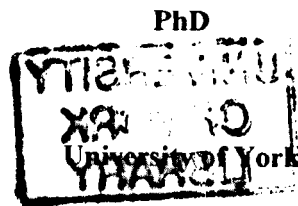


**MANAGING EMOTIONS:**

**An enquiry into some psychological and sociological aspects of affect and emotion  
at work**

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### Abstract

Since the publication of *The Managed Heart* in 1983, emotional labour research has, to a large extent, taken place within disciplinary silos. In an attempt to move beyond studies of the mere existence of emotional labour and towards the examination of the structural sources of variation in emotion management, this thesis takes a synthetic approach by drawing on literatures from psychology, sociology, social-psychology and organisational behaviour. In so doing, affect, subjectivity and emotive dissonance are seen as key to further understanding both the concept of emotional labour but also, the emotional labour process. Taking a reflexive, bottom-up approach a comparative analysis of the emotional labour processes of cabin crew and GP receptionists was undertaken. Employing observation, interview, projective drawing and biographical-narrative interview methods I explore the emotional labour processes taking place in two seemingly antithetic occupational roles. I consider how psychological discomfort experienced when both cabin crew and GP receptionists behaviour do not match passenger, patient or their own expectations can be described as emotive dissonance. As part of a wider contribution I also demonstrate how performances of emotional labour can be enacted to reduce feelings of dissonance as a project on self to maintain ontological security. Emotive dissonance is shown to be experienced at different stages in the emotional labour process including, during, post- and pre- interaction. This alternative conceptualisation also problematises the distinction Hochschild (1983) made between emotional labour and emotion work based on economic characteristics. Finally, a neglected aspect of emotion management is presented. Emotional neutrality, defined as a technique used to suppress emotions felt whilst displaying unemotional behaviour, wherein the suppression of the emotion is the performances itself, is shown to offer a possible alternative explanation as to why GP receptionists are characterised by Draconian stereotypes. I conclude, that emotional labour should now be considered part of strategy to maintain ontological security through the enactment of a continuous narrative of self, thereby making issues of subjectivity and affect central to the emotional labour discourse.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

### Introduction

This thesis focuses on the concept of emotional labour and the emotional labour process. Since the publication of *The Managed Heart* (Hochschild, 1983) emotional labour research has been taken up by scholars in the fields of sociology, psychology, social-psychology, nursing research, and organisational behaviour. Despite this, however, there has been little cross-disciplinary collaboration. In an attempt to further understand how emotional labour is experienced, why it is performed and how it can be managed I undertook a multi-disciplinary literature review. The following research questions emerged: How is the performance of emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, experienced and performed? What is the role of emotive dissonance in emotional labour processes? What are some of the salient characteristics of the relationship between emotion, affect and subjectivity?

A consideration of affect and subjectivity led to a comparative analysis between two occupational roles characterised by seemingly antithetic stereotypes: cabin crew and GP receptionists. A multi-method approach based on social-constructionist principles, including biographical-narrative interviews and non-participant observations, was utilised to understand how the stereotypes associated with the role were negotiated and understood by those who occupied them. To make sense of the co-constructed narratives that were shared with me, I took a synthetic approach to analysing the data by drawing on literature on self, affect, labour and emotion from across disciplines.

By doing so I am able to demonstrate how emotional labour is sometimes used as a dissonance reducing behaviour as part of a project of the self. This is based on a broader discussion of how affective labour can be prescribed by socially constructed norms and rules. The implication of this alternative conceptualisation is that emotional labour can no longer be presented as an expansion of labour process theory without a discussion of the role of subjectivity and affect. I also identify emotional neutrality, defined as a technique used to suppress emotions felt in order to present unemotional behaviour wherein the suppression of emotion is the performance itself, as a neglected form of the emotional labour. Finally, Hochschild's economic distinction between emotional labour and emotion work is problematised when emotional labour is performed to maintain ontological security through a continuous narrative of self.



The aim of this chapter is to situate the reader by giving them a brief overview of what they are to expect from the thesis. I begin by briefly narrating my own experiences of the project and the research journey that led to my contributions. I then move on to discuss the chapter outlines and justify the structural choices I made for the presentation of the thesis. Finally, I conclude by identifying the thesis contributions.

### **The Research Journey**

This thesis was inspired by questions raised from a previous research project (Ward, 2005), in which I concluded that emotional labour performances were not driven solely by organisational prescription. At the budget airline, that was my research site, I observed that despite there being no formal requirement for cabin crew to engage in emotional labour they continued to do so, and even saw it as an enjoyable part of their work. Thus, I wanted to further understand the relationships between self, affect and emotional labour.

After reviewing the sociological and organisational behaviour literature on emotional labour I was left with a number of issues/ questions that needed reconciling. Emotive dissonance was continually mentioned in the literatures, and the concept was even attributed to being the cause of emotional exhaustion, (Wouters, 1989; Hartel et al, 2002) yet it was never the central focus of the research. In addition, despite Hochschild (1983) presenting emotional labour as a consequence of expanding capitalist control into 'private areas of the self' the link with labour process theory seemed to have been lost. What could critical labour process theory add to our understanding of the emotional labour process? And, the concept of emotional labour had been taken up as a topic of research by more than one academic discipline, yet there seemed to be very little in the way of cross-disciplinary collaboration. What could psychological research tell us about the role of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process, for instance? Finally, Hochschild's gendered comparison of flight attendants and bill collectors has meant that much of the emotional labour literature has been viewed through a gendered lens. The binding of the two, emotional labour and gender, has developed some interesting research findings and new ways of seeing the gender division, exploitation and commodification, though mainly of women and 'women's work'. My concern, then, was that although viewing emotional labour through a gendered lens may be useful and illuminating, it might also be blurring, hiding or masking other issues. Thus, I removed the gender lens from my empirical analysis and my approach to the literatures to focus on the labour process roots of emotional labour

theory. However, this does not imply that I am disposing of the gender lens: rather I am simply putting it aside for the time being, with a hope to reapplying it in light of the developments its removal may impart.

These issues led me to undertake a much broader review of the literature on emotional labour from the fields of psychology, sociology, social-psychology and organisational behaviour. They also characterise the structure of the first half of the thesis, for instead of there being just one literature review chapter, I have three. As will be discussed later on, I present the literature from across the disciplines in a way that allows the reader to understand the theoretical origins of emotional labour and its relationship with labour process theory (Chapter Two), some alternative conceptualisations and its relationship with affective forms of immaterial labour (Chapter Three) and finally, consider emotive dissonance as a concept in its own right, and its role within the emotional labour process (Chapter Four). The cross-disciplinary literature review led to the development of the research questions that form the basis for this thesis.

How is the performance of emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, experienced and performed? What is the role of emotive dissonance in emotional labour processes? What are some of the salient characteristics of the relationship between emotion, affect and subjectivity?

Following Hochschild (1983) I conducted a comparative analysis of two antithetic occupational roles. However, my comparison focused on the difference in expectations and perceptions associated with the role, as this was identified in the social-psychological literature (Thoits, 1985) as having import on the experience of emotive dissonance. Thus, I compared the work of cabin crew and GP receptionists. Adopting a multi-method, bottom-up, reflexive approach to researching emotion and affect I utilised a range of qualitative research methods including, biographical-narrative interviews, standard interviews, non-participant observations, a focus group and projective drawings. Via these methods I wanted to understand how the antithetic stereotypes were negotiated and understood by those who occupied the roles, which forms of emotional labour were enacted and how emotive dissonance was experienced as part of the emotional labour process.

Due to restrictions on research access to the airline industry (discussed in full in Chapter Five) I was unable to gain formal admittance into an airline. So, I utilised snowball-sampling to identify participants. For the GP receptionists element of the

project, however, I worked as part of an NHS-funded project run by one of my supervisory team. I was granted ethics approval to conduct non-participant observations and to conduct interviews with those working as GP receptionists within a group of three practices. I was not permitted to speak to patients, and therefore chose not to include the voices of passengers either as I felt this would leave the project unbalanced. However, I do feel this is a major area for future research.

What follows is a brief overview of what the reader can expect in the forthcoming chapters, along with a short discussion of the theoretical framework and research approach.

### **Chapter Summaries**

The thesis spans eight chapters. The first, you are half way through. Next, come three literature review chapters, followed by my methodology, then two empirical chapters, and finally my conclusion.

### **Chapter Two – The Immaterial Labour Process**

The first of the literature review chapters is a discussion of labour process theory and its relationship with emotional labour. As previously mentioned, emotional labour was originally presented as consequence of capitalist control expanding into private areas of the self, namely emotions. In order to remind and re-contextualise the emotional labour concept within its theoretical origins a historical review of labour process theory is required. Drawing on critical debates surrounding Marx's critique of capitalism and the subordination of labour under a capitalist regime, this review focuses on the role of subjectivity in labour processes. Knights' (1990) and Willmott's (1990) critique of the ontological dualism that has dominated labour process theory is considered, along with a discussion that centralises the relationships between subjectivity, affect and the labour process. I then move on to consider paradigmatic shifts in the nature and composition of society, from material to 'immaterial' (Hardt & Negri, 2001) labour processes. Emotional labour is critically discussed as a form of immaterial labour in an informatized society (Hardt & Negri, 2001) and is drawn upon again in the following chapter as a specific form of affective labour.

### **Chapter Three – Emotional Labour**

I then move on to present emotional labour research in sociology and organisational behaviour, in particular, with a broader discussion of the literature on affect stemming from the political economy literature. Emotional labour, as a concept, is one that has been criticised and debated since its presentation in 1983. As part of these critical debates, a number of alternative conceptualisations have been offered (including Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Tolich 1993; Grandey, 2000; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Gosserand & Diefendorf, 2005; Bolton, 2005) however, few literature reviews have considered these alternative models as broader emotional labour processes. Thus, I take up this challenge by presenting in chronological order various alternative models of emotional labour (including Tolich, 1993; Grandey, 2000; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Gosserand & Diefendorf, 2005; Bolton, 2005) whilst discussing their implications, limitations and causal relationships with emotional labour theory in general, and wider sociological debates including Baudrillard's (1969/2000) 'genesis of needs', thereby painting a comprehensive picture of the emotional labour literature and its theoretical development over the past twenty-six years.

I conclude this chapter by engaging in the literature on affect. If emotional labour is to be considered a form of immaterial labour, and more so as an affective form of labour, then the relationship between emotion and affect requires attention. I approach this with a discussion of affect followed by a critical analysis of some of the political economy literature on affective labour. I conclude that emotional labour can be seen as a contributory form, though is not synonymous with, affective labour.

#### **Chapter Four – Emotive Dissonance**

Finally, I move on to consider the way emotional labour is treated by psychology and social-psychology, with a focus on emotive dissonance. I begin with a discussion of Hochschild's (1983) ontological assumptions that underlie emotional labour. Through a consideration of self, reflexivity and identity I consider the social-psychological literature on reflexive self-consciousness, expectations and norms. In pursuit of understanding Hochschild's claim that emotive dissonance is analogous to cognitive dissonance (1983:90) I also looked at the psychological literature on cognitive dissonance. Taking a synthetic approach to the work previously conducted in disciplinary silos I was able to draw across the literatures to paint a potentially more colourful and multi-dimensional picture of the emotional labour process and the role emotive dissonance plays within that.

The final chapter of the literature review concludes that there is a theoretical possibility that emotional labour could be seen as a dissonance reducing behaviour as part of a project on self, to maintain ontological security. Subsequently I adopted research methods that would be consistent with my theoretical approach.

## **Chapter Five – Methodology**

Taking into consideration the role reflexive-consciousness was playing in my thinking, taking a reflexive approach to empirical research was a natural progression. In addition, the idea that emotional labour was performed to adhere to role expectations and social norms also meant taking a social constructionist approach. Thus, I adopted a multi-methods research design that would reflect my theoretical framework.

As part of this I have written the methodology chapter in the first person, as a guided tour of my research journey. I feel this to be conducive to inviting the reader to get to know and understand my role in the research process and to hear my voice as an active narrator and participant in the thesis. I discuss the way in which I encouraged the women who shared their stories with me to reflect on what they had said, why they had chosen to tell that particular story in that particular way. But what I do not do is exclude my influence on their narratives.

I consider the research process as a stage on which emotion management techniques are performed. Both the interviewer and interviewee are guided by social norms that govern the interview situation, thus I was keen to try and move beyond these emotion management performances by engaging the participants in open and informal conversation, often giving something more of myself to help overcome the barriers and pretence, or, as Czarniawska (2004) terms the 'logic of representation'. As part of this acknowledgement of my own emotion management performance I also include two excerpts from my research diary that demonstrate how I, as a researcher, engaged in performances of emotion management. I attempt to reflexively analyse these situations to understand why I had chosen to perform emotion management. Such a consistently reflexive approach to both my theoretical framework and research design helped to counter the solipsistic nature of emotion management research, but also gave an alternative insight into the emotional labour process and the role of the subject within that.

I also consider the use of alternative and multiple methods for researching emotion including biographical narrative interviews, standard interviews, focus group, projective drawing and non-participant observations.

## **Chapter Six – Cabin Crew**

The first of the empirical chapters focuses on analysing the empirical material given by the women who worked as cabin crew, particularly around Claire.

This chapter begins by presenting the stereotypical image of an ‘air-hostess’ and goes on to unpick and understand the historical legacy of these stereotypes and how they impact on perceptions and expectations of the role today. I then go on to introduce Claire with whom I conducted a ten-hour biographical narrative interview. Claire has worked for a British full-service provider for over ten years and was able to share countless number of stories and a wealth of experience with me. I focus my analysis of the emotional labour process around three ‘critical incidents’, or stories, narrated by Claire. These three stories entitled ‘The Big Bang’, ‘Constipated Old Man’ and ‘Surf or Turf?’ each describe the performance of emotion management techniques and experiences of emotive dissonance. I have chosen these three stories in particular because they each tell of Claire experiencing the psychological discomfort of emotive dissonance at different stages in the emotional labour process; during the interaction, post-interaction and even prior to the interaction via projective imaginings. Thus, demonstrating that the emotion management process is a dynamic one. These ‘incidents’ also show that emotional labour was performed in order to reduce the discomfort of dissonance caused by Claire’s behaviour being incongruent with passengers, or sometimes her own, expectations of herself.

In addition, Claire describes how she feels she is on, what can best be described as a ‘continual quest for congruence’ as she attempts to meet the unidentifiable, and ever-changing expectations of passengers. Thus, I conclude that through the use of Claire’s narratives, and the supportive voices of other cabin crew, I can demonstrate that emotional labour can, in some circumstances, be enacted as a dissonance reducing behaviour in order to maintain ontological security through a continuous narrative of self.

## **Chapter Seven – GP Receptionists: “I’ve got to get past this dragon before I can get to God!”**

The final empirical chapter is based on the work of GP receptionists. Following the same format as the previous chapter, I begin by presenting the stereotype associated with GP receptionists. In support of such Draconian images I also present some recent excerpts from on-line forums dedicated to patients who wish to vent their frustrations and share their experiences of obstructive GP receptionists. In an attempt to unpick such negative perceptions associated with the role I provide a review of the existing literature on GP reception work. However, the paucity of the literature only goes some way in explaining the stereotypes. In addition, literature produced by the Department of Health, Department of Health and Social Security and local Primary Care Trusts are shown to prescribe a very different perception of the role than those held by patients.

In an attempt to further understand the origins of the negative stereotypes and also to explore the emotion management required of GP receptionists I move on to analyse the empirical material I gathered whilst working on the NHS funded project; six-weeks of observations at three practices, three standard interviews, a focus group and projective drawings.

In an attempt to be consistent I present Sam as the central voice in this chapter, though other GP receptionists opinions are also included to support, or oppose, Sam’s narrative. Through non-participant observations I found that what I expected to observe, I did not. Instead of performances of either empathetic, or antipathetic emotional labour I observed a form of emotion management technique that involved the GP receptionists suppressing the display of any kind of emotion as part of a performance; they performed emotional neutrality.

By re-analysing Claire’s narrative and reflecting on performances of emotional neutrality observed in GP reception work I was able to understand more fully some of the emotional performances described by Claire. In incidents in which she had to deal with demanding passengers she often described herself as being ‘calm’ and ‘in control’, ‘not rising to it’ which can now be better understood as performances of emotional neutrality.

In addition, I also illustrate another incident in which emotive dissonance was experienced post-interaction through a process of reflection. Emotive dissonance, was

in this incident, reduced through a method of rationalisation, or justification in the same way as had been described by Claire in the previous chapter.

Thus, emotional neutrality can also be offered as a potential explanation for the negative stereotypes associated with GP receptionists. In an attempt to maintain patient confidentiality, protect themselves from emotional inundation and adhere to strict NHS and practice guidelines, in terms of data protection, GP receptionists engage in performances of emotional neutrality. Though this could be perceived as being heartless, cold, and Draconian by patients.

## **Chapter Eight – Contributions and Reflections**

The final chapter of the thesis presents the three main contributions of my research, which are discussed below. It also takes a forward looking approach to orientate and contextualised these contributions in terms of wider theoretical debates and future research. I discuss how emotion management research must now be approached to reflect the changes in theory as a consequence to my research. I also take a reflexive look back at my own journey, of how I see myself as researcher and understand and reconcile the limitations of the project.

In an attempt to maintain my consistent approach to reflexivity and social constructionism I wanted both Claire and Sam to have an opportunity to reflect back on my findings and the way I presented them and their narratives. Unfortunately Claire was unable to participate in this process for personal reasons, however Sam very kindly offered to spend a further hour talking and reflecting on my research. I feel this concluded the cycle and helped me to feel comfortable with my presentation of Sam and that she felt my analysis of her narratives was a fair representation and provided her with an interesting account of GP reception work.

## **Summary**

In summary, this thesis concludes by making three distinct contributions to contemporary thinking in the study of emotions in organisations. Firstly, by taking a cross-disciplinary approach it offers a re-conceptualisation of the emotional labour process in which emotive dissonance has a central yet dynamic role. Emotional labour performances are shown to be enacted as dissonance reducing behaviours as part of a project to maintain ontological security via a continuous narrative of self. Secondly, emotional neutrality, defined as an emotion management technique to suppress



emotions felt and display unemotional behaviour, wherein the suppression of emotion is the performance itself, is presented as a neglected form of emotion management. Third, having demonstrated that emotional labour can be performed as part of a project on self, challenges the academic community to re-think the way in which emotional labour has been presented as an expansion of capitalist control over private areas of the self. Hochschild's (1983) distinct economic definitions of emotional labour and emotion work are, as a consequence, problematised.

## Chapter Two: The Immaterial Labour Process

### Introduction

Since Braverman's (1974) revival of labour process theory many theorists have sought to explain and explore the changing nature of labour and the way in which work is experienced. I begin my thesis with a review of labour process theory in an attempt to re-contextualise the emotional labour construct. Hochschild initially presented the emotional labour construct as an extension to Marx's analysis of the material labour process under a capitalist regime. However, since then, as emotional labour research has flourished, the Marxist origins of the emotional labour construct have tended to be overlooked. Thus I begin my literature review by critically exploring traditional labour process theory. I then go on, with a discussion of the 'immaterial labour' literature, to discuss how the changing nature of work and society challenges labour process theory to explain the dynamic relationship between capital and labour.

Braverman's (1974) *Labour and Monopoly Capital* marks the beginning of what came to be known as, the labour process debate. Friedman (1977), Goldthorpe et al (1969) and Burawoy (1985), amongst others, engaged in the debate, in an attempt to further understand the relationship between capitalist control and the labour process, as first highlighted by Marx (1867/1990). Following Marx, early labour process theory focused on the 'material labour process', studying manufacturing industries that predominantly employed male manual workers. However, technological advancements led the industrial paradigm to shift in the direction of the 'immaterial' (Virno, 1996; Lazzarato, 1996; Hardt & Negri, 2001). As a consequence it has been argued that traditional labour process theory lacks the scope to conceptualise the nuanced nature of work in an 'informatized society' (Hardt & Negri, 2001).

To understand this 'new' dimension of the labour process, it is necessary to return to the original framework "...about the nature of work relationships inside a capitalist mode of production" (Thompson, 1990:38) as proposed by Marx. By doing so, we seek to understand the more fundamental, and often taken for granted, aspects of the relationship between capital and labour that will go on to inform discussions of new forms of work and the changing nature of labour. As Littler (1990) asserts:

Labour process theory examines the question of the ultimate function of management and asserts that this function is the conversion of labour power (the

potential for work) into labour (actual work effort) under conditions which permit capital accumulation (Braverman, 1974)

(Little, 1990:48)

### The Labour Process

Marx acknowledged 'immaterial' labour (Lazzarato, 1996; Hardt & Negri, 2001) such as poetry, art, and comedy as forms of labour. However, his explicit discussion of the material industrial labour processes was a consequence of manual labour being the most prevalent form of work at the time of writing. As Marx explained in *Theories of Surplus Value*,

All these manifestations in this field are so insignificant, if we compare them to the whole of production, that they can be completely ignored

(Marx, 1863/1961:610-611)

And earlier in the *Grundrisse* he justified his interest in the manual labour process:

In all forms of society there is one specific form of production which predominates over the rest, whose relations thus assign rank and influence to the others.

(Marx, 1957:106-107)

Marx's discussion of the labour process focused on production relationships that occur under capitalism. His focus was primarily on the relationship between the 'means of production' and man's *labour power*. For Marx (1867), labour is the means through which human nature is realised by transforming 'nature'. Put simply, "by his activity, man changes the forms of the materials of nature in such a way as to make them useful to him" (Marx, 1867 cited in Schor & Holt, 2000: 331). As Knights (1990:299) states, "through the act of labour, nature is transformed into the means of subsistence and men/women are humanised as they engage in creative self-expression". Thus, the fluidity of Marx's definition of labour does not restrict his analysis to the 'material labour' of the physical labour process.

Underpinning Marx's analysis of the production process was the idea that man consciously constructs his role within the labour process. This is how 'the architect' is distinguished from the bee', for "Man not only effects a change of form in the materials of nature, he also realises his own purpose in those materials" (Marx, 1976 [1867]: 284). In this sense, then, even physical labour, is never simply 'manual', but requires a certain level of 'knowledgeability' (Thompson & Ackroyd, 2005).

Under capitalism, components of production are purchased i.e. the means of production and labour power, and set to work upon each other. The objective is to create surplus value for the capitalist, or in Marx's terms *valorisation*. The capitalist sells the product of this relationship for a greater value than the cost of production. The provision of raw materials and labour power does not ensure profitability, however, for purchased labour power is only 'potential labour power'. This is why Marx referred to labour power as 'variable capital', because the labour power extracted from that capital investment is variable upon worker effort and activity. Optimal extraction of labour power becomes a managerial problem (Friedman, 1977) that requires systematic control to be exerted over the labour process. Of course, how the maximisation of labour power is managed, and whether that requires control is debatable. The capitalist becomes focused upon the efficiency, skill and willingness of the workers to ensure maximum valorisation.

Valorisation can be seen, from the workers perspective as both positive and negative. The negative perspective lies with Marx's ideas of alienation and exploitation, which are discussed later. Positive contributions of value discourses have been outlined by Cafferentzis (2005). His discussion argues that valorisation can be useful in the sense that it attaches a measure to the degree of exploitation, which serves to make visible the usually 'hidden' nature of capitalist subordination. In addition, he highlights how such narratives further support the 'exploited workers' "antagonistic way to describe ... the capitalists and landlords as parasitic upon their labour, anxiety and suffering" (Cafferentzis, 2005:94). Finally, he argues, that a discourse of value, allows workers to recognise themselves as productive forces, thereby appreciating the power of their own potential, both within and outside of the capitalist process of production. The pursuit of capitalist profit is argued to lead to the subordination of labour; no longer is the individual in control of his<sup>1</sup> own working conditions or practices and, more importantly for Marx, he no longer holds any rights over the products of his expended labour power.

For Marx, labour fell under the subordination of capitalist control when machinery and science became involved in the systematic organisation of labour to extract increased levels of surplus value. Logic, such as that epitomised in Taylor's scientific management (1911), sought to intensify the labour process, by maximising output and minimising costs. Technologies such as task routinization and 'scientifically' determined divisions of labour exacerbate Marx's fears of *alienation*. From a humanist perspective, if labour is the outpouring of humanity to transform nature, then, routinized tasks and an intense division of labour serves to dislocate this relationship, leaving labour alienated from its efforts. In Marx's own words,

In this process [alienation], then, the social character of their labour comes to confront the workers, so to speak in a capitalised form: thus machinery is an instance of the way in which the visible products of labour take on the appearance of its masters. The same transformation may be observed in the forces of nature and science ...they too confront the worker as the powers of capital. They become separated effectively from the skill and knowledge of the individual worker.

(Marx, 1976[1867]:1055)

The capitalist labour process renders work as “external to the worker...not a part of his nature, that consequently he does not fulfil himself in his work but denies himself” (Marx, 1973:110 cited in Knights, 1990:300). This is because the act of labour, or the ‘outpouring of humanity,’ is seen as a form of self-expression. Exerting extensive control over the labour process seeks to mechanise the relationship between labourers and their labour, albeit denying the freedom of self-expression.

Early Marxist thinking was characterised by an implicit humanism as the essentialist ontology focused around fulfilment and self-actualisation through a relationship between human nature and nature itself. However, the notion of alienation is a comparative one, for it is tied to a “nostalgic ideal of pre-industrial artisanal work” (Weeks, 2007:243), where the individual only produced enough for himself and his family, and received the full value in remuneration of his efforts, such as is epitomised by Braverman (1974), and to some extent Mills (1953). Essentially pre-industrial ideals of craftwork, where alienation does not exist for there is no capital exploitation involved within the production process, do not deprive the worker of his own “skills or humanity” (Knights, 1990:300). Evaluating work under capitalism, in comparison to that of the ‘liberated’, ‘utopian’ view of craftwork, is today, however, an abstract exercise, for as Mills (1953) points out, workers have no memory of that which is being compared and such a critique therefore has little resonance in contemporary society. “Only the psychological imagination of the historian makes it possible to write of such comparisons as if they were of psychological import” (1953:228).

The conflicting relationship between capitalist control and labour’s efforts to subvert and resist is the primary focus of much of the labour process debate (Carls, 2007). However, changes in the industrial composition of the economy and the subsequent effects this has had on the nature of work, challenged labour process theory to explain the dynamic relationship between capital and labour. With the expansion of the service economy, theorists such as Braverman sought to explore such fundamental changes to

the economic structure and the nature of work by re-visiting traditional understandings of the labour process.

### *Braverman's Revival*

Marx's radical analysis of the universal condition of human existence, manifest in the relationship between the power of labour and the capitalist mode of production, is presented in the first volume of *Capital*. The totality of the implications proposed, led to *Capital* becoming the definitive theoretical text on monopoly capital and attracted little in the way of critical analysis. According to Sweezy (1974) the absence of critical analysis can be partially justified because, 'as far as theory was concerned, they were right. But of course the outward manifestations of capitalism, though not its inner nature, have undergone tremendous changes in the last century' (Sweezy in Braverman, 1974: xi). It is the changes in the outward manifestations of capitalism that is the focus of this chapter, as I explore how shifts in the industrial paradigm have affected the nature of work and the associated labour processes.

Braverman (1974) took on the task of re-contextualising Marx's theory of capitalism within the context of modern organizations, thereby reviving labour process theory and the associated sociological debate. Braverman's analysis focused primarily on a central problem known as the 'indeterminacy of labour' (Sewell, 2005). The indeterminacy of labour is best thought of "as the gap between an employee's notional capacity to labour (i.e. their 'labour power') and what the employee actually ends up doing" (Sewell, 2005:686). Braverman orientated his argument around management, as he was concerned with the way labour was controlled. Whilst Marx emphasised the consequence of alienation, Braverman considered the cause. He concluded that the cause of alienation, and its associated consequences, was the separation of conception and execution: a strategy epitomized in Taylor's practice of scientific management (1911). The capitalist idea of separating conception and execution was to remove decision-making from workers' job roles to ensure efficiency through standardisation. However, other theorists have disagreed with this idea, seeing a certain amount of decision-making as a crucial part of appeasing labour relations (Burawoy, 1979).

For Burawoy (1979), and others such as Edwards (1979) and Friedman (1977), a more effective method of expropriating increased surplus value was to actually relax managerial control and encourage the workforce to 'self-organise,' whilst simultaneously offering incentive bonus payments for achieving targets. Burawoy

(1979) sees limited decision-making as important because it lubricates the relationship between workers and management. As Friedman (1977), among others, points out, the 'work-to-rule' initiatives of antagonised workers illustrates the importance workers place on maintaining some discretion over their work. Burawoy (1979), who re-visited the work site previously investigated by Marxist Chicago sociologist Donald Roy (1952, 1953, 1954), observed that workers would sustain production levels despite lack of direct management control, and would even self-regulate those that jeopardised the meeting of productivity targets. His observations were similar to Roy's more than twenty-years earlier, and Burawoy adopted Roy's term for the processes of subversion and informal alliances: 'making-out'. Roy's emphasis was on the subtle relationships between compliance and resistance, for he observed how workers would resist rule changes and new procedures in order to work more efficiently. Burawoy, however, focused on consent as opposed to resistance: for him workers were implicitly accepting the rules of the game by playing it. This notion is encapsulated by the title of Burawoy's study 'Manufacturing Consent' (1979) as a sense of autonomy and choice secured the production of surplus value, whilst obscuring the capitalist agenda. More contemporary forms of the illusory status of the worker are prominent in normative controls, setting of targets, corporate culture programmes and away-days, where workers are instilled with an illusory sense of autonomy and control (Taylor, 1998; Grugulis et al., 2000; Ogbanna & Harris, 1998).

For Braverman (1974) managerial control is sustained by deskilling and fragmenting work, along with the continual rationalizing separation of conception from execution. What is crucial about Braverman's interpretation, however, is the way in which he views the mental labour process as subject to the same form of separation as the physical labour process. This acknowledgement immediately broadened the Marxist critique into new arenas of work and organisational forms, (particularly clerical and service industries) as Braverman attempted to reflect the changes in productive processes and the social climate of post-war capitalism in a modern Marxist analysis.

Unlike many other later theorists, including Friedman (1977), Burawoy (1979, 1985) and Gorz (1999), Braverman did not significantly alter Marx's basic concepts. For example, deskilling and work fragmentation were central tenets of Marx's original thinking and they continue to hold centre stage in Braverman's analysis of the degradation of work. Essentially, Braverman's contribution to labour process theory can be attributed to his theoretical allegiance to Marx as Braverman attempted to 'renew' (Thompson, 1990:73) labour process theory by applying Marx's thinking to

new forms of work, as "...he outlines the greater possibilities for widespread deskilling through the use of new forms of technology and science in the service of capital" (Thompson, 1990:73).

Braverman's lack of theoretical critique of Marx's work, however, led to the reproduction of some of Marx's weaknesses. The anti-Braverman position (Burawoy, 1979; Edwards, 1979) criticises *Labour and Monopoly Capital's* central thesis of deskilling and control for assuming that the working-class is homogenous, and omniscient and that work satisfaction is based on income, power and status, and also, for a general lack of consideration of power and resistance (Thompson 1990:213).

Neglecting worker subjectivity (Thompson, 1990; Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990) meant the deskilling thesis was presented without a consideration of resistance against management control; in particular, it disregarded the power of trade unions and collective labour. Management was presented as an "omnipotent and omniscient" (Thompson, 1990:96) force, whose power and agenda was uncontested, as they sought to commodify tacit skills held by individual workers. Such criticisms have led the post-Braverman labour process debate away from Marxist orthodoxy towards a more nuanced understanding of post-war capitalism, one that acknowledged the "...capacity of workers acting individually and collectively to resist managerial plans..." (Leidner, 1993:3).

Despite such criticisms Braverman's contribution highlighted how new manifestations of traditional labour processes, for example service and clerical work continued to be subject to capitalist control that essentially sought to separate conception from execution. However, what was key was the way capitalist technologies of control were evolving to keep pace with the changing nature of work. As Thompson states "growing diversity needed explanation" (1990:69).

### **Growing Diversity...**

*Labour and Monopoly Capital's* (Braverman, 1974) aim was to provide a theory of work history, to "reintegrate a consideration of the division of labour, technology and management methods with an analysis of occupational structure, class structure and the phases of capitalism" (Littler, 1990:47). Such an analysis provided a more holistic overview of the labour process in terms of deskilling trends, capitalist labour markets and the role of managerial and control strategies (Littler, 1990). Since then, labour



process theorising has complexified as it seeks to reflect the dynamic nature of the labour process.

Following Baran and Sweezy (1966), Braverman explains how the main concern of post-war capitalism was the accommodation of labour that had been displaced by societal shifts. In response to this, monopoly capitalists began to invest in various 'social sectors' that had previously been situated in the realm of the 'community', for example the provision of entertainment and care. Increased levels of investment and the flow of surplus value within the economy led to the growth of the service sector and subsequently a significant change in occupational structure. Braverman argues that such a development allowed capitalism to become all encompassing: monopolising the private realms of society to serve and control individual's and community needs:

It is only in its era of monopoly that the capitalist mode of production takes over the totality of individual family and social needs and, in subordinating them to the market, also re-shapes them to service the needs of capital.

(Braverman, 1974:271)

Marx defined a service as 'nothing more than the useful effect of a use-value, be it of a commodity, or be it of labour' (Marx, 1976:187). Braverman adds that '...the useful effects of labour themselves *become* the commodity' (Braverman, 1974:360). This indivisibility forms the basis of Braverman's idea of a 'service worker', as someone who provides a commodity that is intangible. He argues that these roles are simply modified and "more intensely exploited" (Braverman, 1974:282) variations of the work conducted in manufacturing and the domestic sphere.

Following Marxist orthodoxy, Braverman continued purposefully in the tradition of the totality of capitalism. As Burawoy (1985:22) notes, "Braverman repeatedly stresses the mechanisms through which subjectivity is destroyed or rendered ineffectual and through which individuals lose their individuality." Both believed that the "homogenisation of work increasingly unifies the working class" (Thompson, 1990:88). However, it has been argued, that such a selective reading of capitalism could have significant repercussions for labour process theory (Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990; Rosenthal 2004). As both Burawoy and Thompson argue independently, "capitalist control cannot be separated from and understood outside the supportive components of work experience" (Thompson, 1990:88).

In opposition, to the homogenising effects of capitalism, Knights (1990) and Willmott (1990) suggest that capitalism actually fosters individualising effects. “Labour processes fragment, atomise and turn workers into individuals rather than members of a class” (Knights, 1990:311). In the pursuit of a coherent and ‘accepted’ identity, in terms of acceptance within society, individuals will pursue bonus payments and incentive schemes, as this enforces the cultural definition of what it is to be a ‘good person,’ as shaped by the Protestant work ethic. Capitalism’s role is to create a ‘comparative social isolation’ for individuals, which encourages them to seek ontological security<sup>2</sup> through, what Baudrillard, and others, call the ‘consumer society’. Capital, then, is seen no longer to control labour production directly, but indirectly through the enchanting effects of a ‘new myth of consumption’. In other words, individual identity is constructed and maintained through the consumption and accumulation of symbolic goods and services. According to Baudrillard, the ‘social order,’ and, therefore, by implication social control, is determined by the “hierarchy of differential signs and the interiorization by the individual of signs in general (i.e., of the norms, values, and social imperatives that signs are)” (Baudrillard, 1969:61). Thus, in the pursuit of self-validation through the consumption of symbolic artefacts, individuals require wealth, which is secured, most readily, through the labour process<sup>3</sup>.

Burawoy’s (1985) critical reading of *Labour and Monopoly Capital* centred on Braverman’s theoretical framework, which sees the working class as a “... class *in itself*, not a class *for itself*...” (Braverman, 1974:27). Such a framework allows Braverman to dismiss the subjective experience of work and therefore fails to illustrate, quite fully, the totalising nature of capitalism in terms of control and compliance; the side of capitalism that induces the proletariat to reproduce the control mechanisms that lead to their subordination (Burawoy, 1979). A point that Sweezy (1974) eloquently highlights in his foreword to Braverman’s thesis;

The class *in itself*/ class *for itself* scheme allows Braverman to ignore all those day-to-day responses that yield the secrets of how and why workers acquiesce in building for themselves more ‘modern’, more ‘scientific’, more ‘dehumanised prisons of labour’ and of workers’ willingness to tolerate the continuance of an arrangement so obviously destructive of the well-being and happiness of human beings.

(Sweezy, 1974: xiii)

In response, post-Braverman debates attempted a more balanced view of the subjective and objective experiences of work, to offer a more nuanced understanding of the complex relational experience of diverse manifestations of capitalism.

### **'The Personality Market'**

Today's manifestations of the labour process differ from the labour process that previous sociologists (Marx, 1867; Braverman, 1974; Friedman, 1977; Burawoy, 1979) have written about. Much attention is focused around the work conducted in the service economy (Hochschild, 1983; Leidner, 1993; Ritzer, 1996); where capitalism is no longer satisfied with controlling physical labour capacity, but seeks control of workers' affects (Dowling, 2007; Wissinger, 2007), bodies (for example Witz et al, 2003; Warhurst & Nickson, 2007) and emotions (for example Hochschild, 1983; Taylor, 1998). The commodification of affect is not new to the post-Braverman debate, in fact, C. Wright Mills' influential *White Collar* focused on the work conducted by white-collar workers, whom were seen to epitomize the American middle-class. *White Collar* discusses a 'personality market' (1953:182), in which the instrumentalisation and externalisation of personality was said to take alienation to 'explicit extremes' (Mills, 1953:225).

Mills (1953), Burawoy (1985) and Gorz (1999), among others, have advocated a sector specific approach to understand the subjective experience of working within the boundaries of capitalism. Criticising Braverman for assuming that the subjective and objective aspects of the capitalist labour process can be analysed independently, Burawoy, and others, have attempted to introduce the subject back into labour process theorising (Friedman, 1977; Pollert, 1981; Cressey & MacInnes, 1980). Emphasising the totalising nature of capitalism, Gorz (1999) discusses how it is no longer enough to exchange labour power for a wage. Today, labour is required to negotiate terms of employment with personality, which could be interpreted as a 'return to the pre-capitalist relations of personal submission as described by Marx' (Gorz, 1999, cited in Bunting, 2004:69). Instead of capitalist control being contested and negotiated within the workplace, which early Marxist thinking predicted in the form of a revolution of the proletariat, individual identities are instead consumed by the overpowering norms of capitalist society, which serve to eliminate resistance and conflict. The totality of capitalism means that the "...subjectivity and 'identity' of individuals, their values, their images of themselves and the world are being continually structured, manufactured and shaped" (Gorz, 1999, cited in Bunting, 2004:69).

Gorz' totalising image of capitalism echoes Ritzer's (1996) concerns over the ubiquitous power of capitalist rationality, which he effectively conceptualises in terms of a fast-food model: "McDonaldization is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant took over American society and the rest of the world" (Ritzer, 1996:1). Ritzer's reading of Weber led his thesis to be based on four dimensions of bureaucratic rationality: efficiency, calculability, predictability and control, it is through these dimensions that capitalist rationalism is thought to be embedded into society. Weber saw bureaucracy as the ideal system through which formal rationality could be maintained, thereby ensuring optimal decision-making. Bureaucracies, then, embody each of the aforementioned dimensions; they are efficient in handling large quantities because performance is reduced to a series of, often, quantifiable tasks (calculability). Such tasks are governed and regulated by a strongly asserted system of rules and regulatory policies making them predictable and, finally, such rules and policies reduce the need for individual decision-making, thereby improving control over the production process. Ritzer (1996; 2000) illustrates how McDonald's could be offered as an amplified manifestation of Weber's idealised bureaucracy, as every element of the McDonald's process is planned and rationalised to produce the most efficient, predictable, calculable, controlled response from consumers. Consumers have limited choice in McDonalidized situations, thereby replicating Weber's 'formally rational system' (Ritzer, 2000:23) in which "virtually everyone can (or must) make the same, optimal choice". The creation of an idealised bureaucracy is based on the 'paradigm of rationality' (Ritzer, 2000), thus emotions, feelings and moods are seen as irrational, as they are, in general, unpredictable, uncontrollable and unquantifiable. Weber himself explains:

... the more the bureaucracy is "dehumanised" the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special value.

(Weber, 1946: 215-216 cited in Fineman 2001:219)

Ritzer sees the 'dehumanising' nature of rationality as the 'irrationality of rationality' as "rational systems inevitably spawn irrationalities that limit, eventually compromise, and perhaps even undermine their rationality" (Ritzer, 2000:123). For example, standing in line at a cash point on the high street may be more time consuming than actually going into the bank and seeing a cashier<sup>4</sup>.

Ritzer (1996; 2000) also offers numerous examples of the degree to which both production and consumption are rationalised to ensure capitalist control. Employees are seen as being less of a problem to control, as they rely on the organisation for economic reasons. Customers, on the other hand, are not so compliant and have the freedom to resist and contest organisational systems. However, in their quest to rationalise all elements of the labour process, including the participatory role of the consumer, McDonaldised systems have developed methods for controlling customers<sup>5</sup>. Taking examples from McDonalds itself, Ritzer highlights how customers are taught the 'norms' of behaviour required of them by the company. They are expected to order and collect their own food from the counter, to eat as fast as they can and then to clear away their rubbish. Such a 'conveyor belt' system is facilitated by the use of a number of techniques including, amongst many others; chairs being designed to become uncomfortable after approximately twenty minutes, ensuring customers do not spend too long within the restaurant; customer-facing staff are forced to follow tight scripts to ensure a standardised and controlled interaction, food is conveniently wrapped and eaten, keeping eating time to a minimum; and the décor is brash, making it aesthetically austere thus encouraging people to remain alert and leave quickly. Each of these examples illustrates the ubiquity of rationalisation within a capitalist society, and supports Weber's notion of the 'iron cage of rationality'. In this sense society is becoming 'McDonaldized', bureaucratic rationality is dominating more sectors of society. As Leidner states, "as routinization spills over the boundaries of organizations to include customers as well as employees, employers' strategies for controlling work affect not only workers but the culture at large" (1993:2).

### **A Consumer Society**

Like Braverman, however, Ritzer fails to acknowledge the potential for conflict and resistance from those under the control of managerial capitalism, although it could be said that Ritzer's later work on 'enchantment' (2005) goes some way in explaining such an oversight. Like Gorz (1999), the totalising nature of capitalism enchants the consumer into buying into a culture of mass consumerism; it has become a 'consumer society' (Baudrillard, 1998). As Rosenthal highlights, "the hoped for resistance of classical labour process studies is hard to find [in service interaction studies], but there is worse: the perfection of management control may reflect nothing less than the loss by workers of the awareness of its existence" (2004:604). For Baudrillard, this is not necessarily a case of 'enchantment' but a consequence of the unconscious social logic that is hidden beneath the "consecrated ideology of consumption" (1969:57).

Consumption is pitched as production's opposite, as leisure is oppositional to work. Leisure and consumption are based on a principle of pleasure and choice, yet Baudrillard argues that this autonomy is a myth for

...Consumption is only possible in the abstraction of a system based on the 'liberty' of the consumer. It is necessary that the individual users have a choice, and become through his choice free at last to enter as a productive force in a production calculus, exactly as the capitalist system frees the laborer to sell, at last his labour power.

(Baudrillard, 1969:74)

In other words, consumption is capital or, more precisely, it is "consummativity that is a structuralist mode of productivity" (1969:74). Needs, then, are 'myths' created by capitalism, as Baudrillard points out, is it not strange that consumers need what is already produced? Needs are "induced functions of the system" (1969:73), or more accurately, needs are better defined "not as a consummative force liberated by the affluent society, but as a productive force required by the functioning of the system itself... In other words, there are only needs because the system needs them" (1969:73). Thus, production and consumption are inextricably bound within the capitalist system, the 'internal finality' of production allows capitalism to survive and reproduce itself. Baudrillard's argument is that capitalism is total, in the most absolute sense. Thus, individuals should not only be viewed as labour power in terms of production, but also as consumption power. Caught in a never-ending cycle of capitalist production and reproduction the relationship between production and consumption is a self-fulfilling prophecy.

### **The enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty in a 'postemotional' society**

Service interaction literature tends to be divided between those who see service work as drawing consumers into the capitalist labour process through the rationalisation and bureaucratisation of the service delivery (Ritzer, 1996) and those who argue that the customer has risen to the position of 'sovereign' (du Gay & Salaman, 1992; du Gay, 1996), which has led to service work being re-organised in order to serve the sovereign consumer. However, Korczynski (2002) and Korczynski & Ott (2004) bridge the gap by arguing that service work actively attempts to 'enchant' customers into believing that they hold 'sovereign' status within an organisation, although this is a myth to draw customers in to the capitalist labour process.

For Korczynski & Ott (2004), the meaning of the term sovereignty can be thought of in both a modern and/or pre-modern context. In a pre-modern context, 'sovereignty' is associated with the ultimate ruler, for example a king or queen. This was also the beginning of Foucault's (1977) view of sovereignty, where the sovereign held 'sovereign power'. In this sense, the customer is treated as a 'sovereign power' in relation to the service worker. In these contexts, the customer's elevated position of authority and superiority is continually reinforced throughout the service interaction because they hold the power due to their associated hierarchical position. Modern connotations of the term are related to characteristics such as independence and autonomy; individuals are seen as "autonomous, private owners, of themselves and their property" (Korczynski & Ott, 2004:583). Customers make autonomous decisions, independent of the state, though, the state still exists but in a supervisory capacity. Both of these definitions are implied in the managerial process of 'the enchanting myth of customer sovereignty.'

The consumer's position of 'sovereignty' however, is seen by Korczynski & Ott (2004) to be a myth created by capitalism to bureaucratise consumption. Taking this into account, the customer-orientated bureaucracy may not be as customer orientated as consumers are led to believe; resulting in potentially negative consequences when the illusion fades; "customers find themselves wooed by the enchanting myth of customer sovereignty, only to periodically, and systematically, meet disillusionment" (Korczynski, 2002:202-203).

Emphasis on the 'sovereign customer' is acute in the provision of services; yet, there are few studies, within the field of sociology and organisational behaviour that have included the voice of the consumer in their research (exceptions include Tolich, 1993; Bolton & Houlihan, 2005). In support of such a relational view of the service encounter, a recent trend in critical literature has called for the voice of the customer or 'service-recipient,' to be integrated into labour process theory within the service sector (Leidner, 1993; Ackroyd & Thompson, 1995; Gabriel, 2002; Korczynski & Ott, 2004; Rosenthal, 2004).

Bolton & Houlihan (2005) emphasise the role of the customer, in an attempt to 'reinterpret customer service interaction as a *human relationship*' (Bolton & Houlihan, 2005:685 emphasis in original). Collecting data from both a random sample of customers and from a participant observation methodology in a call-centre they

conclude that customers should be conceptualised in multiple ways, and should not be represented, as they so often have been, as one-dimensional actors (Hochschild, 1983; Korczynski, 2000), whom are, at best, both a “disparaging audience and management spy (du Gay & Salaman, 1992; Rosenthal et al., 2001)” (Bolton & Houlihan, 2005:687) [see also Tolich, 1993 for customers as control mechanisms]. Bolton & Houlihan (2005), then, conceptualise the customer in three ways:

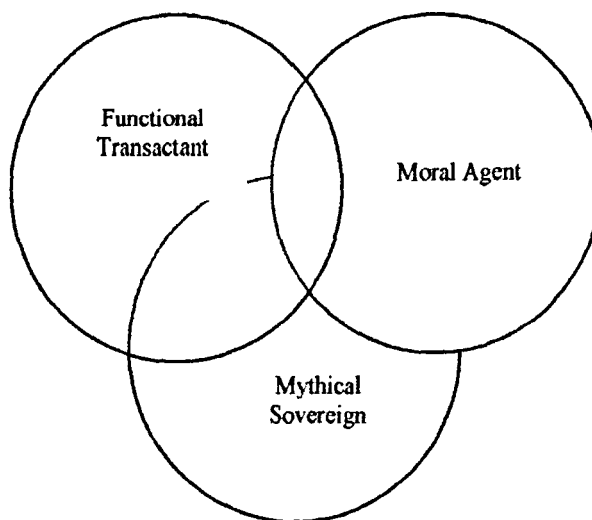
...Customers can be seen as *'mythical sovereigns'* who seek to exercise their perceived right to demand not just service, but servitude from service providers, but they can also be understood as *'functional transactants'* who, especially within the limits of interaction offered by call centres, want to carry out a transaction in the simplest manner possible and, in addition, as *'moral agents'* who fully engage with service providers, recognizing that service providers and customers are economic and social actors and that customer interaction is a socially relevant activity.

(Bolton & Houlihan, 2005:686 emphases in original)

Bolton & Houlihan (2007) present the relationship between these conceptualisations of the customer in a 'new typology' (see Figure 1), which shows the customer as 'mythical sovereign', 'functional transactant' and 'moral agent'. These discourses are not distinct unitary categories instead they overlap, as customers can be various combinations of these conceptualisations at any one time. For example, customers may uphold their role as 'sovereign' and expect 'servitude', or at least quality service from front-line service workers yet this may occur in routine service interactions, where speed and efficiency is demanded.



**Figure 1: A new typology of re-presenting customer service**



(Bolton & Houlihan, 2005:692)

As a critique to Korczynski & Ott's (2004) notion of the 'enchanted myth of consumer sovereignty,' Bolton & Houlihan (2005) argue that in fact the 'sovereign customer' is more accurately conceptualised as 'mythical sovereign'. The customers in their research, along with the call centre workers, understand the service interaction as a 'façade' in which customer sovereignty is indeed mythical; "despite the powerful discourse of enterprise, neither producers nor consumers believe in the myth" (Bolton & Houlihan, 2005:698). Alternatively, it can be argued that customers are 'victims' of the labour process, though Bolton & Houlihan counter that even in such cases where customers are "scrunched and mauled into compliance with a mechanized notion of what it is they need" (2005:698), they are not without agency.

What is clear within the contemporary labour process, or service interaction literature, is the importance that is now placed on the emotional 'climate' of the service interaction. "...Labour-power, rather than being characterised as a 'commodified aspect of human beings', can in fact be treated as a produced commodity" (Harvie, 2005:159). In other words, the demands made on front-line service workers to manage their emotions in order to create and sustain the 'enchanted myth of consumer sovereignty' (Korczynski & Ott, 2004) can no longer be viewed as 'unproductive labour' but instead should be viewed as a 'commodity', that constitutes a form of 'labour-power' in its own right.

In his book *Postemotional Society*, Mestovic (1997) discusses wider sociological implications of 'enchantment' arguing that society has been bombarded with 'emotional' imagery and emotional discourse to the extent that its impact has been diluted. The traumatic images and reports broadcast every day on television and in newspapers have led society to 'fictionalise' their meaning. In other words, people have become used to seeing death and destruction, pain and anguish, so they no longer have an emotional attachment to those images. The popularity of violent video games and music videos are seen by Mestovic (1997) to heighten postemotionality, as young children and adults battle it out, side by side, in virtual tournaments that encourage killing and mass destruction.

Applying this critique to organisations, workers are required to engage in 'emotional' service interactions, however, the way these emotions are interpreted by consumers and workers alike, can be seen as being postemotional. In other words, the consumer is under no illusion that the 'Have a Nice Day' they have just received from the checkout girl is likely to be genuine. Yet, the irony is that, although the checkout girl may have to perform such a tedious ritual a thousand times a day, it does not mean that at least some of those emotional performances are authentic displays of happiness (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1989).

'Hyperreality' characterises the way consciousness determines truth from fantasy. In a state of 'hyperreality', fantasy often becomes reality. For Baudrillard (1998), societal culture, specifically in the industrialised 'West', has become a consumer society, where goods and services are consumed, not necessarily for their use-value, but for their 'sign value.' Brand names come to make up part of an individual's identity as consumer products such as clothes, sports equipment, vehicles and personal services are all 'branded' to indicate to self and others a 'sign-value' associated with that product. In a state of hyper-reality, then, consciousness is detached from real emotional reactions and sentiments; instead, they are replaced with 'artificial simulations' of reality. Ironically, in the state of postemotionality the emphasis placed on emotionality is significant. Personalities, characters, and smiles are commodified and used as capital within the labour process. As a consequence, emotion management, or self-regulation, has been argued to be a 'skill' (Bolton, 2005; Martinez-Pons, 2000), so much so, that in addition to intelligence and knowledge specific to occupational roles, employers are seeking to determine a candidate's 'emotional intelligence'.

### Emotional Intelligence

Salovey & Mayer (1990) are said to have coined the term, but it was Goleman's (1996) book, *Emotional Intelligence* that popularised the concept. Goleman (1996) defines emotional intelligence as "...the interpersonal competencies of knowing one's emotions, managing emotions, motivating oneself, and the interpersonal competences of recognizing emotions in others and handling relationships" (1996:42). Fineman's (2000) highly critical evaluation of emotional intelligence, as both a theoretical concept and a management tool, labelled its popularity an 'emerging management fad' (2000:102), but now over a decade from its debut on the public stage, emotional intelligence continues to occupy both academic and business attention.

Emotional intelligence presents emotions as a commodity to be traded, as can be inferred from Cooper and Sawaf's definition:

Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of *emotions* as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence.

(Cooper & Sawaf, 1997:xiii, emphasis in original)

Goleman (1996) presents this learnable competence as a process that will strip the 'irrationality' from emotionality, thereby enhancing "managers' 'intelligent', rational control" (Fineman, 2000:105). The rhetoric of a quantifiable measure of something that has always been an unpredictable, uncontrollable variable within the workplace, has appealed to consultants and business professionals alike. As Fineman (2004:721) points out "their aim is to make the inchoate tangible through quantification". However, Fineman (2004) sees this as an example of the growing desire to commodify complex elements of affective life.

In the context of labour process theory, the term 'emotional intelligence' is the unification of two dichotomous genres: emotion (irrational, or non-rational) and intelligence (rational, quantifiable). Intelligence quotients (IQ) have long been mainly calculated to measure the cognitive abilities of the rational mind. The term 'IQ' is widely used and understood, most people know their 'IQ' and for many years 'IQ' structured the education system<sup>6</sup>. However in the postmodern era, where organisational boundaries have expanded to encapsulate and control emotional sensitivity and empathy, the emotional quotient (EQ) has become increasingly salient. The ability to successfully read and manage emotions has become a necessary component of the new "working skills 'toolkit'" (Hughes, 2005: 605).

A standard measure of emotional intelligence has yet to be agreed on, partly because a common definition of the construct has remained elusive and partly due to the multifaceted nature of emotional ability and emotional skill. Thus, there are a number of different EI tests (examples include Mayer-Salovey-Caruso's (1990) MSCEIT and Bar-On's (1997) EQ-i) each designed to give alternative quantitative measures of an individual's emotional intelligence. The various Emotional Quotients are derived from responses to surveys and questionnaires. The responses are then given a numeric weighting, often in a Likert Scale format. Results are presented in rational formats such as grids, charts, and sub-scales, to enhance the 'scientific' rhetoric that gives emotional intelligence its credibility in the eyes of managers.

Proponents of emotional intelligence advocate rational control over the emotions, by presenting a plausible underlying assumption that "emotions and cognitions often work in tandem, or intertwine, and that is a better process than exclusively cognitive formulations" (Fineman, 2000:108). Emotional intelligence fosters the process through which emotions can be commodified and harnessed to become productive and no longer an unpredictable anomaly within the organisational context. As Fineman (2004:110) states, "emotional intelligence promises a form of rationality and control by the actor that is an illusory one or, more pointedly, a fake."

Polarised views on the validity of the emotional intelligence construct are dependent on epistemological positions. This can be illustrated by two direct quotations:

Emotion's potential multifacetedness suggests that any one approach to understanding 'it' will be just that – one approach. It is necessarily partial, meaningful only in terms of the philosophy that informs it, the medium through which it is conveyed and the receiving audience.

(Fineman, 2004:721)

In order to study 'subjective well-being' (happiness, life satisfaction, the experience of pleasure and fulfilment) scientifically, we must be able to measure it. The simplest method is to ask people on surveys how happy and satisfied they are.

(Diener, 2001:1, cited in Fineman, 2004:721)

Oppositional views such as these have tended to manifest in a disciplinary debate. The emphasis emotional intelligence places on the numeric evaluation of individual's emotional competences have attracted much criticism from the field of sociology (Fineman, 2004). This has stemmed, primarily, from the political and ethical

connotations associated with the measure. EQs (emotional quotient) determine whether individuals are emotionally competent or not, however, just as IQ has served to stigmatise and label certain social groups, the emotional intelligence measure also has the capability of creating anxieties and social labels for individuals at either end of the EQ scale.

Its mixed, often vague measures, are employed as a 'discourse technology' (Fairclough, 1989), where appropriated social scientific, or quasi-scientific, knowledge is used to powerfully disseminate a particular creed about emotions... Yet the moral dice are loaded when the very technique or concept creates distinctions that immediately relegate, with apparent force and authority, some people to a less worthy or less 'competent' personal condition.

(Fineman, 2000:109)

Emotional intelligence has itself become a commodity. Salovey & Mayer (1990) introduced the concept in the creative research-based clinical journal, *Imagination, Cognition and Personality*, yet it was Daniel Goleman (1996), a science journalist, who brought the concept to the attention of those outside the specialist academic field. Since then, organisation and business consultants have commodified the emotional intelligence concept, claiming that it can increase profits, improve customer satisfaction and potentially make 'stars' of managers who develop (or naturally possess) a high EQ.

Despite negative academic appraisals of EQ, certain academic and business communities still value the contribution that emotional intelligence tools claim to offer. The question then becomes, why have these emotion narratives been received so favourably? There are a number of possible reasons for this: firstly, "emotional restraint has become the hallmark of civility" (Fineman, 2000:107) in both the US and the UK, therefore, processes of rationalisation that serve to regulate emotionalism are celebrated (including the growing discourse surrounding the emotional labour construct). Secondly, in today's society emotions and feelings are readily discussed and expressed in public. The media and journalists who seek instant emotional reactions from their work encourage such openness. Testimony to this trend can be found on reality television shows such as *Big Brother*, and chat shows such as *Oprah Winfrey*. Both formats relish an emotional story, exposing the scandal, sorrow, grief and anger of their 'guests', "a commodification of emotion that can be translated into viewer rating figures" (Fineman, 2000:107). Thus, we are supposed to be 'in touch' with our emotions and ready to display them, but we must also be able to control and manage them when required. Mestrovic (1997) sees such hyper-emotionality as a contributing factor to 'postemotionality'.

Coupling these trends with the changing nature of work, emotions are playing an increasingly salient role in the workplace. As emotion seeks new form of social legitimisation (Fineman, 2000), the affective nature of being is revealed in new ways, and the means by which to commodify it for productive ends is highly prized.

Despite debate, it is important to acknowledge the development of emotional intelligence as a discourse. Such a rapid ascendancy is a sign of workplace shifts taking place within contemporary organisations. Hughes (2005) argues that emotional intelligence as a 'discrete set of ideas' may not be overly valuable, but the concept should be understood "...as an explicit template of the kinds of behavioural/ emotional characteristics that have more generally come to be championed within particular sectors of the workplace..." (2005: 605). In this sense, character, identity and emotions become commodities to be traded, invested in, improved and manipulated by both individuals and organisations; worker's affects and subjectivities are colonized (Hochschild, 1983; Grugulis et al, 2000; Putnam & Mumby, 1993; Hughes, 2005) by extended control strategies.

### *Service with a smile?*

Not all discussions of the labour process reach such pessimistic conclusions, as those described in the previous section. Leidner's (1993) discussion of the labour process in the service sector recontextualises labour process theory in terms of 'commodification', 'routinization' and 'standardization' by considering the subjective experience of service work. For Leidner, work conducted within the service sector is controlled by much of the same rationalising technologies as any other, yet, the difference lies in the nature of service work. For Rosenthal (2004), and many others, Braverman's conceptualisation of service work, as an extension to the work carried out on the production line, fails to reflect the complex relational character of service work.

The service encounter is not open to control in the same way as Schmidt's<sup>7</sup> (Taylor, 1911) physical labour power; instead people are the raw materials of the labour process and thus add a dimension of unpredictability. As Ritzer (1996) pointed out, the abstract ideal of McDonaldization would be to remove all non-standardised variables, and replace them with predictable, controllable, efficient and quantifiable non-human technologies. However, in 'interactive service work' (Leidner, 1993), that is "jobs that

require workers to interact directly with customers or clients” (1993:1) such a goal is almost unachievable through the use of traditional capitalist technologies.

Contemporary service work, then, has two distinct features; firstly the presence of the ‘service-recipient’ (Leidner, 1993) means that production and consumption occur simultaneously, examples can be taken from the retail sector and on-board flights. For Korczynski, the importance of the service interaction lies in the fact that “...in such interactions the usually temporally, spatially and culturally separate spheres of production and consumption become intertwined” (2005:290). In the increasingly competitive service market, service quality is based on upholding ‘customer sovereignty’ (Du Gay & Salaman, 1992) or, as Korczynski & Ott (2004:580) would prefer, promoting “the consumption of the enchanting myth of customer sovereignty<sup>8</sup>”. Here, the ascribed ‘quality’ of the service interaction, for both the customer and the service worker, derives from subjective experience. Secondly, the worker must balance a third set of expectations and demands from the customer whilst conducting the service interaction (Rosenthal, 2004). Triadic contentions between the capitalist’s desire to control more, the alienated worker’s desire to resist, and the unpredictability of the customer, are the subject of service interaction literature (Hochschild, 1983; du Gay and Salaman, 1992; Leidner, 1993; Korczynski, 2000, 2005; Korczynski & Ott, 2004).

From a capitalist perspective interactive service work requires the routinization and commodification of subjectivity, as well as physicality (Pettinger, 2006). Yet the managerial prerogative of standardization, routinization and control in the service sector must not be overstated, as Fuller and Smith (1991:3) point out:

Quality service requires that workers rely on inner arsenals of affective and interpersonal skills, capabilities which cannot be successfully codified, standardized, or dissected into discrete components and set forth in a company handbook.

However, this does not prevent organisations from utilising control and compliance technologies to ensure that service workers adhere to specified rules and norms prescribed to their roles. Such ‘panoptic’ technologies include the use of CCTV, encouraging the public to report ‘bad service’, and mystery shoppers, amongst others. Bentham originally designed the panopticon, a surveillance technology for monitoring and controlling prisoners. The idea was to harness a power that was both visible, yet unverifiable. He did this by designing a prison centred around a tall observation tower so the “inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon” (Foucault, 1977:201). However, despite this surveillance

being visible, it was also unverifiable for the “inmate must never know whether he is being looked at, at any one moment; but he must be sure that he may always be so” (Foucault, 1977:201). In essence, the panopticon places the constraints of power onto the subject. The visibility coupled with the unverifiability leads the subject to play both the roles of the surveyor and the surveyed thus becoming the “principle of his own subjection” (Foucault, 1977:203) in an ‘emancipatory utopia’ (Foucault, 1977:203).

Organisations employ such techniques, particularly in the service sector where it is more problematic to control individual service interactions and to exercise control over individual affect. Panopties of sophisticated surveillance methods monitor worker behaviour, effectively through a process of subjectification. More subtle forms of normative control such as bonus and incentive schemes, and a deeply embedded corporate culture, are also examples of subjectification. By nurturing a corporate culture organisations aim to ensure that workers adopt the values, beliefs and objectives of the organisation, thereby reducing the likelihood of resistance. In this way, there is a ‘transmutation’ (Hochschild, 1983) of an individual’s cognition (and in the most successful cases their emotional system too) towards work and the organisation. In so doing the organisation inscribes the power relation onto the individuals who will then ‘discipline’ themselves accordingly.

Lazzarato (1996) and Hardt & Negri (2001), however, would argue that such direct subjugation no longer constitutes the principle relationship between workers and capital in a post-modern economy. Instead a

...polymorphous self-employed autonomous work has emerged as the dominant form, a kind of ‘intellectual worker’ who is him or herself an entrepreneur, inserted within a market that is constantly shifting and within networks that are changeable in time and space

(Nunes, 2007:184-185 footnote).

Thus, as the nature of labour changes so too do capitalist controls. Gabriel (2005) argues that a ‘glass cage of total exposure’ has replaced Weber’s ‘iron cage of rationality’. Drawing on Foucault’s (1977) metaphor of the panopticon, capitalist controls seek to expose and survey behaviours, values and emotions through a reflexive process of subjectification.

## **Subjectivity**



The distinctive quality of service work requires a complex and sensitive account of the subjectivity and agency of front-line staff. As Nunes (2007) describes above they can no longer be assumed to be defenceless, burnt-out, emotionally exhausted, or, worse, docile and compliant to the capitalist regime (Hochschild, 1983; Frost, 2003). Marx's early work on alienation went some way in theorising the role of the subject, however, his main focus was the objective study of political economy. Blauner (1964), amongst others, critiques the objective structuralist nature of Marxism (especially late Marxism), calling for a subjective re-evaluation of labour process theory (Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990; Thompson, 1990).

Believing Braverman's dismissal of subjectivity to be far too flippant, because even "...Marx acknowledged the importance of the production of relations within a capitalist society" (1985:37), Burawoy's (1985) objective was to show how gaining an understanding of capitalist control was dependent on a consideration of both the objective and subjective components of work, not only independently but as a single concept without distinction. Burawoy (1979) considers labour process theory as lacking an explanation for the way in which capitalist production processes are able to continually extract increasing volumes of surplus whilst obscuring the exploitative control over labour. In contrast to Braverman's (1974) theorising, Burawoy (1979) argues that it is the relaxation of managerial control that allows workers to 'self-organise' whilst they continue to sustain production levels. As Knights (1990:310) explains, "what guarantees the securing, whilst obscuring, of the production of surplus value is absorption in the game and the sense of autonomy and choice that labour experiences in playing it." In this sense, then, 'game-playing' is interpreted as compensation for the dehumanisation caused by the extraction of increasing levels of surplus value. Workers are enhancing their own self-worth by meeting targets and achieving bonuses, thereby providing a competent performance of their social-identity.

It is no longer acceptable to separate the subjective experience of work from the objective products of labour (Knights, 1990; Thompson, 1990; Willmott, 1990), especially when workers identities and personalities are being actively managed or normatively influenced on a daily basis. Wright Mills (1953) alludes to the way in which work process intertwine with the subjective experience of life:

While the white-collar worker has no articulate philosophy of work, his feelings about it and his experiences of it influence his satisfactions and frustrations, the whole tone of his life. Whatever the effects of his work, known to him or not, they are the net results of the work as an activity, plus the meanings he brings to it, plus the views that others hold of it.

(Wright Mills, 1953:215)

Such an appreciation of subjectivity stems from one of Marx's most fundamental premises, that the "labour process is, first of all, a process between man and nature, a process by which man, through his own actions, mediates, regulates and controls the metabolism between himself and nature" (Marx, 1976:283, cited in Willmott, 1990:337).

As Knights argues "...theoretical constructions...reduce the complexity of social life into a polarisation..." (Knights, 1990:297). In the case of labour process theory this polarisation presents the creative autonomy of voluntary subjects struggling against the oppressive determinism of objective capitalist structures. Building on Cressey & MacInnes' (1980) thesis on the dialectical nature of the labour process, Knights (1990) attempts to transcend the agency-structure dualism, by offering a Foucauldian view on the role of subjectivity and power.

Foucault views the subject as the product of a plurality of power-knowledge strategies and mechanisms of surveillance. Such a perspective contrasts with Marx, who focuses on the exploitation of labour through capital's extraction of surplus value, because his conceptualisation of the role of the subject is dependant upon subjugation. As Knights (1990) points out, although Foucault does not explicate this relationship fully, he does state that modern technologies of power force individuals back in on themselves, so that they become "tied to [their] own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge" (1982:212). Extending this, Knights suggests that from a Foucauldian perspective subjugation occurs:

...where the freedom of a subject is directed narrowly, and in a self-disciplined fashion, towards practices which may be seen or thought to secure the acknowledgement, recognition and confirmation of self by significant others.

(Knights, 1990:319).

According to Foucault, subjects constantly position themselves to reproduce the power-knowledge structure, and therefore maintain a stable self-identity. Such power-knowledge regimes produce subjects and are, therefore, embraced by them. Theorising of this kind goes some way in explaining Roy's (1952, 1953, 1954), and later Burawoy's (1979), concept of 'making-out', where labour went above and beyond their duty to capitalist regimes of power; disciplining and motivating themselves to optimise surplus value for the capitalist. From a determinist perspective, they were 'advancing

their own dehumanisation' (Burawoy, 1981:90), yet Foucault would argue, along with social identity theorists, that they were 'advancing their own humanisation' because they were securing their own self-identity to maintain ontological security. Foucault implicitly suggests that the reproductive character of power serves to weaken resistance against oppressive regimes. It does so by 'pushing individuals back in on themselves' (Knights, 1990) which results in a reflexive evaluation of the self, in terms of the 'other'.

Fromm (1956) argues that such subjugation is paradoxical in essence, as individuals strive for ontological security by pursuing certainty for their self-identity, yet this ultimately lies in the uncontrollable judgements of others. This is seen to have both positive and negative implications:

...positive in freeing us from totalitarian and authoritarian restrictions on human creativity and social purpose; yet negative in simply leading us to subordinate our energies to that which gives us the illusion of security.

(Knights, 1990:322-323)

And more fully:

In effect, the sense of ourselves becomes so tied to the continuous participation in – and reproduction of – a set of practices...that any potential disruption is defined not just as a change in behaviour but as a threat to our very identity. Caught in the double-bind of the desire for individual independence and the fear of isolation – both of which are an effect of, or desire from, the strategies of liberal power regimes that constitute the modern subject – individuals seek private success and institutional power as an illusory solution to the freedom problem.

(Knights, 1990:325-326)

The ontological subject/object dualism that plagued labour process theory (Braverman, 1974) has been challenged in the post-Braverman debate (Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990; Knights, 2000-2001). The works of Knights and Willmott have called for a nondualistic analysis of labour process theory (Knights, 1990; Willmott, 1990) one that problematizes the dualistic analytical representations of the "objects to which they refer" (Knights, 2000-2001:70). Knights (2000-2001) has argued that the acceptance of such an ontological dualism has derived out of a 'comparative comfort in thinking in terms of binary oppositions' (Knights, 2000-2001:70). However, such comfort has obscured the need to problematise the dualism and thereby hidden the "desire to secure the self through the construction of a set of orderly representations of social reality" (Knights, 2000-2001:70). Thus, a nondualistic consideration of subjectivity in the

reproduction of the capitalist regime offers an alternative conclusion to that of the individual being rendered docile and manageable (Foucault, 1982).

### **An Immaterial Labour Process...**

The *worker* who performs *productive work* is *productive* and the work he performs is productive if it directly creates *surplus value* i.e. if it valorizes capital (Marx, 1976: 1039 emphasis in original)

This prescriptive definition left little room for debate at a time when labour power referred predominantly to physical labour capacity. Since managerial control has entered the 'private spheres' of labour capital, the debate over work classified as productive and unproductive has begun to develop. Is the warm smile of a receptionist productive or unproductive work? Is it even work at all?

