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"Manufacturing" Community: Solidarity, Profit, and the Bar Owner

Timothy Hartshorn
Connecticut College, thartso@conncoll.edu

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**"Manufacturing" Community:
Solidarity, Profit, and the Bar Owner**

Timothy Hartshorn

2014

Honors Thesis

Anthropology Department

Connecticut College

Thesis Adviser: Professor Anthony P. Graesch

First Reader: Professor Jeffrey Cole

Second Reader: Professor Christopher Steiner

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Abstract

The following study examines the potential of eight independently run bars in New London, Connecticut to “manufacture” community. This process is examined with particular focus on the tension felt by bar *owners*, who must continually attract new patrons while still keeping their current “regulars” content. Inherent to this study is the reexamination of “community” as an analytically useful term in anthropological scholarship, with particular emphasis on disproportionate feelings of belonging and commitment as manifested by individual interpretation of collectively rendered symbols.

This data for this study was collected by virtue of semi-structured interviews as well as ethnographic field observation. The owner (or, in one case, the manager) of each bar on which the study is focused was interviewed twice. First interviews largely consisted of descriptive questions, while structural questions comprised the majority of second interviews. Interviews were transcribed and then analyzed by virtue of domain analyses and folk taxonomies. Field note-taking was divided into two distinct stages: that of unfocused notes, which concerned anything and everything discernible within a bar, and that of focused notes, which concerned a single behavioral pattern.

Analysis of my data indicates that a bar may “manufacture” community by encouraging patrons to identify with one another, the establishment’s owner, and the owner’s ideal bar environment. The bar owners interviewed for this study facilitate such feelings of identification, in part, by targeting specific “crowds” of patrons with whom they identify. Furthermore, these individuals remain highly visible within their respective establishments and, as a result, promote the continual reproduction of a specific bar atmosphere. This atmosphere is the product of such elements as music, décor, and television programming, but primarily emerges as a result of

social interaction. The bar owners on which this study is focused make it a point to interact with their patrons on a regular basis. In so doing, they promote normative models of social behavior. The role of these individuals can be said to harbor a considerable tension, however, as, along with reproducing regularity, they must continually seek new patronage (albeit to varying extents) as a means of remaining in business. As such, the need to make a profit is often juxtaposed to “community” in the language of both bar owners and bar patrons.

Based on the interview and observational data that I collected, I conclude that the propensity of bars involved with this study to garner feelings of solidarity and belonging among patrons does, indeed, enable them to “manufacture” community. Although the interpretation of symbols (“hipster,” “alternative,” “neighborhood bar,” etc.) associated with bar communities unavoidably varies between individual patrons, bar owners encourage similarity across such interpretations by, again, remaining visible within their respective establishments. The owners of the eight bars examined in this study, through both conversation and other forms of behavior, publicize their own interpretations of the community identities “manufactured” within their respective establishments. As new bar patrons become more familiar with a bar owner *and* this individual’s regular clientele, they will be encouraged to align their own interpretations of community identity with those of more seasoned community members. By encouraging interpretive unity among patrons (with the understanding that this can never be fully achieved), bar owners navigate the tension between novelty and cyclicity. Although some bar owners encourage “diversity” within their main crowd in terms of ethnic or cultural backgrounds, they also attempt to assimilate new patrons into their respective communities as quickly and seamlessly as possible. Prompt assimilation reduces the potential for disruption in the regular schedule of a bar.

Chapter1: Introduction

We go to each other's parties. We go to each other's funerals.

- Gary, owner of Nine Innings Tavern

The city of New London, Connecticut, viewed by some as up and coming and, by others, as abandoned, rests its presently ambivalent character on a history of economic flux. Once a kingpin of the whaling industry and, during World War II, a leader in submarine manufacture, this urbanized port town has most recently transformed into an unpredictable burden for many residents. Over the past decade, a variety (and abundance) of financial struggles have forced New London, rightly proud of its ignored history and smartly aware of its potential as a growing hub for the arts, down a winding path of countless identity renewals, clean-ups, and predicted renaissances. Although this course continues to cause substantial frustration among residents and investors alike, most locals will hold that the city's downtown neighborhoods have experienced a rise in youth population and, concurrently, in one particular type of establishment: the bar.

