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CRIMINOLOGY

Danish Open Prison System and Reflections on the Implications for Family Life.

By: Tara Cantwell '13.

Often, the traditional family thought to be comprised of two married parents, children, and perhaps even a dog or a cat. In Copenhagen, an observer can note many illustrations supporting this notion by simply walking down the street. A mother and father pushing their child in a stroller while simultaneously walking the family dog is the representation of a functional family unit that provides a supportive and caring environment for the child; however, in the case of a parent's absence, this perfect image is shattered. A parent's absence can take a significant toll on the child, who is often not mature enough to understand the situation. An especially challenging situation presents itself in the case of a parent's incarceration. Although rates are much lower in Scandinavia than other parts of the world, crime and correctional institutions are still a reality, and a parent's absence due to incarceration has the potential to negatively impact family relationships. Fortunately, the social welfare system in Denmark includes provisions to protect traditional family values in its correctional facilities, which focus on rehabilitating the offender and promoting a successful re-entry into society.

The social welfare system maintains a functional society by ensuring economic balance, social opportunity, accessible healthcare, and the fostering of important family values such as respect for gender and child development. These values are embodied in many aspects of Danish life, including correctional facilities. In Denmark, many of the correctional facilities take the form of open prisons, which often lack the surrounding gates, heavy security, and adversarial relationships often found behind bars (Ward, 1972, p. 1). Offenders sent to open prisons are usually serving sentences less than five years, often due to drug charges. Eight such facilities

exist around Denmark, with the intention of sending all offenders to an open facility, unless the length of their sentence, previous attempts to escape, or misconduct in open prison requires them to be sent to a closed facility (Prison & Probation, 2011, p. 5). Within open prisons, the goal is to reduce criminality and reintegrate the individual successfully back into society. As opposed to the United States, where the prison system is focused on incapacitation, retribution, and deterrence, the Danish system focuses much more on rehabilitation. Data shows that only 27 percent of Danish offenders recidivate after their release from prison, which is much lower than the average (Damon, 2003, p. 1). As a result of the focus on rehabilitation and reintegration, offenders have the opportunity to maintain family relationships and community connections while incarcerated.

While a parent is in an open prison, the spouse and the children are able to visit often. In a recent Danish study, visits were found to be beneficial to both the parent and the child, showing the child that the absent parent was "still alive" and improving the morale of the parent (Robertson, 2007, p. 9). Given the opportunity for frequent visits with the spouse and children reduces the chance of the offender acting out within prison, because they do not want to lose the privilege of these visits. Furthermore, they also do not want to be sent to a closed facility for bad behavior where visits are not allowed. To increase the ease with which visits are possible, the sentencing board considers the location of the prison and the visiting accommodations available so as to not hinder the development of the parent-child relationship. Often, offenders are sent to an open prison closest to their home to make visits possible. Within most open prisons, there are semi-private rooms in which families can visit, and there are even sometimes playgrounds for children outside. A child is even able to live with the parent in a special ward of some prisons until the age of three (Damon, 2003, p.1). The system seeks to make visiting a parent a

comfortable experience for the family rather than an anxious one. Furthermore, offenders have the opportunity to leave the prison a few times a month to go home and maintain connections in their community.

Social reintegration is vital to the rehabilitation of a parent-offender, because when a parent is released from prison, the ability to hold a job and be a productive member of society is crucial to maintaining a stable family environment for the children. According to the Prison & Probation Service (2011), in order to promote social reintegration, the open prison system focuses on six principles: normalization, openness, responsibility, security, least possible intervention, and optimum use of resources (p.6).

Open prisons achieve normalization through visits with family, offering educational opportunities, and encouraging positive relationships between prisoners and guards. Often, the most beneficial relationships exist between prisoners and female guards, as female guards are thought to be able to calm the prisoners and help them to foster a respect for gender that is necessary outside of prison (Damon, 2003, p.1). A focus on responsibility gives prisoners the opportunity to take initiative and have responsibilities similar to those they would have outside—they can hold a job, receive an education, and are responsible for buying and cooking their own food. Security is also important for both guards and inmates, but it also becomes crucial when families come to visit the prison. A large motivation to maintain a secure environment at the open prison comes from the desire of the prisoners to have their own families come to visit—no one wants their children subjected to misconduct or serious violence. The principle of least possible intervention alludes to the many privileges granted to the offender while in prison and supports the need for normalization; however, this is not to say that being in an open prison is without punishment. Often, the greatest struggles faced by prisoners are the loss of small

liberties, such as needing to abide by curfew rules and requiring permission to leave the prison. By offering an optimum use of resources, the prisons can offer educational and job opportunities that will benefit the inmates, but the extension of resources does not stop after the prisoner is freed—once an offender's sentence is over, after-care offices are in place that serve as a resource for their continued growth and reintegration.

Instead of being marginalized while in prison, offenders are treated with respect and given the opportunity to heal. The Danish concept of Jantelov supports this idea, suggesting that no one is better than anyone else (Nicolaisen, 2007, p. 105). Although this idea has negative connotations for many Danes, as it discourages disproportionate success and pride in one's own accomplishments, it is helpful in explaining why prisoners are granted opportunities and treated humanely. Although in the general population Jantelov is a "clear prescription for mediocrity," it can also explain the Scandinavian efforts to rehabilitate offenders and reintegrate them into society (Borish, 1991, p. 87). Jantelov is also helpful in explaining the positive relationships between prisoners and guards by suggesting that, "you should not in any way hint that you are 'more' or 'better' than others" (Nicolaisen, 2007, p. 106). The guards are inclined to treat the prisoners humanely as a result; however, the prisoners still recognize that the guards deserve respect despite the relaxed relationship. Whereas in a more adversarial system a prisoner might behave aggressively to a guard, the prisoners here are more likely to display the same respect that they themselves would like to receive. Prisoners still receive healthcare, education, and can keep jobs, which lessens the damaging effect that prison often has to an individual's ties to the community. With these services still available, an individual can continue to be involved with family life and decrease the suffering often imposed on the families of offenders. Interestingly, the treatment of offenders in Denmark suggests that there are fewer stigmas attached with

incarceration, whereas in the United States, the repercussions of a criminal act follow the individual. In Danish, there is no word for "felon" as there is in English—"offender" is used much more frequently, which references the individual's isolated criminal act rather than a pervasive character flaw (Birk, 2011). By observing the rehabilitative correctional system, it seems as though Danish society has hope that offenders can successfully reenter society. Interestingly, the six principles of prison can also respond to values that are often found within a family. While interacting with Danish families during my time in Denmark, the relationship between parents and children is one where openness is stressed through open dialogues on controversial issues and children are encouraged to self-advocate and take advantage of the resources available, whether they are jobs or education. Gender roles are normalized, and there are not many observable gender differences between men and women. No one seems to brag about his or her personal family successes, and they are satisfied with what they have. Finding satisfaction in the little things also seems to be a vital element in why imprisonment is not as stigmatized and why rehabilitation is encouraged. When families recognize that no one is better than anyone else, they are more likely to accept their own situation and not judge others for misfortune.