For Marx, the answer would lie in the production of surplus value, but the valorisation of a smile or friendly hello is not easily quantifiable, though this is not to say that it does not hold value in and of itself. It could be argued that the emphasis now placed on 'service interactions' between customers and employees is a sign of the growing value that capitalism places on such traditionally 'unproductive' forms of labour. However, service sector jobs tend to be characterised by low pay (Mastracci et al, 2006; Guy & Newman, 2004).

To accommodate the diversity of work in the contemporary labour market, a more general definition of 'productive labour' has been offered. Smith (1996:87 cited in Harvie 2005:160) suggests that in "present-day society productive labour can have no other meaning but production under the domination of capital." Fortunati (2007), however, disagrees; taking a feminist perspective, she argues that domestic labour, as immaterial labour, would in Marx's terms be seen as unproductive labour because it does not produce capital, goods or material wealth (Marx, 1961). However, she sees domestic labour as 'productive' because it produces and/or reproduces "the commodity most precious for capital, the labour force" (Fortunati, 2007:145). Such an argument raises a fundamental discussion as to the definition of labour itself, particularly for feminist writers (such as Dalla Costa & James, 1972; Pringle, 1988). By the term 'labour', do we mean to imply only labour that is employed within the capitalist process, identified most clearly as 'waged labour'? For Hardt & Negri (2001:32), capital can never capture the whole of human existence but by referring to all human activity as 'labour' implies that human action is controlled by the capitalist regime. "In

the biopolitical sphere, life is made to work for production and production is made to work for life” (Hardt & Negri, 2001:32).

Taking a historical-political view of the changes in the technical and subjective-political composition of society, Hardt & Negri (2001) build on Lazzarato’s (1996) work to offer an alternative to the productive-unproductive dichotomy. They propose that society has moved into a postmodern, post-Fordist or informatized era. Such paradigmatic shifts are characterised by changes to the dominant industrial sector within society. Just as the domination of agriculture gave way to the manufacturing sector in a process of modernization, now we are seeing the subordination of manufacturing to service and information industries. This is not to say there has been, or will be, a disappearance of the agricultural and manufacturing sectors, instead, their position within the employment hierarchy has diminished, but more significantly the nature of agriculture and manufacturing has been transformed.

For Hardt & Negri (2001:281) quantitative attempts to identify shifts in the industrial paradigm (Castells & Aoyama, 1994) go some way in explaining the progression of this paradigm shift, yet they fail to capture the qualitative transformation (Trott, 2007). For example, when agriculture was modernised, industrial machinery was integrated into agricultural practices. In effect, “when agriculture was modernized as industry, the farm progressively became a factory, with all of the factory’s discipline, technology, wage relations, and so forth. Agriculture was modernised as industry” (Hardt & Negri, 2001:284). Such a process had significant effects on society as a whole, society became industrialised “even to the point of transforming human relations and human nature” (2001:284).

According to Hardt & Negri (2001:285), ‘*modernisation has come to an end*’, in its place stands a period of postmodernisation, or informatization. This paradigmatic shift is characterised by a migration of labour from the industrial sector to the tertiary industries. The rapid development of the service sector has had considerable effects on the kind of labour-power that is now required by capitalist production regimes, as Hardt & Negri (2001) explain:

The jobs for the most part are highly mobile and involve flexible skills. More important, they are characterised in general by the central role played by knowledge, information, affect and communication.

(Hardt & Negri, 2001:285).

The nature of these paradigmatic shifts, in economic and societal developments, means we are not only seeing an accelerated growth rate of service occupations but also a transformation in the nature of manufacturing industries. In short, “Treat manufacturing as a service” (Bar, 1995:56 cited in Hardt & Negri, 2001:286). Similar to the effects of modernization, postmodernization will also have ramifications for society. As Trott (2007:208) describes, “industrial labour lost its hegemony and immaterial labour came to the fore, pulling, as industrial labour had done before it, other forms of labour and society into its ‘vortex’ (Hardt & Negri, 2001:107)”.

Most interestingly it is shaping the nature of work, organisational forms and relationships within the workplace. In a society where virtual interaction is commonplace and modern management recommends a ‘seven-day weekend’ (Semler, 2003) it is no longer adequate to classify labour as productive or unproductive. Hardt & Negri (2001) prefer an alternative dichotomy that reflects the changing nature of labour, that being material and immaterial. They argue that the immaterial labour paradigm has created a “new social reality” to that of Marx’s era, and thus a new theoretical framework is required to explain this (Trott, 2007).

Informatization’s central point of reference is the impact information and communication technology has had on the structural composition of working practices and, consequently, on the nature of labour involved in those practices. There has been a shift from modernist Fordism in manufacturing to postmodern Toyotism, or post-Fordism, where there is faster communication and response between production and consumption. Such terms as post-Fordist and Toyotism, describe the “new configurations of capitalist social relations” (Wright, 2007:274), “the framework within which the relationship between labour and capital is constituted” (2007:274).

Fordism functioned on the premise that the market was production led; Henry Ford was not concerned about meeting consumer demand, because the market wanted whatever he built. The market wanted mass standardization and therefore the relationship between production and consumption was of little concern. However, with Toyotism, the opposite is true; success demands a close relationship between production and consumption. The just-in-time methods of manufacturing epitomize the Toyotist mode of production, where factories hold little stock and rely on rapid communications systems to relay information regarding the consumer market’s demands that will determine production. As Hardt & Negri (2001) point out, such a model comparison

aids in understanding the industrial context within which communication and information have come to play a central role.

“One might say that instrumental action and communicative action have become intimately interwoven in the informationalized industrial process...” (Hardt & Negri, 2001: 290), a process which entails an intensification of labour as jobs become more flexible and are expected to encompass elements that were previously considered to be outside their scope in order to achieve high levels of productivity. Such trends are most acute within the service sector, where production and consumption occur simultaneously, and the consumer plays an immanent role within the interaction. For Hardt & Negri (2001:290 emphasis added), “since the production of services results in no material and durable good, we define the labour involved in this production as *immaterial labor* – that is, *labor that produces an immaterial good*, such as a service, a cultural product, knowledge, or communication.” Importantly, it is not the labour itself, which is immaterial, but the product that it produces. Here less tangible dimensions of the work are incorporated into performance leading to an emphasis on style or appearance and form and the aestheticization of labour in general. This is communicated more clearly in Lazzarato’s (1996) definition of immaterial labour, as he states, “immaterial labour...is defined as the labour that produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity” (1996:132). According to Lazzarato (1996: 138):

Immaterial labour finds itself at the crossroads (or rather, it is the interface) of a new relationship between production and consumption. The activation of both productive cooperation and the social relationship with the consumer is materialized within and by the process of communication.

In his initial presentation of immaterial labour, Lazzarato (1996) considered the effects of this new form of labour upon the individual worker and upon society. Post-Fordist management was seen to require the “ ‘workers soul to become part of the factory.’ The worker’s personality and subjectivity have to be made susceptible to organisation and command” (Lazzarato, 1996:133). In this sense, workers are no longer under the direct control of management, but instead are given a decision-making capacity over the investment of subjectivity and affect. Thus, workers are no-longer cogs in the machine of production but are ‘active agents’. Management, therefore, have to control individual subjectivities as oppose to commanding labour power.

For Lazzarato (1996), one of the raw materials of the immaterial labour process is subjectivity. He sees this as posing a theoretical challenge, as subjectivity, as a concept, has been, in general, confined to the thinking of post-structuralist French philosophers,

yet within a post-Fordist societal model, subjectivity needs to be considered as an economic resource:

The fact that immaterial labour produces subjectivity and economic value at the same time demonstrates how capitalist production has invaded our lives and has broken down all the oppositions among economy, power and knowledge. The process of social communication (and its principle content, the production of subjectivity) becomes here directly productive because in a certain way it “produces” production.

(Lazzarato, 1996:142)

In their book *Empire*, Hardt & Negri (2001) proceed to explicate immaterial labour more fully, by identifying three specific forms:

- a) *informating the production process*: This represents the relationship between machine and human labour, there is an indirect relationship between the product and the labour producing the product, pushing buttons on graphical user interfaces stands in the place of traditional skills or machine operation, acting to further abstract labour power from the product of its labour. In short manufacturing has become a service.
- b) *analytic or symbolic labour*: This category is made up of two forms of labour both of which are knowledge-based. The first involves work based on creativity and intelligence, examples include consultants, analysts and programmers; the second is the more mundane or routinized tasks, for example data entry, call-centre work.
- c) *the production and manipulation of affect or affective labour*: This is that work which involves the use of the body and the emotions in human interactions, either virtual or actual.

### *The Nature of Affect*

In an early paper, Hardt stated that “affective labour is itself and directly the constitution of communities and collective subjectivities” (1999:89)<sup>9</sup>. From a Foucauldian perspective, affective labour can be thought of as producing biopower (Foucault, 1976), because “immaterial labour produces first and foremost a social relation” (Lazzarato, 1996:142).

Biopower is the power of the creation of life; it is the production of collective subjectivities, sociality, and society itself. The focus on affects and the networks of the production of affects reveals these processes of social constitution. What is created in the networks of affective labour is a form-of-life.

(Hardt, 1999:98)



Foucault's discussion of biopower considers the characteristic privilege of sovereign power as the right to rule over life and death; the fathers right to 'dispose' of his slave's and children's lives because he had given them life and therefore had the right to take it back. Biopower is considered as "the power to manage life" (Hardt, 1999:98), just as Foucault demonstrated in the *History of Sexuality*, the narrative discourse that surrounds sex and sexuality has the power to manage 'life'. Extending such a notion, Hardt & Negri consider immaterial labour to be yet another effect of biopower in the era of postmodernisation, arguing that use-value and the production of capitalism is central to the management and control of populations. However, Trott (2007) points out that Hardt & Negri's (2004) use of the term 'biopolitical production' is an inversion of Foucault's concept of biopower. As previously discussed Foucault used the term biopower to refer to power strategies used to regulate the population. However, Hardt & Negri (2004) use 'biopolitical production' to describe the 'potential power' (Trott, 2007:211) of an informatized society.

Biopower stands above society, transcendent as a sovereign authority and imposes its order. Biopolitical production, in contrast, is immanent to society and creates social relationships and forms through collective labour.

(Hardt & Negri, 2004:94-95)

As Hardt & Negri (2001:294) explain, "*cooperation is completely immanent to the labouring activity itself*". Immaterial labour can be seen as having the ability to valorise itself, as "brains and bodies still need others to produce value, but the others they need are not necessarily provided by capital and its capacities to orchestrate production" (Hardt & Negri, 2001:294), therefore it can be performed outside of the confines of capitalist production, thus, it seems "to provide the potential for a kind of spontaneous and elementary communism" (Hardt & Negri, 2001:294). Trott (2007) summarises:

...biopolitical production refers to a situation in which mechanisms of cooperation, communication and collaboration have become contained within labour itself, presenting new opportunities for economic self-management and political and social self-organisation.

(Trott, 2007:211 paraphrasing Hardt & Negri, 2004:336)

Immaterial labour moves beyond the confines of capitalism to engage in the production and reproduction of society (Hardt & Negri, 2004). As Nunes (2007:184) explicates:

Biopolitical production has the common as both its ground – the general human capacity to affect and be affected, to communicate, to cooperate, to reproduce and innovate; and social relations themselves, symbolic and affective codes etc. – and its results: it produces new being i.e., new subjectivities, new enunciations, new forms of social life.

However, this has not stopped capitalism from attempting to colonize and standardise immaterial labour processes, it has in fact proved to be a stimulus for commodification. The colonization of immaterial labour processes, of which affective labour processes are a part, could then be argued to reinforce Marx and Braverman's concerns over the homogenisation of work and the unification of the social class. Virno (1996) argues that the intensified domination of the post-Fordist production process capitalises on the emotional tonality of fear, opportunism and cynicism to engender a culture of adaptability, flexibility and compliance. Qualities that are products of socialisation, embedded and learnt outside of the workplace, are commodified and valued as part of the immateriality of the labour process:

Fears of particular dangers, if only virtual ones, haunt the workday like a mood that cannot be escaped. This fear, however, is transformed into an operational requirement, a special tool of the trade. Insecurity about one's place during periodic innovation, fear of losing recently gained privileges, and anxiety over being 'left behind' translate into flexibility, adaptability, and a readiness to reconfigure oneself.

(Virno, 1996:16)

Considering affective labour as part of the immaterial labour thesis (Lazzarato 1996; Hardt & Negri, 2001) within the context of the restaurant, Dowling (2007) argues that affective labour cannot be seen as a signifier of 'elementary communism,' for the presence of capitalism actively alters the affective nature of relationships within the work context. Using participant observation techniques, Dowling (2007) offers a reflexive account of her experiences working as a waitress for a high-end restaurant. She claims "the active involvement of capital fundamentally changed the nature of my relationship with the people who were my guests" (2007:125). She cites the following example to illustrate her point:

Firstly, the form of community that was created between the guest and myself was an unequal one in which I was not simply under command to relate to other people in a way that I would anyway whether the capital relation existed or not, but one in which precisely because of the capital relation, I had to behave towards my guests in a particular way, namely one which involved me pandering to their needs and desires so that the company could make its profit.

(Dowling, 2007:125)

Dowling's (2007) point, then, is that immaterial labour processes are colonised and standardised by capitalist regimes, as the ultimate goal is to maximise profits by extracting the optimal amount of surplus value, be that material or immaterial. Thus, "it is important to understand the nuanced ways in which affective labour interacts with capital and the wage relation..." (Dowling, 2007:126).

Baudrillard's theses on the *Consumer Society* and the *The Ideological Genesis of Needs* (1969) offers an alternative perspective on the subtler ways in which both immaterial and material labour subjectivities are colonised by the capitalist regime through the individual's pursuit of self-validation via consumption and symbolic accumulation.

### **Production or Consumption?**

Baudrillard's (1969[2000]) text on society's desire to consume was one of the first to consider the role of consumption within a postmodern capitalist society. For Baudrillard, society is socialised into consumption via capitalist manipulation, in this sense humans are groomed for their role as mass consumers by the media, government and capitalist organisations. Individuals are seen as acting collectively, in a Durkheimian sense, and are therefore open to manipulation and institutionalisation by capitalist consumption. Within this 'consumer society', then, "superfluous consumption allows people and society to feel that they exist" (Baudrillard, 1998: 5), just as hard work was admired and respected by modernism, now society worships 'consumption idols' such as film stars and footballers, in a state of 'hyperreality'.

Utilising Levi-Strauss' symbolism, Baudrillard presents consumption as a symbolic language. In this sense, the commodity being consumed is not important; instead the emphasis is placed on the sign-value the commodity holds. "Commodities are no longer defined by their use value but what they signify. And what they signify is defined not by what they do, but by their relationship to the entire system of commodities and signs" (Ritzer's introduction to Baudrillard, 1998:7).

Baudrillard moves beyond Marxism, for he sees consumerism as the nature of society and not a phenomenon created by agential motivations. Therefore, consumption is more of a Durkheimian social fact that is external to individuals; it works on them not through them, as a system of collective signs that are utilised as a language of communication. Capitalism is seen to exploit the insatiable appetites of consumers in order to maximize surplus value, by creating new social hierarchies, yet for Baudrillard at least, this hunger will never be satisfied, because "consumption, as a new tribal myth, has become the morality of our present world" (Mayer, foreword to Baudrillard 1998:1). Consumption has become a 'new tribal myth' through which agents attempt to secure themselves a position in the social hierarchy, thereby continually reproducing

the dominance of the capitalist political economy. Hardt & Negri eloquently describe the totality of the situation.

The great industrial and financial powers thus produce not only commodities but also subjectivities. They produce agentic subjectivities within the biopolitical context: they produce needs, social relations, bodies, and minds –which is to say, they produce producers. In the biopolitical sphere, life is made to work for production and production is made to work for life. It is a great hive in which the queen bee continuously oversees production and reproduction. The deeper the analysis goes, the more it finds at increasing levels of intensity the interlinking assemblages of interactive relationships.

(Hardt & Negri, 2001:32)

If, therefore, consumption is produced by capitalist society, then so too are the standards that govern the aesthetic. Society produces norms through collective behaviour, thus as Tarde (1902) first postulated, “the value of a commodity was determined partially by the public production of standards of ‘truth, beauty and utility’” (Arvidsson 2006:675). Such a conclusion has a significant effect on the discussion of affective labour, for human interaction must comply with socially desirable norms. Subjecting this to a Foucauldian critique, it could be argued that conceptions of beauty and ‘normality’ are dictated and formulated by subconscious power structures. Thus propelling a continually self-fulfilling cycle of production and consumption.

The relationship between production and consumption is central to the nature of work in contemporary society. Contingent upon human contact, affective labour typifies the mode of work and organisation that dominates the informatized era. Marx himself acknowledged the affective dimension of immaterial labour, in terms of the aesthetic experiences of singers, schoolteachers and other occupations. However at the time, these roles were marginalized and therefore little intellectual attention was spent on further understanding the nature of such work (Arvidsson, 2006). It was ‘feminist’ writers whom first brought attention to the ‘affective’ dimensions of ‘women’s work’ or ‘caring work’ (Dalla Costa & James, 1972; Pringle, 1988; Fortunati, 2007). These writers argue that the emotional and aesthetic elements of what was classed as ‘women’s work’ or ‘domestic work’ are to be considered productive. The rapid acceleration of growth within the service economy in the 1980s, when service ‘professionals’ became the new factory workers in terms of the sociological attention they received (Hochschild, 1983; Leidner, 1993; Ritzer, 1996), helped to fuel debates of the ‘immaterial’.

### **Conclusion: The Immaterial Labour Process**

This chapter has presented a detailed discussion of Marx's ideas of labour under a capitalist regime, explored some of the debates that have shaped labour process theory, discussed the changing nature of work, and concluded with a post-Marxist discussion of immaterial labour.

Braverman's (1974) acknowledgement that mental labour processes were also subject to capitalist control sparked the labour process theory debate in which theorists have sought to explain the dynamic relationship between labour and capitalist control. This chapter sought to trace some of the trends in this debate to explore if and how changes in the nature of labour and work in an informatized society could be explained by traditional labour process theory.

For Burawoy (1979) the fundamental question for labour process theorists was how the capitalist production process continuously extracts increasing volumes of surplus value whilst obscuring exploitative control over labour. As already discussed, Rosenthal (2004:604) offered that "the perfection of management control may reflect nothing less by workers of the awareness of its existence". Similarly, Baudrillard (1969:57) argues that an unconscious social logic is hidden beneath the "consecrated ideals of consumption". For Knights (1990) workers comply with capitalist regimes because they want to promote a competent performance of their social identity. His argument is supported by Foucault's (1982:212) perspective on power and control, in which individuals are tied to their own self-identity by a conscious self-knowledge. In other words, individuals continually position themselves to reproduce power-knowledge structures in order to maintain a stable self-identity. By complying with the dominant social order they are able to secure their own humanisation, a process Burawoy (1981) saw as one that 'advanced their own dehumanisation'. Thus, the reproductive character of power serves to weaken resistance against oppressive regimes.

As the nature of labour changes and the traditionally material labour process becomes immaterial, subjectivity becomes an economic resource. The immaterial labour process moves beyond capitalism as it engages in the production and reproduction of society. Such a process involves the commodification, either directly or indirectly, of more than just physical labour power. Post-modern organisations seek to valorise emotions, bodies and affect in an attempt to create an enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty. How this is achieved and at what cost is likely to be the focus of future research in this area.

It was important to consider labour process theory and the post-Marxist immaterial labour debate as the Marxist origins of emotional labour have shaped the way in which emotional labour research has been approached. For example the literature's pre-occupation with the negative consequences of emotional labour performances (Wouters, 1989) can be attributed to its Marxist origins. A review of labour process theory, however, problematises the notion that labour is defenceless under capitalism (Nunes, 2007). In a bid to explore and challenge some of assumptions embedded in the emotional labour literature it was necessary to begin with a review of labour process theory debates and alternative perspectives. Extending this view, it was also important to contextualise the emotional labour construct and the subsequent research in the broader sociological debates. Emotional labour is an increasingly prevalent form of work in the 'informatized' era, thus, it is essential to explore some of the issues surrounding this kind of work, including post-Marxist immaterial labour in which individual subjectivity is one of the raw materials of the labour process.

Through such a review the post-Braverman debate that centred on the role of resistance and compliance to capitalist control raised questions about the ontological dualism of labour process theory (Knights, 1990; 2000-2001; Willmott, 1990; 1995) and the role of the subject. Worker resistance and compliance to the capitalist regime has also been problematised, particularly by O'Doherty (2009), Knights and Willmott (1999), Burawoy (1979) and Roy (1952; 1953; 1954). Can the same debates and questions be helpful in further understanding the emotional labour process? Are all emotional labourers oppressed and alienated by the capitalist regime? What is the role of the subject in the emotional labour process?

These issues will be reflected upon and explored through a review of the emotional labour literature in the following chapter, where the focus will be on the development of the emotional labour literature since Hochschild (1983), the role of emotional labour and the subject within the emotional labour process, and to consider the emotional labour process as an extension to labour process theory. In so doing, a consideration of labour process theory and the post-Marxist immaterial labour debate has fundamentally situated the emotional labour construct and the emotional labour process in their theoretical origins. A historical review of labour process theory serves to contextualise the forthcoming literature review chapters and also aids in situating the findings of the empirical chapters into the broader sociological context. An exploration of the post-Marxist immaterial labour literature has made possible a later discussion of whether

emotional labour should be considered a form of affective labour in Hardt & Negri's terms. Such a comprehensive review also reminds us that although emotional labour was based on a Marxist concept of exploitation the post-Braverman debates should not be ignored in a discussion of the emotional labour process.

## Chapter Three: Emotional Labour

### Introduction

The previous chapter focused on the development of labour process theory and some of the related debates. It also reviewed the post-Marxist literature on immaterial labour in a discussion of the changing nature of work and labour processes in an 'informatized' society (Hardt & Negri 2001). Such a review served as a reminder of the Marxist origins of the emotional labour construct, and also drew on some of the more nuanced arguments of the post-Braverman literature, such as Knights' (1990; 2000-2001) criticisms of the ontological dualism of labour process theory and his call for a reconsideration of the role of the subject. The aim of this chapter is to re-situate the emotional labour construct, and also the emotional labour process, into a labour process theory context. Reflecting some of the debates and criticisms highlighted in the previous chapter onto the emotional labour literature will offer an alternative perspective on the emotional labour process.

This chapter begins by discussing the theoretical underpinnings of emotion management, illustrating the complexity of the construct that Hochschild (1983) proposed as 'emotion systems theory'. It goes on to provide a detailed review of the emotional labour literature since the publication of *The Managed Heart* and, in addition, comparatively considers other theorists' proposed typologies and models for representing the process of emotion management. The final section of this chapter draws on the post-Marxist literature introduced in the previous chapter to explore the relationship between affect and emotion. It considers whether emotional labour can be conceptualised as a form of affective labour, and if so, does this offer an alternative perspective on the emotional labour process; one that places emotion management at the heart of a process of maintaining ontological security.

The questions raised in this cross-disciplinary review of the emotional labour literature will then be explored in the final chapter of the literature review. The final chapter will explore the psychological and social-psychological literature on emotive dissonance to further understand the role it plays in the emotional labour process. A focus on the emotional labour process, as opposed to the construct itself, offers a more nuanced understanding of why emotional labour is performed and how it is experienced and negotiated by the individual in a quest to maintain a stable self-identity.



## Commodification

Metaphors such as Weber's 'iron cage' of rationality or Ford's machine-like assembly line (for example Drake & Lanahan, 2007; Morgan 2006; Gabriel, 2005) were once used to describe and represent industrial organisations. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, there has been a paradigmatic shift in the industrial composition of the economy. Today, mental, emotional and aesthetic labour, known as 'immaterial labour' (Hardt & Negri, 2001) is making up an increasing proportion of our labour efforts. Thus, Weber's 'iron-cage' of rationality has been modified to the 'glass cage' of total exposure (Gabriel, 2005) to represent the more subtle and indirect demonstrations of power and control under capitalism. Ritzer's (1996) McDonaldization thesis explores some of the more subtle mechanisms used by post-Fordist organisations in a bid to manipulate both consumers and workers alike. As the immaterial labour process becomes more prevalent the capitalist regime can no longer aspire to exclude emotions, feelings and subjectivities from the workplace. Nor does it want to. Instead, they become the raw materials of the immaterial labour process.

As the rational model of bureaucratisation slips away to reveal flexible workplaces filled with fractured identities and disrupted narratives of self (Sennett, 1998; Hughes, 2005), organisations are embracing and harnessing emotions and feelings that were once seen as detrimental to the capitalist system. A quote from Weber's work highlights the contrast between traditional and what has come to be known as post-Fordist forms of organisation:

...The more the bureaucracy is "dehumanised" the more completely it succeeds in eliminating from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation. This is the specific nature of bureaucracy and it is appraised as its special value.

(Weber, 1946:215-216, cited in Fineman, 2001:219)

Weber's (1946) re-presentation of the 'modernist' organisation places emotion in ontological opposition to reason. Emotion, then, was excluded from the boundaries of organisation in a modernist belief that "efficiency should not be sullied by the irrationality of personal feelings" (Hancock & Tyler, 2001:130). Yet, as 'emotions' were found to influence motivation and organisational performance (Herzberg, 1966; Maslow, 1970) there was an 'emotion turn'. Performance measures, motivation, loyalty and commitment became heavily associated with workplace emotion, leading to

increased attention surrounding the measurement (Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Goleman, 1996) and commodification (Hochschild, 1983) of what was once deemed 'irrational'.

With the exponential growth of the service sector, the management of emotions and other 'immaterial' forms of labour (Hardt & Negri, 2001) are becoming increasingly important<sup>10</sup>. The post-Fordist paradigm reconstructed the relationship between emotion and reason to "demonstrate the mutually constitutive rather than oppositional relation" (Jaggar, 1989:157). The idea that emotions and feelings are irrational, and, therefore, hold no place within the rational context of organisations, was challenged. A result of this 'emotional revolution,' was the formation of a stream of research that studies the multi-faceted phenomenon of emotion within the workplace.

### *The Managed Heart*

Hochschild (1983) was the first to propose that private emotions were increasingly becoming commodified by organisational control in a process of 'emotional labour' in *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. From Hochschild's perspective, emotional labour is the rational commodification of emotions. In one sense, the acceptance of emotion and feeling into the workplace can be seen as a postmodern turn as emotions are no longer confined to 'private life'. However, postmodernity has little to celebrate as the traditional boundaries between public and private life have not been broken down but have been extended. Now emotions are often incarcerated by managerial control mechanisms that replicate modernist rigidity<sup>11</sup>. Emotions are no longer excluded from the labour process, but have become the subject of managerial control.

Hochschild's work was widely disseminated, catching the attention of scholars from various fields, including psychology, sociology, social psychology and organisational behaviour. However, the general acceptance of 'emotions systems theory' (Hochschild, 1983: xi) has often served to induce a sense of complacency towards the emotional labour process, as a consequence many of the complex conceptual nuances have become lost in the subsequent literature. All emotional activity that takes place within the workplace is often referred to as 'emotional labour'; Bolton (2005) labels this phenomenon the 'emotional labour bandwagon'. As a consequence, a significant proportion of published literature that claims to deal with emotional labour appears to reproduce a number of misconceptions that may be confusing the development of a coherent theoretical framework.

It is necessary to begin any discussion of the emotion management literature by clearly defining the terms emotion work and emotional labour, as they were originally intended, as it is this obscurity that appears to be at the centre of one of the most common emotional labour confusions. This does not mean, however, that these definitions are by any means static or considered definitive, but it is important to consider how they were originally intended for use to understand Hochschild's conceptualisation of emotion management.

Thus, Hochschild originally distinguished the concepts of emotional labour and emotion work in the following way:

I use the terms *emotional labour* to mean the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange-value*. I use the synonymous terms *emotion work* or *emotion management* to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have *use-value*.

(Hochschild, 1983:7 *emphases in original*)

Despite such a clear definition of both concepts, a significant proportion of the emotion management literature, even in some of the most respected journals, continues to use the terms emotional labour and emotion work interchangeably (Mastracci et al, 2006; Sharpe, 2005; Lively 2002; James, 1989), thereby obscuring the relevant distinction. Callahan & McCollum (2002) see the wording of this definition to be the root of the confusion, as many people have interpreted the distinction between emotional labour and emotion work on the use of the words 'public' and 'private'. Emotional labour is perceived to be the regulation of emotion done in public and emotion work to be its private equivalent. However, this delineation is not entirely representative of Hochschild's 'emotions systems theory'. Hochschild grounded her distinction between emotion work and emotional labour in Marx's definition of exchange-value and use-value, which underlies Hochschild's presentation of the emotional labour process as an extension to labour process theory.

Before taking the discussion any further, it is important to point out that although Hochschild uses the terms emotion work and emotion management synonymously, the term emotion management has come to refer to the ability of individuals to control emotions, whilst emotion work describes a form of emotion management that has use-value specifically<sup>12</sup>. In other words, emotion management has evolved into the "over-

arching term for the construct” (Callahan & McCollum, 2002:222) and therefore includes both terms emotional labour and emotion work.

Emotion management, then, is a complex, multi-dimensional construct, as it encapsulates both public and private dimensions of emotion management, and that which is done for use-value and exchange-value. Wharton & Erikson (1993) discuss how emotions are managed in the workplace: arguing that individuals regulate their emotions, not only to benefit the organisation, but also to benefit themselves. In this sense, emotions are seen to be socially produced experiences (Hochschild, 1983; Fineman, 1996; Thoits, 1996). They are learned expressions that are played out in socially regulated settings, defined by social norms that govern behaviour. Such social norms take the form of ‘display rules’ (Ekman, 1973) and ‘feeling rules’ (Hochschild, 1979). They can be defined by general society, usually embedded in culturally specific norms and rituals: by explicit regulations: or by normative controls defined by an organisation<sup>13</sup>.

Tracing Hochschild’s theoretical roots back to Marx, it is possible to uncover the theoretical underpinnings of emotional labour and emotion work. Marx argued that something has use-value if it is possible to gain pleasure or use from it. However, it did not have to be worth anything in the free market; an example of something that may be considered to hold use-value would be a warm summer’s day. In general, things that possess use-value cannot be traded, as they have no exchange-value. Alternatively, however, a hamburger, a television set or accountancy services can be exchanged within the market place as they have an ‘exchange-value’. As Marx himself notes, “exchange-value appears first of all as the quantitative relation, the proportion, in which use-values of one kind exchange for use-values of another kind” (1867/1990:126).

Keeping this distinction in mind, then, Hochschild defined emotion work as having a ‘use-value’ because it cannot be traded or exchanged for a quantitative amount. Thus, emotion work refers to the form of emotion management that is self-regulated for private benefit, whereas emotional labour is seen to possess exchange-value and is therefore tradable in return for a wage. Callahan & McCollum (2002) summarize:

...The term *emotion work* is appropriate for situations in which individuals are personally choosing to manage their emotions for their own noncompensated benefit. The term *emotional labour*, on the other hand, is appropriate only when emotion work is exchanged for something such as a wage or some other type of valued compensation.

(Callahan & McCollum, 2002:221, emphasis in original)

However, it is often unclear, even to the individual, as to whether they are performing emotional labour to conform to the feeling rules specified by the organisation, or whether they are going beyond the call of duty because it makes them feel better about themselves. Highlighting this ambiguity in the application of Hochschild's emotional labour theory, Tolich (1993) proposes an alternative model, in which he makes control rather than exchange value central to the conceptualisation. This alternative model will be dealt with more fully later in the chapter.

### **Putting Emotion to Work**

Emotional labour research attempts to understand how individuals manage their emotions as part of their work role. Much of this management is assumed to be driven by conformity to display rules (Ekman, 1973) and feeling rules (Hochschild, 1979) prescribed by the organisation. It is, therefore, perceived that emotion regulation strategies are employed by individuals to control their felt emotions (Hochschild 1983; Morris & Feldman 1996; Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Grandey, 2000). As Brotheridge & Lee (2003:365) state, "employees perform EL [emotional labour] when they regulate their emotional display in an attempt to meet organizationally-based expectations specific to their roles." These social rules, be they either implicitly (Seymour & Sandiford, 2005) or explicitly prescribed, not only determine the range of emotions to be performed (Hochschild, 1979; 1983) but also the frequency, intensity and duration of such a performance (Morris & Feldman, 1996).

In her seminal thesis, Hochschild (1983) uses the work of flight attendants and debt collectors to illustrate the complexity of the emotional labour concept and the consequences it has on those whom perform it as part of their work role. Drawing on Marx, Hochschild constructs the emotional labour concept as an extension to traditional labour process theory:

Marx questioned how many hours a day it was fair to use a human being as an instrument, and how much pay for being an instrument was fair, considering the profits that factory owners made. But he was also concerned with something he thought more fundamental: the human cost of becoming an "instrument of labor" at all.

(Hochschild 1983:3)

Taylor's (1998) definition of emotional labour resonates with the Marxist discourse of exploitation and subordination:

...This term refers to the management of human feeling, during social interaction within the labour process, as shaped by the dictates of capital accumulation.

(Taylor, 1998:84)

This Marxist view on the commodification of emotions and the ontological assumptions upon which the emotional labour construct is built has led to critical analysis assuming that there is inevitably a gap that arises during the performance of emotional labour between “the public appearances and private realities of self” (Snyder, 1987:7) This ‘inevitable gap’ (Hancock & Tyler, 2001) is seen as congruent with Marx’s concept of alienation and Goffman’s (1959) dramaturgical approach to identity roles. As a consequence much of the emotional labour literature has focused on the ‘dark side’ of emotion within the workplace, emphasizing negative consequences such as self-estrangement, emotional exhaustion, stress and burnout. However, these studies have been criticised for their ‘mono-focus’ (Wouters, 1989) as the emotional labour construct has since been considered a multi-dimensional construct (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993).

*The Managed Heart* begins by comparing the emotional component of the work of flight attendants to that of the physical labour extracted from manual labourers by factory owners. In the service sector “*the emotional style of offering the service is part of the service itself*” (Hochschild 1983:5); in other words, flight attendants’ emotions are being commodified by the airline in exchange for a wage, just as factory workers were paid for their physical labour power. In her own words, Hochschild explains the emotional labour concept:

This labour requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others ... This kind of labour calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our individuality  
(Hochschild, 1983:7).

Raz’s (2002) cultural comparison of normative controls in Japanese society and those found in the West, describes the methods by which emotions are commodified by organisations. Emotions in this way become company property, and are routinely tradable, just as physical and mental labour capacity has been for centuries.

Putting emotion to work occurs through three major, interrelated processes: commodification, formalization, and reduction. Commodification takes place when emotions become a company ideology, no longer a private sentiment but rather a public ‘social glue.’ The remaining two processes provide concrete

mechanisms for sustaining these ideologies. Feeling rules regarding the employer-employee dyad are formalized through manuals, workshops, checklists, and spiels. In addition, social interaction within the representative-customer dyad is reduced to standardized service tasks that embody the feeling rules of the organization.

(Raz 2002:44)

Such manipulation and commodification of emotions was thought by Hochschild (1979) to manifest in forms that required varying levels of personal involvement. These emotional labour techniques are modelled in the table below.

**Table 1: Emotion Management Techniques**

<u>Techniques</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Level of Involvement</u>
<i>Cognitive</i>	<i>Changes images, ideas or thoughts in an attempt to change feelings associated with them</i>	High
<i>Bodily</i>	<i>Changes somatic/physical symptoms of emotion e.g. try to breathe slowly</i>	Medium
<i>Expressive</i>	<i>Change expressive gestures e.g. smile to feel happy</i>	Low

Based on Hochschild's (1979) description of emotional labour techniques.

This initial conceptualisation of the commodification of emotion later (1983) manifested itself in a more formal theory of surface acting and deep acting, aptly named to be in keeping with the dramaturgical approach (Goffman, 1959). Derived from Goffman (1959), *surface acting* involves managing outward appearances; pretending 'to feel what we do not, ...we deceive others about what we really feel, but we do not deceive ourselves' (Hochschild 1983:33). In this case, the emotional labourer is able to articulate the difference between what they genuinely feel and the impression that they are projecting. Put simply, surface acting is the art of impression management; which involves "...stimulating emotions that are not actually felt, which is accomplished by careful presentation of verbal and nonverbal cues, such as facial expression, gestures, and voice tone" (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993:91). Research suggests that prolonged performances of surface acting can lead to negative consequences on well-being, such as burnout (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002).

*Deep acting*, on the other hand, is the act of ‘deceiving oneself as much as deceiving others... we make feigning easy by making it unnecessary’ (Hochschild 1983:33). Deep acting is seen to entail a successful transmutation of the private emotional system, as the emotional labourer begins to feel that the normative requirements prescribed by the organisation are, in fact, his or her own. In such cases, then, behavioural change is an indirect consequence of deep acting, for it is inner feelings that are being manipulated directly, not outward manifestations of those emotions. Deep acting is thought to be associated with less obvious negative effects than surface acting (Hochschild 1983). However, Hochschild, and others who see emotional labour as an extension of the labour process, would argue that the successful transmutation of the private emotional system is the ultimate in capitalist subordination.

The third, and often overlooked, form of emotion management is the expression of genuinely felt emotions (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Hochschild’s (1983) conceptualisation of emotion management implies that all emotions have to be consciously managed. However, Ashforth & Humphrey (1993:93) argue that this conceptualisation of emotional labour “does not allow for instances whereby one spontaneously and genuinely experiences and expresses the expected emotion.” In addition, social identity theorists would argue that in order to identify with an organisation, and therefore share values and beliefs, “an individual need not expend effort toward the group’s goals. Rather, an individual need only perceive him- or herself as psychologically intertwined with the fate of the group” (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Hochschild’s original conceptual forms of emotional labour have not gone uncontested, and many theorists have proposed differing conceptualisations that claim to reflect the emotional labour construct more ‘accurately’ (Tolich, 1993; Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003). Taylor (1998) places emotional labour in the context of the ‘new’ workplace (call-centres), declaring that deep and surface acting constructs are far too simplistic to do justice to the complexity of feelings and motivations experienced by emotional labourers. In response, he introduces ‘deep acting for pragmatic purposes’ or ‘sophisticated surface acting’; practices he observed using an ethnographic methodology on a group of telesales operators in a major British airline.

For Taylor, deep acting for pragmatic purposes works on the basis that emotional labourers will fake the transmutation of the emotional system: in other words pretend to deep act, in order to earn an income and meet targets. They ‘act’ as if they are not



acting, in order to meet management requirements. Rafaeli & Sutton (1987) add an ethical dimension to this, differentiating between employees feeling they are faking for mutual benefit (“faking in good faith”) or to the customers’ disadvantage and their organization’s advantage (“faking in bad faith”).

Whether it is deep or surface acting (Hochschild, 1983), expressing a genuine emotion (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) or deep acting for pragmatic purposes (Taylor, 1998), it is clear that the way in which emotions are managed within the workplace is a complex process. For many years after the publication of *The Managed Heart*, the literature was pre-occupied with identifying occupational roles that required the performance of emotional labour. Over time, research has unsurprisingly concluded that emotional labour is present in the work of flight attendants (Hochschild, 1983; Wouters 1989; Tyler & Taylor, 2001; Williams, 2003); nurses (James, 1989; Bolton, 2000, 2005); beauty therapists (Sharma & Black, 2001); paralegals (Lively, 2002); call-centre operators (Taylor, 1998; Shuler & Davenport, 2000); tour reps (Guerrier & Adib, 2003); adventure guides (Sharpe, 2005); nursing home carers (Lopez, 2006); cruise ship crew (Tracey, 2000); Disneyland employees (Van Maanen 1991); bill collectors (Hochschild, 1983; Sutton, 1991) and supermarket staff (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). As Erickson & Ritter (2001) point out, in general, researchers need:

...To move beyond studies of the mere existence of emotional labour and toward those which examine the structural sources of variation in emotion management and its psychological effects, research must not be limited to investigating groups that are presumed to perform emotional labour (Smith-Lovin 1998).

(Erickson & Ritter, 2001:160)

However, such an important observation is a generalisation, for there have been a number of significant contributions to emotion management theory that have critically challenged Hochschild’s original conceptualisations and subsequently aided theoretical progression in terms of offering alternative models and illustrating the nuanced nature of emotion in the workplace.

### **The “Hochschild/Wouters Controversy”**

Beneath the difference between physical and emotional labour there lies a similarity in the possible cost of doing the work: the worker can become estranged or alienated from an aspect of self – either the body or the margins of the soul – that is *used* to do the work.

(Hochschild 1983:7)

Hochschild's concept of emotional labour contends that organisations commodify individuals' emotions in return for a wage as they have a certain 'exchange-value'. The process of commodification is seen to be ethically exploitative in terms of capitalist extraction of surplus value, but is also thought to have negative effects on the well-being and health of those performing emotional labour in exchange for a wage. Burnout, emotional exhaustion, alienation, depersonalisation, stress, depression and self-estrangement have all been seen as potential consequences of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Frost, 2003; Cohen et al, 1991; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). The commodification of private emotions and sentiments was believed to leave the individual unsure of whom they are; "*estranged or alienated from an aspect of self*" (Hochschild, 1983:7). Much of the psychological literature on emotional labour is centred on establishing relationships between the performance of emotional labour and its consequences upon individual well-being.

However, a number of theorists, including Wouters (1989) and Tolich (1993) among others, came to question whether anything more lay beyond the 'dark side' of emotional labour. In 1989, *Theory, Culture and Society* published what has come to be known as the 'Hochschild/ Wouters controversy' (Williams 2003:515). It was presented in three articles; the first was a critical piece by Wouters aimed at the assumptions Hochschild had made to theorise emotion management; the second article, a response to Wouters criticisms by Hochschild; the third, a reply to the response. In general, the tone and theoretical critique of the argument deteriorates as the debate proceeds, often getting personal at points. However, in spite of this, Wouters does present some interesting criticisms of emotion management theory, criticisms that have gone on to change the way emotional labour is perceived and researched.

Wouters (1989) argued that his own data, on flight attendants, offered no support for Hochschild's conclusion that alienation stemmed from the requirement to perform emotional labour. He critically states that "Hochschild's preoccupation with the 'costs' of emotion work not only leads to a one-sided and moralistic interpretation of the working conditions of flight attendants, it also hampers understanding the joy the job may bring" (Wouters, 1989:116). Undeniably, Wouters had made a valid point, however, a closer reading of Hochschild, which she kindly points out to Wouters in her reply, shows that she never intended emotional labour to be considered solely as having negative consequences

My purpose in *The Managed Heart*, then, was to introduce the concept of 'emotional labour', 'feeling rules' (the norms which govern emotional labour), and the 'emotional exchanges' on which these bear, and to show how these concepts shed light on the nature of service work, and the workers' *potential* estrangement from it.

(Hochschild, 1989:441 *emphasis added*)

Hochschild's retaliation to this fundamental critique came in the form of validity. She reminds the reader that Wouters' conclusions are based on a sample size of just five KLM flight attendants, whereas her own study used a multi-methodological approach, including observing training programmes, interviewing the executive vice-president of Delta Airlines, group sessions with the marketing teams, observing the recruitment process at Pan American Airways and conducting three hour long interviews with over thirty five flight attendants. Just as the objective structural nature of labour process theory has led to a preoccupation with the alienating effects of capitalism, so too has *'The Managed Heart'* been criticised for portraying emotional labour as a negative concept. In short, Hochschild does not deny that the approach the introduction of emotional labour took led to a certain 'doom and gloom' attitude toward the concept. Yet, she subtly reminds the reader that Wouters' criticism is based on a study in which he "interviewed five KLM flight attendants" (1989:442). However, it must be acknowledged that criticising the representational validity of Wouters' work on the reliability of his sample size is incongruent with Hochschild's constructionist assumptions.

If Wouters' is accusing Hochschild of being too pessimistic, then, in retaliation, Hochschild criticises Wouters' portrayal of the 'Happy Worker' (Hochschild, 1989:442) as naive. Hochschild sees this unchallenged optimism as another product of his predisposition to 'informalisation theory'. Informalization theory is the belief that "...over the past one hundred years of Western history, we have seen a decline in external constraints on human feeling" (Hochschild, 1989:442). In other words, manners, etiquette and idealised behaviour have become more relaxed, and emotional exchanges are less rigidly directed by social rules. However, such an observation is not a relevant criticism of Hochschild's thesis on emotion management, for, it is not the quantity of social constraints that is relevant, but their nature. Emotional labour theory argues that the object of social constraint is no longer external displays of emotion but, instead, internal states, differentiated by display rules (Ekman, 1973) and feeling rules (Hochschild, 1979). Organisations are commodifying what was once a private, internal part of the self; making individual's emotions public property, open to manipulation and management. Therefore, it may be true that public behaviour is less regulated by

social norms, yet one hundred years ago, were organisations interested in the way their employees felt about their customers?

### **Alternative Conceptualisations**

#### ***Tolich (1993): Ownership v Control***

The publication of the Hochschild/ Wouters controversy altered the way in which emotional labour has been researched and perceived by calling for a more detailed investigation into the accuracy with which the theoretical construct reflects everyday performances of emotional labour. Taking Wouters' critique as a starting point for analysing his own data on supermarket clerks, Tolich (1993) proposes a new conceptualisation of emotion management within the workplace. His model abandons Hochschild's demarcation of emotion work and emotional labour based on exchange and use-value and instead concentrates on issues of control, which is, of course the central concern of labour process theory.

With data that identified the performance of emotion management to be both alienating and liberating, Tolich (1993) needed to reformulate the emotional labour construct to account, more realistically, for his findings. He criticizes the dichotomous delineation of exchange- and use-value as being confusing. For example, if a spontaneous, genuine emotional act is performed within the workplace that is not prescribed by organisational norms, yet it still benefits the organisation, then surely that act has exchange-value? Being co-operative and helpful to fellow colleagues is not necessarily regulated by the organisation, yet it helps them to run efficiently. Therefore, it has exchange-value, but would not, ordinarily, be labelled emotional labour. To explain his ambiguous finding in terms of existing theory was impossible, and so, Tolich (1993) replaced Hochschild's dichotomy with his own. Tolich's dichotomy focuses on who is controlling the emotional display, as opposed to who owns it; *autonomous emotion management* refers to emotions managed by the individual, whereas, *regulated emotion management* refers to emotions managed by the organisation, or more generally, anyone other than the self.

He goes on then to challenge yet another of Hochschild's dichotomies, this time in the form of the public/ private distinction (Wouters, 1989). As it has already been stated, emotion work is often conceived to be the form of emotion management that takes place away from public view, usually within the company of family or friends, more generally outside of the organisation. However, in agreement once again with Wouters (1989) Tolich disputes this differentiation as he feels that it is control over emotional

display that is the fundamental underpinning of emotion management's conceptualisation and that the public/ private dichotomy is an unnecessary analytical tool:

In nonwork situations, regulated emotion management/autonomous emotion management is a useful dichotomy. Consider the following scenario. If a mother requires her daughter to kiss her grandmother, how are we to interpret this situation? Is this scenario an example of a child learning how to perform regulated emotion management? The display of emotion she shows her grandmother is performed by the daughter but conceived and supervised by the mother...Neither the child nor the supermarket worker is in control of the performance, and both perform regulated emotion work.

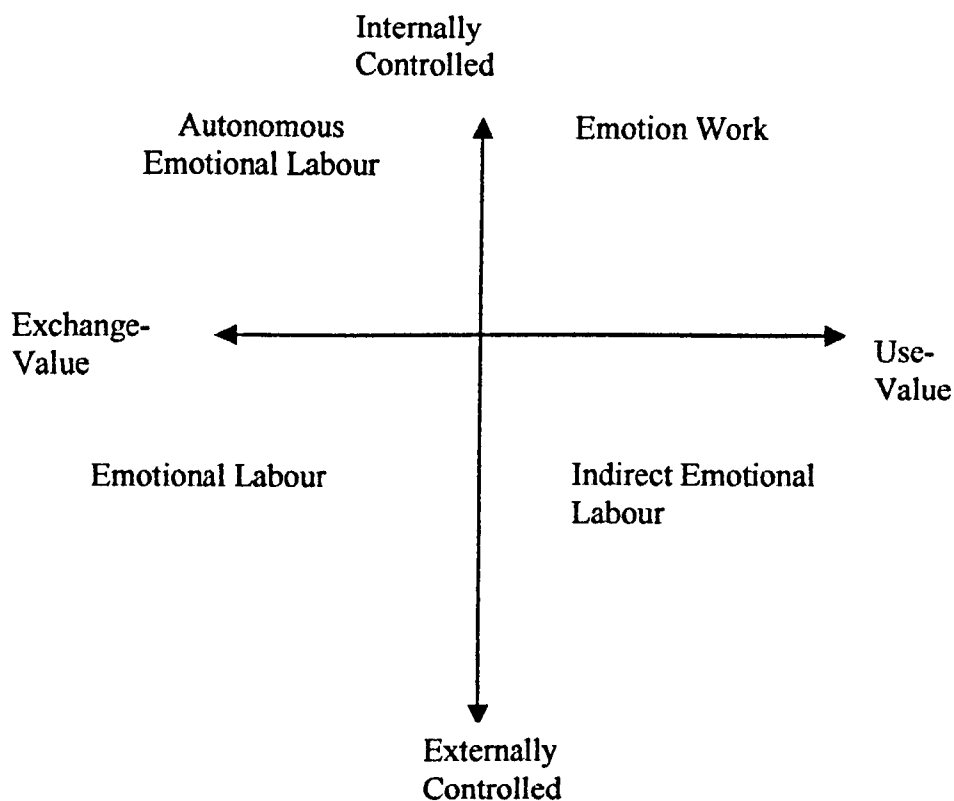
(Tolich, 1993:379)

### *Callahan & McCollum: Emotion Management Matrix*

Callahan & McCollum (2002) take up Tolich's (1993) conceptualisation and build autonomous emotion management into their matrix (see Figure 2), along with traditional forms of emotional labour and emotion work, and their own, slightly ambiguous, form of emotion management named 'indirect emotional labour'. Indirect emotional labour is performed when "other actions within the workplace can have a perceived use-value to the individual but are directed by external requirements" (2002:224). The example cited is organizationally arranged events e.g. team-building exercises, away-days, and company-funded holidays. Such emotional labour is still classed as work and the same implicit or explicit rules apply to the situation, yet the emotional labour performed in these situations is 'indirect' as it is usually motivated by 'other' goals; including promotion, pay rises, favours, and does not hold direct exchange-value for the organisation.

By combining the exchange- and use-value dichotomy with that of internal versus externally controlled emotion management, as advocated by Tolich (1993), Callahan & McCollum (2002) propose a new matrix that aids in clarifying some of the more ambiguous elements of emotional labour theory.

**Figure 2: Emotion Management Matrix**



Callahan & McCollum (2002)

Callahan and McCollum's model visualises the theoretical implications of supporting Hochschild's original conceptualisations of emotion work and emotional labour, in terms of the two dichotomous continua. In doing this, they identify two areas of the matrix that are unaccounted for by traditional emotion management theory; internally controlled emotion management that has exchange-value (autonomous emotion management) and externally controlled emotion management that has use-value (indirect emotion management).

However, viewing the category of labour as only being bound by exchange and use-value implies that labour is economically determined. However, exchange-value and use-value are not the only potential 'logics of signification'. Baudrillard's (1969, 1970) *Theory of Consumption* presents, in addition to the two already discussed, symbolic-value and sign-value as alternative ways in which 'objects' possess value. (See Table 2)

**Table 2: Logics of Signification**

Logic of signification	Logic of ...	Status
A functional logic of use value	Utility, practical operation	Instrument
An economic logic of exchange value	Market, equivalence	Commodity
A logic of symbolic exchange	Gift, ambivalence	Symbol
A logic of sign value	Status, difference	Sign

Adapted from Baudrillard (1969: 60)

Symbolic value is usually associated with a gift that symbolizes or represents a relationship. In these terms, then, the aesthetic qualities, commodity value nor utility are central to the 'value' of the object. The example Baudrillard (1969) offers is of a wedding ring; the ring is a unique object that symbolizes the relationship between the couple. As a symbolic object its monetary value is irrelevant, as it is unlikely to ever be sold or replaced, and fashion plays a very insignificant part in its 'value'.

Sign-value is the logic of signification that, for Baudrillard, defines our 'Consumer Society'. Building on the work of Levi-Strauss, Baudrillard considers consumption as a whole set of signs, symbols, social logic and structural relations. The act of consumption is a method of communication, a language and it is through this perception of consumption that we can understand consumables to be more than exchange or use-values in the Marxist sense. As Ritzer explains in his introduction to Baudrillard's *Consumer Society*

Commodities are no longer defined by their use but what they signify. And what they signify is defined not by what they do, but by their relationship to the entire system of commodities and signs.

(Ritzer, 1998: 7)

As a result of this consumption of sign, consumers are paradoxically governed by the constant desire to differentiate themselves from others whilst simultaneously wanting to be like others. The sign-value of the object is translated into status, an individual's position in the social hierarchy. The sign-value of the object is not determined by its functionality, its value nor by what it symbolises. Instead the logic of signification

defines an object of consumption. What is important is what the consumption of that object signifies, and how it differentiates the consumer from others.

The definition of an object of consumption is entirely independent of objects themselves and *exclusively a function of the logic of significations*. An object is not an object of consumption unless it is released from its psychic determinations as *symbol*; from its functional determinations as *instrument*; from its commercial determinations as *product*; and is thus *liberated as a sign* to be recaptured by the formal logic of fashion, i.e., by the logic of differentiations.

(Baudrillard 1969:61 emphases in original)

In terms of emotion management, then, sign-value offers a means to critique Hochschild's (1983) original dichotomy of emotion work and emotional labour and Callahan and McCollum's (2002) matrix of emotion management, as it moves beyond a state in which labour is economically defined. Sign-value, then, can be thought of as a form of identity capital. This is comparable to Goffman's (1969:12) 'control moves' defined as; "the intentional effort of an informant to produce expressions that he thinks will improve his situation if they are gleaned by the observer". Through micro-observations Goffman breaks down behaviour into 'control moves'. He sees interactions as games in which actors actively manage outer impressions. "...Moment to moment, the individual is actively, consciously negotiating a personal and apparently unique course of action" (Hochschild 2003:90). By actively managing their outer image, the actor is able to gain and maintain the interaction and their place in the social hierarchy. In this sense, emotions are managed to fulfil role expectations (Rafaeli & Sutton 1989). As Goffman himself explains, the management of impressions is the equivalent to paying a tax for the sake of sustaining an encounter; "we are repaid in the currency of safety from disrepute" (Hochschild 2003:91)

Just as sign-value is associated with differentiation, conformity also plays a large part. Differentiation is only possible if there is a norm to evaluate difference against. By performing emotion management, be that in either a public or private setting, we are conforming to societal rules of behaviour and feeling. In this sense, then, the sign-value, or identity capital, is produced and consumed in 'control moves' during relational interactions.

Although Baudrillard focused on the role of advertising in a 'Consumer Society' his discourse was often way ahead of its time especially when it touched upon the role sign-value played within the service sector, particularly as part of his 'Mystique of Solicitude' (1970/1998) critique. For Baudrillard, then, the consumer society is not only



concerned with the consumption of goods and services, but with the idea that in this society 'everything is a service' (Baudrillard 1998:159). In the presentation of the service, human relations are consumed, yet these relations are only the 'signs of solicitude' and not spontaneous and reciprocal.

It is on this basis that we are seeing the systematic reinjection of human relations - in the form of signs - into the social circuit, and are seeing the *consumption* of those relations of that human warmth *in signified form*. The receptionist, the social worker...all these apostles of the social machine have as their secular mission the gratification, *the lubrication of social relations with the institutional smile*.

(Baudrillard 1998:161)

Baudrillard's perspective on emotional labour, then, is not one of production but of consumption; focusing on the structural and social implications of the consumption of 'kitsch' or 'pseudo' relations, they are those that hold an abundance of signs, yet lack any real significance. "Though designed to produce solicitude, it is condemned simultaneously to produce - and reproduce- distance, non-communication, opacity and atrocity" (Baudrillard 1998:162).

"Functionalised human relations" (Baudrillard 1998:162) are produced through service interactions for consumption. Baudrillard sees the warm smile of the flight attendant, not as genuine emotion but as a good for consumption, there is nothing spontaneous about this smile for it has been "cleansed of all temperamental or psychological aspects, cleansed of all real, affective harmonics, and reconstituted on the basis of the calculated vibrations of the ideal relationship" (Baudrillard 1998:167). In other words, what was once seen to be a shared, reciprocal performance of sincerity has now fallen under the sway of industrial production. Sincerity is mass-produced in what Baudrillard calls the 'Mystique of Solicitude'.

He points out that the term 'to solicit' has a dual, and oppositional meaning. In one sense 'solicitude' means to be caring and mothering but in another it means to 'request' or 'demand'. Baudrillard sees this as key in understanding the relationship between production and consumption within a consumer society. The consumer faces the caring, warmth of the front-line service agent but this agent is consciously producing this façade of sincerity in order to solicit consumer loyalty and spending. However, such a process is not confined to service interactions, as Baudrillard argues that such solicitous behaviour is now a common characteristic in our consumer society. Self-improvement, a strong sense of personal values and autonomy are no longer seen as a mark of

personality, today individuals must be able to 'relate to people', 'fit in' and continuously strive to gain the approval of others.

"Everyone 'solicits' and manipulates, everyone is solicited and manipulated"

(Baudrillard 1998:171)

Baudrillard (1998) sees such 'functional tolerance' and the 'production of relations' as an 'atrocity' because spontaneous social relations are controlled by market forces and are therefore objects of consumption. Thus, the immaterial labour process is one that produces objects of consumption. This alternative perspective on emotional labour has been overlooked by Callahan & McCollum (2002), and other emotional labour theorists, as they have continued to follow Hochschild's lead by dichotomously representing emotion work and emotional labour in terms of use- and exchange- value, respectively. A consideration of Baudrillard's work on sign value, and how this form of value can affect the emotional labour construct, seems to have escaped the attention of emotional labour theorists. The difference with sign value is that it is not economically determined. Thus, emotional labour no longer has to be considered as part of an economically controlled regime, but instead a more complex and nuanced systems of sign, one which places the subjectivity of the individual at the centre of its logic. Such an alternative conceptualisation may offer some insight into explaining the variation in experience of performing emotional labour.

Despite such significant critique, the presentation of emotion management forms in Callahan & McCollum's (2002) matrix functions as a response to Wouters and Tolich's criticisms of Hochschild's dichotomous conceptualisation of emotion work and emotional labour. It can be used as a tool for theorists to gain a closer understanding of the reasons behind the varied and irregular experiences of performing emotion management techniques both inside and outside the boundaries of organisational control.

One such example of this on-going quest to understand the consequences can be found in Williams' (2003) extensive multi-method research project that involved three thousand Australian flight attendants. Analysing emotional labour as a gendered cultural performance, Williams focuses on issues of occupational health and safety and sexual harassment. The conclusions drawn from the vast research project include support for Taylor & Tyler's (2000) findings that emotional labour is not gender neutral, but finds clear indications that its performance can contribute towards increased

likelihood of sexual harassment (Rush, 1999). In contrast, Erikson & Ritter (2001) found no direct correlation between gender and feelings of burnout or inauthenticity, even though their results indicated that women were more likely to be involved in jobs that require emotional labour. Williams (2003) also found that the way emotional labour is experienced depends heavily on the organisational context, therefore, implying that by nature, emotional labour is not *always* a negative experience and should be perceived as a multidimensional construct (Brotheridge & Lee 2003).

Rafaeli & Sutton's (1987) work on the expression of emotion as part of the work role considers the "causes, qualities and consequences" of expressing emotion in order to conform to role expectations. For them, role expectations are created, influenced and maintained by the organisational context (recruitment and selection, socialisation and rewards and punishments) and emotional transactions. The actual emotional transaction that takes place with the customer, or more generally the service recipient will govern the emotional display. This is because society and the market are indoctrinated with role expectations about the service they should receive during an interaction. In addition, their emotional tone is also governed by societies' expectations of them as customers. These complex relationships construct the identities of both the customer and the front-line representative, as self and 'Other', simultaneously, as both parties uphold role expectations. Thus, the expression of emotion as part of the work role is somewhat dependent on the customer (or colleague) with whom you interact. An individual's ability to uphold role expectations is determined by the 'Other' and, thus, you cannot know yourself without knowing the 'Other' (Massumi 2002). Such a process has been more pragmatically formalised by Weick (1979) as the 'double interact.'

"...the initial emotions sent by a focal employee (an 'act') stimulate the target person to respond with implicit or explicit feedback about the continuation of the displayed emotion (an 'interact'). The sender of emotion reacts to such feedback by readjustments ... (completing a 'double interact'). The sender and receiver of displayed emotion use one or more double interacts to reach agreement, or reduce equivocality (Weick, 1979) about which feelings should be conveyed and which should be hidden"

(Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987:28)

These 'double interacts' are played out within the confines of the organisational context and are therefore influenced by organisationally prescribed feeling and display rules. Building on Hochschild's (1983) work on display and feeling rules, and Thoits' (1985) paper on dissonance and consonance Rafaeli & Sutton (1987) go on to conceptualise

the effects of role expectations on individual well-being. Implicitly assuming a true singular self, the 'match' between these 'true' feelings and those prescribed by role expectations are seen to manifest in one of three states, emotional harmony, emotional dissonance and emotional deviance.

More recently, Gosserand & Diefendorff's (2005) quantitative analysis of commitment to display rules concluded that adherence to display rules is contingent upon employee commitment to the organisation and the job role. They conclude, more generally, that motivation and commitment play a significant role in the emotional labour process. However, in spite of Rafaeli & Sutton's (1987) conceptual framework laying out the potential effects of emotional labour, subsequent research, particularly in the field of psychology, has tended to take a more inductive approach, focusing on how these consequences manifest (for example Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Guy & Newman, 2004; Abraham, 1999, 2000).

#### *Grandey (2000) and Emotion Regulation*

Taking a 'grass roots' perspective Grandey (2000) points out that research into emotional labour has tended to lack a consideration of emotion theory. Using emotion regulation theory as a guiding principle Grandey (2000) presents a multidimensional model of emotional labour that attempts to include individual differences and organisational context to account for differing long-term consequences. Emotion regulation theory is defined as "the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions" (Gross, 1998b: 275 cited in Grandey, 2000:98). Building on Gross' (1998a, 1998b) work Grandey (2000) relates antecedent-focused and response-focused emotion regulation to deep and surface acting respectively.

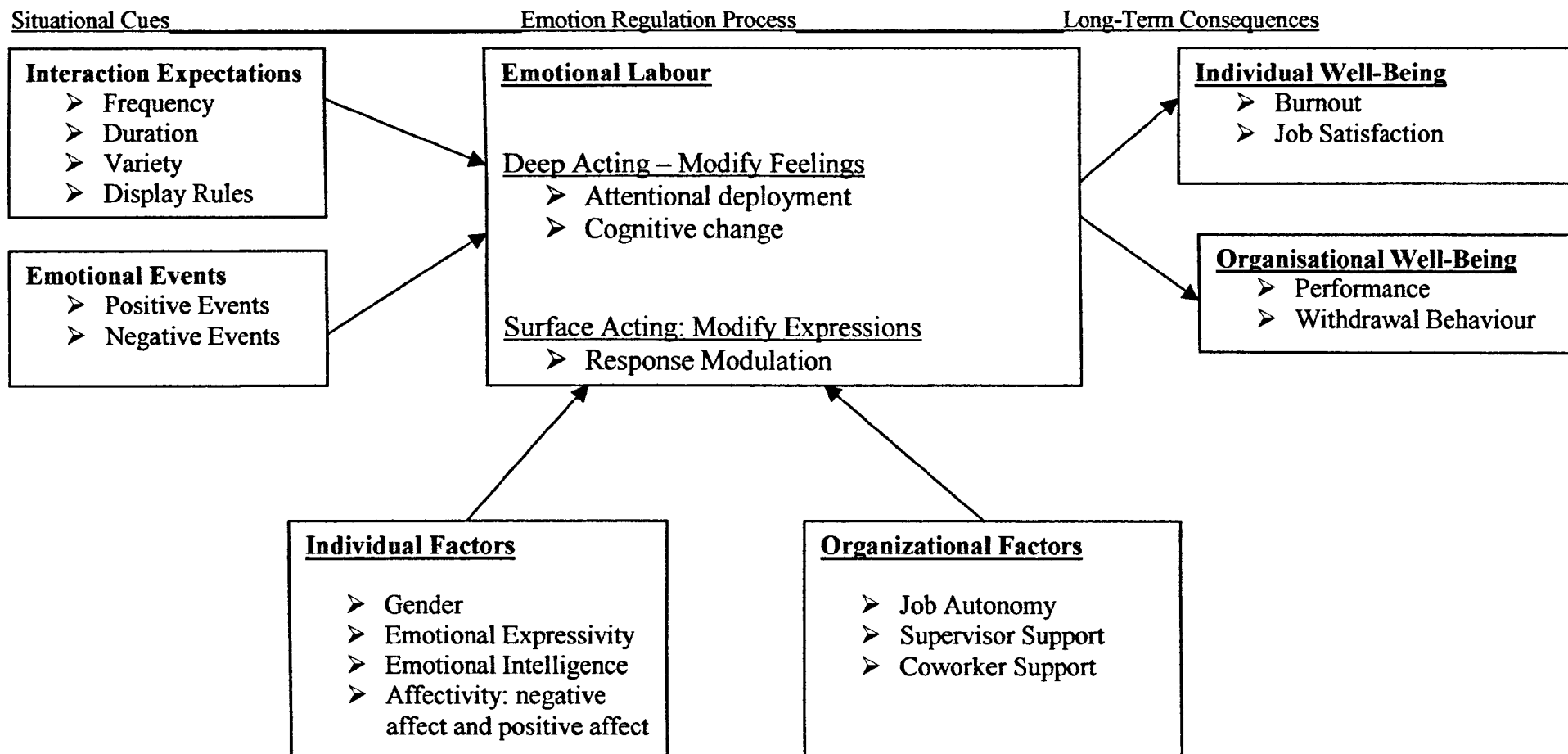
Antecedent-focused emotion regulation occurs when the individual "modifies the situation or the perception of the situation in order to adjust emotions" (Grandey 2000:98). In other words, the individual must alter the way in which they *think of*, or *think in*, a situation in order to manage their emotions. There are two types of antecedent focused emotion regulation; attention deployment and cognitive change. Attention deployment describes the re-thinking *in* a situation, for example focusing on positive thoughts and experiences to display those emotions during the service interaction. Cognitive change is a method of *thinking of* a situation in a different way; using an example from the *Managed Heart*, Hochschild describes how flight attendants

are taught to think of disruptive passengers as young children in order to regulate their emotional reactions. Grandey (2000) allies both of these methods to Hochschild's deep acting in that "the internal regulation (thoughts and feelings) are modified with the goal to make the expression more genuine" (Grandey 2000:99).

Response- focused emotion regulation, then, is seen to be comparable to Hochschild's surface acting as it is concerned with modifying the way in which an emotional response is displayed, rather than regulating the response itself. "In this process, the person has a tendency toward an emotional response, but manipulates how he or she shows that emotional response by "directly influencing physiological, experiential, or behavioural responding" (Gross, 1998b:285). For example, a flight attendant may feel exhausted after a long flight but she will still smile politely as passengers disembark despite feeling anti-social<sup>14</sup>.

Grandey (2000) "reorganizes" and "integrates" previous models of emotional labour around "the working definition" and utilizes the proposed theory of emotion regulation to provide a "conceptual model of emotional labour" (Grandey 2000:101) [See Figure 3.]

**Figure 3: Grandey's (2000:101) Proposed Conceptual Framework of Emotion Regulation Performed in a Work Setting**



This 'conceptual framework' goes some way in presenting and integrating a number of the alternative perspectives of emotional labour theory including Morris & Feldman's (1996) four dimensions of the emotional labour construct (frequency of interaction, attentiveness, variety of emotions displayed and emotional dissonance); Hochschild's (1983) deep acting and surface acting; and Abraham's (1998) job satisfaction<sup>15</sup>. Grandey (2000) integrates a number of these perspectives into functional system for conceptualisation by favouring a functionalist epistemology. However, it does little to move emotional labour theory along. In addition, as is common in much of the emotional labour literature, the model fails to include the functional role of emotive dissonance, thus leaving the emotional labour process incomplete, and somewhat simplified, in its representation. Such an omission could partly be due to the lack of an ontological discussion in the presentation of the emotional labour process, therefore the model lacks reflexivity.

Each of these alternative models takes a slightly different perspective on emotional labour theory. In some cases this is motivated by the inability of existing theory to explain trends in data (for example Toerien & Kitzinger 2007; Grandey et al 2005; Schaubroek & Jones 2000), and in others it is due to differences in particular researchers ontological and epistemological assumptions (Gosserand & Diefendorff 2005; Diefendorff & Gosserand 2003; Grandey 2000). Perhaps for these reasons, many of these alternative conceptual frameworks have not been considered 'significant' in terms of the wider emotion management debate and have received little attention in many literature reviews concerning emotional labour. They also contribute to the fragmented, and often, disjointed nature of emotional labour theory; so many alternative definitions and conceptualisations have led to a lack of continuity within the literature.

### **A typology of workplace emotion?**

Since the mid-1980s the term 'emotional labour' has been used increasingly to describe emotion in the workplace. As Bolton points out, this 'emotional labour bandwagon' (2005:53) has led to the term being used in a multitude of ways, which has unfortunately led to the distortion of Hochschild's original definition (Grandey 2000). In her attempt to address this issue, Bolton proposes a new typology of workplace emotion, one that, according to her, re-conceptualises emotion management to reflect the changes in contemporary organisations and, "offers a portrayal of an active knowledge agent who is a skilled social actor and manager of

emotion who operates within institutionalised boundaries of frameworks of action which can be both constraining and enabling” (2005:89).

Hochschild’s (1983) original conceptualisation of emotional labour stated that the many jobs that require the performance of emotional labour have three common characteristics,

First, they require face-to-face or voice-to-voice contact with the public. Second, they require the worker to produce an emotional state in another person – gratitude or fear, for example. Third, they allow the employer, through training and supervision, to exercise a degree of control over the emotional activities of employees.

(Hochschild, 1983:147)

These three characteristics are presented as general guidelines by which roles that may require the performance of emotional labour can be identified. However, Bolton sees them in a more totalising manner and even asserts that a fourth criterion is required “which needs to be fulfilled before the term emotional labour can be applied: the creation of a profitable product with the use of emotional labour as a major factor in its production” (Bolton 2005:51). The implementation of this fourth criterion would exclude the public sector workforce from the emotional labour debate, thereby denying that occupations such as doctors, nurses and healthcare professionals require the performance of emotional labour. This is clarified when she states

...Hochschild openly admits that the concept of emotional labour is *little suited* to the study of workers outside of the commercial service sector. However, she stresses this is due to the autonomy held by public sector professional groups over how, when, and for whom they perform emotion work... ‘emotional labour’ would appear conceptually inadequate for the understanding of work in the public sector. Nevertheless, this has not prevented the term being used widely in this context.