The present-day peppering of bars in downtown New London, all of which seem entrenched in a struggle with abandoned storefronts for control of the city's major streets, is not exactly a new direction for this area. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, New London was – at least in the words of Larry, seasoned New Londoner and denizen of the leftmost barstool at Harley's (a basement bar with rock-n'-roll loyalties) – “pretty goddamn crazy.” Indeed, find someone who lived downtown during this time, and you will find anecdotes of alcohol, drugs, prostitution, and even a stolen fire truck. How many of these tales are based in fact remains unclear, but what *can* be said with certainty is that, by the 1990s, all craziness had ended. Bars

began to close with increasing frequency, and it soon became apparent that New London was yet again reinventing itself. Not surprisingly, anecdotes concerning this period of change are, like those centered on the hard-partying '70s and '80s, diverse products of a fragmented oral tradition. According to many locals, it was the navy which, indirectly, caused most bars to close. Too many young sailors were returning to base with empty pockets, it is often said, and strict regulations were soon placed on the ability of these individuals to visit downtown establishments, *especially* those which served liquor. Other locals, conversely, blame pressure from local politicians on the decline in nightlife. Conspiracies and scapegoats aside, however, what everyone does agree on is that, to borrow the words of local bar-owner Gary McAllister, downtown quickly become a “ghost town,” and the identity of New London, now virtually devoid of both industry and small business, remained wholly unclear.

Witness to this bizarre drama was Gary's own business, Nine Innings Tavern, one of the few bars which managed to stay up and running through the 1990's. Still open today, this single-room establishment, often deemed something of a “hole in the wall” by newcomers and non-regulars alike, is New London's oldest bar. And though few, if any, locals would shrug their shoulders if asked for directions to Nine Innings, the storied tavern hardly announces itself. Tucked away on Garden Avenue, one of numerous byroads which make up New London's cluttered maze of one-ways and back alleys, this business counts among its neighbors a small apartment complex, a parking lot, and the rear side of an Indian restaurant.

In the eyes of a rare out-of-towner, the façade of Nine Innings is unlikely to stand out as a particularly compelling piece of architecture. Before entering, visitors are presented with a pair of large windows from which hang five small neon signs (reading “Budweiser,” “Miller High Life,” “Guinness,” “Schaefer: The One for Fun,” and “Nine Innings Tavern,” respectively), as

well as a timeworn wooden door. The blinds of one window are generally drawn but cracked open, while the other is reliably crowded with posters advertising upcoming musical performances in the area.

Once inside the establishment, however, new patrons will soon understand this business as something quite different from the cramped dive that, while still positioned at the windows, squinting past flyers for local bluegrass shows and art festivals, they may have initially considered it. The interior is clean and quiet, and maintains what many have called a “historical” appeal, much of which is embodied by the tavern’s unusual reliance on wood as a primary building material for both furniture and architectural fixtures. Indeed, having entered Nine Innings, visitors will be met with a planked floor, a wooden bar counter, wooden bar stools, five wooden tables, and almost exclusively wooden walls. Especially compelling is the establishment’s north wall, which hangs a carefully arranged assortment of framed black-and-white photographs depicting New London over the past century. The south wall, to which the bar counter is adjacent, features a series of oak shelves displaying baseball memorabilia and neat stacks of novelty beer cans. A single flat-screen television juts out from this wall toward the front (east) end of the bar, anomalous but not unfitting. If it is before five o’clock, you will see Gary, owner of Nine Innings for fifteen years, standing behind the bar.

Gary will be the first to tell you that his crowd is ninety percent regulars, meaning that most people who enter the tavern will be greeted by name and served before they reach one of the establishment’s barstools. He will also be the first to say that patrons fill a role in his life far greater than that of the basic consumer. Gary considers nearly all of his patrons to be friends, some of them very good friends, and Nine Innings a home away from home. The tavern has been open for eighty years, and Gary has been around for thirty-five of them. When asked about

his personal involvement with the establishment, he will unequivocally explain: *I drank here for ten years, I worked here for ten years, and I've owned it for fifteen years.* He will tell you about his desire to preserve an environment which he sees as being among the last of a dying breed and, in so doing, continue to give his extended “family” of patrons and staff a place which they, too, may call “home.”