My visit to the open prison at Jyllerup illustrated the unique Danish perspective on correctional facilities. At the prison, I was shocked to see how many privileges were afforded to the offenders. The corridors resembled a college dormitory, and the outer grounds were landscaped to perfection. Our tour was led by a guard and an inmate, both of whom interacted in a friendly way with each other. This particular guard led a craft group in which the inmate was an active participant, and they had developed a respect for each other. Importantly, this respect was mutual—the guard has the understanding that the inmate deserved to be treated just like

anyone else in society, and in turn, this treatment will help rehabilitate the inmate and prevent aggressive behavior both in prison and once released to society. As we walked through the halls of the prison, we saw the private rooms where the inmates slept, as well as the kitchen facilities equipped with quite an array of sharp cooking implements. This to me was shocking, as in a United States prison this would never make for a safe environment; however, it was a perfect example of the responsibilities granted to offenders in prison. There was even a tanning bed in their fitness facilities—an element of a luxury from society included in the prison's design to make the offenders feel less marginalized. Our guide agreed, however, that the greatest punishment inside prison was the loss of liberty—the obligation to tell a guard when he was coming or going, the curfew imposed on the inmates, and the struggle to recover from a drug addiction through a regimented program. The inmate did, however, enjoy taking advantage of family visits and leaves to maintain a relationship with his teenaged son. He expressed satisfaction that they had remained close even though he was incarcerated and that they still talked often. Furthermore, returning to his family was one of his main motivations for serving his time productively and participating in drug rehabilitation.

Open prison is successful in protecting family life because it attends to traditional Danish values and its focus on rehabilitation. It accepts that individuals are not perfect and may commit crimes that require incarceration and punishment; however, they do not seek to stigmatize and marginalize the individual. The attitude suggests that all people should have a chance to make amends for their actions and return to their communities without shattering the connections they have already made. Furthermore, the development of children is taken into consideration. The opportunity to have an open relationship with a parent who is incarcerated makes the challenge more bearable for the child, even if the situation is still not ideal. As Sir James Mellon stated,

"The public spirit and feeling of solidarity which exists in Denmark today will continue to exist

and become a model which other European countries will look up to in the centuries to come"

(Jespersen, 2004, p. 53). While it is those family values that seem to keep prisoners motivated to

behave well and continue to interact with their children, it sparks the curiosity as to how the

effects of parental absence, due to incarceration, in other nations such as the United States would

change if an open system was in place and family values such as these were encouraged behind

bars.

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SOCIOLOGY

Sociological Perspectives through Time.

By James Lanier '14

Classic sociologist, Karl Marx, analyzed and explained class systems through a unique perspective that remains to be extremely useful and relevant to today's society. His ideas began in the nineteenth century when a bourgeoisie label proved to give one a successful life, while a proletariat label caused immediate life struggle and hardship. A very different classic sociologist, Max Weber, delineated social class in a very different way than Marx. He saw social class as a more complex structure, perhaps adding a different perspective because his studies occurred at a very different time than Marx's. Nevertheless, these two very different sociologists were both intrigued by how social class affects a person's life. Their explanations remain an imperative base for the science of Sociology today. Further, applying their theories are useful in understanding the influences of social class.

"Communist Manifesto" gives a thorough explanation of Karl Marx's perspective on social class. He is famously known as a conflict theorist. Marx describes social class as consisting of the "oppressor and oppressed" (Marx and Engels 1967:79). The oppressor is the bourgeoisie and the oppressed is proletariats. Marx describes how a "primeval" community evolves from a society which contributes equally somehow to the community develops into social classes dividing them. He states "dissolution of these primeval communities society begins to de differentiated into separate and finally antagonistic class" (Marx and Engels 1967:79). According to Marx, this leaves no room for the possibility of separate classes working together. His outlook on social class explains that there must only be the bourgeoisie and proletarians. Even the possibility of a middle class eventually "sinks" into the proletarian group in reaction to

the interest of the bourgeoisie. Marx claims "the lower strata of the middle class…sink gradually into the proletariat, partly because their specialized skills rendered worthless by new methods of productions" (Marx and Engels 1967:79).

The way he describes the exchange between the two classes is like an un-ending battle between good and evil. He explains that the proletariat is a man trying to live happily through hard work. This is evident when he says "class of labourers, who live only so long as they find work" (Marx and Engels 1967:87). On the other hand he describes the bourgeoisies as an evil class who cause trouble for the proletarians. They dominate all and determine what the proletarians may and may not do, to an extreme extent. Marx states how "the bourgeoisie has torn away from the family its sentimental veil, and has reduced the family to a mere money relation" (Marx and Engels 1967:82). It is important to view the words that Karl Marx uses very carefully. He uses the word "family" which is primarily the first most important thing to a man. The fact that he describes the bourgeoisie as reducing a man's family to a mere monetary gain is a harsh statement towards the class. He concludes that the outcome is a clash between the two groups. Marx believes that "a fight that each time end either in revolutionary reconstitution of society at large, or in the common ruin of the contending classes" (Marx and Engels 1967:79) Karl Marx's view on social class is interesting, there is evidence of possible favoritism for the proletarian class. This is a complex view on social class that directly relates to his identity as a conflict theorist.

While Karl Marx has his ideas about social class, Max Weber has his own perspective which differs from Marx's opinion. Weber's explanation of social class is more complex than Marx's bourgeoisie and proletarians clash. Weber examines social class through understanding the impact of different class circumstances. Weber expresses this idea by saying "A social class

makes up the totality of those class situations within which individuals and generational nobility is easy and typical" (Weber 1978:302). The big difference between Marx and Weber is the issue on the conflict between the classes. Weber does not believe that just because there is an obvious difference between certain types of classes in the structure of his idea of social class that there has to be an eventual conflict. Evidence of his opinion is seen when he claims that "The mere differentiation of property classes is not dynamic that is, it need not to result in class struggles and revolutions" (Weber 1978:303). The main example he uses of this peaceful coexistence between different classes is the age of the slave owners and poor whites in the south. He states "privileged class of slave owners may coexist with much less privileged peasants or even the declassed" (Weber 1978:304). Recent research of social class has been influenced by Weber's more complex ideal of social class.

