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Abstract: Members of worker co-operatives – organizations collectively owned and democratically run by their workers – report substantial differences in how they can or must perform various emotions, compared to previous work at conventional, hierarchical organizations. First, some emotions not allowed in conventional workplaces are fully permitted at worker co-operatives, including negative emotions, like anger, but also positive emotions, like enthusiasm. In contrast, other emotions must be displayed, even if insincere. Sometimes, these displays are accomplished through surface acting, like pretending to happily accept the slow pace of committee-lead change. Other times, through deep acting, members internalized new emotional reactions, such as pride, instead of resentment, when helping co-workers even after their own shifts had ended.

Introduction

Many workers fantasize about working in a democratic business at which their voice is heard and they are able to participate in the management decisions that affect

their employment. For many, this remains a fantasy. However, some actually accomplish this by joining or creating worker co-operatives, organizations in which all workers democratically co-own and co-manage the business. Becoming both a worker and a manager, however, often demands a new approach to work. This new way of working can be liberating in that some emotions that could not be displayed at conventional, hierarchical organizations may be allowed or even welcome at co-operatives. However, working in a co-operative can demand more emotional labor than might be expected in similar jobs in conventional organizations. Worker co-operative members accomplished this through both "deep acting" and "surface acting," to use the terms coined by Hochschild for changing one's internal emotional reaction and feigning prescribed emotions, respectively (1983).

This study examines emotions and the emotional labor performed in worker co-operatives in four industries: coal mining, chemical manufacturing, taxicab driving, and organic food distribution. This research extends the theory and research on the sociology of emotions and emotional labor. While the majority of emotions scholarship focuses on emotional labor demands when dealing with the public, this article explores the demands for intra-organizational emotional labor. Additionally, most research on emotional labor focuses on management techniques for teaching, monitoring, and enforcing service workers' emotional labor; other research in this area examines how workers resist or defer to owners and managers' demands for various emotional labor. However, this study examines emotional labor demanded by the workers themselves of each other.

In addition, this study also offers new insights into, and adds to the growing literature on, collectivist organizations. Often overlooked by sociologists of

organizations, worker co-operatives offer a contrast to the conventional business that is owned privately or by a sea of outside stock holders. Such conventional businesses, Weber asserted, purge the expression of personal feelings and passions – enthusiasm, love, resentments, hatred, etc. (Weber [1922] 1958). Worker-owned businesses seek to enhance workplace equality and minimize organizational hierarchy. In doing so, many aspects of the work experience may be substantially changed, including how emotions are displayed.

Literature

Worker Co-operatives

Sociologists and other scholars have resisted, decried, and denied the feasibility of worker co-operatives, democratically run and collectively owned workplaces with flattened hiearchies. Weber wrote that an organization without hierarchy is impossible in modern society and utopian, because of the substantial structural changes it would require and because hierarchy provides the apparatus that bureaucracy requires ([1922] 1958). Robert Michels doubted the likelihood of larger democratically run organizations with his infamous Iron Law of Oligarchy: "Who says organization, says oligarchy" (Michels [1911] 2001:241). More recently, Hannan and Freeman's work implies that organizations without hierarchical structure and democratic management will likely fail, lacking certain technical efficiency and lessened legitimacy (1989). Zucker (1977) and other institutionalists, while denying the technical benefits of hierarchy, stress that hierarchy provides institutional legitimacy. Although Marx did believe that co-operatively-held property would precede socialism, these co-operative businesses would

be government sponsored and on a national scale; non-government co-operatives, wrote Marx, were misguided and perpetuated organizations' fundamental exploitative nature (Marx [1887] 1967).

Nevertheless, throughout history, some workers have endeavored to collectively own their own workplaces and run them democratically with a flattened, if not absent, hierarchy (Rothschild-Whitt 1979). A small handful of researchers have studied these workplaces (see Blasi 2003; Blasi, Freedman, and Kruse 2013; Cornforth, Thomas, Lewis, and Spear 1988; Hoffmann 2006; Mansbridge 1982; Rothschild 2009; Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Tucker 1999; Whyte, Hammer, Meek, Nelson, and Stern 1983; Wright 2010). These researchers found that worker co-operatives can often achieve workplaces of greater meaning and heightened senses of community (Rothschild-Whitt and Whitt 1986), with better communication (Tucker 1999), increased productivity and innovation (Blasi et al. 2013), greater efficiency (Wright 2010), heightened equality (Cornforth, et al. 1988) and broader dispute resolution options (Hoffmann 2012). However, while accomplishing some key goals, worker co-operatives, nevertheless, may face continuing sexism (Kleinman 1996), informal high-power elites among the co-workers (Freeman 1984), informal networks of privilege (Hoffmann 2005), and higher levels of personal stress (Rothschild-Whitt and Whitt 1986).

Emotions at Work

Positive emotions are useful. Positive emotion tends to broaden one's ideas for taking action, whereas negative emotion narrows one's action repertoire (Losada and Heaphy 2004). As a result, positive emotion leads to enhanced information-seeking and

creativity (Fredrickson and Joiner 2002), even when information is potentially distressing or challenging to one's self-views (Aspinwall and Brunhart 1996). It also is correlated with greater goal attainment (Bindle 2012). Positive emotion has been shown to produce fundamental shifts in how one frames or approaches a situation, leading to substantial gains in problem-solving performance (Ashby, Isen, and Turken 1999). In contrast, negative emotion is associated with ruminative cognitive styles that focus on particular bits of information and on the self and thus do not effectively integrate and extend knowledge (Solberg Nes and Segerstrom 2006). In addition to perceived support, emotion has independent effects on actual social integration, through the objective formation of social ties. Positive emotion furthers the exchange of greetings and gestures between individuals (Turner and Stets 2006). This leads to particularized forms of mutual understanding and solidarity that result in social ties (Lawler and Yoon 1998). Those prone to negative emotion are likely to have a difficult time escalating interactions to solidarity and mutual identification with others (Turner and Stets 2006).