Gary’s story, while compelling, is also familiar. Most Americans have at one point in their lives been exposed to the image of a bar populated by regulars. Especially in recent years, the wide success of television programs such as *Cheers* and *The Simpsons* (think Moe’s Tavern) have brought to the forefront of American pop culture what many frequent bar-goers had long accepted – that bars are important sites of social interaction. From Gary’s perspective, to consider the drinking establishment as a locus of “community” has been commonplace in this country for decades. Speaking about Nine Innings, he once told me, “it’s a dying breed...there used to be lots of bars like this in every town...I kind of stress...making it possible for people to have conversations...if we do have music, it’s kept at a very reasonable volume to encourage people to talk...it’s the way I think it was in the sixties and the fifties.” Whether or not bars are in fact becoming less social by what Gary has called a “media overload” of multiple televisions, loud music, or even an overwhelming variety of beers on tap is a question which I explore in Chapter 4. Pertinent here is simply the fact that, for a long time now, bars have been perceived as spaces in which friendships are formed, stories are shared, and social lives are entangled.

The notion of the bar as a site of community production is made problematic, however, by the fact that the term *community* itself has never been sufficiently or explicitly defined by social scientists. What is a community? Do relationships such as those developed in Nine Innings Tavern constitute community formation? Furthermore, how might communities formed

within bars inform the development of growing urban centers such as New London? While this study will focus on the unique communities formed within New London bars, it is important to note that membership of these communities is not exclusive. There exists overlap in clientele. As such, interpretations of the both group and individual identity are exchanged across distinct spaces; the normative codes of behavior influencing activity in one establishment may affect conduct in another. By bringing locals together in conversation, bars invariably affect the neighborhoods and, on a broader scale, towns or cities in which they are situated. It is on these questions that this study will be most intimately concerned.

The bar has long been a staple of British and American society, first emerging in its recognizable form during the turn of the nineteenth century, when the counter that now shares its name with this type of establishment became widespread in the U.K. From England, this piece of furniture made its way to the United States, where it has since become a clear demarcation of the bar space, both in terms of acceptable interpersonal interactions and expected rituals of consumption (Schivelbusch 1992, 194-203). The speed at which liquor can be dispensed over a bar counter has allowed for a form of serving distinct from that practiced at restaurants (*ibid.*) and, in consequence, has enabled possibilities for social interaction based on such unique practices as buying a round or conversing with a server at length.

That the bar counter has enabled a broadly uniform code of behavior to govern contemporary activity within drinking establishments becomes quite an ironic fact when one considers the importance of individuality with the bar industry. Few stand-alone bars today are part of a chain, so few, in fact, that these establishments are often seen as constituting the last independent business landscape in America. Bars attract people by mimicking people: some are

relaxed, while others are loud, some are welcoming, while others refrain from treating strangers with particular warmth. Nevertheless, once inside a bar, experienced patrons understand what is expected of them – how to interact with the furniture, the bar tender, the drink that he or she is served, and, most notably, other patrons. Of course, uniform codes of behavior within business establishments are not exclusive to bars; we all know how to browse through retail stores, or pay for gas. The *visibility* of expected interactions between patrons in bars, however, is unique. No other type of business forces clientele to consciously locate themselves within a social landscape of strangers, acquaintances, and friends with such consistency.

As will be discussed further in Chapter 2, drinking itself maintains an ambivalent character (not just in the so-called west, but globally) by serving as both a catalyst for interaction and a path to isolation. Each side of this dual identity, however, is frequently oversimplified by an unwavering focus, common in the United States, on the potential health and behavioral hazards of alcohol consumption. While this research project is by no means designed to glorify or promote drinking, I will argue that the social consequences of drinking, whether positive or negative, cannot be fully understood if trivialized as different forms of self-destruction.¹

Indeed, it would be a fairly simple task to prove that not all bar patrons are alcoholics, and that not all bars actively promote alcoholism and alcohol-related crime. Just look at Gary. His patrons tend not to have more than one or two beers per visit and apparently stop by Nine Innings more to chat than to drink. No one seems especially concerned about overspending on alcohol. This fact alone, however, offers little insight into the social environment of bars. The

¹ It is worth mentioning that, even on television shows which depict the bar as a decidedly social environment, the physical effects of alcohol may be exaggerated. Consider Moe's Tavern on *The Simpsons*. Despite the compelling humanity of Matt Groening's characters, few of us would aspire to be a Homer or a Barney, or, for that matter, a Moe.

following study will be foremost concerned with the potential of community to be produced within bars *despite* profit being a foremost objective of these establishments.