In a study by Tak Wing Chan and John H. Goldthorpe, it is clear that Weber's distinction between class and status is not only "conceptual cogent, but empirically important as well" (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007:512). They present the idea that social class becomes not a clash between two different groups but a social norm between the two. They state how "we regard a status order as a structure of relations of perceived, and in some degree accepted, social superiority, equality, and inferiority among individuals" (Chan and Goldthorpe 2007:512). Max Weber's exploration into social class brings complexity to the idea presented by Karl Marx as the dominant class manipulating a lower class. Studies have been performed to see how social class affects different aspects of life such as the act of voting choice, racial inequality, and the poor. In a study recorded by Lynn McDonald the affects of social class were monitored in the Canadian Federal election in Ontario. McDonald reports in the "Social class and voting: a study of the 1968 Canadian Federal election in Ontario", that "Canadian findings and those of other

countries pointed out. Almost all the previous studies have shown social class to have some significant association with voting, and very often it has a closer association than…religion and ethnicity" (McDonald 1968:412). The interviews were obtained from 1,916 voters, which is a substantial amount of people contributing to the validation of the connection between social class, voting, religion and ethnicity. When observing the study McDonald notes that they discovered "the effect of occupation on voting is only weak" (McDonald 1968:414). No major effects of social class were found throughout the study. The main variables associated closely with social class had little or no effect. This study displays the idea that social class does not determine a sure probability of how different classes will vote. McDonald writes that "a person's status in society…did not significantly increase the explanation of voting beyond that already explained by the main status variables of occupation, ethnicity, and religion" (McDonald 1968:418). The mere fact that such a project was pursued to answer questions about the effects of social class gives evidence of its importance to understanding society and how it changes, and conducts itself.

Durkheim and Bullying.

By: Julia Crane '13, Emily Gehrdes'13, Patrick McKeon '13, Rich Valeri '13

Durkheim's theoretical framework proves to be helpful when used to understand the intersection of suicide and modern-day patterns of homophobic bullying. His concept of "collective conscience" offers an explanation for prejudices in society, pervasive attitudes that foster atmospheres in which homophobic bullying can occur (Ritzer 81). While Durkheim's model of "altruistic" suicide fails to sufficiently explain modern suicides relating to homophobic bullying, his "anomic", "fatalistic", and "egoistic" models provide useful tools for understanding data presented in current literature on the issue. His ideas about "integration" and "regulation" not only constitute the basis for the formulation of these four different types of suicide, but also imply possible solutions to this social problem (Ritzer 93).

The way of thinking to which the majority of a society subscribes may be understood as a "collective conscience". Durkheim describes his concept, writing: "The totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average citizens of the same society forms a determinate system which has its own life; one may call it the collective or common conscience…It is, thus, an entirely different thing from particular consciences, although it can be realized only through them" (Durkheim 81). Today, one may see Durkheim's notion of the collective conscience at work in the general aversion to homosexuality in American society. This sort of nonmaterial social fact may be studied through the observation of state laws regarding same-sex marriage; currently, only six out of fifty states (in addition to the District of Colombia) will "issue marriage licenses to same sex couples" ("Defining Marriage" NCSL). The laws of a society often reflect the collective conscience of its constituents, and thus, it may be surmised that many Americans do not condone homosexuality. This relates to the issue of homophobic bullying because

widespread mindsets of this sort can create a culture that prompts hostile behavior, which can have dangerous consequences.

Durkheim constructs ideas about social currents of "integration" and "regulation" in order to explain different problems in society that cause individuals to commit suicide. "Integration" may be understood as "the strength of the attachment that [an individual] has to society", whereas "regulation refers to the degree of external constraint on people" (Ritzer 93). One type of suicide outlined by Durkheim is called "altruistic." Individuals who commit altruistic suicide do so because their "social integration is too strong", and resultantly they have developed a mindset that believes "it is their duty to [commit suicide]" (Durkheim 95; Ritzer 95). If Durkheim's four-type model of suicide is perfect, then one may understand there to be a gap in the current literature on homophobic bullying, for it has not been observed that many victims of this behavior take their own lives out of a sense of duty to society. In this way, it is evident that Durkheim's framework of altruistic suicide, though useful in other instances, falls short of adequate explanation of the phenomena of suicide resulting from homophobic bullying.

Anomic suicide is one of the four types of suicide that Durkheim discusses. Anomic suicide happens when regulation of a society is too low, leading to disruption and a lack of control over an individual's passions and life (Ritzer 95). There are two types of disruption; negative disruption such as an economic depression and positive disruption like an economic boom (Ritzer 95). Homophobic bullying is an example of a negative disruption. The very nature of bullying alienates students from their peers, Durkheim believes a way to remedy this is through better regulation. This leads the individual to feel vulnerable and more likely to commit suicide. Young lesbian, gay and bisexual students (LGB) are subjected to bullying in school without the support (regulation) necessary for them to succeed (Birkett, Espelage, Koenig). In a

study on hostility against homosexuals, Kingdom, Mason, and Palmer found that, "40% of all violent [bullying] attacks have taken place at school." According to Durkheim the appropriate way to remedy this statistic would be to implement more regulation in the school setting. However, this may problematic because the power source enforcing the regulation (faculty) are unregulated themselves; "99.4% [of LGB students] said they heard remarks from students and 39.2% heard remarks from faculty or school staff" (Kosciw and Diaz). If the faculty are participating in the bullying then the level of disruption that Durkheim is talking about must be very high, the students are more likely to commit suicide because of this lack of regulation. In Birkett, Espelage, and Koenigs' study on homophobic bullying in schools, they find that "high rates of negative outcomes for LGB and questioning students might, in fact, be preventable with a positive school climate and absence of homophobic teasing" (Birkett, Espelage, Koenig 991). This call for implementation of new regulations was mirrored in other literature on homophobic victimization (Poteat et al.). Durkheim's framework is applicable in so far as these researchers use his theory to formulate suggestions for social improvement. If the regulation in school and homes were higher, to an acceptable level, the rate of suicide among LGB students would be lower. This is shown in literature conducted on the subject of homophobic bullying.

One may consider Durkheim's model of fatalistic suicide loosely relatable to suicide stemming from homophobic bullying, but it arguably falls short in certain aspects. Fatalistic suicide, as explained by Durkheim, occurs with "persons with futures pitilessly blocked and passions violently choked by oppressive discipline" (Durkheim in Ritzer 96). This is the opposite of anomic suicide, where the individual commits suicide due to a lack of social regulation. Durkheim's fatalistic suicide applies to homophobic bullying because, in certain

instances, individuals who self-identify as LGB may feel that excessive social regulations (arising from a homophobic collective conscience) impel them to suppress this aspect of their identity. As previously mentioned, American society may be considered largely homophobic; this homophobic culture is born out of the collective conscience of societal norms, hence setting the stage to enable homophobic bullying. However, the notion that individuals "passions" are suppressed by excessive "regulations" may not be directly relatable to homophobic bullying because collective consciousness is not the same as regulations like laws.