Perhaps recognizing the usefulness of positive emotions, managers increasingly require the display of certain emotions in the workplace. Hochschild (1983) introduced the term "emotional labor" to describe the emotion management practices of airplane stewardesses, and how emotion management is an organizationally utilized tool in a "service-producing society." Building on Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical view of interactions as actors concerned with appearances, Hochschild categorized emotional labors by levels of "acting." Controlling one's appearance or behavior to exhibit the emotions the situation dictates, without changing one's actual underlying feeling, was called "surface acting." "Deep acting," however, describes the portrayal of required

emotions through the alteration of one's own inner feelings to genuinely experience the required emotion (Hochschild 2003).

Emotional labor is often performed by lower-status workers for the benefit of higher-status workers (Hochschild 1983; Tucker 1999). Co-workers can substantially help each other in both deep acting and surface acting and are routinely critical in shaping the employees' expressions of emotions (Lively and Powell 2006; Van Maanen and Kunda 1989). Indeed, when people encounter a negative, anger-producing situation at work, they are more likely to seek help from others in the workplace in managing their emotions, than they would at home where they would directly confront the person triggering their anger (Lively and Powell 2006). Even away from work, friends often engage in "collaborative emotional management" in order to assist one another in embracing one emotional state and subverting an undesired emotion (Staske 1996:130).

How employees act and display particular emotions effects organizational goals, such as client comforting (Lively 2002), customer satisfaction (Sharma & Levy 2003), and passenger loyalty (Hochschild 1983). Wanting to achieve these goals, organizations often require their customer-contact employees to display those emotions that achieve the organization's goals (Ellis 2013; Hochschild 1983; Van Maanen and Kunda 1989). However, employees do not always feel the emotions that they are asked to display. Hochschild introduced the term "feeling rules" for the norms regarding what emotions should be expressed in a particular situation (1983). Learning a new organization's feeling rules is often as critical as learning the mechanics of the new job.

Just as Marx discussed the alienation of the industrial worker, Hochschild coined the term "emotive dissonance" for the psychological effect of separating one's sincerely

felt emotions from the emotional displays that are mandated at work (1983). For example, Grandey, Fisk, and Steiner (2005) documented that the problems associated with emotional labor include burnout, emotional exhaustion, absenteeism, turnover. Similarly, Wagner, Barnes, and Brent (2014) found that workplace emotional labor created problems in the employee's home life, including insomnia and emotional exhaustion.

However, Erickson and Ritter (2001), Grandey (2003), Wright and Cropanzano (1998), and others have shown how that emotional labor, particularly surface acting, is associated with higher levels of stress and depression. Hulsheger and Schewe's (2011) meta-analysis suggests that surface acting is particularly detrimental to worker well-being and job performance, while deep acting seems largely unrelated to either of these and may even improve performance. Similarly, Erickson and Ritter found that workers lost their sense of "authentic selfhood" and experienced higher levels of burnout when they had to "cover up their feelings of agitation" (e.g., anger or irritation) at work (2001:159).These many findings could suggest that deep acting may be the better alternative to surface acting.

While many studies document the toll that emotional labor takes on workers, some studies suggest that use of emotional labor can diminish stress and be used to survive otherwise more stressful situations. For example, Grandey's (2000) study of customer service representatives found that such emotional labor as faking a smile when being yelled at by a customer enabled that worker to minimize the hurtful effect of the yelling. Moreover, Lively (2000) and others have demonstrated that employees can challenge the mandated emotional labor at their jobs, rather than acquiescing.

Morris and Feldman (1996) emphasize that even when the prescribed emotion is truly felt by the employee, the employee must still display that emotion in the way required by the organization. For example, if the employee is supposed to be happy and truly is happy at work, s/he might be required to show that happiness by greeting each customer with a smile, even if a more natural expression of that happiness might to whistle or sing. Singing, although expressing the correct emotion, could be an inappropriate expression at work. Similarly, nurses who feel compassion for their patients are constrained in which particular ways they may express this (Karimi, Leggat, Donohue, Farrell, and Couper 2014) or sales people, charged with expressing friendliness and warmth toward customers, are further instructed that these positive emotions may only be expressed within the limited behavioral expectations of the department store setting (Gazzoli, Hancer, and Kim 2013). Thus, even employees who sincerely feel the emotion mandated by their organization must still put forth some emotional labor to portray it correctly (Morris and Feldman 1996).

Sample and Methods

I interviewed and observed members of worker co-operatives in four industries: coal mining, chemical manufacturing, taxicab driving, and organic food distribution. The industries in this study offered a range of workplace cultures, gender balances, and business objectives. I visited each business twice, observing as well as interviewing workers and achieving variation in interviewees on many dimensions.