Looking past the small-town, 1950s charm of Nine Innings, a skeptical observer could, feasibly, argue that the entire culture of this establishment – décor, beer selection, even the focus on patron bonding – has been constructed simply to make money. Certainly, Gary cares about his patrons, but he also cares about making a profit. How do these two loyalties coexist? Is their coexistence the basis of community production? The purpose of this study is to answer such questions: to explore those processes through which businesses designed foremost to yield a profit may also facilitate social interactions crucial to community development and affective of relationships and activities outside and beyond the bar. By deconstructing the paradox of bars (through use of the term “manufactured community”), I clarify the analytical potential of *community* within anthropology and the social sciences more broadly. I will examine the potential of symbolic “boundaries” (Cohen 1985) to delimit bar-based communities which develop through identity negotiation and, in turn, promote the development of “joint commitments,” feelings of “belonging,” and “consociate” relationships (Amit 2012).

In regard to the setting of this research project, I argue that it is easiest to explore the bar as a site of “manufactured community” by conducting field work in establishments which enjoy a high percentage of regular clientele. This contention is *not*, however, meant to imply that bars which often cater to relatively transient crowds do not *also* serve regular patrons who frequent these sites in order to reaffirm certain elements of their identity (by virtue of both association with patrons of an establishment, as well as with the establishment itself and direct interaction). That being said, the process of identifying regulars in such establishments and, subsequently, examining their behavior is made difficult with groups of non-regulars continuously streaming in

and out. Furthermore, the relationship between bars as sites of manufactured community and the *localities* (see Chapter 2) in which these establishments are situated is +most readily discernible in a location relatively free of passersby. To this end, the city of New London, with its high density of bars and low residential population, becomes an ideal field for bar-based research. While there are several bars in town which, particularly during summer months, do attract notable business from train traffic and vacationers, the establishments reviewed in this study have come to expect only small numbers of non-regular patrons, regardless of the season.

Chapter 2: Community, Drinking, and The Bar

Introduction: Locating Community

The ubiquity of vague references to community is a familiar story to most of us.

- Vered Amit (in *Community, Cosmopolitanism, and the Problem of Human Commonality*)²

Before reviewing the literature on which this study locates a theoretical base, it is important to first address the following question: why community? Drinking practices and places have been analyzed extensively in relation to identity as well as to economic structures, but the bar as a site of “community” development does not quite conform to either of these models. That this study does not locate itself in any tradition of scholarship – that anthropologists have avoided research concerning the drinking place as a “community” – largely results from the considerable ambiguity embodied by this latter term. Indeed, before asking *why community?*, we must first identify to *what*, exactly, the word refers.

Were one to compile a list of those terms within the social sciences which experience frequent use but irregular analysis – terms as varied in origin and content as “culture,” “local,” and “phenomenon” – “community” would among the most compelling entries. The word is deceptively difficult. So frequent is its use, so varied are the contexts in which we reference it *and* the referents to which we attach it, that, for most members of the English-speaking public, “community” seems readily definable. We all share a vague impression, a feeling of what the term signifies. When it comes time to define this concept, however, many of us stumble and eventually halt. The word can seemingly be used to describe *any* group of associated people, regardless of whether this association is based in geography, kinship, vocation, or ideology.

² (2012, 3)

Communities are temporally and spatially unrestricted, but can also be formed solely by the contours of space and time. They require both solidarity and individuation, but cannot be described as universally disjunctive or cohesive. Membership within a community has the potential to occur at any point during someone's life and may be an active or a passive process. Consider the following examples: *The Muslim community, a community of activists, a community in South Bronx*...potential uses are endlessly available and easy to produce.