Durkheim's theory of egoistic suicide is the strongest, contemporary form of suicide practiced in modern society. "LGB people are subject to institutionalized prejudice, social stress, social exclusion (even within families) and anti-homosexual hatred and violence and often internalize a sense of shame about their sexuality" (King et al., 2008). Durkheim would argue that LGB people feel disconnected from society because the prevailing collective consciousness makes them feel they do not belong into any "acceptable" social group (Ritzer, 81). There have been many occurrences of acts, thoughts, and attempts of egoistic suicide resulting from homophobic bullying against LGB people, specifically in educational institutions; these students are victimized through the language, perceptions, and physical abuses of heterosexual students which do not allow them their right to freedom of expression (Birkett et al., Diamond et al., Espelage et al.Ploderl et al.). This relates to Durkheim's belief that an individual's privilege is based on a moral or social link of a culture. The larger hetero-normative collective conscience of American Society clearly ostracizes LGB people, causing them to have low levels of social integration. Durkheim concludes that man, "is governed not by a material environment brutally imposed on him, but by a conscience superior to his own, the superiority of which he feels" (Lemert, 85). In modern society, heterosexism governs the dominant attitude of social

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acceptance. According to scholar, Daniel Chesir-Teran, "We conceive of heterosexism as a systematic process of privileging heterosexuality relative to homosexuality, based on the assumption that heterosexuality and heterosexual power and privilege are normal and ideal" (Chesir-Teran & Hughes 2008).

Durkheim also speculates, "Because the greater, better part of his existence transcends the body, he escapes the body's yoke, but is subject to that of society" (Lemert, 85). This translates into that one is allowed to express their individuality in accordance with collective society. The heterosexual ideology only allows non-LGB males and females to freely express their sexuality. For instance, "In most settings-including schools- heterosexist regularities are maintained through subtle processes that reinforce LGB invisibility and through explicit expressions of anti-LGBQ discrimination or victimization" (Chesir-Teran & Hughes, 2008). This in turn creates a vulnerable environment and societal isolation for LGB students in that their sexuality is not socially acceptable; this may drive them to extreme measures such as egoistic suicide (Birkett et al., Diamond et al.). To exemplify this, one may consider the case of Tyler Clementi, a gay teen who attended Rutgers University, who committed suicide because his roommate web-recorded him having sexual relations with another male student. His roommate disclosed this recording with fellow students, exposing his personal life, thus destroying his reputation (Egan). This homophobic bullying in the end caused his suicide of jumping off the Washington Bridge. From this example of egoistic suicide, the dominant ideology of heterosexism can be seen as a social force that negatively impacts individuals, leading them to their death.

Durkheim divides motivation for suicide into four categories: egoistic, altruistic, anomic, and fatalistic. Each type is adequate when linking suicide to government or economic

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systems. However, when looking at a modern tragedy like homophobic bullying only two of his

explanations directly apply. Egoistic Suicide is useful because it is based around the isolation of

an individual, from society, leading to his or her suicide. An adolescent member of the LGB

community is unfortunately not accepted in most middle and high schools, thus becoming a

target for bullies. He or she is constantly harassed by and isolated from the majority and the lack

of social ties can allow the smallest frustration to lead to suicide (Ritzer, 93). Anomic Suicide is

also useful in explaining this tragedy. Anomie, as explained by Durkheim, refers to social

conditions in which humans lack sufficient moral restrain (Ritzer, 90). Moral restraint is

controlled by regulation and in a school setting teachers are responsible for creating those

restrictions. Bullies who target LGB persons do so because there is no intervention by

teachers. Without a moderation in levels of integration and regulation suicides will continue to

rise among bullied LGB students. Statistics have shown that once that regulation/integration is

achieved LGB students will feel they have more control over their life and passions, leading to

less suicides.

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Human Trafficking of American Girls: A Repetitive Cycle

By Kristen Bailey '14

Although most citizens of the United States of America believe that human trafficking is

an industry that needs to be stopped, the problem is not often acknowledged. The U.S.

Department of Justice estimates that, "The average age at which girls first become victims of

prostitution is 12-14". Teenage girls are lured into illegal and forced prostitution at young ages

by men and boys known as "pimps" who use the girls' vulnerable pasts to coerce them into the

life. The pimp targets at-risk American teenagers with histories of trauma and through a specific

cycle, including steps such as recruitment, retention, intimidation and addiction, running away,

and returning to the pimp, turns the girl into a commodity.

The U.S. Department of Justice estimates that there are over "293,000 American youth

are currently at risk of becoming victims of commercial sexual exploitation", many of whom

come from broken homes and are sexually abused. Nicole von Oy, the United States training and

outreach coordinator at a non-profit anti-trafficking organization called Love 146, noted that

among at-risk teens, "70-90% of cases involve sexual abuse". She stated, "In my experience, all

of the girls have been lured in by pimps. Many have an unstable home life, sexual abuse,

exposure to drugs, or are chronic runaways due to the abuse and the neglect at home".

American teenagers lured into prostitution are viewed as nothing more than a moneymaking

enterprise for their pimps. Rachel Lloyd bluntly states (126):

> Pimps understand child psychology and adolescent development well enough to know the
> dynamics at play and can skillfully manipulate most children, regardless of
> socioeconomic background, prior abuse, or parenting, into a situation where they can be
> forced or coerced into being sold for sex.

The beginning of a minor's journey towards being viewed solely as a commodity begins with the

"recruitment" stage. This is the stage in which a pimp identifies an "at-risk" teen through the

characteristics previously discussed. The 2001 study entitled, "Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States" notes, "pimps recruit young, vulnerable U.S. women in malls and clubs by befriending and creating emotional and drug or alcohol dependencies to entrap them. Girls that are abused are often desperately seeking the attention of any human being. When the human being happens to be a male figure, they usually do not say "no". One study found that, "1 in 5 women trafficked in the United States had an intimate relationship with their pimp, who took advantage of the woman's emotional ties. Emotional and physical abuse, then, lures women into prostitution themselves" (Parrot and Cummings 7). Pimps do not always initially tell their victims that they are pimps and many times will pretend to be interested in the girls. They often spend time getting to know the girls, isolating them from any sort of family that they may have, and then eventually telling them what they do for a living.

Many young girls do not realize that their pimp is exploiting them until it is far too late. One such example is a young girl named Shaneiqua who is highlighted in the documentary, *Very Young Girls*. Shaneiqua entered the life at age 12 after her pimp followed her and approached her saying "I like you. You cute, you sweet" (Very Young Girls). Although Shaneiqua's pimp was 29 or 30 years old she says, "I didn't really care. I felt like it was cool for me to be twelve years old and for an older dude to be interested in me. I'm sexy" (Very Young Girls). In addition to initial contact, Shaneiqua's pimp continued to establish deeper connections with her in order to recruit her. They ended up becoming intimate very early on and he told her "we're going to be together" (Very Young Girls). Shaneiqua next describes the "honeymoon" stage of her relationship with her pimp. They would always go out to dinner, go to the movies, and do normal things that a couples often like to do. Shaneiqua next states (Very Young Girls):

> After the two weeks, we were out riding and he was like yo I really love you. I want us to be together and I would do anything for you. I'm a pimp. I get girls, they go on the track

for me, and they make money for me. I would love you a lot more if you made money for me because we could have more fun and go more shopping and we wouldn't have to worry about much.