<u>Sample</u>

I conducted a total of 124 interviews: 35 at Organix Co-op, 28 at Chemical Co-operative, 20 at Co-op Cab, and 41 at Coal Co-operative. All businesses were located in various regions across the U.K., except for Co-op Cab, which was in the U.S. Midwest.[1] For each site, Table One provides summary statistics on the interviewees as well as on the organizations, themselves. I did not identify a specific group of workers whom I knew did particular emotional labor or performed certain emotions, but spoke to as many interviewees as I could enlist about their workplace experiences generally. I included a wide variety of interviewees to maximize the range of experiences included in this study. My sample included present and former employees, men and women, founding members and new-hires, as well as worker-managers. Interviewees also differed in terms of race, age, level of education, socioeconomic status, and section of the particular business. Approximately half of those interviewed for this study had worked in conventional (non-co-operative) jobs in the same industry as their present worker co-operative, prior to joining their current worker co-op.

Through careful sampling and the repetition of responses I encountered as interviewees spoke of similar themes, I have become confident that my findings are well triangulated and valid. Although these interviewees are not statistically representative of all the workers at their individual organizations, the diversity of this sample is helpful in developing conceptual models. As I discuss various themes, below, I provide a percentage of how many interviewees at each worker co-operative made statements within each theme as well as the exact count of how many interviewees made such

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statements. This will provide the reader with information about how prevalent each theme is.

Generally, I approached interviewees myself, rather than requesting volunteers to come forward. Sometimes I would approach a group of people, ask to talk with one of them, and schedule interview times with the others. Other times I would approach people who were off by themselves. I arranged certain interviews in advance with key people and workers from underrepresented groups within the organization whom I wanted to be certain to include. Most of the interviews were conducted in public places or in private spaces at the companies. All interviews were conducted in person, using a set of open-ended questions as initial probes on a wide variety of work-related topics.

[Table 1 about here]

The interviewees were drawn from four industries: (1) organic food distribution, (2) chemical manufacturing, (3) taxicab driving, and (4) coal mining. Each business in this study met several key criteria. First, it had to have at least 50 workers. Second, each business had to be a stable organization with established procedures; none were less than two years old. Third, no organization could be part of a larger organization. Fourth, each co-operative included in the study had to be a true worker co-operative – with all employees being equal shareholders and no outside shareholders – not merely an Employee Stock Option Plan (ESOP) company. The businesses are summarized in Table One.

Organix Co-op, an organic food distributor, was located in the mid-North of England. As a food distributor only, it does not produce any of their products: organic produce or foods made from organic produce and with minimal processing. While some workers (5 interviewees or 14%) described the attraction of these jobs as simply the need for a paycheck, others (33 interviewees or 94%) spoke of their dedication to the organic and whole food movement or to worker co-operatives, and saw the jobs as a type of activism. Organix Co-op was begun over 20 years ago by progressive college students who wanted to create a better, healthier, more egalitarian work environment. This consciousness of the worker co-operative ideology still permeates the business. Workers at Organix Co-op became members after completing a probationary period and being voted into membership by the current members. Once they became members, they received their part of the company's profits, as well as wages, and became "vested" in the company, with each worker owning a single share of stock, regardless of tenure. When they left the co-operative, they would have to sell their share back to the company, generating a type of severance pay.

Chemical Co-operative, located in the North of England, had been a family-owned specialty chemical company, founded in 1921. In 1951, this Quaker family decided to give the business to the workers over a period of years At the time of this study, the workers were fully vested in the company. Each worker had one share and one vote, although the actual shares were held in a trust, Chemical Co-operative Commonwealth. They continue to make synthetic resins and polymers.

The co-operative taxicab company, Co-op Cab, is located in a mid-size Midwestern city in the United States. Co-op Cab was begun over 20 years ago by cab

drivers who were out of work due to strikes at two of the city's main taxicab companies. Possibly affected by its location in a Big Ten university town, known for its progressive politics (Langway 1997), Co-op Cab embraced the worker co-operative ideology in trying to create a better workplace, although not as strongly, uniformly, or dogmatically as Organix Co-op above. Workers at Co-op Cab became members once they had successfully completed a probationary period as determined by the membership committee. Once members, they shared in the profits of the company in addition to their wages.

Finally, Coal Co-operative was a "deep-pit" coal mine, meaning deep underground mining, as opposed to strip mining. This mine, located in Wales, U.K., was the last deep pit in Wales, one of the few left in the U.K., and the only co-operatively owned deep pit coal mine internationally. Employment at the mine held important cultural significance for the miners, who deeply identified with the mining occupation. During the period between the closing of the mine by the Coal Board and its reopening as a co-operative, some out-of-work miners took factory jobs, the only other jobs in the area. One hundred percent of those workers who had held factory jobs (41 interviewees) described them with much contempt, often saying that they would rather go on government assistance than work there again. Once the mine was re-opened as a co-operative, workers had to become members before they could begin work at the mine. In order to participate, each worker had to buy a single share of the co-operative at approximately $13,000. As with the other two co-operatives, this share entitled the member to profit sharing as well as wages. When the worker left the co-op, this share would be bought back by the company.

Methods

        One of the key benefits of qualitative studies is the high validity possible: the researcher can understand the greater context, obtain a large overview, and can triangulate the accounts of differently situated interviewees with various bases of knowledge. In gathering data for this study, I interviewed workers; observed behavior; read related documents and articles; attended companies' business meetings and, when possible, grievance hearings; and participated in aspects of some businesses (e.g., went down into the coal pit, rode along in the taxicabs).

        The interviews ranged from twenty minutes to over five hours, with most lasting between thirty and ninety minutes. Most occurred in private areas on-site, such as personal vehicles, empty cafeterias or break rooms, or unused offices. I selected these locations in order to provide privacy and assure confidentiality. A minority of interviews at each business occurred off site. This was true for all interviews of former employees, as well as a few current employees.