In academia today, "community" is used casually by some and avoided by others. Few scholars rely on the word with any standard definition in mind. This is not to imply, however, that the social sciences have completely ignored the analytical potential of this term. Any anthropological study that concerns itself with the concept of "community" must acknowledge and respond to the indefinite and frequently precarious position that this unlikely "hot button" has held within the social sciences for the past fifty years.

As Cooke (1990, 3) explains, "use [of community] goes back to the drawing of modern sociology where it was a concept developed in theoretical accounts of the importance from...feudalism to capitalism, prerational or premodern society to rational modernity, or societies characterized by mechanical solidarity to those displaying organic solidarity." In the eyes of social theorists such as Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, whose scholarship concerned an increasingly industrialized and capitalist Europe, the late 19th century marked a dissolution of community within the so-called western world. Such scholars, most vociferously Marx and Engels (1902), associated profound feelings of alienation with extreme labor specialization and the consequent diversity of normative behavioral codes. Ferdinand Tönnies, the first scholar concerned foremost with the community concept itself, "described a transition taking place between 'gemeinschaft,' the society of intimacy, of close personal knowledge, of stability, and

gesellschaft, a society characterized by ego-focused, highly specific and possibly discontinuous relationships, in which the individual interacts with different social milieu for different purposes” (Cohen 1985, 22). This dichotomy was developed in accordance with the distinctions outlined by Cooke (1990), particularly Durkheim’s concepts of mechanical and organic solidarity³,

As sociology desperately theorized the changing social conditions of newly industrial Europe, anthropology emerged as a more or less “scientific” derivative of colonialism. The supposedly “isolated” cultures of “primitive” peoples, “noble savages” whose purportedly egalitarian societies had just recently been penetrated by the reach of imperial powers, represented a manifestation of “community” more or less unattainable in Europe. Drawing a bridge between colonial-era sociology and anthropology, Schröder (2007, 78-79) notes that, along with serving as “a key concept in many classical social theories, usually as of a pair of opposites...the idea of community as a spatially and socially bounded unit was also fundamental to the classical ethnographic studies of functionalist anthropology.” Capitalist versus non-capitalist, primitive versus modern – the world, according to contemporary scholars such as Cooke (1990) and Schröder (2007) was suddenly dichotomized into oversimplified ideals.

For most social scientists, community began to lose its utility as the binaries developed by 19th century sociologists fell under increasing scrutiny. Cooke (1990, 5) notes that scholars unwilling to part from such dualisms increasingly aligned themselves with the view that community was “a *stable* medium for the reproduction of cultural practices based on strong ties of kinship and social familiarity,” (emphasis added) and sought field sites – for example, “remote Irish or Welsh communities where the persistence of native language could be perceived as an

³ In the words of Cohen (1985, 22): “Durkheim dichotomized...mechanical solidarity, the society founded on likeness, and unable to tolerate dissimilarity (therefore unable to encompass anything more than a rudimentary division of labor), and, second, organic solidarity, the society founded upon the integration of difference into a collaborative, and therefore harmonious, complex whole.”

added protection against the incursions of industrial culture” (Cooke 1990, 5) – from which such stability could be inferred. Although the utility of such studies has been disputed amongst scholars (Cooke 1990; Day and Murdoch 1993), they are rarely referenced today.

In claiming that, “If we are to...move beyond ‘community’ to a theoretical understanding of change rather than stability and, in particular, change in a spatial context it is important to consider the possibility that ‘locality’ is the more appropriate theoretical concept” Cooke (1990, 50) echoes a sentiment common in contemporary social scientific discourse. As such, locality will be reviewed and understood as a concept which holds the potential to compliment community. Before this discussion may begin, however, two important elements of *contemporary* community studies⁴ must be considered in brief.

First, it is important to note that not all “community studies” are concerned with a “spatial context” in the way that Cooke uses this phrase. Although Schröder (2007, 80) also introduces locality as a “rival concept” to community, she does acknowledge that the past three decades have seen the latter resurface as a viable term in both sociology and anthropology. With each discipline forced to contend with the emergence of globalization, a phenomenon as complex and dynamic as the industrialization which preceded it, certain scholars (Amit 2002, 2012; Anderson 1983) have revisited “community” while considering such non-geographical platforms for identity formation as ethnicity and ideology.