(Bolton 2005:49 emphasis added)

And then later states,

...Professional groups are *exempt* from performing ‘emotional labour’ in that they retain discretion and autonomy in the interpretation of professional feeling rules (Hochschild 1983).

(Bolton 2005:126 emphasis added)

Yet, this comes at a time when New Public Management approaches are encouraging the public sector to redefine the public as ‘consumers’. They even seek service feedback and evaluate performance in terms of customer satisfaction. One of the



prime examples of this 'redefinition' is primary health care in the NHS, which will be focused on in Chapter 7. However, Bolton (2005) seems to have confused Hochschild's (1983:153 emphasis added) meaning because what she actually said was...

It should be noted that although the social worker, the day-care provider, the doctor, and the lawyer have personal contact and try to affect the emotional states of others, they do not work with an emotion supervisor immediately on hand. Rather, *they supervise their own emotional labour* by considering informal professional norms and client expectations. So their jobs, like many others, fill only two of our three criteria.

The point Hochschild was trying to make was that emotional labour occurs in numerous jobs, manifest in very different forms, thereby illustrating the complexity of the concept. In fact, she presents, as an Appendix, an extensive sketch of occupational roles that require emotional labour, which include registered nurses, social and recreation workers and physicians, dentists and related personnel (1983: 244-251).

Bolton's misinterpretation of Hochschild's work is of concern but it also highlights the lack of an extensive literature review. The plethora of studies into emotional labour does, make it difficult to provide a thorough literature review of the theoretical nuances that numerous empirical studies have uncovered. However, there are a number of issues and significant studies that require attention, these include Wouter's (1989) argument that challenged negative conceptualisations of the emotional labour process, the impact organisational context has on the experience of emotional labour (Williams, 2003; Tyler & Taylor, 2001) and a discussion of emotive dissonance. Such omissions from Bolton's review have led to an incomplete picture of the emotional labour landscape being presented. For example, emotive dissonance has long played a significant, yet understated, role in our understanding of emotional labour (Abraham 1998; Morris & Feldman 1996; Wharton 1999; Ashforth & Humphrey 1993). However, Bolton, omits a discussion of the topic, referring to it only twice in passing. Neglecting a discussion of emotive dissonance omits one of the most significant theoretical breakthroughs in emotion systems theory. Emotional labour is no longer considered to lead to negative consequences but can have positive effects. Emotive dissonance has been identified as a potential consequence of emotional labour, which does lead to negative consequences. Thus, without the consideration of emotive dissonance, emotional labour would still be considered a negative construct.

Presenting a somewhat selective literature review set Bolton's argument on shaky ground, yet her ideas are not without value. The work on emotions performed by flight attendants and bill collectors differs greatly to the emotions that are harnessed by those 'caring professions', usually located within the public sector. As Bolton and Hochschild testify, the difference lies within the motivation behind the performances and the adherence to different kinds of feeling rules. However, Bolton's insistence that her new typology represents people in organisations as "...skilled social actors and multi-skilled managers of emotions" (Bolton 2005:1) who adhere to complex and multiple social norms, becomes somewhat unconvincing when she states,

At worst, if practices of 'deep acting' do not have the desired affect the worker will at least comply with the display rules and present a desirable performance for fear that their audience, the discerning customer, will make a complaint to management

(Bolton 2005:117).

A consideration of the social-psychological literature on emotional labour, which concerns itself with the reflexive consciousness of the individual and thus, the way in which they adhere to social norms in order to maintain a continuous narrative of self, and a stable position within society (Thoits 1983; 1985) may potentially inform Bolton's understanding of the emotional labour process if only to be dismissed in conjunction with the idea of compliance.

**Table 3: A typology of workplace emotion**

	<b>Pecuniary</b>	<b>Prescriptive</b>	<b>Presentational</b>	<b>Philanthropic</b>
Feeling Rules	Commercial	Professional Organisational	Social	Social
Associated Motivations	Instrumental	Altruism Status Instrumental	Ontological Security	Gift
Performance	Cynical Compliance	Cynical/Sincere Consent/Commitment	Sincere/Cynical Commitment/Consent	Sincere Commitment
Identity	Imposed/ Self	Professional/ Self	Self	Self
Consequence	Alienation Contradiction Conflict Resistance	Professional Identity Contradiction	Stability	Stability Satisfaction

(Bolton 2005:93)

***Pecuniary Emotion Management***

Pecuniary emotion management seems to be the equivalent of Hochschild's term 'emotional labour', encompassing surface acting, possibly deep acting, though this is unclear, and, although not mentioned, deep acting for pragmatic purposes (Taylor 1998). However, in Table 3 it is presented as a form of cynical emotion management that is performed in compliance with commercial display rules for instrumental gain by an imposed self that leads to alienation, contradiction, conflict and resistance. Such a description only really describes a performance of 'surface acting'. However, further discussion of this type of emotion management in the later chapters actually states that,

By 'pretending deeply' service workers can alter their emotional state and more easily match feeling with face, thus offering a convincing performance of customer-care (Hochschild 1983). In this way pecuniary emotion management is enacted as a sincere performance displaying what Goffman might describe as 'attachment' to the role of service-provider

(Bolton 2005:117).

Such a description would therefore imply that pecuniary emotion management is more than simply the superficial performance of compliance as presented in the table. This being the case, it is also important to note the lack of discussion surrounding the positive effects that the performance of emotional labour has been found to have on employee well being (Wouters 1989; Wharton 1993; Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Williams 2003). Emotional labour has not been seen as a solely negative construct since Morris & Feldman (1996) proposed that it was in fact emotive dissonance that leads to decreased job satisfaction and other negative consequences. Therefore, Bolton (2005) paints a confusing picture of pecuniary emotion management, for she initially begins by describing it as ‘pretending deeply...to enact a sincere performance of care’ (2005:117) but then on the following pages states that “it is notable how the performance of pecuniary emotion management is rarely described as satisfying or rewarding work” (Bolton 2005:118) along with “...the detrimental effects upon workers in what can only be described as a no-win situation” (119).

### *Prescriptive Emotion Management*

Prescriptive emotion management seems to be performed by those who hold ‘membership of a professional body’. These people enjoy the status of their social role, and thereby adhere to the ‘professional feeling rules’ the role prescribes in order to maintain their status. It is also pointed out that “one may also be genuinely motivated to care for or serve people in a public service profession thus indicating the possibility of multiple, even contradictory, motivations” (Bolton 2005:95). The presentation of this form of emotion management implies that those who become members of a professional body do so for the associated status. The act of ‘genuinely caring’ seems to be a bonus and not a pre-requisite in Bolton’s view.

Yet the adherence to feeling rules (Hochschild 1979, 1983) and display rules (Goffman 1959; Ekman 1979), be they professional or otherwise, is perceived to be a basic assumption underlying well-established role identity theory (Thoits 1983, 1985). That is to say, rules regarding social norms, be they professional or otherwise, provide the structure of a cohesive society. Those who do not adhere to the prescribed social norms are labelled, by self and other, ‘abnormal’ or ‘deviant’. The idea that only ‘professional norms’ have some form of status connotation neglects to take into consideration the complexity of the relationship between self, identity and emotions. Even nurses and cabin crew take pride in their work and feel their occupational role is associated with ‘status.’

This quarter of the typology incorporates a wide variety of work motivations, from professionals who genuinely care, the long-standing employee who has become an organizational 'dope', the lawyer who loves the status his or her role affords, and the London banker who adheres to display and feeling rules to maximise bonus earnings.

### *Presentational and Philanthropic Emotion Management*

Presentational emotion management is, though this is not made entirely clear, the inter-colleague emotion work that goes on within the boundaries of an organisation. Along with philanthropic emotion management is "...derived from the notion of maintenance of the 'interaction order', involving moral commitment to maintain rituals of deference and demeanour which offers a sense of stability and ontological security to participants" (Bolton 2005:97). Korczynski (2002) has dealt quite comprehensively with this issue in his work on 'communities of coping', which he derived from Hochschild's own 'collective emotional labour' (1983:114). All three of these terms infer the regulation of emotion that occurs 'backstage', the emotion work that pertains to the social side of organisational life. Bolton indicates that such a performance is governed by 'social feeling rules' in order to maintain ontological security; whether this form of emotion management differs to Hochschild's 'emotion work', located in the agent's private life, is not made clear. However, the recognition that this form of emotion management does occur within the boundaries of organisations does add a considerable richness to the analysis of emotion within the workplace.

Finally, philanthropic emotion management is presented as an extension of the presentational form and one that manifests itself in an emotional 'gift'. When an uneven emotional exchange occurs and the giver is offering a response as a gift that does not need returning, Bolton sees this as a form of philanthropic emotion management. "It might be suggested that it is philanthropic emotion management that represents everyday humanity in the workplace" (Bolton 2005:140). Using one of Hochschild's examples this point is illustrated more clearly.

When a giver and receiver share an expectation about how much sincerity is owed, gestures can be judged as paying less or more than what is owed...the giver may offer more, as when he discounts the very need for a thanks by redefining the gift as a voluntary act of pleasure: "Oh no, there's nothing to thank me for. It was a pleasure to read your manuscript."

(Hochschild 1989:78)

In the workplace, the same social and feelings rules govern philanthropic emotion management as with presentational emotion management, and is motivated by a desire to maintain a stable sense of belonging and acceptance. As with presentational emotion management it appears that both of these forms are similar to Hochschild's 'emotion work', for they are governed by social feeling rules and are motivated by ontological security and acceptance. Yet, Bolton does not make it clear as to whether there are any specific differences between the emotion work that goes on in the private sphere and that which is performed within the boundaries of the organisation.

Bolton goes on to compare philanthropic and presentational emotion management to Goffman's work on the presentation of self.

...[P]rimary socialization is effective enough that social actors enact many social encounters routinely. Actively working on emotion should be distinguished from the framework of assumptions that are usually operative. *Goffman (1959) would call the routine compliance with social feeling rules the 'presentation of self'* and it is suggested here that actors' abilities in presenting socially desirable performances are better thought about in terms of 'presentational' emotional management, with philanthropic emotion management being distinguished as a special case.

(Bolton 2005:100 emphasis added).

The confusion here seems to be twofold, for Goffman's view is dramaturgical meaning his focus is on action, audience and context, thus emotion management is implicit in his work but not explicated nor excluded. So, Goffman's presentation of self was governed by *display rules*, rules that aid impression management and not *feeling rules*, primarily. Thus, Goffman's seminal analysis does not go beyond this 'impression' explicitly, but implies some form of emotion regulation as taking place. Hochschild, however, states, "Goffman's actors actively manage outer impressions, but they do not actively manage inner feelings" (1979:557). In her later work she refines what she means by this when she states "... Goffman does not assume that the individual is effortlessly, pliantly social...the individual's feelings are...consciously suppressed or controlled" (1983:224).

Hochschild goes to great lengths to ensure there is a clear distinction made between 'feeling rules' and Goffman's display rules by stating, "In sum, the emotion management perspective fosters attention to how people try to feel, not as for Goffman, how people try to appear to feel" (Hochschild 1979:560). Bolton's

presentation of Goffman is controversial, for his dramaturgical analysis is one where reality is subordinate to appearance. "Thus commentators refer to Goffman's views of the human being ... as a 'detached, rational impression manager' and the self 'as pure commodity'" (Johnson Williams 1986:349).

The expressive coherence that is required in performances points out a crucial discrepancy between our all-too-human selves and our socialized selves. As human beings, we are presumably creatures of variable impulses with moods and energies that change from one moment to the next. As characters put on for an audience, however, we must not be subject to ups and downs. As Durkheim suggested, we do not allow our higher social activity 'to follow in the trail of our bodily states, as our sensations and our general bodily consciousness do.' A certain bureaucratisation of the spirit is expected so that we can be relied upon to give a perfectly homogenous performance at every appointed time

(Goffman 1959:63-64)

The idea of personal identity relates to the overall conception of self that is formulated and functions within and through the construction of society. Returning to Bolton's idea that presentational emotion management is derived from Goffman's 'presentation of self', this form of emotion management should not be considered 'routine compliance with social feeling rules' (2005:100). For, Goffman's presentation of self is actually a form of impression management, whereby personal identity, or the reflexive consciousness of one's self-concept, is constructed through the interaction order by negotiating, contesting and playing with social feeling rules. As Hochschild herself summarises, "...Goffman does not assume that the individual is effortlessly, pliantly social...the individual's feelings are...consciously suppressed or controlled" (1983:224).

In sum, Goffman's 'inner self' is very rarely seen. His work focuses on the impression of the self, as he himself explains (1959:252-253)

The self...as a performed character, is not an organic thing that has specific location...[the performer and] his body merely provide the peg on which something of collaborative manufacture will be hung for a time...and the means for producing and maintaining self do not reside inside the peg.

(Goffman 1959:252-253)

Bolton's presentation of a new typology of emotion management was, no doubt, long overdue. However, the way in which it was presented has left her theorising open to criticism and debate. One of the contributing factors to such criticisms has to be the lack of empirical evidence, not only to support her new representation but also to help

illustrate to the reader some of the finer, more nuanced distinctions between the different forms of emotion management. This was one of the strengths of Hochschild's book, as the term emotional labour is immediately associated with flight attendants. However, despite such criticisms there have been researchers who have used Bolton's new typology to help make sense of their empirical findings. One such paper by Lewis (2005) is discussed in the following section.

### **A new typology in action...?**

As stated above, the publication of Bolton's (2005) *Emotion Management in the Workplace*, as a serious contribution to the field of emotion management, led to the new typology being taken up as a framework for empirical analysis. This section of the chapter discusses the ways in which Lewis (2005) utilises Bolton's theoretical framework to understand what she observed in a neonatal ward. I am taking the time to discuss this particular paper because I feel that it helps better clarify some of Bolton's conceptual meanings.

Lewis' (2005) study into the emotion management required of neonatal nurses used prescriptive and philanthropic emotion management in a work context where emotion "...suppression is a professional requirement" (Lewis 2005:565). Lewis's research, however, is not supported by clear critical theoretical debate, as it has to negotiate the analytical disruptions in Bolton's typology. However, Lewis does attempt to iron out some of the creases, identified in the previous section, in Bolton's interpretation of Hochschild.

Lewis also aids our understanding of the fluidity with which the different forms of emotion management are enabled. She calls this notion 'dual consciousness', a concept borrowed from Collinson (1992) by Bolton and Boyd in their 2003 paper on the 'skilled' emotional labour of cabin crew. Dual consciousness is the idea that individuals have both a personal and a professional orientation to work, that they have dual motivations and dual roles that they have to enact. Such a concept aids our understanding of Bolton's new model, for the functionalist, rigid presentation of the typology (see Figure 1) clouds the dynamism and fluidity with which 'active knowledge agents' (Bolton 2005) negotiate the variable motivations and social norms they face when managing their emotions in the context of work.



Philanthropic emotion management seems to be, then, synonymous with “collective emotional labour” (Hochschild 1983), when addressing the support networks that nurses have developed amongst each other, Lewis states, “this form of emotional labour can be characterised as philanthropic, in that the emotional support provided and the emotional work performed by nurses for each other is given as a gift” (2005:577). However, there is no consideration of presentational emotion management in the theoretical analysis. For if philanthropic emotion management is an extension to presentational emotion management, as Bolton states, then surely it cannot be analysed without a consideration of the latter?

She goes on to conclude.

The existence of these private communities of coping again demonstrates how nurses are active agents when it comes to emotion management issues on the unit. They are not simply subject to prescriptive feeling rules that demand an unemotional, aloof, professional demeanour.

(Lewis 2005:577)

Lewis’s conclusion supports Hochschild’s (1983) original definition of collective emotional labour. The extract below shows how Hochschild documented the support and camaraderie emotional labourers provide for one another, helping each other through crises.

...when there is time for it, mutual morale raising is common. As one said: “When one flight attendants is depressed, thinking, ‘I’m ugly, what am I doing as a flight attendant?’ other flight attendants, even without quite knowing what they are doing, try to cheer her up. They straighten her collar for her, to get her up and smiling again. I’ve done it too, and needed it done.

(Hochschild 1983:115)

The difference perhaps is that Hochschild took a slightly less optimistic outlook on the consequences and origins of this collective form of emotional labour. Though it cannot be denied that she sees the emotional labourer as an active emotion manager, perhaps the idea is plausible that collective emotional labour cannot always be labelled as a gift, but can be a product of deeper, organisational control.

To thwart cynicism about the living room analogy, to catch it as it collapses in the face of other realizations, the company eye shifts to another field of emotion work – the field in which flight attendants interact with each other. This is a strategic point of entry for the company because if the company can influence how flight attendants deal with each other’s feelings on the job, it can assure proper support for private emotion management.

(Hochschild 1983:114-115).

In conclusion, from the new typology of workplace emotion it is difficult to comprehend the distinctions between the various forms of emotion management presented, especially when trying to apply them to empirical data. Why there is no research data presented in the book is unclear, because the 2003 article that Bolton co-wrote with Boyd uses 'comparable data' (Bolton & Boyd 2003:289) to that of Hochschild (flight attendants) to illustrate the differences between the identified forms of emotion management.

The emotional labour 'bandwagon' has indeed moved us away from Hochschild's original conceptualisation of emotion management, and led to the term being used to 'catch all' workplace emotions. Such generalisations detract from the value of the emotional labour construct and could be thought of as hindering its theoretical progression. Secondly, Hochschild's emotion work – emotional labour dichotomy could be viewed as outdated, or simply unhelpful in terms of being founded on a division between the public and private performances of emotion management (Tolich 1993). The rapid development of the informatized society has placed an ever-growing onus on the service sector, the interactive service contract has now become an aestheticized experience, which has led to greater importance being placed on immaterial labour (Hardt & Negri 2001). The way organisations and individuals cope with and contest these changes have led to an increasing complexity of emotion management in both public and private life.

The need for a reconsideration of emotion in the contemporary workplace is valid, yet the complexity of the changes induced by dynamic trends in society is much greater than those implied by Bolton. An analysis of a contemporary organisation, particularly in the service sector and especially one that relies on labour process analysis to form its foundation, is incomplete without a consideration of 'affective labour' (Hardt 1999; Hardt & Negri 2001). The exclusion of such a fundamental debate, along with a lack of empirical research to illustrate and support the typology, leaves Bolton's new typology feeling very out of touch with the experience of emotion in the contemporary workplace.

## The Affective Turn<sup>16</sup>

The final section of this chapter offers a perspective on emotional labour that has tended to be marginalized in the literature, particularly in the field of organization studies. Drawing from the ‘immaterial labour’ debate<sup>17</sup> (Lazzarato 1996; Virno 1996; Hardt & Negri 2001), ‘affect’ is seen to be increasingly important in the discussion of labour in the post-Fordist stage of capitalism; informatization. Literature and ideas presented here attempt to contextualise the use of emotion management within organisations in a wider discussion of ‘affective labour’ (Wissinger 2007; Weeks, 2007, Dowling 2007).

Within the philosophical literatures there is no agreed upon definition of affect. Some think of it as being synonymous with emotion (Barsade & Gibson 2007) whilst others see this synonymy as being the cause of ambiguity (Massumi 2002; Wittel 2004). In *Parables for the Virtual*, Massumi (2002) goes to great lengths to explain and demonstrate why emotion and affect should be theorised differently. For him, affect is intensity whilst emotion is “a sociolinguistic fixing of the quality of an experience” (Massumi, 2002:28), thus, emotion and affect follow different logics and pertain to different orders. Expanding on this distinction, Massumi (2002) sees affect as being a ‘narrative continuity’, drawing from Spinoza’s conceptualisation of affect, in that, affect exists prior to recognition and reflexivity, it is prior to the distinction between activity and passivity. Affect can be perceived to be both virtual and actual, in other words it has a dual ontology; affect in the virtual influences affect in the actual and vice versa<sup>18</sup>. In this sense, emotions are seen to be the ‘qualification breaks’ (2002:25) in this ‘narrative continuity’, that is, the state of affect is already in existence and emotions are the registering of that state. They are “qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning” (Massumi 2002:28).

Emotions, then, are the intense moments in the continuous narrative. Massumi (2002) points out that these ‘qualification breaks’ i.e. emotions, are a reminder of all that has passed in that narrative:

That is why all emotion is more or less disorientating, and why it is classically described as being outside of oneself, at the very point at which one is intimately and unshareably in contact with oneself and one’s vitality. If there were no escape, no excess or remainder, no fade-out to infinity, the universe

would be without potential, pure entropy, death. Actually existing, structured things live in and through that which escapes them. Their autonomy is the autonomy of affect.

(Massumi 2002:35)

For Clough, the concept of affect is similar to Massumi's (2002) definition, in that affect is

...a substrate of potential bodily responses, often automatic responses, in excess of consciousness...affect refers generally to bodily capacities to affect and be affected or the augmentation or diminution of a body's capacity to act, to engage, and to connect, such that autoaffectation is linked with self-feeling of being alive, that is, aliveness or vitality.

(Clough 2007:2).

Wittel (2004:25) offers a less abstract definition:

Affect is more than feelings or emotions: it is energy, sensation and a force that drives things that encourage bodily and social movements. It is human; it is what keeps everything else alive.

These definitions demonstrate the conceptual differences between affect and emotion, yet some scholars continue to see them as one and the same (Barsade & Gibson 2007). Massumi (2002) believes that the two terms are used and confused as synonyms because there is no 'cultural theoretical vocabulary specific to affect' (2002:27) and therefore it is easy to use the psychological categories associated with related concepts i.e. emotion. In addition, he also comments that affect is not 'ownable' or 'recognizable' and thus is resistant to critique (Massumi 2002: 28). In spite of their differences, however, emotion and affect do share a close relationship and it is this relationship that will be explored throughout the remainder of this chapter as part of a broader discussion of immaterial labour.

### *Emotional Labour as a form of Affective Labour*

In a discussion of affect, Negri (1999) pointed out that taking a top down approach to researching forms of immaterial labour can often be fruitless, as affect, by definition, becomes invisible from this angle. Instead, he argues for a study of affective labour from below, from the perspective of the subject. However, this idea is merited in theory, yet the epistemological and ontological nature of affect makes finding a suitable methodology difficult. Perhaps as a consequence of this, research into affective labour has been relatively lacking, and, it has recently been argued that

where emotional labour theory has been used to guide research methodologies, a consideration of affective labour may have been more suited (Weeks 2007).

Weeks (2007) critically discusses Hochschild's (1983) concept of emotional labour and C.Wright Mills's (1953) white collar immaterial labour from the perspective of affective labour. She argues that both Mills and Hochschild, as socialists, were focused on the comparative value of the 'Other' e.g. public versus private, industrial versus craft and alienated versus free but proposes an alternative politicised analytical framework in terms of life and work, in light of the affective labour debate and subjectification.

Hochschild's presentation of emotional labour is an extension and elaboration of Mills's discussion of the personality market<sup>19</sup>. However, as Weeks (2007) and Hochschild point out, Mills tends to "assume that in order to sell personality, one need only have it" (Hochschild 1983:ix; Weeks 2007:240). Hochschild's contribution, then, was that the sale of personality required an active skill i.e. emotional labour, this acknowledgement moved the 'production' of personality into a discussion of the labour process; where the labour process is a process of subjectification.

As Hochschild explains labour in the 'personality market' is one that "calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and...sometimes draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our individuality" (Hochschild, 1983:7). Weeks (2007: 241) goes on to elaborate that "its impact is not even limited to what we do or what we think, to the body's health and energies or the mind's thoughts. It extends to the affective life of the subject, into the fabric of the personality" Taking this into consideration, then, Weeks (2007) suggests that Hochschild's analysis of the 'production and consumption of subjectivity' may have been better suited to a discussion of affect rather than emotion as "the category of affect traverses the divisions of mind and body, reason and emotion, and confounds the ontological containment these dichotomies enable" (Weeks 2007:241). Also, affective labour as a form of immaterial labour is situated in more fluid assumptions relating to subjectivity and thus would provide a more dynamic notion of the 'active subject' as emotion manager. Discussion of affect allows for a broader conceptualisation of the commodification of 'personality' or 'self' in terms of emotions, aesthetics, cognition and gender<sup>20</sup>.

Week's (2007) alternative framework for conceptualising this immaterial process of subjectification is based on a critical distinction between life and work. As she explains,

Once we recognize that work produces subjects, the borders that would contain it are called into question. It is not only that work and life cannot be confined to particular sites, from the perspective of the production of subjectivity, work and life are thoroughly interpenetrated. The subjectivities shaped at work do not remain at work but inhabit all the spaces and times of nonwork and vice-versa. Who one becomes at work and in life are mutually constitutive.

(Weeks, 2007:246)

The process of subjectification, then, is one of a multiplicity of selves, interwoven subjectivities that inform the whole; to construct who a person 'is'. From this fragmented multiplicity of subjects a coherent narrative discourse of self exists.

For Weeks (2007), the existence of the immaterial labour market and the consequences this has on individuals and society requires a "critical standpoint rooted in a discourse of subjectivity and in relation to some notion of an alternative model of the subject" (2007:247). She offers the 'potential self' as an alternative model, where an individual is not defined by the subjectivities that are currently in existence but those that might come into being. Such a 'potential self' would reframe an argument of Marxist alienation, so that there would be no self to exploit or save from alienation<sup>21</sup>, instead we would perceive of a self to be constructed; who you want to be.

Carls (2007) considers immaterial labour to accentuate conflict and resistance to control, she argues that any form of labour control is considered a conflictive field, but this is highlighted in the case of immaterial labour. It is particularly conflictive because immaterial labour control is dynamic and in constant pursuit of consent and compliance of subjectivities.

As its aim is to transform mere labour power into real work performance, labour control has to assure the exclusion from the work process of all those employee's interest which do not meet the goal of capitalist accumulation. In addition it must adapt all those parts of employee's subjectivities required in the labour process to this imperative

(Carls, 2007:48).

Researching frontline retail labour Carls (2007) considers the way in which the affective character of the labour inherent in the service interactions is colonized and unified as a technology of control. Her qualitative research methods found that the

front-line service staff interviewed articulated that they enjoyed personal interactions with clients, finding them rewarding and pleasing.

Due to the attraction of affective labour, employees could this be said to have internalised responsibility for service quality and to behave in line with company's interests in spite of generally dissatisfactory working conditions

(Carls 2007:52)

'The attraction of affective labour', as implied here refers to the recognition and satisfaction that front line service workers gained from dealing with customers who were friendly and appreciative of their efforts. Thus, Carls is alluding to the idea that affective labour could be seen as upholding and affirming a part of the self.

Massumi's (2002) work on affect and the body considers the role of the *virtual observer* in identity construction. Massumi (2002) states that the perception of oneself is co-constructed by the 'Other'. This 'Other' is the *virtual observer*, for our ability to be self-reflexive means that we are all virtual observers of ourselves, and those with which we interact. Through such a referential process of co-construction, the self is continually monitored and observed as we aspire toward the ideal of our 'potential self' (Weeks 2007). This idea of self as a co-construction of the virtual and the actual is a product of the dual ontology of affect previously discussed.

What is crucial in Weeks' and Carls' (2007) developing arguments, then, is that emotional labour is seen to be a form of affective labour. Through the performance of emotional labour it is not only emotions that are produced, consumed and managed, emotions play a role in the production and consumption of affect and subjectivity. Dowling (2007) and Wissinger (2007), however, argue that although it is appropriate to situate emotional labour within the immaterial labour debate, it is imperative that they are still recognised and thought of as individual forms of labour. They believe that a nuanced understanding of those particular forms should not be overlooked in generalisations of the immaterial.

Wissinger's (2007) research into the modelling industry provides some illustrative practical examples of the inaccuracies when it comes to conceptualising emotion and affect as synonymous. She sees affect as being central in the process of modelling as the models attempt to engage with more than emotion, "they engage with affect on a level below conscious awareness". Affect is seen to be "a condition of the emergence

of emotion, as a form of bodily vitality that does not reside in any particular subject” (Wissinger 2007:250).

Wissinger (2007) argues that, for example, models are asked to convey certain emotions and therefore perform emotional labour. However:

“...Frequently, models at this level are not given direction: instead they are called upon to channel the mood and energy present in the room, to open themselves to the possibilities of the moment, to collaborate with the team assembled in the hope of capturing something unexpected, something that moves them beyond the norm, toward the unknown”

(Wissinger 2007:260).

This she feels is beyond the realm of emotional labour, for it is unsupervised, undirected emotion and aesthetic management. Yet, would it not be naïve to argue that all emotional performances given under the rubric of emotional labour is directed and planned? The type of ‘affective labour’ required of models, undoubtedly differs from the kind of emotion management employed by cabin crew, yet is it not just another manifestation, a more dynamic, form of emotion manipulation. To this critique Wissinger (2007) argues

In contrast to the flight attendant who has a specific reaction in mind, and works to produce that emotion both in him or herself and the passenger, a fashion model is not asked to capture and contain emotion, or direct it in a particular way. The work of models may resemble this activity periodically but, much of the time, fashion models are valued for their ability to unleash a wide range of responses, responses that might shift or be modulated faster than they can be subjectively recognised as emotions

(Wissinger, 2007:260).

For Wissinger, then, affective labour should not be too readily associated with emotional labour, in fear of the two concepts becoming blurred and their individual nuances lost. Wissinger argues that affect is a “condition of emergence of emotion, and emotion as the capture, closure, and naming of affect” (2007:260). In this sense, then, affect is the ‘energy’ that motivates social and bodily effects, that underlies human life. It is non-subjective, in the sense that affect is pre-conscious; it precedes the cultural understanding and social ‘rationalisation’ that are present in emotion. Wissinger’s analysis, however, is based on an implicit assumption that emotions are a product of conscious awareness, as does Hochschild.



## Conclusion

Since the publication of the *The Managed Heart* research into emotional labour has been widespread, with the main focus being on identifying which occupational roles require the performance of emotional labour. However, over the course of the past twenty-five years such research has become relatively unconstructive in advancing our understanding of emotional labour as a form of labour and the consequences of such a performance. This chapter has served to review some of the more significant theoretical contributions over this period and to offer a potential re-positioning of the emotional labour debate.

Since the Hochschild/ Wouters controversy in 1989 the idea that not all emotional labour performances would lead to negative consequences has been dispelled. Constructing emotional labour as a multi-dimensional construct opened up the field to further investigation. However, Hochschild's original presentation of emotional labour as an extension to the labour process has meant that many of the epistemological and ontological assumptions upon which emotional labour theory is built have found it difficult to explain just why emotional labour is experienced in different ways.

By conceptualising emotional labour in a broader context of immaterial labour, and more specifically affective labour, it is possible to move away from more orthodox assumptions of the traditional labour process. Considering emotional labour as a constitutive form of affective labour opens up the debate to consider the impact alternative models of self may have on the way in which we theorise and conceptualise emotional labour, and emotion management in general. From recent research on affect and affective labour, where affect is defined as 'narrative continuity' (Massumi 2002) and emotions are the conscious breaks from that subconscious narrative through which we orientate and evaluate, it may be possible to postulate the role of a 'potential self' (Weeks 2007) in the production of subjectivity in the process of performing emotional labour; and that emotional labour aids in the co-construction of a continuous narrative of self, that being affect. In other words, the way we manage and evaluate the moments in which we are able to reflect and become conscious of our affective self, that is the experience of emotions, is all part of a larger project in maintaining a continuous and coherent narrative of self, or our 'affect'.

The following chapter looks to the field of psychology to further explore the emotional labour process in an attempt to understand how a continuous narrative of self is performed and maintained.

## Chapter Four: Emotive Dissonance: a neodissonant approach to emotion?

### Introduction

The focus of this chapter is to centralise the role of emotive dissonance within a discussion of the emotional labour process. Despite many sociological and socio-psychological studies pointing towards the importance of emotive dissonance in understanding the emotional labour process it has yet to become the focus of emotional labour research. The relationship between emotive dissonance and well-being has been considered within the psychological literature, however, these studies have failed to be considered by sociologists.

I take a cross-disciplinary approach to researching the role emotive dissonance plays in the emotional labour process to gain a more holistic view of the concept particularly when considering emotional labour within a discussion of affective labour. The chapter begins with a consideration of Hochschild's ontological assumptions that underlie emotional labour; the role of self, reflexivity and identity. I then go on to review the literature on emotive dissonance and consider the origins of the concept, to explore the way emotive dissonance has the potential to be considered key in shaping emotional labour performances and social identities.

### The Inconsistency of Multiple Selves

The concept of emotive dissonance is presented as contingent upon the existence of a 'true self' (Hochschild, 1983), or a concept of self that individual's feel represents them most 'honestly.' Such notions of singularity, truth and authenticity are seeded in the foundations of our 'Western<sup>22</sup>' (Spiro, 1993) cultural society, for example the Protestant work ethic fosters individualism, by presenting work as a means of salvation. Thus, the monotheistic traditions of Western society, could be seen to lead to the development of a belief in a True, singular self (Harré 1998), unique to each individual. As Gergen postulated "the self is treated as a set of core feelings or perceptions that a person has about himself which demand reverence because they uniquely distinguish the individual from others" (1971:2). An example of such commitment to singular truth and authenticity can be taken from Shakespeare:

To thine own self be true, and it must follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man

Hamlet – Shakespeare

Not all conceptions of self are singular, however. William James (1890/1961) was the first to consider a fragmented formation of self in terms of the 'I' and 'me'; with the whole 'me' comprising of the 'social me', 'material me' and 'spiritual me'. The self for James is the 'stream of consciousness' in which physical and emotional life is experienced; it can therefore be examined from the perspective of knower, 'I', or known, 'me'. Despite this fragmented typology of 'self' James never intended the two dimensions of 'knower' and 'known' to be separated, they should be seen as two perspectives on the 'stream of consciousness'; therefore, James saw the self as both subject and object unified as a single phenomenon.

Stemming from James' theory of a two-dimensional self was his peripheric theory of emotion. Extending the notion of the 'knower' and the 'known' James believed that emotion was actually the consciousness of physical change, in other words the knower, 'I', is effected by the state of the known, 'me'. Thus, physical symptoms trigger an emotional reaction; emotions are the consciousness of that physical change. As Sartre explains, "Sadness does not cause tears, on the contrary, James prefers paradoxically to say that tears, the physiological disturbance, causes sadness, which is the consciousness of this disturbance" (1971:1-2). For James, the 'stream of consciousness' is only a response to, or a consciousness of, physiological manifestations.

In her seminal piece on emotional labour, Hochschild's (1983) choice of analytical conceptualisation of emotion is dichotomous; she sees theories of emotion falling into 'organismic models', including Darwin, James and Freud and 'interactional models' including C. Wright Mills and Erving Goffman. In brief, theories that fall into the organismic model are those that view emotion as innate, a biological component of the human form. Psychoanalysts take the view that emotions are constantly present but are not, generally, acknowledged. Such an understanding of emotion goes some way to explaining James' peripheric theory of emotion. If emotions are flowing like a sub-current beneath the surface of consciousness then, according to James, physiological change can serve as an outlet; by laughing we begin to feel happy. Such a view is much less salient in conceptualisations of emotion today, yet there are still those that support the notion of physical stimulus helping to induce emotional response to some extent (Hochschild 1979, 1983; Zajonc 1985). It can be argued, that physical manifestations of the emotions presented e.g. smiling, can help to trigger the 'emotion memory'<sup>23</sup> (Stanislavski 1965; Hochschild 1983), thereby aiding in the

process of arousing particular emotions e.g. feelings of happiness. As will be discussed later, Hochschild develops such thinking when she concludes that expressive gestures that regulate display can alter inner feeling (1983:562).

Symbolic interactionism, on the other hand, holds a more stable position within both psychological and sociological research. It is a model based on the ontological assumption of a mind and self constructed by society. C. H. Cooley (1902) and G.H. Mead (1934) were the social psychologists that emphasized the relationship between self and society, in terms of a 'social self'. Cooley (1902) termed such sociality a 'Looking Glass Self', as the self is formed by our imagination of our appearance to others, the imagined judgement of it and the self-feeling that such imaginings invoke. From this perspective, the self is no longer static or stable, it is a product of social interaction, a product of how it imagines itself from the standpoint of the 'other', and, is therefore, by definition, dynamic. Such a reflexive conception of self influenced the thinking of Karl Weick, among others<sup>24</sup>.

Mead (1934), however, was not content with Cooley's conception of self as it relied too heavily on the 'imaginings' of other's reactions and was, therefore, inevitably introspective. For Mead however, the critical issue was that Cooley's conception of self was based on solipsism. Solipsism is the assumption that you can never really know the content of another's mind. Such an assumption limits Cooley's self-concept to imaginings, yet the idea of a social self, a belief in which, the self and mind emerge in the social world implies that the mind of the 'other' is in fact knowable, as it is constructed by social interaction.

To rectify such 'weaknesses', Mead placed a concerted emphasis on 'self-consciousness' as opposed to 'self-feeling'. Though his ideas were still focused on a social self, a self constructed through social interaction, it was no longer the imagined reaction of others but the reaction learnt through experience of previous social interactions. According to Mead, the self takes the role of the 'other', which is at first a specific other and then the wider community of the 'generalised other' (Thoits 1985:222), and over time comes to think of itself in terms of other's behaviour towards it. In other words, the self is socially constructed "...through the internalisation of the social interpretation of human conduct" (Henriques 1984:16), humans are constantly monitoring their emotions and behaviours (Scheff 1983) from the standpoint of the 'generalised other' (Thoits 1985)

'Transference' (Craib 2001; Theodosius 2006), is a psychoanalytical concept that is an inherently social process. Craib illustrates the nature of transference:

We imagine what our parents are thinking and feeling, and later in life what our partners and friends are thinking and feeling and what our children will be, or are thinking and feeling; we are all born into our parents' phantasies. Here is a sense in which a human relationship, any human relationship, involves an exchange of parts...and it follows that any relationship will involve some degree of transference.

(Craib 2001:196)

Theodosius' work on nurses emphasises the significance of such a concept within social interactions at work. She criticises Hochschild for not considering the interactive relational nature of emotions, concluding that emotional labour is overly focused on feeling rules and norms, thereby depicting individuals and their emotions as existing in a vacuum away from the rest of society. However, despite Hochschild emphasising the importance of feelings rules within the service interaction, it may be unfair to accuse her of not appreciating the relational nature of emotions, considering her references to 'collective emotional labour' (1983:114) and the concept of 'gift exchange' (1983:18).

The concept of collective emotional labour, though it will be considered in more depth later, is the emotion management that takes place when a group of emotional labourers work together, in effect, they maintain the 'emotional tone' by bantering with one another, to keep the mood 'up'. Gift exchange, similarly, helps to maintain equilibrium within social interactions, by individuals offering an emotional gift to one another in a time of need. For example, one may comfort or suppress feelings of frustration towards a co-worker who is upset due to personal issues. This act of emotion management, then, is offered as a gift, for there are no prescribed rules that dictate behaviour within such situations. As Hochschild remarks, however, "over time, the debtor makes up the debt or sends promissory notes persuading the other to join in imagining a future time of repayment" (1983:84), therefore although the emotion is offered as a gift, it is generally expected to be returned in the future. Both of these concepts demonstrate the social nature of emotions as they are generated by social interaction. In addition, although Hochschild's primary focus is on the generation of emotions to adhere to organisational display and feeling rules, she also considers that emotions can be 'done to' a person. In other words, emotions that are generated by the behaviour of other people, for example, angry and abusive passengers can upset cabin crew; emotions, in this sense, are 'done to' the individual and are not internally generated. It is not entirely accurate, then, to comment that

Hochschild's representation of individuals and their emotions as existing within a social vacuum.

The omnipotence of transference within social interaction implies that emotion itself must be treated as an interactive, relational process. A key characteristic of transference, is that it not only takes place within interactions but also results from and anticipates interaction. Thus, moving away from Hochschild's 'functionalist tendencies', Theodosius (2006) highlights the subsequent importance of considering unconscious emotion responses alongside those that are consciously managed, as transference is not necessarily a conscious process.

Symbolic interactionism's ontology is one of multiple selves, where self-conceptions emerge and are validated by social interaction. Multiple self-conceptions that emerge through various social relationships have been termed 'social identities' (Styker and Serpe 1982) or 'role-identities' (Thoits 1991) relating them to structural positions within society (e.g. wife, parent, teacher, nurse etc). Role-identities each have a set of social rules or 'scripts' that give the actor a sense of who they are and how they should behave. Holstein and Gubrium illustrate the multiplicity of social-identities,

We carry on a whole series of different relationships to different people. We are one thing to one man and another thing to another. There are parts of the self which exist only for the self in relationship to itself. We divide ourselves in all sorts of different selves with reference to our acquaintances...there are all sorts of different selves answering to all sorts of different social reactions. It is the social process itself that is responsible for the appearance of the self; it is not there as a self apart from this type of experience.

(Holstein and Gubrium 2000: 142)

However, it is not only 'social-identities', determined by our structural position in society that constructs multiple self-conceptions. Cooley's (1902) interpretation of symbolic interactionism implies that one can imagine the reaction of others to a specific behaviour, making it possible to anticipate the behaviour that a 'social-identity' will induce. This reflexive consciousness (Sartre 1971) allows the self to be "conscious of itself as an object [or behaviour] appears" (Mead 1934:xiv; Rosenberg 1990). Such a quality permits the reflexive assessment of the meaning of one's actual or, contemplated behaviours, as Thoits (1985) recognises, thus allowing both public and self-labelling. The process of being reflexively conscious of the self is known as 'reflexive cognition' (Rosenburg 1990).

Extending theories of symbolic interactionism, Weick (1995) proposes that identity construction is grounded in a process of 'sensemaking'.

Active agents construct sensible, sensible (Huber & Daft 1987, p154) events. They "structure the unknown" (Waterman, 1990, p41). How they construct, why, and with what effects are the central questions for people interested in sensemaking"

(Weick 1995:4).

Such a process is seen to have seven distinguishing characteristics: it is grounded in identity construction, retrospective, enactive of sensible environments, social, ongoing, focused on and by extracted cues and driven by plausibility rather than accuracy. Just as symbolic interaction is a 'social process,' so too is sensemaking, as both infer that society functions through a set of 'intersubjective shared meanings' (Weick, 1995: 38) where behaviour and conceptualisation are contingent 'on others'. Weick describes the main theoretical links between sensemaking and symbolic interactionism

Investigators who talk about sensemaking often invoke imagery associated with symbolic interactionism (Fine 1993), not so much because this is the unofficial theory of sensemaking but because the theory keeps in play a crucial set of elements, including self, action, interaction, meaning and joint action...because symbolic interactionism derives from the work of Mead, and because Mead was adamant that mind and self arise and develop within the social process, to use the images of symbolic interactionism is to ensure that one remains alert to the ways in which people actively shape each other's meanings and sensemaking processes.

(Weick 1995:41)

As is the case with symbolic interactionism, the primary ontological assumption is the interaction of multiple, social selves. Following Mead, a sensemaker is, a 'parliament of selves' as no individual ever acts as a single sensemaker.

Reflexive cognition is embodied in the retrospective characteristic of sensemaking, for "people can only know what they are doing only after they have done it" (Weick 1995:24). Using James' (1961 [1890]) 'stream of experience' to conceptualise time and events as 'pure duration' (1995:25), we only reflect on discrete segments of memory, by stepping away from that stream of experience or pure duration, thus, allowing them to be interpreted as phases of the continual flow. Therefore, meaning is created by paying attention to particular discrete segments in time that have already passed, the way in which they will be interpreted is contingent on circumstances at the point of retrospect. In terms of the self-concept, then, the events that we choose to



highlight in our histories are those that will confirm the narrative that our current social role prescribes.

A symbolically interactional self leads to an interactional theory of emotion, one based on the meaning that the biological process of emotion ascribes. Within the interactional model, emotion is evoked by cognitive recognition or interpersonal interaction, making the emotion inseparable from the experience; emotions are reflexive and formative, and are constantly shaped by social and cultural norms, or 'feeling rules' (Hochschild 1979). Implicit in such a construction of emotion, is the assumption that emotions are only experienced after the event has occurred; in order to experience an emotion, the social situation must be constructed and interpreted.

In contrast to James' peripheric theory of emotion, symbolic interactionism implies that the physical manifestations of emotions are non-specific; instead an emotional response is dependent on the situational environment within which it is aroused and the culture in which it is interpreted. "Emotions, then, are the joint product of generalised arousal and specific sociocultural factors" (Thoits 1989:320) thereby making them culturally specific. Cross-cultural research on emotion, particularly that from anthropological studies of communities from lesser-developed countries, has documented complete 'emotional cultures' made up of unique emotion vocabularies. "Each culture produces a lexicon of emotion words that orders the emotional experiences of individuals" (Middleton 1989:192). As Thoits points out, the assumptions of symbolic interactionism imply that there must exist as many emotions as have been distinguished across all cultures (Averill 1980). In opposition to this view, proponents of universalist theories of emotion (Scheff, 1983) believe that there exists only one physical form of arousal that is integral in all emotional experiences, yet emotions are differentiated by the 'frame' (Goffman 1974; Hochschild 1979) in which they are interpreted.

Erving Goffman's (1959) work on presentations of self falls into the interactional model category, and deserves further attention here, as the impact it had on Hochschild's work, and a number of others, is considerable. Goffman does not assume that individuals are innately social; instead they must constantly work at suppressing and performing emotions to maintain social order. His dramaturgical approach implies a constrained performance beneath which there is the implicit opportunity for the expression of feeling regardless of social appropriation. 'Agentive reflexivity' (Rosenburg 1990:3), "the process whereby the organism reflects back on

itself for the purpose of producing intended effects on itself," allows for the manipulation of the presentation of self, thereby creating the possibility for emotion management. 'Agentive reflexivity' differs from 'reflexive cognition' (Rosenburg, 1990) or 'self-reflexivity' (Thoits, 1983), because it identifies constituent parts of the 'self' as opposed to viewing the 'self' as a whole. Being reflexive in a cognitive sense allows the individual to reflect on the overall impression of the self, as the 'other' would perceive it. Yet, 'agentive reflexivity' allows an individual to identify specific processes and elements of the 'self', such as emotions and cognitions. As Rosenburg (1990:3) points out, "by virtue of reflexivity and agency, people are able to observe, reflect on, and produce alterations in these internal processes," thereby opening up the possibility for emotion management.

For Goffman, emotions are suppressed, thereby creating the need for the self to constantly regulate and remain reflexively aware of the social situation and the emotions and behaviours that are appropriate. Thus, an individual's 'presentation of the self' is one based upon a capacity to consciously manage their emotions, without this level of control social solidarity would be compromised. However for Hochschild (1979, 1983), Goffman only goes so far in linking emotion with self-conception. Goffman's description of the individual is one almost at the mercy of social compliance because there is no discussion of an inner self, an inner voice that holds an opinion on what is expected of him. Goffman's 'actor' is one who can only perform 'surface acting'; the ability to deep act is inconceivable without an inner self. Goffman's 'actor' is not concerned with his inner subjectivity, but places a primary focus on his outer impression; an impression that is constantly being reflected upon and managed.

Emotions are often characterised as entities, somehow possessing their own will and motivation to control the person in whom they reside. We speak of being 'haunted by fear', 'overwhelmed by anger', 'racked with guilt', and 'consumed by rage'. In most cases of 'irrationality' we blame our emotions. In this sense, emotions, especially those of relatively high intensity, such as rage, and anger are often perceived to be all consuming, as they have the capacity to inspire action, in the way of compulsions and otherwise 'unusual' behaviour. Hochschild (1983:214) points out that such metaphors are often likely to portray how it feels to experience such emotion but such perceptions should not infiltrate our understanding of how emotions work. For Hochschild (1983) emotions are

... a biological given sense, and our most important one. Like other senses... it is a means by which we know about our relation to the world... Emotion is unique among the senses, however, because it is related not only to an orientation toward *action* but also to an orientation toward *cognition*.

(Hochschild 1983:229 *emphases in original*)

In a sense, Hochschild perceives emotion in terms of Sartre's Cartesian consciousness, in that consciousness must always be aware of itself. In Sartre's work, the self is always seen as the subject, and perception is always reflexive. Perception is reflexive in the sense that you are always aware of yourself perceiving something. Consequently, Sartre sees emotion as being an 'indissoluble synthesis' tied to both the subject (self) and an object, that towards which the emotion is directed (Sartre: 1971:9). The duality of self and emotion holds similarities to James' typology of self in terms of 'the knower' and 'the known'. They are perspectives on the stream of consciousness bound to both subject and object.

A reflexive theory of emotion can therefore be defined as "internal states of arousal that are subjected to interpreted processes" (Rosenburg 1990:4), that are cognitive in nature. Emotion is a product of the behavioural and cognitive processing of information referring to the actor's capacity to be aware and act upon internal states of arousal. A reflexive theory of emotion relies on a reflexive theory of consciousness and highlights the distinction between motivation and arousal. Without cognitive reflexive consciousness (Rosenburg 1990) it would not be possible to interpret emotion, and without agentic reflexivity it would not be possible to decide upon an appropriate response. The 'appropriate response' is thereby the motivating factor behind emotion management. Without a reflexive consciousness emotions would simply be aroused.

### **An Emotionally Managed Self**

The way in which the performance of emotional labour, as a form of immaterial labour<sup>25</sup> is perceived by both theorists and 'actors' is contingent upon the ontological assumptions made regarding the self. Hochschild (1983) offers a sensitive account of airline flight attendants' and bill collectors' struggles to stave off the effects of multiple, contesting sociabilities in order to protect their inner, authentic self. She describes the relentless requirement to keep others happy, and to create a positive upbeat atmosphere in the face of often 'demanding publics' (Williams 2003), as an

exercise in the management and co-ordination of emotions. In effect, hers is a story of the 'true self's' resistance to inundation from externalities created by the organisation.

Hochschild's ontological debate includes the existence of both a 'social self or selves' and a true 'Transcendental self'. Implicit in her assumptions, that are the foundations of the emotional labour field, Hochschild adopts a multiplicity of selves in the Meadian sense, yet these 'social selves' are seen to be 'false selves' that serve to mobilize around the 'true self' to protect it from inundation from the social world. Hochschild's ontological assumptions are derived from an amalgamation of theoretical influences, including Goffman (1959), Mead (1934), Dewey (1922) and Gerth and Mills (1964). The existence of a 'true self' aids in explaining her data findings, in terms of the commodification of feeling and emotionality, however it is primarily an a priori theoretical commitment to what she perceives to be part of the 'interactionist model' of emotion theory. One of the main ontological contributors to Hochschild's theorising of a 'new social theory of emotion' was Goffman (1959) because she thought there was a lack of continuity between his notion of self and his theory of emotion.

Goffman (1959) argued that individuals manage their behaviour and emotions in accordance with certain 'display rules' that allow individuals to function cohesively within society. However, he denies the development of a 'true self', and thereby the existence of an inner voice, which may seek to coordinate actions in order to for rules to be complied to, resisted against or simply acknowledged. This lack of continuity made Hochschild question: "Where is the self as subject of emotive experience? What is the relation of *act* to *self*?" (1983:227, emphasis in original). For Goffman, then, "actions happen to the self; but the self does not do them" (1983:227).

Hochschild's 'false selves' are regarded as multiple 'performed selves'; similar to Goffman (1959), however, the construction of 'performed selves' is disputed. Goffman (1959:232) argues '...the self itself does not derive from its possessor, but from the whole scene of his action', in other words, the self is a product of the situation in which it finds itself. Yet Hochschild denies this, seeing the self as having the ability to 'deeply feel, direct, and internally manage actions and emotions' (1983:217). For Hochschild, as for Harré (1998), there exists a stable inner self to which we all refer back, yet we also possess the ability to mobilize 'social selves' to adapt to our surroundings. As Hochschild comments, "most of us maintain a priori expectations of a continuous self, but the character of the self we expect to maintain is

subject to profoundly social influence” (1983:231). In this sense, there is a variety of ‘public selves’ that are presented outwardly, yet ultimately there is a unitary self (private self) to which these multiple presentations are moored. The mobilization of the ‘public selves’ is a conscious adaptation, often made to protect the inner self. As Holstein and Gubrium (2000:47) summarize “...hers is a mutilayered self, laid down through psychosexual development and socialization, one that has some sense of continuity and stability across situations, yet one that constantly adapts to its social surroundings”.

This version of a mutilayered self is a combination of both an inner and outer-directed self (Riesman 1950). The inner directed self being the ‘true self,’ one that is located deep inside our being, shaped by parents, society and education; as we mature we set implicit goals and motivations that are orientated to shape our ‘authentic self’. However, such a true self can, potentially become lost behind a multiplicity of ‘outer-directed’ selves. An ‘outer-directed self’ is a socially constructed formulation of self that is heavily influenced by external sources e.g. media and group culture.

As the ‘service economy’ continues to grow, organisational commodification of emotions is becoming more prevalent and as a consequence an increasing proportion of workers are required to put a part of their ‘self’ on the market in exchange for payment. Following Marx, Hochschild, among others (Leidner 1993; Raz 2002), is concerned with the routinization and mechanisation of emotions. In this way ‘false selves’ are mobilized for instrumental use by the organisation and there is a danger of these feelings belonging more to the organisation than they do the individual. Hochschild’s discontent with this ‘over-extension’ of capitalist control is illustrated by her emphatic conclusion to chapter three.

Surface acting and deep acting in a commercial setting, unlike acting in a dramatic, private, or therapeutic context, make one’s face and one’s feelings take on the properties of a resource. But it is not a resource to be used for the purpose of art, as in drama, or for the purpose of self-discovery as in therapy, or for the pursuit of fulfilment, as in everyday life. It is a resource to be used to make money.

(Hochschild, 1983:55)

Hochschild’s warns of the ‘false self’ taking the place of the ‘real self,’ referring to Christopher Lasch’s (1979) ‘narcissistic self’ and broadening the debate to Riesman’s (1950) warning of the social homogeneity and conformity of a society filled with outer-directed selves. However, in general the ‘false self’, in Hochschild’s analysis, is

a healthy false self for “by giving up infantile desires for omnipotence, a person gains a “place in society which can never be attained or maintained by a True Self alone (Winnicott 1965:143)” (1983:195).

### **Safety in numbers?**

Thoits (1983) ‘identity accumulation hypothesis’ supports such a view, proposing a direct relationship between identity accumulation and psychological well-being. In other words, the more identities possessed by an actor the less psychological distress that person is likely to suffer. Not everyone shares this view, however, (Goode 1960; Kahn et al 1964; Sarbin & Allen 1968; Jackson & Schuler 1985, 2000; Lambert & Lambert 2001) as studies pertaining to role strain and role conflict continue to examine the negative affects of multiple identities. For Morris & Feldman (1996), emotive dissonance is one such negative effect of role-conflict. Morris & Feldman (1996) view the performance of multiple ‘social roles’ as potentially conflicting, and therefore incompatible roles will foster feelings of inauthenticity. In the case of role strain, too many role-identities are adopted which can lead to exhaustion and apathy. However, Thoits presents the positive rewards associated with multiple identities and hypothesises a curvilinear relationship between well-being and identity accumulation (one that is later discredited by her own data).

She justifies her hypothesis by focusing on the ‘existential security’ (Thoits 1983:175) created by multiple selves. Within the symbolic interactionist model, social interaction is essential in developing and sustaining appropriate social conduct and well-being. It is assumed that the self is a set of ‘discrete identities’ (Thoits 1983) defined by the individual in terms of the positions they occupy within society. A greater number of ‘social identities’ possessed serves to reaffirm a strong sense of a meaningful self. Such a hypothesis works on the basis of Sieber’s (1974) ‘ego-gratification’ concept, in that the more social-roles held, the greater the sense of being appreciated by a larger number of people. Weick summarises the complexity of upholding multiple selves.

The more selves I have access to, the more meanings I should be able to extract and impose in any situation. Furthermore, the more selves I have access to, the less the likelihood that I will ever be surprised (Louis 1980) or astonished (Reason 1990), although I may find myself confused by the overabundance of possibilities and therefore forced to deal with equivocality.

(Weick, 1995:23)

Therefore, identity-accumulation and ego-gratification are the positive outcomes of holding multiple identities, to which role-strain and role-conflict are the negative.

It has been noted, by Thoits (1983), that the “identity accumulation hypothesis” holds similarities to Durkheim’s (1951) organic solidarity, in that the preservation of normative and stable rules of conduct helps to maintain well-being and protect against ‘suicide’ (Thoits 1983). By conforming to societal norms the individual feels a sense of belonging and certainty, thus preventing suicide. Goffman’s (1963) discussion of the discrepancy between ‘virtual’ and ‘actual’ identity, virtual identity being the expectations that ‘others’ hold of an individual, offers an insight into the role social identity plays in terms of social solidarity:

This discrepancy, when known about or apparent, spoils his social identity, it has the effect of cutting him off from society and from himself so that he stands a discredited person facing an unaccepting world.

(Goffman, 1963:31)

As Thoits points out, Durkheim’s source of existential security, however, is found in the group; the group constructs the self, and the group serves to protect it. Comparatively, Thoits’ analysis places the construction of self within the social role. Structural positions in society will preserve the self but only if the individual accepts the role identities he adopts. In short, the occupation of multiple identities allows for increased ‘network- embeddedness’, whereby the active agent secures their existential security by forming as many social relationships as possible and conforming to the norms that govern each one in order to remain legitimate within that role.

Looking to Harre’s (1998) conceptualisation of ‘the self’, he believes ‘the self’ to be the “singularity we each feel ourselves to be” (1998:3), that is the site at which we locate ourselves in order to perceive the world. Thus, the title *The Singular Self*, does not imply a ‘true self’ in the transcendental sense, as an entity, but instead, a singular sense of personhood. For Harre this sense of ‘personhood’ consists of three concepts, each of which are ontologically quite different: Self 1 is the point of view from which one perceives the material environment; Self 2 is the “shifting totality of personal characteristics” (1998:5); Self 3 refers to the personal impressions we make on other people. Each of these concepts are simply ‘grammatical fictions’, as they do not exist in reality, but serve as theoretical constructs that analytically model the self as ‘person’. For Harre, an individual cannot embody more than one person; cases of this

are seen as symptomatic of multiple personality disorders. However, to hold more than one Self 2 is not uncommon, for example, the way one may present oneself in a story of recollection may differ depending on the issue in question. Yet, self 3 is in every sense 'multiple', as Harre himself explains, "each person has a repertoire of Selves 3, called forth on different occasions and in dialogue with different people" (1998:149) Thus, Harre's Self 3 supports the idea that multiple social roles allow an individual to find solidarity and acceptance within a community, and '...we should recognise that a certain amount of inauthenticity ...helps to oil the wheels of social interaction' (Garrety & Down 2005:3). However, our ontological security must be maintained in order for a sense of reality to prevail, as Giddens argues such security emanates from our ability to produce a continuous narrative of who we 'really' are (1991), or alternatively, our tolerance of ambiguity.

### **A 'True' Self**

The idea of living solely with a 'True self' is the focus of John Barth's "nihilist catastrophe" (1958:viii), *The End of the Road*. The main character, Horner, suffers from an un-named psychological condition, sporadically rendering him unable to think or move; he becomes an ontological vacuum. In the foreword to his short story, Barth (1958:viii) comments that Jacob Horner "embodies my conviction that one may reach such a degree of self-estrangement as to feel no coherent antecedent for the first-person-singular pronoun", yet a condition of 'self-estrangement' implies a self to be known, a self to be estranged from; a 'true self' like that embodied in Joe Morgan's character.

After a chance meeting with a self-proclaimed 'Doctor' who sets him on a course of therapies, including mythotherapy and agotherapy, Horner learns how to create an emotional response to a situation by constructing social role-identities for himself, which allow him to function in social interactions. Using these techniques, Horner begins to reintegrate himself into society. Working as a teacher at a local school he befriends a couple named the Morgans. They are strong figures in the community and fascinate Horner with their unyielding dedication to their belief in honesty and their commitment to the truth of their being; their 'inner self'. It is apparent that the Morgans, more specifically Joe Morgan, are characters with simply one 'True self', an unwavering, and unclouded 'Transcendental self'. Horner's character evaluation goes some way in describing this manifestation of a singular self:



My initial estimate of him I had completely to revise; it turned out that those activities of his and aspects of his personality about which I had found it easy to make commonplace criticisms were nearly always the result of very careful, uncommon thinking. One understood that Joe Morgan would never make a move or utter a statement... that he hadn't considered deliberately and penetratingly beforehand, and he had, therefore, the strength not to be much bothered if his move proved unfortunate... Indecision... was apparently foreign to him: he was always sure of his ground; he acted quickly, explained his actions lucidly if questioned, and would have regarded apologies for missteps as superfluous. Moreover, four of my least fortunate traits – shyness, fear of appearing ridiculous, affinity for many sorts of nonsense, and almost complete inconsistency – he seemed not to share at all... Finally, for better or worse he seemed completely devoid of craft or guile, and in that sense ingenuous though by no means naïve...

(Barth, 1958:284)

Despite his efforts to adopt such a staunch view of society and his own identity, Horner is unable fully to orchestrate his emotions in the same way as Joe Morgan does. Through his therapies, Horner develops the ability to perform various identities to prevent slipping back toward the ontological vacuum he had once been. However, his reflective monologue communicates the inadequacy he feels at not being able to locate his 'true self', yet it also illustrates to the reader the reality of functioning with such a thing in 'real life'.

To feel, as Joe did, no regret for anything one has done in the past requires at least a strong sense of one's personal unity, and such a sense is one of the things I've always lacked. Indeed, the conflict between individual points of view that Joe admitted lay close to the heart of his subjectivism I should carry even further, for subjectivism implies a self, and where one feels a plurality of selves, one is subject to the same conflict on an intensely intramural level, each of one's selves claiming the same irrefutable validity for its special point of view that, in Joe's system, individuals and institutions may claim. In other words, judging from my clearest picture of myself, the individual is not individual after all, any more than the atom is really atomistic: he can be divided further, and subjectivism doesn't really become intelligible until one finally locates the subject.

(Barth, 1958:389-390)

However, the plurality of Horner's selves is not 'abnormal,' but it is Joe Morgan's behaviour that is portrayed as unusual and 'uncommon'. The discourse surrounding Joe's character is of admiration and potentially jealousy, thus somehow personifying the monotheistic tradition of knowing who one is, of understanding one's 'True self'. *The End of the Road* implicitly illustrates the necessity of a self, but also, and much more subtly, the potential advantages of having multiple selves, that help to lubricate

social interaction. However, the narrative character continues to question his identity when faced with the image of himself in Joe Morgan's eyes:

Jacob Horner – owl, peacock, donkey, and popinjay, fugitive from a medieval bestiary –was at the same time giant and dwarf, plenum and vacuum, and admirable and contemptible. Had I explained this to Joe he'd have added it to his store of evidence that I did not exist: my own feeling was that it was and was not such evidence.

(Barth 1958:368)

The story finally ends in tragedy as Rennie Morgan falls pregnant with what could either be her husband's or Horner's child. Joe's stolid character makes no allowances for mistakes or misjudgements and, thus, he is mystified by the adulterous relationship between his wife and his best friend. No longer being able to bear the shame of her inability to explain her actions, and thereby demonstrate a commitment to her 'True self', Rennie threatens to commit suicide if she is unable to abort her unborn child. In a final attempt to prove himself 'worthy' of the "Morgan's ethics" (Barth, 1958:390) Horner arranges for his 'Doctor' to perform the termination. However, an unfortunate sequence of events, leads to Rennie's dramatic death during the procedure. For Horner, the death of his lover leads him to "abdicate personality altogether" (Barth, 1958:viii).

Barth's novel is an insight into how a transcendental self would function within society, without social adaptation. It is clear that the performance of false selves goes beyond the commodification of feelings by organisations in the requirement to perform emotional labour. Can there exist one 'True self,' a form of transcendental being as Joe Morgan personified, equally, can there exist a plurality of selves, in which "each of one's selves claim[ing] the same irrefutable validity for its special point of view" (1958:390)? Barth brings to life both of these possibilities of being, demonstrating the instability of life through social interaction.

We do emotion work as much to shield our true selves and feelings as we do to manage social situations. It's a way of resisting social intrusions, a technique for counteracting the social demands placed on who we really are or should be.

(Holstein & Gubrium 2000:50)

### **Feeling rules and Expression norms**

Hochschild (1983) implies that emotive dissonance occurs when the emotions that we express in order to satisfy 'feeling rules' (1979) are inconsistent with inner-feelings (Rafaeli & Sutton 1987). *The Managed Heart* (Hochschild 1983) was not only an investigative study into emotional labour, it also helped to develop one of

Hochschild's earlier concepts: *'feeling rules'*. Feeling rules, or *emotion norms*, are somewhat similar to Ekman's (1973) *display rules*, or *expression norms*. Feeling rules prescribe the *extent*, *direction* and *duration* of an emotion that is appropriate to a given situation; they are "the social guidelines...describable as a set of socially shared, albeit often latent (not thought about unless probed at), rules" (Hochschild 1979:563). For example, feelings of intense grief and sadness are normal and expected after the death of a loved one, though there is an assumption that those feelings will decrease in intensity during the period of mourning.

Comparatively, display rules regulate emotional behaviour. For example, crying at a funeral is appropriate, even commended, but an emotional outburst at the supermarket would be considered inappropriate. Such display rules act as the 'invisible hand' (Goffman 1959) that guide Goffman's actor as he negotiates his way through everyday life. Ekman (1984:320) summarised the instrumental quality such norms hold when he defined display norms as "over-learned habits about who can show emotion to whom and when they can show it". Although Goffman and Ekman's analyses of display rules focused on the regulatory system that guided the management of outward impression, we can argue that display rules and impression management may have a broader impact on emotion management.

Hochschild identifies three techniques of emotion work: cognitive, bodily and expressive. In her analysis, she defines expressive emotion work as "trying to change expressive gestures in the service of changing inner feeling" (1979:562). In this way, the regulation of display is aimed at altering the internal state. Therefore, both display and feeling rules should be seen as interconnected in a discussion of the social construction of emotion management. Similarly<sup>26</sup>, emotional and aesthetic labour should be conjoined in a discussion of affective labour (Hardt & Negri 2001) for they function together to create a socially constructed effect. For example, drawing on personal experience, I myself feel more confident and in control when I wear shoes with a heel. Thus, in situations when I expect to feel nervous I will purposefully wear shoes with a heel, as they help me to create a particular affect.

The discussion of feeling rules and expression norms can be seen as part of a wider discussion of 'emotional culture' (Thoits, 1989). Here emotion norms are defined by our specific 'emotion culture'; our cultural beliefs, therefore, govern our subjective experiences (Thoits 1989). Knowledge of such 'norms' is learned through a process of socialisation (Thoits 1989; Seymour & Sandiford 2005) as the self is seen to be a

cognitive construction (Harter 1999). In the developmental stages of childhood, emotion and expression norms that are permissible within the 'emotion culture' are internalised (Rafaeli & Sutton 1987), thereby making behaviour and emotional responses culturally specific. Feeling rules and display rules regulate the way individuals, groups and societies function both intrapersonally and on an interpersonal level. However, Kemper disputes the unidimensional emphasis on cultural influence, as an explanation of social conformity. Instead, he argues for a further consideration of the influence social structure and power have on constructing and sustaining such norms. Kemper's contribution is to introduce the debate of power and status into the constructionist view of emotions. Using the example of gender roles, he argues that in the past women had not chosen to pursue certain roles and occupations, but they did so because they were held in a firm structure of dominance and submission. Men held power over women and therefore "...pre-empted the roles they desired because they had more power to do so and thus could promote more status for themselves" (Kemper 1981:344). In this sense, then, the 'norms' stemmed and subsequently supported the existing power structure.

Kemper extends Goffman's position to include the impact of power and status within social structure. Society is constructed through power relations between classes, genders and other social demographic groups. Power relations are translated into social norms that are socialised into individuals and these go on to shape the performances of 'appropriate' emotional performances. For Kemper (1981) then, social constructionists are 'too ambitious' in their presentation of the sociology of emotion because they reject the influence of an underlying physiological process. Thus emotional experience and expression are determined by social norms alone. Rules and norms specified by a situation do not directly produce emotion but they are the guidelines that instruct the performance, or suppression, of appropriate emotions, in a process of emotion management. Within the critical literature, emotion management is thought to constitute either the repression or production of emotion in compliance with display and feeling rules.

'Social 'rules', learned by intense socialisation, allow for the evaluation of feelings and emotional behaviour in relation to a situation (Hochschild 1979: 560). Emotional responses or feelings are never evaluated in abstraction; this would be impossible, as it has already been pointed out that an emotion is a response to a given situation. An emotion, as a physiological manifestation, cannot be judged as appropriate or inappropriate outside of a given context for beyond 'framed' situations there are no

governing social norms. Thus, we come to expect our own behaviour to reflect that of the 'generalised other', in order to be accepted by society and therefore self-label the self 'normal'. By implication, the 'social self' emerges from these feeling and display rules, as they are the expectations of the 'generalised other'; subsequently the 'generalised other's' opinion becomes the 'norm state' (Thoits 1985).

When we speak of emotions appropriate to 'a given situation' this does not imply that there is a preset emotional response to each 'situation'. A 'given situation' is interpreted subjectively by 'framing rules' (Hochschild, 1979), a construction developed from Garfinkel and Goffman's (1974) notion of 'frame'. Gonos (1977) argues that the concepts of 'frame' and 'situation', however, "represent two opposing paradigms" (1977:855) for the study of everyday life. He sees the 'situation' to be the unit of micro-sociology used by symbolic interactionists, in which "social situations never spontaneously repeat themselves" (Thomas 1972, cited in Gonos 1977:856). In this sense, emotions can never be pre-set because every interaction in each 'situation' is spontaneous and, therefore, unique. Goffman's 'frame analysis' is argued to be representative of a form of structuralism. For Goffman, all interactions take place within a 'frame' and this frame is governed by a set of rules. His analysis attempts to uncover what goes on 'behind the scenes' to understand the rules of the frame in order to contextualise observed interactions.

Gonos' main point, then, is that when Goffman is classified as a symbolic interactionist the meaning of his work is distorted for his analysis of everyday life focused on 'frames' and not 'situations'. The example Hochschild (1989) uses is that of a man being fired from his job, which can either be seen as an 'instance of capitalist abuse' or a result of personal failure. Depending on the way in which the 'situation' is 'framed' different feeling and display rules apply, therefore "framing and feeling rules are back to back and mutually imply each other" (Hochschild 1979:566).

Feeling rules and display rules reflect patterns of social membership (Hochschild 1979:566) and induce a sense of belonging and community when they are adhered to. In a Durkheimian sense, such norms are conducive to social stability and cohesion.

An individual...if he feels strongly attached to the society of which he is a member, feels that he is morally held to be participating in its sorrows and joys; not to be interested in them would be equivalent to breaking the bonds uniting

him to the group; it would be renouncing all desire for it and contradicting himself.