        I conducted most interviewing during regular business hours but while the interviewees themselves were not "on the clock." For example, many interviews were conducted before or after shift changes, during breaks, or during "down time," such as when taxicab drivers were waiting for fares at the airport or were "driving dead time," i.e., driving an empty cab across town to the airport or to the main office. Please realize that all but Organix Co-op had multiple shifts with workers engaged throughout the day and night.

At least one especially lengthy interview occurred at each business. All interviews and most site observation notes were tape-recorded and transcribed, so all quotes used here are direct quotes. A three-digit number confidentially identifying each interviewee follows all direct quotes in this paper. Because these interviews are part of a larger project that also included conventional (not worker co-operative) businesses, the total number of interviewees is 205, with 205 being the highest interview number assigned. Interviews for the Organix, Chemical Co-operative, and Coal Co-operative were conducted in 2003 and 1997. Interviews for Co-op Cab were conducted in 2000 and 1994. The duration of the visits ranged from a few days to two weeks.

Interviewees were asked mostly general, open-ended questions, but with some direct questions, especially as follow-up inquiries. Respondents would often draw on examples from their past experiences. These data were analyzed using the qualitative data software NVivo. The transcribed interviews were coded, using NVivo, for various themes. Some of these themes were responses to explicit questions (e.g., "In what ways is your job difficult?"). However, many others were extracted from the responses of interviewees to broader questions (e.g., "How would you describe your job?" "How would you recommend/criticize your job to another worker in the same industry?" "What would you change about your job if you could just snap your fingers and it would be different?") or to follow up questions to other responses. Thus, a portion of the codes were not the result of a direct question or set of questions, but were produced by careful analysis of interviewees' responses to various questions. For example, an interviewee might respond to the question about job description with a lengthy answer that included a mention of having to "sit in countless meetings." Later in the interview, the same

interviewee might respond to a question asking in what ways her job is difficult by saying that "getting things changed is difficult" among other annoyances. Still later in the interview, the respondent might respond to a question asking what she'd like to change by mentioning that she would want to shorten meetings and be able to snap her fingers and change something without having to discuss it with others. These responses could be coded as (1) discussion of meetings and also as (2) time-commitments. [2]

Results

When contrasting their experiences as members of worker co-operatives, interviewees often discussed emotional labor. Members of the worker co-operatives talked about emotions in terms of (1) their heightened freedom to express themselves in the co-ops, (2) how they learned new emotional responses once they joined the co-operatives, and (3) the emotions they might occasionally need to fake in order to obey their co-operatives' "feeling rules" (Hochschild 1983). I discuss each of these below.

The Freedom to Express

One key difference in being a member of a co-operative that many interviewees mentioned was the freedom to express their feelings without having to reign in certain emotions. For example, this member of the Chemical Co-operative explained that part of being a co-owner was that each person's opinion mattered, whether positive or negative.

> Other places, you're just told. Management decides on something new
> and so then you do that new thing. Doesn't matter if you think the new

way is good, or better, or just plain stupid. Here, your opinion matters. If

a supervisor is thinking of changing something, first, he asks what people

think. And then it's okay to really, really say what you think. You think

it's a dumb idea, you say so. If you're angry at even the idea of the

change, it's okay to be angry, too. [178]

Others (32 interviewees or 91% at Organix, 24 interviewees or 86% at Chemical Co-op,

18 interviewees or 90% at Co-op Cab, and 38 interviewees or 93% at Coal Co-operative)

echoed this sentiment that being upset or even angry is acceptable at the co-operatives.

This member of Organix Co-op explained that he didn't feel the need to suppress his

feelings when frustrated.

If I'm upset, I let you know it. This is my business, too, and my feelings

count, too. If I'm angry, I show it. You don't have to be all lamby-

pamby. Be direct. Tell the person how you feel and get on with fixing the

problem. That's how a co-operative works. [017]

For this co-operative member, part of being an owner in a worker co-operative was both

the freedom to express his anger but also the desire to work through and correct

problems. He felt that freely expressing emotions was part of this problem-solving

process. Similarly, the taxicab driver, below, believed that expressing his anger was

healthy for him, and, by extension, good for the co-operative.

You want get angry, [go ahead and] get angry. You want to yell, [feel free

to] yell. So long as you don't go berserk, you aren't going to get fired.

And you'll probably feel better. And if you feel better, then that's better

for the company and for everyone. [148]

These and many other workers (34 interviewees or 97% at Organix, 25 interviewees or 89% at Chemical Co-op, 18 interviewees or 90% at Co-op Cab, and 38 interviewees or 93% at Coal Co-operative) explained that freely expressing negative emotions – getting angry, yelling, etc. – would not be tolerated at other businesses. Yet, in the co-operatives, this was understood to be acceptable, so long as one didn't "go berserk." They didn't have to "lump it" (Galanter 1974) as many other employees need to do in conventional organizations.

Because anger could be expressed, it would not build up. This third-generation miner contrasted the present co-operative with working in the coal mines prior to the worker buy-out.

> [Under British Coal] [t]he resentment would build up and build up. Not just one person, dozens and dozens would build up, until one day something minor might happen. And, bang! There's war. It's strike! What the bloody hell?! It's been building and boiling for months and months because of all those little incidents that have been happening for weeks and weeks and all of a sudden, it just blows up, bang! [129]

Now, he said, the members of Coal Co-operative could raise their problems and get them resolved, instead of letting them fester into a "war."