Secondly, not all social scientists accept the notion that 19th and 20th century sociology saw the end to “community” as an idea central to geographically bound social groups. According to Cohen (1985) the “opposites” suggested by Schröder (2007) and Cooke (1990), among others, to have defined the scholarship of Weber, Marx, and, most notably, Durkheim are

⁴ Into the 21st century, social science and, more specifically, anthropology, continue to resist the idea of “moving beyond” this term

oversimplified. Cohen (1985, 24) argues that “ it is...clear that [Durkheim] did not see mechanic and organic solidarities as historically incompatible, but, rather, as contrasted tendencies within society at any given time.” In order to make this claim, he cites Durkheim directly with the following quotation:

In the first [i.e., mechanic solidarity], what we call society is a more or less organized totality of beliefs and sentiments common to all the members of the group: this is the collective type. On the other hand, the society in which we are solitary in the second instance is a system of different, special functions which definite relations unite. These two societies really make up only one. They are two aspects of one and the same reality... (Durkheim 1964, 129)

According to Cohen (1985, 24), “mechanic solidarity is the aggregate of socially constituted individuals,” while “organic solidarity is society constituted *by* individuals, where differences which distinguish them from each other become also the bases for their integration and collaboration in a solidary whole.” As such, these terms are not *inherently* at odds with one another. While Cohen (1985) does not comment on the manner in which prevalent 19th century perceptions of industrialization informed Durkheim’s distinction between “mechanic” and “organic” solidarities, his point seems less a comment on Durkheim’s own ideas than a frustration with the failure of contemporary academics to reappropriate these ideas. According to Cohen, collective identity and the distinguishing of individuals need not be at odds.

Now, back to locality. The word has, traditionally, been studied in largely economic terms (Cox 1997; Day and Murdoch 1993; Massey 1984; Stacey 1969), but, like studies of community, social scientific scholarship concerned with this word has bred a variety of interpretations. While discussing social life in Wales’ Ithon valley, Day and Murdoch (1993), for example, distinguish the interaction between local economic institutions as a fundamental element of locality. Community, in contrast, is said to “play an essential part” in processes of

negotiation which inform the identities of both new and old residents, processes prompted by the fact that “Locals do not want ‘strangers’ in their midst and most incomers do not wish to be ‘strangers.’” Day and Murdoch (1993, 108) conclude that, while the site of their research can be considered a community, to call this field a locality is less a convincing argument. They hold that, “on no criterion does the Ithon valley seem to have an objective unity: it is cut across by several travel-to-work areas, local institutions mesh internally and externally in varied ways, and there is no clear evidence of economic ‘layering’” (Day and Murdoch 1993, 108).

Another model of locality is presented by Cox (1997). Like Day and Murdoch (1993), Cox (1997) sees the concept in primarily economic terms, but focuses his attention on oppositional rather than “unifying” structures. In this sense, his model partially mirrors that of Cooke (1990)e, who argues that a “*necessary*” and, often, tenuous, relationship between locality and a “nation” may allow the latter a “proactive capacity.” Indeed, from Cox’s perspective, it is a “territorialization around issues of local economic development and competition and conflict in wider arena” which defines locality.

Unlike Cooke (1990), however, Cox (1997), does not see locality as a replacement term for community. Citing two field studies (Elias and Scotson 1965; Smith 1993) concerned foremost with geographically-situated processes of identity negotiation, Cox (1997) holds that such processes do not necessarily indicate locality. At issue in these examples is “the life world and threats to its place bound integrity,” *not* economic integrity. It is this “life world,” defined as “the way in which interaction is secured by a common set of taken-for-granted meanings, transmitted via socialization mechanisms, and normatively enforced [to form] systems of meaning [through which] people acquire a sense of identity: an identity which is threatened by those who are outside the normative structure in question,” that Cox (1997) associates with

community. Although their respective ideas regarding locality differ beyond a basic economic focus, both Cox (1997) and Day and Murdoch (1993) appear to conceptualize community similarly – as the solidarity achieved through a continuous reproduction of group and individual identities.