(Durkheim (1965:446[1915]) cited in Kemper 1981:357)

This is not to say that emotions are simply products of mechanistic solidarity. Genuine emotion is evoked but is done so within the boundaries of societal norms. This is eloquently captured by Merleau-Ponty, “we can never disengage ourselves from the ‘hold the world’ has on us” (quoted in Garot, 2004:738). Emotions are not always orchestrated; emotions can be genuine and spontaneous, evoked by and in others apart from the self, yet they can never be experienced outside of societal influence. Emotions can be considered pre-objective in the way that they can ‘do us’ (Garot, 2004), for example, the smug, aloofness of the traffic warden whom has just issued a parking fine can drive one into a fiery rage. Identifying emotions as ‘pre-objective’ reminds us “if it wasn’t for the poignant resonance of emotions in social life, emotions would hardly be worth ‘managing’” (Garot, 2004:736)<sup>27</sup>.

Conformity to display and feeling rules can be compared to the concept of ‘*coercive isomorphism*’ developed by Ashforth and Gibbs (1990) in their consideration of organisational legitimacy. Coercive isomorphism generally defines the way in which organisations seek legitimacy by conforming to the “values, norms, and expectations of constituents” (1990:178). In terms of display and feeling rules, then, coercive isomorphism conceptualises the way in which individuals will conform to the ‘norm-state’, in order to remain legitimate, fully integrated members of society, as illustrated by Durkheim. The use of this borrowed concept is also useful in a consideration of the emotional and expressive norms prescribed by the organisation in a commercialised setting.

In a commercial setting, the organisation prescribes either implicitly or explicitly, such ‘display rules’, and according to Hochschild and many other emotional labour theorists, ‘feeling rules’ also. Organisations will expect the standard rules of expressive behaviour, and aesthetic appearance, to be adhered to in order to meet customer expectations; because “coercive isomorphism ‘signals’ the fitness – the apparent willingness and ability of the organisation to fulfil constituents’ role expectations” (Ashforth & Gibbs 1990:178). To this end, organisations are trying to utilise ‘macro-coercive isomorphism’ to remain competitive in the market place and be a ‘legitimate organisation’ by commodifying the emotions of their employees. For example, for a top hairdressing salon to remain competitive their employees must not

only be able to cut the latest styles, they must also sport the latest hairstyles themselves whilst being warm and friendly to clients.

Coercive isomorphism is multi-faceted on both a micro and macro level. Not only do organisations prescribe display and feeling rules for their employees in order for the organisation to remain competitive and 'legitimate'; but also the employees themselves want to adhere to emotional and expressive norms in order for them to remain 'legitimate' in their role. To remain legitimate on a micro level, actors need to validate their social identity. For example, cabin crew are expected to be warm, friendly and calm in the face of a crisis (Hochschild 1983); doctors are expected to be emotionally neutral in many situations to convey an air of professionalism and authority, and fast-food workers are expected to be friendly and polite but at all times efficient (Leidner 1993). In each of these examples, the individual needs to legitimise their 'social identity' to be able to attach a self-label of 'normal' to themselves; the only way this can be achieved is by adhering to display and emotion rules. As Hochschild illustrates "a social role – such as that of bride, wife or mother – is partly a way of describing what feelings people think are owed and are owing. A role establishes a base line for what feelings seem appropriate to a certain series of events" (1983:74).

### **Self-Labeling**

Reflexive consciousness allows for the possibility of self-labelling (Thoits 1985). Self-labelling is the outcome of self-evaluation, comparing the hypothetical social identity with the expected responses of the 'generalised other'. Self-labelling can be viewed as a construction of symbolic interactionism as it implies a focus "on judgements made by the self *on* the self" (Thoits 1985:225). In Thoits' (1985:223) paper on self-labelling and mental illness she identifies three implicit assumptions underlying self-labelling theory: self-labellers must be stable, well-socialised actors within society, in order to recognise normative expectations; there must be cultural agreement on categories of norms; and finally, the actor must be motivated to conform to social expectation, especially those attached to their 'social identities'.

When, a moment of reflexive consciousness reveals an individual's emotional response differing from that prescribed by the 'norm state', the individual will self-label, judging their emotional response to be deviant from the norm-state. "I will say that individuals who are aware of discrepancies between their private experiences of

emotion and the states prescribed by emotional norms are in a condition of “norm-state discrepancy” (Thoits 1985:227). Where there is a dissonance between emotional behaviour and the prescribed display rules then the term ‘norm-display discrepancy’ applies (Thoits, 1985).

In summary, Sartre’s reflexive consciousness allows individuals to reflect upon their own behaviour and Rosenberg’s (1990) ‘agentive reflexivity’ conceptualises the ability to focus on internal elements of self. Symbolic interactionism and Cooley’s ‘Looking Glass Self’ constructs feeling and display rules in terms of social norms. In other words, individuals reflect on their ‘self’ by considering how the ‘generalised other’ sees them. However, as Mead criticised, such a conception of self is based on the ‘imagining’ of the ‘other’, yet, symbolic interactionist thinking allows solipsism to manifest at a societal level, in the form of display and feeling rules. Thus, individuals can reflect on how ‘others’ view them by reflecting on how they have adhered to social norms. Compliance to such rules leads to acceptance by the ‘group’. Such a process is self-regulated by the ability of individuals to reflect on their own behaviour and their internalised learnt ‘knowledge’ of the ‘other’. Where behaviour or feeling does not conform to the ‘rules’ and ‘norms’, then, individuals feel discomfort in a state of ‘norm-state discrepancy’ (Thoits, 1985). When cases of ‘norm-state discrepancy’ are identified, psychological discomfort prevails, for the behavioural guidelines that are prescribed by the particular ‘role-identity’ enacted are not being followed. In this situation, the individual comes to feel inadequate because he believes this is the way others see him<sup>28</sup>. Therefore, feeling and display rules could be argued to play a much more important role within the conceptualisation of self through a process of emotion management.

### **Emotive Dissonance**

The role of ‘emotive dissonance’ in the emotional labour process is largely undeveloped. Hochschild’s main focus, in *The Managed Heart*, was to lay the foundations for further critical investigation into the concept of emotional labour. However as a consequence a number of related concepts have been marginalized in later critical discussions, including collective emotional labour, gift exchange, emotion work and emotive dissonance. The lack of attention emotive dissonance received in *The Managed Heart* has been replicated in much subsequent sociological literature, though there have been exceptions, including the work of Ashforth & Humphrey (1993), Morris & Feldman (1996), Kruml & Geddes (2000). More



attention has been paid to the concept within the field of psychology; this is primarily due to the connection emotive dissonance has with the familiar negative psychological consequences of emotional labour, in terms of stress, burnout and emotional exhaustion (Abraham 1998, 1999, 2000; Jansz & Timmers 2002; Heuven & Bakker, 2003; Lewig & Dollard 2003).

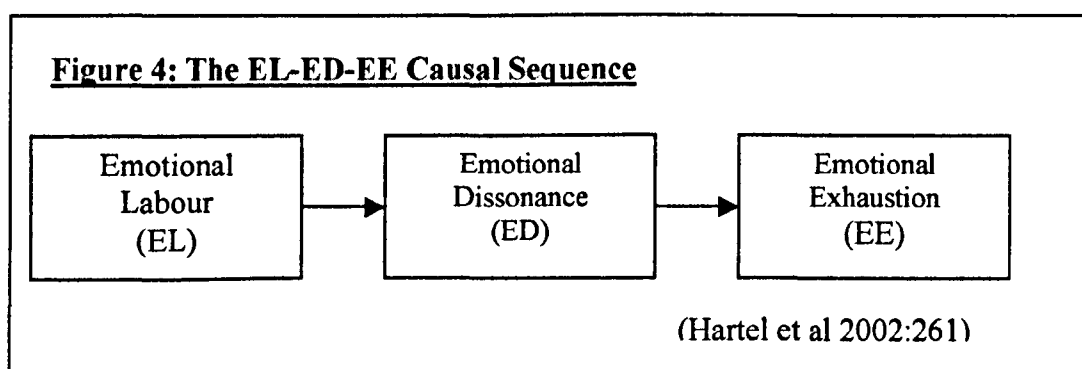
The literature following Hochschild (1983) has discussed the concept of 'emotional dissonance' (Morris & Feldman 1996; Rafaeli & Sutton 1987; Middleton 1989; Zerbe 2000; Jansz & Timmers 2002; Lewig & Dollard 2003; Heuven & Bakker 2003; Abraham 1998,1999,2000) whilst others have used Hochschild's preferred term 'emotive dissonance' (Hochschild 1983; Ashforth & Humphrey 1993), and others have used a combination of the two (Brotheridge & Lee 2003). It would appear that the two terms have been used interchangeably, as no theoretical explanation has been presented for the neologism, 'emotional dissonance'. However a brief etymological analysis indicates that in fact the words emotional and emotive are not synonymous. The word emotional is an adjective relating to a person's emotions, tending to mean 'being *characterised by* intense feeling' (Oxford Dictionary of English, 2005), whereas the adjective 'emotive' implies the *ability to arouse* intense feeling'. As the *Oxford Dictionary of English* illustrates, '*an emotive issue is one which is likely to arouse people's passions, while an emotional response is one which is itself full of passion.*' Thus, emotive dissonance has been presented as an 'emotional' dissonance in the literature. For the concept of emotive dissonance to be explored as a potentially central element in the performance and experience of emotional labour processes, a less ambiguous conceptualisation is required.

A large proportion of emotional labour research that has been conducted in the service sector, particularly looking at roles that require 'interactive service work' (Leidner 1993), shows that emotionality at work is often experienced positively by those performing it (Tolich, 1993). However, organisational commodification of the emotions is often deemed exploitative regardless of individual experience. This is due to Hochschild's original thesis, presenting the emotional labour process as an extension to the labour process, thus those that experience emotional labour positively are concluded to be in a state of false consciousness.

However, in 1989, as previously discussed Cas Wouters published his extensive critique of Hochschild's ideas, arguing primarily that her work is 'preoccupied' with the costs of emotional labour based on her Marxist perspective on capitalism<sup>29</sup>. From

the 'Hochschild/ Wouters Controversy' (Williams, 2003) it has subsequently been argued that emotional labour should not be seen as a negative construct, as it is in fact 'emotive dissonance' that causes negative consequences. In other words, emotional labour does not always lead to a negative experience of work (Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Wharton & Erikson 1993; Morris & Feldman 1996a,b; Wharton 1999), therefore emotive dissonance should not be viewed as a negative consequence of emotional labour but as a negative construct (Middleton 1989).

Emotive dissonance occurs when the prescribed 'norms', often set by the organisation, are inconsistent with the worker's internal state. In terms of current theory, the common assumption has been that Hochschild (1983) was implying that emotional labour would inevitably cause emotive dissonance in the long term (Hartel et al 2002). This relationship has been developed more formally by Hartel et al (2002) in their 'EEE sequence' (see Figure 4) to explain why not all emotional labour leads to negative outcomes such as emotional exhaustion. They believe the consequences of performing emotional labour are mediated by emotive dissonance.



Hartel et al (2002) justify their conceptual model by stating "academics have theorized that EL can produce ED and that this conflict between what one feels and what one is required to display by the organization produces, in turn, EE [emotional exhaustion](Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Hochschild 1983; Morris & Feldman 1996)" (Hartel et al 2002:252).

Despite Hochschild pointing out that her classifications were simply a sketch that would, hopefully, stimulate further research (1985:234), her brief discussion of emotive dissonance has led the disruptive state to be under-researched as a theoretical concept, particularly in a way that challenges the essential nature of emotive dissonance as a concept in its own right. Results of existing studies, however, do point towards emotive dissonance playing a potentially critical role in our understanding of

the relationship between emotional labour and its consequences (Morris & Feldman 1996; Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Gosserand & Diefendorff 2005).

Emotional labour, then, is no longer considered a negative construct but one that may or may not lead to negative consequences. Empirical results indicate that emotive dissonance plays a mediating role between emotional labour and emotional exhaustion (or associated negative consequences) (Hartel et al, 2002; Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996). However, this classification has subsequently led to emotive dissonance being classified as a negative construct and therefore has been marginalized in sociological theorising in emotional labour studies. Ambiguous empirical findings have also contributed to emotive dissonance becoming an element within the field that has largely escaped critical evaluation.

Exemplifying this point are three leading theorists on emotive dissonance, Abraham (1999) and Morris & Feldman (1996). One of the major contributors to 'emotional dissonance'<sup>30</sup> theory has been Abraham (1998, 1999, 2000), a social psychologist who has underscored the importance of exploring the interaction of emotion management with other job characteristics. Defining 'emotional dissonance' as the "conflict between experienced emotions and emotions expressed to conform to display rules" (1999:441), Abraham found that emotive dissonance led to job dissatisfaction which subsequently had a negative impact on organisational commitment and labour turnover (1999). This relationship was found to be more acute in individuals with highly developed 'self-monitoring capabilities'. Abraham (1999) then, sees this as a result of role-conflict and, thus, theorises emotive dissonance to be a state in which core values, in terms of emotional displays, are compromised which "represents such a fundamental attack on the self that...alienation and hostility [are] aroused" (1999:451). However, in an earlier study (1998) she reports that the relationship between emotive dissonance and job dissatisfaction was mediated by social support from co-workers. In fact, the 1998 publication found that social support, did in fact, prevent job dissatisfaction from occurring at all. In this case, those that experienced emotive dissonance remained completely satisfied with their job as long as they had support from co-workers. Yet, such a strong relationship was not found between emotive dissonance, social support and organisational commitment, as employees experienced a reduction in commitment to the organisation even if they did have the support of co-workers.

In a later study in 2000, Abraham investigated the relationship between emotional dissonance and job control, hypothesising that more autonomy within the role would lead to lower levels of emotive dissonance being experienced, as individuals would have the freedom to select suitable coping methods, with which they were comfortable. Her results showed that individuals with high self-efficacy<sup>31</sup> experienced increased levels of job satisfaction when they had limited job control. Similarly, those with low self-efficacy were happier in situations where they had more control. Abraham (2000) explains her findings by stating that in situations where emotive dissonance could not be reduced those individuals with high self-efficacy and low job control, found satisfaction in being able to blame the organisation for their lack of autonomy to find a suitable coping strategy. Contrastingly, those with low self-efficacy in situations of high job control were satisfied as they saw the autonomy they possessed to be representative of the organisations confidence of their abilities.

In addition, to these conclusions, Abraham also considered the relationship that emotional intelligence played, she found that those with higher EQ scores were more likely to feel increased organisational commitment, explained by increased resilience and better social networks with co-workers. Abraham's work into the multi-faceted nature of emotive dissonance has provided a number of insights into its relationship with other job characteristics however, despite making considerable contributions to the development of our understanding of the negative impact emotional dissonance can have on well-being, Abraham (1998; 1999; 2000) works on the implicit assumption that emotive dissonance is a product of emotional labour.

Morris & Feldman (1996:986) have defined emotive dissonance more formally as being generated by 'having to express organizationally desired emotions not genuinely felt'. They conceptualise emotional labour in terms of four dimensions: frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to required display rules, variety of emotions to be displayed, and emotional dissonance. In essence, they conclude that all four factors actually lead to increased levels of exhaustion and stress, yet only emotive dissonance was found to lower job satisfaction. For Morris & Feldman (1996:1002), emotive dissonance should be considered a form of role-conflict, which involves "conflict between the needs and values of a person and the demands of others in his or her role set." Emotive dissonance, as a form of role-conflict, is thought to lead to emotional exhaustion. Grandey (2000), however, disagrees with Morris & Feldman's conclusion that emotive dissonance is a dimension of emotional labour,

because the idea of emotional dissonance being a state of being, as opposed to a conscious process contradicts their original definition of emotional labour.

When emotive dissonance occurs it is said that feelings of inauthenticity prevail, or in the words of a Delta Airlines flight attendant we feel 'phoney'. Hochschild (1983:90) describes prolonged emotive dissonance as the difference "...between feeling and feigning..." She goes on to elaborate, "we try to reduce this strain by pulling the two closer together either by changing what we feel or by changing what we feign", illustrated by...

... if a woman suddenly learns that her life partner has been killed, she may alter the character of her understanding of this event so as to keep in line with what she expects – that he will still be living. She may defend against the self-relevance of the event: "This isn't happening to me." Or she may defend against the event itself: "He's still alive. I know he is. I don't believe he's dead." In these ways she holds prior expectation and current perception in a relation to one another that avoids pain.

(Hochschild 1983:232)

Therefore, it can be stated that when an individual is aware of their own feelings being inconsistent with the prescribed '*feeling rules*', or '*emotion norms*', they will experience feelings of discomfort, termed by Hochschild as '*emotive dissonance*' (1983:90). Thus, emotive dissonance and norm-state discrepancy are synonymous (Erikson & Ritter 2001). Though, as they have derived from two separate fields of research it is necessary to add the caveat that norm-state discrepancy theory has been developed in the social psychological field and therefore has been formulated in the non-commercial sector. In many senses norm-state discrepancy is therefore, more closely related to the role of emotion work as opposed to emotional labour.

After reviewing the literature on emotional labour and emotive dissonance it would appear that emotional labour theory, in the sociological field, has marginalized the concept of emotive dissonance. However, in the psychological domain the, predominantly quantitative research is underpinned by the implicit assumption that emotive dissonance is a product of emotional labour (Abraham 1998, 1999, 2000; Grandey 2000; Grandey et al, 2005; Kruml & Geddes 2000; Heuven & Bakker 2003; Lewig & Dollard 2003; Hartel et al, 2002). It would appear that there has been a lack of cross-disciplinary investigation, which has led to many of the important findings concerning the relational nature of emotive dissonance being excluded from the emotional labour debate within the domain of sociology. Similarly, the ambiguous

nature of emotive dissonance, as implied by sociology, is finding itself overlooked by psychological investigations.

In an attempt to integrate the two bodies of work, it is necessary to return to Hochschild, who first stated, “a principle of *emotive dissonance*, analogous to the principle of *cognitive dissonance* is at work” (Hochschild 1985:90 *emphasis added*). In light of this, emotive dissonance can be better understood with a consideration of ‘cognitive dissonance’.

### **Cognitive Dissonance**

Leon Festinger’s conceptualisation of ‘cognitive dissonance theory’ was first published in 1957, in *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Since then, a number of theorists, including Aronson (1968), Cooper & Fazio (1984) and Beauvois & Joule (1996) have updated and expanded Festinger’s original hypothesis, thereby generating a body of critical literature concerning cognitive dissonance.

Festinger’s original definition of cognitive dissonance highlights the heritage it shares with emotive dissonance:

Dissonance is said to exist when cognitions such as attitudes, beliefs, opinions, perceptions and behaviour pertaining to oneself or one’s environment are incompatible with another. The existence of dissonance between cognitions is presumed to give rise to feelings of psychological discomfort which motivates the individual to engage in behaviour to mitigate dissonance.

(Hollon & Chesser 1976:309)

Emotive and cognitive dissonance both work on the premise that “*an individual strives toward consistency within himself*” (Festinger 1957:1). A misalignment in cognitions (or emotional states) will cause the individual some form of psychological discomfort and therefore induce measures to reduce such dissonance (Richman 1988), just as Thoits (1989) theorised with norm-state discrepancy.

From Festinger’s basic hypothesis, see Figure 5, it can be concluded that cognitive (or emotive) dissonance can be seen as an antecedent condition to dissonance reducing behaviour (Festinger 1957). The basic paradigm implies there is a constant pressure to produce consonant relationships between cognitions as “it has frequently been implied, and sometimes pointed out, that the individual strives toward consistency within himself” (Festinger 1957:1). Dissonance theory shares strong theoretical links

with the cognitive consistency movement (Heider 1946) in terms of people's preferred consistency amongst their intrapersonal cognitions, beliefs and actions. However it was Festinger's discussion of the magnitude of dissonance that has made his work so enduring. Postulating a positive relationship between the magnitude of the dissonance or consonance experienced, and the importance of the cognitive elements involved, he acknowledges that some degree of dissonance is natural, for there are very few situations whereby absolute consonance is experienced. The magnitude of the dissonance is therefore also important when discussing cognitive or emotive dissonance.

To analyse magnitude positivist empirical methods have been conducted in laboratory experiments. The methodological approach to dissonance theory has always been the subject of severe scrutiny from an ethical standpoint because original experiments were undertaken by purposefully deceiving the subjects in an attempt to measure the magnitude of their dissonant cognitions. To many, such an approach was deemed morally reprehensible (Schenkler 1982), thereby undermining the entire methodological approach. It was not until the use of film became cost-effective and reliable enough, in the field of cognitive psychology, that research was resumed, this time with the subjects as observers as opposed to participants.

Extending the thinking beyond magnitude as an abstract concept, it was then postulated that the magnitude of the dissonance was positively correlated to dissonance reducing behaviour (Festinger 1957:18). According to Festinger, dissonance can be reduced in one of two ways; behaviour can be altered to become consistent with knowledge, or knowledge can be brought into line with behaviour. There is also a third option, known in social psychology as 'selective exposure' (Rosenburg 1990), whereby the individual will only expose himself or herself to information that is consistent with their behaviour or beliefs. A situation is made sense of by extracting relevant cues; the cues that are extracted are determined by the saliency of information that then provides norms and expectations that govern acceptable behaviour.

However, dissonance reduction often meets with resistance, as the satisfaction gained from present behaviour often outweighs the psychological discomfort caused by the dissonance. For example, if you provide a smoker with information on the negative health impacts of smoking they will experience dissonance. They will want to continue smoking because they enjoy it yet they do not want to increase their chances

of suffering from lung cancer in later life. They have two options in order to reduce the psychological discomfort they are experiencing due to cognitive dissonance; they can stop smoking, thereby changing their behaviour to be consistent with knowledge, or they can trivialise the research findings they have just read, convincing themselves that the risks have been exaggerated, thereby changing their knowledge to be consonant with their behaviour in order to reduce dissonance and continue smoking. The third option, as proposed by Rosenberg (1990), would have been to refuse to read any literature related to negative health impacts caused by smoking, thereby selectively exposing themselves to self-affirming knowledge.

#### **Figure 5: Festinger's Basic Hypothesis**

1. If two cognitive elements are relevant, the relation between them is either dissonant or consonant (1957:18)
2. The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance (1957:3).
3. When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance (1957:3).
4. The magnitude of the dissonance or consonance increases as the importance of the elements increases (1957:18).
5. The total amount of dissonance that exists between two clusters of cognitive elements is a function of the weighted proportions of all relevant relations between the two clusters that are dissonant (1957:18).

Taken from Leon Festinger's original work.

The tenets of dissonance theory, however, have not gone unchallenged. Over the last half century, research has been conducted into the situations in and conditions under which dissonance occurs most prominently. As the consonants and contestations are compared and contrasted, a discussion of the most fundamental critiques can be instrumental in generating a synthesis of ideas.

One of the major critiques pitched at dissonance theory is its overextension; lack of boundaries, in terms of definition, has allowed dissonance theory to be used as a 'catch all' concept in post-decisional study (Lord 1992). Lord argues, that such an



overextension has actually "...led an entire generation of researchers on a lengthy detour that lost contact with mainstream psychological principles" (1992:340). Such a criticism should not be overlooked, the problem lies primarily, with the dissonant or consonant elements; 'elements of cognition' or 'knowledges' are discussed by Festinger (1957) as mirrors of reality. "In the case of opinions, beliefs, and values, the reality may be what others think or do; in other instances the reality may be what is encountered experientially or what others have told him" (1957:11). The fluidity of the 'knowledges' has thereby allowed dissonance theory, rightly or wrongly, to explain a plethora of psychological findings, including, maybe, the definition of such 'knowledges' as emotions to conceptualise 'emotive dissonance'.

In response to such criticisms, Aronson reconsiders dissonance theory in terms of the self-concept (1968). In his own words, "...dissonance is greatest and clearest when what is involved is not just any two cognitions but, rather, a cognition about the self and a piece of behaviour that violates that self-concept" (1997:131). In specifying the nature of the "elements of cognition", Aronson saw the predictive power of dissonance theory increase. Elaborating on self-conceptualisation as a central theme in the experience and reduction of dissonance, Aronson et al (1974) suggests there are three conditions individuals strive for: preservation of a consistent, stable, predictable sense of self, preservation of a competent sense of self and, the preservation of a morally good sense of self.

Taking these premises into account dissonance reducing behaviour is performed when behaviour is not consistent with the individual's conception of self. In Aronson's own words (1997:131) "...what is dissonant is not the cognition that I believe X and I said "not X"; what is dissonant is that I see myself as a decent and clever human being and find that I have lied to another person in the absence of adequate justification." It is clear to see the impact that the substitution of the self-concept has on dissonance theory. It is not the inconsistency of cognitions that causes dissonance, but it is, in fact, the inconsistency of the self-concept. In Aronson's example above, he would not have felt any discomfort having believed himself to be an immoral, hypocritical individual. Consonance is achieved through practicing what you preach. The emphasis lies in issues of authenticity, as continuous narratives of self are based on a desire to be seen as consistent and 'real'.

Aronson et al's (1974) three conditions of self-conception are synonymous in the sense that they describe a True self, with a stable and continuous core. From this core

conception of self it is then possible to locate and label an emotion or a cognition dissonant or consonant, in addition it allows for the magnitude of such a dissonant behaviour to be judged. Referring back to Thoits' (1985:227) concept of 'norm-state discrepancy' emotive dissonance is described as the discrepancy between an individual's "private experiences of emotion and the states prescribed by emotional norms". The private experiences of emotion, in terms of Aronson's modified dissonance theory, is the emotive self-concept which may be dissonant with the emotive norm being prescribed by situational 'display rules' (Ekman 1973).

However, Aronson's ideas have attracted a range of criticisms from those sceptical of limiting the practical application of cognitive dissonance theory to self-concept (Cooper 1992). 'New look' dissonance theory developed out of Cooper's initial discomfort with Aronson's conceptualisation. Cooper and Fazio (1984) specify that an individual will only experience dissonance arousal when their behaviour leads to 'aversive events' for which they feel responsible. An event is 'considered aversive' if, all things considered, "the event is one that the person would rather have not occur" (Cooper 1992:322).

Aronson believes that dissonance arousal is facilitated by self-conception; feelings of discomfort are only aroused when actions have negative affects on the self-concept. 'New look' dissonance theory is much more functional, in the sense that any consideration in which adverse conditions emerge and responsibility is felt feelings of dissonance will be induced. Therefore, 'new look' dissonance is contingent on the subjective view of self and behaviour. This is relevant when issues of self-esteem are considered, for those with low self-esteem it may take a much larger 'aversive event' to arouse dissonance than those with a much higher regard for themselves. "For some people, acting hypocritically may be devastating to a central core of the self-concept and thus be an extremely aversive event. For others, who may be close to aschematic with respect to the trait of hypocrisy, acting contrary to a belief is hardly aversive at all" (Cooper 1992:322). Thus Cooper & Fazio's 'new look' theory is an extension in many respects to Aronson's modification, separating dissonance arousal from dissonance motivation.

In 1996, to commemorate the fortieth anniversary of *The Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (1957), Beauvois & Joule published their version of dissonance theory, terming it 'radical'. The aim was to introduce a radical departure from contemporary dissonance theory, to reintegrate, or reinstate, Festinger's original theoretical

concepts. Beauvois & Joules took cognitive dissonance theory back to basics, utilising a whole range of new methodological approaches in their quest. They argue that dissonance theory is not a theory of rationality or a theory of consistency, for the process of dissonance reduction can often create further inconsistencies. Instead, dissonance reduction is about rationalising behaviour. It was Aronson (1968) whom first commented, dissonance theory does not assume that man is rational but rather that “he attempts to appear rational, both to others and to himself” (Aronson 1968:6). Again, this idea relates back to sensemaking characterized by ‘plausibility rather than accuracy’.

Sensemaking is about accounts that are socially acceptable and credible... It would be nice if these acceptable accounts were also accurate. But in an equivocal, postmodern world, infused with the politics of interpretation and conflicting interests and inhabited by people with multiple shifting identities, an obsession with accuracy seems fruitless...

(Weick 1995:61)

One of the significant contributions radical dissonance theory has made to the field is to highlight the emphasis Festinger implicitly placed on the dissonance ratio (number of dissonant cognitions divided by the number of dissonant plus the number of consonant cognitions). Although such a functionalist model is beyond the scope of discussion here, it does make a valid point in terms of the ambiguity of dissonant cognitions. Echoing Aronson’s concerns of vaguery, Beauvois & Jules propose the need to introduce, and identify through research, the role of the ‘generative cognition’. The ‘generative cognition’ is “the one cognitive element against which everything is determined to be consonant or dissonant” (Stone 1998:320).

Aronson et al (1974) would argue that such a ‘generative cognition’ is in fact the singular ‘self’, and therefore behaviour is either dissonant or consonant with our expectation of self. Yet Beauvois & Joules allow no opportunity for such a critique, arguing that it is ‘lax’ theorists that assume such behaviour to be an attitude or cognition of self. They postulate that all dissonance reducing behaviour will automatically lead to further inconsistencies between different cognitions, implying dissonance reduction impossible via attitude change. Attitude change only serves to rationalise a certain cognitive binary, not to eliminate dissonance. However, according to Stone (1998) the generative cognition may equally be termed ‘*salient*’ or ‘*accessible*’ for it can be interpreted as the most accessible or salient form of behaviour in memory. In this sense, then, cognitions must hold a hierarchical structure somewhat similar to role-identities as posited in the identity literature (Thoits 1991).

In his critical review, Stone points out that radical dissonance theory assumes the generative cognition to be stable, the reference to which all other behaviours and cognitions are judged. However, as Stone highlights, social cognition research indicates that the generative cognition used is that which is made immediately available in a particular situation. Therefore, there is scope to hypothesise a multiplicity of 'generatives', since according to social cognitive research, a generative cognition is not a static construct but changes with the nature of the 'self-concept', constructed or directed by the situational context. Therefore, in response to Beauvois & Joule's pre-empted critique, "under some conditions, attitudes or cognitions about the self are generative" (Stone 1998:324).

In conclusion, there is no doubt that critical understanding of emotive dissonance can be aided by synthesising the theoretical debate surrounding the theory of cognitive dissonance. The theoretical critique and rigorous scrutiny to which cognitive dissonance has been subjected can facilitate the development of the emotive dissonance concept, building on the sociological foundations laid by Morris & Feldman (1996), Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) and others. However, it must be noted that by drawing on research from other domains I am not presenting, or encouraging the presentation of, emotive dissonance as epiphenomenal to cognitive dissonance. Instead, I have utilised the well-developed body of literature on cognitive dissonance to inform and further understanding of the role emotive dissonance plays in the emotion management process. It is not my intention to colonise emotive dissonance within the cognitive dissonance discourse as this would, not only detract research interests away from developing understanding of the role emotive dissonance plays in the emotional labour process but it would also be problematic in terms of, differing epistemological, ontological and methodological foundations. In addition, I am not proposing that cognitive and affective domains can be treated in the same way (see Chapter Three for a further discussion) but it can be posited that the relationship between cognition and self, and affect and self do share some similarities when it comes to the maintenance of ontological security.

### **Emotive dissonance or a 'neodissonant approach to emotion'?**

The similarities between Hochschild's (1983) emotive dissonance and Festinger's (1957) dissonance theory is not unusual, since the late 1980s social psychology has shown a renewed interest in the ideas of cognitive dissonance and thus, a plethora of 'neodissonance' theories have emerged (Aronson 1992). Such theories include

Steele's self-affirmation theory (1988), symbolic self-completion theory (Wicklund & Gollwitzer 1982) and Swann's self-verification theory (1984). Aronson (1992) has pitched a convincing critique toward 'neodissonant' approaches on the grounds of an imbalance in the 'analysis-synthesis ratio' (Berkowitz and Devine 1989). Aronson argues that analysis, defined as "the careful delineation and differentiation of the theoretical concepts and propositions that led to the prediction of different outcomes" (1992:309), has come to dominate the research agenda at the cost of theoretical synthesis. Synthesis of concepts and theories implies the collection of like ideas in order to show continuity, coherence and progression within a field of study; allowing a deeper understanding of any given approach.

Without surprise, such criticisms have not been taken lightly; Swann argued in a personal correspondence with Aronson that it is impossible for theories with such different properties to say the same thing (Aronson 1992:310). However, this is not what is being argued. A synthesis of concepts does not devalue or undermine any of the theories under the common theoretical umbrella, instead, they serve to support, corroborate and extend one another.

...the synthetic approach... is attractive because it highlights the philosophical credo that, ..., I hold dear: The task of the scientist is not to prove one proposition right and true and the other utterly false, but to painstakingly find the conditions under which one or the other is more likely to occur...

(Aronson 1992:310)

Aronson may argue, then, that 'emotive dissonance' is a 'neodissonant' approach under the theoretical umbrella of Festinger's original dissonance theory. This synthetic approach to emotive dissonance does not mean that the distinctive and unique qualities of emotion can be dismissed or subsumed under various different categories. Instead, the extensive research that has already been conducted, by reputable scholars from numerous disciplines, can add to the critical debate on emotive dissonance. Dissonance theory has long been a concept grounded in situational experience that equally suits the study of emotion, and therefore has the potential to broaden theoretical understanding of its role within the emotional labour process.

## **Conclusion**

The concept of emotive dissonance has largely been marginalized in sociological studies of emotional labour, therefore, the role it plays in the emotional labour process remained ambiguous. Tracing the concepts theoretical routes led to a consideration of the psychological literature as Hochschild stated that emotive dissonance was analogous to cognitive dissonance. Synthesising ideas found in the psychological literature on cognitive dissonance and emotional labour points towards the potential for emotive dissonance to be seen as a neodissonant approach to emotion. This offers a new perspective on the characteristics of emotive dissonance and the role it potentially plays in identity formation and the emotional labour process. By viewing emotive dissonance as a neodissonant approach to emotion and analogous to cognitive dissonance, then, the principles of cognitive dissonance can be applied to the emotional labour process. Utilising Aronson et al's version of the theory, also places the self at the centre of the debate, thus Hochschild's ontological assumptions were given much consideration at the beginning of this chapter. The remainder of the thesis will focus on further understanding the role emotive dissonance plays in the emotional labour process utilising a synthetic approach to method and empirical analysis through a process of theoretical sampling.

## Chapter Five: Methodology

### Introduction

In this chapter, I first outline the development of the research questions, considering both the theoretical discussion and the personal interest I had in the multi-disciplinary construct of emotional labour. I have written this chapter with the aim of taking the reader on a guided tour of my research journey, pointing out decisions I had to make, opportunities that arose (and sometimes passed me by) and problems encountered and negotiated. I therefore, see this as a reflexive review of the research design, considering myself, as researcher, student and emotion manager as significant in the collection, interpretation and construction of the empirical material. Taking a reflexive approach I also seek to provide a first person account of the experience of performing emotional labour in the research setting, thereby offering an 'insider account' to diminish the critique of solipsism in interpretive research methods.

### Development of the Research Question

The concept of emotional labour has become a popular research focus in a number of academic disciplines; including, among others, psychology (for example Abraham 1998, 1999; Diefendorff & Gosserand 2005; Schaubroeck & Jones 2000), sociology (for example Bolton 2005; Callahan & McCollum 2002; Tolich 1993), social psychology (for example, Ashforth & Humphrey 1993; Erickson & Ritter 2001), organisational behaviour (for example Rafaeli & Sutton 1987; Wharton & Erickson 1993; Williams 2003) and nursing and care (for example Lopez 2006; Bolton 2000, 2005; James 1989; Smith 1992). Despite such attention, work within the individual disciplines has tended to be inward looking; reviewing only the literature within its own discipline, making few attempts to consider the way in which findings from other disciplines could inform an understanding of the concept and its effects (exceptions include Thoits 1983, 1985).

My approach to researching emotional labour is one that assumes a 'dissensus relation' (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000) to the dominant discourse, through a critical consideration of the literature in multiple disciplines. My aim was to further understand how and why individuals, in both a public and private setting, performed emotion management and how this 'performance' is experienced. While this research question bears necessary relation to those prior studies of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983; Bolton 2005; Morris & Feldman 1996), I felt that a focus on

emotion management<sup>32</sup>, as opposed to emotional labour was important, especially when reading from multiple disciplines. Also, a focused re-reading of the literature, from more than one discipline, will aid in constructing a nuanced understanding of the multi-faceted process of emotion management.

After a critical reading of the emotion management/ emotional labour literature from sociology, psychology and organisational behaviour I then returned to Hochschild's (1979, 1983) original texts. A careful re-reading of '*The Managed Heart*' enabled me to focus on a number of key ideas and concepts that have tended to be marginalised within the literatures: the most prominent of these concepts being emotive dissonance. A thorough discussion of emotive dissonance and the role it plays in the process of emotional labour (or emotion management in general) is not present in Hochschild's (1983) analysis, however, she does allude to its importance and the nature of its conceptualisation, as she states that "a principle of *emotive dissonance*, analogous to the principle of *cognitive dissonance* is at work" (Hochschild 1983:90 *emphasis added*). In spite of this indication, subsequent literatures have tended to acknowledge the importance of the concept yet have failed to consider it a central component in the emotion management process. As a result, discussion and research on emotional labour and emotion management have consistently negotiated a disjunctive juxtaposition between the concepts of emotion management and emotive dissonance.

I also had an empirical motivation to research the experience of performing emotion management. In a previous research project that focused on cabin crew's experience of emotional labour in a budget airline, I found that cabin crew performed traditional forms of emotional labour associated with the occupational role even though the airline made no formal prescription for them to do so. These findings posed an interesting research question and the potential to re-consider the original Marxist underpinnings of the emotional labour concept, as specified by Hochschild (1983). If cabin crew were autonomously choosing to perform emotional labour, even when there was no explicit requirement to do so, then, might it not be the case that emotional labour plays a more complex role in terms of self and identity than has previously been considered?

Therefore my main research questions emerged as: **How is emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, experienced and performed? What is the role of emotive dissonance in emotional labour processes? What are some of the salient characteristics of the relationship between emotion, affect and subjectivity?**



## Reflexivity

Interpretive research overtly rejects positivist notions of the objective nature of scientific research (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994), as it fundamentally questions the very possibility of social scientific knowledge. 'Realism' is contrary to both the interpretive paradigm, which prioritises understanding (*Verstehen*) and meaning, and constructivist thinking that pursues no 'reality' but emphasises "the instrumental and practical function of theory construction and knowing" (Schwandt, 1994:125). Thus, in interpretive-constructivist paradigms "meaning and knowledge are subjectively shared social constructions" (Gergen, 1985:267). Critical realists, such as Bhaskar (1989), however, do not deny reality but believe the social structures that "pre-exist us are only reproduced or transformed in our everyday activities; thus society does not exist independently of human agency" (Bhaskar 1989:4). Critical realism sees the production of knowledge as a social process, one that aims to understand and make visible the structures of society. For them, the fundamental question is an ontological one; how do we know what is? "Truth is relative to be sure but there is still both truth and error" (Lopez & Rotter 2001:9).

Social constructionism, however, concerns itself with the way in which the social structure is legitimised and controlled through socialisation (Marechal, unpublished). 'Micro-acts' are thought to create and maintain social order, though these acts often include organisational norms and policies. These 'micro-acts' become embedded into agency knowledge; they become social facts that are then reinforced when they are adhered to. Individuals become institutionalised agents and the institutions are given ontological objectivity as they become a stable and consistent part of the social structure. Berger and Luckmann (1966) summarise the consequences of social constructionism: "social processes influence individual perceptions and beliefs about the world (subjective 'reality') which themselves play an important role in the (re)construction of institutions and persons (objective reality)" (Maréchal, unpublished: 4).

As Schwant (1994:125) highlights by quoting Fuss (1989:3), constructionism is antiessentialist, "...constructionists are concerned above all with the production and organisation of differences, and they therefore reject the idea that any essential or natural givens precede the process of social determination." In this sense, individuals are active agents that produce, re-produce and make sense of the symbolic order of

society through interaction and discourse. Symbolic interactionism, regards individuals as purposive agents that engage in “minded” self-reflexive behaviour (Blumer, 1969:81) when interpreting the world in order to act. Thus, symbolic interactionism is concerned with studying overt behaviour to understand social practices. The aim of interpretivist and constructionist research is to further understand the processes by which meaning is “created, negotiate, sustained and modified within a specific context” (Schwandt, 1994:120). Thus, my aim is to understand how and why the performance of emotional labour is created, negotiated, sustained and modified through the interpretation of human action. The approach I have taken in this quest has been both qualitative and reflexive.

During the development of my research design, particularly just before entering the field, a member of my supervisory team pointed out to me on a number of occasions, how I had a responsibility as a researcher to remain detached from the field, not to get too close to the situation, not to give my opinion on matters that arose and to fight the urge to get involved in work related tasks or personal issues that may or may not occur when I was out in the field. These guidelines were laid out for two reasons, firstly, to prevent me being consumed by the research site, which may jeopardise my ability to analyse the empirical findings; secondly, it was to prevent me, as a researcher, from contaminating the ‘results’. To the advice I listened with an air of suspicion ... Why could I not be ‘myself’ (if I knew who that was) when I was out in the field? What was ‘the field’? How close was too close? Was it acceptable to reveal anything about my own life? Why couldn’t I help out if I was able? Although I knew the theoretical and ethical answers to my questions I saw them as part of a bigger methodological issue.

Interpretive researchers claim to reject the notions of positivism to embrace the heterogeneous, subjective, individual accounts of those they study in order to further understand the way meaning is constructed. Despite this recognition there tends to be a deeply embedded attachment to our modernist notions of what ‘good research’ is about (examples include Campbell & Stanley 1963; Glaser & Strauss 1967; Becker 1970; Kvale 2006), as they were once the basis of qualitative research:

...qualified competent observers can with objectivity, clarity, and precision report on their own observations of the social world, including the observations of others.

(Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:11-12 cited in Hardy et al, 2001:535)

Institutional Review Boards and Ethics Committees share this assumption. Bosk & DeVries (2004) argue that IRBs and ethics committees' guidelines on 'best practice' are unsuitable for ethnographic, inductive and qualitative research as the nuanced nature of the relationships involved with qualitative research can not be regulated by 'one best way'. They even go as far as to argue that IRBs are "a distraction from the real difficulties that we face and from the real ethical dilemmas that confront us that we may not recognize and discuss the serious and elemental because we are so busy with the procedural and bureaucratic" (Bosk & DeVries, 2004:260). For Bosk & DeVries the main problem with IRBs is that they originate from the medical sciences and therefore lack the scope to address ethical dilemmas that arise in qualitative research. The influence ethics committees, IRBs, research councils and other such bodies have on research design provoked Hardy et al (2001) to call for the 'research community' to be considered in reflexive accounts of the construction of the research subject.

...we are interested in reflexivity in terms of understanding the role of the research process in producing the subjects of that research, as well as the ways in which processes and actors produce and stabilize the 'facts' that constitute research. To be reflexive in this way, we must include an analysis of the researcher and of the research community.

(Hardy et al, 2001:536)

If reality is co-constructed through interaction, then the role, identity and 'subjectivity' of the researcher, or the research community, cannot be marginalized, without presenting a distorted view of that construction of 'reality' or meaning (Cunliffe 2003). As Schwandt (1994:119) points out, interpretivists "...celebrate the permanence and priority of the real world of first-person, subjective experience. Yet, in true Cartesian fashion, they seek to disengage from that experience and objectify it." But as Haynes, poignantly summarises, "in qualitative research, we cannot separate reason from emotion. We are embedded subjectively in our work whether we like it or not, and, I would argue, should be explicit in acknowledging it." (2006:218).

"Reflexivity is the awareness that the researcher and the object of study affect each other mutually and continually in the research process (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2000)" (Haynes, 2006:208). Not only did I want my own biases, personal influences and interpretations to be considered by the reader when considering my research I also wanted to move beyond the research monologue, to engage the reader in my own research experience. Emotional labour research has tended to use interviews and

participant observations to further understand the process and its effects, however, these methods only provide us with a presentation, governed by social norms and rules. Yet, although the performance of emotion management and emotional labour, more specifically, are common in social interaction, not excluding the research process, the experience of the researcher has largely been excluded from the research accounts. Thus, whilst engaging in the role of researcher I too would be performing emotional labour and my own personal experiences should not be excluded from my analysis. As Walkerdine (1997:59) points out, “instead of making futile attempts to avoid something that cannot be avoided, we should think more carefully about how to utilise our subjectivity as part of the research process.”

Thus, my endeavour to be reflexive, in terms of my research, is twofold. Firstly, in the presentation of myself to the participants I have attempted not to obscure who I am, or to adopt the role of the objective researcher. I made a conscious effort to be personable and ‘real’, to open up and allow, at least a portion of my interests, identity and biases to be exposed<sup>33</sup>. Secondly, as a researcher I performed emotional labour in the field and thus consider how I experienced those performances. My own account of how I experienced the performance of emotional labour, as a researcher, also acts as a confessional tale (Van Maanen, 1988) that allows the reader an insight into the way the material was gathered, the “personal biases, character flaws [and] bad habits” that have coloured my portrayal of the participants and their behaviours (see Figure 6 & 7). I felt this to be a key part of my attempt to be self-reflexive (Cunliffe, 2003) in my research and analysis processes, however, they are not presented as a method of removing bias but instead to make them visible to the reader (Linstead, 1994; Hardy et al, 2001). I present them here, rather than with the voices of the research subjects, in an attempt to prevent my reflexive approach becoming the focus of the study (Clegg & Hardy, 1996).

In this sense, then, I am both the subject and the object of my study. Such an approach goes some way to countering the criticism of solipsism, often aimed at interpretive enquiry, for I, as objective researcher, am able, to some extent, to know the content of my own mind, the subject. However, this is only conceivable in terms of the discourse and meaning understood through the symbolic order of society. Similar reflexive approaches have been advocated and used in nursing research. Where researchers are also practitioners there is a pertinent need to be reflexive in order to understand how the researcher’s individual values and beliefs impact on the interpretation of a situation (Arber, 2006:156). Such a reflexive approach will allow me to explore some

of the nuanced, competing and confusing process that occur when we negotiate performances of emotional labour (Theodosius, 2006).

Not only am I proposing to open up my own experience of performing emotional labour for analysis, I must not forget that I am also the 'author' of the research. The interpretive/constructivist paradigm posits multiple, equally valid social realities that are co-constructed through dialogic interaction, this also includes the interaction between author and reader. The reader also approaches the research with preconceived notions, biases and opinions. The text itself claims no factual superiority (Pullen, 2005:195) but offers an interpretation of the research experience for the reader to re-interpret again. As Linstead & Grafton-Small (1992: 343-344) point out:

... the author is as much product of the text as the text is a product of the author (Barthes, 1981). The text cannot exist as mere words, symbols or actions, though, until it is read or made to have meaning – therefore it depends upon its re-creation by a 'reader' or recipient...The text has an intertextuality, a multiplicity of meaning which is inherent rather than a result of a variety of interpretations.

I continue to write this chapter in the first person, to emphasise ownership over the methodological choices and assumptions I have made (Cunliffe, 2003). Working with the epistemological and ontological assumptions of the interpretive-constructivist paradigm I critically discuss the choice of occupational roles studied and the methodological tools used to do so.

### **An 'Insider Account'**

When I began my fieldwork I became more aware of my own emotional performances. If I wanted to understand why individuals perform emotional labour and how it made them feel I could not help reflecting these questions back on to myself. In an attempt to make sense of what I was feeling I kept a 'research diary'. Although I did not make entries everyday it was a space for me to make quick jottings or more detailed descriptions about how I felt I had regulated my emotions whilst I was out in the field. On reflection I see this as being important for it helped me to make sense of what I was feeling and also made me consider, reflexively, the emotional labour process that I, often subconsciously, enacted.

I have chosen two of these entries to discuss here. The first is taken from my time observing the GP receptionists and the second from a meeting with a member of cabin crew. I have chosen these particular examples for two reasons; as I read and reflect back on my time in the field these two incidents stand out, I can remember, vividly, the emotions I experienced at the time, and secondly, they demonstrate two very different kinds of emotion management.

The incident described in Figure 6, is one that remains in the forefront of my mind. I noticed, as I was writing the description, how angry I still felt. I do not feel anger toward myself, however, but towards the doctor in question and his inappropriate comments. I did, and perhaps to some extent, still do, feel frustrated by the incident. Although I feel I handled the situation correctly, and would probably behave in exactly the same way again, I am frustrated by the idea that Dr Chen got away with saying those things. By not making my true feelings known and putting him in his place a part of me feels as if he has won. If that situation had occurred in a private situation, for example in a bar, I would have not hesitated in telling him exactly what I thought. However, at the time I was constrained by the situation and the identity I had adopted (researcher) and, therefore, I did not feel it appropriate to react in such a volatile manner.

Throughout this incident, I performed empathetic emotional labour as I entertained Dr Chen's stories, despite them being irrelevant to my research, and whilst he belittled and embarrassed me. During this performance, my emotions were congruent with the feeling and display norms associated with the role of researcher. Reflecting back, as a researcher I feel I behaved impeccably throughout, controlling my embarrassment, anger and frustration, however, another competing identity perceives my actions as weak and dissonant. It was only after my smiles and polite declinations had been repeatedly ignored that I had to change my emotional tone. When I clearly stated that I did not think his ideas were appropriate I was no longer performing empathetic emotional labour, however, I was not expressing genuine emotion either. I had adopted a kind of emotional neutrality to end the interaction and remove myself from the situation. On reflection, it probably took a lot of courage to change the emotional performance I had embarked upon, however, it was one that again remained within the boundaries of what seemed to me as appropriate behaviour as a researcher. I did not want to offend Dr Chen, despite him having offended me, but I did need to take control of the situation and I did this by changing the tone of my emotional performance.

This incident has revealed the complexity of the emotional labour process and how central the role of self and identity are to understanding the process more fully.

### Figure 6: Anger, Embarrassment & Smiles

16<sup>th</sup> August 2007

It is a cold and rainy start to the day. As I make the short drive from the hotel I have been staying at for the past three weeks to Surgery 2 I am feeling tired and lonely. I am at the halfway point in my field research and spending most of the week away from home and living out of a suitcase is starting to take its toll on my spirits. However, as I pull into the car park I take a deep breath to prepare myself for another day sitting, cramped in the corner of the tiny, paper filled, chaotic office.

As soon as I walk through the door Jane tells me that Dr Chen is in a bad mood, "He must have had an argument with his wife!" she speculated.

I make the appropriate noises to intimate my concern, shock and pleasure at being privy to this important piece of office gossip, then take my position in the corner of the room and begin to make my notes and observations.

Sometime in the middle of the morning Jane deals with a script query, it turns out to be Dr Chen's mistake. She comments to both Elizabeth and myself that she thinks Dr Chen is finding it difficult to concentrate today because he is "really upset". She goes on to explain, to me, that Dr Chen is married to a British woman and, in her opinion; there is sometimes a clash of cultures. This particular argument is over Dr Chen's wife giving away her husband's pork pie to a member of her family. Jane takes great pride in the fact that Dr Chen has confided in her. "At least he talks to us so we can understand why he is not acting normally!"

Just before lunch Dr Chen comes into reception. The office is very small and cramped with the three of us in there. His large frame fills the room, I feel claustrophobic and uncomfortable in this foreign environment. Dr Chen embarks on a story about the fruit and vegetables he ate whilst he was growing up as a child in the East. His monologue stemmed from no-where, it felt completely out of context and I began to feel increasingly awkward. Jane dipped in and out of the conversation between phone calls, I could tell this speech was for my benefit; I was his captive audience.

I made a note "Dr Chen – self-absorbed"

Later, in the afternoon, Dr Chen returned to the office. As he opened the door he purposively pointed at my note pad "What is all this for?" even though I had explained who I was and what I was doing in my first week at the surgery. I smiled politely, despite feeling my tension levels increase. "It is part of my PhD research." I replied briefly.

His mouth drops to the floor and he dramatically stumbles back to sit on Jane's empty chair. "I thought you were a schoolgirl on work experience! My God! I thought she was just a schoolgirl. She is only a baby!" he exclaims.

I felt incredibly awkward and embarrassed but I continued to smile and laugh at his dramatic gestures that referred to both my age and my gender. I made a note: "Dr Chen is interminably arrogant and rude!"



At around 4pm, I was growing conscious that my day was nearly over and it would soon be time to head back to the hotel. I felt both relieved and yet wearied by the prospect. However, before I could escape Dr Chen came back into reception. As I saw his face enter the room my heart-sank. I could not be bothered to listen to any more of his stories, or here him refer to me as a 'schoolgirl' again.

However, this time he took a very different approach.

"Where are you staying tonight? Where do you live? I am going to take you out tonight, for a curry, in Bradford!" he bombarded me with his questions and demands.

At first, I thought he was joking as the idea was so inappropriate but I soon realised, as he intensely persisted, that this was no joke. As I continued to smile I could feel myself becoming more and more anxious. He began to discuss transport arrangements: he would pick me up and drive there but we would get a taxi back so that we could have many bottles of wine!

I felt very uncomfortable. I did not know what to say. The plans became more and more elaborate so I looked to Jane for moral support and guidance. Was this all a joke?

Had this situation arisen in a different context, were I not a researcher, representing the University and wanting to continue my field research I would have surely told Dr Chen exactly what I thought of him and his dinner plans. However, my role, responsibilities and obligations were governed by feeling and display rules that prescribed appropriate behaviour and they prohibited the cutting remarks that were springing to my mind as he stood before me.

After my many polite refusals were ignored and swept away I looked him directly in the eye and stated "Unfortunately I do not think it appropriate. I am sorry!"

He fell silent, then shrugged his shoulders and left the room.

Jane and Susan, who had said nothing throughout the awful scene, now tried to reassure me. "Don't be offended or worried he is always buying us jewellery (sapphires mainly) and wine. He is just the most generous man we have ever met!"

I smile and reassure them that I am fine, but decide to leave early that day.

As I drive back to the hotel I realise how shaken I am by the entire interaction. I dread the thought of having to go back again tomorrow, as I know it is his surgery.

The second extract from my research diary is one that is a little more light-hearted, yet demonstrates how during the fieldwork I continually engaged in emotion management whilst interacting with the participants.

Figure 7 describes the first meeting I had with a trainee cabin crew named Lucy. Although initially I was confident about meeting her and talking about my research, as I had done many times before, a comment from a mutual friend of ours and the time afforded to me by her being late, led to me being critically reflexive about myself and the way I was going to introduce my research.

As described, Andrew commented on the fact that I had bought a book with me. On reflection, this was something I always did when I met potential participants for the first time. I think I do this to add some kind of weight to my research proposals, I feel it makes the whole project seem more viable if the book, upon which it is based, is tangible. However, as Andrew pointed out, the presence of a 'book' could also be intimidating and possibly out of place in this particular environment. His comments, however, made me reflect on the way I had always pitched my research, had I been too formal, too wrapped up in my own thinking to consider the 'individual' that was sat before me?

In addition, his comment about Lucy being easily identifiable due to her 'Fanta' face was undeniably humorous, but that too led me to consider my own aesthetic performance. I have never worn a lot of makeup or been overly interested in fashion, yet I suddenly became very self-conscious about the way that I looked. This was a new experience for me, and something I had never given serious consideration. I did not want Lucy to think that I was 'out of touch' and unaware of young culture today, though I probably am! As I sat waiting I noticed myself touching my hair and smoothing my clothes, wishing I had made more of an effort.

All of these issues contributed to me pitching my research and presenting myself in a different way. I tried to be more relaxed, less interrogative and did not mention emotional labour theory, only my interest in the emotions cabin crew experienced. My altered performance was also a form of emotion management; I tried to curb my enthusiasm for the theory and concentrate on making Lucy feel comfortable. In addition, I had to suppress my laughter when she arrived, as Andrew's description of her aesthetic appearance was fairly accurate.

This short extract describes how I reflexively analysed my own emotions and aesthetic against the participants. Once again I altered my emotional performance to adhere to the feeling and display rules associated with the role of researcher, but also of a young woman.

### **Figure 7: Laughter, Judgement and Fanta**

**25<sup>th</sup> March 2007**

I have arranged to meet a friend of a friend who has just started cabin crew training for one of the charter airlines. It is a warm, spring evening and we have arranged to meet in a local village pub. I arrive early. I have brought with me Hochschild's 'The Managed Heart' and a large notepad. My intention for this session is to get to know Lucy, explain what I want to do and hopefully secure a follow up time to conduct a proper interview.

Our mutual friend, Andrew, begins his shift behind the bar, as I continue to sit and wait for Lucy. She is late and I begin to worry that she will not arrive. Andrew comes over to say hello and sees the book I have bought with me:

"What have you bought that book for? She is such a dumb ass she won't understand?"

I smile at his frankness and begin to think about the way I should pitch the project and myself to her.

I ask Andrew to bring her over when she arrives.

"You'll know exactly who she is. She looks like Fanta!" he laughed.

"Do you mean she looks like she has been Tangoed?" I clarify

"Yeah, that is what I meant to say, she will be plastered in orange make-up!" He replied smiling, yet serious.

Whilst I waited I contemplated Andrew's remarks. How would I look to Lucy? I wore barely any make-up, my hair was tied back scruffily and I wore jeans and a cardigan. Would the presence of a book scare her? I became uncomfortable with the way I looked and the way I had envisaged this initial chat going.

I pushed the book back into my bag and tried to straighten my hair. I watched the door with trepidation. Fifteen minutes later, just as I was about to give up and go home, a short, blond haired, very confident young woman walked in.

Andrew showed her to my table where my inviting smile was suppressing my laughter. Sure enough Lucy's face was very much orange! I managed to regain my composure and focused on the fact that she had turned up, in the end, and was willing to talk to me about her work.

I explained that I was doing my PhD on the emotions involved with the work of cabin crew. Later, on reflection, I saw my explanations and approach to the introduction of my work to be very different to the way I had explained it in the past. Andrew's comments, and my self-consciousness had shaped the way I was portraying both my fieldwork and myself.

As our discussion continued, it became clear that Lucy would be an interesting respondent and we arranged to follow up the meeting.

After identifying my research questions I began to consider selecting 'data samples', using theoretical sampling to guide my approach. Qualitative data sampling tends to differ from quantitative methods due to the researchers' desire to produce results that are high in representational validity. In order to achieve such a quality, quantitative researchers tend to utilise 'probability sampling' methods (Berg 2007) based upon mathematically representational subgroups of a larger population that are suitable for inferential hypothesis testing. Qualitative research, on the other hand, tends to be led by 'non probability sampling' (Berg 2007). In these cases participants are not, in general, seen to be representative of a larger population in the same way as quantitative studies. The responses given are highly individualised and specific to a given situation and social context, though this does not mean that they are not seen in terms of their membership of a population.

In line with qualitative research sampling, the data samples I chose were identified through a process of theoretical sampling. This technique focuses on elements of theoretical discussion that have potential for interesting and informative empirical research. Emotional labour studies, particularly in sociology and organisational behaviour have tended to prefer context sampling to theoretical sampling leading the literature to become entrenched in the investigation of "groups that are presumed to perform emotional labour (Smith-Lovin, 1998)" (Erickson & Ritter, 2001:160).

Reading emotion management/ emotional labour literature across a number of disciplines allowed me to identify a number of gaps and unanswered questions. These include: why do people in the same organisation, who occupy the same occupational role, experience emotional labour differently? What is the role of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process? As occupational roles and society changes how does the performance of emotional labour change? How do societal perceptions and the expectations projected by them, influence the kind of emotional labour performed and the way it is experienced? How are performances of emotional labour narrated by those who perform it? How are performances of emotional labour negotiated in the workplace and in work groups? How is emotive dissonance aroused, negotiated and reduced?

In pursuit of exploring these ideas I undertook a comparative analysis of two occupational roles, these being the role of cabin crew and the role of GP receptionist. This was the approach taken by Hochschild (1983) in her original presentation of the emotional labour construct, when she compared the emotional labour performed by cabin crew and bill collectors in the early 1980s. Although these occupational roles seemed to be

incongruent, Hochschild (1983) chose them due to the nature of the emotional labour they performed. Cabin crew personified empathy, warmth and subservience whilst bill collectors had to be scary, intimidating and forceful. The comparative analysis I conducted also compares two seemingly incongruent occupational roles. My comparison is based upon societal perceptions of the occupational roles, the nature of the emotional labour performed and also the changes that both the airline industry and primary care have endured in the recent past<sup>34</sup>. I have used a horizontally stratified method that concentrates on the analysis of a process, yet, does not neglect context. Unlike Hochschild (1983) I use the two data sets to illuminate one another in terms of their similarities and differences.

### *Cabin Crew*

As is demonstrated in chapter three, the study of cabin crew is firmly embedded in the foundations of emotional labour theory. In spite of this, there have, however, been few empirical emotional labour studies that have re-visited the nature of emotional labour performed by cabin crew (exceptions include Wouters, 1989; Williams, 2003; Hancock & Tyler, 2000; Bolton & Boyd, 2003). There are a number of possible reasons for the lack of empirical interest in the emotional labour of the airline industry. Firstly, emotional labour is considered a static construct, therefore, there is no reason to keep re-visiting this occupational role as it has previously been characterised by the performance of emotional labour. Secondly, deregulation of the airline industry in 1997 led to increased competition, which subsequently made airlines reluctant to 'waste' time and resources on research. In addition, fierce competition also made airlines fearful of external parties entering their organisations. Thirdly, increased security threats have generally made gaining access to airlines considerably more difficult.

In spite of these barriers to empirical research in the airline industry, I felt that deregulation, the rapid development of the budget airline model and increased security awareness, along with broader social changes to travel and tourism, demanded a re-consideration of the nature of emotional labour performed by cabin crew. Despite these changes the role of cabin crew remains associated with a plethora of social perceptions that centre on the sexualised image of a 1950s airhostess, including 'trolley-dolly', 'bimbo', 'model', 'waitress', and 'hostess.' A consideration of the autobiographical literature of cabin crew for example, *Coffee, Tea or Me?* (Baker & Jones, 1967) and *In-Flight Entertainment* (Hester, 2002) explore, confirm and challenge some of these notions and stereotypes which have endured for decades in spite of the numerous changes to the

occupational role and its associated social position. In theoretical terms, cabin crew are perceived to perform 'empathetic emotional labour' (Korczynski 2002), characterised by caring, empathy, warmth, compliance and joy. These factors combined make cabin crew an appropriate occupational role for researching the experience and performance of emotional labour and an interesting comparative to GP receptionists.

However despite my efforts, I was unable to gain formal access to an airline. I feel this was largely due to the aforementioned reasons, these being the airlines reluctance to allow researchers in due to the highly competitive market and increased security threats. Thus, I adopted a method of 'convenience sampling' to sample cabin crew participants. Convenience sampling "...relies on available subjects – those who are close at hand or easily accessible" (Berg 2007:43). Convenience sampling has been criticised as 'ad-hoc' (Berg, 207:43) due to its association with empirical research where those sampled are not specifically equipped to offer information about a given study. However, convenience sampling was an appropriate method of sampling in this instance because the concern was to further understand the way emotional labour is experienced and performed, therefore I was not concerned with the specific organisational context but with the individual experience of performing emotional labour. In addition, this kind of 'random sampling' gave the participants an added assurance of anonymity. This was particularly important for cabin crew participants as those that were currently working as crew had been specifically forbidden by the airlines to discuss their work or the organisation with third parties<sup>35</sup>.

As part of my method of convenience sampling, I contacted a number of friends and associates that currently work, or had worked, as cabin crew. In turn, these participants put me in touch with colleagues who were willing to take part in the project. This is known as 'snowball sampling' or 'chain referral sampling' (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981) and is particularly useful for studying sensitive topics or difficult to reach populations (Lee 1993). In all, these combined methods of sampling facilitated access to four cabin crew from various airlines with whom I conducted semi-structured interviews, and one Purser with whom I conducted a ten-hour biographic-narrative interview (Wengraf, 2001).

In addition, a previous research project's primary data were re-analysed. This empirical material was collected in 2005 when formal access was successfully negotiated with a UK budget airline. Data collection methods included semi-structured interviews with four cabin crew, an interview with the Head of Cabin Crew and non-participant observations

of three training days. After careful consideration the empirical material gathered in 2005 will be known as stage one, in the extended unit of research and will, therefore, be re-analysed alongside more recently gathered material. This decision has been made on the basis that: the data is only three years old, the nature of the questions asked and the objective of the previous research project is similar; the same ontological and epistemological assumptions stand; and if I had the opportunity again I would not make any significant changes to the questions asked or the methods used. However, I do acknowledge that if the study were re-conducted there would, no doubt, be changes in the empirical findings, as I am not assuming the organisation or the individuals have remained static over the past three years.

### *GP Receptionists*

In order to conduct a comparative analysis in terms of 'perception' I required an occupational role characterised by an alternative social stereotype to that of cabin crew. GP receptionists offered an ideal comparative to cabin crew because they are also front-line service representatives, but they are represented by negative metaphors such as 'dragons' and 'ogres'. The social perception of GP receptionists is characterised by 'antipathetic emotional labour' (Korczynski, 2002), as they are seen to be curt, short tempered, obstinate, obstructive and unhelpful in the patient's pursuit to see a GP. However, this is not the kind of metaphors that are prescribed to the role by the literature, as demonstrated in the following extract.

The first impression the patient has of the surgery or hospital department is usually of the reception areas and the reception staff. Remember, the receptionist is the 'shop window' and the way in which patients feel as they sit in the waiting areas will depend entirely on how the receptionist has reacted and greeted them. It is the receptionist's role to allay patient's fear and worries and help them to feel 'comfortable' whilst they wait. A courteous, friendly manner, accompanied by a smile and an understanding of the situation can work wonders, even with the most difficult of patients... Everyone, whether patients, secretaries, receptionists, doctors or other members of the health care team has feelings. If you have personal problems it is difficult not to allow your emotions to affect the way in which you respond and interact with patients and colleagues. It is important to be aware of this and have the ability to overcome your feelings.

(Robbins, 1996:22 emphasis added)

This excerpt from the *Medical Receptionists and Secretaries Handbook*, describes the need for GP receptionists to perform a similar form of 'empathetic emotional labour' (Korczynski, 2002) traditionally associated with cabin crew. Through my research methods, I aimed to untangle some of these contradicting perceptions and expectations of



GP receptionists and cabin crew, endeavouring to understand, at least in part, the sources of the variations in the emotional labour performed within and across different occupational groups. Table 4 illustrates a simplified comparison of the roles of cabin crew and GP receptionists in terms of their work and the social perceptions associated with the occupational roles. It must be acknowledged, however, that in part, my own perceptions and interpretations of the stereotypes associated with the role have coloured the presentation of the stereotypes here. I am not claiming that everyone associates the roles of either cabin crew or GP receptionists with these representations, they are simply my interpretation of the literatures and my own perception of the stereotypes. However, as will be demonstrated later both Claire and Sam had similar notions of how their occupational roles were perceived and constructed within society.

In order for the comparison to hold, however, I did not want my sample of GP receptionists to work in the same organisational context, as this would leave my findings susceptible to the critique of context specificity. In other words, using a case study approach would have meant it could be argued that the conclusions made, on the bases of empirical material gathered from the same organisation, are specific to the individual organisation and the associated organisational culture. Although it has been proposed that generalisations can be drawn from case study approaches (Flyvberg 2006) I thought it best to avoid such a criticism. To accommodate this, I took part in an already established NHS funded project looking at the influence of devolved management from a Primary Care Trust on a group of practices in the North of England. Involvement in this project gave me access to three different GP surgeries, each serving a very different patient population, and each staffed by a different clinical and administrative team. Although, the same group of partners, known as SharedCare, managed all three sites each surgery was suitably managed as separate entities in terms of emotional labour. Yet, I do appreciate that the influence of the same management team is bound to impact on each of the sites in some way. However, the SharedCare partnership allowed me to focus more upon the individual experience of performing emotional labour as a GP receptionist rather than the emotional labour performed within a specific organisational context.

I originally requested to conduct participant observations, which would have involved me actively working 'as a receptionist doing reception work at each of the three sites'. I wanted to have this level of access in order to reveal more of myself and engage with the receptionists on a mutual level of understanding in an attempt to combat some of the methodological concerns I had at the outset. However, the National Research Ethics Service turned down this proposal on the grounds that patients could not be informed of

the study beforehand. However, as Bosk & DeVries (2004) argue the idea of informing subjects and participants is to allow them to evaluate the benefits and risks of them participating, yet, these are not that different to those associated with normal interactions. They also go on to point out that, due to the nature of inductive research it is often unlikely that the researcher would be able to specify the risks or hypothesise the outcomes of the research. However, in compliance with the ethical review board's decision I went on to conduct non-participant observations and in hindsight this allowed me time and space to reflect more critically on what I was seeing and hearing, without being embedded in my own experience of the emotion management processes involved in reception work.

In this sense, then, the sampling methods used for the GP receptionists was much more structured than that used for cabin crew. I spent six days at each of the three sites conducting non-participant observations and in-situ interviews that totalled over eighty-seven hours. In addition, I was involved in the joint facilitation of a focus group, which included a projective drawing method and conducted hour-long interviews with four reception staff.

**Table 4: Comparison of GP Receptionists and Cabin Crew**

<b>Cabin Crew</b>	<b>GP Receptionists</b>
Thought to perform 'empathetic' or 'positive' emotional labour	Thought to perform 'antipathetic' or 'negative' emotional labour
Play a gate-keeping role to duty free, first class, cockpit etc	Play a gate-keeping role to prescriptions, medicine, medical advice and clinicians
Stereotyped as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Pretty</li> <li>➤ Caring</li> <li>➤ Unintelligent</li> <li>➤ Smiling</li> <li>➤ Happy</li> <li>➤ Well-presented</li> <li>➤ Promiscuous</li> </ul>	Stereotyped as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Hard faced</li> <li>➤ Cold</li> <li>➤ Obstructive</li> <li>➤ Frigid</li> <li>➤ Abrupt</li> <li>➤ Unhappy</li> <li>➤ Monstrous</li> </ul>
Work in front-line service interactions	Work in front-line service interactions
Deal with demanding situations and difficult passengers	Deal with demanding situations and difficult patients
A large part of the job is concerned with preserving life, safety and assistance.	A large part of the job is concerned with preserving life, safety and assistance.
In general, do not have to see passengers or colleagues on a regular basis.	Repeatedly see patients and colleagues – long-term relationships are more common.
Confined working environment – no escape from passengers	Segregated working environment – barrier between patients and receptionists
Passengers can be upset, traumatised, ill, hysterical or happy, relieved, excited etc.	Patients can be upset, traumatised, ill, hysterical, or happy, relieved, excited etc.
Industry and role has recently undergone numerous changes.	Industry and role has recently undergone numerous changes. See Appendix G

The flexibility and variety offered by each of the data sets fits with the interpretive approach implied by social constructionism. My interests lie with the individual experience of performing emotion management, not the organisational context and therefore theoretical sampling offered a horizontally stratified method of selecting empirical sources. Previous research on emotional labour has tended to assume that everyone in the same occupational role experiences emotional labour in the same way. Taking a multi-organisational sample, in both the airline industry and primary care, allows an alternative consideration of the emotional labour construct, one that is heterogeneous and mutates with the changing nature of labour itself. In this sense, each participant was considered to be a “reflective being whose understanding allows for improvisation and adjustment to various situations instead of merely following prescriptive behaviours” (Hoch et al, 2003:21 cited in O’Donohoe & Turley 2006:1433).