A combination of neglect and sexual abuse allows pimps to form ties between themselves and their "girlfriends." They make sure that the girls grow attached physically and emotionally, and then they force them onto "the track." Rachel Lloyd states bluntly that in her experience, "girls weren't drug addicted, they were love addicted" (Lloyd 105).

Most pimps also use a variety of violent acts and threats to retain their commodities. In a New York Times article entitled "Do as He Said," Nicholas Kristof states that in the United States, "89% of prostitutes urgently wanted to escape the work and two-thirds have post-traumatic stress disorder". In addition he posits, "one-third have been threatened with death by pimps, and almost half have attempted suicide. Many pimps prey on girl's older scars of sexual or physical abuse in order to control them. Rachel Lloyd states (156):

> Violence in the home trains children to believe that abuse and aggression are normal expressions of love…for girls who've had nonexistent, fractured, or downright abusive relationships with their fathers or father figures, it's an easy draw. 'My daddy,' girls say with pride as they talk about the man who controls them.

The pimps use these insecurities to become "family." They tell the girls that they are all "wives-in-law" and that he is "Daddy" (Lloyd 154). After coming from lives riddled with sexual abuse and trauma, it is easy to see why "75% of minors engaged in prostitution have a pimp" (trafficking hope). Nicole von Oy recalls often seeing girls who are made promises, but are met with violence instead. She states:

> In my work the majority of girls have an unstable home life, and many when they meet their pimps, are promised modeling careers. They are filmed pornographically because they want to make money and if they try to say no they are met with violence. The pimp will tell them that this famous actress had sex with their director and producer and that everyone has to start somewhere, and it kind of snow balls from there. They are promised careers, but they never get them.

Nicole also says that in her work pimps use a large amount of violence and illegal drugs to control their girls or commodities. Through abuse and control of finances, the pimp creates a "dependency on the trafficker" (von Oy). She states that, "it varies by pimp, but many use drugs as a form of control. If he gets a girl addicted to drugs he can take it away from them as a form of punishment or for disobeying him" (von Oy). Many pimps also keep girls from leaving by controlling them financially. It is estimated that "pimps can earn up to 632,000 per year by selling 4 women or children" (Shared Hope International). Women and girls also accrue "debt" with their pimps. If a girl did something wrong such as "overstayed the allotted time with buyers, or if they were ill" they were often fined by the pimp (Raymond and Hughes 60). In order to keep girls from leaving, pimps will often implement violence that nearly kills the girls involved. One prostitute recounts a situation in which another prostitute talked back to her pimp and was "dragged out of the house naked and run over several times by his moving SUV" (Lloyd 159). Pimps use coercion, lies, and violence in order to control their "property" enough so that they will not abandon the business that they have created.

The next part of a sexually exploited teenager's journey is convincing herself that she is no longer a commodity, or an object to be bought or sold for someone else. Soon after they leave, they begin to consider going back to their pimp and "have nightmares or flashbacks" (Lloyd 473). These are all symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. A study done showed that "67 percent" of 475 prostitutes in the commercial sex industry 'met the criteria' for PTSD" (Lloyd 482). Many girls succumb time and time again to "love" and often go back to their pimp (von Oy). Rachel Lloyd describes what feelings a girl leaving her pimp experiences and states: He feels like a part of my skin, he's in my bloodstream. When he tells me that even if I get married, have children, and am gone for ten years, he'll find me, I believe him. When he says

that I'll have no choice but to go with him, that I'll always belong to him, that I was born to be

his, I believe him. (Lloyd 492).

The job of a pimp is to make a girl into a business venture, but in order to keep her he

must brainwash her. When this cycle is finally broken through counseling and newfound healthy

relationships, American girls have the opportunity to heal and create new identities away from

the sexual exploitation of their pimp and life on "the track."

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Did They Really Just Say That?!? : Micro-Analysis of Interactions

By: Elyssa Feliciano '12

Growing up in a predominantly white area has greatly influenced the way I perceive the Caucasian culture. For a long time, I considered myself to be white despite my most blatantly not white outward appearance. My speech and the manner in which I carry myself might be considered "white" by society and after growing up where I have, I didn't have much exposure to other cultures or other forms of speech. The only experience I had was with my own extended family with whom I often felt like an outsider with. It wasn't until I came to Stonehill College and got involved with the Intercultural Affairs Office that I embraced my ethnicity and took ownership of it. I learned to finally deal accept the challenges and nuances that come with being a "white" Latina.

Many people have always told me I have a unique look, which is their nice way of saying I look racially or ethnically ambiguous. I tend to get a lot of "What are you?" or "Where are you from?" from people I meet. I have realized that the reason why people ask me about my ethnicity is perhaps I don't fit the "norms" or the stereotypes of my culture. I am a proud Latina woman but unfortunately no one can seem to tell just by looking at me. Further, my racially ambiguous appearance is the reason why I have been exposed to language that can be categorized as everyday usage of white racism. People tend to not be as politically correct around me because they forget that I'm not white no matter how much I may act like it. Sure people may not come right out and say something blatantly racist, but often times I experience or witness some type of inadvertent remark that leaves me feeling uncomfortable. One such example occurred here at Stonehill one Saturday night in my sophomore year.

I was outside of the Colonial Courts standing with an acquaintance with whom I hadn't spoken to in awhile when one of our mutual friends walked by. We were talking about how attractive he was when all of sudden she said, "He would be a lot cuter if he didn't have that Spic stache [mustache]." My initial reaction was one of surprise. I could not believe she had just said that in front of me. Not only was it an offensive word in general but, didn't she know I was Hispanic? I had so many questions going through my mind but when it came time to react I just laughed and agreed with her. To this day I am still upset with myself over the fact that I never brought her attention to how offensive I thought her comment was. I just laughed it off and chalked it up to her being ignorant and not knowing that I personally identified as a Latina and that I would find that word offensive. But the fact that I brushed it off and tried not to think much about it just goes to show how engrained the language of White racism is in our society.

The fact that she used that word in front of me could means two things. First, she honestly did not know that I was Hispanic and said it as a joke figuring it would make me laugh. The second option is that she did know my ethnicity and said it anyway because she didn't think the word was offensive. The common factor in these two options however, is the fact that she had no qualms in using the word. If she used it as a necessary component of the joke then she fits the description of White Americans that find slurs an object of fascination (50). In the Everyday Language of White Racism, Jane Hill references Allen's Unkind Words when discussing the American fascination with slurs. Allen asserts that "American slang is among the most elaborate, fanciful, and colorful in the world"(50). Hill goes on to say that that claim "makes clear that Allen, at the same time that he condemns slurs and epithets, takes pleasure in them as a sign of richness of "American" imagination"(50). The interesting thing about slurs is that no matter how offensive people may find them, they still make their way into common language through joking

and other forms of witty talk. Hill acknowledges the fact that many people enjoy the use of slurs in humorous talk and text and most people can appreciate "the poetics of a skillful string of slurs"(50). Perhaps my friend thought I fit into this category of people.