However, a corollary of members' freedom to express their negative emotions with each other was that many members became more sensitized to what offended their co-workers. Not wanting to offend other members, many interviewees spoke of being more gentle and cautious of co-workers' feelings than they would have been at previous jobs (34 interviewees or 97% at Organix, 21 interviewees or 75% at Chemical Co-op, 18

interviewees or 90% at Co-op Cab, and 32 interviewees or 78% at Coal Co-operative).

For example, this driver who had been at Co-op Cab for about a year at the time of the

interview explains the importance of being careful about others' feelings.

> When I first came here, I wasn't very aware of different people. I mean,
> people who are different from me. I'm a white guy and most of my
> friends have always been white guys. But here, I have friends who are
> Black, I have friends who are lesbians. And I like them, but I don't
> always know what to say. Or, like, what *not* to say, you know? And here,
> it matters. I mean, it really matters. I worked other places with Black guys
> or Hispanic guys, and I didn't have to worry about offending them. Here,
> people can get offended and it matters. We don't want to have a
> workplace where people's feelings get hurt. That's not what a co-op is
> about. So I'm always really careful to not offend people. And it can make
> you tired. Sometimes I'm just exhausted from thinking, 'Is this the right
> thing to say?' Especially the dykes, man, if you offend them, they tell
> you. So I try not to. We all really try to get along. That's one of the
> reasons [Co-op Cab] is a great place to work. [136]

This young man felt he put so much labor into not offending his co-workers' emotions

that he would get "exhausted" from his efforts. Because members of the co-operative

had the freedom to express their resentment at offensive (racist, homophobic, etc.)

comments, he and others had become aware of how ethnocentric comments could offend.

While these interviewees, above, talked about negative emotions, other co-op

members also appreciated the freedom to express positive emotions (32 interviewees or

91% at Organix, 20 interviewees or 71% at Chemical Co-op, 17 interviewees or 85% at Co-op Cab, and 34 interviewees or 83% at Coal Co-operative). For example, this member of Organix Co-op described how he felt free to express positive emotions at the co-operative, whereas such expressions would have been deemed inappropriate at other work places.

> If something is great, I say so. If I think everyone is working well, I tell people around me that. Here, I'm free to be enthusiastic. I can get pumped up about the co-op, and it's not nerdy, or sucking up. Hell, there's no owner to suck up to. I'm the owner! So I'm not sucking up; I can just tell everyone when things are going great! [144]

This worker felt that positive displays, such as enthusiasm would be perceived as toadyism in conventional workplaces, while in the co-operative he is free to sincerely be enthusiastic.

Similarly, this taxicab driver contrasted how he acts at the co-operative with how he had acted at other jobs.

> Sometimes people like to bitch. They don't like some rule or another. Even if they agreed to it before. Like the dress code. The dress code says you gotta have hemmed sleeves, like you can't wear a shirt where you just ripped off the sleeves or cut the neck hole bigger with a scissors. And sometimes people don't like that. 'Why can't I dress any way I want to?!' they say. Then I say to them, 'Look, this company is all our company. You don't want me making you look bad – I wouldn't want me marking up the cabs; that would make the company look bad. Same

thing, if you drive around in a bunch of rags, you make the company look

bad. MY company look bad.' I tell them that it's important for all of us

to work together to keep up our good name. I mean, we don't have any

money to advertise; we are our own advertisements as we drive around

town. And if we look like shit, that's what people will think of us. I'm

not telling them to put on make-up or wear a tux; just be their good, clean

selves. I could never have said things like this where I worked before. It

would seem bossy, or none of my business, or like I was trying to kiss up

to the boss. Being a goody-goody. But people here know that I'm for real

I really care. And it's okay to show that you care about things. [057]

At Co-op Cab, he felt free to show his concern for the co-operative without being

perceived as a sycophant, as he would have been elsewhere.

Sometimes expressions of positive emotions were not exclusively verbal. For

example, another worker at Organix Co-op noted that difference between his current co-

operative position and his previous conventional employment was the hugging. He said,

"Being part of a co-operative isn't all about giving hugs, but I do get hugged more here

than any place else I've worked." [124] While hugging one's co-workers was mentioned

in very few interviews, this example illustrates how the pervasive this shift in permissible

emotions was that even physical contact was affected.

A Co-op Cab worker who had joined in the last year explained that merely

accepting the idea of uncensored expression took substantial adjustment time. He said:

It's different working at Union Cab than other places because it is a co-

operative which really makes it different… I think what happens is it's

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enriching on one hand to be able to work for the place where you have a

co-operative say. You get to vote. You can attend the meetings. You

can speak up. You can have your piece heard. You don't have to try to

work a manager or kiss-up to some supervisor or something. But you

have to learn to embrace that. It can be scary to know, to realize, that you

have some power, that you can speak up for yourself. And that you

should. [085]

Indeed, the ethic of being a co-operative member meant that not only could one take an

active part, but also that one had a duty to do so. This "liberation" often was a new

experience for recent hires and, while positive, could be overwhelming at first.

An office worker at Chemical Co-operative explained that he needed some time to

become used to the positive atmosphere at the co-operative and become accustomed to

not putting all his emotions into being defensive, as he had at previous jobs.

Where I worked before is a lot worse, a lot worse. Because people there

were, spending a lot of time protecting themselves in writing and

defending their position, their castle, you know. They might not get on

with three or four departments. And because of that, they'd say, well put

everything in writing at your discretion to protect their boundaries. But it

wasn't very productive if you spent a lot of time just writing defensive

memos. The business carried on, but they spent a lot of energy and time

just writing memos to say, this is what we had or this is what I said and

this is what you said. Very negative. It's not at all like that here. But it

takes some getting used the fact that you can be yourself here. Like you

can take your shoes off when you get home. [179]

Having learned to survive in other organizations' more vicious office cultures, he had

learned to invest his time and emotions in self-protection. Now, at Chemical Co-

operative, he could relax and "be himself." Indeed, Hodson (2001) documented how

badly managed conventional workplaces with "management abuse" often have rampant

back-biting, negative rumor mongering, and substantial interpersonal conflict. Perhaps it

is not surprising that new worker co-operative members might need to adjust to an

environment where such abusive behavior is not acceptable.