The next part of this chapter goes on to consider the use of interpretive ethnographic data collection methods used, which include in-depth interviews, non-participant observations, a biographic-narrative interview and a projective drawing method used in a focus group situation, to consider the lived experience of performing and negotiating emotional labour.

### **A multi-method strategy**

Previous empirical studies on emotional labour have tended to use single methods of data collection, the most common being questionnaires or interviews (Schaubroeck & Jones, 2000; Williams, 2003; O’Donohoe & Turley, 2006; Lewis, 2005). However, after careful consideration, I felt that a single method strategy to collecting data on the performance of emotional labour would not offer an adequate account of the complex and often competing motivations and emotions experienced. Based on the interpretive ethnographic paradigm, I utilised a number of qualitative data collection methods to further understand, not only what kinds of emotional labour were being performed but also the way in which the individuals involved understood, justified and narrated what they were doing on a day-to-day basis.

Multiple data collection strategies are thought to be advantageous because “although every data gathering method is fallible, the weaknesses of one methods are often the strengths of another (Denzin, 1978)” (Meyer, 1991:232). Thus in putting together a multiple method strategy of data collection, I was keen to explore some less ‘traditional’

methods, for as Campbell et al (1982:30) point out we are in danger of creating a “science of consistencies among verbal reports”. This is very much an issue in my research as the adherence to social norms and expectations led participants to reveal what they think to be an ‘appropriate performance’ in interview situations. Such ‘performances’ do not have to be seen as conscious but are governed by embedded situational rules that prescribe appropriate behaviours.

Taking an interpretive approach to the field research and the participants involved means that the voices of the subjects are prioritised. Participants “are not considered to be objects like other objects, but are active sense makers like the researcher...the key conceptions and understandings must be worked out with the subjects under study” (Alvesson & Deetz 2000:33). In this sense, then, the data collection methods, used to further understand how and why emotional labour is performed, are based on these interpretive assumptions and can be described broadly as ‘ethnographic’ in style.

For Alvesson & Deetz (2000:34), “the expressed goal of interpretive studies is to show how particular realities are socially produced and maintained through norms, rites, rituals and daily activities”, this can be achieved through the use of ethnographic data collection methods. Within the social sciences, ethnography is perceived to be a process that “attempts to describe and interpret social expressions between people and groups” (Berg, 2007:172). Ethnographic studies do this via a process of ‘subjective soaking’ (Ellen 1984, 1987). ‘Subjective soaking occurs when the researcher “abandons the idea of absolute objectivity or scientific neutrality and attempts to merge him/herself into the culture being studied” (Ellen, 1984:77)<sup>36</sup>. In so doing, the researcher can examine phenomena as perceived by participants. In this sense, ethnography is not fully comprehensible without some consideration of the other (Berg, 2007). With ethnographic research, however, it is important to remember that, although the researcher’s aim is to ‘soak’ up the culture being studied, the analysis of that culture and the processes identified will only ever be the researcher’s interpretation. Data will never be unaffected by the researcher, as Denzin (1994:500) states, “In the social sciences, there is only interpretation. Nothing speaks for itself.”

In terms of data collection methods, then, Van Maanen (1982:103) suggests that ethnography has become the method “that involves extensive field work of various types including participant observations, formal and informal interviewing, document collecting, filming and recording, and so on.” In ethnographic research, the methods of data collection are considered less important than the reflexive approach of the

researcher. In addition, it tends to adopt multi-method strategies to data collection, as 'valid' empirical material is available from an unlimited number of sources, given that the objective is to understand how norms and rituals are produced and maintained, from the perspective of the social group being studied. Embracing this approach I utilised a number of 'ethnographic style' data collection methods to explore my research questions. However, time and resource constraints, varying opportunities and the nature of the access gained to each data set somewhat influenced the range of data collection methods I was able to adopt. These issues, along with a critical discussion of the methods chosen will be considered throughout the remainder of this chapter.

### *Cabin Crew*

For reasons previously discussed, research access to cabin crew is limited, however, after adopting a method of convenience sampling, I conducted hour-long semi-structured interviews with three-cabin crew from a variety of airlines and a ten-hour biographic narrative interview with an experienced Purser of a full service provider. This is known as stage 2 of the research process. From stage one, I had observed, a three-day training course at a budget airline, conducted hour-long semi-structured interviews with four cabin crew and an hour-long in-depth interview with the Head of Cabin Crew.

The seven-cabin crew interviewed included: in stage one, four crew from the same budget airline (Laura, Sandy, Maggie and Yolanda), and from stage two, a trainee with a full service provider (Lucy) and two retired cabin crew (Janet and Debbie), who now worked in different occupations.

Semi-structured interviews have been used extensively in qualitative emotional labour studies. Interviews are said to offer "...sufficiently rich, detailed and varied accounts" (O'Donohoe & Turley, 2006) of individual's experiences, through the voice of the subject. However, for Silverman (2001) the interview process is laden with issues of power, perception and performance. Interviews, in general, take place after an event, or similarly, require participants to reflect back on a time, or feelings, that have already happened. In this sense, interviews must be considered retrospective accounts that, according to Tompkins & Cheney (1983), tell us more about the individual than they do about what actually happened. As Czarniawska (2004:49) states "interviews do not stand for anything else; they represent nothing else but themselves", in other words, the value of an interview in mirroring what goes on outside of the interview is limited. Yet, taking a social constructionist approach, there is no 'reality', only that which is co-constructed

through performance and interaction and defined by social rules (Seltser & Bass, 1990). "An interview is not a window on social reality but it is a part, a sample of that reality" (Czarniawska, 2004:49). When analysing interview data, it must be appreciated that "people's descriptions of their own behaviour are strongly influenced by social expectations and routinely diverge from their actual behaviour" (Lopez, 2006:139-140), at best an interview is a useful tool for "tapping into discursively displayed social norms and values (Silverman, 1989)" (Shuler & Sypher, 2000:61).

Alvesson & Deetz (2000:74) argue, however, that interviews tend to be over-criticised and offer the potential to "provide interesting clues for the understanding of social reality". 'Standard interviews' (Mishler, 1986), or structured interviews, have long been criticised as rigid and limited in scope due to their inflexibility. One of the earliest papers on interviewing (Lazarsfeld, 1935:1) points out that "asking for reasons and giving answers are commonplace habits of everyday life", yet, interviewing as a research technique carries one critical problem, namely, that the interviewer and the participant do not share assumptions, contextual understandings or common knowledge (Mishler, 1986:1). However, the semi-structured and in-depth interview processes are less constrained by the researcher's assumptions and language because there is "space for negotiation of meanings" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000:71), therefore at some level, both parties can establish mutual and shared understandings of the questions being asked and the answers given, thereby making the empirical material richer (Brekhus et al 2005) and more meaningful in terms of the research question.

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews allowed me to further understand the way in which cabin crew narrated, described and understood the emotional labour they performed. My aim was to understand why individuals performed emotional labour and how they felt about doing so, therefore, many of the criticisms aimed at interviews as a data collection method can be seen as advantages in pursuit of a subjective interpretation of the performance. As Czarniawska (2004:49) points out, "... what people present in interviews is but the results of perception, their interpretation of the world, which is of extreme value to the researcher because one may assume that it is the same perception that informs their actions."

However, there is a significant issue in relation to interviewing, with regard to identity that does pose a methodological conflict. Once the interview is agreed the researcher and the interviewee are instantly bound in a relationship of mutual identity construction. In this sense, interview responses should be viewed as expressions of identity. The way in

which the interviewer presents him, or herself, and the way the research is presented will contribute to constructing his, or her, identity to the participant. "Different identities are invoked and different answers are produced" (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000:73), thus, careful consideration is thought to be required before, during and after the interview to interpret the impact of identity.

Identities frame and structure how we provide accounts of complex phenomena, they affect what we focus on, what we neglect and how we describe what we focus upon. It makes sense to assume that how a person describes their company, work, relations etc, reflects their identity, for example ideas about who they are, what they are characterised by and how they differ from other people.

(Alvesson & Deetz, 2000:124)

Due to these issues and in pursuit of 'good research', it has become customary for the interviewer to avoid getting too involved in the research site, or to show too much of their personal identity to the participant. Instead, one must be continuously aware of one's responsibility as an impartial researcher. However, if the interview interaction is, as all social interactions are, a mutual identity construction, then, the restraint and reserve of the interviewer will influence the identity of the participant. Czarniawska (1999, 2004) discusses the effect of the interview interaction on the interviewee, she labels the logic that dominates the response a 'logic of representation'. The 'logic of representation refers to the individual's desire to present their self in a good light, or as Czarniawska (2004:53) puts it "it is mostly the logic of representation, the dressing up for visitors, which is exhibited during an interview". As Alvesson & Deetz (2000:113) also comment, "the researcher will appear as rigid and strange –an impression that will colour (and restrict) further responses." Just as the interviewer is 'performing' the role identity of 'researcher', so the participant is performing the role identity of 'interviewee'. They are engaged in a mutual construction of identity.

Fontana & Frey (1994) call for a rejection of 'out-dated' techniques of traditional 'good research' in favour of 'real conversations'. They argue that by talking openly to the participant about personal interests and biases, the researcher's 'personal identity' comes through, making the interview "more honest, morally sound, and reliable, because it treats the respondent as an equal, allowing him, or her, to express personal feelings, thereby presenting a more 'realistic' picture than can be uncovered using traditional interview techniques" (1994:371). Although there may be merit in this argument, this kind of approach does not create a 'truthful' interview. Interviewee's will never be 'truth tellers'<sup>37</sup>, because they want to make a situation work and make a good impression. In essence, the



interview will always be an enacted performance, a presentation of selves (Goffman, 1959) in which the interviewer and the interviewee actively construct their social worlds (Silverman 1993). Thus, emotion management performances are an active part of an interview method, for both the participant and the researcher.

Fontana & Frey (1994), among others, raise an interesting point concerning the affect that 'standard interview' methods can have on the interviewee and the knowledge that they share during the interview process. Mishler (1986:69) also states that "telling stories is far from unusual in everyday conversation and it is apparently no more unusual for interviewees to respond to questions with narratives if they are given some room to speak". The opportunity to conduct a ten-hour (carried out in 2 hour sessions over three months) 'biographic narrative interview' (Wengraf, 2001) with a Purser, with over twenty years experience as cabin crew, allowed me to explore Mishler's (1986) observation.

A 'biographical-narrative interview' (Wengraf, 2001) is a variation of the semi-structured interview, "where the interviewee is asked to tell a story, produce a narrative of some sort regarding all or part of their own life-experience (Wengraf, 2001:5)." This process usually begins with the interviewer posing a single question aimed at inducing narrative storytelling. Wengraf's (2001:113) presentation of, what he terms, 'SQIN-BNI' – which stands for Single Question Inducing Narrative – Biographical-Narrative Interviews, is extreme in its execution, for "after the posing of the initial narrative seeking question, interventions by the interviewer are effectively limited to facilitative noises and non-verbal support." The idea is to limit the impact of the researcher, by passing total control of the interaction to the interviewee.

The approach I took to biographical-narrative interviewing was not as extreme as that advocated by Wengraf (2001). In fact, I purposively tried to engage in the 'conversation', clarifying language and meanings I did not understand and, sometimes, even sharing my own experiences, in an attempt to offer support and acknowledgement, as advocated by Fontana & Frey (1994) and others. Such an informal approach also helps highlight the "peculiar symmetry" (Czarniawska, 2004:48) of power, offered by biographic narrative interviewing. Czarniawska (2004) argues that it is unrealistic to think of the researcher as an "omniscient professional" because "the narrators are the only experts on the question of their own lives" (Czarniawska, 2004: 48), thus, the power of knowledge lies with the interviewee not with the researcher. The researcher, however, offers in exchange an unusual and, often, rare space for speech and reflection. Repeat visits also allowed me to build a relationship with Claire, which led to a more fluid and comfortable dialogue and,

potentially, reduced the effects of her 'logic of representation' (Czarniawska, 2004) and moved us towards a more Socratic dialogue (Kvale 2006). Although my aim was to make the sessions as open and informal as possible, I was conscious of not letting them become "pedagogic interrogations" (Wengraf, 2001:113), or therapy sessions (Kvale 2003b), for either the interviewee or myself. My 'warm', 'empathetic' approach to soliciting this dialogue, however, could be seen as an attempt to exploit the power asymmetry of the interview situation, whereby the biographical narrative method facilitated the creation of trust through a 'personal relationship' (Kvale 2006) that I then went on to exploit as the interviewee shared and revealed their more intimate thoughts.

Although biographical material was not directly relevant to the research questions, biographical narratives are effective in researching the way people think and feel, and are also an interesting lens through which to view social mechanisms. Narratives are also constructions, "not only may human lives be examined through storytelling methods, but human lives themselves may now be understood as narrative constructions" (McAdams, 1995:207). Another key reason for utilising a biographical narrative method was to access the norms and tacit knowledge held about the performance and experience of performing emotional labour. Emotion management techniques characterise each and every social interaction, therefore, much of the process has been internalised; embedded into our understanding of how to behave and what emotions are relevant to each situation. By definition, much of the emotional labour process has become 'second nature', or subconscious. As Wengraf (2001:115) points out, "...to ask for a person's explicit knowledge and approach is to access only material that they themselves experience as consciously controversial and needing articulation and therefore capable of fairly quick articulation in words". Narratives, however, allow the researcher to identify the norms and assumptions held, tacitly, by the individual by focusing on what is not said, as opposed to what is.

Narratologists, therefore, argue that biographical narratives are powerfully expressive (and so symptomatic indicators) of the natures of particular persons...and they are valuable instruments for a large range of social and psychological research theory-questions *because* they present to the researcher embedded and tacit assumptions, meanings, reasonings and patterns of action and inaction.

(Wengraf, 2001:116. emphasis in original)

However, having the ‘tool’ to ‘tap into’ tacit assumptions and subconscious processes does not negate the biographical-narrative interview, from the same critiques as those previously discussed. Particularly, that the individual narrating the story is implicitly implicated by the story they are narrating, therefore “...the self-presentation of the interviewee is also a self-preserving self-presentation...” (Wengraf, 2001:117). As Denzin (2001:29) re-iterates, “there is no inner, or deep self that is accessed by the interview or narrative method. There are only different interpretive (and performative) versions of who the person is.”

Taking an ethnographic style approach to data collection allowed me to use a number of different methods in pursuit of further understanding why emotional labour is performed and how these performances are experienced and understood by cabin crew themselves. With no formal access to an airline, I had to adopt a method of convenience sampling and subsequently used qualitative data collection methods that were most suited to gathering the data I required and the time constraints of the individual participants.

### *GP Receptionists*

As has previously been discussed, one of the criticisms aimed at interviewing as a data collection method is the ‘unnaturalness’ of the process (Silverman, 2001).

As Silverman (1989, 1994) has stressed, the value of interview statements is in many cases limited, in terms of their capacity to reflect both reality ‘out there’ and the subjective world of the interviewee (...). This is partly the case because the statements are liable to be determined by the situation that is they are related to the interview context rather than to any other specific ‘experiential reality’...

(Alvesson & Deetz, 2000:71-72)

Ethnographers (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995) suggest that a possible subversion of this criticism is to accompany the interview with direct observations and other complimentary methods. Based on this solution, I used a ‘cocktail’ of methods to gather empirical material on GP receptionist to confirm, critique and corroborate existing theories on how and why emotional labour is performed and experienced.

I conducted six-days of non-participant observations at each of the three sites in the North of England, facilitated a focus group that utilised projective-drawing methods which was attended by twelve receptionists and, finally, conducted hour-long semi-structured interviews with four receptionists (one from each site and one who worked across sites).

Throughout the summer of 2007 I spent six-days a fortnight sat in often awkward positions in the reception areas of each of the three practices in the North of England, conducting non-participant observations. I decided purposively to begin the multi-method strategy with non-participant observations in order to build a relationship with the organisations and the receptionists. After conducting the biographical-narrative interview with the Purser I saw merit in spending time and effort softening the rigidity specified by the social norms and impression management that governed the interview (and more generally, research) situation. Being visible in the working environment, getting to know individual characters and their social positions within the organisational context and allowing them to get to know me, as a researcher and as a person, I hoped to make the interview process more comfortable and relaxed, thereby generating 'richer' empirical material (Sanders, 2005; Brekhus et al, 2005). This juxtaposition of methods enabled the interview to be somewhat closer to a "jointly constructed dialogue between the researcher and the participant" (Shuler & Sypher, 2000:62) as advocated by Mishler (1986).

In relation to this justification, it has often been argued that direct observation of individuals is obtrusive and adds little as a research method as the events and behaviour being observed are not representative of 'reality' but are a 'staged performance' (Tolich, 1993). Nonetheless, direct observations provide the researcher with a visualisation of the context, "a stage on which the reported events are taking place" (Czarniawska, 2004:50). But for me, the direct observations had a more important social function, they allowed me, as researcher, to become visible and known to those whom I would later interview. Over the two-week period at each practice, I witnessed the highs and lows experienced by the receptionists; shared biscuits, sweets and 'pomegranate juice'; whilst laughing, getting angry, and feeling sadness with the ladies who were kind enough to allow me to observe them. In return, they received my full attention, something that rarely, if ever, happens in a GP surgery.

In addition to the advantages of socialisation, non-participant observations allowed the observation of emotional labour performances as they unfolded, not as an abstraction during interview. I witnessed countless number of emotional labour performances throughout my observation sessions, which were later, turned into shared experiences (Czarniawska, 2004:49) and relevant examples in later interview sessions. This process also gave me multiple perspectives on an event or behaviour. As Alvesson & Deetz (2000:76) point out, "a study design focusing on the observation of naturally occurring events avoids –or, more usually, reduces – the researcher's dependence on the

perceptions, understandings and accounts of the respondents.” For me, the observations, interviews and focus group, combined, gave me multiple perspectives on the performance of emotional labour. I was able to compare the performances I observed with the perceptions and understandings of those performances from those who performed them. Such a quality is advantageous considering how, “people’s descriptions of their own behaviour are strongly influenced by social expectations and routinely diverge from their actual behaviour” (Lopez, 2006:139-140).

Direct observations not only gave me the opportunity to observe performances of emotional labour but also “those times when several parties in the field come together to spontaneously hold a conversation, discussion or argument” (Berg, 2007:151). Subtle behaviours were also identified that, almost certainly, would not have been articulated in the interviews alone. They would not have been articulated, predominantly because they are taken for granted norms, rites and rituals that characterise certain situations, and, therefore, become embedded into the definition of a context. Furthermore, direct observations give rise to ‘natural’ opportunities for spontaneous, in-situ, interviews or ‘chats’, in which meanings and processes can be clarified and emotions can be discussed immediately after interactions. The interviews that followed the direct observations were then used to clarify, discuss and reflect on the incidents and emotions witnessed during the observation sessions.

Narratives on emotion within the work context are often heavily prescribed by such situational rules and norms and therefore are difficult for the participant to articulate, or even think about in the abstract environment of an interview situation. I found that when I asked a question that began ‘How do you feel about...’ the response given actually answered ‘What do you think about...’. ‘Western’ society values, particularly in the organisational context, rationality and consistency, emotions are seen to be paradoxical and contradictory and are therefore ‘rationalised’ by organisations. In an attempt, to move away from these rationalised, prescribed narratives given during traditional interviews I opted for a less conventional data collection method. Thanks to the flexibility of the three GP practices I was able to conduct a projective drawing exercise within the context of a focus group.

Focus groups are designed to gather large amounts of data in a short space of time, and are particularly suited to small groups. The aim of a focus group is to generate “discussion about conscious, subconscious, and unconscious psychological and sociocultural characteristics...” (Berg, 2007:144) through the use of group interactions.

Such discussions are intended to evolve in an informal manner that encourages participants to speak freely about their attitudes, behaviours and emotions. If successful, focus groups foster dynamic conversations and group discussions, this is known as a 'synergistic group effect' (Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990) as it allows one participant to reflect and respond on another's comments and thoughts.

A key factor in my decision to conduct a focus group was that they allow the researcher to observe how a group "arrives at, or alter, their conclusions" (Berg, 2007:148). In other words, group interviewing or focus groups combine elements of both interviews and observations because the researcher is able to observe group interactions but also to guide, probe and focus conversations and events. As Berg (2007:149) points out, "meanings and answers arising during focus group interviews are socially constructed rather than individually created". In this sense, the focus group situation provides an insight into the negotiations that take place during the construction of meanings.

The moderation of a focus group allowed me to observe and understand the way the role of GP receptionist was perceived and negotiated by more than one receptionist. Although, the participants were from across the three sites they were all employed to perform the same occupational role, therefore the group situation encouraged them to reflect on that role and the emotions experienced within it. The way in which they saw themselves to be perceived and the expectations the individuals themselves heavily negotiated those perceptions projected but also by the group as a collective.

The focus group provided a suitable setting for the use of a projective drawing method as will be discussed later. I must point out from the outset that although I used drawing as a data collection method I was not interested in the drawings themselves. Thus 'graphic aptitude' (Robey, 1983) is not a direct disadvantage to this method. Yet, someone's fear of their lack of graphic aptitude may influence the way they feel about the exercise which could potentially effect their willingness to disclose and share information with the group. This issue should be considered in the moderation of the exercise to reduce its impact on the dynamics of group interaction. The effect of 'graphic aptitude' as a critique to the use of projective drawing methods is complex and nuanced.

Visual methods for data collection are progressively becoming more common in organisational behaviour studies (for example Jensen et al, 2007; Stiles, 2004; Zuboff, 1988), however, in comparison to verbal methods, the field tends to be somewhat 'visually illiterate' (Strangleman, 2004). Visual representations such as drawing, painting,

sculpture, diagrams, computer graphics and video, among others, can be used to gather empirical material, however, I focused on projective drawings to understand the subjective experience of negotiating perceptions and expectations in narratives of self.

The underlying assumption of visual methods is that “non-rational forms of self-expression can elicit the non-verbal, tacit, emotional knowledge...” (Jensen et al. 2007:359), or as Meyer justifies, visual data collection methods are recommended because “informants often possess more copious and meaningful information than they can communicate verbally” (1991:220). Teasing out often subconscious and tacit knowledge is key to understanding how perceptions of self are constructed and narrated.

My reasons for using visual methods, then, were largely twofold; firstly the drawing activity was used as an icebreaker for the group as they could all share in the experience, thereby reducing the rigidity and formality associated with the interview or research situation; secondly, the drawings themselves were there to stimulate conversation and discussion. It is important to point out that I am not trying to extract deep and hidden meanings from the pictures but instead, as Zuboff (1988:141) argues, “...these pictures functioned as a catalyst...” in terms of generating discussion, and sharing collective meanings, emotions and experiences. Visual representations are argued to be more effective at generating and maintaining discussion as meanings, questions and ideas can be read into the representations. As Jensen et al. (2007) highlights,

...each individual drawing continuously provided a way of discussing the common topic and the drawings’ potential for inspiring and for playing with the different interpretations which emerged in the group. The most significant moments of this phase happened when insight would suddenly hit the person who had made the drawing; showing that she or he had not realized fully what he or he had drawn.

(Jensen et al, 2007:348)

These questions encourage participants to reflect on what they have drawn and why, this process of critical reflection allows for tacit assumptions and knowledge to be discovered in disparate and consensual speech (Cunliffe & Easterby-Smith, 2004). In this process, the drawings themselves are meaningless, as they have to be “explicitly placed in a range of contextually specific dialogues and must be regarded as an expression of context (Vince & Broussine 1996)” (Jensen et al 2007:347). “The underlying assumption that justifies it is that artful activities such as drawing, elicit the non-verbal and elusive dimensions of knowledge. They are a means to express something synoptically, rather than linearly; it facilitates the complex, chaotic and unspeakable rather than the

consequential, rational...” (Jensen et al, 2007:354). Thus, it is the dialogue projected by the drawings that is there to be analysed.

However, the verbal justifications and discussion generated by the drawings are still governed by the same social norms and rules that are present during the interview process, thereby leaving the dialogic element of this method open to the same critiques as interviewing. In addition, the success of this method is contingent upon the willingness of the participants to disclose their emotions and thoughts. Thus, the situation requires sensitive moderation to ensure group dynamics are conducive to sharing, disclosing and constructive discussion.

The focus group provides a suitable context because its aims are complementary to those of the projective drawing method in a number of ways. As previously mentioned, projective drawings aim is the cultivation of discussion and interaction, the visual representation of a behaviour, emotion or attitude can be viewed by others and subsequently explored through collective discussion with an aim to move beyond verbal, rationalised responses. Rubin and Rubin (1995:140) explain how focus groups share these characteristic aims.

In focus groups, the goal is to let people spark off one another, suggesting dimensions and nuances of the original problem that any one individual might not have thought of. Sometimes a totally different understanding of a problem emerges from the group discussion.

Focus groups are somewhat similar to biographic-narrative interviews as they aim to limit the moderator’s involvement in discussions. The idea of a focus group is to observe group interactions and the ways in which they negotiate and work out solutions and agreements, thus researcher involvement is minimal to allow the ‘synergistic group effect’ (Stewart & Shamdasani (1990) to develop. Nevertheless, focus groups and the group interactions observed are artificial (Berg, 2007) constructions that cannot be taken as ‘naturally occurring’. Observational work within the organisational setting of the same participants could offer an interesting line of comparative inquiry into how behaviours and group dynamics differ in so-called ‘artificial’ and ‘natural’ settings, but the presence of the researcher has to be taken into account.

## **Conclusion**

Re-tackling a classic research question I have taken a reflexive cross-disciplinary look at the emotional labour process. I have taken a social constructionist approach to sampling,



gathering and analysing the empirical material. The occupational roles studied, those being cabin crew and GP receptionists, were chosen because they are associated with the performance of oppositional forms of emotional labour. Thus, they were theoretically sampled using a method of horizontal stratification. Taking a reflexive methodological approach allowed for the presentation of an 'insider account' (Haynes, 2006), a personal, first-person account of the experience of performing emotional labour through the research process. Empirical material has been comparatively analysed through a complex, iterative process of interrelating data with theory that led to the presentation of an alternative way of viewing emotion management as a project on self, and opens up a number of possible avenues for future research.

## Chapter Six: Cabin Crew

### Introduction

At the end of chapter four I concluded that there was a theoretical possibility of emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, being considered a dissonance reducing behaviour. Existing emotional labour literature generally considers the performance of emotional labour to be an antecedent to emotive dissonance (for example Morris & Feldman, 1996). However, by reading across the literatures I am suggesting that the relationship between emotion management, and emotive dissonance is more complex and nuanced, and more importantly a key element in the construction of self.

Drawing from literatures across multiple disciplines there appeared to be little communication between the research being undertaken in the fields of psychology and social psychology and sociology and organisational behaviour on the relationship between emotion management and emotive dissonance. These literatures may have largely avoided integration previously because of their often competing epistemological, ontological and methodological positions. For example, some of the Foucauldian labour process literature would question the existence of a self (formulated as a subject) in the way that the self is found in the psychological literature (Venn, 1984). Such a fundamental difference in ontological approach would lead to the concept of emotive dissonance, and dissonance more generally, being rejected or, at least, reconstructed in terms of incompatible discourses and re-presented in terms of resistance and contradiction. By looking across the literatures, then, I was able to piece together an alternative picture, in which emotion management could be conceptualised as a behaviour that enables an individual to conform to role expectations (often referred to as social norms and feeling rules) in order to remain legitimate within that role and, therefore, maintain a continuous narrative of self. Thereby rescuing the concept of dissonance which in critical psychology has been largely depoliticised, and in much of the mainstream functionalist sociological literature has been displaced to an effect of other force, and resituating it in terms of the active construction of self-narratives in a power laden construct.

This chapter explores these theoretical possibilities through an analysis of empirical data. This is centred on Claire's narrative, in which she discusses how it feels to be an 'air hostess' and how she negotiates the expectations and stereotypes associated with the role. I have, therefore, structured this chapter in the following way. First, I address some of the stereotypes associated with the role of cabin crew and how they manifest in passengers

expectations. To do this I consider where these stereotypes have originated from and how the historical legacy of those stereotypes inform the performance of the role today, despite major transformations to the industry. Second, I introduce Claire and attempt to provide the reader with an insight into my interpretation of her and our co-construction of her discursive self-narrative. I begin by first exploring the rationale for adopting a biographical-narrative method centred primarily on a single case, before considering three 'critical incidents' in which the theoretical possibility of emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, being a dissonance reducing behaviour, is explored. In these cases supplementary material is also drawn from interviews with six other cabin crew (from stages one and two of the research process) each from different airlines. Through a detailed analysis of the three 'critical incidents' this chapter draws to a close with an exploration of when emotive dissonance is experienced in the emotional labour process and how it is reduced, depending upon when it is felt. The clear distinction between Hochschild's (1983) definition of emotional labour and emotion work, based on the profit motive, is also problematised when emotion management performances are conceptualised as strategies to maintain ontological security.

As previously discussed in Chapter One, my empirical analysis does not take a gendered perspective. I chose to remove the gender lens from my analysis of the emotional labour performances for three reasons. Firstly, previous research has already attempted to understand why emotional labour is performed without formal prescription to do so (Tyler & Abbott, 1998) by taking a gendered approach. Thus, I did not want to duplicate past research. Secondly, by tracing Hochschild's theoretical origins back to labour process theory I also wanted to focus on this relationship within my analysis and understanding of the emotional labour process, as opposed to emotional labour as a static construct. For me, the way Hochschild presented emotional labour was as an extension to the physical labour process through a gendered lens. By removing the gender lens and going back to labour process theory I tried to develop an alternative way of viewing the emotional labour concept and subsequently the process. Thirdly, emotional labour research is in danger of becoming gendered itself. Bishop et al's (2009) recent article on anti-social behaviour towards bus drivers highlights the lack of research on service roles dominated by men (exceptions include Pullen & Simpson, 2009). How are the characteristics traditionally associated with masculinity negotiated and performed in service roles defined by servility? Taking these issues into consideration I wanted to move beyond these gender constructions to understand more about the emotional labour process- the relationship between selves, emotion and affect, which are heavily shaped by gender, but not defined by it. Hochschild's work on emotional labour was a comparative

analysis between the work of cabin crew and debt collectors, yet subsequent emotional labour research has tended to focus on 'women's work' (Pullen & Simpson, 2009). To move through these intertwined concepts I pulled back the gender lens to return to the basic principles of the emotional labour process.

This is not to say that the gender lens cannot be reapplied to my findings, and there is much scope for future research in this area, but it should challenge and re-inform some of the issues that were perhaps not a consequence of gender but a part of it, and may even be magnified by it.

However, in saying this I have not discounted gender altogether in my account. I do spend time tracing the historical legacy of the stereotypes and analyse some of the literatures and media that reinforce the historical legacy, an analysis of which cannot ignore the impact of gender and sexual differentiation.

### **'Trolley Dollies': Stereotypes and Expectations**

The expectations and perceptions associated with cabin crew tend to be based on the gendered image of the 1950s 'air hostess' that "pervade popular culture" (Mills, 2006:35). Images in the media and fiction uphold these 'traditional' stereotypes, in which womanly virtues such as charm, care, humour and sexuality are commodified by the airline for passenger enjoyment. Airlines are aware that customer perceptions of a flight are predominantly shaped by passenger interaction with front-line airline staff (Festa, 1997) and are, therefore, keen to ensure that cabin crew, along with other staff, meet passenger expectations.

After the First World War, when commercial airlines were being established, safety was the airlines and the passenger's primary concern. They had to compete with the already well-established railways and ocean-going liners, so to abate passenger fears Imperial Airways and Daimler Airways employed young males as stewards (Mills 1998). They became a selling point for the airlines. Over in the US, however, the young men were soon replaced with female stewardesses in an attempt to compete with the "feminine service" (Mills 1998:178) offered on trains and ships. The first female cabin crew of the 1930s were actually trained nurses (Whitelegg, 2002), employed by United Airlines as safety remained a primary concern of both passengers and the airlines. But by the 1950s and 1960s the 'nurse/mother image' (Whitelegg, 2002) (see Illustration 1) had given way to the sexualised image of what has become known as the 'period of eroticization' (Mills, 1998) or the 'Fly Me' era.

'Fly Me' was the slogan used by National Airlines (USA) in their \$9.5 million advertising campaign of the 1960s (an example of which can be found in Illustration 2) these images were key in shaping the 'Trolley Dolly' stereotypes that are still associated with cabin crew today. However, what was key about the 'Fly Me' campaign, was that National Airlines were not just creating a stereotype. Through their advertisements they were also hiring women that conformed to this image. National Airlines, however, were not the first airline to adopt such a strategy as Figure 8 illustrates, one of Braniff's recruitment criteria was the hostess's figure.

**Figure 8: "Those Cupcakes in the Sky"**

"What we want in our hostesses is understated sexiness," says Nancy Marchand, a statuesque blonde in charge of PSA girls. "In choosing a hostess, we pay particular attention to her figure."

"Passengers," said Lawrence (the President of Braniff, and a current leader in airline merchandising) "are entitled to more than a safe, comfortable journey. They are entitled to a little fun."

Lawrence's definition of fun aloft included painting Braniff's fleet of jetliners a variety of Easter egg colours and wildly redecorating the aircraft interiors, ticket offices and waiting rooms. But he reserved the company's hostesses for the most fun of all. He hired famed Italian dress designer Milio Puccini, the inventor of stretch pants to create a hostess costume with "flair, excitement and surprise".

**Feature article in San Francisco Chronicle (04<sup>th</sup> April 1966) entitled "The Secrets of Air Hostesses"**

**Source: Goffman (1967:199)**

During this time airlines were selling female sexuality. As Mills (1998) states

Female sexuality was invariably the vehicle through which *the heterosexual sub-text* was introduced – photographs of female staff were used to add 'glamour' to the in-house magazines and annual reports, with *women being used to emphasize the importance of a male manager or pilot.*

(Mills, 1998:180 – emphasis added)

The idea that women were not only employed to add glamour, but also to "emphasize the importance of a male manager or pilot" is still relevant today and is exemplified in Virgin Atlantic's 2009 advertising campaign. See Illustrations 4 & 5 for examples.

**Illustration 1: Think of her as your mother.**

**Think of her  
as your mother.**

She only wants what's best for you.  
A cool drink. A good dinner. A soft pillow and a warm blanket.  
This is not just maternal instinct. It's a result of the longest  
Stewardess training in the industry.  
Training in service, not just a beauty course.  
Service, after all, is what makes professional travellers prefer American.  
And makes new travellers want to keep on flying with us.  
So we see that every passenger gets the same professional treatment.  
That's the American Way.

*Fly the American Way*  
**American Airlines**



Source: <http://flickr.com/photos/7576734@N02/2195754219>. Original in colour.

**Think of her as your mother**

Text reproduced from advertisement above.

She only wants what's best for you.

A cool drink. A good dinner. A soft, pillow and a warm blanket.

This is not just maternal instinct. It's a result of the longest  
Stewardess training in the industry.

Training in service, not just a beauty course.

Service, after all, is what makes professional travellers prefer American.

And makes new travellers want to keep on flying with us.

So we see that every passenger gets the same professional treatment.

That's the American Way.

## Illustration 2: 'Fly Me'

630 PUNCH, April 9 1975

Advertisement

# I'm Tammy. You can fly me nonstop to Miami.

I'm Pat. If you've never flown Tammy or one of my other wide cabin jets, you're in for a new experience. I'll fly you like you've never been flown before, giving you one of the quietest, smoothest and most relaxed trips you've ever had.

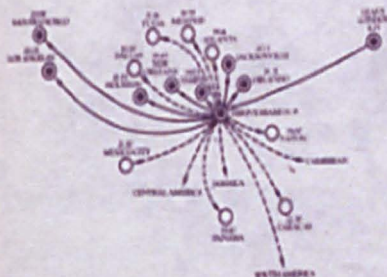
I'll see to your every need, non-stop all the way from London to Miami (gateway to America's Sunshine States) without even touching the cold and congestion of New York.

I'll serve you great food and drinks, show you great movies and offer you 8 channel stereo entertainment\* (it's all part of National Airlines' way of putting you at ease).

And when you fly me to Miami you can take advantage of my quick same-airline service to the rest of Florida, New Orleans, Houston, Los Angeles, San Francisco and all around the States.

Or you can catch one of my connections to the Caribbean and Latin American sun-spots.

\*Movies and stereo available at nominal charge.



**Fly Tammy. Fly National.  Call your travel agent.**

For reservations call your travel agent or National Airlines at 01-629 8272.



During this 'period of eroticization', the sexualised image of the airhostess was not just an 'image'. When passengers boarded the aircraft they were met with the beaming smiles of immaculately presented, beautiful women who were supposedly ready to 'serve them'. By embodying these images through performances of emotional and aesthetic labour, passengers' expectations were fulfilled. However, as a consequence the boundaries became blurred between reality and fantasy, passengers bought into the airlines' 'Fly Me' myth and crews became subject to amorous advances and other acts of sexual harassment. These women, and their sexuality, were treated as an airline commodity. Such organisational commodification of so-called 'private' elements of the self such as emotions, sexuality and the body is at the heart of Hochschild's Marxist conceptualisation of emotional labour. However, at the time, airlines did not acknowledge the commodification of 'affect' to be a problem as a spokesman for National Airlines quoted in Time Magazine (1971) communicates; "The stewardesses become an extension of the airline. We had no preconceived idea of injecting a suggestive leer into the campaign"

*Coffee, Tea or Me?* is the infamous memoir of two stewardesses working for Eastern Airlines (USA) in the 1960s. As the blurb describes

Book a flight back to a time when flying was sexy and everyone was a jet-setter, when airline food was gourmet, everyone dressed up for a flight, the booze flowed, smoking was permitted, and stewardesses catered to our every need.

This hilarious jet-age journal offers a gold mine of anecdotes from the aerial and amorous lives of those busty, lusty, adventuresome young 'stews' of the swinging 60s.

One anecdote in *'Coffee, Tea or Me?'* tells of how a stewardess endured sexually inappropriate comments from a male passenger throughout a flight that finally culminated in an emergency landing. During the emergency landing procedure the same male passenger molested the stewardess. When she reported the incident to her supervisor she was told

"You know, Trudy, we can't have an unhappy, unsmiling stewardess serving our valued travellers, can we? One must always remember, Trudy, that one paying to travel our airline expects the finest and most pleasant service from our girls."

In the mid 1960s female cabin crew began challenging the airlines marketing campaigns and employment practices that commodified their bodies and their sexuality. One of the biggest cases that exemplified this revolt occurred in 1966 when the National Organisation for Women demonstrated against the standard airline practice for firing cabin crew when they reached the age of 32 or got married (Wolf, 1991). However, it was

not until 1968 that these standard practices were made illegal. In 1973 the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) became the first female union established to protect female cabin crew from discriminatory airline practices (Mills, 1998). However, this did not stop the sexualised image of the 'air hostess' being used in advertising campaigns as Swissair's magazine advert from 1972 illustrates (Illustration 3).

**Illustration 3: Your idea of a perfect air hostess may not be the same as ours**

Punch, June 7 1972

**Your idea of a perfect air hostess may not be the same as ours.**

In our book a perfect air hostess isn't a fading beauty queen more interested in looking in the mirror than looking after you.

And if you've ever flown on a 14-hour flight to, say, Bangkok you'd know that it takes more than a plastic smile to make the time fly.

Here's how we make sure our girls have something behind their smiles.

First we turn down three out of four girls who apply.

The ones that remain are first of all trained for eight weeks, then given three months probation in the air, then yet more training, and then onto our short haul jets. Only after 18 months can a girl get on our Far East or South American runs.

Included in the basic course is a guide to whisky, how to mix a Gin and It, how to deliver a baby, what wine to serve with Steak de Veau Maintenon, how to address 41 different types of VIP.

Even when she passes out of this course we go on watching her (in the friendliest of fashions). Is she, for example, complying with rule 2(b)? "While on duty the hostess must always wear a watch giving the exact time."

To help make up for all this we let her choose the colour of her uniform from three shades of blue. So she can match her own colouring.

But we'd never let her dress like the lady on the right. If only because it might take your mind off her job.

Run an airline for the Swiss  
and you can run an airline for anyone.



Source: Advertising Archives image 30550680. Original in colour.

Through this advertisement, Swissair attempted to address the stereotypes commonly associated with the 'air hostess' by presenting their 'girls' as different to other airline's crews. These differences were grounded in the notions that their crews were well-trained, continually observed, and free to choose the colour of their uniform from a selection of three shades!

Firstly, performances of aesthetic and emotional labour are key in the way in which Swissair presents its cabin crew. For example they boast that 'our girls have something behind their smiles', thus, claiming that their crew do more than surface act (Hochschild, 1983), instead they deep act (Hochschild, 1983), as they have undergone a transmutation of the private emotional system, thereby making their emotional labour performances 'sincere'. In terms of the aesthetic, Swissair's crew are not 'fading beauty queens' nor 'ladies of the night', instead they are allowed to choose the shade of their uniform to match their own colouring. In other words, passengers are in for a treat because crew are given choice and freedom to ensure they look their best.

Secondly, Swissair crew combine the emotional and aesthetic labour performances to create an effect of servitude. They are there to 'look after you'. Crew are trained to serve the passenger, to ensure they are able to cater to his every need. The eight-week training course includes vital guides on alcoholic drinks, and the correct way to address over 41 types of VIP. Yet there is no mention of the extensive safety training undertaken, despite this being cabin crew's main responsibility. Taking a critical approach to the creative relationship between advertising and meaning, as advocated by Grafton-Small & Linstead (1989), the symbolism and underlying discourse intimated by the Swissair advert has no definitive interpretation. For, "irrespective of the sponsor's original intentions and their apparent clarity, no advertisement...can ever be anything more than a somewhat limited and imprecise form of persuasion" (Grafton-Small & Linstead 1989: 205). However, one possible interpretation is that Swissair have purposively omitted from their crew's talents their ability to save lives. They do not want passengers, especially male passengers, to think of their female crew taking control of an emergency situation, or saving their life, as this would negate the passenger's masculinity, and as a consequence upset the carefully orchestrated effect of servility and servitude. In addition, they do not want passengers to even contemplate they are risking their lives when they choose to fly Swissair. The blurb that accompanies the image emphasises the airlines commitment to doing a job well, however this leaves an interesting ambiguity, as there is just enough of an emphasis on Swiss thoroughness to suggest that they leave nothing to chance and so can be trusted to

do every part of the job to a high standard. Hence, the issue of safety is connoted rather than denoted, but it could nevertheless be decoded as part of the message. In other words, the artefacts and discourses in the Swissair advertisement act as 'signs' in a symbolically 'persuasive account' (Grafton-Small & Linstead 1989).

Thirdly, the title of this advertisement raises an interesting point, "Your idea of a perfect air hostess may not be the same as ours." In this case, Swissair is attempting to present a more sophisticated image of their crew, in a bid to draw passengers to their airline. Thus, the tag line, in this context, is referring to Swissair's crew's ability to surpass passenger expectations by delivering a higher standard of service. However, the ironic discourse of the advertisement cannot be ignored, instead of presenting a photograph of a Swissair airhostess the image of a satirical and stylised cartoon is deployed. However, the notion of differing expectations is also interesting on a number of other levels and this is something I explore in the next section of this chapter. What happens when passengers' expectations of crew are not the same as those of the airlines, or even the individual crew themselves?

In conclusion, despite the deregulation of the airline industry leading to increased competition between airlines and the influx of male cabin crew, the sexualised image of the female flight attendant continues to be prominent. Virgin Atlantic's recent 2009 advertising campaign to celebrate its twentieth anniversary continues to promote the gendered, sexual quality of air travel and cabin crew, as the 'grabs' in Illustrations 4 & 5 illustrate.

**Illustrations 4 & 5: Virgin Atlantic 2009 Anniversary  
TV Advertisement**



The full length version of this advertisement can be found at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS\\_6HHQ7jOA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KS_6HHQ7jOA)



Source: Advertising Archives image 30559169 & 30559168  
Originals in colour

In the Virgin Atlantic television advertisement the pilot and crew are presented as celebrities in their own right. Pursued by paparazzi and press through the airport lounge they exude a dominant sexual prowess. In this presentation, the role of the passenger is to adore and idolise these women. Instead of being presented as servants to the passengers, the crew stand as a collective to be revered. However, despite the powerful imagery, in which Virgin Atlantic celebrate the celebrity of their crew, there remains a strong sexual undertone. Each of the crew is tall, slim and beautiful and apart from the range of hair colours, they look very similar in their iconic red suits. Ready to serve both their pilot and their passengers whilst they command respect and are revered for their beauty. In comparison to the connoted message of the Swissair advertisement, in which servility and safety were the underlying message, the Virgin Atlantic advert emphasises fun, glamour, energy and celebrity on their aircraft promising to make flying with Virgin Atlantic an exciting experience with a touch of glamour. The historical legacies of early advertising campaigns continue to be prevalent today. They have shaped the way in which cabin crew are perceived and, therefore, the expectations that are associated with the role.

With all of this in mind, I wanted to explore, through Claire's narrative, how she feels about these stereotypes, how they effect the way she feels passengers view her, how she views herself, and how they influence the kind of emotional labour performed. In addition, I am interested in exploring the way in which Claire negotiates these expectations in her own narrative discourse and what happens when passenger expectations are incongruent with her own idea of what it is to be cabin crew. By exploring these questions, I hope to further understand the emotional labour process and the relationship between the performance of emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, and discursive narratives of self.

### **'Voices'**

As previously stated, the remainder of this chapter is centred on 'Claire' and the stories she shared with me during a ten-hour biographical-narrative interview. In addition, I also conducted hour-long semi-structured interviews with six other female cabin crew. The voices of these women are presented in support or opposition of Claire's narrative, where appropriate. However, these women's 'voices' only play a supporting role to Claire's narrative, the reasons for this, along with my justification for referring to them as 'voices,' is discussed below.

Such an approach was a consequence of my unsuccessful attempts at gaining formal access to an airline. Thus, I adopted a method of convenience sampling to source potential participants, meaning I contacted anyone I knew who worked, or had worked as cabin crew. One possible lead was a guy called Peter whom I had known for a couple of years. I had heard on the grapevine that his partner, whom I had never met, worked for a large UK full service provider airline. This turned out to be Claire, whose narrative forms the basis of this chapter. I acknowledge that this sampling approach has a number of potential limitations that have been partly discussed in the previous chapter and will be returned to at the end of this one.

My voice as 'author' and co-constructor of these narratives must also be heard and acknowledged. Thus I attempt to reflexively narrate Claire's biographical-narrative to include my own feelings and emotions as researcher.

### **Anxieties**

When I approached Peter asking if his partner may be interested in taking part in the research project he seemed sure she would be willing to participate. He gave me her number and I promised to call her the following week. I was slightly apprehensive about phoning a total stranger and asking them to talk to me about their work and emotions but I plucked up the courage and dialled the number. Claire answered the phone, after introducing myself she put me at ease by telling me she had been looking forward to my call. She was friendly and easy to talk to and invited me to her house for an initial chat.

On the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at 11am I drove into the leafy village where Claire and Peter live. I pulled into their driveway where my old Peugeot looked more than out of place next to their BMW and Lexus. Peter came out to meet me; he was dressed casually in jogging bottoms and a T-shirt and was relaxed and friendly as always. He invited me inside to meet Claire. I felt awkward as a stranger entering someone's home. This was a new experience for me, as I had carried out interviews before, but never outside of an organisational setting. I was out of my comfort zone and anxious to make a good impression.

Claire was busy in her large country kitchen. Slimly built, with olive coloured skin and deep brown eyes, she was dressed casually in jeans and a white top. Her hair was clipped back in an efficient and effective style, yet she was friendly, and quickly made me feel welcome by offering me coffee. Whilst Claire prepared coffee I chatted to Peter



about my research. Claire soon joined in comfortably; she sat down at the table and automatically stirred both Peter's coffee and mine. As conversation turned towards what I would be interested in talking to Claire about, Peter saw this as his cue to leave.

Thanks to Claire and Peter's warm welcome my anxiety subsided, though, I was conscious of building a rapport with Claire in order to make the most of our research relationship. As part of this I was keen to abate any fears she may have had. Her main concern was the questions I wanted to ask as the airline had made it clear that no employee was permitted to speak about their job, or the organisation without a member of management present. As a result she declined my request to use audio equipment in fear of her involvement getting back to the airline. I explained that the airline's secrets were not my concern, instead, I was interested in her life story, and particularly the work she did as cabin crew.

After this brief discussion we quickly fell into conversation. As I explained the concept of emotional labour, along with aesthetic, mental and physical labour, Claire smiled knowingly at the examples, giving me the impression that she understood and could relate to them. Considering I view the interview as a co-construction between the researcher and the interviewee, I felt I had a duty to explain the concepts to her. This not only helped to reassure her that I was not there to expose the airline but I also wanted her to play an active role in the research process and be aware of the issues I considered important. After a brief, yet honest discussion Claire was open and forthcoming with her biographic-narrative and the initial two-hour session briefly touched on a number of issues and events. However, I used this time, primarily, as an icebreaker, thus, I did not press her for much detail at that stage. In addition, and perhaps more pragmatically, I wanted to evaluate how fruitful both the method and her story telling style would be in pursuit of my research aims. However, I quickly became aware that story telling came easy to Claire and she would have no difficulty in filling ten-hours of interview time with anecdotes and narratives.

In the subsequent sessions I tried to slow the pace of the stories, re-visiting responses to questions to understand more, and asking for stories and anecdotes to be considered more reflexively. The biographic-narrative interview method accommodates such an iterative process, gaining clarity and thick descriptions that will, hopefully, be conveyed in the remainder of this chapter.

## Reflexivity

Reflexivity is seen, particularly in the psychological literature on emotion management to be key in the process of self-construction and self-labelling (Thoits, 1985). With this in mind, I felt that the biographical-narrative method allowed Claire and myself time and space for reflection (Wengraf, 2001) that is not made available by standard interview methods (Mishler 1986). Thus, I felt that presenting material gathered via the different methods as equal would be non-conducive to further understanding the emotion management process. In addition, the standard interview method did not permit enough time to cultivate a relationship with the participants that moved beyond the protocol regulated by the social norms and feeling rules that govern a formal interview situation.

When I read the empirical material from the standard interviews I conducted in both stages of the research process I found it difficult to understand on an emotional level because they were, basically, abstractions. There was no sense of who the person I was interviewing was, or how they wanted to be perceived, or whether what they were saying was congruent with their own discursive narrative. In comparison to the material gathered during the biographical-narrative interview, I felt I was unable to understand how those participants narrated themselves, or how they wanted me to see them. For this reason, I feel I have no context or narrative within which I can contextualise their comments and stories. Thus I present them here as simply 'voices', as abstractions from their narratives.

However, I have chosen to include the 'voices' because they do go some way in balancing Claire's narrative and move this chapter beyond a single-character study. In addition, I feel there is an important methodological point to be made. So often in emotional labour research (Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Williams 2003; O'Donohoe & Turley 2006), traditional interview methods are used but the material generated fails to be considered as influenced or shaped by the invisible norms and rules that govern research relationships and interview techniques (Rapley, 2001). However, this is not to say that I did not see merit in utilising the standard interview method, as previously discussed in Chapter 5.

So what are these 'voices'?

A detailed profile of each participant can be found in Appendix E, but for the sake of context I shall provide a brief description here. Stage one of the research on cabin crew was conducted in 2005 with formal access to a budget airline. I carried out hour-long interviews with three cabin crew who worked for a growing budget subsidiary airline based in the Midlands: Laura (29), Sandy (23) and Maggie (25). In addition, I observed a two-day training course for crew who were being promoted to 'Number 1s' (Cabin Crew Managers) within the airline. The women I interviewed in the second stage of the research on cabin crew were: Debbie (40-50), now a Business Manager and Janet (39), now a Tanning Salon Manager both of whom had worked for medium-sized, European charter airlines as cabin crew for a year and ten years, respectively, and finally Lucy (19), a cabin crew trainee with a large UK tour-operator. The nature of the sample and a discussion of the potential limitations can be found in Chapter Five.

### **'Claire'**

Claire first wanted to fly at the age of fourteen, because, she says it was a "glamorous job that was different to all normal jobs, you get to fly all over the world and meet wonderful people". Thus, her stereotypical ideal of the role of cabin crew had a significant impact on her career choice at an early age. However, as she grew up her ambition to fly gave way to her talent for cooking. Her dream was to be a demonstration cook, having her work feature in books and cookery schools. However, careers advisors and teachers saw her 'social personality' and encouraged her into service roles, suggesting cabin crew as an exciting opportunity. In pursuit of this goal, when she was just 17, Claire went to work in Germany as a nanny to improve her language skills, because the ability to speak a second language was a pre-requisite for cabin crew at the time.

After twelve months, Claire returned from Germany and began work for a marketing company specialising in food exhibitions. In her own words, "I spent most of my time on exhibitions stands talking and feeding people." She reflects back on this as a social time, when she learnt how to socialise, entertain and integrate. After three years, however, her ambition to fly was still very much alive and she began to apply for cabin crew jobs. She quickly got on a training course and began flying at the age of twenty. Over the years she worked her way up and today she is a Purser for a major UK airline.

**"Your idea of the perfect air hostess may not be the same as ours."**

The objective of the biographical-narrative interview was for me to get to know Claire, and by 'get to know' I mean, I wanted to understand how she sees herself and, potentially more importantly, how she would like to be seen by others. On entering the research relationship I had two main questions that I wished to explore; what role does emotive dissonance play in the emotional labour process, and what relationship does this process have with constructions and narratives of self.

As previously discussed the historical legacy of early airline advertising campaigns have manifest into an enduring stereotype of the 'air hostess'. I wanted to understand how Claire felt about these stereotypes and how she feels they effect passenger expectations of her?

"Passengers used to think of us as society hostesses, the job was more about making people *feel* good and comfortable; tuck them in at night. But now it is all very different. *People expect you to be all smiles and glamorous*, almost like celebrities. *It is seen as a glamorous job, we are seen as dolly birds in short skirts...* Richard Branson did a promo with two crewmembers dressed in bikinis but this sends out the wrong message. *I don't want people to think I have a bikini on under my uniform and that I am there for the jolly!* It's not a party!"<sup>38</sup>

This illustrates how Claire feels society expectations of cabin crew have changed during her career. At the beginning, she felt that the role was seen as similar to a 'society hostess,' one possibly characterised by dignity, femininity, care, and popularity. She goes on to say the job was "*more about making people feel good*". In other words, she felt an important part of the job was about managing passengers' emotions. This description fits with Hochschild's original definition of emotional labour,

This labour requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces a proper state of mind in others – in this case, the sense of being cared for in a convivial and safe place.

(1983:7)

Hochschild (1983) also considered the emotional labour performed by cabin crew. She observed that at Delta Airlines in the early 1980s emotional labour was performed to induce, in passengers, a sense of being cared for and being safe. Claire reiterates this idea with the example of '*tuck[ing] them in at night*', which conjures images of the 'nurse/mother' stereotype as illustrated in Fig 6.2. However, she goes on to explain that she feels this is no longer seen to be an important part of cabin crew's work. Now, she feels she is 'expected' to be glamorous and smiling, exemplified by the 'celebrity' and 'dolly bird', both more readily associated with characteristics such as promiscuity,

unintelligence and the ability to feign emotion. In a sense, she feels she has become an 'aesthetic artefact', passively present for passenger enjoyment.

The movement from the nurse/mother image to the celebrity party girl could be seen as conformation to the stereotype. Passenger and society expectations of occupational roles are shaped by media advertising and fictional images. However, the power of these images comes to inform our tacit knowledge and understanding of these roles. Subsequently, societal norms, display and feeling rules are shaped and moulded by our expectations, thus, the individuals who occupy these roles, come to be judged and evaluated against these norms. In a sense, then, the early advertising campaigns, such as National Airline's 'Fly Me', created the cabin crew stereotype, and the historical legacy of that ideal is what shapes society expectations today. Consequently, cabin crew conform to the norms and rules prescribed by the expectations of the 'Other'. In a sense, they embody a 'signified form' (Baudrillard 1998) of the 'air hostess'.

However, it is important to keep in mind that although Claire is talking about passenger expectations, the methods chosen offer no supporting empirical material for qualification. Instead, what is being considered is how Claire believes passengers see her. For the purpose of my objective, this is adequate, for the social-psychological literature on self-labelling, focuses on self-reflexive evaluations of self not the known expectations of others. This is Cooley's (1964[1902]) assumption of solipsism, for him "society really has no existence except in the individual's mind, and the concept of the self is in any sense intrinsically social as a product of imagination" (Cooley 1964[1902]: 224 cited in Holstein & Gubrium 2000:28). However, Mead (1934) argues that the "self is part of a process of communication" (Holstein & Gubrium 2000:29), therefore, unknown expectations of the other are manifest and learnt through social rules and interaction.

What we also see is conflict between what Claire feels is expected of her as a member of cabin crew and what she expects of herself. She does not want to be seen as a sexual commodity, as connotations of promiscuity do not fit with her self-narrative. Thus, expectations of the role are incongruent with her narrative of self.

This became apparent when Claire told me the following story:

"A little girl was asleep in the emergency exit so I asked her parents to move her back to her seat. But the child's father said "Don't listen to her, she's here to do what you tell her!""

As she recounted this brief incident, Claire's face displayed an expression of confusion and hurt. She goes on to elaborate more reflexively.

*"I always like to be thought of as a professional. If I want to do a job, I want to do it to the best of my ability, but I think the industry has created that expectation."*

Claire is describing how she feels expectations of crew have been altered by the industry. She saw her actions as 'professional' because she was ensuring that the child, and other passengers were safe, but the child's father held different expectations of cabin crew's responsibilities. The suggestion is that he expects cabin crew to be subservient to passenger demands, somewhat similar to the affect Swissair in Fig 6.4 was trying to create. Thus, as Claire reflexively evaluates her own behaviour, despite feeling that she had acted professionally, and in accordance with her training, she feels confused and hurt.

These feelings occurred because the passenger does not see Claire in the same way she sees herself, or she wants to be seen. Claire begins by telling me how she likes to be seen: *'I always likes to be thought of as a professional'* but feels that the passenger sees her as rude and out of order or maybe inconsequential. These feelings can be thought of as emotive dissonance, because there is incongruence between Claire's own narrative of self and the way she feels the passenger narrates her.

This incident demonstrates how people's expectations may differ but also, and maybe more importantly, the consequence of that difference. In this situation, however, the passenger makes it clear how he feels about Claire but this may not always be the case. In many cases, we do not know for certain what someone thinks of us but we reflexively evaluate how people perceive us, by utilising our shared knowledge of social norms and rules. Claire's reflects on how she feels her own behaviour and emotions are shaped through reflexive self-consciousness (Sartre, 1957). It could be argued that she is describing Cooley's (1964[1902]) concept of self. A self that is a 'product of imagination' (1964[1902]), due to the solipsistic nature of an 'other's' mind. She describes how, because she doesn't know for certain what people expect of her she has "to imagine them and try to be that way."

"People have expectations and they expect you to be a certain way. It's like sometimes when I'm eating in front of people I feel like people don't expect me to eat! It probably is just in my head but that is the thing; you don't know

what people's expectations are. You just have to imagine them and try to be that way!"

This was said in a tone of exasperation, Claire is frustrated by, what she feels to be, and what might best be expressed as, a continual quest for congruence. She wants to be the best Purser that she can, but is frustrated because she cannot elucidate just what is required of her. This is because the subject is a social construction, based on the expectations and perceptions of society, informed by the media, advertising and powerful organisations who act as the superstructure in our 'Consumer Society' (Baudrillard, 1970/1998). In this sense, she is aware of what the airline expects of her as Purser but she will never know what each individual passenger wants her to be. Thus, the subject is a co-construction and one that is negotiated from moment to moment. To quote Cooley

...The self-idea of this sort seems to have three principle elements: the imagination of our appearance to the other person; the imagination of his [sic] judgement of that appearance, and some sort of self-feeling, such as pride or mortification.

(1902:184)

Claire sees her actions as being congruent with her role as Purser, and cabin crew more generally, for she was helping to ensure the child's safety and the safety of other passengers. We can hypothesise on the basis of the evidence that she 'imagined' the child's father would appreciate her concern and therefore perceive her as professional and well-trained. However, what she 'imagined' would happen was incongruent with how the father reacted. Instead he saw her actions as interfering, controlling and officious, and incongruent with his expectations of the role of cabin crew: possibly servility and servitude, a flying waitress.

In conclusion, Claire's narrative has elaborated on the process by which emotive dissonance can occur, in this case when her own self-narrative is incongruent with the way others perceive her, and the perpetual quest she feels she is on to meet societal expectations. For her, as it was for Cooley (1902), the most difficult part of this self-reflexive evaluation process is that it is based on the appearance of our selves to others, and their imagined judgment of it. What makes it even more fraught with tension is that despite social norms and rules governing social roles "your idea of a perfect air hostess may not be the same as ours" or even the air hostesses idea of their own 'self' in that role.

### **‘Critical Incidents’**

The next section of this chapter looks at three stories recounted by Claire as part of her narrative discourse<sup>39</sup>. She utilised these stories to illustrate and elaborate on certain points of her biographical narrative. I have re-constructed them as ‘critical incidents’ for the purpose of this discussion as they demonstrate the performance of different kinds of emotional labour but, more importantly, they are reflexive experiences re-lived by Claire. Although the incidents described are taken from Claire’s narrative the ‘voices’ of the other cabin crew interviewees are also included to enable discussion of similar and contrasting experiences.

I have chosen to label these particular ‘stories’ as ‘critical incidents’ following Chell’s (1998) definition of the method:

The critical incident technique is a qualitative interview procedure which facilitates *the investigation of significant occurrences* (events, incidents, processes, or issues) *identified by the respondent*, the way they are managed, and the outcomes in terms of *perceived effects*. *The objective is to gain understanding of the incident from the perspective of the individual*, taking into account cognitive, affective and behavioural elements.

(Chell, 1998:56 *emphases added*)

This technique of analysis complements the biographical-narrative interview method (Wengraf 2001) because the participant determines the critical incidents discussed. They are usually told in response to a question (Gremier, 2004). The method does not restrict the interviewee’s language, description or structure of the narrative; instead, the critical incident technique provides rich detailed firsthand experiences (Bitner et al 1994) that are often full of emotion and feeling as the incident is re-lived. However, as the critical incidents are recalled they are done so through retrospect, therefore, the method has been criticised for being susceptible to memory lapses and reinterpretations of the incidents (Johnston 1995). My focus, however, is on the way in which the critical incidents are reflected upon and the feelings they evoke, thus, the accuracy of the facts is not a priority for my analysis.

Despite such criticisms, along with others, the essential nature of the ‘critical incident technique’ has remained unchanged since its introduction by Flanagan in 1954. And although I am happy to utilise the critical incident collection techniques my affiliation with the technique stops here, for I do not adopt the normal method of analysis. When Flanagan (1954) introduced the technique he stated that once the stories have been told and recorded they should then be subjected to a formal content analysis in order to



“classify observations of human behaviour” (Gremier, 2004:66). Content analysis, however, attempts to quantify qualitative data and, thus, I did not feel comfortable adopting such a method. Instead, I took a more informal approach to the analysis; one that focused on the emotions experienced on reflection of the critical incidents. Through a reflexive consideration of these incidents I was able to explore the role of emotive dissonance within the emotional labour process, and to understand how dissonance is negotiated and reduced.

### *The Big Bang*

We were just about to leave Washington DC when a passenger sitting above the wing complained how hot it was. No one else had complained and so we didn't think anything of it and the plane took off. At 1400ft one of the engines exploded. Crew were strapped in their seats, which meant we were facing the passengers. When the engine actually exploded I said “shit!” and everyone saw me! The engine had to burn itself off and then we had to dump the fuel supply that also burns away, so it looks as if the situation is getting worse. We all [crew] knew the danger we were in because we had been through the training. I was terrified but we all smiled and everyone was fine. When we landed in London it was such a relief but we all felt fantastic because we had gotten through it and we had all done our jobs properly.

This dramatic incident illustrates a number of issues regarding the emotional labour process. I will begin the analysis with a consideration of whether emotional labour is present in the description of the incident and, if so, in which forms. I then move on to consider the role dissonance plays within the emotional labour process.

### **An emotional repertoire**

In this story we can hear that Claire, her fellow crew and passengers were caught in a dangerous and terrifying situation. With the aircraft engines exploding and fires breaking out, both passengers and crew are described as being on the verge of panic. However, Claire tells of how she suppresses her own emotions of fear and shock through the performance of empathetic emotional labour/ emotion work when she states, “*I was terrified but we all smiled*”. In other words, she embodied a positive and calm display in order to induce a reciprocal response from passengers. Her aim, then, was to keep passengers calm and reassured, to prevent the situation escalating and the cabin becoming a scene of panic.

Note how I have used the term emotional labour/emotion work in the above description. This is due to the ambiguity as to whether the emotion management performance

should be classed as emotional labour or emotion work. In this case, it is difficult to separate the two performances. In one sense her smile and calm exterior may have been part of a carefully orchestrated performance motivated by her desire to adhere to the airline's safety training; in other words, she smiled because she had been told to by the airline, making it an emotional labour performance. Yet in another sense she may be driven by a personal desire to reduce the danger to herself, her colleagues and fellow passengers. She did this by employing the knowledge she had gained from the airline's training programme, thereby making the performance emotion work, as there was no profit motive. This situation illustrates the complexity and often interwoven nature of emotion management performances, sometimes it is difficult to separate performances of emotional labour and emotion work, utilising Hochschild's (1983) economic definition. For the sake of discussion, however, I will proceed by seeing this as a performance of emotional labour.

The performance of empathetic emotional labour also had other qualities. Firstly, although Claire was smiling, she was in fact actively suppressing her own negative emotions. This can be heard in her narrative as she tells of how she shouted, "shit" and was terrified because she "knew the dangers" but despite these fears running through her mind she just "smiled". The positive emotional display was produced through a method of surface acting (Hochschild 1983) as Claire was disguising what she felt, by pretending to feel what she did not. In this case, then, she was deceiving passengers by making them believe she was untroubled by the events, however, she was not deceiving herself, in fact, she admits that she was terrified.

However, another form of emotional labour may have also been performed. When Claire said, "... *we all smiled and everyone was fine. When we landed in London it was such a relief but we all felt fantastic because we had gotten through it and we had all done our jobs properly*" she was implying that it was not only her who was engaged in empathetic emotional labour. In fact, there is a sense of camaraderie in this comment that suggests teamwork was perhaps at play. The surface act of empathetic labour may also have been co-performed in what Hochschild (1983) terms, 'collective emotional labour'. This form of emotional labour has been explored least in the existing literatures (exceptions include Korczynski, 2003), partly because Hochschild did not specifically define the concept. Collective emotional labour, then, is the performance of emotional labour by more than one person in order to create and maintain an 'emotional tone' (Hochschild 1983:115). On the flight from Washington DC to London, Claire and her fellow crew knew the danger they were in when the first engine exploded, however,

they worked together to create a positive 'emotional tone' (Korczynski, 2003) in the cabin, thereby, successfully preventing passengers from panicking.

Simultaneously, whilst working together to perform collective emotional labour for the passengers they have also enacted a form of 'community of coping' (Korczynski, 2003). A 'community of coping' occurs when cabin crew rely on each other for mutual support (Korczynski, 2003b:56). This is likely considering, as Claire pointed out, "*We all [crew] knew the danger we were in because we had been through the training*".

So, Claire described three different forms of emotional labour performed during the incident, however, she is not explicit about what motivated these performances.

Cabin crew were first put onto aircraft to ensure passenger safety, and this remains their primary responsibility today. Crew are trained extensively to save as many passenger lives as possible in the event of an emergency. However, as time has passed and the role of cabin crew has moved further away from the nurse/mother image, in which safety and security were embodied, so too have passenger perceptions of cabin crew's primary responsibilities.

In 1994, Cranfield University was commissioned by the Federal Aviation Administration of the US and the UK Civil Aviation Authority to conduct research into the influence of cabin crew on passenger evacuation in an emergency situation. The study found that where cabin crew were assertive in assisting passengers, evacuation times were quicker than without their assistance. Professor Muir (1996:33), who conducted the study, elaborates on these findings.

Aircraft accidents are very infrequent but when they do happen, if a fire occurs, there is frequently loss of life and the reason that can occur is because typically once the fire has started there is only usually two minutes in which the conditions in the cabin remain survivable.

Despite cabin crew playing such a vital role in ensuring the safety of passengers, perceptions of fun, glamour, sex and servitude endure, as Janet reiterates.

"Passengers think you are there to serve them drinks not to save them in an emergency. Safety is the first part of your job, serving a cup of tea is the second part."

Janet

But why is this the case? Well, Professor Muir pointed out the infrequency of aircraft accidents, which could suggest that although cabin crew are trained to save passenger's lives, these skills are rarely demonstrated. However, Claire's narrative describes the use of more subtle safety ensuring techniques.

Claire and the other cabin crew are described as having engaged in the performance of multiple forms of emotional labour in a bid to calm and reassure passengers. Claire went on to elaborate:

“When passengers panic they start acting irrationally and are a danger to themselves, fellow passengers and crew so it is cabin crew's job to prevent panic and maintain calm.”

Claire

In order to 'prevent panic and maintain calm' it would appear that Claire the crew disguised their own fears and concerns with smiles. In other words, their emotional labour performances were actually a strategy to prevent passengers escalating the severity of the situation. From Claire's narrative it can be heard that she felt she was under pressure to 'perform' as she states, "*Crew were strapped in their seats, which meant we were facing the passengers*". There is a sense of urgency here, in that crew were given no time to reflect on the situation, they were already 'on stage'. Crew jump seats are positioned so that they face passengers. This may be a tactical decision made by airlines as crew sit in their seats at times when passengers feel the least secure, i.e. during take off, landing and emergency situations. Thus, it could be argued that aircraft are specifically designed to ensure that during these most dangerous times, passengers are faced with the calm reassuring smile of their 'hostess'.

What is important here, however, is that the gendered, sexualised stereotype of cabin crew disguises their primary role of ensuring passenger safety. However, by conforming to these social expectations they ensure passengers remain calm, preventing them from being a danger to themselves and others around them. In other words, during this incident Claire describes the performance of collective empathetic surface acting as a technique to ensure passenger safety. Claire's narration of this incident, then, alludes to the idea that emotional labour is potentially used in more sophisticated and complex ways than have previously been realised.

More generally, then, perceptions of fun, glamour and sex could be said to endure due to the emotional labour performed by cabin crew because its purpose is to disguise the

danger and seriousness of flying from passengers. It is crew's job to act as 'hostess' during the flight, to put people at their ease. Cabin crew protect passengers from the psychological trauma of security threats and the abnormal conditions of flying through their emotional management<sup>40</sup> performances. As Claire's narrative conveys, she and her fellow crew draw from a repertoire of different emotional labour techniques including surface acting, empathetic and collective emotional labour to manage passenger emotions. The modes of emotional labour enacted during this incident are congruent with the stereotypical ideal of the 'air hostess', despite it being a serious display of the primary role of cabin crew. In a sense, Claire is somewhat engaged in a cyclical process, in which she wants to behave in a manner that is congruent with expectations, yet by conforming she is reinforcing societal perceptions and stereotypes that we know she is uncomfortable with.