While I found the use of the slur to be rude I did not take too much offense to it because she was not using the slur against me. I told myself that she used the word to emphasize the ridiculousness of our white friend having a mustache that is notoriously seen on men of Hispanic descent. I have certainly been desensitized to the use of slurs and epithets in humorous talk. It does not bother me that much when I know the intent is to make me laugh. I realize however, that I may be a minority in this way of thinking.

Most of my friends of color do not find the use of slurs in humorous talk and text to actually be funny. The question I must then ask, is why do I? After reading *The Everyday Language of White Racism* and reflecting on the situations I have been in, I realize that I perpetuate the White racism Hill discusses throughout the book with my silence. I tend to not speak up when something is offensive because I am either used to it, or it is one of my friends saying it and I do not want to embarrass them by calling them out on the offensive nature of their speech.

The fact that I have been desensitized to "covert racist speech" or even outright racist speech occurred to me after I read the text and saw the presentation on Mock Spanish. I remember thinking, " Wow, some of these are examples are considered offensive? Should these things offend me? What's wrong with me?" The class discussion about the chapter that ensued certainly hit home the fact that I do not notice or recognize this kind of speech as racist. Mock Spanish has never offended me even though most of family are native speakers. In fact, after seeing the examples the author used in the book I realized that I used Mock Spanish rather

frequently. A question that arose but did not dare to ask was, "Is it Mock Spanish when a non-native but Latina speaker uses it?" In other words, would it still be Mock Spanish if I said something? I did not dare say anything in class especially since there were other students that also identify as Latina. But I realized that perhaps my "identity crisis" has caused me to adopt these unintentional characteristics of everyday white racism.

The truth is that by dismissing the use of slurs because the person is my friend trying to be humorous I perpetuate white racism. I know this is something that my friends of color would find very disheartening. In fact, a lot of my white friends found it horrible as well, but there were a select few who waited to see my reaction before reacting to what I told them. If I told them and seemed visibly upset by it then they would respond with the usual "I can't believe she said that." But there were a few that would respond with that response while laughing at the same time. Those types of reactions contribute to my understanding of the incident as nothing to be too offended about because she was obviously just trying to make a joke. But as I reflect, I realize that even if she was just joking that that kind of language is just unacceptable.

Through these experiences and reflections, I have been made more aware of how inappropriate these incidents are. I rethink these moments continuously looking for when I began to feel hurt and offended. When the racial slur first came out of my friend's mouth it did hurt, even though the word was not directed at me. It hurt because I knew she was not just saying it to make the joke. She has obviously used that word in the past and I think that is what bothers me the most. There I was thinking that no one even uses that word anymore, and all of a sudden I realize that it is still very much a part of everyday language. In this sense, my classroom knowledge has been somewhat cathartic because it has allowed me to reflect on the situation and approach it from several angles. And each angle has shown that when I experience these

glimpses of racism through speech, it is normal for me to be offended and that I should

acknowledge that there is no excuse or intention to help me laugh about it. Never again will I

allow such speech to be used in my presence because if I cannot speak up in my own defense,

who will?

Student-Worker Dual Identity

By: Sinead Chalmers '12

It is Thursday afternoon; the sun is shining in my window as I glance at the clock. It mocks me telling me it is time to go to work. I jump off my bed, as I listen to the grumblings of the T.V. behind me. I begin to prepare for work. I grab my maroon collared shirt and black visor out of my closet and stuff them into my backpack. I slip on my black non-slip shoes, grab my room key and run out the door. The sun beats down on my shoulders. I pass students and professors as I walk down the path and greet them all with a smile. I place my earphones in and play some 'feel good' music as I make the trek to the freshmen dining hall across campus. The music begins to pick up; I begin to sing to myself. I contemplate my newest life dramas and think of all the work I have to do later in the evening. I get closer to the dining hall and glance down at my watch. I have 5 minutes to get there, seeing how my shift starts at 4p.m. on the dot. I pick up the pace. I pass students I see every day at work aka residents of the Holy Cross dormitory. Some smile, others quickly look away. Regardless I smile and laugh to myself. With each step I am one step closer to the Holy Cross dormitory. I am one step closer to transforming my identity from a student of the College to an employee of the College. I finally get to the door. I greet my co-workers with a smile and a big "Hello!" It's 3:58pm. I punch in just in the nick of time.

The aroma of the kitchen is intoxicating. The smell of mashed potatoes and chicken fill the air. The dishwasher hums in the corner pumping water into and out of the sink. There is peacefulness in the kitchen despite its noisy surroundings. I look around at my co-workers; you can tell everyone is tired. It is the Thursday slump, just one more day and it's the weekend.

Small talk ensues between my coworkers. Laughter soon follows. I glance up at the clock. It's 4:45p.m. Fifteen minutes until dinner officially starts. I grab the fresh food out of the oven and place it on the line ready for the students. I run back to complete my uniform. I slip the maroon shirt over my head. I place the visor on my head and tuck my ponytail in. I am no longer Sinead Chalmers, upperclassmen at the College. I am now Sinead Chalmers, employee of the College. I hear the steamer buzz in its high pitch from the office. I run out and grab the green beans out of the steamer and place them on the line. The residents of the dorm begin to file into the dining room. I greet the first student with a smile. I am an employee now, not a student. The separation of the steel counter and the identification of that the maroon shirt makes a clear distinction between me and the students.

Class Assignments and Requirements

My original project began as a required assignment in an advanced qualitative methods course. I conducted extensive field research in order to understand the "complexities of the social world in which we live and how we go about thinking, acting and making meaning in our lives" (Ellis 2004:25). As a researcher I set out to examine the different effects of a secluded freshmen dormitory on a small liberal arts campus.

Throughout this process, I was to ensure that my research followed ethical measures for all participants involved. My chosen research site was a freshmen dormitory's café, where I was also employed. My methodology consisted of participant observation and semi-structured interviews with one male and one female participant. I used the interviews to gain insight into the student experience in the isolated dormitory. Additionally, through participant observation, my employment at the café was useful in gaining a further understanding of the student experience in the dorm as well as to gain a holistic experience within the freshmen dormitory.

The field work that I participated in would hopefully allow insight into greater connections to the social world, and therefore be applicable to other settings (Ellis 2004). I hoped that through this methodology that I could capture the environment as "holistically and naturally" as possibly while being enmeshed in the research as an involved participant (Ellis 2004: 26).

Original Project: Goals and Methodology

Initially I sought to focus on three distinct features of my site. First, I wanted to explore the relationship between food and body satisfaction/dissatisfaction. This seemed appropriate because I was working in a cafeteria during the dinner shift. Second, the freshman dormitory was relatively isolated from the rest of campus life. This intrigued me as I questioned if that residential isolation in the beginning of a student's college career may have social affects, (negative or positive) on relationships between the students as well as their interactions with the staff in the café. Finally, I wanted to focus on the student-staff perspective in which I employed. This would allow me insight into how the students and the staff interacted. I planned to use my 'insider/outsider' positions to gain insight.