Home-Away-From-Home

The freedom from management abuse and the liberty to express their emotions

freely may be a result of the more relaxed, possibly more home-like, working

environment of co-operatives. When at home, people are more likely to address their

feelings directly, with less surface acting and more expression of sincerely felt feelings

(Lively and Powell 2006). A number of worker co-operative members (28 interviewees,

or 80% at Organix, 10 interviewees or 36% at Chemical Co-op, 17 interviewees or 85%

at Co-op Cab, and 12 interviewees or 29% at Coal Co-operative) characterized working

in the co-operative as being part of a family or finding a home. For example, recall the

member of Organix Co-op who spoke of getting hugs at work (interviewee #124); hugs

are an expression of affection much more commonly found in family settings.

Similarly, this taxicab driver, below, explained how the co-op felt like a family to

him.

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It feels like you're sort of part of a little group, or family-like thing, sort

of helping to run the business. You have a say. You don't feel like

you're working for some slob trying to pull fifty grand out of the

business. You feel like you're working for yourself on a team, working

for everybody really. A family in it together. [157]

A member at Organix Co-op, who had been with the co-operative for four years, echoed

this concept of the co-operative being a "family-like thing":

I think you tend to develop good friendships with people that you work

with, probably more than I have at any other job. You become close.

You're sort of a family. [009]

Similarly, this coal miner compared the deep-pit mine of the co-operative to a home-

away-from-home.

You get to work and you know that you're here. It's like [sigh] 'You're

home.' You know? You get here, and it's where you should be. Sort of

your home-away-from-home, if you will. [033]

Also, recall the office worker at Chemical Co-operative (interviewee #179), quoted in the

previous section, who compared his freedom to be himself at the co-operative to being

free to remove his shoes in his home. Feeling at home was feeling more relaxed.

New Ways of Feeling

Sometimes interviewees spoke of having to learn new ways of feeling once they

joined the co-operative (35 interviewees or 100% at Organix, 26 interviewees or 93% at

Chemical Co-op, 18 interviewees or 90% at Co-op Cab, and 41 interviewees or 100% at

Coal Co-operative). This is similar to the findings from other studies that show how new members of professions (Lively 2001) or occupations (Tyson 2013) actively try to learn the new feeling rules, display rules, and behavior rules. For example, a long-time worker at Organix Co-op explained how new members had to learn to think of the group as well as themselves, and, then, to express the appropriate emotional response when called on to help the group.

> [In contrast, at previous jobs], you look out for yourself, maybe a few other [friends]. Here, we all pull together. Like, whenever you get done with your job, you always go to the warehouse to help pickers finish making up the pallets, the orders. Just 'cause whatever you were doing is done for the day, doesn't mean everything is done. Sometimes new members don't understand that, and they resent it when we remind them to go down and help [fill] the orders. But they just gotta be reminded that no one job is one person's job; every job is everyone's job, so they shouldn't go getting grumpy. [117]

Another, somewhat newer member of the wholefood distribution co-op echoed this dynamic:

> At other jobs, when you're done, you're done, and off you go, right? Well, at a co-op, we try to get everyone done before we go home, and that means that if the pickers – the ones who actually pick the orders off shelves in the warehouse and assemble the orders on the pallets – if they aren't done yet then we all stay and help them. Well, let me tell you, this can royally suck because some pickers are slower than others. When I

first came here, I thought, 'Well, that's a fine thing. Here I worked hard to get done at a reasonable time, and now I have to help [those co-workers]!' But then I learned that that's not an acceptable attitude. At first, I did it; I hated it and resented it, but I did it. I'd put on a smile, maybe, but I hated it. Then I said to myself, 'You're in a co-operative and you need to have the right attitude for that.' So I taught myself not to resent [it]. Now, in fact, I like it. I think, 'How many work places does the guy doing the accounts come and help the guy picking orders?' Not many! I'm proud of it and I'm happy to do it now. [042]

This newer member described how at first, he refused to display the helpful emotion. Then he faked it, displaying the required emotion, but inwardly resenting it – what Hochschild would call "surface acting." Now, he has accomplished "deep acting" (Hochschild 1983), and would actually feel the required emotion.

Similarly, this member of the co-operative coal mine explained how the men had to learn new emotional responses to workplace problems when they reopened the mine as a co-operative.

It's strange to own your own pit. This is ours. But, especially for the new men, it's hard to really understand that, to feel it. Especially if you're used to working for British Coal and being told 'Do this!' and 'Do that!' You automatically react to that by trying to do as little as you can. You know, you resist. The management wants to squeeze as much as they can from the men and the men try to give them less. But now it's yours. It's ours. And now the [worker-manager] says, 'Boys, we just don't have all

the men for [this shift]. So-and-so didn't get here yet. Could you work

undermanned until he gets here?' Now under British Coal, that answer

would be 'No!' and we'd walk out if they tried to force us. But now, so

long as we think it's safe, we'll work [with the team being] a man short.