### **Action and Reflection**

So what can be learnt of the 'emotional labour process' from Claire's narrative? Well, as the first engine exploded Claire's initial reaction was to shout expletives. However, from her narrative it seems that she feels this outburst was inappropriate.

"I said shit and everyone saw me!"

As she confessed her outburst there was a tone of embarrassment and disbelief in her voice, she seemed almost shocked at her own behaviour. But was it not understandable that she was shocked and scared by what was happening?

It appears that she felt embarrassed, and continues to do so, because she had revealed emotions of fear in front of "*everyone*", including passengers and crew. For a moment, she was taken off guard and revealed an emotion that she felt inappropriate. This is something that Hopfl & Linstead (1993) call 'corpsing', when the mask slips and the performance is revealed as an illusion. For a moment the illusion that Claire was completely in control and unaffected by the potential danger was revealed to the passengers, however, Claire quickly replaced the mask on experiencing immediate feelings of dissonance. As she recounts the event, the embarrassment is relived through the account. She is embarrassed all over again because as a member of cabin crew she feels it was 'unprofessional' of her to show an emotion such as fear, and to have sworn. She had failed to conform to societal expectations of cabin crew behaviour. Thus, her narrative of self, as someone who "*always likes to be thought of as a professional!*"

was disrupted by her outburst. In other words, there is a gap, or dissonance, between how Claire wants to be seen i.e. a 'professional' and her emotional performance at the first explosion. These feelings of discomfort and the continually re-lived embarrassment can be thought of as emotive dissonance.

However, despite being terrified Claire, along with the other crewmembers, quickly regained control of their emotions and "*all smiled*". In other words, as previously discussed, they performed various forms of emotional labour, which suppressed and disguised their own fears in order to calm and reassure passengers. In terms of the pending theoretical possibility deduced from the literatures then, it could be argued that in this case, emotional labour was performed in order to reduce the gap between how Claire wanted to be seen and how she had behaved. Passengers were looking to Claire for reassurance and an 'emotional cue' to indicate the severity of the situation, however, she did not deliver what she thought to be a professional performance in this situation, instead, she revealed her own fears. At this point however, Claire immediately felt emotional discomfort, which can be labelled emotive dissonance and sought to reduce this by performing emotional labour. The complex performance of emotional labour, not only disguised her own emotions but also sought to actively "induce the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hochschild, 1983:7), which in turn prevented panic and ensured safety.

When the flight finally touched down in London and everyone was safe and panic had been prevented, Claire describes how they all 'felt fantastic' because they had done their 'jobs properly'! Through her narrative it would seem that Claire sees herself as having done her 'job properly' because she was able to disguise her own emotions through the performance of emotional labour, thereby fulfilling the expectations of passengers, crew, the airline, and her own perception of what it means to be good crew. In this case, she felt proud of herself for maintaining her own composure and creating an atmosphere of calm through collective emotional labour efforts with other crew.

In conclusion, although, Claire only revealed her fear for a fleeting moment throughout the entire emergency landing it is clear that this is something she continues to remember and reflect upon. She is reflecting on the emotive dissonance that she experienced when she "*shouted shit and everyone saw*" her. This continues to be reflexively evaluated as it was an incident in which her continuous narrative of self was disrupted and her ontological security threatened. However, quickly after experiencing

feelings of dissonance (embarrassment) Claire regained her composure and smiled her way through the rest of the terrifying experience. Thus, these feelings of dissonance were instantly reflected upon through a process of reflexive self-consciousness and her outward display was brought in line with expectations and the norms that are associated with cabin crew behaviour in an emergency situation. In other words, Claire experienced the emotive dissonance instantly, and was able to reduce it at the point at which it occurred. This could be seen as an example of Grandey's (2000) response focused emotion regulation, as Claire regulated her emotions once she had experienced the feelings of dissonance. Thus, her performance of emotional labour as a form of dissonance reducing behaviour was response focused. Therefore, although she continues to reflect on the incident now, she is able to think of the situation positively because she *"felt fantastic because we had gotten through it and we had all done our jobs properly"*

### *Constipated Old Man*

I left home at 1.45pm on Wednesday, boarded at 4pm for a ten-hour flight to Beijing. We landed at 8.00am on Thursday. I had three or four hours sleep, went shopping and finally went to bed at around 9pm. I boarded the return flight to London at the equivalent of 1.30am UK time.

When we boarded, one of the crew came to me and asked for some painkillers for a seventy-year-old passenger. He hadn't been to the toilet in three days and was complaining of stomach pains. I had nothing for constipation and wouldn't have been allowed to give him anything anyway, so I gave him the painkillers. Throughout the flight I kept going back to check on him but he had dropped off to sleep. He hadn't been to the toilet for the entire flight, which concerned me. When we landed he asked for a wheelchair to disembark because he was in a lot of pain. I told him he must go straight to the hospital. He said that he would take my advice and thanked me for a wonderful flight.

After the flight, on my way back home, I thought 'why hadn't I moved him into club class?' I felt so guilty for not having moved him and for not helping him in anyway that I could have done. Was it because he was asleep and I didn't want to disturb him? Was it because I was tired and exhausted and not feeling my usual self?

This story tells of a very different emotional performance from the one above. This narrative tells of a situation in which Claire had very limited interaction with the passenger involved yet she still experienced the uncomfortable feelings of dissonance.

Although Claire did not initially speak to the passenger about his physical discomfort, we can hear in her narrative that she was concerned for his well-being throughout the flight. “...*I kept going back to check on him but he had dropped off to sleep. He hadn't been to the toilet for the entire flight, which concerned me*”. This concern and care epitomises the nurse/mother image of the ‘air hostess’ stereotype. However, it was only at the end of the flight that Claire realised the severity of the man’s discomfort. She tells how she encouraged him to seek medical advice and in return he thanked her for a wonderful flight.

The emotions Claire described she felt do not appear to be an example of surface acting, for she does not seem to be actively disguising her own emotions in order to make the passenger feel cared for. Instead this may be an example of deep acting. Deep acting goes beyond the ‘plastic smile’ (Swissair 1972), feigning is made easy because it is made unnecessary (Hochschild, 1983), as the individual learns to deceive herself as much as she is deceiving others. However, it is potentially unfair to think that Claire felt no genuine concern for the elderly gentleman’s suffering.

Alternatively, as Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) may argue, this incident could portray the expression of genuinely felt emotions. Hochschild’s (1983) conceptualisation of emotion management implies that all emotions have to be consciously managed. However, Ashforth & Humphrey (1993:93) argue that “...this conceptualisation of emotional labor ...does not allow for instances whereby one spontaneously and genuinely experiences and expresses the expected emotion.” Claire and the other flight attendant may have genuinely wanted to relieve the passenger of his pain, therefore, their concern and interest was not an ‘act’ but instead a ‘real’ emotion. By definition, the ability to distinguish between a genuinely felt emotion and those emotions induced by deep acting is often difficult, as is the case here. More interestingly, however, is how Claire’s story illustrates an important characteristic of the emotional labour process and the role of dissonance that I had not considered previously.

Claire and her colleague are both presented here as having dealt with the elderly passenger with compassion and professionalism. They administered as much medication as they were permitted and kept a close eye on him throughout the duration of the flight. At the end of the flight both Claire and the passenger parted on good terms, despite the passenger’s continued physical discomfort. However, it wasn’t until Claire was on her way back home that she began to reflect on the day’s events and with this reflection came feelings of guilt. Claire describes how she felt she had let the



elderly gentleman down because she had failed to make him as comfortable as possible by moving him into club class. *“After the flight, on my way back home, I thought ‘why hadn’t I moved him into club class?’ I felt so guilty for not having moved him and for not helping him in anyway that I could have done.”*

Claire did not feel this guilt during the flight, at the time she felt she had served the passenger well. However, in a moment of reflexive consciousness later on she feels guilty and wishes she had done more to help the man. So where do these feelings of guilt come from and why were they not experienced earlier?

As our discussion progressed Claire made the following statement about herself.

“You see I am the type of person who goes out of my way to help people. I stop when people breakdown, pick old ladies up off of the supermarket floor. I have taken old people home when they are lost and confused and phoned social services!”

It is possible that with this comment she is trying to communicate the way she wants people to view her, and how she views herself. She wants to be seen as kind and generous, almost selfless, however, on reflection her treatment of the elderly passenger was not congruent with this narrative. Instead of moving him to club class and going that extra mile for him Claire simply treated him in a professional manner. For the airline this was enough, and for the passenger too, however, it was not enough for Claire.

This feeling of guilt, could be described as a kind of emotive dissonance, for it is induced by the gap between Claire’s own expectations of herself and her own behaviour. In other words, there is incongruence between Claire’s own self-narrative and the way she dealt with the passenger. She feels uncomfortable knowing that she did not go out of her way to make the elderly gentlemen as comfortable as possible, especially considering there were no rules governing her role or the function of the aircraft that prevented her from doing so. Thus, her narrative of self was disrupted.

Although her emotional discomfort can be described as emotive dissonance Claire did not experience it in the same way she did in the ‘*Big Bang*’ story. In the previous incident the feelings of discomfort were experienced immediately after her emotional outburst and she went on to reduce the dissonance there and then through a complex performance of emotional labour techniques. However, this time, Claire did not experience the dissonance until she was on her way home.

As to when emotive dissonance occurs in the emotional labour process is one that seems to be more nuanced than I expected. Much of the emotional labour literature implies that performances of emotional labour have the ability to cause emotive dissonance, this was something that I was challenging with the idea that in fact emotional labour can actually be used to reduce feelings of emotive dissonance, as demonstrated in the Big Bang story. However, this incident challenges both of these conceptualisations by illustrating that emotive dissonance can be experienced after the event, away from the interaction, through the individual's reflexive evaluation of the event.

In contrast to the previous story, Claire narrates this incident as a negative reflection on her self. As she tells me the story she despairs at her actions and I can see her wrestling with her conscience as she tries to justify, or excuse, her handling of the situation. After explaining that she began to feel guilty about her treatment of the passenger she attempts to justify herself. *"Was it because he was asleep and I didn't want to disturb him? Was it because I was tired and exhausted and not feeling my usual self?"* Reading this story again, it becomes apparent that from the outset Claire is trying to contextualise her actions. She begins the story with the time schedule she was working with which sets the scene for her exhaustion that is later offered as a possible justification for her actions. In a sense, Claire was trying to reduce the feelings of emotive dissonance before she had even told me the story. By telling me this story she has to re-live the experience of dissonance as she presents herself to me as having behaved in a way that is incongruent with her carefully crafted narrative.

The search for a justification can be seen as an active engagement in dissonance reducing behaviour. As Beauvois & Joules (1996) argue, dissonance reduction is not about striving to achieve consonance it is about 'rationalising' behaviour. Claire tries to rationalise her behaviour by claiming that she 'was not her usual self'. This strategy can be seen as similar to Grandey's (2000) antecedent focused emotion response, as Claire attempt to rationalise her behaviour by altering the way she and others perceive the event i.e. as an arbitration, a 'glitch' in her continuous and stable narrative of self.

The notion that dissonance was not experienced during the flight is demonstrative of the complex nature of the relationship between self and dissonance. In the situation described, Claire conformed to the social, emotional and behavioural norms specified by the occupational role of cabin crew. However, when she is removed from that role

and considers the incident in the broader context of her 'self', she does, then, find that her behaviour does not conform to who she sees herself as being. Thus, she experiences dissonance. In other words, although she has acted 'professionally' which is an integral part of who Claire is as cabin crew and Purser, she did not go out of her way to help the elderly passenger. Her statement about picking old ladies up off of the supermarket floor and phoning social services is an illustration of how she sees herself and wants others to think of her. However, her treatment of the elderly passenger does not re-affirm this identity construction (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). These feelings of dissonance are not generated by incongruence in her occupational identity as cabin crew, but more broadly in terms of her grand self-narrative.

So why did Claire not experience this feeling of dissonance during the flight?

This is an interesting question to which I can only speculate possible explanations. Baudrillard's work on the "Mystique of Solicitude" may provide a useful starting point. He argues that a consequence of a consumer society, where human relations are produced for consumption, genuine emotions are overlooked because individuals automatically engage in the performance of 'signs', and in this case they would be 'signs of solicitude'.

The consumer society is simultaneously a society of the production of goods and of the *accelerated production of relations*. Indeed, this latter is the defining aspect. This production of relations, which is still craft-based at the intersubjective level or the level of primary groups, is, however, tending gradually to become aligned to the mode of production of material goods or, in other words, to the generalized industrial mode...The consequences of this development are as yet difficult to foretell. It is difficult to accept that (human, social, political) relationships are produced in the same way as objects, and that, once they come to be produced in that same way, they become, similarly, objects of consumption.

(Baudrillard 1998:172)

Baudrillard's analysis would imply that Claire's concern and care for the elderly passenger during the flight was a product of 'deep acting'. Her treatment of him complied with that prescribed by the airline and met the expectations of the passenger, however, this performance was nothing more than a performance of 'signs of solicitude'. They were a pre-programmed response to the situation. Yet, after the flight, when Claire had time to reflect on her behaviour she felt guilty for not having gone that extra mile, to have made the passenger as comfortable as possible, something she claims she has done, in her private life, a number of times before.

The empathetic emotional labour performed during the flight, according to Baudrillard, was nothing more than a performance of 'signs' that ensured that Claire's emotional response met the expectations of both the passenger and the airline and, therefore, maintained her own narrative of wanting to be 'professional'. However, the 'signs' produced in their place marginalized genuine, spontaneous emotions. It was not until Claire was able to reflect upon the incident, away from the organisational context, that she was able to reflect critically on how the performance of 'signs' had jeopardised the continuity of her self-narrative.

Alternatively, as Claire tries to justify, it may have been that the long day and the exhaustion she was feeling meant that she had switched on to 'auto-pilot', that she was simply 'performing signs of solicitude' to get her through the flight. However, on reflection she realises that although the passenger was happy and her actions had complied with the guidelines set by the airline she was not at all comfortable with her own handling of the situation.

In conclusion, as to why the dissonance was not felt until after the event is unclear, and beyond the scope of this project. However, what is important is that Claire's story points toward the idea that where emotive dissonance is experienced in the emotional labour process is not always the same and where feelings of dissonance occur will determine the ways by which it can be reduced.

### *Surf or Turf?*

Just the other week we had a delay. We had to sit on the runway for three hours and it was 105°F. As you can imagine, passengers were getting angry, repeatedly asking when we were going to take off. It was a nightmare.

I was doing the main course food orders and one passenger said he couldn't decide whether to have the steak or the prawns. I told him I would carry on and come back to him a little later. By the time I returned, I only had a limited number of options left. He was less than impressed but he settled on the prawns.

Later in the flight when another member of the crew took the same passenger his prawns he started complaining, claiming he had ordered the steak! He came into the galley and was shouting at me, he was very aggressive. I felt like hitting him but I just kept calm and told *him to take a seat while I tried to sort something out. He kept shouting at me, telling me I didn't care about him. Finally he sat down.*

I felt really bad about the whole thing because it was a reflection on me. Later that day the captain came over and congratulated me on the way I had handled the situation. It made me feel so much better to know that I had her support. We only normally hear from management if we have made a mistake!

Following the pattern of analysis of the previous two critical incidents I will begin by identifying the forms of emotional labour being performed and then move on to look at the role of emotive dissonance within the emotional labour process.

The story above highlights an increasingly common issue in airline travel, the irate passenger, or as Williams (2003) terms it, 'demanding publics'. Deregulation of the airline market meant that more airlines were allowed to enter the industry, thus increasing supply, which led to a decrease in ticket prices. As competition in the market increased a niche market began to form that concentrated on offering passengers low price tickets in return for a 'no-frills' service. These became known as budget or 'no-frills' airlines. Such a radical change to the airline transport business model opened up the market to those who, previously, would have been priced out of airline travel. Low fares meant more passengers, and these passengers were not the business 'men' that cabin crew had been used to serving.

As the budget airline industry boomed even full service provider airlines could no longer ignore price competition. The budget airline model not only included low prices, they also flew from smaller, more convenient airports very frequently. This cheap and convenient product offering was a huge success and thus full service providers had no choice but to engage in price competition. However, falling prices not only led to an increase in passenger numbers, it also attracted a different breed of passenger.

Cheap beach holidays, stag and hen parties on the continent and quick weekend breaks meant that passengers no longer required the luxury associated with air travel. Consequences of these changes saw an increase in 'budget passengers' and this had a significant effect on the work of cabin crew. Budget passengers are characterised by crew as often being drunk, disruptive, demanding and sometimes sexually inappropriate. Janet and Debbie describe the day-to-day effect these industry changes had on the work of cabin crew.

"Over the ten years the class of passenger got worse. As passengers got lower class I got more and more unhappy!"

(Janet)

“When you get a drunk guy, six women can’t really control him...so really you’ve got no hope!”

(Debbie)

“One incident that really scared me was when we were in America. This guy just lost it. He tried to open the door...when I think back, now that I’m a mother, I wouldn’t be able to go back to it now. It’s just too risky when you’re dealing with people like that!”

(Janet)

Claire Williams’ (2003) study on the effect of what she calls ‘demanding publics’ on the work of cabin crew observed how the incidence of ‘demanding publics’ has significantly increased since the deregulation of the airline industry. She defines ‘demanding publics’ as situations

... where elements of customer abuse are present in the encounter

(2003:522)

and

... where there is no doubt that the rules of conviviality and respectful behaviour have been broken and, if service workers were not trapped by the inadequate boundaries provided by their employer, they would decisively exit the situation without fear of reprisal

(2003:522).

What is key in Williams’ definition of demanding publics, however, is the finality in the notion that service workers are ‘trapped’ by their employer. Williams states this as the reason why cabin crew, and other service workers, endure such abuse from passengers and customers, respectively, without considering other potential reasons. She goes on,

... Instead, they [customer service representatives] are forced to be loyal to both the abusive customer and their employer at the expense of their own health, well-being and safety

(2003:522)

Dealing with ‘demanding publics’ has become an every day reality for cabin crew. Yet the idea that cabin crew are trapped in a role which is detrimental to their well-being by ‘inadequate boundaries’ set by the airlines is something which is not revealed in Claire’s story, entitled ‘Surf or Turf?’

'Surf or Turf?' tells of a situation where an angry passenger verbally abused Claire in front of other passengers and her fellow crew. Although his complaint was not serious, simply a misunderstanding over his food order, his behaviour was extreme. Claire describes how she "felt like hitting him" but instead she "just kept calm and told him to take a seat". In other words, she managed the situation by performing emotional labour. She suppressed her own emotions of anger in order to maintain a calm exterior. This is another example of surface acting, like that in the Big Bang story, she is deceiving the passenger by making him believe that she feels calm and unaffected by his aggression when inside she is angry and upset. Thus, the performance of calm is only a façade. It is important when identifying surface acting that the individual is aware they are deceiving others but are not deceiving themselves (Hochschild, 1983).

Although the surface acting performed here was similar to that described in previous stories, the form of emotional labour described is somewhat different. Empathetic (Korczynski, 2002) or positive emotional labour can be defined as the performance of empathy in order to identify with an individual to create the desired emotional response within them. An example of empathetic emotional labour would be making someone feel happy and cared for. Antipathetic (Korczynski, 2002) or negative emotional labour on the other hand involves inducing emotions such as cynicism and antipathy, this is characterised by the work of debt collectors and policemen, for example. However, the emotional reaction that Claire described in this situation is best described by neither of these forms of emotional labour. For, she did not try and make the passenger feel happy by empathising with him, and neither did she attempt to intimidate him.

Claire's response here is one that does not demonstrate anger or kindness, instead she describes herself as remaining 'calm'. My initial analysis of this story, and others like it, did not provoke me to question what kind of emotional labour was being performed because through a spoken narrative it is often difficult to identify when performances of emotional labour are being described, especially when they involve displays that proscribe emotion.

However, when I began to observe the GP receptionists (presented in Chapter 7) this kind of so-called 'calm' was very much prevalent in their handling of patients. I observed, particularly during interactions with 'demanding publics' or disruptive patients, GP receptionists engaging in 'calm', 'rational' performances, just as Claire described in the 'Surf or Turf?' incident.

Emotional neutrality, then, can be defined as an emotion management technique used to suppress emotions felt and display unemotional behaviour, wherein the suppression of emotion is the performance itself – in this case performed to portray power and an unemotional persona of authority. The concept of ‘emotional neutrality’ is explored more fully in the following chapter on GP receptionists. However, I felt that my analysis of this narrative was incomplete without mentioning it here<sup>41</sup>.

So why didn’t Claire hit the passenger as she claims she wanted to do and why did she engage in this form of emotional labour? I asked Claire why she had not hit the passenger if that was what she wanted to do. Her initial response was

“Because I would lose my job!” she retorted incredulously.

She answered this question quickly and with a tone of ridicule in her voice. I felt she thought this was a ridiculous question. Our conversation moved on but I could not help dwell on this story and Claire’s immediate response to my question. Could someone really suppress such extreme emotions in fear of losing their job, which was basically Williams’ (2003) ‘demanding publics’ argument.

At the next session, a couple of weeks later I asked Claire to revisit this story again, she kindly obliged and I plucked up the courage to ask the same ‘ridiculous’ question for a second time. Why hadn’t she hit the man or at least defended herself if that was what she wanted to do?

This time my question was, at first, met with a moment’s silence, she raised her eyes to the ceiling and reflected on my question, as if hearing it for the first time. I also have to consider that perhaps she was trying to enact another account considering I appeared unsatisfied by her first account.

“Well...I would hate people to think I had to resort to things like that. I don’t want my junior crew to feel that I can’t handle a situation. They would be thinking, ‘what would she be like in an emergency?’ When someone does speak to you like that it is illogical, I just can’t believe people speak to you the way they do. When I first started people never spoke to us like that.”

This response was derived from reflection. Her first answer, ‘because I would lose my job’ is reflected in Williams’ definition of ‘demanding publics’ and Bolton’s comment



“...the worker will at least comply with the display rules and present a desirable performance for fear that their audience, the discerning customer, will make a complaint to management” (2005:117). However, these notions of service workers being abused by customers because they fear losing their jobs was not reflected in Claire’s narrative. After Claire had been given time and space to reflect on her behaviour she describes her emotional labour performance as part of a process more complex and interwoven with her narrative self-construction.

She describes how breaking the emotion rules and behavioural norms associated with the role would not only have led to potential dismissal but would, perhaps more importantly, be incongruent with her narrative of self. An aggressive response would not have been consistent with passenger and airline expectations of cabin crew, and would therefore have disrupted Claire’s own narrative of self, thereby threatening her ontological security. If she had reacted in this way she would probably have experienced feelings of discomfort such as embarrassment or guilt that would be indicative of emotive dissonance. However, she was able to prevent these feelings of dissonance occurring by performing emotional neutrality throughout the interaction.

Comparing this incident to the previous two, it is possible that this story demonstrates yet another alternative for the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process. For this time, emotive dissonance was not actively experienced, for there was no incongruence between what was expected and what was performed. Instead, Claire’s reflexive consciousness had the ability to imagine what the possible outcome would be if she did not perform a suitable emotional display. Such a characteristic of self-consciousness is at the centre of the Mead – Cooley debate. In effect, this ability to imagine the self in a situation prevents emotive dissonance being experienced but still leads to the performance of dissonance reducing behaviour i.e. emotional labour.

It is possible that emotional neutrality was performed in this situation in order for Claire to remain in control of the situation. As she states, **‘I don’t want my junior crew to think I can’t handle a situation’**, instead, she wants to set an example for her crew, in other words, she wants to be seen as a ‘professional’. If she had displayed her anger her behaviour would have been incongruent with whom she believes herself to be, and the way she feels others view her. Thus, she performs emotional neutrality to maintain ontological security. In addition, as we saw in the ‘Big Bang’ narrative, cabin crew’s main responsibility is for the safety of passengers, thus, it is important for disruptive passengers to be managed appropriately for safety reasons. In other words, crew have to

be careful not to let a situation escalate as it can quickly develop into a critical safety issue. Claire explains this consideration,

“You see we have passengers on that plane for up to 12 hours sometimes. We have to manage the situation because stress radiates out and panic sets in. The last thing any of us want is trouble. We are constantly aware of the other passenger’s safety.”

Since identifying performances of emotional neutrality, I have reflected on other narratives of emotional labour told by other crew members and this was not the only time ‘emotional neutrality’ has been described as having been used to manage demanding publics.

“It makes them feel stupid if you do not retaliate. Sometimes, though, this makes them worse because they think you don’t care.”

(Sandy)

“We are taught not to get angry with disruptive passengers, but new recruits find it much harder. You need a strong personality.”

(Maggie)

In conclusion, the ‘Surf or Turf?’ critical incident illustrates the projective nature of reflexive consciousness. It allows individuals to imagine how their behaviour would be perceived, thereby giving them the opportunity to prevent dissonance before it is even experienced. In addition, the emotional labour performed during this incident can be understood as a neglected aspect of the emotional labour process wherein the suppression of emotion is the performance itself. One I have named ‘emotional neutrality’. In this situation, emotional neutrality is used to de-escalate the disruptive passenger’s anger, whilst allowing Claire to maintain power over the situation and, thereby, remain legitimate in her social role as Purser and maintain her continuous narrative of self.

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion, Claire’s narrative supports the theoretical possibility that emotional labour can be used as a technique of dissonance reduction. However, what has also become clear through the critical incidents is that dissonance can be experienced at different stages in the emotional labour process. Those highlighted here include, during the interaction, thus allowing the individual time and space to alter their behaviour to reduce the dissonance; after the event when there is no way of actively reducing the

dissonance other than trying to justify your actions; and thirdly dissonance can be imagined via our reflexive consciousness' ability to be projective, thereby preventing dissonance from occurring in the first place.

The 'Looking Glass Self' has also been described as playing a key role in the self-reflexive evaluation of the self. Where expectations and perceptions differ to the individual's self-narrative it is likely that emotive dissonance will be experienced. When analysing the empirical material on the GP receptionists I take forward these observations to inform and enrich my understanding of the relationship between emotion management and emotive dissonance. Stereotypical images and perhaps societal perceptions of GP receptionists tend to be antithetic to those projected on to cabin crew. Thus, it will be interesting to see what forms of emotional labour are enacted from the GP receptionist's emotion management repertoire and how dissonance is experienced and negotiated in a very different environment.

## **Chapter Seven: “I’ve got to get past this dragon before I can get to God!”**

### **Introduction**

In the previous chapter I explored the theoretical possibility that emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, could be seen as a dissonance reducing behaviour. I concluded that through Claire’s narrative it was possible to conceptualise emotional labour performances in this way. However, through a consideration of three so-called ‘critical incidents’ and other material from Claire and the ‘voices’, I proposed that dissonance can be experienced at different stages of the emotional labour process, and where and when dissonance is experienced will influence whether emotion management can reduce it and, if so, how.

As part of this construction of the emotional labour process I also considered the effects that stereotypes and expectations have on dissonance experienced and the emotional labour performed. This chapter takes a similar approach, considering stereotypes and perceptions of GP receptionists, informed by the historical legacy of the role, my own perception of the stereotypes and some illustrative excerpts from on-line forums and other sources, to understand how these expectations influence emotional labour performances and individual identity constructions.

I wanted to further explore the emotional labour process through GP reception work for a number of empirical and conceptual reasons. Firstly, Hochschild’s (1983) original study on emotional labour is a comparative analysis of the way emotions are managed in two very different occupational roles; those being cabin crew and bill collectors. Hochschild (1983) focused on how emotions were managed and the kind of emotions and states this management evoked in others. Although my interests are concerned with the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process I decided a comparison of occupations roles on the basis of their associated stereotypes may also be constructive. The role of GP receptionist provided an antithetic stereotype to cabin crew (as discussed in Chapter Five).

Secondly, I was interested in the way the emotional labour process is enacted when expectations and perceptions are negotiated in self-narratives. The role of GP receptionist is traditionally characterised by very strong negative stereotypes, which stands in contrast to the positive, highly sexualised perceptions of cabin crew. Thirdly, the work of GP receptionists has remained relatively untouched by research (exceptions include Arber & Sawyer, 1985; Offredy, 2002; Gallagher et al, 2001). Again, this is a

very different situation to the role of cabin crew, which has held the attention of both academic and media interest for some time. Finally, the level of access I was able to gain in *SharedCare* offered me the opportunity not only to interview GP receptionists, but also to observe them whilst they interacted with patients (something I was unable to do with cabin crew). I was able to watch emotional labour being performed first-hand. Such an opportunity provides yet another perspective on the emotional labour process.

Research with GP receptionists working at *SharedCare* took place after I had conducted the interviews and biographical-narrative with the cabin crew. Therefore, I entered this stage of the research process with the same expectations and ideas from the literatures but in addition my thinking was informed by my talks with cabin crew. However, my principal concern remained to explore the same questions and research aims that I had done with cabin crew, i.e. to look at the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process and to understand how individual's self-narratives negotiate role perceptions and stereotypes. Different research methods, however, led to a reflexive process of analysis, for the observational methods combined with the standard interviewing led to a focus on a previously neglected aspect of the emotional labour process: emotional neutrality. This was later used as a lens through which the cabin crew material could be re-analysed and re-conceptualised.

This chapter aims to explore how those working as GP receptionists negotiate the often-negative stereotypes associated with their role through narratives of self. I also consider, as I did in the previous chapter, how stereotypes and expectations influence the kind of emotional labour performed. These processes are explored through a number of key analytical themes including gatekeeping, communities of care, expectations, norms and stereotypes. Theoretically, this involves a consideration of the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process and the potential emergence of a new form of emotional management.

### **Stereotypes**

General Practitioner's Receptionists (henceforth GP receptionists) working in the UK are employed by the National Health Service (henceforth NHS) as administrative service staff to ensure patients have easy access to primary care medical services (Royal College of General Practitioners, 2002). GP receptionists are responsible for registering new patients to the practice, arranging appointments, checking patients in for their consultations, arranging repeat prescriptions and liaising with outside organisations and medical services such as chiropody, midwifery, social services, pharmacies, hospitals,

translation services and suppliers to name but a few. In a sense, GP receptionists have a dual role, for they are customer facing, 'frontline' service representatives but are also responsible for much of the bureaucratic work, such as co-ordinating, communicating and liaising taking place behind the scenes. In short, GP receptionists play a significant role in the management and co-ordination of primary care.

Despite the role being officially constructed in this way by the NHS, GP receptionists are not typically seen as service representatives. Instead they have developed an unflattering reputation for being obstructive and unhelpful (see Illustration 6 & Figure 9) that has led to negative stereotypes characterising the traditional occupational role, such as 'dragons' (Arber & Sawyer 1985), 'ogres', 'witches' (LostSoul, 2007) and 'the spawn of Satan' (LostSoul, 2007).

Illustration 6 depicts a patient who has recently undergone the amputation of both arms trying to get the attention of the hospital receptionist. However, because he is unable to conform to the correct protocol, 'Ring Bell for Assistance' the receptionist continues to ignore him, despite being aware of his presence. This 'comical' illustration is only funny, however, because people can relate to it. The artist is emphasising the degree to which GP receptionists are thought to be unhelpful and obstructive. By doing so he is playing on the associated stereotype that characterises the role of GP receptionists.

Figure 9 is an article taken from *News Biscuit*, a satirical current events ezine. Although Moira Braithwaite is, we can only hope, a fictional character she is supposed to represent the stereotypical GP receptionist. Her character is one that is purposively obstructive to patients seeking medical care, however, the article satirically praises her as being "the most effective doctor's receptionist of all time". The role of GP receptionist is brought under scrutiny here, as the article portrays Moira's primary goal, and achievement, as preventing patients from seeing a doctor. In a sense, the satire is based upon the central conflict of the role, patient sovereignty versus gatekeeping. Patients, like customers, expect to be held in sovereign status by the organisations that serve them, however, the GP receptionist often quashes this 'enchanted myth' (Korczyński & Ott 2004) as they act as gatekeepers, to prevent GPs being overloaded. This central conflict, or contradiction, that GP receptionists hold the promise of access whilst simultaneously holding the threat of barring the way. Such a position contributes towards the negative stereotypes associated with the occupational role, for it is the GP receptionist who holds the power over whether a patient is forced to wait or is seen by a clinician. Hall (1974) conceptualises receptionists as intermediaries who stand at the

boundary where the private person becomes an institutional case. It is often this process that patients find uncomfortable as they are used to upholding 'consumer sovereignty', even if it is mythical, during service interactions.



IAN BAKER:



### Figure 9: Doctors Receptionist breaks record with zero appointments



Moira Braithwaite, 52, of Dorking, was this morning celebrating her ninth successive Receptionist of the Month award after preventing over 35,000 patients getting an appointment within 48 hours during the month of September alone. Moira's name will appear in the next Guinness Book of Records as the most effective doctor's receptionist of all time, having not allowed a single appointment to be made with any doctor, despite the desperate pleas of the sick and injured.

Moira uses a number of techniques to prevent patients from seeing their local GP. 'Sometimes when people ring up she pretends to be a mini-cab company in Bromsgrove and claims that the taxi is on its way. Another time she diverted her number so that people calling the doctors went straight through to the Samaritans.'

Although patients are supposed to be able to get an appointment within 48 hours Moira claims that this figure is intended to represent 48 working hours and anybody stopping work during that time goes to the back of the queue again. She also maintains the right to prevent anybody who may be unwell from visiting the doctor's surgery 'at the risk of them bringing germs into the surgery'. The waiting list for expectant mothers is a year and a half.

The actual surgery has been fitted with a high security door leaving visitors to speak into a distorted and inaudible intercom outside, which allows Moira to pretend she can't hear them. 'The speaker button also delivers a mild electric shock, which is always an extra deterrent for anyone with a heart condition', claimed one elderly stroke victim. If patients do manage to get inside the next set of doors have no handles and cannot be opened from the outside. Or indeed, from the inside as they are only painted onto the wall. Moira has also managed to keep mothers away by claiming that 'The normal children's doctor is off sick today but I can make you an appointment with our temporary paediatrician, Dr Glitter.

Moira was telephoned this morning to ask when she would like to collect her prestigious award, but she claimed she couldn't offer any slots this week, but we could try ringing back one second past eight on Monday morning and 'see if we had anything then.' Or we could queue outside the surgery on the off-chance over the weekend, even though it would in fact be closed. And relocated to a secret address in Canada.

Source: [Newsbiscuit.com](http://newsbiscuit.com) 17<sup>th</sup> October 2008 by Des Custard  
<http://newsbiscuit.com/2008/10/17/doctors-receptionist-breaks-record-by-with-zero-g-appointments-386/>. Original in colour.

Arber & Sawyer (1985) view receptionists in general practice as “a crucial member of the primary health care team. She is the intermediary through whom virtually all contact between the patient and the GP are made” (1985:918). They argue that it is the gatekeeping nature of the role that is likely to lead to patients expressing hostility. Gatekeeping can be defined as “brief encounters in which two persons meet, usually as strangers, with one of them having the authority to make decisions which affect the other’s future” (Erickson & Schultz, 1982:xi).

Surveying over one thousand adults about their experiences of the reception process in general practice, Arber & Sawyer (1985) found that patients are likely to express greater hostility towards reception staff in larger practices, as rules are less flexible. They also found that parents with children are likely to experience receptionists more negatively than the elderly. In short, Arber & Sawyer argue that patients perceive GP receptionists’ as “battle-axes” and “dragons” (1985:911) because of their structural position in primary care, stating, “it is no longer possible to talk only of a dyadic doctor-patient relationship, instead the triad doctor-receptionist-patient must also be considered” (1985:918). Receptionists play a discretionary role in determining patient access to medical care and it is this power over medical assessments that reportedly antagonises patients most of all as they feel such power is misplaced. GP receptionists have no formal medical training yet hold the discretion to determine how urgent particular cases are. This idea is present in the second narrative reported in Fig 10, patients are asked to disclose medical information to the receptionist in order for her to make a decision as to how urgent the situation is. This decision will determine what appointment times are available and whether the patient requires a home visit. “Patients feel antagonistic towards receptionists who are perceived as officious, and interfering in medical affairs which are not seen as their legitimate province” (Arber & Sawyer, 1985:918).

The Healthcare Commission confirmed these ideas more recently when they reported that between August 2006 and July 2007 3,700 complaints were made about primary care in the UK. Approximately 43% of these complaints related to brief GP consultations and limited discussion of treatment options; other complaints included mis-diagnosis and poor attitudes of receptionists and practice managers.

Unhappy patients, however, are not content with making official complaints to the NHS. A number of on-line forums dedicated to patients’ discontent with treatment received from GP receptionists serve as vents for patient anger. Figure 10 is a typical

example of the kinds of issues being raised in these forums and also demonstrates the emotion these incidents evoke.

**Figure 10: On-Line Forum 'Doctor's Receptionists'**

[http://www.telford-live.com/link.asp?TOPIC\\_ID=2329](http://www.telford-live.com/link.asp?TOPIC_ID=2329)

Date: 03/12/2008

**Topic Author:** LostSoul

**Posted on:** 02/05/07 15:37:01

I've just rang my GP in a failed attempt to get the results of a blood test they did last week. The first time I rang, the *gormless witch* (an accurate description of the majority of doctor's receptionists) told me that the nurse was out and could I call back at 3.00pm. Fine.

Just rang back and spoke to the same *gormless witch* – she has a very distinctive voice that makes you want to shove a pillow down her throat – and she's now told me that the nurse will ring me back on Friday!!!! What the f\*\*k is that all about? Did I miss the nano-second that the nurse was going to be available at 3.00pm? Is the *gormless witch* so gormless that she has no idea what she is doing?

Now I know there are good receptionists (it is one of the many jobs the missus has done), but why the f\*\*k are the majority of them so gormless? Is there some sort of training that they have to go through to reach that depth of *stupidity and ignorance*?

**Reply author:** cuteaccent

**Date:** 02/05/07 17:40:13

I called my Dr today & the receptionist wanted to know what was wrong with me. Now I'm no brain surgeon but that is absolutely none of her business & is confidential between Dr & patient, I told her this but she insisted that if I wanted to speak with my Dr or his receptionist I would have to disclose to her what my problem was needless to say I didn't disclose & thus had to travel to the surgery where upon I spoke with my Dr & made a formal complaint.

How these women *think they are superior* to the average person is beyond me, they need a swift sharp lesson in respect & confidentiality.

*They are a receptionist for goodness sake NOT a Dr!!!!*

**Reply author:** LostSoul

**Date:** 02/05/07 20:29:03

[Sic] It is with our GP receptionists, I'm sure they're *the spawn of Satan*\*\*\*\*\*

Taken from the Telford Live on-line forum. *Emphasis added.*

These discontented patients are less than flattering in their depiction of their local GP receptionists. However, they do raise some interesting issues in terms of patient confidentiality (Arber & Sawyer, 1985; Petchey et al, 2001; Jacobson et al, 2001), the responsibility to make decisions on medical issues (Offredy, 2002) and gatekeeping being interpreted by patients as being obstructive (Hallam 1993). These are the issues that seem to be most prevalent in the narratives of Illustration 6 and Figures 9 & 10. Forcing individuals to disclose personal information and acting in a way that appears to the patient as obstructive are just an example of how GP receptionist's behaviour can translate into patient discontent and lead the role to be associated with negative stereotypes.

The relatively small number of studies on GP receptionists conducted both in the NHS and elsewhere means that there has been limited work done on the legacy of such stereotypes. This stands in relatively stark contrast to the wealth of literature found on cabin crew and the traditional stereotypical role of the airhostess (for example Mills 1998; 2006) Exceptions to this generalisation have concluded that GP receptionists have a low status within the surgery (Hughes, 1989; Bain & Durno, 1982); are given little training (Copeman & van Zwanenberg, 1988; Eisner & Britten, 1999); have a large amount of responsibility in terms of gatekeeping (for example Arber & Sawyer, 1985); tend to be perceived negatively by patients and are, as a consequence, treated badly by patients (Heuston et al 2001).

As the NHS tries to encourage competition in the public sector for health care provision, GP receptionists' attitudes and service style are coming under scrutiny. Service and care are at the top of the government's agenda and as front line service representatives GP receptionists are the 'shop window' (Robbins, 1996) for the surgery. As part of this drive for improved service some Primary Care Trusts have launched courses with the aim of making GP receptionists more approachable and cheerful. Dr Millington, in an interview for BBC Online suggests that the negative image of GP receptionists is a result of problems in the NHS rather than individual personalities. He goes on to say,

There has been an image of some receptionists being dragons but I like to think we have moved on from that. I think the problem is that receptionists are there on the frontline. One of the difficulties with being on the frontline is that you are the first point of call if services behind you aren't able to deliver what patients expect and what they have been promised by politicians. In that situation, receptionists

may be seen as obstructionist or difficult. They may come across as unresponsive and miserable.

BBC News Online. 13<sup>th</sup> July 2003  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/3058611.stm>

Dr Millington is offering, as a possible justification for the way GP receptionists are perceived, disillusionment, or as Korczynski & Ott (2004) would describe, the enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty being disrobed leaves the customer feeling cheated. In other words, the government and, even the GPs themselves, create a 'myth' surrounding patient importance and 'sovereignty' within the NHS system, which is then contradicted by the GP receptionist during interactions with patients.

In a recent doctoral thesis, GP receptionists in Scotland were found to be task-focused, as opposed to relationally-focused (Hewitt, 2006). Receptionists being task orientated led to patients feeling disillusioned and reporting a negative service experience. This was attributed to reception staff not drawing on their wider identity during patient interactions, as they were task-focused on administrative duties. Such a conclusion, viewed through an emotion management lens, may be interpreted as a lack of emotional labour, or perhaps empathetic emotional labour, more specifically, being performed by the GP receptionists studied. It could be argued that, the dual role GP receptionists play, as both service representatives and administrative staff, can in some cases lead to an emphasis being placed on one of the two roles, thereby neglecting the other. Although the administrative work can be processual in nature, the emotional labour required of GP receptionists to embody warmth, care and empathy, is bespoke to each individual patient. It is potentially the dual task nature of GP receptionist's duties that could, in part, lead to patients holding negative perceptions of the role.

In pursuit of exploring Hewitt's (2006) conclusions and my own research questions I wanted to witness first-hand the nature of GP reception work and how they negotiated the Draconian stereotypes. As previously stated, although I was considering the same research question with the GP receptionists as I had with cabin crew the methods I used were different. This was primarily due to the different level of access gained to the 'SharedCare' group of practices that provided the empirical sites but also because the type of work and the environment within which GP reception work takes place is very different. After considerable negotiation with the ethics committee, I was granted approval to conduct non-participant observation at all three surgeries, and to conduct

semi-structured interviews with the receptionists and a focus group with 12 of the administrative staff.

These methods differed significantly to those conducted with cabin crew and, thus, the empirical material gathered is also very different. I did not have the time or resources to conduct a biographical-narrative interview with one of the receptionists, despite my feeling that this was a successful method for researching emotion management. As a result I was unable to gain a deeper insight into who the individual receptionists were, or more importantly, how they narrate their selves. Without understanding the way in which these self-narratives were constructed and maintained it has made it more challenging to reflect behaviour and discourses back on to an individual's concept of self, thus, inhibiting the reflexive nature of my analysis. However, what I was able to do, to maintain an aspect of reflexivity within the process, was to observe patient-receptionist interactions first hand, and then conduct interviews with the same receptionists later on. This allowed me the space to encourage reflexive evaluations on some of the incidents, and it also gave me an insight into how an individual narrates herself and the way she behaved on a daily basis. Such an iterative process allowed comparisons between narratives and performances of emotion management to be made, which were not possible with the cabin crew methods. Thus, the empirical material presented here is my interpretive ethnography of these individuals and the events I observed rather than their own narratives of the events (as was the case in the previous chapter).

In summary, the role of GP receptionists is commonly characterised by negative stereotypes, such as “the dragon behind the desk” (Arber & Sawyer, 1985). However, such a characterisation is incongruent with the receptionist being a critical member of the primary care team. What will be explored in the remainder of this chapter is how individual receptionists in a newly established health partnership, which emphasises care and community in all aspects of its service delivery, negotiate these negative perceptions of themselves through performances of emotion management. As was the case for the cabin crew empirical work, there will be a particular focus on the role of emotive dissonance within the emotional labour process and also the kinds of emotional labour performed. The aim is to comparatively analyse the strategies through which those who occupy two very different occupational roles, characterised by opposing stereotypes and expectations, reduce dissonance. So what is *SharedCare* and who are these ‘dragons’ on the frontline?

## SharedCare

As part of the NHS reforms to improve standards and service Primary Care Trusts were given budgetary control and clinical governance of geographical areas of England (NHS, 1997)<sup>42</sup>. In 2008 there were over 300 PCTs in England controlling over 80% of the total NHS budget. In addition, single-handed GP practices are slowly being brought under PCT control and tendered out via PMS contracts (Klein, 2006). The *SharedCare* partnership is a working example of this national process and for this reason they were involved in an NHS funded research project looking at devolved management and leadership in primary care, with which I was involved.

*SharedCare* are a group of executive partners, comprising of two Doctors and three Nurse Practitioners who won the PMS contract to manage three GP practices in the North of England in late 2007<sup>43</sup>. *SharedCare*'s ethos places care and community at the centre of its decision-making processes. In the *SharedCare* Staff Newsletter of August 2007, it was stated that "We bring value to our communities through caring and, thus, enriching their lives and hopefully our own in the process". In short, *SharedCare*'s aim is to "continue providing high quality primary healthcare in small, accessible surgery settings" (*SharedCare* 2007); their objective is to develop a community of care, both within the organisational setting, and in the wider community.

Gaining formal access to the *SharedCare* group of practices via the NHS funded project, led by one of my supervisors, enabled me to conduct a multi-method strategy to gather empirical information. The variety of data collection methods used however meant that the tools of analysis also differ. Therefore, instead of presenting 'critical incidents' as I did for the cabin crew in the previous chapter, which were particularly useful for understanding information gathered from the biographical-narrative interviews, here the data is more fragmented, as more 'voices' are heard from other receptionists. In spite of these multiple voices, and sometimes fragmented narratives I have focused on one of the receptionists, in particular, Sam. Sam's narrative is heard more frequently than the other 'voices' in this chapter as I spent the most time observing and interviewing her. Through these processes I felt I 'got to know her' better than I did the others. In so doing, her central position within this chapter can be compared to Claire's in the previous chapter, however, it must be noted that although I spent a lot of time observing and talking to Sam the methods used are not treated as equal to biographical-narrative interviewing.



Through my research methods I aimed to understand what *SharedCare* expects of its receptionists when it comes to creating and maintaining a 'community of care'. I was interested in learning how the individual women negotiated the traditional stereotypes that characterised the role of GP receptionist and maintained a 'community of care' whilst upholding a continuous narrative of self.

Throughout my period of empirical research at the three *SharedCare* surgeries I was given access to the local PCT intranet sites, recruitment guidelines and the literature that was available to the receptionists themselves. Utilising these resources enabled me to paint a picture of what *SharedCare* expected from their receptionists. I was particularly interested in trying to understand what the emotional labour requirements of the job were. The remainder of this section will focus on the job description for GP receptionists under *SharedCare's* particular PCT and the literature targeted at receptionists that was available at the surgeries.

Bolton (2004; 2005) argues that the ability to perform emotional labour should be considered a skill, and should therefore be remunerated accordingly and acknowledged as significant in recruitment and selection criteria. However, Payne (2009) argues that labelling emotional labour as a skill is "extremely problematic" (2009:348). His conclusion is based on two key elements that help define a skill; task complexity and discretion/ control. Payne argues that the heterogeneity of emotional labour means that jobs that require the performance of 'emotional labour' would be "swept together under a banner of skilled work" (Payne, 2009:363). Yet, the emotional labour performed by the airhostess is very different to the emotional labour performances required of debt collectors (Hochschild, 1983). Similarly, he argues that much of the low-paid service sector work requires performances of emotional labour, therefore the fact that within these roles emotional labour performances are generally "untutored and probably poor" (Filby, 1992:39) means that the workers have little discretion or control over the work processes and are unable to limit the supply of labour. Instead, Payne (2009:355) argues that "emotion work may be better seen as part of a person's ethical or moral self rather than a skill as such." Thus, I looked at *SharedCare's*<sup>44</sup> job description (Figure 11) for the role of receptionist, to establish whether emotional labour was considered a skill by the PCT, or even a requirement of the role.

### Figure 11: JOB DESCRIPTION

**POST TITLE** Receptionist – PCT Manager G.P. Practice

**GRADE:** Band 2

**RESPONSIBLE TO:** Practice Manager

**LOCATION:** Sites 1, 2 &3

#### JOB SUMMARY:

To assist the clinical team to provide an efficient service to the patients. Being the first point of contact for patient and outside agencies in a courteous manner at all times.

#### Duties/Responsibilities:

1. Providing basic clerical/ reception duties as required
2. Maintain patient administrative system computerised and paper records including the registration of patients, preparing notes for summarising, receiving and returning paper records to other agencies as requested
3. Deal in a courteous manner with all queries from patients and outside agencies passing relevant accurate detail in a timely manner to other members of the team, using judgement if urgent attention is required
4. Use of the computer for making appointments, entering relevant data according to specific protocols, printing prescriptions and ensuring visits and telephone messages are dealt with following specific protocols using IT skills being able to prioritise own workloads using relevant protocols
5. Listen to and empathise with patients, to be firm at times with some patients who may show aggression, to be compassionate and caring. These duties will include providing a comprehensive reception service to all patients and visitors to the surgery
6. To liaise and help the clinical staff to provide an efficient service to the patients. To carry out duties as requested by clinical staff within the remit of your responsibilities to be aware and look for relevant protocols.
7. To liaise with outside agencies, including booking of transport for patients, communicating with Estates department and PCT
8. Deal with bodily fluids when sending to path lab following relevant protocol and being able to deal with any spillages in the correct manner
9. Be ready to deal with frequent interruptions that cause a change of task. Have the ability to multitask accurately and calmly
10. Responsible for receipt of petty cash and recording accurately in cash receipt book
11. Undertake audits as defined by the clinicians to analyse and discuss with relevant parties
12. Comply with Data Protection Act
13. To assist other members of the PHCT to carry out various clinics in an efficient manner, to prepare rooms and ensure patients are informed of clinics running within the practice
14. To keep the waiting room in a tidy state and to ensure all posters and information is up to date and accurate.

From the job summary it is possible to identify that the performance of emotional labour is a key aspect of the receptionist's role at the *SharedCare* practices. By stating that the receptionists are to be "the first point of contact" and so behave in a "courteous manner at all times" directly implies that they will have to be able to manage their emotions within the organisational context in order to "provide an efficient service to the patients". *SharedCare* are emphasising the service orientation of the role, something that is not always associated with public sector jobs and is certainly incongruent with the traditional stereotypes that characterise the role and the patient experiences (see Figure 10) that feed the on-line forums.

The job description proceeds to detail the duties and responsibilities associated with the role of receptionists, these include clerical duties, updating computer records, administration, communicating with patients and other agencies, tidying, and dealing with petty cash and "bodily fluids". Each of these duties requires the candidate to have specific skills, in order to fulfil them correctly and efficiently. Amidst these fairly mundane responsibilities, however, there was one that caught my attention, duty number five reads:

*Listen to and empathise with patients, to be firm at times with some patients who may show aggression, to be compassionate and caring.* These duties will include providing a comprehensive reception service to all patients and visitors to the surgery.

*(emphasis added)*

*SharedCare* are giving specific direction, here, for their GP receptionists to perform empathetic emotional labour, for one of their duties actually states that they must "empathise with patients". In order to fulfil this duty, the candidate is required, and presumed to have the ability, to perform this kind of emotion management technique. By listening and empathising the receptionist is to appear "compassionate and caring" to the patient and all visitors to the surgery. Those patients who may be less than cooperative must also experience the interaction with the receptionist as a service. In fact, the job description actually points out that it may be the case that the receptionist will have to "be firm ... with some patients who may show aggression". In other words, they are also required to perform antipathetic emotional labour when it is necessary. This makes the role of GP receptionist an emotionally complex role for they have a duty to provide a "compassionate and caring" service through performances of both empathetic and antipathetic emotional labour. In addition, *SharedCare*, are acknowledging the potential dangers of the job which invites a high degree of discretion

and decision on the part of the receptionists, and a presumption that the ability to handle these potential dangers and know when to perform each form of emotional labour are pre-existing within the candidates.

*SharedCare*, however, are not unique in their acknowledgement of the requirement for GP receptionists to have an ability to handle difficult patients. The 1982 *Receptionists' Handbook* (found in the administration office at Site 3) is more empathetic in its presentation of this requirement to be firm as it frames 'feminine attributes' as being of 'value to the practice'. Note also the highly gendered tone of the handbook, with the use of the pronoun 'she'.

*The receptionist has a difficult task working always with sick and anxious people, helping them to be relaxed and confident when they go in to see the doctor...if she can create sympathetic and worthwhile relationships with people, particularly those who are ill and frightened, she will be of inestimable value to the practice.*

(DHSS 1981:2)

In other words, the people who are aggressive towards receptionists are likely to be behaving this way because they are *sick* and *anxious*, *ill* and *frightened*. Thus, the British Medical Association advocates receptionists being sympathetic in order to create a safe and welcoming atmosphere in the surgery. This is comparable to the nurse/mother image of the 1950s airhostesses whose role was to create an environment in which passengers felt safe and secure, their fears and anxieties swept away by the reassuring warmth of the motherly airhostess. Hochschild (1983) also reported Delta Airlines cabin crew adopting a similar strategy in an attempt to understand why passengers were acting in a particular way. Crew were taught by the airline to imagine the aggressive passenger as his or her own relative or friend who was terrified of flying. This technique was supposed to help cabin crew manage their emotions more easily. In effect such a technique is a form of 'method acting', as cabin crew were encouraged to change the way they viewed the situation, which would in turn automatically, alter their emotional response.

Robbins (1996) advocates GP receptionists having a positive service attitude that places patient care at the centre of its duties.

*The receptionist's attitude, empathy and efficiency is able to enhance or damage its [surgery] image. A good receptionist can facilitate the way in which a patient accesses the system of medical care and should do all that is possible to make the patient feel welcome, comfortable and to ease the patient's access to medical help and care. ...It is the receptionist's role to allay patients' fears and worries and*

*help them to feel 'comfortable' whilst they wait. A courteous, friendly manner, accompanied by a smile and an understanding of the situation can work wonders, even with the most difficult of patients.*

(Robbins, 1996:22 *emphasis added*)

As previously mentioned, the role of GP receptionist is centred on access facilitation and patient sovereignty. Patients want immediate access to medical care but it is the receptionist's role to mediate that access, to regulate who sees a clinician and when. Robbins (1996) advocates that such a balance can be achieved with the regulation of emotions. She explains how it is the receptionist's job to make patients "feel welcome and comfortable" by managing their emotions in a performance of empathetic emotional labour. However, as she points out, this performance of empathetic emotional labour must also be allied with the gatekeeping element of the role for "It is the receptionist's role to allay patient's fear and worries and help them to feel 'comfortable' whilst they wait." Therefore, patients, as sovereigns, must be made to feel comfortable yet their sovereignty is revealed to be a myth when the GP receptionist prevents immediate access to primary care.

Robbins (1996) goes on to discuss, in detail, the importance of emotion regulation within GP reception work;

*If you have personal problems it is difficult not to allow your emotions to affect the way in which you respond and interact with patients and colleagues. It is important to be aware of this and have the ability to overcome your feelings. Your attitude will influence the attitude of the person you are dealing with*

(Robbins, 1996:22 *emphasis added*)

When we compare this to Hochschild's original definition of emotional labour i.e. labour that "requires one to induce or suppress feelings in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (Hochschild, 1983:7), the similarities are acute. The receptionist is described as having to alter her own emotions in order to make the patient feel differently. In other words, Robbins (1996) is stating that GP receptionists are specifically required to perform emotional labour as part of their role.

Robbins (1996) presents GP receptionists as occupying a service role. Elaborating on this point, she goes on to present how the NHS defines 'customer care', (see Table 5) highlighting that "the NHS is a very large business organization and the customers are your business" (Robbins, 1996:23). The use of the term customer, instead of patient, is congruent with the NHS's attempt to create market conditions within the public sector

for health, in a bid to improve customer service and efficiency. In so doing, emotional labour and customer care became a new priority for primary care and other sectors of the NHS. However, encouraging patients to think of themselves as customers, and primary care as a 'service' may have negative effects, particularly on GP receptionists, when the 'enchanted myth of patient sovereignty' is revealed to be just that, a myth.

In addition, Robbins (1996) also presents her perspective on what 'customers' expect of GP receptionists (Table 5). Although, the analogy of the customer and the market is false in the sense that very few patients have the opportunity to select another provider, demand anything back for perceived bad service or reward good service with continued discretionary support and the economic transactional basis of the relationship is missing, this does provide an interesting point of discussion on expectations and perceptions. Robbins (1996) believes that patients, or customers, expect GP receptionists to be welcoming, pleasant, and smiling whilst showing a concern for their needs. Such a description reminds me more of the cabin crew stereotypes from the previous chapter than they do of the stereotypes we have seen associated with the role of GP receptionist. But why is this the case?

<b>Table 5: Expectations</b>	
<p><b>What is Customer Care?</b></p> <p>Customer care means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Giving the right impression</li> <li>➤ Meeting customers' expectations</li> <li>➤ Exceeding customers' expectations</li> <li>➤ Listening to customers</li> <li>➤ Having customer-friendly systems</li> <li>➤ Being totally professional</li> <li>➤ Putting customers first</li> <li>➤ Being totally customer orientated</li> <li>➤ Having the right attitude</li> <li>➤ Treating others as you would wish to be treated</li> </ul>	<p><b>What does the customer expect of us?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Welcoming, pleasant, smiling receptionists</li> <li>➤ A concern for their needs</li> <li>➤ Interest and recognition</li> <li>➤ Value for money</li> <li>➤ Adequate information</li> <li>➤ Good support services</li> <li>➤ Satisfaction of their needs</li> <li>➤ Quality service</li> </ul>
<p>Adapted from Robbins (1996: 23-24)</p>	

Why do the 'customer' or patient expectations presented by Robbins not reflect the 'dragon'/ 'witch' stereotypes that are so often associated with GP receptionists? It can be argued that Robbins (1996) is describing the NHS's expectations of GP receptionists, as opposed to those of patients. However, when we consider the large number of on-line forums dedicated to patient complaints about the service they have received from their local GP receptionist it is possible to interpret such behaviour as a failure to meet patient expectations. In other words, patients are angry because they have not received the level of service that the NHS and other service providers have led them to believe they are entitled to. Alternatively, it may be that the patient's status of sovereignty in the market place, particularly in the private sector, is revealed to be an 'enchanted myth' or an 'illusion' and it is this disillusionment, often administered by the GP receptionist as part of their gatekeeping role that leads to their role being demonised and patients having negative expectations of the role. Indeed a receptionist may achieve welcoming compassion and gatekeeping but until the blame of service disappointment is shifted to either the clinicians or the NHS as a whole, it is the receptionists who will suffer. It could be argued that GP receptionists have always suffered from the systems inability to deliver the expected service and levels of patient access to medical care. Negative perceptions of the role may have little to do with personal performance, and more to do with the system failures and a burden of blame. Over time this process could have led to patients expecting GP receptionists to be unhelpful and obstructive.

Through my research on the emotional labour process, I therefore considered how GP receptionists come to be thought of as 'dragons' and 'ogres' when they work in an environment that is designed to provide care and support. *SharedCare* provided an ideal set of practices to observe such behaviour since they advocated a strong community of care ethos to both their organisation and the wider community. How do individuals working as GP receptionists understand and negotiate the incongruence between what is expected of them by the NHS, the practice, and the patients?

### **Emotion Switching**

Throughout the six weeks of non-participant observations I found the GP receptionists at each of the three *SharedCare* surgeries to be kind, warm and, in the main, very un-dragon like<sup>45</sup>. I watched as they dealt with an almost continual flow of patients each with their individual needs and problems; including, osteoporosis, blindness, language barriers, diabetes, suicidal tendencies, psychological and mental health problems,

emergency situations and death. I also observed the mundane elements of their work such as checking patients in, booking appointments, filing, scanning, coding, directing clinicians to forms and liaising with the pharmacy to name but a few.

My first observational notes detailed the processual nature of GP receptionist's work, which struck me as being very different to the work of cabin crew. Cabin crew work in, what can be described as a static environment, for once the passengers board an aircraft they will be served by the same crew for the duration of the flight. Working in such an environment does come with its own set of problems, however, but once those passengers disembark, it is unlikely that the crew who served them will ever see them again.

The work of GP receptionists is, on the other hand, processual: they deal with a large number of patients on a daily basis but the interactions are relatively short and often task based e.g. booking an appointment, checking a patient in. However, they may see these patients week after week and therefore relational interactions for GP receptionists are significant in terms of how they are perceived by patients. Simultaneously, receptionists are also able to build up a detailed understanding of individual patients as they see them on a regular basis, often live within the same communities and learn about their medical conditions through the administrative element of their role. The *SharedCare* receptionists used this knowledge to inform the way they handled patients through emotion management techniques whilst they continued with their daily routine of handling multiple demands, booking appointments, handling queries and fluid samples and answering the telephone. In a sense, the method acting strategies employed by the cabin crew of Delta Airlines was needed because the crew did not know the passengers they were dealing with. Instead they had to 'intuit' why the passenger was behaving in this way. GP receptionists, however, have the opportunity to build an understanding of individual patient cases as they see them on a regular basis and have an insight into their background and medical conditions. Utilising this relational knowledge means that GP receptionists do not have to rely on the 'imaginings' of the other as much as cabin crew. Thus, the emotion management techniques employed by GP receptionists are more likely to be better informed than those of cabin crew.

Sam describes how her knowledge of individual patients informs her emotional labour performances and the service she provides.



“I wouldn’t like to miss contact with them [patients] ‘cause for one it’s not good in your job really if you don’t feel kept up to date because then you lose that interaction ... with who’s who...and they are just a name on a piece of paper and so when you put names to faces, even though you don’t discuss what you see, *you know inside a little bit about what’s going on*. Whereas if you just did that [be a service representative] you don’t know so you wouldn’t understand why they’re acting like they act. There are some quite poorly people and they are usually the ones who don’t cause you grief. They tend to be a lot more amenable than the ones that are just minor things, but obviously big things to them, and they just cause you more problems, more hassle, when they don’t need to. But it does help to understand. I can think of things I have done this morning that comes out and *‘Oh I didn’t know that! That’s terrible!’ So next time I’m in contact with that patient, even though they won’t say anything, I know deep down just how important that might be*. So if they are being ‘Oh it’s ok.’ I might be able to use a bit of judgement to make a decision.”

Sam, Site 3, *emphasis added*

What Sam is describing is the complex way in which the dual role of the GP receptionist as both administrator and service representative are equally as important. The task-based and relational-based functions of the role, identified by Hewitt (2006) as competing, are described as working together, allowing the receptionists to tailor their emotional labour performances to individual patient’s needs. Thus, instead of the duality of the role being seen as a negative characteristic that has been offered to explain the negative stereotypes associated with GP reception work, it can be used to mutually inform one another, thereby facilitating a higher level of patient care and customer service. For example, as Sam points out, knowing of a patient’s condition enables the receptionist to make better-informed judgements on the urgency of an appointment or medication.

What is also prevalent in Sam’s narrative is the emphasis she places on patient care. The way in which she describes herself thinking *“Oh I didn’t know that! That’s terrible!”* implies that she is genuinely concerned and affected by the patient’s condition. In such cases it must be considered that ‘genuine emotion’ (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993) and ‘empathy’ may be experienced frequently in GP reception work as they are dealing with highly emotive issues. Sam’s narrative highlights the emotional roller coaster that the processual nature of the job inflicts, but it also paints a very different picture to the stereotypical images of the role presented at the beginning of the chapter. Sam describes how she genuinely cares for the patient and is sympathetic to their condition, she could not be described as a ‘witch’ or a ‘dragon’ from her testimony here. However, her description of her feelings may shed some light on the negative stereotype. She points out that despite knowing that a specific patient was suffering in a particular way, she would not be able to acknowledge to the patient that she was aware

of their condition. “*So next time I’m in contact with that patient, even though they won’t say anything, I know deep down just how important that might be.* So if they are being ‘Oh it’s ok.’ I might be able to use a bit of judgement to make a decision.” Sam is not only describing the way in which the bureaucratic element of her role helps her to provide patients with better care, it also highlights the fact that GP receptionists often have a deeper knowledge of a patients situation than they are able to let on.

In other words, a patient may be very ill and the receptionist is aware of this but due to issues of confidentiality they are not permitted to communicate this knowledge to the patient, unless the patient themselves chooses to tell the receptionist. Thus, their treatment of that patient may appear heartless and cold to the patient, but behind the scenes Sam would use the information to make better-informed decisions about the speed of access and provision of services. Similarly, a patient who is being disruptive at reception, claiming that their request is urgent may be met with what they feel to be ‘bad service’ because the receptionist may be aware that this patient’s condition is not urgent and will prioritise other cases first. Not being able to make patients aware of their background knowledge of the individual cases can lead to patients viewing GP receptionists as obstructive and unhelpful.

Dealing with death and terminal illnesses is a significant part of the work of GP receptionists. On my very first day of observations, Jane and Elizabeth were discussing how a local woman had been kicked in the head by a horse and had recently died. I could sense immediately that they were both upset by the incident. Jane turned to me and said:

“You know being in this job, especially for a long time, you get to know so many people and you know... *it really does affect you!*”

Jane, Site 1.

Such a declaration provided an insight into the emotional nature of the job, “*it really does affect you*” seemed to emphasise how relevant the threat of toxicity was in such a role. Continued exposure to negative emotions and feelings, such as those experienced by GP receptionists are thought to have potentially damaging consequences on individual well-being. They are known as ‘toxic’ emotions (Frost, 2003) and those that handle such ‘toxicity’ are known as ‘toxin handlers’ (Frost, 2003). In order to remain healthy and able to continue handling toxic emotions over time, Frost argues that we have to develop toxin handling skills and strategies at both an individual and

organisational level. Without such strategies individuals could themselves 'become toxic'.

Just as Jane drew breath to continue explaining to me how death and illness was a big part of her job the telephone rang. She picked up the receiver and in a buoyant and cheerful tone commenced the following interaction:

"Good Morning Site 1 Surgery!"

"Yes Mrs Denbeigh!"

"Right."

"Umm...it might be as well to see the doctor this time, if it's for a review. Let me just look at what we've got!"

"Right. Would you prefer a morning or an afternoon?"

"Morning...ok."

"Could you do 9 o'clock... bit too early?"

"What time is your bus?"

"Right, well you tell me what's a decent time?"

"10 o'clock. Just confirm your date of birth for me Mrs Denbeigh?"

"02.09.1927"

(Repeats appointment time and date back to patient)

"Ok! Thank you! Bob bye!"<sup>46</sup>

Jane, Site 1

Jane's sadness and grief at the young woman's death had to be suppressed as she exuded warmth, enthusiasm and kindness in her interaction with Mrs Denbeigh. Although it was just a routine appointment booking, Jane ensured the patient's needs were met through a positive empathetic performance of emotional labour. However, I must point out that due to the nature of non-participant observation methods I was unable to determine whether such performances were a genuine emotional response (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993), surface acting or deep acting (Hochschild, 1983). However, due to the routine nature of this interaction I have assumed it to be an example of empathetic surface acting. Regardless of what kind of emotion management was being performed in Jane's interaction with Mrs Denbeigh, what is prevalent in this example is the amount of 'emotion switching' that is required in the role.

The processual nature of the work means that GP receptionists stand on the frontline and deal with happy momentous occasions, such as the birth of a baby or the news that a long suffering cancer patient has gone into remission, only to be immediately told by the patient next in line that their husband passed away last week. The GP receptionists I observed seemed to be on an 'emotional roller coaster' every day. As they dealt with death, joy, anger, aggression, sadness and disillusionment all in the space of an hour.

The juxtaposition of antithetic emotions or ‘emotion switching’ is a significant part of GP reception work as it ensures patients’ are treated with compassion and care specific to their individual, and often, emotionally complex situation.

### **Every Picture Tells a Story...**

After two weeks of observations at *SharedCare* I facilitated a focus group attended by eight GP receptionists and four administrative staff from the three practices. The aim of the focus group was to encourage group discussion about what it felt like to be a GP receptionist and how the receptionists felt about the traditional stereotypes that characterised their occupational role. The Business Development Manager at *SharedCare* also wanted this session to encourage cross-practice relationships with a view to later cross-practice working. As part of the session I utilised a method of projective-drawing in an attempt to promote discussion and reduce the formality of the relationships within the group. I will discuss the outcome of this method a little later in this section, however, the exercise was a success and the rest of the two-hour session was filled with shared experiences and emotional narratives. Sam told one such story, reflecting on an emotionally challenging situation in which she felt genuinely saddened by a patient’s story.

“You are a bit of *an agony aunt* I think...A patient came along ... really distressed and I had to take her somewhere else, quiet. Then she proceeded to tell me all about it and *that was quite sad...you know...you’re trying to blink back your tears, not to get too upset* because that is not going to help, so I just let her off load and tell me what she wanted to say... she kept grabbing me, grabbing my hand, so I had to go along with that you know because it comforted her... *We just have to be as compassionate and helpful as we can...I was quite sad then...I thought, ‘oh dear, they are suffering so bad’*”.

Sam, *emphasis added*

Sam’s story tells of how an interaction with a patient led her to feel upset and sadness. However, she chose to suppress those emotions as she tried to “blink back” her own tears. This emotion suppression demonstrates a form of surface acting, as she felt genuine emotions of sadness for the lady but disguised these emotions with empathy. Sam explains how this was made even harder as the patient continually touched her hand, almost gripping on to Sam for support through her grief. Sam seems to feel uncomfortable with this level of contact, but again describes how she suppresses her desire to perhaps distance herself from such strong emotions by saying “I had to go along with it, you know, because it comforted her”. Yet there was nobody telling Sam that she had to behave in this way, she went beyond her occupational duties to ensure she was as “compassionate and helpful” as she could be. She goes on to explain how

the experience left its mark on her. She felt sad for the patient's suffering, thus although we can describe the suppression of emotion as emotional labour, and even surface acting as Sam was completely aware of how she really felt, it can not be described as 'phoney' or 'fake'. Whether this can be labelled emotional labour or emotion work is difficult, for these definitions are based on an economic distinction, namely profit motivation. However, as discussed in the previous chapter, this distinction is not always easily made. Did Sam spend the time with the patient because it was her job to do so, or was it more about her feeling genuine emotions of empathy. Would she have treated this lady any differently had she not been at work? It is the subtly and often ambiguous nature of emotion management performances that makes a clear distinction between emotional labour and emotion work, as defined by Hochschild (1983) problematic.