To conclude his argument, Cox (1997) asserts, “localities can indeed be defensibly regarded as pseudo-communities: 'communities' in the sense that they do have a residual significance for the formation of identities and senses of solidarity, but 'pseudo-' in that they have no necessary conditions in the life world.” In this statement, we see clear reference made to the deterritorialized notions of community explored by Anderson (1983) and Amit (2002, 2012), among others. Although localities may “residually” inform identity development by way of their status, to borrow an example from Cox (1997), as “touchstones of memory,” the “life world” needs not be bound to locality or, by extension, place. This product of identity negotiation exists entirely on a symbolic level.

That being said, locality and community, at least as Cox (1997) interprets them, *can* overlap. For the purposes of my own study, I will assume a similarly open perspective on terminological reconciliation: the outlook that theoretical concepts need not be mutually exclusive. While my focus regards processes of identity formation which translate into community, I see no merit in arguing that the bars involved in my research are not localities. I hesitate to dub them “pseudo-communities” only because of the apparently pervasive assumption among social scientists that a locality will consist of more than one economic institution.

I use the word “assumption” because none of the sources referenced above explicitly regard a multiplicity of for-profit structures as necessary to locality. Nonetheless, there does appear to be a dearth of scholarship considering the business as locality. This is even the case in

Appadurai (1996,178-179), whose notion of locality “as primarily relational and contextual rather than as scalar or spatial” is far more abstract than any of the economic models reviewed in this section. Despite considering locality as a “phenomenological quality,” Appadurai (ibid.) nonetheless contends that will be realized in “spatial or virtual...neighborhoods.”⁵

To downsize the analyses of Cooke (1990) and Cox (1997), with the bar serving as locality and the New London government as “nation” (Cooke 1990) might be possible; but such an approach would steer this study away from my concern with identity formation as a community-developing process to collective agency as facilitated by local power dynamics. Considering the varied notions of locality currently in use by contemporary scholars, and the impractical economic footwork required to consolidate these conceptions into a single definition applicable to bars, this study will draw from those widely accepted elements of locality – memory, physical objects, and construction of space (Cox 1997; Lovell 1998) – long held by scholars of community to “residually” inform identity development. In the spirit of Cox, community and locality will be recognized as partially distinct concepts subject to frequent points of interaction.

In reflecting that “community has more often become identified as an idea than as an actual social form, as something that is primarily shaped by collective identity than by interaction,” Schröder (2007, 80) is clearly concerned primarily with identities on the broad level of “ethnicity” or “nationality.” In large part, my choice of bars as potential platforms for

⁵ Appadurai (1996, 179) defines neighborhoods as “situated communities characterized by their actuality, whether spatial or virtual, and their potential for social reproduction.” In other words, neighborhoods are a “material basis” (Schröder 2007, 81) for the development and reproduction of locality. Although Appadurai (1996) presents a solid theoretical platform for research foremost concerned with global processes of identity formation, his broad perspective – combined with his penchant for reinventing terminology (community becomes locality; locality becomes neighborhood) without acknowledging the previous use of certain words – motivated my decision *not* to rely on the theoretical framework presented in this text.

community development was made in response to the viewpoint that this passage describes. That interaction may *directly* lead to collective identity and, by extension, a sense of community is, I feel, most demonstrable on the small scale of a local drinking establishment. I agree that “community” is more idea than social form, but perceive this idea as something reproducible through face-to-face communication.