And the new men, ah, they don't understand. They start to get angry or

resentful. They've got to understand that they're not putting extra coins in

the pockets of British Coal, but in their own pockets. And then their

attitude changes. They don't whinge [grumble] so much and they cop on

okay. [167]

This Coal Co-op member was part of the original team of workers who organized to

worker buy-out. Reflecting on the gradual socialization of new members, he said that

new members will complain ("whinge") about making certain accommodations, having

become accustomed to more of a work-to-rule style of work. Once they understand how

the co-op works, however, they become more obliging and display the necessary emotion

of helpfulness.

One of the taxicab drivers who had joined the Co-op Cab within the past year,

illustrated this new-member dynamic with his own story.

When I came here, I was in it for myself. This was just another job, you

know? I did what I was supposed to, but I wasn't going to look out for

anyone else. But now, I get it. I get it. This is all of our company and

we all work together. [045]

His attitude changed significantly after a potentially dangerous incident when a co-

worker who wasn't even a driver on the road rushed to his rescue. He radioed for help,

but no cabs were near him. Hearing the code for driver-in-trouble, the mechanic in the garage drove out to help him himself.

> [T]he rest of the guys and gals driving weren't anywhere near me. The night mechanic – that guy could intimidate the socks right off of you if he needed to – he jumped into one of the cars. He must of got down there in 90 seconds. He must have been doing a hundred miles an hour in one of the cabs that weren't assigned that night. All of a sudden, I see a cab come around the corner. I see the night mechanic jump out. He throws it in park right in front of me and he gets out with a club as big as me. He says, '[Name], seem to be having any problems here tonight?' Boom, I got paid. [045]

After that experience of being the recipient of another co-worker's rescue, he understood the importance of having concern for other members of the co-operative and felt that concern for others, himself.

The Veneer

As some of the above quotes suggested, before "deep acting" was achieved, sometimes the workers had to simply fake the required emotions until they internalized the new emotion norms. Other times, members found certain emotions difficult to display or not display. This was particularly true when members became frustrated with aspects of the co-operative. For example, the less appealing side of having a democratically run organization is the need for much participation in the running of the business. In the case of these larger worker co-operatives, this meant using committees

for many tasks. However, committee-run activities are sometimes slower processes than an autocratic manager who makes all decisions in an instant. This inherent part of worker co-operatives could be a source of frustration, but, since committees symbolized the co-op's commitment to worker participation, complaining about committees could be seen as complaining about the democratic co-operative structure and ideology. Such complaints were not well tolerated, as this long-time member of Organix Co-op explains.

> You get frustrated because you want to make changes but it's long lasting. It takes so long to get it made because we have a committee procedure. So if something comes to the attention to the board of directors, it'll be sent to a committee. And then the committee will work on it for a couple months and send it back. It's not a very fast procedure, so that's the frustrating part of working there. I think some people should be allowed to just make big, or biggish decisions, but then that would erode the whole democratic thing, and that's why we're here. So, if I want something changed, I just take a deep breath, put on a smile, and start the slow, slow process. [166]

Similarly, this mechanic at Co-op Cab echoed the frustration with the committee process:

> I used to work as a manager, so I know how things go. In another place, I could just tell someone how to do their job; how to do it better. But here you have to ask, and explain, and talk, and sometimes go through a committee. Everything takes longer. That's your democracy in action. That's the cost. Can't say anything.
>
> *Interviewer: What happens if you say something?*

Pff! You can't. Then you're not a 'team player,' you know? You're

thinking 'only of yourself' not thinking of the 'co-operative'! Nope. No

way. Gotta be the team player. Play along, you know? [136]

This "cost of democracy in action" can create more burdensome processes for change.

This Co-op Cab member felt he had to censor his own feelings of frustration with those

processes or risk being criticized as not being a "team player." This fear of criticism for

violating the "feeling rules" (Hochschild 1983) was mentioned at all four co-operatives

(35 interviewees or 100% at Organix, 21 interviewees or 75% at Chemical Co-op, 20

interviewees or 100% at Co-op Cab, and 31 interviewees or 76% at Coal Co-operative).

Discussion and Conclusions

The members of the worker co-operatives were aware of how their displays of

emotions were different at their present co-operatives than they were at previous

conventional businesses. They enjoyed the freedom to express themselves without

censoring various negative and positive emotions. At other times, certain emotional

displays were required; members responded to these "feeling rules" by either adopting

and internalizing these new emotional responses ("deep acting"), or else simply faking

the requisite emotion ("surface acting"). Often, members would describe how they would

first engage in surface acting and fake a required emotional response, but later would

come to have altered their own feelings so that they truly felt the required emotions.

This article goes beyond past research on worker co-operatives by exploring the

emotional impacts of membership in this type of organization. This deep exploration into

the emotional labor, freely expressed emotions, and constrained emotions of co-operative

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members unravels another aspect of the puzzle of the co-operative workplace. By better understanding this facet of co-operative participation, one can appreciate the complexity of membership. While other research focused on problems and disputes (Hoffmann 2001; 2003; 2005; 2006; 2012; Tucker 1999), market forces and failure rates (Schoening 2007), and co-operatives as experiments in classical social theory (Rothschild and Whitt 1986; Scott 2008) this article delves into the emotional lives of those workers. This brings a qualitatively more nuanced understanding of the experiences of worker co-operative members.

In addition, this article contributes to the issue of participatory democracy by exploring how participatory democracy is possible in the workplace setting. The workplace is the setting in which participation and democracy often seem the most antithetical. Most people think of the workplace as inherently run by a pyramid of managers, each taking more and more control away from the workers below. Democratic participation at work might seem utopian, and, indeed, many great thinkers said so (see Weber [1922] 1958; Michels [1911] 2001). Yet some people have invested their time, their money, their efforts, and their emotions to making such democratic workplaces possible.