### **What do you feel it means to be a GP receptionist?**

I could give numerous examples of similar interactions in which patients were treated with warmth and kindness. However, I feel that the projective drawings generated by the focus group give an overview of how the GP receptionists at *SharedCare* feel about their role. They were asked to work in pairs. This was done for two reasons, firstly I was keen to encourage cross-practice working and hoped the collaboration on a group project with someone they had not worked with before would improve these working relationships. Secondly, by working in pairs they had to engage in discussion from the outset, which is the objective of the method. The pictures in Illustration 7 were generated in response to the question "What do you feel it means to be a GP receptionist?"

I then asked them to present their drawings to the rest of the group. The purpose of this exercise was to generate discussion within the group and encourage them to ask questions and think about certain aspects of their role that they may not usually feel comfortable talking about. The concept of the method is to make the intangible, tangible. By visualising the various aspects and demands of the job it makes it easier for others to ask questions, share experiences and engage with the illustrator. These qualities are thought to make the method suited to the study of emotion and other less tangible and 'rational' facets of organisational life (Vince & Broussine, 1996). I was also cautious not to go beyond my capabilities as a researcher. Researching emotion can be problematic and one can easily become involved in very sensitive and raw emotions and experiences that one is not qualified to deal with. In an attempt to prevent such an

incident I allowed the women to work in pairs to create a joint illustration, which prevented the drawings or the experiences becoming overly personal.

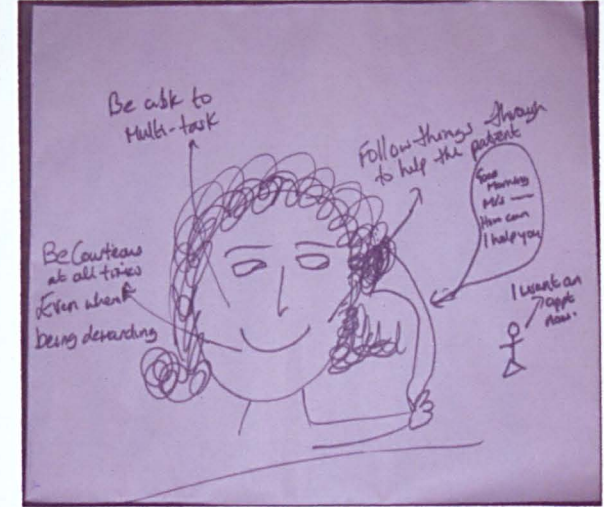
Plate 1



Plate 2



Plate 3



ate 4



Plate 5

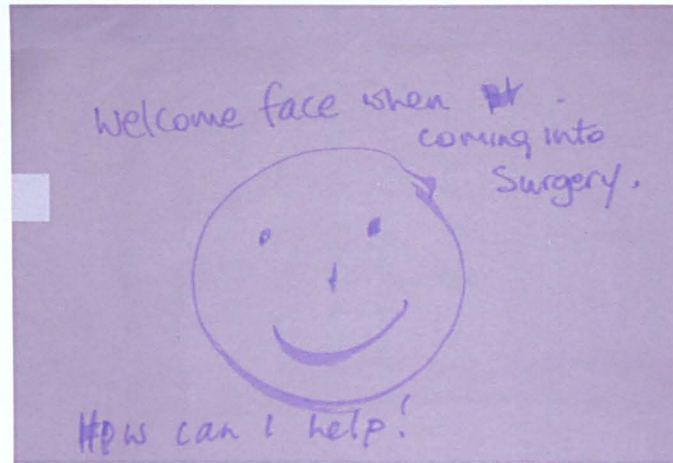


Plate 6



It can be seen in Illustration 7 that each of the drawings, generated in response to the question “What do you feel it means to be a GP receptionist?” contains a smiling face. This could be interpreted as them being happy in their work or it could point toward a more complex relationship with ‘smiling’ as an act of emotion management.

Sam and Caroline illustrated Plate 2. They had creatively divided the page into two and drawn two pictures of how they felt at two different times of the day. Caroline stood up to present their picture. Her narrative is telling of the job demands and the role of emotion management.

“This is the receptionist in the morning with hair like Sam’s (loud laughter) lovely long hair. She’s got lots and lots of arms because she’s got lots of things to do. You can see phones there and there (pointing), you’ve got somebody at the desk; *you’re trying to smile at all times*....And this is the receptionist at the end of the day (reveals other half of picture to laughter) Sam has lost her lovely head of hair. Lots of think bubbles, yeah, and no heels left either because she’s worn them down, and a cold cup of coffee as well. That is something I have never had yet is a warm cup of coffee (laughter) but other than that I love it!”

Caroline (*emphasis added*)

Caroline and Sam’s illustration, then, is one that tells of the frenetic activity of GP reception work. They are continually bombarded by multiple demands and tasks from patients, clinicians and other outside organisations such as the pharmacy, local hospitals and the PCT. Whilst they try to complete all of these tasks to schedule they are continually interacting with patients. The way in which Caroline describes the need to smile, almost as an after-thought, could be presented in support of Hewitt’s (2006) findings that GP reception work is task-orientated at the cost of relational-orientations to patients. However, from Sam’s previous narrative she explained how both aspects of the job inform one another, allowing receptionists to provide high levels of patient care.

The comparison between morning and afternoon is also interesting. The morning picture shows someone who is in control of the multiple and competing tasks and who is remembering to smile. Yet the afternoon picture depicts a much less glamorous version of self. As Caroline described we see someone with no hair, no shoes, cold coffee but they still have a smile on their face. Caroline fails to mention this smile in her description of the afternoon receptionist but the carefully illustrated image is still smiling. Can we assume that the smiling element of the job has become almost implicit and subconscious; do they smile all of the time despite how tired and



overloaded they may be? If so, it may be that deep acting is part of GP receptionist emotional labour.

Plate 3, by Alice and Gabby again shows a receptionist with a beaming smile. However, Gabby's presentation of their illustration alludes to the centrality of emotion management in GP reception work.

*"You've got to try and be courteous at all times even though we've got demanding patients saying what they want now (laughter); got to multi-task because sometimes we've got the phone going ...and patients at the desk. You've got to try and do it all...[...] always got to make sure you follow things through because it always comes back later on and answer the phone and appreciate there's a lot of demanding patients and it's hard to be courteous when they are not being courteous with you... that's it."*

Gabby (*emphasis added*)

What Gabby describes is the demanding nature of the role. GP reception work is all about multi-tasking and having the ability to handle multiple and often competing tasks at the same time. However, Gabby's opening and closing remarks gives us an insight into the smile her and Alice have drawn on their receptionist. Gabby states "you've got to try and be courteous at all times". The use of the verb 'to try' is interesting as it implies that effort is involved in being in a courteous manner and also that this may not always be achieved. The implication of effort means that emotion management is being performed, often at a surface level. She finishes her narrative by reiterating that to be a GP receptionist you must "appreciate there's a lot of demanding patients and it's hard to be courteous when they are not being courteous to you". In other words, she is pointing out that in order to be a GP receptionist you must have the ability to mask and manage your emotions in the face of demanding publics.

Elizabeth and Rose's drawing, plate five, provides a simple and powerful insight into what it feels to be a GP receptionist. Elizabeth stood up to present their drawing.

*"All I've got is a nice smiley face, welcoming patients when they come into surgery, and how can we help, and we go from there really."*

Elizabeth

For Elizabeth, her key role as a GP receptionist was to provide patients with a warm and friendly welcome when they entered the surgery. She does not describe whether this is always a genuine welcome or whether sometimes she needs to manage her emotions but she is centralising the need for empathy and kindness in her role. She presents the welcoming smile as the heart of her service offering, "we go from there

really” alludes to her feeling that so long as she is kind and attentive to patients her other skills will take care of the rest.

Each of the illustrations details the centrality of warm, friendly smiles, be they genuine or orchestrated. Yet none of them depict the role of GP receptionist as the stereotypical dragon or ogre, despite the role continuing to be associated with such images in the media. How are these competing images and expectations assimilated and made sense of by those who are GP receptionists?

Caroline, who had not long joined *SharedCare* told me how she found working as one of the ‘dragons’.

“Before I started working, I always found the girls who worked here...really nice but then you get “*Oh they’re a bit snotty aren’t they, the receptionists!*” You know that is the way they came across but when you actually come to work in a place like this you find out why they have to act like that.”

Caroline, *emphasis in original*

I went on to prompt her why she thought you had to act ‘snotty’. She replied:

“Um... basically because of all of the red tape, you have to be very careful what you say to people...um...you can’t let too much out.”

Caroline

Here she is referring to patient confidentiality that must be maintained by GP receptionists. As Sam explained earlier, although they may be aware of patient’s medical history or current condition they are not permitted to acknowledge this to the patients themselves. Caroline sees the rules and regulations surrounding the role as inhibiting her ability to be more open and empathetic to patients as she fears she may breach the Data Protection Act. The handling of confidential and sensitive information is always a concern for the receptionists, and restricts their emotional performances. So instead of the organisation encouraging their staff to increase the intensity and personability of their emotional labour performances, GP receptionists are constrained by the type of information they are dealing with. As Caroline explained, she often knows a lot more than she is allowed to let on, either implicitly or explicitly.

Sam discusses how she believes *SharedCare* wants its receptionists to be perceived as “*personable*” and “*approachable*”.

“...Some of the old fashioned ways, was [sic] a little bit ...*starchy*! You know, it’s got the old adage of the *dragon*, oh receptionists! So you know we don’t want that, we want to be approachable and pleasant with people. Yet, give that air of confidence and...I’m going to try and help them and take seriously what they are coming in for and try your best to meet those standards.”

Sam, *emphasis added*

Sam feels that the Draconian perception is now unrepresentative of the GP receptionist’s role. I asked her what she thought was wrong with such ‘dragon-like’ behaviour and why this has become so readily associated with the role of GP receptionist?

“Well it’s unhelpful to patients when they are clearly coming in because they are primarily feeling unwell Um...Also they [referring to doctors] advocate themselves in a different way...they’re the doctor and we’re the receptionists and um...”at all costs you keep the patients away from me [the doctor] unless they are booked-in”...regardless of any information given. It used to be quite daunting going to ask a GP is they would see an extra patient or explain a problem. You know, it’s not like that now. They are very approachable...they will listen to you as the receptionist, what you’ve got to say and value it! I have seen that changeover from the old style to the new style and the new style is very much better all round because you feel valued and the patient also gets better care.”

Sam

So Sam feels that because GPs are now more relaxed and approachable the receptionists feel they can pass on this culture to the patients. The system she is describing is now more open and flexible, thus allowing GP receptionists to become active members of the community of care. However, the countervailing need to control access to GPs remains. She goes on to explain how she feels the changes in doctor’s attitudes have affected the way GP receptionists treat patients and how this has altered the perception of the receptionist.

“We wouldn’t make clinical decisions without consulting a clinician. But we would have done before ...because of the fear of what the GP would have said. Because they would invariably, you know, take their frustration out on you, which wasn’t helpful because in the end you knew you were going to get it again from patients (**here she breaks to put on a false smile**)...They are a lot more relaxed than they used to be...whereas, with the days at the beginning, even though the doctor came in the room he was *God!* So, *I’ve got to get past this dragon before I can get to God!* So there was still that, we’ve got to get past Her!”

Sam, *emphasis added*

Sam likens doctors to Gods, in that they held the power and ultimate authority on patient care. The God metaphor is used to convey the omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent nature of doctor's perceptions of themselves and patients perceptions of the doctors. However, their attitudes actually forced control over access to medical care onto the receptionists, as they were too afraid to seek advice from doctors and therefore took matters into their own hands. Heather reiterates this:

“Twenty or thirty years ago doctor's were like God, but I think things are changing now.”

Heather

Heather and Sam are describing the receptionist as gatekeeper (Arber & Sawyer, 1985; Hallam, 1993 & Offredy, 2002), and therefore as 'dragon', but Sam does it in such a way that reveals a potentially more complex conceptualisation than has previously been presented. Sam tells of a time when she, as a GP receptionist, felt caught between the patient and the doctor. Despite trying to prioritise patient care and customer service, the doctor's attitude and the surgeries' culture made the situation very difficult. The clinician's obstructive attitude, and God-like persona, led her to make clinical decisions alone, which was potentially dangerous. She feels that by protecting the doctor/ God from patients, and as a result herself from the doctor, the role of GP receptionist became associated with negative perceptions. Sam is describing a role that was primarily toxic, for she had to deal with emotional toxicity from the clinicians and from disgruntled patients. Frost (2003) describes how occupational roles can become toxic.

...Toxicity is produced when an individual's attitude or an organization's policies, or both, fail to take into account the emotional attachment people have to their contributions to work. They discount the human qualities of people at the receiving end of this initiative, intervention, or retort. Unfortunately, this lack of sensitivity to others (consciously or otherwise) is an all-too-common trait among people who hold high levels of power and influence, where the name of the game is surviving, prospering, and acquiring control.

(Frost, 2003:56-57)

Sam feels that changes in clinician's attitudes towards patients, themselves and GP receptionists have allowed receptionists to improve patient care and provide a better service. In turn, she feels that this has helped to counter some of the negative perceptions and stereotypes associated with the role of GP receptionist.

Much of what I observed at the three surgeries corroborated Sam and the other receptionist's narratives of how they were personable and approachable, caring and

warm to patients, through performances of empathetic emotional labour. However, this was not the only kind of emotional presentation I observed. The final section of this chapter focuses on the emotional labour process and the role of emotive dissonance. I consider this by looking at two incidents, one that I observed first hand, and the other I was told about during an interview. Both of these incidents however, are characterised neither by empathetic emotional labour performances nor by antipathetic emotional labour, but by a performed suppression.

### **Emotional Neutrality**

As previously concluded in Chapter 6, the empirical material from the cabin crew supported the theoretical possibility that emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, can be conceptualised as a dissonance reducing behaviour. I will continue to explore this possibility throughout the remainder of this chapter but will also focus on the forms of emotional labour performed to reduce dissonance.

The first ‘incident’ I present is relatively short in comparison to the second and lacks the same kind of reflexive interpretation. This is because it was an interaction between Hannah (GP receptionist) and Dr Agra that I observed during my observation period at one of the surgeries. I have chosen this interaction because I feel it illustrates the role of emotive dissonance within the emotional labour process and demonstrates a different form of emotional labour performance.

### ***Dr Singh***

One hot Thursday afternoon, Dr Agra & Hannah were sat chatting in reception at Site 1 when a tall, smartly dressed gentleman approached the front desk. Hannah stood up to greet him.

“Hello, I’m Dr Singh. Dr Robert Sanderson, one of the *SharedCare* partners has sent me over to have a look around” he stated.

Hannah looked at him suspiciously.

“I have spoken to Robert this morning and he didn’t mention your visit?” she questioned rather coldly.

Dr Singh looked embarrassed. Clearly not knowing what to do in this situation he did not say anything more. He glanced around the waiting area and quickly left.

“Well that was the proverbial ‘quick look’!” Hannah laughed to Dr Agra.

A little later on that day, when there was no one else in the office, Hannah turned to me and said,

“Did you think I was standoffish with Dr Singh earlier? ...I mean, he looked a bit taken aback by my saying that I knew nothing about it...but you can't just let people in...you don't know what they could do!” she tried to justify.

I try not to pass judgement, saying that it was an awkward situation, and it is never pleasant going into a place you do not know.

“Yeah...but I feel really bad because if he does come to work here I don't want him to get the wrong impression because it's bad enough coming to work somewhere where you don't know anyone – let alone when you think they're all ...you know!”

Hannah's brief interaction with Dr Singh is one that helps to further explore yet another facet of the emotional labour process. In this situation, Hannah made the decision not to let an unexpected visitor into the surgery. She had every right to do this, as he did not present identification, nor did he ask her to corroborate his story with Dr Sanderson. In preventing his access she enacted the role of gatekeeper, and the emotional labour performance that accompanied it.

Arber & Sawyer (1985) attributed the negative perception of GP receptionists to their responsibility as gatekeeper. In other words, because the GP receptionist has control over patient access to primary care services they are often demonised when patients do not get their own way. Following this line of reasoning, GP receptionists have been unfairly labelled as 'dragons' or 'ogres' who lie in wait for the unsuspecting patient who is just trying to cross the bridge to see his or her GP. For Arber & Sawyer (1985) patients are disillusioned by the system, and unfortunately GP receptionists are the face of the system. Hence, the enduring stereotypes.

However, Hannah's gatekeeper behaviour with Dr Singh offers an insight into how such perceptions are experienced and dealt with by GP receptionists. On reflection, Hannah declared that she felt “*really bad*”, at having denied Dr Singh access to the surgery, despite earlier believing she had acted in the correct manner. When she asked me later in the day whether I thought she had been 'standoffish' she was really looking for validation of her behaviour. Dr Singh's clear embarrassment and sudden departure had been playing on Hannah's mind and she wanted to hear how someone else had perceived the incident.

As we have heard in Claire's narratives, at first Hannah attempts to rationalise and justify her behaviour to reassure herself she had acted in an appropriate manner. Here she says “You can't just let people in...you don't know what they could do!”

However, given time to reflect on the incident she seems to feel uncomfortable with her behaviour. “But I feel really bad because if he does come to work here I don’t want him to get the wrong impression!”

This “really bad” feeling can possibly be described as emotive dissonance. Just as we heard in Claire’s narrative in the previous chapter, Hannah’s behaviour was incongruent with the way in which she wants others to see her. Thus, she experienced discomfort on reflection that can be termed emotive dissonance. Applying what we learnt from the previous chapter’s critical incident, it would appear that Hannah did not experience this dissonance during the interaction and now that the situation has passed she can not reduce it through performances of emotional labour. Instead she must try to justify her behaviour through her interpretation and/or perspective on the incident in order to make it congruent with her continuous narrative of self.

Not only does this incident illustrate the emotional labour process, and offer support for the previous chapter’s conclusions it also demonstrates another form of emotion management. In order to enact a believable performance of gatekeeping Hannah performed a form of emotional labour known as ‘emotional neutrality’ (as previously referred to in Chapter 6). Existing forms of emotional labour tend to classify performances in terms of the emotions performed, for example empathetic emotional labour is the performance of empathetic emotions that induce positive emotions in others; whilst antipathetic emotional labour is a performance of negative emotions that usually create fear or sadness in others. Continuing the theme of classification, the emotional labour performance Hannah gave in her interaction with Dr Singh can be presented as an example of emotional neutrality.

Smith & Kleinman’s (1989) paper on medical student’s emotion management processes presents the idea of ‘affective neutrality’. Although they do not give a specific definition of the concept, the idea is that emotional neutrality is an emotion management technique used to display unemotional behaviour, required by the medical profession. Smith & Kleinman (1985) see the concept of ‘affective neutrality’ as a strategy used by medical students for dealing with the human body, both dead and alive. The students have to detach themselves from the emotional in order to carry out medical procedures on the corporeal without becoming overloaded by sensory and emotional images. Despite this being far from my theoretical concern, this paper goes some way in helping us understand the kind of emotional labour performances that are undertaken by GP receptionists in certain situations.

Shuler and Sypher (2000) and Tracey and Tracey (1998a,b) also use the term 'emotional neutrality' to describe the way in which 911 call centre operators have to manage their emotions. They are said to enact this neutrality in order to "perpetuate the myth of rationality" (Shuler & Sypher, 2000:81). Emotional neutrality however, has received very little attention in emotional labour research, partly because it is difficult to detect through observation and traditional interview techniques as performances of emotional neutrality requires the display of "dispassionate authority" (Morris & Feldman, 1996:991). Thus, when emotional neutrality is performed successfully it would appear that there are no emotions involved within the interaction. In a sense, the performance of emotional neutrality is the epitome of bureaucratic control over the emotions (Weber, 1946).

What I observed, during the interaction, between Hannah and Dr Singh was Hannah's emotional labour performance being neither empathetic nor antipathetic. Instead her performance was neutral. I define emotional neutrality as an emotion management technique used to suppress emotions felt and display unemotional behaviour. In this case, emotional neutrality was performed to portray power and an unemotional persona of authority. Hannah, as GP receptionist, had a responsibility to protect the surgery. She felt she could not let a man she had not been informed about enter the practice. Thus, she denied him access, which caused Dr Singh great embarrassment. In order to make her performance of gatekeeper believable she performed emotional neutrality, which gave the impression that she held "dispassionate authority" (Morris & Feldman, 1996:991) over the situation.

However, this performance of emotional neutrality led Hannah to experience emotive dissonance, but only after the incident.

*"Did you think I was standoffish with Dr Singh earlier? ... I mean, he looked a bit taken aback by my saying that I knew nothing about it... but you can't just let people in... you don't know what they could do!"*

Such a comment reflects Hannah's ability to be reflexively conscious of her own emotion management performance, however, this could have been more acute at this particular point due to my presence. Having someone sat observing and continually writing notes would, no doubt, heighten reflexivity. However, the point is still justified, she was reflexively conscious of her own emotional labour performance and on reflection this caused her to experience emotive dissonance.



Emotive dissonance could have been experienced due to the performance of emotional neutrality. As we have previously considered, *SharedCare*'s culture and ethos is based around creating and enhancing a 'community of care', thus, perceptions and expectations of GP receptionists as dragons is one that does not necessarily fit. However, Hannah's emotionally neutral performance as gatekeeper could have been perceived as potentially Draconian. In a sense, Hannah experienced dissonance because her emotional labour performance was incongruent with how she sees herself as an individual, and how she perceives her role within *SharedCare*.

Therefore, this incident illustrates how performances of emotional labour can also lead to experiences of emotive dissonance, as advocated by Ashforth & Humphrey (1993) among others. The emotional labour process, then, is one that is much more complex and nuanced than previously presented. In this situation, Hannah attempts to justify her performance of emotional neutrality, thereby reducing the dissonance felt, by returning to her original motive, gatekeeping. She stated, "*you can't just let people in...you don't know what they could do*". She is justifying her performance of emotional neutrality by referring to her duty to protect other members of staff and patients.

However, she still experienced dissonance because such a performance was not congruent with how she wants Dr Singh to think of her. She does not want him to be left with the impression that she is "*...you know!*" By this I feel she was alluding to the traditional or stereotypical role characterisation of GP receptionists, that she feels to be unfair or inappropriate. Hannah does not want Dr Singh to believe she is the dragon that works on the front desk. This is possibly even more important to Hannah when she learnt that Dr Singh was Dr Agra's new replacement.

In conclusion, the incident with Dr Singh, when compared and contrasted to the incidents presented in the previous chapter, illustrates the multi-dimensional complexity of the emotional labour process. In the previous chapter the critical incidents presented illustrated how emotional labour performances can be dissonance-reducing behaviours, whilst, this example offers support for the original conceptualisation of the emotional labour process i.e. emotional labour creates emotive dissonance. In addition, this incident also acts as another example of the way dissonance can be experienced at different points in the emotional labour process and the significant role reflexive self-consciousness plays in the maintenance of ontological security through emotional labour performances. It also demonstrates the

performance of an under appreciated aspect of the emotional labour process wherein the suppression of emotion, is the performance itself.

### **Demanding Publics: Racism**

This dramatic incident was recounted to me during an interview with Gabby, a twenty-year-old receptionist from Site 1. I asked her what she thought *SharedCare* expected of her, and she had replied with “*warm and friendly*”. I followed this up with, “Do you sometimes find that difficult with some patients that you deal with?” This was her response:

“Well ok, I’ll give you a situation, something that happened to me on Monday... Um... the doctor had requested an appointment with the patient, he had written this on the back of the prescription and said that the patient needed to come in... but ‘cause it wasn’t an urgent appointment or anything, this was on Friday, I made the patient an appointment for Monday.

The patient came in on Monday and she was talking to another receptionist and she was really annoyed with me because I’d made her the appointment on Monday and I didn’t give her the appointment straight away. I don’t think she understood the whole situation. So when I got to the front desk,... and this was the first time this has ever happened to me yeah?... when I got to the front desk the patient was shouting and swearing and she’d been racist to me... she told me she was going to hit me with her stick and... it was ridiculous... and it were awful. Jean, my manager, pulled her into her office and explained to her that she couldn’t talk to her staff that way... but even after Jean had spoken to her she was still saying things and ... she was in reception and she was talking to other patients and still saying racist things...

I asked her how this made her feel?

It annoyed me... it didn’t upset me much really... I didn’t know what type of person she was but from some of the things she was saying I knew that she was a bit ignorant... so I didn’t let it upset me but I was annoyed by the fact that she thought she could speak to me that way. Even though we told her many times to calm down she just carried on and she was pointing and reaching towards me.

I asked her if she felt like shouting back at her?

Yeah very much so... That’s why I was angry, because in normal situations like that I’d have a chance to shout back at that person. You know... outside work and so that anger would come out but...

So how did you handle the situation?

I said to her, I made you the next available appointment... it wasn’t an urgent appointment. After a while I just let her go on because she wouldn’t listen to me at all... you can’t be warm and friendly to a person like that at all!

Why didn’t you shout back at her?

Just because I know it's my job. I just know that I can't...It's funny because at home I would shout back straight away and then I'd think "Oh I've done the right thing, I've put them in their place!" but at work it made me see that when you shout like that it doesn't get you anywhere and *I'd just look as silly as she did*.... It probably is the receptionist role that makes you think...you're not going to get anywhere by shouting...and I mean, obviously, she was totally out of order...but on the other end of the stick they are obviously annoyed at some reason to do with their health...

Gabby's narrative tells of how she handled a very emotionally demanding situation, in which she was personally attacked by a patient. She describes how despite being racially assaulted in front of her fellow colleagues and other patients she was able to remain calm and attempt to reason with the irate patient.

She describes how she suppressed her anger and annoyance and performed a surface act of emotional neutrality. She goes on to explain how if this had happened outside of work she would have shouted back and have been proud of it. "*Oh I've done the right thing, I've put them in their place!*". However, because she was at work, and was therefore occupying the role of GP receptionist she suppressed her emotions. She describes being able to do this by labelling the patient as 'ignorant' due to the insults she was throwing. However, Gabby's reaction outside of her occupational role would have been very different, by her own admission.

Thus, occupying this identity enables her to reflect on herself and her own behaviour through a different lens. She was able to reflexively evaluate how shouting back would have been perceived by the other patients and her colleagues and decided that she would have looked "just as silly as she did" and, thus, modelled her behaviour around the emotional rules and social norms that govern the occupational role of GP receptionist.

What Gabby is describing is a situation in which it is inappropriate to perform positive or negative emotional labour, or let her genuine emotions show through. Instead, she performs emotional neutrality, as she suppressed her own emotions and displays unemotional behaviour. Such a performance prevents emotive dissonance from being experienced because if she had performed empathetic emotional labour in this situation, by being pleasant to the demanding public her behaviour would have been incongruent with what she believes in both inside and outside of work. She does not want to be racially attacked either at work or at home, and does not condone racist behaviour. Alternatively by performing antipathetic emotional labour she would, by

her own admission, have looked ‘just as silly as she did’. Thus, she adopted a strategy of unemotional behaviour that allowed her to maintain a continuous narrative of self, as both a GP receptionist and in her own private social role.

In conclusion, emotional neutrality can be seen as another form of emotional labour, wherein the suppression of emotion is the performance itself, as it provides an alternative to empathetic and antipathetic emotional labour performances. This particular incident shows how emotional neutrality was used as a dissonance preventing behaviour, when Gabby was able to imagine how she would have been perceived if she had let her genuine emotion show through, or performed different kinds of emotional labour. Thus, emotional neutrality can be thought of as a form of emotion management that is used to maintain ontological security through a continuous narrative of self.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, the strong culture of care at *SharedCare* has changed the way GP receptionists view their role and the way others view it too. Clinicians are no longer thought of as Gods who require their dragons to protect them, which leaves the ‘dragons’ free to participate in the provision of care. However, as I have demonstrated through two ‘critical incidents’ despite trying to loose the association with such negative stereotypes there are times when GP receptionists are still required to deal with toxic emotions, complete gatekeeping duties, or simply bare the brunt of a patient’s discontent. In these, more complex and demanding situations, I observed that a different kind of emotional performance was enacted. A performance that, at first, was unnoticeable due to its nature. Emotional neutrality is the suppression of genuine emotions to display unemotional behaviour.

Gatekeeping duties, patient discontent and the ability to handle toxic emotions continue to play a large part in GP reception work. However, what I found interesting was how these were negotiated into the *SharedCare* narrative of care. What I observed, and heard through the focus groups and interviews was that instead of the receptionists seeing this as obstructive, dragon-like behaviour, they narrated it as ‘educating patients’. Without this narrative they would experience emotive dissonance, for their role would be incongruent with the *SharedCare* culture, so to reduce this dissonance and justify their actions they use the idea of education, as can be heard in Sally’s explanation,

“I am totally dedicated to the job. Sam and I have trained even some of the most difficult and drug dependent patients to behave. I could never understand why doctor’s receptionists were so rude but now I realise how much pressure they are under. Receptionists are the first point of contact and we can sometimes cure them before they have even seen a clinician just by listening to what they are saying. They just want someone to listen to them.”

Sally

On a methodological level, without being able to observe the GP receptionists at work, the performances of emotional neutrality would not have been interpreted as ‘performances’. A reflexive consideration of many cabin crew stories now reveal incidences of emotional neutrality performances, they too are gatekeepers (to air travel, first class, in-flight meals and entertainment) and work in an emotionally charged environment. Making a comparison between the two, relatively different occupational roles has proved to be fruitful in the development of understanding the complexity of the emotional labour process and the concept of emotional neutrality.

From empirical research, I conclude that the emotional labour process is one that is complex and multi-faceted and mutates with the changing nature of labour and through individual interactions. It can be argued that emotional labour can be conceptualised as a dissonance reducing behaviour that is enacted through an individual’s reflexive consciousness to ensure the maintenance of a continuous narrative of self and therefore, ontological security. As Caroline neatly explains,

“I think you do ask questions of yourself really, and especially when you are dealing with patients because you constantly, how can I put it, everybody’s different and you’ve got to make an impression...everybody sees a different impression of you, and it’s trying to fulfil everything. It’s very difficult but I think you do reflect, and especially at the end of the day, you’re sat there with a warm cup of coffee...and you sort of go back over your day and think if I’d done that this could have been better...”

## Chapter Eight: Contributions and Reflections

### Introduction

In an 'informatized' society (Hardt & Negri, 2001) organisations place an emphasis on affective labour. Emotions, aesthetics and affect are seen as the key to providing 'good customer service'. In an ailing economy, organisations seek to reduce costs but retain customers by focusing on their 'service' offering. In other words, employees are asked to give more of themselves when times are hard at no extra cost to the organisation. Emotional labour being conceptualised as an expansion of capitalist control views such a requirement for employees to go the 'extra mile' as an intensification of the exploitation of workers. Thus, it is timely for academic research to move beyond identifying occupational roles that require the performance of emotional labour (Smith-Lovin, 1998; Erickson & Ritter, 2001) and instead look to understanding more about the emotional labour process and its relationship with the self.

It is particularly important for researchers to centralise the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process as the immaterial labour debate accelerates. Discussions over the potential consequences of performing immaterial forms of labour have been growing since 2000, yet the emotional labour literature, particularly in sociology, continues to marginalize the concept of dissonance, which has long been seen, in psychology as the mediator between performances of emotional labour, negative effects on well-being and experiences of work. Therefore, as research into affective forms of labour, which has included emotional labour, becomes more popular it becomes more important to re-visit and review some of its conceptual foundations.

This final chapter sets out to remind the reader of the research journey they have been guided through. The aim is to re-orientate the nuanced and complex discussion emanating from the empirical analysis into a broader theoretical and practical context. I do this by first providing a brief summary of where the research journey began, how the initial research questions were formulated and the strategy deployed to explore those questions. I then go on to discuss the three main theoretical contributions of my research, and how my findings will influence future research on emotional labour and the emotional labour process. I then move on to address a number of audiences of my research, namely the airline industry, the NHS, PCT's and practice managers, emotional labour researchers and finally Claire and Sam. In an attempt to be

consistent in my reflexive approach to research I wanted to conduct reflexive feedback interviews with Claire and Sam. These were dedicated to hearing their reactions to my presentation and analysis of their narratives. These reflexive interviews were conducted as feedback sessions, in order to complete the co-construction of the research process. Unfortunately, however, Claire was unable to partake in the final part of the research process for personal reasons. However, Sam's thoughts and comments are included throughout. The final part of this chapter is dedicated to my own reflexive evaluation of the research process. Here I discuss my own personal journey, the limitations of the study, my regrets and reconciliation.

### **Reminder**

Since the publication of *The Managed Heart* (Hochschild, 1983) in 1983, emotional labour research has been conducted in a number of academic disciplines, including psychology, sociology, organisational behaviour, and human resource management. Hochschild (1983) originally presented the concept of emotional labour as an expansion of capitalist control over parts of the self that were once seen as 'private', that is emotions. Since then, Hochschild's work has been criticised as pessimistic and negative (Wouters, 1989) as the Marxist origins of the concept led sociological and functionalist psychological researchers to pursue research that attempted to identify the consequences of performing emotional labour (including Grandey et al, 2005; Gosserand & Dieffendorff, 2005; Abraham 1998, 1999, 2000). However, despite the powerful impact emotional labour's Marxist origins have had on the direction of emotional labour research there has been little discussion of how labour process theory can inform and further our understanding of the concept or the process.

In a previous research project (Ward, 2005) on the emotional labour performed by cabin crew of budget airlines, I found that despite there being no formal requirement to perform emotional labour, cabin crew engaged in performances anyway. Emotional labour performances had migrated into the implicit duties of the job role, meaning those working as cabin crew had internalised the requirement to perform emotional labour as part of their definition of the job role. Thus, I concluded that the relationship between emotional labour and subjectivity was more complex than previously thought, and therefore required further investigation.

I wanted to pursue these issues further and understand why this migration had occurred and how it impacted on the way in which emotional labour had been conceptualised as an extension to labour process theory. I was also concerned with

emotive dissonance's role in the emotional labour process, for as a concept emotive dissonance had tended to be marginalized in sociology yet identified as a key element in determining the way emotional labour is experienced in psychology.

The project began with three main research questions:

**How is emotional labour, as a form of emotion management, experienced and performed? What is the role of emotive dissonance in emotional labour processes? What are some of the salient characteristics of the relationship between emotion, affect and subjectivity?**

These questions are particularly pertinent for contemporary management and organising as affective elements of work are becoming increasingly important. Both emotions and aesthetics, and affective labour in general make up a growing proportion of work within our economy. A critical consideration of these research questions can inform the way in which emotion is considered in relation to the labour process, subjectivity and wider discourses of self. As layers of middle management are stripped away in streamlining measures front-line staff are supervised less whilst being expected to do more. By further understanding emotional labour performances managers have the opportunity to manage the service interactions in alternative ways. Understanding the consequences and causal relationships of emotional labour will also inform the way in which emotional labour performances are experienced by the service recipient, thereby having the potential to improve customer satisfaction.

Following Hochschild's (1983) comparative approach to researching emotional labour, I considered the work of cabin crew and GP receptionists. I chose these two occupational roles on the basis of their antithetical stereotypes, based on their historical legacies, academic literatures and previous research, other media and my own perceptions of the stereotypes associated with the roles. This exploration into the enactment of the emotional labour process in two roles characterised by oppositional perceptions and expectations was undertaken to further understand how emotional labour performances are negotiated by the self. Taking a multi-method strategy I gathered a range of qualitative empirical material, including projective drawings, biographical narratives, participant observation notes and interview material.

### **Emotions and Dissonance: bridging literatures**

The first contribution of the thesis was to draw together various literatures on emotion management from across sociology, psychology and social psychology. To this point,



much of the work had been developed in disciplinary silos, with differences in ontological and epistemological positions discouraging integration. Nonetheless integration and comparison was made possible by tracing the theoretical origins of the concept of emotional labour to understand how the concept had been developed by different disciplines. A key element of this cross-disciplinary approach was the 'analogous' relationship between the concepts of cognitive and emotive dissonance, as pointed to by Hochschild (1983). From this it quickly became clear that a number of key issues had been neglected, specifically the role of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process and the relationship between emotion management and subjectivity. We return to consider these issues in more depth at the end of the chapter; for the moment it is sufficient to note that the analysis of these literatures allowed for the formulation of new questions: are there times and places in which emotional labour is a form of dissonance reducing behaviour? If so, what effect does this have on the presentation of emotional labour as an expansion of capitalist control over private areas of the self?

### *Discussion*

Through an analysis of cabin crew and GP receptionists, based on the antithetical nature of the associated stereotypes, I focused on how the historical legacy of the occupational stereotypes influences emotion management performances, and how these stereotypical images are negotiated in individual narratives of self. This approach centred on further understanding the relationship between emotion management performances and subjectivity, and the role of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process.

A biographical-narrative interview method, which consisted of ten hours of interview time with Claire, forms the basis of the discussion for this part. This particular research method was adopted due to Claire's willingness and ability to dedicate a considerable amount of time to the project, but also because it allowed me to penetrate the impression management and guiding norms that govern the interview method. Repeat visits and longer interviews meant Claire and I had the time and space to get to know one another and to spend time thinking and discussing in a more reflexive manner. Such a process enabled me to paint a picture of how Claire sees herself, and how she wants others to view her, not only as a member of cabin crew, but also as a person in a wider sense. This method proved fruitful in interpreting her narratives on particular incidents in a way that led me to conclude that emotional labour can, in some circumstances, be a dissonance reducing behaviour.

The three 'critical incidents' each describe situations in which Claire experienced feelings of emotive dissonance, or psychological discomfort. I have chosen these three particular incidents as they not only describe *why* emotional labour performances can be interpreted as dissonance reducing behaviours, but also because they demonstrate changes in *when* emotive dissonance was experienced and *how* this impacts on the type of emotional labour performances used to reduce the dissonance.

In 'The Big Bang', then, Claire experiences feelings of dissonance when she reveals her fear to passengers and fellow colleagues during an emergency situation. Experiencing feelings of discomfort at the point at which she 'corpse'd' (Hopfl & Linstead, 1993) meant she was immediately able to engage in a performance of emotional labour to reduce those feelings. This can be seen as similar to Grandey's (2000) response-focused emotion management, as it was performed in response to these feelings of discomfort.

However, in the second incident, '*Constipated Old Man*' Claire experienced emotive dissonance post-interaction. So, she was unable to reduce the feelings of discomfort with response-focused emotion management (Grandey, 2000). According to Beauvois & Joules (1996), however, dissonance reduction is not all about achieving consonance; rather, it is an exercise of 'rationalisation'. In other words, even though the dissonance cannot be reduced to consonance because the situation is no longer active, dissonance can be reduced through 'rationalisation'. Claire tried to 'rationalise' or justify her treatment of the gentleman by claiming that she was tired and 'not her usual self'. Such a strategy is similar to Grandey's (2000) antecedent-focused emotion regulation, as Claire attempted to alter her perception of the situation in order to reduce the dissonance.

Finally, 'Surf or Turf?' offers yet another alternative conceptualisation of the role of dissonance in the emotional labour process. In this incident Claire was faced with an aggressive passenger. She describes how she imagined what would have happened if she had let her true emotions be revealed, saying that she would have looked pathetic to other passengers and colleagues. Thus, Claire is describing how her reflexive-consciousness (Sartre, 1957) has an ability to project how her behaviour would most likely be perceived by others and herself through her embedded knowledge of social rules (Mead, 1934). Her ability to imagine the self in that situation prevents emotive dissonance being experienced through a performance of emotional labour.

In summary, Claire's narratives illustrated various forms of emotional labour being utilised as dissonance reducing behaviours. In addition, dissonance was experienced at different stages of the emotional labour process including during the interaction, post-interaction and even before the interaction, in a projected imagining of the situation. Such a temporal nature of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process has a significant impact on the way in which future research into emotional labour is approached, but it also offers a more nuanced and subtle approach to managing roles that require the performance of emotional labour.

But why was emotional labour being used to reduce dissonance?

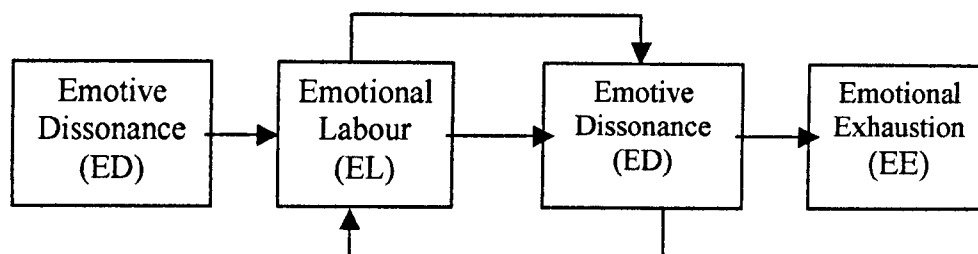
Taking Hochschild's (1983) lead in my attempt to further understand the role of emotive dissonance in the emotional labour process I reviewed the psychological literature on cognitive dissonance. Aronson et al (1974) posed that an individual would only experience cognitive dissonance when what they had said, done or believed was incongruent with how they viewed themselves. In other words, cognitive dissonance would not occur between two random cognitions, one of those cognitions had to be the self. Applying such a condition to emotive dissonance meant that where an emotion, feeling or behaviour was incongruent with the affective dimension of an individual, dissonance would be experienced. Now, cognitive and affective domains are thought to function in relative isolation, however, in order for a continuous and stable narrative construction of self to remain legitimate then cognition and affect must interpenetrate, working together to maintain congruence and continuity. This can be seen from the empirical analysis, as Claire describes how she is on what can be best described as a continual quest for congruence, despite only being able to imagine what passengers are thinking of her.

Claire wants to be thought of as kind and helpful both in her role as cabin crew and beyond, therefore, when something threatens that narrative, she described feelings of discomfort or emotive dissonance, in order to re-affirm her narrative of self, she performed emotional labour, where possible. Thus, my first contribution is that emotional labour can be performed as a dissonance reducing behaviour in order to maintain ontological security via a continuous narrative of self. The emotional labour process, as originally conceptualised by Hartel et al (2002) might be better represented as a continuous and iterative process of dissonance reduction. Only in

extreme cases do we hear of those engaged in performances of emotional labour actually suffering from emotional exhaustion (see Figure 12).

Thus, the relationship between affect, emotion and subjectivity can be characterised as complex, dynamic and interwoven. As previously discussed (Chapter Three), if affect is defined as 'narrative continuity' (Massumi, 2002) and emotions are the conscious breaks from that pre-conscious narrative through which we are able to reflexively evaluate and orientate our 'selves', then, conceptualising performances of emotion management, be that emotional labour or emotion work, as behaviours that reduce dissonance, is to imply that performances of emotion management are part of a larger iterative process of ontological maintenance. That is to say, emotion management is not just about the management of emotions to adhere to feeling and display rules, but is part of a bigger project on self. Emotions are managed in order maintain 'narrative continuity', or affect. Emotional labour can, therefore, be conceptualised as being a form of affective labour, though not synonymous to it.

By implication this conceptualisation of the role emotional labour performances have in a larger emotional, or affective, labour process draws us back to Hardt's (1999) original definition of affective labour; "affective labour is itself and directly the constitution of communities and collective subjectivities" (1999:89). If emotional labour performances are ways in which individuals monitor their affective self, then, it is congruent with Hardt's definition of affective labour. For the emotional labour performance ensures that the individual remains a legitimate member of society, in a Durkheimian sense, and therefore, helps constitute a community and collective subjectivity.

**Figure 12: The Emotional Labour Process**

(adapted from Hartel et al 2002:261)

### **Emotional Neutrality**

The second contribution of the thesis was to focus on the nature of the emotional labour performed by GP receptionists. The paucity of the literature on GP receptionists made clear that the occupational role had, in general, failed to attract the attention of emotion management scholars. Nonetheless, reviewing the existing literature gave an insight into some of the explanations offered for the negative stereotypes associated with GP reception work including their structural position as gatekeepers (Arber and Sawyer, 1985) and the duality of the role (Hewitt, 2006). Despite the few studies conducted a number of key issues remain neglected, specifically emotion management performances within the role, and the way the stereotypes are negotiated and understood by GP receptionists. This was then the starting point for the empirical research conducted at the *SharedCare* practices.

### **Discussion**

Before I began the non-participant observations at the *SharedCare* practices, I had expected to find GP receptionists performing combinations of empathetic and antipathetic emotional labour (Korczynski, 2002). However, my observation notes did not describe GP reception work as characterised by performances of either of these forms of emotional labour. Instead, I was having difficulty describing any emotion at all. As the first week of observations ended, I began to reflect on what I had seen. If these were neither performances of positive or negative emotional labour, were they even performing emotional labour at all? GP receptionists are not 'customer' service representatives, they are 'patient' facing. Maybe the lack of a market, in the commercial sense, meant the receptionists did not feel a need to 'perform'. I began to

attribute the negative stereotypes associated with GP reception work as a consequence of a lack of emotion management.

However, as the weeks progressed, I began to conduct interviews with a number of the receptionists I had observed. Their narratives on what they felt it meant to be a GP receptionist described performances of emotion management. But these were not performances of empathetic or antipathetic emotional labour, instead they spoke of 'control' and 'calm'. My subsequent observations, then, focused on this kind of emotion management, I also spent time reviewing previous notes. The incidents I had interpreted as lacking emotional labour could be better understood as performances of what can be termed emotional neutrality.

Emotional neutrality is defined here as an emotion management technique used to suppress emotions felt and display unemotional behaviour, wherein the suppression of the emotion is the performances itself. As part of the 'feedback session' with Sam, I presented the concept of emotional neutrality in the way I have presented it here. She seemed excited by my interpretation of these performances, she said

“You can't loose your temper but equally you can't meet abuse with empathy. You must have a way of reconciling that...All be it we never ever shout, you can get assertive in a way that they know you are not going to take their behaviour lightly and that neutrality is a good description actually.”

Sam

From my observations and from my discussion with Sam, emotional neutrality can be performed to portray authority and power over a situation. Sam sees this as a strategy to prevent demanding patient situations from escalating. However, I also felt emotional neutrality may also be a way in which GP receptionists are protecting themselves from the inundation of toxic emotions.

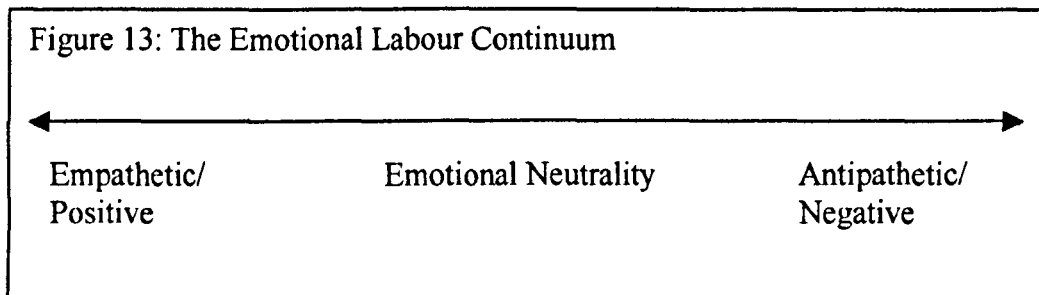
The processual nature of GP reception work stands in contrast to the work of cabin crew. GP receptionists are stable members of the local community. They see the same patients on a, relatively, regular basis and therefore their relationships with patients are an important part of their job, and patient perceptions of primary care. However, these characteristics mean that the role is emotionally demanding via the requirement to what I have called 'emotion switch'. Emotion switching represents the variety of emotions GP receptionists have to deal with on a daily basis, and the rapidity with which they are required to change their emotional performance. For example, the first patient at reception may be a new Mum who is beaming with pride and joy when she

shows off her newborn to the receptionists. The patient next in line, however, might be a newly bereaved pensioner informing the surgery of his wife's death. These antithetic emotional interactions may take place within minutes of one another, or sometimes even simultaneously if a receptionist answers the telephone whilst dealing with a patient at the window.

If GP receptionists allowed themselves to be taken on this roller coaster of emotions they would surely become 'toxic' (Frost, 2003). However, emotional neutrality performances may allow them to shield themselves from being bombarded by other people's emotions to some extent during times of emotion switching. Therefore, performances of emotional neutrality not only convey 'dispassionate authority' (Morris & Feldman 1996) but are also enacted in an attempt to prevent them from entering into each person's emotional experience. However, performances of emotional neutrality may also contribute to patient's negative perceptions of GP receptionists. This 'unemotional' behaviour, although used as a shield for the individual against emotional inundation, and as a method of maintaining control in emotional situations may be interpreted as 'heartless' or Draconian in nature. The performance of 'dispassionate authority', however, was just that, a performance, and can therefore be identified as a performance of emotional labour. Just as Weber describes the way bureaucratic rationality requires efficiency, predictability, control and calculability it felt as if the GP receptionists were attempting to protect themselves and the bureaucracy from being permeated by irrational emotions. In a sense, their emotional labour performances had become part of the bureaucratic regime as they proceeded to do what appeared to be eliminating "from official business love, hatred, and all purely personal, irrational and emotional elements which escape calculation" (Weber, 1946:215-216). As Hall (1974) pointed out, GP receptionists are the intermediaries who stand at the boundary where the private person becomes an institutional case. As part of this role they adopt the dispassionate authority of the bureaucrat. Thus, I suggest that performances of emotional neutrality are potentially contributory to the negative stereotypes associated with GP receptionists.

Emotional neutrality can be offered as an alternative to the dualistic representation of Korczynski's empathetic and antipathetic emotional labour performances. I see this kind of performance as sitting somewhere between the two concepts. In addition, a new form of emotional labour problematises the dualistic nature of previous conceptualisations. As an alternative I present emotional neutrality as being central in

what is, for now, a dichotomous continua of emotional labour performances. A continuum is most representative in that performances of emotional neutrality may have more of an antipathetic tone or an empathetic tone depending upon the situation. These would be represented along the continua instead of being restricted to one of the 'pure' forms of emotion management at either end. The continuum also offers flexibility so is capable of representing the complexity and nuanced nature of emotion management performances (See Figure 13). This is not to say that this conceptualisation of emotional labour forms is neither definitive nor static, it simply elucidates the present situation within the emotional labour literatures. I hope that future research into emotion management techniques will colour this picture with other alternative forms.



Since the empirical work on GP receptionists came after that of cabin crew, I was able to reflect the concept of emotional neutrality back onto my discussions with Claire. This process offered a secondary interpretation of Claire's narratives. In some of our conversations I could now hear her talking about performances of emotional neutrality particularly when she described dealing with demanding and difficult passengers. Therefore, emotional neutrality performances go beyond the role of GP receptionists and have been shown to be prevalent in the emotion management techniques of cabin crew. Future research will benefit from [re]interpreting narratives and material from other occupational roles in terms of emotional neutrality performances in an attempt to learn more about this concept, the circumstances in which it is used and the way these performances are experienced by patients, customers and passengers.

### **Emotion Management: labour or work?**

The third contribution of the thesis draws back on emotional labour's theoretical origins in labour process theory. To this point, much of the work across the disciplines had depoliticised the Marxist origins of the concept and had therefore failed to integrate current debates in labour process theory into a discussion of emotion



management. Thus, a number of key issues had been neglected; the relationship between subjectivity and the emotional labour process and the economic definition of value and labour. We return to consider these issues later in the chapter, but for the moment it is sufficient to note that the analysis of the literatures allowed for the formulation of new questions: what are some of the salient characteristics of the relationship between emotion, affect and subjectivity? Can emotion management performances always be defined in economic terms?

### *Discussion*

Based on the initial contribution made by my thesis, that emotional labour has been shown as a dissonance reducing behaviour in order to maintain ontological security via narrative continuity has significant implications for Hochschild's (1983) economic definition of emotional labour and her distinction between emotion work and emotional labour, as forms of emotion management. Emotional labour was originally presented as capitalism's expansion of control into private areas of the self. Thus, emotional labour was portrayed as alienating, disruptive and as having negative effects on well-being. However, I have presented evidence in support of emotional labour being performed as a project on self. In other words, emotional labour is not simply performed in return for a wage (Hochschild, 1983), or in "fear that ... the discerning customer, will make a complaint to management" (Bolton 2005:117). Instead, emotional labour is performed as part of a complex process to maintain ontological security.

Drawing on the psychological and social psychological literature on self and identity, individuals attempt to conform to social norms and rules defined by society. Outside of the workplace there are social norms that determine how we perceive people to be either 'good' or 'bad'. These norms can often be traced back to religious definitions of 'moral goodness' and 'sin'. For example the influence of the Protestant Work Ethic remains prevalent as we continue to admire diligence, commitment and honesty but condemn idleness, fecklessness and dishonesty. As a social group we use these norms to make sense of and understand the world around us. We continue to use these norms to define what is expected and required of us in our occupational roles.

Thus, as someone who believes themselves to be a 'good' individual it is likely that they will also want to be good at their job. This continuity in narrative allows the individual to remain a legitimate and accepted member of society. Narrative continuity could be seen as having 'sign-value' (Baudrillard, 1969) as it signifies and

communicates your position and status within the social hierarchy. So, in the occupational roles I observed Claire believes herself to be a 'good, kind' person, therefore she wants to be seen as a good member of cabin crew. She described how she sometimes felt frustrated because she could not tell what passengers expected of her in certain situations and subsequently felt she was on a continual quest for congruence. In order to maintain this continuity she manages her emotions to conform to what she projectively imagines is expected of her in that role. The way in which this is achieved is through performances of emotion management.

The same is true for GP receptionists. However, their situation is a little more complex as there are competing expectations surrounding the role. The NHS, PCTs and local practices require GP receptionists to be helpful, welcoming and supportive in meeting patient needs. However, various characteristics of the job role have led GP receptionists to be associated with negative expectations. However, those I observed and interviewed felt they had a key role to play in the community of care provided by their practices and therefore wanted patients, clinicians and myself, as researcher, to see them in that way. Again, this was achieved through performances of emotion management.

Understanding emotion management as a project on self, both inside and outside of the workplace problematises the economic distinction between emotional labour and emotion work made by Hochschild (1983). As a reminder, Hochschild makes the distinction in the following way:

I use the terms *emotional labour* to mean the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange-value*. I use the synonymous terms *emotion work* or *emotion management* to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have *use-value*.

Sometimes, as demonstrated in Chapters 6 & 7, it is not always easy to determine what are performances of emotional labour and what is emotion work. For, if emotional labour performances are also projects on self they also hold use-value, their exchange-value is simply a benefit to the organisation but does not have to be the motivation for the individual. For the individual, the emotional labour performance can be interpreted as only one part of an 'affective performance' in which they attempt to continuously uphold the expectations of themselves and others in order to remain a legitimate member of society.

However, we cannot ignore the Marxist origins of emotional labour in our final analysis. Marx, and possibly Hochschild, would argue that although emotional labour is being used to reduce dissonance, this does not mean that the emotional labour is free of capitalist subordination and control. Drawing on labour process theory, we can argue that direct capitalist control may no longer be necessary in prescribing performances of emotional labour because society has absorbed the occupational role requirements set out by capitalist organisations into their social norms and rules. Therefore direct capitalist control over individual's 'private emotions' is no longer required. Instead, the capitalist system has inscribed this control onto the individuals. They endeavour to meet these expectations in order to label themselves 'good cabin crew' or a 'good person' in their pursuit of conformity and social legitimisation (Durkheim ?). Therefore, there is no longer a need for organisations to explicitly prescribe the need for emotional labour performances, as individuals will internalise the requirements of the role when they enter the position in order to create the required overall 'affect'.

Alternatively, this can be considered from a consumption perspective as opposed to that of production. Returning to Baudrillard, who believes that identity is constructed and maintained through the consumption and accumulation of symbolic goods and that social order is determined by "the hierarchy of differential signs and the interiorization by the individual of signs in general (i.e. norms, values and social imperatives that are signs)" (Baudrillard, 1969:61) then, it could be argued that 'affect' has become a symbolic good – a sign. The maintenance of that affect, through performances of emotional labour, that ensure we adhere to social rules and norms have become an unconscious social logic, a 'consecrated ideology of consumption' (199:57) in which 'affect' is consumed by and simultaneously creates collective subjectivities. Therefore, Hochschild's distinction between emotional labour and emotion work on the basis of exchange and use-value should now be part of a broader discourse of production and consumption, and one that integrates the possibility of sign-value.

Such a conclusion, helps me to understand what I found in my own previous research project (Ward, 2005) whilst also offering the potential to help emotional labour scholars unpick the ambiguous relationship between emotion, affect, subjectivity and the consequences of performing emotional labour.

## **Implications for Policy, Practice and Future Research**

This section discusses some of the implications of my contributions at a policy and practice level. I address some of the effected audiences in turn to give a more detailed summary but also to acknowledge those audiences who were, and will continue to be, a key part in the co-construction and interpretation of my research findings.

### *Airline Industry*

Since Hochschild's (1983) initial presentation of emotional labour in *The Managed Heart*, the airline industry has been readily associated with the concept. Despite this, however, restriction on research access due to the highly competitive nature of the industry and increased security threats has led to only a small number of subsequent emotional labour research projects taking place within the airline industry (examples include Wouters, 1989; Williams, 2003; Bolton & Boyd, 2003; Tyler & Taylor, 2001).

The ability to manage affective elements of the self, such as emotions and appearance, has always been a core part of cabin crew training, particularly within full-service provider airlines. Part of my contribution was to understand why, when there was no formal requirement to perform emotional labour in a budget airline, did the crew continue to do so. By understanding emotion management as a dissonance-reducing behaviour it can be assumed that the cabin crew of the budget airline continued to manage their emotions in order to uphold passenger expectations. Therefore, it may be assumed that those working as cabin crew will perform emotional labour in order to maintain ontological security through a continuous narrative of self.

As a consequence to the airlines, then, emotional labour training may not be as important as it has always been deemed. If cabin crew are continually engaging in reflexive evaluations comparing their behaviour and performances with the expectations of passengers, the airline and themselves then maybe the focus should be on airline expectations, as opposed to prescriptive emotional labour techniques. In Hochschild's terms, then, formal prescriptions to perform emotional labour as part of the job role will potentially only lead to surface acting, whereas a focus on expectations and perceptions will lead crew to internalise these requirements, therefore achieving a 'transmutation of the private emotional system', that is deep acting.

### *NHS/ PCTs/ Practice Managers*

Research into GP reception work has offered a number of alternative explanations as to why the role has become so readily associated with negative stereotypes. These include the structural position of the role as an intermediary between patients and primary care (Arber and Sawyer, 1985), their low status within the surgery (Hughes, 1989), a lack of training (Copeman and van Zwanenberg, 1988) and finally the dual nature of the role (Hewitt, 2006). My research, however, offers some alternative explanations and associated policy implications.

From observations and interviews it is clear that GP reception work is emotionally demanding, complex and multi-dimensional. As Hewitt (2006) rightly identified there is a duality to the role; GP reception work is both administrative and relational. They are responsible for printing prescriptions, keeping patient notes and records up to date, liaising with outside bodies and related services such as pharmacies, hospitals and clinics. This administrative element comes with the weight of responsibility because how they process a particular document can, indirectly, have serious, and potentially fatal consequences to the patient concerned. However, the other part of the job, and the one with which we are perhaps most familiar, is the front-line work; dealing with patient queries, handling appointments and checking patients in.

I found that the duality of the role, however, helps those working as GP receptionists to build a bigger picture of a patient's condition and situation. Being better informed about a patient's condition, through involvement in the bureaucratic work helped the receptionists when they came to deal with them on the 'front-line'. As a consequence patients received bespoke emotional and social care from the receptionists. Instead of contributing to the negative perceptions of GP receptionists I found the duality of the role helped to negate it and patients received better emotional support as a consequence. At a practice level, then, it may be advisable for those working on the front-line to also have responsibility for at least some of the administrative work.

Identifying performances of emotional neutrality as a strategy to protect the self from emotional inundation and also as a method for conveying authority, confidence and control over a situation, particularly with demanding patients, may also attribute towards the negative stereotype. The GP receptionists I observed felt that patients did not understand what their job required of them. They felt patients were unaware of the amount of administrative work they had to do and the level of restraint through PCT

and NHS driven policies on issues such as patient confidentiality that they had to contend with. In her feedback session Sam told me that she had a national certificate in GP receptionist skills.

“We used to display, before we got decorated, the certificates...um...but again just saying so and so completed reception course level 1,2,3 still didn't mean a great deal to the patients.”

Sam

Therefore, Copeman & van Zwanenberg's (1988) conclusion that GP receptionists receive little training may or may not be the case, depending on the practice and PCT they work for, but what is more representative is potentially the way patients perceive GP receptionists holding low status within the surgery (Hughes 1989) and are therefore not given training as a result. Sam feels that the title of her role 'GP or medical receptionist' also attributes to the negative perception of her role.

“...If you think of receptionists in a hotel it's a totally different receptionist. Yeah you are receiving people but the 'receiving' is incidental.”

Sam

She feels that if patients were made aware of the complexity of the role and the way in which they play a key, yet often overlooked, part within the community of care at a practice they would respect GP receptionists more. In addition, Sam feels that much of the problem comes down to patient expectations. As previously discussed in Chapter 7, patient sovereignty is often revealed to be a myth by receptionists when there are no available appointments or their demands are not adhered to. An example of this is the *SharedCare's* guideline for appointments. *SharedCare* state that all non-urgent cases must be seen by a primary care clinician within three-days. However, few patients are aware of this and expect to see their GP within a much shorter timeframe. By offering someone an appointment for the following day a GP receptionist may be seen as obstructive or unhelpful by the patient but the receptionist is well within NHS guidelines for appointment times.

Public awareness improvements could therefore lead to GP receptionists being seen as skilled members of their local primary care team. In addition, a re-naming of the role may also be beneficial. The objective of altering patient perceptions of GP receptionists is to integrate the role into the community of care, making patients feel emotionally and socially cared for, not only by the clinicians, but also by others within that organisation. From a pragmatic perspective, by improving expectations

and perceptions of the role GP receptionists will also want to conform to the altered social norms and as a consequence patient care should improve.

The key message for practice managers, local PCTs and the NHS is that GP reception work can no longer be overlooked, it must now become a key part of the agenda for change. Negative perceptions of the role have a detrimental impact on the way primary care is perceived in the UK, and this is a key area for future research. As the complexity and responsibility of the work increases patient expectations and understanding of the role must reflect those changes in order for GP receptionists to be seen, and therefore become, key members in community of care practices.

#### *Emotional labour researchers*

The implication of my contribution on emotional labour research can be seen as two-fold; firstly, in terms of my theoretical contribution and, secondly, in terms of methodological approach. Considering emotional management a dissonance reducing behaviour offers an alternative perspective on emotional labour research. Drawing across the literatures that have studied emotional labour gave an insight into the potential benefits of cross-disciplinary research to build up a more complex and nuanced understanding of the emotional labour process and its relationship with other key areas.

Emotional labour can no longer be presented as simply an extension to labour process theory without a thorough discussion of its relationship with subjectivity and self. The role of dissonance, which has long been marginalized in the sociological and managerial literature on emotional labour, must now be centralised in discussions of the emotional labour process. Further research into why dissonance is experienced at different stages in the emotional labour process is also required and this may best be approached via multi-disciplinary collaboration. In addition, the economic distinction between emotional labour and emotion work must now be problematised. It may no longer be a sufficient distinction, but one that must be acknowledged and subjected to rigorous critique before it can be dismissed.

In addition, emotional neutrality should now be offered as an alternative to positive and negative performances of emotional labour. Where once, there may have appeared to be a lack of emotion delivered by some occupational roles, this may now be better understood as performances of emotional neutrality. Such performances are not restricted to the workplace they can also be enacted as performances of emotion work, though further research into potential motivations and consequences is required.

Finally, the methodological approach I took to this project was one that includes a range of qualitative methods. The biographical-narrative interviews in particular gave me an insight into the relationship between emotion management and subjectivity. It also allowed me, as researcher, and Claire, as interviewee, the time and space to reflect on, review and re-tell stories. Such a bottom-up, reflexive approach became key in both the theoretical contribution I was making to emotional labour research but also key in terms of the method. Emotional labour performances, as projects on self, are deeply embedded and often unacknowledged as a rational cognitive process. Therefore, standard interview methods used in much of the emotional labour literature fail to move beyond the emotion management performances co-constructed by the interview process. The biographical-narrative interview encourages story-telling and emotional reactions. The participants give something of themselves so long as the researcher is willing and able to do the same. The other methods, used also aided my understanding of the emotional labour process and deserve the attention of future research.

The abundance and richness of the empirical material that I collected for this project has meant that what I have presented here is only a small insight into the colourful stories and observations that I gathered. As a consequence there are a number of future projects for consideration these include the use of the body as an aesthetic artefact, boundaries and space within the working environment (physical and virtual) and the reapplication of a gendered lens in light of the conclusions made in this project.

My decision to remove the gender lens from my approach to researching the emotional labour process origins in labour process theory has, for me, had positive consequences in terms of the way in which the historical legacy labour process theory debates can shape and inform our understanding of the emotional labour process. It must be pointed out, though, the removal of the gendered lens did not mean that I intended to ignore or disregard the role of gender in the labour process. Instead I wanted to simply strip back the theory in an attempt to return to basics. However this approach also calls for a post-analysis reapplication of the gender lens. If the emotional labour process is part of a project on self, through the maintenance of affect via continuity, then, the gendered nature of self cannot be ignored. In particular, issues surrounding 'gendered jobs', those that "capitalise on the skills women have by virtue of having led their lives as women" (Davies & Rosser, 1986:109) are called



into focus. Taking a consumption perspective also means that the way in which gender is consumed and demanded should also be given attention. Gender is not a lever within the capitalist mode of production but is built into the complexity of the labour process. What is perhaps most important, in term of the reapplication of the gendered lens, is that the way in which gender is defined and constructed can not be considered in isolation, or as an objective skill (Payne, 2009), it is part of an individual; defining and shaping who they are as individual 'labourers'. Taking such a perspective on gender's relationship with labour process theory perhaps will encourage a critical re-engagement with some of the more-traditional gender related theories such as pressure and preference theory (Podmore & Spencer, 1986).

### *Claire*

Unfortunately, due to personal circumstances Claire was unable to partake in a feedback interview. However, I want to thank her for her time and patience and for allowing me to explore, and re-explore her stories and narratives. The implication of my research on Claire goes unsaid, but I hope she found the process as interesting as I did. I hope when she reads her narrative back that I have presented her fairly and she agrees with my final discussions of her stories. Though I am sure that, despite my efforts to contextualise and situate she will find it unusual to see her lived experiences as abstractions on a page. The co-constructive approach I took to conducting the bibliographic-narrative interviews made Claire key in the way I analysed and made sense of the stories that she told.

I would be interested to find out, as part of future research, how this co-constructive approach to research has affected Claire's emotion management performances on a daily basis. Does she now experience dissonance more or less readily or in a different way and does she now have other techniques to reduce that dissonance?

### *Sam*

Again, for Sam I hope that her involvement in this project has given her the time and space to reflect on the importance of her work as GP receptionist and also the emotion management she enacts on a daily basis. The reflexive feedback session completed the process of reflection by reassuring Sam that her identity, along with her colleagues has remained anonymous and also by giving her a chance to review my analysis and presentation of her.

As previously discussed, Sam found the concept of emotional neutrality to be a good way of describing many of the emotion management performances she and her

colleagues enact. She also confirmed my analysis of the beneficial qualities of the duality of the role. I believe Sam enjoyed the attention and time dedicated to further understanding GP reception work and their role within the surgery. For her, she stated that she would find it interesting to see if patients were aware when GP receptionists “were having a bad day, or were in a mood, because we know when patients are!” In other words, Sam was interested in finding out patient perceptions of her, which is in keeping with what Claire described as a ‘continual quest for congruence’. In addition, this question would also reveal whether Sam’s performances of emotion management were convincing.

In future research, I feel it would be beneficial to include the voice of the patient in an attempt to give two sides of the story in terms of perceptions, expectations, emotion management performances and dissonance.

### **Reflections**

Overall the research experience has been long and intense yet positive and entirely rewarding. There were times when I had to make difficult research decisions (see Chapter 5), times when my own self-concept was brought under the spotlight and times of great happiness at having achieved a desired goal or listening to an interesting narrative.

One of the most challenging, yet perhaps the most interesting, elements of the process, however, has been the way in which my theoretical and methodological perspectives have forced me to reflect upon myself, my own narrative of self and my own emotion management performances. Through my reading I soon became aware of the methodological and theoretical inconsistencies in much of the emotion management literature, where researchers were listening and reporting on research participants experiences of emotion management performances yet were failing to consider how as a researcher they too were managing their emotions. I wanted to address the critique of solipsism in interpretive research by ensuring ‘my story’ was also audible. In so doing (Chapter 5 Figures 6 & 7) I found myself reflecting on my own performances of emotion management whilst out in the field. I offer two examples in which after reflexive evaluation I consider my emotion management performances to be a strategy of maintaining a continuous and accepted narrative of self.

However, despite this project being, for me, an enlightening journey of self-discovery I must not fail to acknowledge its limitations. The cross-disciplinary approach I took to the literature review that subsequently went on to inform my thinking broadened the scope of my ideas, thereby allowing me to see gaps in and between the literatures that had previously remained unidentified, or at best, un-addressed. However, taking a cross-disciplinary approach means trying to make sense of competing epistemological, ontological and methodological approaches. By doing so, I have endeavoured to integrate numerous ideas and approaches to emotion management research to offer a new perspective on the emotion management process.

The use of multiple reflexive methods also offered a bottom-up approach to the empirical research, which as previously discussed, broadened the scope of the theoretical contribution into the realm of affect. However, it also generated a variety of data formats that had to be analysed as part of a coherent framework. Although I have made every attempt to present and discuss the differing empirical formats in the context of the individual narratives from whom they came I do acknowledge that the multiple methods and the subsequent empirical formats could be seen as fragmented and incomplete. However, I prefer to see them as representative of the individual's reflexive evaluations of self, which are often fragmented, incomplete and complex.

The comparative analysis of occupational roles associated with antithetic stereotypes is a generalised stereotype in itself. Thus, it could be argued that cabin crew and GP receptionists are no longer associated with such stereotypes, though Sam's interview disputes this. However, I have presented evidence that suggests such traditionally associated images of the two stereotypes are still being evoked today (see Virgin Atlantic 2009 advertisement Illustrations 4 & 5 and GP receptionist forum Figure 10). In addition, my argument is less about the evocation of stereotypical images and more about how their historical legacy informs modern perceptions and expectations of the role.

Although I made every attempt not to conduct a context specific empirical study by snowball sampling the cabin crew participants and utilising GP receptionists from three surgeries it must be acknowledged that the central roles given to both Claire and Sam, in Chapter 6 & 7 respectively, means that the majority of the empirical material in each respective chapter is specific to a given organisational context. However, I have attempted to reduce the dependency on Claire and Sam's narratives by supporting and contesting the discussion with the voices of other participants from

different organisational contexts where appropriate. In addition, I am not attempting to make broad generalisations from their narratives about the impact of the respective organisational contexts; instead I am presenting their stories as individual co-constructed interpretations of the emotional labour process.