The residents that ate in this café reflected the college's demographics, a primarily white, female population. My sample consisted of approximately 150 students and was relatively consistent as only students living in that dormitory regularly ate in the café. As noted, the methodology I utilized for this study consisted of participant observation and semi-structured interviews. With the use of participant observation I was able to observe the students while I worked. This carried both advantages and disadvantages. The consistency of scheduled time and similar participants were advantages. These consistencies proved to be beneficial to my research. On the other hand, due to this 'insider status' I was immersed within the environment where I could potentially overlook factors that an outsider would have the ability to detect.

My primary gatekeeper was my employer granting me access into the dormitory and kitchen in which I worked in. This access into the dormitory allowed my research to delve into the complex insider and outsider statuses I occupied. My insider statuses included: regular access and employment within the café, which enabled me to build a rapport with my co-workers. However, I occupied an 'outsider status' with the participants, the residents of the dorm. This outsider status was a result of my perceived position as a staff member, despite the fact that I too am a student at the college. This complexity of identity not only enhanced my research but became the focal point. Consequently, through participant observation I occupied a covert position. The students as well as the other employees were unaware of my study. I understand the ethical implications of this covert researcher position however; it allowed the environment to remain 'natural' and uncontrolled. Thus, I would be able to observe the students and the staff in their 'natural dispositions.'

Dual Identity: Privilege, Class and Embody the Student-Worker

Interestingly enough in the beginning of my research my dual identity just seemed to be a convenient perk as it gave me the perspective of both the student and the staff. Each day I recorded my field notes there seemed to be some indication of social class issues when interacting with the students. These incidents were small and discreet yet ever so present. This was the interesting element about my dual student-worker identity. Classism was persistently present throughout this process through subtle gestures, comments, and body language from the students. Social class and judgment filled the air within those cafeteria walls yet it seemed that no one addressed it. To be honest, I did not fully address until after I read over my field notes and began interpreting my data. It was when I was formulating conclusions that my dual identity

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allowed for an important analysis. I soon realized that the elephant in the room was social class and no one wanted to address it.

During my interpretive process I read Meagan Elliot's (2010) research which delves into the silence surrounding classism on college campuses. Instantly when reading Elliot's research I thought of my own. Throughout this entire process, classism became more and more apparent; however, when I addressed this issue in my semi-structured interviews the participants denied that there was any differentiation in classes (especially in relation to themselves). This illustrated the "incongruity between what people said and what they did," prompting my growing intrigue into this issue within my environment of the café (Ellis 2004: 27).

In the interviews I conducted the participants agreed that classism existed and was exercised within the confines of the café; however, they made it clear that they did not perpetuate it. The participants I interviewed both separately agreed that students are rude to the staff. Thus, students were disavowing themselves from this issue and completely excluding themselves from the perpetuation of classism within the café. This illustrated the silence around classism I persistently felt in this process. Students' participating in this silence only sustain the cycle of student privilege as well as maintain the inferiority and invisibility of the worker's status. Elliot suggests that there is a "lack of awareness" which is enabled by privilege (Ellis 2004: 27). This 'lack of awareness' of one's class allows for the denial and accountability that encompasses the persistence of privilege. This directly links to the privilege at the college, which I too had been largely unaware of until I discovered it my research. Class blindness seems to eliminate personal accountability, which parallels larger social issues. The participants of my study are guilty of this as am I. If there is no accountability there is no motivation for change. This is true of both the college as well as American society. I cannot unknow what I have seen and

experienced. As Mykhalovskiy argued to "write about the self is to write about the social experience. If culture circulates through all of us, then how can autoethnography not connect to a world beyond the self" (Ellis 2004: 34). Thus, to separate myself from the social issues within the microcosm of the freshmen dormitory café seems impossible and autoethnography is the only format to properly illustrate my experience as a researcher and a participant.

Hence, the focus on my story and my interactions with a specific group, such as the students of the freshmen dormitory, will create a story where the political, cultural and social connect (Ellis 2004). My research directly connects to the ethnographic work of Carolyn Ellis. For this reason, formatting my research into an autoethnographic format allows me as a researcher to connect my personal story to a larger societal story, which I was unaware even existed until the late stages of my research process. My personal experience as a researcher-participant was greatly valuable to my overall research experience.

After reading Carolyn Ellis' work on autoethnography and reevaluating my research, I have decided that my research is considered contingent ethnography where the researcher writes "about others and not about the self. It is not until the process of research that the researcher discovers his or her connection to the material and the world studied" (Ellis 2004: 51). It was not until my conclusion of my qualitative research that I realized the profound connection I have to the environment I studied and that there were larger sociological structures at play. I initially sought out to research three facets of the secluded dormitory; however, I realized that there was a larger connection to classism that I was completely overlooking, which in turn became the focus of my writing.

<u>Findings</u>

Discovering this dual identity threw me for a loop. It both inspired yet confused me. As a sociologist-in-training, I seek to dispel the invisible social structures influencing everyday life. The student-staff interactions I was studying through my participant observation illustrated the juxtaposition of student privilege and employee status. I embodied that very contradiction. Due to the covert status of my research many of the participants were unaware as my status as a student and identified me simply as an employee of the café. This propelled a lot of negative treatment from the students. For example:

> "Rudeness was a basic reaction from many students. I conclude that it is due to the assumed inferiority of the staff, that being behind a counter literally serving the students made us, the staff, of lesser value. This rudeness is nothing short of infuriating, especially realizing the fact that I occupy both the position of the staff and the student. Rudeness was felt by a majority of the students; therefore concluding that it is not a coincidence, rather it's an issue of perceived social class" (Field Notes)

> Female Interviewee: "Yeah there are some people that think that they [staff] are only here to serve us"
> Male Interviewee: "There are definitely those students that just think, the staff is the staff… ya know" (Interveiws)

My treatment as an employee by the students was very interesting because my insider characteristics of age, race and gender seemed to mask the larger sociological issues at play. It was not until I was finishing my research that I was disheartened by the treatment that my fellow employees were experiencing. As a majority of my co-workers are older than me, I was outraged to witness this disrespect. In many instances, when returning to my college dorm after work, I was upset questioning if I embodied that privilege and never really addressed it. Was I living a contradiction: a privileged student by day and a subordinate college employee by night? I knew that I did not perpetuate the disrespect; however, I did embody student privilege. I am a student

at a four year private liberal arts college in Massachusetts. This internal conflict made me question if I were a part of this system of inequality.

I have been an employee of the freshmen dorm café for three years and I have encountered many moments of disrespect. Due to the fact that I am an upperclassman, my student status is/was covert to many of the freshmen who enter the café. Thus, when I reveal where I work, the reactions are literally priceless, even from my closest friends. Why it that that form of employment is considered inferior? I hold several jobs at the college, out of the list of my employment, why is it that my employment at the freshmen dorm café provoke such treatment? Their reactions only seem to create a tainted image of who I am, not as a student, not as a worker, not as a friend, rather as a person. They may never say it but their eyes do.