In particular, this article explored how workers can work together democratically – with minimal hierarchy and worker-managers – and still maintain functioning and sustainable businesses. This article examines the emotions and emotional labor necessary for participation in a workplace democracy. These data show that such participation is not automatic nor necessarily easy. At times, members of these co-operatives struggled with the emotional demands of participation in a cooperative – a collectively owned and

democratically run workplace. However, this article also shows the emotional benefits that many enjoyed by participating in these democratic businesses.

While some emotions needed to be suppressed and others needed to be performed even if not sincerely felt, many members of the cooperatives reported being freer to express themselves at their co-operatives than they would have been in conventional, hierarchical businesses. The extant literature well documents that people are more resigned to monitoring and adapting their emotional performances when at work, those same people usually expect to act more naturally and be more emotionally genuine when they are at home (Hochschild 1983; Lively and Powell 2006; Stearns and Stearns 1989).

Given that interviewees often expressed home- and family-like feelings toward the co-operatives and their members, one might expect to find nothing but freely expressed genuine emotion. Therefore, it may be surprising that some emotional labor – especially surface acting – was necessary in the co-operatives. Interviewees discussed surface acting especially as a segue to deep acting and early internalization of the co-operatives "feeling rules." This might be an ironic aspect of the greater democratic management in co-operatives – that some aspects central to co-operative, shared management make for a more frustrating work experience, such as the slow process of government by committee. This is similar to the finding by Rothschild-Whitt and Whitt (1986): that worker co-operative members not only felt "more in control and less alienated" but also experienced a "higher level of personal stress" (1986:313). Issues of collegiality, shared authority, rotating jobs, and personal commitment to the co-operative movement all created demands for emotional labor not found in conventional, hierarchical organizations (Rothschild-Whitt and Whitt 1986).

Moreover, while these aspects of the co-operative workplace were frustrating, they were inherent signatures of the worker co-operative structure. As hallmarks of the co-operative enterprise, vocal complaining about them was seen as severe criticism of the co-operative ideology itself and so was forbidden. These, very present, negative emotions – such as the frustration over the tedious and slow pace of committees – demanded a certain amount of emotional labor. These findings are supported by those of Mansbridge (1982) who found that members of collectivist organizations, like worker co-operatives, sometimes have profound aversions to conflict, preferring to not address certain problems.

However, this emotional labor might not necessarily have been harmful to these workers. Not only is the extant literature somewhat conflicted regarding whether and when emotional labor is actually disruptive or harmful for individuals, but, more importantly for this study, some studies suggest that members of worker co-operatives – workers who have substantial control over their workplace – might experience less harm from their emotional labor than workers at other businesses. For example, Grandey, et al. (2005) demonstrated that employees' control over much of their actions at work provided a buffer against the strain caused by emotional labor; however, they counter-posited that this effect might actually be a result of occupational status since as one climbs the ranks of one's occupation, one enjoys greater job autonomy. Pugliesi (1999) found that greater emotional labor (both deep acting and surface acting) had "uniformly negative effects on workers" (125) even when controlling for the amount of complexity the jobs demanded and the degree of control that workers had over their jobs. In contrast, Bulan, Erickson,

and Warton (1997) found that having greater control over one's work increases positive feelings and minimizes the negative effects of emotional labor.

Co-op members' discussion of the different ways they experienced and displayed emotions in the co-operatives may be part of the transformation from how they identified themselves. Once they joined the co-operatives, they shifted from thinking of themselves as just employees, as they had at previous jobs, to identifying as co-owners. Affect control theory explains that one's new social identities, in addition to possibly new settings, can directly affect one's emotions and emotional displays (Heise 2006). For example, research by Lively and Heise (2004) found that one's identity and setting affect which emotions one embraces. The shift in emotional labor, identified by my study, as workers joined the co-operatives was facilitated by their new set of co-workers. As Lively and Heise (2004) explain, emotions can be transformed and managed through the social support one receives, possibly such as co-worker feedback, criticism, or encouragement. Such transformation of identity and organizational socialization are complex topics that will be addressed more thoroughly in future research.

Worker co-operatives frequently offer greater emotional freedom but can also create some stress and demand certain emotional labor due to the complexities of shared governance and flattened hierarchy. While members new to worker co-operatives need time to learn the co-ops' feeling rules and organizational culture, this is true of most new job situations (Carmeli, Gilat, and Waldman 2007; Cohen & Hudecek 1993; Lively 2001; van Knippenberg 2000). Unlike many workplaces, however, the worker co-operatives appear to offer a work experience with the possibility of a wider range of genuine emotional displays.

Tables
Table 1: Summary of Sites and Interviewees

	industry	type of organization	location	number of workers	number interviewed
Organix Co-op	organic food	worker co-operative	West Yorkshire (U.K.)	50	35 (70%)
Chemical Co-operative	specialty chemicals	worker co-operative	Northamp-tonshire (U.K.)	156	28 (18%)
Co-op Cab	taxicab driving	worker co-operative	Upper Midwest (U.S.)	150	20 (13%)
Coal Co-operative	coal mine	worker co-operative	Wales (U.K.)	239	41 (17%)

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[1] Although I did look for contrasts between the U.S. site and the U.K. site, as well as and southern U.K. sites, I did not identify any.

[2] At the editors' request, I reviewed the data for additional negative comments about worker cooperatives. I found very few and these were only minor themes. Therefore, they were not discussed.