In summary, I feel that the discussed limitations of the project do not outweigh the positive contribution such a multiple method, reflexive research approach has made to further understanding the complexity of the emotion management process. Having said that, if I had the opportunity again, I would have liked to carry out a biographical-narrative interview with Sam in order to construct a more detailed understanding of her self-narrative, comparable to that of Claire's. In addition, I feel the project would have benefited from observing Claire working within the organisational context, whilst she performed emotional labour. This would have enabled me to illuminate her detailed reflexive evaluation of events with my own interpretation, something I was lucky enough to have done with the GP receptionists. Finally, I feel the project would have benefited from hearing patient and passenger opinions of the two occupational roles. This would have offered a more detailed interpretation of the expectations and stereotypes projected on those who are subject to them. However, I was unable to gain the ethics approval for this level of access but would endeavour to include these voices in future work on the emotion management process.

**Appendices A-G**

**Appendix A: Key Theoretical Contributors for Chapter 2: The Immaterial Labour Process**

The following tables identify a number of ‘key theoretical contributors’ used in the development of my thinking in terms of labour process theory. This is not an exhaustive list but one that seeks to highlight the progression of my own theorising and thinking as a researcher. The aim of this somewhat crude tabularisation, when read with the other two, is to draw out the significant gaps that can be found in emotional labour theory when it is read in a number of disciplines, specifically sociology, psychology, social-psychology and organisational behaviour.

The strengths and weaknesses are judgements based on methodological approach, methods and theoretical conceptualisation. These were chosen purposively to highlight the difference in approaches that can be identified when a piece of research is considered from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Baudrillard (1969) (1998)	Sociology	What is the role of consumption in a postmodern capitalist society?	Enchantment 'Myth' Consumer Society Sign/ symbolic value	Society is socialised into consumption via capitalist manipulation. Within this consumer society “superfluous consumption allows people to feel that they exist” (1998:5), just as diligence was respected in modernity, now, in a state of ‘hyperreality’, society worships consumption idols.  “Commodities are no longer defined by their use value but what they signify. And what they signify is defined not by what they do, but by their relationship to the entire system of commodities and signs” (Ritzer 1998:7)	Considers society and capitalism from the perspective of consumption.	<b>Approach</b> Pessimistic - Totalitarianism of capitalist control.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Bolton & Houlihan (2005)	Sociology	Reinterpret customer service interactions as a human relationship	Customers as mythical sovereigns, functional transactants and moral agents.	“...customers can be seen as ‘mythical sovereigns’ who seek to exercise their perceived right to demand not just service, but servitude from service providers... ‘functional transactants’ who, ... want to carry out a transaction in the simplest manner possible and... ‘moral agents’ who fully engage with service providers, recognizing that service providers and customers are economic and social actors and that customer interaction is a socially relevant activity.” (2005:686)	<p>Include the voice of the customer in the research data.</p> <p>Present a multi-dimensional conceptualisation of customers.</p>	<p><b>Approach</b></p> <p>Optimistic of the influence of capitalism in service interactions</p>

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Braverman (1974)	Industrial Sociology	How does Marx's capitalist theory apply to modern organisational forms?	Division of labour and deskilling to reduce the indeterminacy of labour.	Separating conceptualisation and execution in the labour process can reduce the indeterminacy of labour.	Considered much broader definitions of labour including the growing service sector. Treated the mental labour process equal to the physical labour process. Re-contextualised Marxist theories of labour and capital and re-ignited debate.	One-dimensional view of service sector – portrays service roles as low-paid, oppressed and at bottom of the working class. Simplistic representation of managerial control over the labour process. No consideration of resistance to managerial control. Disregard for trade unions and collective labour power. Deskilling thesis focuses on the relationship between the individual and the task, not the larger issue of social organisation. Deterministic – lack of consideration for subjectivity.



<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Burawoy (1985)	Industrial Sociology	Role of power and control on the process of value extraction from the labour process.	Self-organisation Self-regulation	Burawoy found that workers would sustain production levels despite a lack of management control and would even self-regulate those that jeopardise productivity targets. A sense of autonomy and choice secured the production of surplus value, whilst obscuring capitalisms agenda.	Moved away from the traditional Marxist assumptions.  Considered power, resistance and control in the labour process.  Considered labour to be, to some extent, active agents.	<b>Conceptual</b> Lacked a comprehensive consideration of the role of subjectivity in the labour process.  Interprets self-organising as 'game-playing' and 'making-out' closes off further analysis of control, resistance and motivation.
Cafferentzis (2005)	Sociology	Should discourses of value always be seen as negative in terms of the labour process?	Outlines the positive contribution that discourses on value can have	Discourses of value can be seen as positive as they attach a precise measure to the degree of exploitation, to make visible the usually hidden nature of capitalist subordination. Allows workers to recognise themselves as productive forces in the capitalist production system.	Offers an interesting critique to Marx	<b>Conceptual</b> Lacks a consideration of the role of subjectivity in the labour process.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Hardt & Negri (2001)	Historical - Political Sociology/ Economics	How can we understand the 'new' political order of globalisation?	Empire Immaterial Labour Informatization	Propose a paradigmatic shift in global industry, from modernity to informatization or postmodernisation, that has had significant effects on human relations. Changes in the nature of work have changed the nature of labour. This change is seen most readily in the expansion of the service sector. "Since the production of services results in no material and durable good, we define the labour involved in this production as immaterial labor" (2001:290)	Identification of immaterial labour offers a concept of labour that moves beyond the confines of capitalism to engage in the production and reproduction of society i.e. immaterial labour has biopower.	<p><b>Conceptual</b> Claim that value of immaterial labour can not be measured because it can not be traced to the individual worker – but Marx considers the concept of 'abstract labour' not 'real labour' to address these issues.</p> <p>Assumes a transition into the post-modern</p> <p><b>Approach</b> Self-valorising nature of labour could be viewed as optimistic</p>

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Knights (1990)	Industrial sociology	Is there a missing subject in labour process theory?	An alternative conceptualisation of the labour process which resists “dualistic tendencies to perceive social reality in terms of a binary opposition between voluntary subjects...and objective structures...” (1990:297)	“...the behaviour of subjects is not simply or exclusively determined by the forces of capitalist production and exploitation. Much action is voluntarily undertaken either as the result of routinized practices that have stabilising effects on meaning or as specific anticipated means of acquiring material and symbolic resources that facilitate or are a product of sustaining subjective security” (1990:329)	Re-considers the role of the subject in the labour process to transcend the subject/object dualism characteristic of labour process theory.	<b>Conceptual</b> What are the implications of separating subject and object? Would this be relevant to Marx?  Only considers consent not resistance.  De-politicisation of the debate – what are the implications on theories of class formation, exploitation and value?

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Korczynski (2002/ 2005)	Sociology	What form of consumption takes place in sales interactions?	The enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty.	<p>“...sales workers tend to promote not only rational information exchange and trust-building but also enchantment. There is a contradictory relationship of instrumental empathy between the capitalist firm and the customer, ...and sales workers attempt to manage this contradiction by promoting the enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty” (2005:69)</p> <p>The ‘enchanting myth of consumer sovereignty’ refers to the way in which consumers are led to believe they occupy a position of sovereignty, when in reality this is a myth created by capitalise to bureaucratise consumption.</p>	Role of consumption in the capitalist labour process.	<p><b>Methodological</b> Despite emphasising the role of the ‘sovereign customer’ it excludes the voice of the consumer in the research.</p> <p><b>Conceptual</b> Is the customer really unaware that their role as sovereign is in fact mythical?</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Marx (1876)	Sociology	Focused on the relationship between the 'means of production' and man's 'labour power'	Alienation Exploitation	<p>"Man not only effects a change of form in the materials of nature, he also realises his own purpose in those materials" (1876; 1976:284)</p> <p>If labour is the outpouring of humanity to transform nature, then, routinized tasks and intense divisions of labour will serve to dislocate this relationship.</p>		<p><b>Conceptual</b> Based on the assumption that the working class are homogenous. Work satisfaction is based on income, power and status. Lacks a treatment of power and resistance.</p>
Mestrovic (1997)	Political Sociology	What is the role of emotion in a postmodern society?	Postemotionality Postemotional society	Emotions have become separated from action. Emotions are disjointed and synthetic. Society has been bombarded with 'emotional' imagery and emotional discourse to the extent that its impact has been diluted. A postemotional society is one in which individuals and organisations exist in a state of 'hyperreality'	<p>Considers the wider sociological implications of 'enchantment' (Baudrillard 1969).</p> <p>Draws on ideas of consciousness and self-awareness, and their impact on society and social trends.</p>	<p><b>Approach</b> Pessimistic Alternatives and 'escape routes' from this postemotional society are underdeveloped.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Ritzer (1996)	Sociology	Considers the ubiquitous nature of capitalist rationality in the service sector and, more broadly, the mechanisation of social life.	McDonalidization 'Iron-cage of rationality' Commodification Routinization Bureaucratic-rationality Efficiency Predictability Calculability Control	"McDonalidization is the process by which the principles of the fast-food restaurant took over American society and the rest of the world" (1996:1)  Sees the dehumanising nature of rationality as the 'irrationality of rationality'.	Applies Weber' concepts of rationality and bureaucracy to new organisational forms.  Considers the labour process from a consumption and production perspective.	<b>Conceptual</b> Fails to acknowledge the potential for conflict and resistance under the control of managerial capitalism.  Neglects the role of the subject.  <b>Approach</b> Gives a somewhat over-simplified picture of a very complex situation.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Rosenthal (2004)	Organisational Behaviour	How employees experience and evaluate management control in relation to their self-defined interests.	Managerial control as an employee resource.	Explores the ways in which the bureaucratic, technical and normative regulation designed by management to control service workers is used in turn by workers to further their own control and influence over managers and customers. E.g. scripts can allow front-line staff to minimise mental and psychological effort when needed.	Looks beyond traditional views of labour process theory, concerned with managerial control, conflict, power and resistance to give an account of active agents and the role of their subjectivity.  Presents the emotional labour process within service interaction work as a direct extension of labour process theory.	<b>Conceptual</b> Lacks a consideration of some of the wider social implications and motivations behind compliance and active agents.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Trott (2007)	Political Sociology	Can Hardt & Negri's (2001) theory of immaterial labour provide a theoretical framework within which we can make sense of current political global trends?	Tendential nature of change in the global political economy is supported by Hardt & Negri's (2001) theory of immaterial labour and informatization.	Supports Hardt & Negri's theory of global political change that "industrial labour lost its hegemony and immaterial labour came to the fore, pulling as industrial labour had done before it, other forms of labour and society itself into its 'vortex' (Hardt & Negri, 2001)" (Trott, 2007:208)	Points to the subtler tendential nature of Hardt & Negri's observations i.e. more than a quantitative shift in the dominant industrial sector but a paradigm shift in which other forms of labour and society are changing.  Traces routes of immaterial labour back to Lazarrato (1996) & Virno (1996)	Lacks a clear distinction between how she sees biopower and biopolitical production.



<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Willmott (1990)	Industrial Sociology	What is the role of the 'missing subject' in labour process theory?	Subjectivity and the basic human need to maintain ontological security reinforces the capitalist labour process.	The ontological insecurity of labour, created by the separation of nature from humanity leads to a reproduction of the exploitative and subordinating mechanisms of control in the labour process.	Re-considers the role of the subject in the labour process to transcend the subject/object dualism characteristic of labour process theory.	<p><b>Conceptual</b> What are the implications of separating subject and object? Would this be relevant to Marx?</p> <p>Only considers consent not resistance.</p> <p>De-politicisation of the debate – what are the implications on theories of class, exploitation and value?</p>

### Appendix B: Key Theoretical Contributors for Chapter 3: Emotional Labour

The following tables identify a number of 'key theoretical contributors' used in the development of my thinking in terms of emotional labour theory. This is not an exhaustive list but one that seeks to highlight the progression of my own theorising and thinking as a researcher. The aim of this somewhat crude tabularisation, when read with the other two, is to draw out the significant gaps that can be found in emotional labour theory when it is read in a number of disciplines, specifically sociology, psychology, social-psychology and organisational behaviour.

The strengths and weaknesses are judgements based on methodological approach, methods and theoretical conceptualisation. These were chosen purposively to highlight the difference in approaches that can be identified when a piece of research is considered from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

Author	Discipline <sup>47</sup>	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Ashforth & Humphrey (1993)	Social-psychology	What is the influence of identity on the performance of emotional labour in service roles?	Identity  Emotional Labour  Genuinely felt emotions	"... negative effects of emotional labour on the well-being of the service provider are moderated by identification with the role (or the values and norms of the role) in question" (1993:105).  Genuinely felt emotions should be considered a form of emotional labour when they are congruent with those prescribed by the organisation.	Includes a brief consideration of emotive dissonance.  Presents genuinely felt emotions in the discussion of emotional labour.  Stimulates further research into the nuances of emotion management theory and identity.	<i>Conceptual Literature on emotive dissonance is lacking from the discussion.</i>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Bolton (2005)	Sociology	How to reconceptualise emotion management to prevent all workplace emotion being labelled emotional labour?	Pecuniary / Prescriptive/ Presentational/ Philanthropic  Emotion Management	Presents a new typology of workplace emotion (see Table 3), one that reconceptualises emotion management to reflect changes in contemporary organisations and “offers a portrayal of an active knowledge agent who is a skilled social actor and manager of emotion who operates within institutionalised boundaries of frameworks of action which can be both constraining and enabling” (2005:89).	Highlights the endemic issue of the ‘emotional labour bandwagon.’  Typology draws attention to the different kind of emotion performed in the caring professions.	<i>Conceptual</i> Lacks a detailed review of the existing literature.  Does not discuss the ontological assumptions upon which the new typology is based.  No consideration of emotive dissonance. <i>Method</i> Lack of empirical evidence to support and illustrate findings.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Callahan & McCollum (2002)	Sociology	To explore the theoretical underpinnings of the two concepts, emotional labour and emotion work, and present a matrix that clarifies the distinctions between the forms of emotion management.	Exchange- value Use-value Emotional Labour Emotion work	Traces the theoretical roots of emotion management to Marx to justify the distinction between emotional labour and emotion work with exchange and use value.  Proposes a new matrix of emotion management based on exchange and use value continuum and also on the internal and external control continuum to add two additional forms of emotion management i.e. autonomous and indirect emotional labour.	Restates the often forgotten Marxist theoretical roots of emotion management.	<i>Approach</i> The concept of indirect emotional labour is not dealt with as thoroughly as the other concepts.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Carls (2007)	Political Sociology	What strategies do employees adopt to cope with conflicting and unsatisfying working conditions and what role does affect play in everyday work experiences.	Affective labour  Colonization of affect	Considers immaterial labour to accentuate conflict and resistance to control due to immaterial labour control being dynamic and in constant pursuit of consent and compliance of subjectivities. The precariousness and vulnerability felt by retail service workers affects the way they feel about the colonization of their own affects.	Acknowledges that not all emotional labour is experienced negatively.  Considers why affective labour is becoming a more common part of work today.	<i>Approach</i> Lacks an explicit discussion of emotive/ cognitive dissonance

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Erickson & Ritter (2001)	Social Psychology	How do emotional labourers experience the management of positive, negative and agitated emotions?	Positive emotions Negative emotions Agitated emotions (In) Authenticity Burnout	Emotional labour that requires the management of feelings of agitation is most likely to be associated with increased feelings of burnout and inauthenticity. This is not gender specific.	Encourages further research into specific types of emotion and their effects. Calls for a move beyond identifying the existence of emotional labour toward a consideration of the psychological effects and the variations in types of emotion management.  Calls for research to be conducted on occupational roles that do not perform emotional labour – if this is possible.  A broad literature review, includes a variety of disciplines.	<i>Method</i> Positivist methodology, some of the findings may have been better illustrated using some qualitative data.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Grandey (2000)	Organisational Psychology	How does an emotion regulation perspective interpret existing emotion management research?	Antecedent-focused emotion regulation  Response-focused emotion regulation.	Re-organises and integrates existing emotional labour models around the working definitions and utilises the proposed theory of emotion regulation to provide a conceptual model of emotional labour. See Illustration 3.	Integrates a number of emotion management models to give a more comprehensive picture of the theoretical field.	<p><i>Conceptual</i> Integrating existing theories, though useful, does little to move the emotion management literature along.</p> <p>Fails to consider the role of emotive dissonance in a functional way, thus leaving the emotional labour process incomplete.</p> <p>Lacks a reflexive consideration of the emotion management theories presented i.e. their</p>

						ontological foundations.
Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Hochschild (1983)	Sociology	How are individual's emotions utilised by organisations, and what are the consequences of this process?	Emotional labour Commodification Commercialisation Emotion Management Emotion Systems Theory	Private emotions are increasingly becoming commodified by organisational control in the process of emotional labour.  Emotional labour is seen as the rational commodification of emotions.  Emotional labour is the "management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange-value. I use the terms emotion work and emotion management to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have use-value" (1983:7)	Applies labour process theorising to the 'new' service sector.  Provides strong empirical support for her arguments.  Clarifies the way in which emotions are utilised by organisation in order to make a profit.	<i>Conceptual</i> Assumes the existence of a 'true' self.  Lacks a discussion of dissonance or a full definition of the term emotive dissonance.  <i>Approach</i> Does not emphasise that emotional labour does not always lead to negative consequences



<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Massumi (2002)	Political Philosophy	'Affect' and 'corporeality' as communication and symbolism.	Affect  Virtual Observer	The perception of oneself is co-constructed by the 'Other'. This 'Other' is the virtual observer, for our ability to be self-reflexive means that we are all virtual observers of ourselves, and those with which we interact. The self, then, is co-constructed by the actual and the virtual, and therefore is a product of the dual ontology of affect.	Offers a new way of thinking about affect, emotion, corporeality and identity.  Makes a clear distinction between, the often confused concepts of, affect and emotion.	Very complex philosophical text.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Morris & Feldman (1996)	Organisational Behaviour	To further conceptualise the construct of emotional labour focusing on four dimensions that characterise the way the performance of emotional labour is experienced.	Emotional exhaustion  Emotional dissonance Job satisfaction	<p>“Frequency of emotional display, attentiveness to display rules, variety of emotions to be displayed, and emotional dissonance are hypothesized to lead to greater emotional exhaustion, but only emotional dissonance is hypothesised to lead to lower job satisfaction” (1993:1006)</p> <p>Multi-dimensional conceptualisation of emotional labour broadens the argument to allow emotional labour to be seen as not uniformly damaging or equally damaging to all employees.</p>	<p>Presents emotional labour as a complex multi-dimensional concept.</p> <p>Sets up further research questions and possibilities.</p>	<p><i>Approach</i> Theoretical arguments would be further illustrated by empirical examples.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Rafaeli & Sutton (1987)	Organisational Behaviour	What are “the causes, qualities, and consequences of emotions that are expressed to fulfil role expectations” (1987:23)?	Emotional Harmony  Emotional Dissonance  Emotional Deviance  Faking in good faith  Faking in bad faith	Emotion management is performed to maintain a position in the social hierarchy; emotions are expressed to fulfil role expectations. Such maintenance is achieved by ‘faking in good faith’ i.e. when employees believe they are faking for mutual benefit, or ‘faking in bad faith’ i.e. ‘faking’ to the customers disadvantage but the organisations advantage.  The ‘match’ between ‘true’ feelings and those prescribed by role expectations are seen to manifest in one of three states; emotional harmony, emotional dissonance or emotional deviance.	Encourages further research into the management of emotions.  Adds an ethical dimension to the emotional labour debate.	<i>Conceptual</i> Implicitly assume a ‘true’ singular self that is able to experience ‘true’ emotions and feelings.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Schaubroeck & Jones (2000)	Psychology	How does organisational context and individual disposition (Trait Affect) effect the experience of emotional labour?	Trait Affect Dissonance Positive and Negative Efference	The experience of emotional labour is dependent on context and individual dispositions. Negative health symptoms were experienced more by those who reported little identification with the organisation, as these emotional expressions were “not an authentic representation of one’s personal beliefs” (2000:179)  “It is not emotional labour itself that is distressing, but one’s perceptions of the emotions as being inauthentic” (2000:180)  Authenticity is critical in determining the consequences of emotional labour.	Alludes to further research into different kinds of emotion management.  Sees emotion management as part of a bigger performance of ‘affect’  Considers the role of cognitive dissonance in the process of emotional labour and authenticity. Highlights the theoretical and consequential differences in performing positive and negative forms of emotional labour i.e. empathetic and antipathetic.	<i>Method</i> Lack of qualitative data.  <i>Approach</i> Focuses on cognitive dissonance but does not attempt to integrate emotive dissonance.  <i>Conceptual</i> Assumes a ‘true’ self.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Tolich (1993)	Sociology	Does all emotional labour leave the employee feeling estranged from their emotions?	<p>Exchange-value</p> <p>Work-autonomous emotion management</p> <p>Regulated emotion management</p>	<p>Data identifies emotional labour as being both liberating and alienating. This is explained by moving away from Hochschild's dichotomous delineation of exchange- and use-value based on who owns the emotional display toward a conceptualisation based on who controls the display. Autonomous emotion management refers to emotions managed by the individual, whereas, regulated emotion management refers to emotions managed by the organisation, or more generally, anyone other than the self.</p>	<p>Contests the dichotomous nature of Hochschild's presentation of emotional labour.</p> <p>Highlights the Marxist roots of emotional labour theory.</p> <p>Challenges the negative perception of emotional labour on well-being, with empirical support.</p>	<p><i>Conceptual</i></p> <p>Criticises emotional labour theory based on dichotomies and so presents another dichotomy as an alternative.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Weeks (2007)	Political Feminist Sociology	How do Hochschild and C.W. Mills help to better understand immaterial labour in the post-Fordist paradigm?	Immaterial labour  Affective Labour Potential Self	<p>Mills and Hochschild, along with other socialists, focus on the comparative value of the 'other' in terms of binaries i.e. public v private, alienated v free. Weeks proposes a new politicised analytical framework in terms of life and work.</p> <p>In this sense, the production of subjectivity is not confined to particular sites but is interpenetrated by work and life. "Who one becomes at work and in life is mutually constitutive" (2007:246).</p> <p>The immaterial labour market and the production and consumption of subjectivities in this market, requires an alternative model of self: a potential self.</p>	<p>Traces affective labour, as a form of immaterial labour, back to its theoretical roots to build a clearer picture of the concept.</p> <p>Discusses how Hochschild's analysis of the production and consumption of subjectivity would have been suited to a discussion of affect rather than emotion, as "the category of affect traverses the divisions of mind and body, reason and emotion..." (2007:241)</p>	<p><i>Conceptual</i> Lacks a critical discussion of how this potential self would function in terms of Marxist theories of alienation and exploitation.</p>

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Wharton & Erickson (1993)	Organisational Behaviour	How do work and family roles vary in the types and degrees of emotion management they require?	Boundary spanning Work/Life Balance Multiple roles Inter-role conflict	Considers how emotion management also takes place outside of the workplace.  Individuals regulate their emotions, not only to benefit the organisation, but also to benefit themselves. Part of this regulation is to manage inter-role conflict, especially those that span the work/life boundary.	Takes a more holistic perspective of individual experiences of emotion management i.e. emotion work and emotional labour and how the performance of both is motivated by differing and similar factors.  Considers a gender perspective.  Contextualises the need to regulate emotion in changing workplaces and society.	<i>Approach</i> Fails to state explicit definitions of emotional labour and emotion management.  <i>Conceptual</i> Does not consider dissonance or the performance of emotional labour as part of an emotional labour process.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Williams (2003)	Organisational Behaviour	Analyses emotional labour as a gendered, cultural performance to further consider the way in which emotional labour performances are experienced.	Demanding-publics	<p>Concludes that the same individual can experience emotional labour both positively and negatively at different times.</p> <p>'Demanding-publics' is a term that refers to the "transgressions of the legitimate boundaries of the service worker" (2003:513) e.g. sexual harassment, abuse. 'Demanding-publics' put increased pressure on the performance of emotional labour and as a consequence, their presence is likely to lead to a negative experience. Yet, organisational support, reduced demanding-publics and a sense of being valued all help to reduce these negative effects.</p>	<p>Considers emotional labour as a multi-dimensional, gendered, cultural performance.</p> <p>Careful discussion of the Hochschild/ Wouters controversy.</p> <p>Application of findings to practical advice for the airline industry and service sector.</p>	<p><i>Approach</i> Lacks a consideration of some of the psychological literature.</p> <p><i>Conceptual</i> Does not consider dissonance as part of the emotional labour process.</p>



<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Wouters (1989)	Organisational Behaviour	Does anything lie beyond the 'dark side' of emotional labour?	Positive experiences of emotional labour	"Hochschild's preoccupation with the 'costs' of emotion work not only leads to a one- sided and moralistic interpretation of the working conditions of flight attendants, it also hampers understanding the joy the job may bring" (1989:116)	Draws attention to emotional labour as a multi-dimensional construct.	<p><i>Conceptual</i> Emotional labour was not intended to be considered as having solely negative consequences.</p> <p><i>Method</i> Validity – empirical data is based on a sample size of just five KLM flight attendants, in comparison to Hochschild's multi-method approach.</p> <p><i>Approach</i> Too optimistic. Presentation of the 'Happy Worker'.</p>

**Appendix C: Key Theoretical Contributors for Chapter 4: Emotive Dissonance**

The following tables identify a number of 'key theoretical contributors' used in the development of my thinking in terms of theories of dissonance. This is not an exhaustive list but one that seeks to highlight the progression of my own theorising and thinking as a researcher. The aim of this somewhat crude tabularisation, when read with the other two, is to draw out the significant gaps that can be found in emotional labour theory when it is read in a number of disciplines, specifically sociology, psychology, social-psychology and organisational behaviour.

The strengths and weaknesses are judgements based on methodological approach, methods and theoretical conceptualisation. These were chosen purposively to highlight the difference in approaches that can be identified when a piece of research is considered from a multi-disciplinary perspective.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Abraham (1998; 1999; 2000)	Psychology	How does job control/ organisational commitment moderate the experience of emotional dissonance?	Emotional Dissonance  Job Control  Organisational Commitment	Argues that emotional dissonance reduced organisational commitment whilst individuals with high self- efficacy preferred lower job control when faced with emotional dissonance.	Focuses on emotional dissonance as a concept.	<i>Conceptual</i> Assumes that emotional dissonance is a product of emotional labour.  <i>Method</i> Quantitative data used to support arguments. To further our theoretical understanding of the emotional labour process it is

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Aronson et al (1974; 1997)	Psychology	How can Festinger's (1957) theory of cognitive dissonance be better understood to prevent it being used as a 'catch-all' concept?	Cognitive Dissonance and the Self Concept	<p>“...dissonance is greatest and clearest when what is involved is not just any two cognitions but, rather, a cognition about the self and a piece of behaviour that violates the self-concept” (1997:131)</p> <p>“... what is dissonant is not the cognition that I believe X and I said “not X”; what is dissonant is that I see myself as a decent and clever human being and find that I have lied to another person in the absence of adequate justification” (1997:131)</p>	<p>Does not assume man is rational but takes into account a degree of self-reflexivity.</p> <p>Takes into account the role of subjectivity.</p>	critical to learn the way in which emotive dissonance is experienced and controlled.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Ashforth & Gibbs (1990)	Organizational Behaviour	How is organisational legitimacy created and sustained, in spite of it's 'double-edge'?	Coercive Isomorphism	Coercive isomorphism defines the way in which organisations seek legitimacy by conforming to the "values, norms and expectations of constituents" (1990:178)	Comprehensive discussion of organisational legitimacy which takes into account symbolism and the unconscious as legitimating technology.	<p>Conceptual Coercive isomorphism can be considered at both a macro and micro level. I.e. organisational and individual employee.</p> <p>Arguments are constructed at the 'macro' level without a consideration of how this 'legitimacy' is upheld on the front-line.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Cooley (1902)	Psychology	Nature of self	Looking Glass Self  Symbolic Interactionism	Symbolic interactionist theories are based on the relationship between self and society. Cooley (1902) termed such sociality a 'Looking Glass Self', as the self is formed by our imagination of our appearance to others, the imagined judgement of it and the self-feeling that such imaginings invoke. From this perspective, the self is no longer static or stable, it is a product of social interaction, a product of how it imagines itself from the standpoint of the 'other', and, is therefore, by definition, dynamic.	Conceptualises the self as dynamic and ever-changing as opposed to a stable and static entity.  Self is influenced and co-constructed by others.  Takes into account the sociality and conformism of the self.	<i>Conceptual</i> Based on an assumption of solipsism; thus you can never really know the contents of another's mind. This limits Cooley's conception of self to imaginings.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Festinger (1957)	Psychology	Why do individuals strive toward consistency within himself?	Cognitive Dissonance	“...I am proposing that dissonance, that is, the existence of nonfitting relations among cognitions, is a motivating factor in its own right. By the term cognition, here... I mean any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one’s behaviour. Cognitive dissonance can be seen as an antecedent condition which leads to activity orientated toward dissonance reduction...” (1957:3)	Considers the process of dissonance arousal and the consequences of that arousal.	<i>Conceptual</i> Dissonance is aroused between ‘two cognitions’ due to the broad definition of the term cognition it led to cognitive dissonance theory being used as a catch all concept.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Goffman (1959)	Sociology	How do individuals present their selves in order to function in society?	Virtual Identity Actual Identity Presentation of Self	<p>Goffman does not assume that individuals are innately social; instead they must constantly work at suppressing and performing emotions to maintain social order. His dramaturgical approach implies a constrained performance beneath which there is the implicit opportunity for the expression of feeling regardless of social appropriation.</p> <p>Virtual identity is the expectations that others hold about an individual. If there is a discrepancy between the virtual and the actual, i.e. the expected behaviour and the actual, then, the individual can become cut off from society.</p>	Presents the self as a 'performance' based on the manipulation of false selves to uphold an identity.	<i>Conceptual</i> Implicitly assumes the existence of a transcendental self. I.e. that a true self does exist and is known to the individual.
Harre (1998)	Psychology	Nature of Self	Singular Self	'Singular Self' does not implies a singular sense of personhood. This 'singular' sense of personhood is made up of three self- concepts.	Depicts the self as multi-faced and complex	

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
James (1961[1890])	Psychology	The nature of self.	Peripheric Theory of Emotion	<p>James (1961 [1890]) was the first to consider a fragmented formation of self in terms of the 'I' and 'me'; with the whole 'me' comprising of the 'social me', 'material me' and 'spiritual me'. The self is the 'stream of consciousness' in which physical and emotional life is experienced; it can therefore be examined from the perspective of knower, 'I', or known, 'me'.</p> <p>Peripheric theory of emotion states that emotion is the consciousness of physical change. Thus, physical symptoms trigger an emotional reaction; emotions are the consciousness of that physical change. As Sartre explains, "Sadness does not cause tears, on the contrary, James prefers paradoxically to say that tears, the physiological disturbance, causes sadness, which is the consciousness of this disturbance" (1971:1-2).</p>	Conceptualises the self as both the subject and the object in terms of consciousness.	<i>Conceptual</i> Believes that emotions stem from physiological symptoms.



Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Mead (1934)	Psychology	Nature of self		<p>A theory of symbolic interactionism. Mead's ideas were focused on a social self, a self constructed through social interaction. The self is regulated by the reaction learnt through experience of previous social interactions. The self comes to think of itself in terms of other's behaviour towards it. In other words, the self is socially constructed "...through the internalisation of the social interpretation of human conduct" (Henriques 1984:16).</p>	<p>Mead's conceptualisation of the self is not based on the imaginings of the other but learnt through experience of social interactions.</p> <p>Takes into account social norms and rules.</p> <p>Assumes that the self has the ability to learn and retain social information, and is therefore co-constructed.</p>	

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Rosenburg (1990)	Social-Psychology	A reflexive theory of emotion.	<p>Agentive reflexivity</p> <p>Reflexive cognition</p>	<p>Reflexivity changes emotions fundamentally. Individuals can think of their 'self' as an object. In this sense, they are both the "knower and the object of knowledge" (1990:3). This is known as reflexive cognition.</p> <p>Agentive reflexivity is when the individual acts upon their 'self' to change a part of their self.</p> <p>Reflexivity is a central feature of emotional identification, emotional display and emotional experience.</p>	Integrates ideas of self and reflexivity into a theory of emotion.	<p><i>Method</i> Lacks empirical data to support and illustrate arguments.</p> <p><i>Conceptual</i> Does not consider the role of inauthentic emotions.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Sartre (1971)	Philosophy	What is the nature of being?	Reflexive Consciousness Emotion	Sartre's notion of 'Cartesian consciousness,' is based on the idea that consciousness must always be aware of itself. In Sartre's work on consciousness, the self is always seen as the subject, and perception is always reflexive. Perception is reflexive in the sense that you are always aware of yourself perceiving something. Consequently emotion is seen as being an 'indissoluble synthesis' tied to both the subject (self) and an object, that which the emotion is directed (Sartre: 1971:9).		

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Theodosius (2006)	Sociology	What is the role of unconscious emotions in Hochschild's presentation of a 'new' social theory of emotion?	Transference Unconscious emotions Interaction Emotions	<p>“This article suggests that Hochschild's (1983) theory (new social theory of emotion) conceptually limits the interactive, relational nature of emotion (Burkitt, 1997, 2000) and prioritizes external social factors at the expense of unconscious ones” (2006:893)</p> <p>Theodosius develops the 'new' social theory of emotion to include its relational and unconscious aspects.</p>	<p>Explores and expands on Hochschild's conceptualisation of emotion theory.</p> <p>Considers the role of unconscious emotions.</p> <p>Includes a consideration of the reflexive nature of emotion interactions.</p> <p>Introduced transference as a tool of analysis.</p>	<p><i>Approach</i> Gives a descriptive rather than critical account of the methodological approach.</p> <p>Does not tackle the ethical argument of combining a psychological analysis of emotion with general social theory.</p>

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Thoits (1983)	Social-Psychology	What is the relationship between multiple identities and psychological well-being?	Identity-accumulation hypothesis  Multiple Identities	Supports a direct relationship between identity-accumulation and psychological well-being. The more identities someone holds the more existentially secure they will feel.	Based on a symbolic interactionist conception of self which considers subjectivity and self-reflexivity.  Allows for the consideration of multiple-identities as socially stable.	<i>Conceptual</i> Assumes all relationships and identities are valued equally. Integrated people are thought to be less committed to each identity and therefore loss of one of these identities can be compensated by increased commitment to another.

Author	Discipline	Core Question	Key Concept	Key Contribution	Strengths	Weaknesses
Thoits (1985)	Social-Psychology	How can we explain voluntary treatment seeking in mental illness?	Norm-state discrepancy Self-Labeling	"...in spite of social inducements to conform to normative expectations, even well-socialised actors often face structural situations that result in nonnormative feelings. When aware of such feelings the individual should anticipate, or imaginatively share the imminent disapproval of others and he possible loss of calculated rewards. Motivated to prevent these possibilities from becoming actualised, the individual can engage in 'emotion work' – efforts to change feelings to fit the normative situation or to justify existing discrepant feelings normatively" (1985:231)	Expands the scope of labelling theory by drawing on symbolic interactionist conceptions of the self and self-control.  Puts self-reflexivity and social norms at the centre of the discussion. I.e. self-labelling is concerned with judgements made by the self 'on' the self.	<i>Conceptual</i> Does not consider the role of cognitive or emotive dissonance in the discussion.

<b>Author</b>	<b>Discipline</b>	<b>Core Question</b>	<b>Key Concept</b>	<b>Key Contribution</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Weick (1995)	Socio-Psychology	How, why and with what effects do people construct identity?	Sensemaking	Sensemaking is a social process, based on a society that functions through a set of 'intersubjective shared meanings' (1995:38) where behaviour and conceptualisations are contingent on others. People are constantly and actively shaping and re-shaping each others meanings and sensemaking processes.	Takes a reflexive, interactional theory of emotions.  An extension to symbolic interactionism.	<i>Conceptual</i> Assumes the self to be multiple and social.

**Appendix D: Topic Guide/ Focus Areas**

These pertain to the semi/ unstructured interviews I carried out with cabin crew. Areas of interest continue to be relevant in terms of receptionist's experience of work but it may be that additional interests arise naturally from the discussions, and/or the emphasis placed on the topics may vary.

**□ Performance of emotional labour**

Deep acting, surface acting, empathetic and/ or antipathetic.

**□ Organisational Culture / Control**

Is emotional labour specifically prescribed by the organisation? If so how, when?

How is it enforced, and regulated? Instances of resistance?

If emotional labour is not prescribed explicitly is there evidence of implicit performances? Why? To what extent? To what end?

Personal reaction to the commodification of emotions?

Customer reaction?

Feeling rules/ Display rules?

Training?

**□ Consequences of emotional labour?**

Looking for pride in work, joy, 'buzz'/ burnout, stress, exhaustion, self-estrangement, alienation

**□ Aesthetic Labour**

Implicit/ Explicit?

Personal reaction to the commodification of the corporeal – body as 'aesthetic artefact'.

Customer reaction?

**□ Narrative of Self**



Background – “tell me about yourself”/ “life story”/ “I want you to talk to me as if I am writing your biography”

Married/ single/ children/ career?

How do they present themselves (looking for ‘hidden’ clues in terms of affect)?

How does emotional labour relate to their concept of self?

Social roles and identities – expectations in terms of the organisation and self-imposed?

□ **Emotive dissonance/ emotional labour relationship**

Best (in my experience) found in terms of critical incident analysis – too complex to question directly (not even sure how I would articulate or identify a feeling of emotive dissonance explicitly) but one that is subtly described in terms of specific incidents. - CIA is also good for relating discourses of self and social identity to emotional labour/ emotive dissonance.

□ **Perceptions and Expectations**

□ **Inter-relational emotionality**– inter-colleague relationships – explicate more fully the dichotomy of emotional labour and emotion work

**Other Methodological Considerations**

To get anyone to discuss their emotions is very difficult – some respondents will just never ‘open up.’

In terms of interviews, critical incident analysis is, in my experience, the best method by which to hear the emotion, and it’s management by the self, in action.

Other methodologies that may be used are:

Focus groups – when people are together you can observe the dynamism between self and other, and a collective form of self, in terms of social role

identity. Focus groups are normally most effective when conducted by two people: one guiding the conversation and the other observing.

Visual methods: use of drawing and discussion to facilitate a deeper narrative on emotion. Again done in a group setting.

Observation: self, emotions and reflexivity become prevalent in interaction, be that with colleagues, customers or managers.

I have attached the questions I devised for a previous cabin crew project (Ward, 2005). These were used, as a 'topic guide' though invariably, once a conversation begins it is never structured as was initially planned. However, they do act as an overview of the issues that the original data related to.

## Guide

### **Data Capture:**

1. Name:
2. Age:
3. Marital Status:
4. What does your partner do for a living?
5. Children:  
If so, how many?
6. How long have you been a flight attendant/ GP receptionist?
7. How long have you worked for this airline/ practice?
8. Previous occupations:
9. Why did you choose the airline industry as a career/ become a GP receptionist?
10. Have you ever worked for a different airline/ practice?

### **Discussion Questions/ Areas of Interest**

1. 'Some flight attendants could see a connection between the personality they were supposed to project and the market segment the company wants to attract.' (Hochschild, 1983 p.97) What do you think, are the qualities that your airline is looking for in their flight crew's? Why do you think they want these particular qualities?

2. In your experience/ opinion how do you think being a flight attendant for a budget airline differs from a standard fair airline? I.e. the way you are expected to deal with passengers/ demand on you as an individual?
3. Do you receive any training formal/ informal in dealing with difficult patients/ passengers? What is it? How is it effective? What counts as a difficult patient/ passenger at this practice/ airline?
4. In your experience has this been effective? Do you feel comfortable with these methods?
5. What are your personal coping strategies?
6. Previous literature has suggested picturing/ imagining a difficult passenger as a close family member or someone who has suffered a terrible tragedy in their lives. Do you think this would be a good strategy? Why?
7. How would you describe the service contract that you have with passengers/ patients?
8. When passengers/ patients pay the flight/ practice a compliment, how does this make you feel?
9. Similarly, how do you feel when a passenger/ patient makes a complaint?
10. Describe to me a situation you have experienced with a difficult passenger/ patient. How did you deal with this situation? How did it make you feel?
11. Did you feel you had support from your colleagues and the company?

12. Now describe to me, in the same way, a situation with a satisfied passenger/ patient.
13. Describe to me the best and worst aspects of your job?
14. Do you feel you have enough management and company support?
15. Is there someone you can go and talk to about how you are feeling and the job in general?
16. If so, how regular do you take advantage of this service?
17. How is it perceived within the company/ practice?
18. Do you think it does/would help? How?
19. Are you 'yourself' at work?
20. Would one of your friends/family members recognise you at work? (the way you deal with difficult situations and interact with customers and colleagues)
21. Would you say your job was stressful? How?
22. Do you ever feel any physical ailments that you believe to be caused by the job?
23. How do you 'unwind' after a flight/ long day?
24. Would you prefer to work with the same crew/ reception team every flight/ shift? Why?
25. Have you seen any changes in your job since you began working in the airline industry/ NHS? How do you feel about these changes?

26. Do you feel passengers treat male flight attendants differently to women? How? Why do you think this is?

### **Receptionist specific**

Nature of interaction with GPs, nurses and other management professionals

Do receptionists mediate the relationship between patients and health professionals?

Do patients behave differently towards receptionists than other members of staff? E.g. doctors, nurses. If so, why do you think this is the case? How does it make you feel? How could this be changed?

Appendix E: Ethics Approval Letter

10 July 2006

Dr Robert M McMurray  
 Lecturer in Organisational Behaviour  
 Department of Management Studies, University of York  
 Sally Baldwin Buildings Block A  
 Heslington  
 York  
 YO10 5DD

Dear Dr McMurray

**Full title of study:** The Luscinia Project: an ethnographic study of interdisciplinary boundary negotiation, innovation and identity change in a single general practice.

**REC reference number:** 06/Q1201/21

Thank you for your letter of 22 June 2006, responding to the Committee's request for further information on the above research. The further information has been considered on behalf of the Committee by the Chair, who would like to thank you for the comprehensive and considered response you have made.

**Confirmation of ethical opinion**

On behalf of the Committee, I am pleased to confirm a favourable ethical opinion for the above research on the basis described in the application form, protocol and supporting documentation as revised.

The Committee agreed that this site should be exempt from Site Specific Assessment. There is no need to complete Part C of the application form. However, all researchers and local research collaborators who intend to participate in this study at NHS sites should notify the R&D Department for the relevant care organisation and seek research governance approval. Details of research governance contacts can be found at [www.rdforum.org.uk](http://www.rdforum.org.uk).

**Conditions of approval**

The favourable opinion is given provided that you comply with the conditions set out in the attached document. You are advised to study the conditions carefully.

**Approved documents**

The final list of documents reviewed and approved by the Committee is as follows:

<i>Document</i>	<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>
Application		17 May 2006

Protocol		18 May 2006
Letter from Sponsor		15 May 2006
Participant Information Sheet: participant observation/interview info sheet	1	18 May 2006
Participant Information Sheet: practitioner video recording info sheet	1	18 May 2006
Participant Information Sheet: patient video recording info sheet	1	18 May 2006
Participant Consent Form: patient video recording consent form	1	18 May 2006
Participant Consent Form: participant observation/interview consent form	1	18 May 2006
Participant Consent Form: practitioner video recording consent form	1	18 May 2006
Response to Request for Further Information		22 June 2006
Participant semi-structured topic guide	1	18 May 2006

### Statement of compliance

The Committee is constituted in accordance with the Governance Arrangements for Research Ethics Committees (July 2001) and complies fully with the Standard Operating Procedures for Research Ethics Committees in the UK.

06/Q1201/21

Please quote this number on all correspondence

The Committee would like to wish you success with the project.

Kind regards  
Yours sincerely



**Deborah Cocker**  
Coordinator

Email: [debbie.cocker@anhst.nhs.uk](mailto:debbie.cocker@anhst.nhs.uk)

*Enclosures:*

*Standard approval conditions*

Copy to: University of York  
University of York, Research Support Office  
Heslington,  
York



## **Appendix F: Participant Profiles**

The aim of this appendix is to provide a detailed profile of each of the participants from both data sets.

### **Cabin Crew**

The cabin crew profiles illustrate the diversity in demographic, work experience and organisational setting from which they are giving their subjective accounts of performing emotional labour. The diversity in the data set was designed specifically to address the assumption in the emotional labour literature that everyone in the same occupational role performs the same kind of emotional labour. By choosing a varied data set I was able to explore what it meant to be cabin crew in a variety of different airlines and industry sectors (budget airlines and full service providers). The variety in experience and age also aid in building up a picture of the longitudinal changes that have occurred both in society and the airline industry; specifically, how these changes have impacted on the performance of emotional labour.

<b>Name<sup>48</sup></b>	<b>Age (Yrs)<sup>49</sup></b>	<b>Current Occupation</b>	<b>Previous Work Experience</b>	<b>Research Method</b>
Debbie	40-50	Business Manager	1 year as cabin crew for Air Europe	Interview
Janet	39	Tanning Salon Manager	10 years as cabin crew for Air 2000	Interview
Lucy	19	Cabin crew for Thomas Cook	Bar maid	Interview
Claire	47	20 years as Purser for BA	12 months as a nanny in Germany – in order to learn German  3yrs in a Food Marketing Company  12 months as cabin crew for Gulf Air	10 hour Work-life history interview
Rebecca	35-40	2 years as Head of Cabin Crew for bmibaby	Unknown	Interview and Informal Chats
Laura	29	3 years as cabin crew for bmibaby	Conference & Banqueting manager  3 years as cabin crew for British Midland	Interview
Sandy	23	2 years as cabin crew for bmibaby	1 year as ground crew with British Midland	Interview
Maggie	25	4 ½ years as cabin crew with bmibaby	Receptionist	Interview
Alan	30-40	Cabin Crew Manager for bmibaby	Cabin crew for British Midland	Interview
Yolanda	40-50	Full time cabin crew trainer for bmibaby	23 years as cabin crew for British Midland	Informal interview
SCA Training Group (15)	15 cabin crew were present ranging from early 20's to late 40's	All training to be SCA's for bmibaby	All cabin crew for bmibaby	Non-participant observation of training weekend

### GP Receptionists

The participant profiles listed below are only those receptionists that have played a significant role in my research. By 'significant' I mean that they partook in at least one of my research methods i.e. interviews, focus group and/or non-participant observations. It is clear from the participant profiles that, as with the cabin crew data sample, the receptionists studied ranged in age, work experience and organisational setting. Once, again the variety of experience has led to a consideration of the changes over time, in both society, in general, and primary health care, specifically. The way GP receptionists are perceived and the way in which they perceive themselves has become a key element to my research, one that is highlighted through the varied ages and experiences of the participants. What is also of interest here are the comparisons that can be drawn across the three sites<sup>50</sup> of the SharedCare Group in terms of the demographic they are serving and the type of emotional labour performed in response to this. These issues were particularly striking during the non-participant observations and through some of the drawing methodologies.

<b>Name<sup>51</sup></b>	<b>Age (Yrs)<sup>52</sup></b>	<b>Duration of Tenure</b>	<b>Previous Work Experience</b>	<b>Research Method</b>
Chris Site 3	40-50	Unknown	Unknown	Non-participant Observations Focus Group
Sam Site 3	53	13 years	Pharmacy Assistant  British Forces	Non-Participant Observations  Focus Group  Interview
Sally Site 3	40-45	Unknown	Unknown	Non-participant Observation
Jo W Site 3	50-60	Unknown	Unknown	Focus Group
Shirley All sites	50-60	Unknown	Unknown	Non-Participant Observations
Rose Site 2	50-60	Unknown	Unknown	Non-participant Observations  Focus Group
Karly Site 2	40-50	Unknown	Unknown	Non-participant Observations
Emily Site 2	50-60	20 years +	Unknown	Non-participant Observations
Jane Site 2	60 +	30 years +	N/a	Non-participant Observations  Focus Group
Elizabeth Site 2	60+	30 years +	N/a	Non-participant Observations  Focus Group
Linda Site 2	50	19 years	British Transport Police Clerical Officer  Insurance Clerk	Interview

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age (Yrs)</b>	<b>Duration of Tenure</b>	<b>Previous Work Experience</b>	<b>Research Method</b>
Becky Site 1	25-30	Unknown	Unknown	Non-participant Observations
Alice Site 1	30-40	Under 12months	Surgical Assistant	Non-participant Observations Focus Group
Heather Site 1	40-50	2 years	Unknown	Non-participant Observations
Gabby Site 1	23	7 months	Finance Admin Care Home Assistant	Non-participant Observations Focus Group Interview
Edith Site 1	50-60	Less than 12 months	Unknown	Non-participant Observations Focus Group
Caroline Sites 2 & 3	39	3 months	Asda Silver Service Stewardess	Non-participant Observations Focus Group Interview

### **Appendix G: SharedCare and the National Health Service**

The purpose of this appendix is to set out the context from which the GP receptionist's data is drawn. The research I undertook with the SharedCare Health Partnership was part of a larger NHS funded project entitled the Luscinia Project. The Luscinia Project is an ethnographic study of interdisciplinary boundary negotiation, innovation and identity change in a single general practice. After being granted ethics approval to join the research team I was able to conduct non-participant observations, focus groups and interviews with members of staff.

The SharedCare Health Partnership Health Partnership is made up of three GP surgeries operating in the North of England, under the local Primary Care Trust (PCT). Five partners, known as the Executive Group, made up of three Nurse Practitioner and two GPs, collectively manage all three sites.

#### **Brief History of Primary Care in the UK**

The National Health Service (NHS), established on the 05<sup>th</sup> July 1948, was the first health care system in a Western society to offer free health care to all. "At the time of its creation it was a unique example of the collectivist provision of health care in a market society" (Klein, 2006:1). Through the development of the NHS the Government aimed to "promote the establishment in England and Wales of a comprehensive health service designed to secure improvement in the physical and mental health of the people of England and Wales and the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness, and for that purpose to provide or secure the effective provision of services" (NHS, 1946), what more, this service 'shall be free of charge'.

The success and appeal of the NHS meant that both Labour and Conservative governments have sought to improve and promote its efficiency and stability. However, in 1997 Tony Blair's 'New Labour' government decided to transform the 1948 model of the NHS, which tended to be characterised as a paternalistic, command and control system into an NHS that reflected changes in society. Such reforms were a continuation of the marketisation reforms initiated by the Conservative government in late 1989. Britain's traditional industries were in decline in the latter part of the last millennium and new technologies were creating a new social and economic climate in the UK. This 'new UK' was one focused on the provision of services, not heavily unionised industries such as coal and steel. 'New Labour' transformed the NHS to reflect such changes in society, "consumer politics were replacing producer politics" (Klein, 2006:1). The 1948 model was replaced by a pluralistic, dynamic

consumer-led model, in which money followed the patient. Blair took a pragmatic approach to government, often implementing goals not rules. For Blair “what counts is what works” (1997), thus he encouraged innovations and entrepreneurialism in the public sector, a policy that was, at the time, characteristic of Thatcherite policies.

‘New Labour’s proclaimed aim was to promote “responsive public services to meet the need of citizens not the convenience of service providers to deliver quality services” (Blair et al, 1999). New Labour realised that in a consumer-led society patients demanded choice and higher quality services in both the public and private sector. In response to these demands, the Labour party published a White Paper entitled *The New NHS: Modern-Dependable* (December 1997), the aims of the new NHS were laid out to be; an improvement in health care for the population along with a decrease in inequality, and the implementation of new instruments for efficiency and quality.

In addition to the changes in society from which these policy changes flowed, there were also more pressing motivating factors. Two months prior to the publication of the December 1997 White Paper, the General Medical Council began the hearing of the Bristol Infirmary case. This case centred on the deaths of fifteen small children who died during cardiac surgery procedures at the Bristol Infirmary. The Bristol Inquiry found two surgeons guilty of professional misconduct. The Bristol Infirmary scandal threw the medical profession into the media spotlight. The media claimed that the medical profession was more concerned with shielding their own members than protecting the public. The Bristol case strengthened the Government’s resolve and generated public support for NHS reform that put quality at the heart of the NHS. Clinical governance became a key objective in the ‘new’ NHS. Over the next two years considerable structural changes were made to the NHS in an attempt to increase standards of health care and implement new clinical governance systems. One of the most significant changes to primary health care was the development of Primary Care Groups in April 1999.

Primary Care Groups were given responsibility of managing primary care providers in a given geographical region. By April 2000 PCGs had evolved into PCTs, Primary Care Trusts; free standing trusts, accountable to the health authority, with the added responsibility of providing community health services in their region. PCTs were also given control of a proportion of the NHS’s total budget in accordance with its population. In 2008 there are approximately three hundred PCTs in England (NHS, 2008), responsible for around 80% of the total NHS budget (NHS, 2008). In terms of clinical governance, then, PCTs were required to set up a system that monitored standards and identified poor

performance. All practicing doctors were required to take part in a compulsory audit, this was the first time such a performance monitoring system had been obligatory. In addition, a non-department public body called the Commission for Health Improvement was established to ensure clinical governance was implemented through reviews of all PCTs.

Clinical governance and high quality performance became the focus of the NHS for the first time since its inception in 1948 (Klein, 2006). They came to realise that self-regulation of primary care “could no longer be asserted but had to be earned” (Klein, 2006:120). In 1999, yet further steps were taken to deal with poorly performing doctors. The Department of Health published a report pointing out that “present NHS procedures for detecting and dealing with poor clinical performance were fragmented and inflexible” (DoH, 1999). Scrutiny of GPs and primary care professionals heightened in January 2000 when Dr Harold Shipman was convicted of murdering fifteen of his patients (O’Neil, 2000). In response to this high profile case all single-handed GP practices are slowly being brought under the control of PCTs and tendered out via PMS contracts.

#### **How did GPs fair in the ‘new’ NHS?**

PCGs and PCTs were not just a new NHS bureaucratic strategy, they did, in fact, signal the medical professions willingness to accept collective responsibility for monitoring and controlling one another’s activities. “An acceptance all the more remarkable given that GPs had always prided themselves on their small shopkeeper status and fiercely opposed any threats to their independence” (Klein, 2006:195).

Klein’s (2006) analogy of GPs as being “small shopkeepers” (Klein, 2006) refers to the fact that they were the least controlled faction of the NHS, despite them holding the greatest influence over demand for NHS resources. GPs are independent contractors with their own small businesses that run alongside, but largely autonomous to, the rest of the NHS. For Klein (2006), then, GPs are the gatekeepers of the NHS as they influence, filter and control demand for services and specialists. As Klein (2006) points out, the role of the GP had changed very little between 1913 and 1982, when they decided to make Family Practitioner Committees responsible for the administration of primary care and accountable to the Department of Health and Social Services.

In 1986 the Government published a Green Paper *Primary Health Care: an Agenda for Discussion* setting out four main objectives for primary health care. These objectives were; ‘to give patients the widest range of choice in obtaining high quality primary health care services’, ‘to be responsive to the needs of the public’, ‘to provide the tax payer with the



best value for money from NHS expenditure' and 'to enable clearer priorities to be set for the family practitioner services in relation to the NHS'. In short, this Green Paper was concerned with creating a market for GP services in order to make improvements in patient choice, efficiency of surgeries and the delivery of care. By fostering a market for GP services the Government's ultimate aim was to improve standards. The introduction of competition between GP practices would lead to doctors having to improve the service they provided to patients, or the patients would be able to change their doctor. These proposals were finally approved in the White Paper published in 1987 entitled *Promoting Better Health*.

The publication of *Promoting Better Health* was the first step in introducing competition into the market for GP services. It signalled a move away from the autonomous monopoly status that GPs held over their patients, towards a more efficiently regulated service market where patients had choice and power. No longer was primary care producer-led it was now patient-led; money followed the patient.

### **Conclusion**

Society and the economy have changed rapidly since the NHS was first established in 1948 and unsurprisingly such changes have influenced the structure, perceptions and demand for the NHS and the services it provides. For Klein (1993) these changes are best illustrated by two metaphors, health care as a garage and health care as a secular church. The characteristics of these two models are summarised in the table below taken from Klein's own work (2006:254)

**Table 6: Competing Models of Health Care**

<b><u>Model 1: Health care as church</u></b>	<b><u>Model 2: Health care as garage</u></b>
Paternalism	Consumerism
Planning	Responsiveness
Need	Demand
Priorities	Choice
Trust	Contract
Universalistic	Pluralistic
Stability	Adaptability

(Klein 2006:254)

Modelling healthcare, as a secular church is a metaphor more suited to societal attitudes towards health care at the time of the NHS's creation. The main objective of the NHS was to provide health care for everyone, celebrating equality and social communion. However, in contrast, although the NHS made health care accessible to all regardless of their social or financial status they were only equal in the eyes of the doctor. This was a model of health care that put ultimate power into the hands of the doctor, trusting them to do what was best for their patients and not themselves. Extending this metaphor, it could be argued that the role of the doctor in this model was similar to that of God. As Klein points out, this was a model based on social justice just as much as it was based on 'technocratic rationality'; the two were in fact conflated. In other words, it was the Government and experts that would determine who got what and when. It was a producer, or provider,- led model with little regulation and even less choice.

The other model, based on the metaphor where health care is a garage, is more closely associated with the 'new' NHS; a patient-led NHS. In this model there is a market, health care is driven by choice, patient choice. As Klein explains "the body is taken in for repair by its owner, who retains control over what happens to it. The ability to choose between garages becomes crucial, as does access to information about how the garages perform" (2006:254). In this instance, then, health care providers are not trusted implicitly to act in the patient's best interests; instead they are regulated and monitored, partially by market forces. The most crucial element to this model of health care is the way in which it is perceived as a 'service' in a service driven, consumer-led society. Patients hold consumer sovereignty and are able to exercise choice and demand high quality.

Both of these models provide a neat way of looking at and understanding some of the complex changes that have occurred in health care and NHS over the past sixty years. However, as with all models and metaphors they must be read with caution for they oversimplify a very complex reality. In addition, health care's move from 'church' to 'garage' has not been rapid, smooth or complete but gradual and partial. What is key though is that there have been changes and there has been continuity. Changes have been made to decision-making systems and structures yet the rhetoric of the founding fathers remains; the NHS is still an instrument of social justice.

### **Historical Background of the Three Surgeries and their Current Status**

As part of the 'new' NHS reforms and the phasing out of single-handed GP practices, SharedCare Health Partnership was awarded formal devolved management of the three North of England sites in May 2008.

This next section goes on to give a brief overview of each of the three surgeries managed by the SharedCare Health Partnership. It will become clear that each site services a very different population with very different needs. The purpose of these descriptions is to build up a picture of the potential differences in the work of the GP receptionists through the type of patients and problems they encounter on a regular basis. These pictures will then serve as a context in which the research accounts can be set.

I have presented the sites in the order in which I visited them to conduct the non-participant observations, however, this also happens to be reverse chronological order in which the sites were brought under SharedCare's control i.e. Site 3 was acquired first.

#### *Site 1*

The SharedCare Health Partnership took control of this surgery in November 2006, making it the newest addition to the group. Site 1 was formally a single-handed GP practice, brought under management when Dr X announced his retirement and disposed of the surgery building with very short notice. The surgery now has a new home near to the centre of the city.

Being relatively close to the city centre, Site 1 serves a patient base with a very mixed profile. The practice has a growing patient list of 2283 (in 2007) of which 72% are between

the ages of 18-65 years. Although the profile is mainly White British there are a growing number of ethnic minorities from Asia, Poland, the Middle East, Africa and Afghanistan. One of the biggest issues for this site is the incidence of Asylum seekers and the time and resource consuming issues they bring with them. Not only are communication, language, social isolation, cultural differences and chronic disease an obstacle they are often compounded by mental health issues, including depression, post-traumatic stress and torture.

With Site 1 being new to the area, combined with frequent language and communication issues, reception staff are unfamiliar with the patient population and the patients are unfamiliar with them too. Although they have come to know certain 'problem' patients, in general, they are unfamiliar with patient personalities and their requirements. They do, however, provide an efficient and supportive service, and are adept at conquering language and communication barriers to elicit and provide information to patients.

#### *Site 2*

Site 2 was taken under SharedCare Health Partnership control in February 2003 after experiencing difficulties with practice management and GP recruitment. Site 2 serves a small village community with an ageing population. Out of the 3070 patients (in 2007) a quarter are over the age of 60 year and another 25% are under 18 years. The community is relatively stable and predominately White British, with very low numbers of ethnic minorities. However, the community has a fairly mixed socio-economical population profile.

The workload of the surgery is predominantly weighted towards the provision of palliative care, blood pathologies and other age related complaints. Due to GP recruitment issues in the past the Nurse Practitioners at Site 2 have tended to deal with most family and child healthcare.

The aging population served by Site 2 tend to be fairly knowledgeable of their rights and needs and have no difficulty sharing these with the practice. However, this does not mean that they are difficult or demanding. The atmosphere in the practice is cheerful, friendly and calm. Majority of the reception and administrative staff have worked at the practice for over twenty years and have watched the patient population grown up. Over time they have come to know individual patient needs and are able to deliver a personalised service to individual patients.

*Site 3*

The SharedCare Health Partnership took over this 'difficult to doctor' region after a single-handed GP was suspended and a number of other Locum and salaried GPs were unwilling to take responsibility of the site. Site 3 serves a patient community of approximately 3408 (in 2007), made up of predominantly White British origin and more recently a number of Asylum seekers. One third of this patient population is under the age of 18.

Site 3 is located in a highly deprived area of the North West. The area has a high deprivation score, with more than 50% of the population being within the most 20% nationally deprived. The practice itself is located amongst high-rise flats and council housing sites. A 6ft steel perimeter fence surrounds the surgery. The area is characterised by high levels of unemployment, narcotics abuse, alcohol abuse, teenage pregnancy, child abuse, single parenthood, mental health issues and smoking. Despite having severe incidence of chronic diseases the community, as a whole, is not pro-active in expressing their needs and views. It has become the surgeries prerogative to reach out to the community, to encourage them to ask for help and communicate their needs.

The clinical team, along with receptionists and administrative staff, dedicate a lot of time and effort to providing an adequate level of care to such a difficult patient population. Abuse and violence are a common occurrence at Site 3. Staff are trained to deal with 'difficult patients' and are supportive of one another in their attempts to do so. They endeavour to 'train' the patients to utilise the system properly in an attempt to reduce frustration and cross-communication with those who suffer severe mental and physical impairments, often originating from abuse.

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## Endnotes

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### Chapter Two – The Immaterial Labour Process

<sup>1</sup> I discuss Marx's work using masculine pronouns such as 'his' as I am merely following Marx. However, I do acknowledge that neither my own, nor Marx's, discussion of labour excludes women.

<sup>2</sup> Further discussion of ontological security can be found in Chapter Four.

<sup>3</sup> An understanding of Baudrillard's thinking is dependent upon the 'theory of needs' being meaningless, for "beyond the threshold of survival, man no longer knows what he wants" (1969:72). The implication of this condition is discussed more fully later in the chapter and in Chapter Four

<sup>4</sup> Ritzer's (2000) thesis provides many more examples of the disadvantages and illusions created by the enchantment of rationality, demonstrating the ubiquitous power of bureaucratisation.

<sup>5</sup> Baudrillard (1969) would argue that consumption is already subsumed under capitalist control, as it is a function of the system. A discussion of this issue can be found later in this chapter.

<sup>6</sup> The 11-plus was actually the child's IQ score.

<sup>7</sup> Taylor's first illustration of the practice of scientific management was at Bethlehem Steel Company. Selecting a workman, named Schmidt, Taylor sought to show managers and owners the advantages of task work. Schmidt, had been handling approximately twelve and a half tonnes of pig-iron in exchange for \$1.15 per day. However, under careful supervision and the strict implementation of scientific management methods he moved 47 tonnes for just \$1.85. "Schmidt started to work, and all day long, and at regular intervals, was told by the man who stood over him with a watch, "Now pick up a pig and walk. Now sit down and rest. Now walk – now rest etc. He worked when he was told to work, and rested when he was told to rest..." (Taylor, 1911:21).

<sup>8</sup> The 'enchanted myth of consumer sovereignty' is discussed later in the chapter.

<sup>9</sup> See Trott (2007) for a discussion of Hardt & Negri's (2004) later contradiction of this argument in their discussion of communication in a post-Fordist society.

### Chapter Three – Emotional Labour

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 2 for a detailed discussion of these issues.

<sup>11</sup> Examples of such technologies an system controls can be found in Chapter 2: The immaterial labour process.

<sup>12</sup> A definition of use-value and exchange-value will be given later in the chapter.

<sup>13</sup> For a further discussion of display and feeling rules see Chapter 4: Emotive Dissonance

<sup>14</sup> This perspective of emotion regulation highlights the way in which deep acting tends to be governed by feeling rules (Hochschild 1983), whereas surface acting is, potentially, better explained by display rules (Goffman 1969).

<sup>15</sup> Job satisfaction and its relationship to emotive dissonance within the emotional labour process will be dealt with more fully in Chapter 4: Emotive Dissonance.

<sup>16</sup> Heading taken from Patricia Clough's book entitled *The Affective Turn: Theorizing the Social* (2007).

<sup>17</sup> See Chapter 2: The Immaterial Labour Process for a review of the debate.

<sup>18</sup> This characteristic of affect will be explored later on in the chapter.

<sup>19</sup> See Chapter 2: The Immaterial Labour Process for a discussion of the personality market and its contribution to labour process theory.

<sup>20</sup> In addition, affective labour is not subject to the gendered critique so often pitched against emotional labour theory, that being, certain emotions come more naturally to each



gender. For example, women have a more caring nature and so the caring element of nursing is not classed as 'labour' or 'work' as it is a natural part of a woman's character.

<sup>21</sup> Particularly in the emotional labour discourse.

## Chapter Four – Emotive Dissonance

<sup>22</sup> Use of the term 'Western', in opposition to 'non-Western,' in relation to society and self is in itself problematic. See Spiro (1993) for a discussion of the issues involved in conceptualising such a dichotomy.

<sup>23</sup> The term 'emotion memory' refers to the memories one holds of emotional events that have occurred in the past. Stanislavski's (1965) notion of method acting engages with the emotion memory to draw on past experiences, to evoke certain emotions, thereby indirectly inducing the subconscious.

<sup>24</sup> A discussion of which can be found later in the chapter.

<sup>25</sup> See Chapter 2: The Immaterial Labour Process for a discussion of immaterial labour and Chapter 3: Emotional Labour for a critique on how emotional labour can be considered a form of affective immaterial labour.

<sup>26</sup> As has been argued in Chapter 3: Emotional Labour.

<sup>27</sup> The conceptualisation of emotion as pre-objective is central to the 'emotional contagion' discourse (including Thoits, 1996; Pugh, 2001; Barsade, 2002; Hennig-Thurau, 2006; Barger & Grandey, 2006) as emotions are evoked by emotions of others around us. However, they will always be mediated and understood in the context of societal norms

<sup>28</sup> How this inadequacy is interpreted is dependant on whether the norm-state is considered correctly constituted by the individual. However, even when the individual does not accept the norm-state, and decides to self-label themselves 'different' they still face a certain level of social pressure to comply.

<sup>29</sup> See Chapter 3: Emotional Labour for a full discussion of the Wouters/Hochschild controversy.

<sup>30</sup> Abraham (1998, 1999, 2000) utilises the term 'emotional dissonance' but I will use 'emotive dissonance' as no explanation of the neologism is offered.

<sup>31</sup> "Self-efficacy refers to confidence in one's ability to harness the resources needed to meet job demands (Bandura, 1977)" (Abraham, 2000:171). Note, this is not the same as self-esteem for it is task specific in its assessment of confidence.

## Chapter Five - Methodology

<sup>32</sup> Here I refer to emotion management as the umbrella term for the manipulation of emotions, not as Hochschild (1983) first defined it as synonymous with emotion work.

<sup>33</sup> I must note, however, that although I was able to pursue this approach with cabin crew, ethical and moral courtesy prevented me from taking such an open approach to the GP receptionists as my work was part of a larger, already established NHS funded project. Nevertheless, I did make a conscious effort to appear open, personable and 'real' to the GP receptionists, though I show reserve in terms of helping them with IT queries and offering my personal opinion on both personal and work related matters.

<sup>34</sup> For a detailed discussion of these changes please see Appendix G.

<sup>35</sup> This fear prevented the interviews being audio recorded; therefore, no verbatim transcripts are available.

<sup>36</sup> Issues of subjectivity, value neutrality and bias are discussed in more depth later in the chapter.

<sup>37</sup> Fontana & Frey (1994) are also making the epistemological assumption that there is a 'truth' to be uncovered, and an ontological assumption of a 'true self' that will reveal this elusive truth.

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<sup>38</sup> Emphasis in italics is used to draw the reader's attention to points of relevance. Emphasis in bold shows the emphasis in the speaker's voice.

<sup>39</sup> Please note, these stories are presented as part of Claire's biographical narrative, thus, neither the accuracy of the facts nor the order of events have been checked. What is important is the way in which Claire narrates the incidents and negotiates them into her biographical narrative of self.

<sup>40</sup> I use the term emotion management here, to convey the often ambiguous and simultaneously occurring performances of emotional labour and emotion work.

<sup>41</sup> I feel that it is important to make clear, I did not, at first, see the handling of this situation as an example of emotional neutrality. It was only through the analysis of the other data set (GP receptionists) that this concept developed. I then used one data set to illuminate my interpretation of the other. For these reasons a full discussion of the emotional neutrality concept can be found in Chapter 7.

## Chapter Seven – "I've got to get past that dragon, in order to get to God!"

<sup>42</sup> See Appendix G for a detailed review of the NHS and development of PCTs.

<sup>43</sup> Although they gained the PMS contract in late 2007 the *SharedCare* partners had been running the three surgeries as a collective organisation since early 2007. Thus, this situation should not be compared to a management buyout.

<sup>44</sup> Note the job description is used for all three surgeries under *SharedCare*'s control.

<sup>45</sup> Each of the three surgeries serves a different patient demographic with varying needs. However, for the purpose of this chapter I will not differentiate between the sites, as the discussion of the emotion management process here is not context specific.

<sup>46</sup> Both the patient's name and date of birth have been changed to ensure anonymity.

## Appendices

<sup>47</sup> Where the author(s) have not specifically stated under which discipline they are positioning their work I have made a judgement based on the journal within which the work is published, the nature of the methods used and the approach taken.

<sup>48</sup> All names have been changed in order to protect the identity of the individuals that were kind enough to share their thoughts and experiences with me.

<sup>49</sup> Some participants preferred not to reveal their age, where this is the case I have made a generalised judgement based on their work experience and appearance and in such cases is estimated as a range.

<sup>50</sup> A detailed description of the three sites, their history and current patient demographic can be found in Appendix E.

<sup>51</sup> All names have been changed in order to protect the identity of the individuals that were kind enough to share their thoughts and experiences with me.

<sup>52</sup> Some participants did not specify an age, where this is the case I have made a generalised judgement based on their appearance and work experience, and in such cases is estimated as a range.