> Before I came to work today, one of my friends had asked me where I worked, I told her and immediately the judgment set in and the issue of conformity became apparent to me: does every student have this perception of the staff that works for the college? Why does the poor treatment persist? Do they even realize that they are doing it?" It is so interesting how the judgment sets in from all aspects of the student body, from the students who live in the Holy Cross dormitory to those who don't (Field Notes).

Why does this happen? How does my worker status as an employee of the college café affect my 'status?' I embody the conflicting positions of the privileged student and the invisible worker. Thus, these reactions do not immediately reflect the person; rather it reflects the larger influences on my work status. This is an issue of socialization, yet I sit here in limbo, in my dual identity. I am the student that serves other students.

This limbo is not only difficult for me, but also for others. Where am I categorized? I sit in this indeterminate state between privilege and worker inferiority. In the eyes of others, I walk a fine line of being an exception. I am not considered inferior because I too am a student. I am the exception compared to the rest of the café employees, whom will remain inferior. However, I

know I am not. I am a working student from a working class family who can barely afford the outrageous costs of a private college education. I am not the exception. If anything I am in the marginalized population that is barely spoken about within the glorified systems of higher education. However, despite my finances, I have every right to attend a private college, this private college. In many respects this little research study that I took on has morphed into this larger issue of the privileged and the disenfranchised. My student-worker status is a clear illustration of the have and have-nots. I have the entitled position to go to this private four year institution, yet I do not have the privilege of not working. I must work to financially support myself. Hence, it is fascinating to see how I am classified in two contradicting positions. One as a student enrolled in an out of state private liberal arts institution promising a world of opportunities, and the other as a student who can barely afford to attend said school costing me thousands in tuition bills. This illustrates the glorified reality and the grim reality. The glorified reality is the one I encompass in my daily life, walking to and from class on this beautiful campus without a care in the world. The grim reality is the lack of employment opportunities and student debt awaiting me. These conflicting realities are present on this campus with the staff and students. The students live the glorified reality; the staff the grim. This research began in a small kitchen in a café dorm and slowly unraveled to illustrate systematic inequalities in education and classism that I am only now learning I am a part of.

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FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

It Needs to Get Better: Listen Up Theory Students.

By Dr. Patricia Leavy, Associate Professor of Sociology

One of my favorite quotes is: "The candle is not there to illuminate itself." To me, this means knowledge should be put into action—to make visible what may be in darkness and to use our voices to break through silence—because it needs to get better. This is a class about ideas, about how our own individual lives unfold in a larger context that shapes us and that we in turn shape. This class is also about social justice and acting with compassion and equality in a world of stark inequalities. When we see how our lives impact the lives of others, when we start to see the road map between our micro-worlds and our macro-worlds, we are compelled to act accordingly. As Oprah Winfrey often says, and I concur, "When you know better, you do better." So to me, this class has the potential to help each of us live more consciously and in turn improve our own lives and the lives of others. Let's take a look back over the semester, and a look forward into the future.

Sometimes we act in the world as if we are sleepwalking through our lives and it is my hope that we all live our lives wide awake. Next time you are going to a store to pick something up think about Marx and consider the kind of store you are going to. Are you going to a big box store or a local business? Where was the item you are buying made, and why? What is the process that brought it from there to here—whose labor is imprinted in the object? If you are paying a low price, how is that afforded to you? I personally don't want to live in a world of only big box stores and I don't want to contribute to unfair working conditions here or abroad because I know there is no difference between my child and a child born elsewhere. So it needs to get better.

Durkheim has showed us that if we want to understand changes in non-material culture we must look to material culture which reflects cultural beliefs and values. We must do this on our own campus. When we look at the non-discrimination policy at Stonehill, a part of material culture, we will see that it does not protect people on the basis of sexual orientation. Does that reflect our values? Do we value homophobia? Do we value inequality? Do we value harassment? Do we value hate crimes? It needs to get better.

Weber teaches us to look at history if we are to make sense of our present. The lessons in history about the deep and dark dangers of inequality are all-too plentiful. Several years ago when the world was learning about the horrors of the Rwandan genocide through films like Hotel Rwanda I was honored to be invited to a dinner with Paul Rusesabagina (the movie Hotel Rwanda is about his experience in the genocide). I will never forget speaking with him and I want to share it with you. He was surprised when the world was silent as children were butchered in the streets—he was waiting for intervention, waiting for help. We asked him what his fears were now—he said the same thing is happening in Darfur, but the world has not learned, the world watches in silence. I am reminded of Noam Chomsky who said: "Silence is complicity." It needs to get better.

I told you that the day after my talk with the Treasurer of the United States I went to the Holocaust Museum in New York. I thought about how lucky I was to be able to use my voice when so many have been denied. Recently when I was giving a book talk about Low-Fat Love at another college, one student asked me if one of the characters, Melville, was Jewish. I replied that I had not noted any religious background for any of the characters so no, Melville was not Jewish. The student replied: "Oh, because Melville was really cheap and I know a lot of Jewish people who are cheap so I thought he may be Jewish." Needless to say I was utterly horrified.

Instead of showing my horror I replied: "I am Jewish so when you say that it hurts my feelings." The student did not reply. No one in the room said a word, as if it didn't happen. It needs to get better. If you're thinking that would never happen here, think again. Several years ago a Stonehill student wrote the following in one of his class papers: "I really like it that you're funny. Jewish people like you and Jerry Seinfeld are funny." I wrote the following on the student's paper: "I realize you mean this as a compliment but in fact it is a stereotype and there are no "good" stereotypes so I encourage you to reflect on this." In an effort to "save face" as Goffman said, instead of reflecting on my comments, the student took his paper to another professor in a different department. That white, male, Christian professor later emailed me that he felt sorry for his embarrassed student because he believed the student was trying to say something nice. It needs to get better.

It is important to remember what we have learned from feminist theorists: inequalities limit our chances for self-actualization, the innate right of every human being. But our inequalities are the result of our situations and we can change our situations. Our situations are also impacted by our self-esteem, as Cooley teaches us. Every semester I learn about female students starving themselves, denigrating themselves, belittling themselves and diminishing themselves. It needs to get better. It seems hardly a week goes by without hearing about a "bias incident" on this campus. Here I think about the late-great comedian George Carlin who talked about euphemistic language and how it conceals the truth. If we are to learn from Foucault then it is in discourse that power and knowledge are joined. So the way we talk about things matters. So maybe we need to talk about racism, hate and hate crimes as just that, and not diminish them with the sterile term "bias incident." It needs to get better.

We often say that knowledge is power. I would say that knowledge is responsibility. What are you going to do with what you have learned, because it needs to get better? So we each came into this class a few months ago, and now, these months later I hope each of us is a little better, and will continue to be. As you know I will be heading to DC in the Fall to speak with our government about diversity. I will take what I have learned from you and I will send a clear message: It needs to get better.

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