With community clarified – at least in terms of its distinction from locality – I now return to the question with which this section began: *why community?* Worth noting here is the trend of anthropological scholarship concerned with alcohol consumption, of which there is a substantial amount, to avoid the relationship between locality and various levels community at all costs. The essays featured in Wilson (2005, 4), for example, which “focus principally on ethnic and national culture,” were collected during a time in which scholars found it “increasingly difficult to provide analytical categories, in regard to race, ethnicity, class and nationality, which are of clear comparative utility” (Wilson 2005, 8). In his introduction to the text Wilson (2005, 11) himself admits:

Most anthropologists today simply choose to avoid making linkages between respondents, and their local actions and groups, on the one hand, and the larger social formations of which they are part, such as ethnic groups, classes and nations, on the other. As a result, anthropologists also increasingly avoid studies of ‘communities,’ largely due to the loss of confidence in ‘community’ as a valuable analytical category, even though many, perhaps most, people in the world use their notion of community daily as an expression of their own group solidarity and personal and group identities

While this study cannot hope to fully illuminate the manner in which relatively broad communities (hipster, American, working-class) may articulate those developed in bars, it is my hope that ethnographic projects such as this – which foremost regard on locally-based community identity – may compliment the wider-ranging focus of texts such as Wilson (2005). It is through analyzing the language used by bar owners to describe their establishments that I

intend to link the already well-documented process of identity formation encouraged by drinking and drinking places (Douglas 1987; Wilson 2005) to community development.

The “Idea” of Community

There is no attempt made in this book to formulate yet another definition...it is proposed to...seek not lexical meaning, but use.

- Anthony P. Cohen (in *The Symbolic Construction of Community*)

Although Schröder (2007) clearly sees “locality” as a more analytically useful concept than “community,” her reference to the latter as an “idea” rather than an “actual social form” need not be read as a departure from recent anthropological interpretations of this term. As Cohen (1985, 12) suggests in the above quotation, more important than identifying the exact parameters of community (in terms of everything from geographical distribution to population size to kinship systems), is exploration of the word in accordance with its highly variable uses. His treatment of community considers the concept in terms of a very broad and “reasonable” definition based on two basic conditions, namely, “that the members of a group of people (a) have something in common with each other which (b) distinguishes the in a significant way from the members of other putative groups” (Cohen 1985, 12). Rather than examining such groups in terms of social, economic, or political structures, Cohen (1985) concerns himself with the perceived “boundaries” that delimit them; his focus is on “community identity” as an abstraction, a dynamic and *distinguishing* symbolic construct. As such, he is able beyond Durkheim’s structuralist ideal of “an economically differentiated society...modeled on the division of labour, in which different functions are harnessed in a productive whole” (Cohen 1985, 20) Whereas Durkheim considered this phenomenon as an “*integrating mechanism*,” Cohen (1985) understands it as an “*aggregating device*.”

In order to examine why, exactly, Cohen sees community as an “idea” worth keeping in social scientific vocabulary, I revisit his response to such scholars as Cooke (1990) and Schröder (2007) who perceive the fall of so-called “stable” and insular societies during industrialization (as well as growing criticism of the binaries by which such societies were identified and lumped together) as sufficient grounds to abandon the use of community in social scientific discourse. Considering this viewpoint from a historical perspective, Cohen (1985, 11-12) asserts:

opposition of ‘community’ and ‘modernity’ rests only upon ascribing stipulatively to community those features of social life which are supposed, by definition, to be lacking from modernity...Others have suggested that the domination of modern life by the state, and the essential confrontation of classes in capitalist society, have made ‘community a nostalgic, bourgeoisie and anachronistic concept. Once again, the argument is based entirely upon a highly particularistic and sectarian definition. However, its redundancy can be claimed not only on philosophical grounds, but also as being evident in the massive upsurge of community consciousness – in such terms as ethnicity, localism, religion, and class itself – which has swept the modern world in recent years.

Because his interpretation of the dichotomies suggested by Durkheim, Weber, Marx, and Tonnies contrasts with those made by Cooke (1990) and Schröder (2007), Cohen (1985) neither sees the rise of so-called “modern life” as eliminating the need for community outright, as Cooke (1990) argues, or applying it *exclusively* to the level of “global” identities such as ethnicity or nationality. While Cohen (1985) certainly acknowledges these broad manifestations of community, his mention of “localism” recognizes the fact that community – as an “idea” and, quite possibly, an *ideal* – can facilitate place-situated identity negotiation.

Like Cohen, Amit (2002, 2012) is willing to recognize that an idea or sense of community may manifest itself among a diversity of social groups, Recognizing that “A common scholarly response to [the] proliferation of unspecified invocations of community has been to suggest that this ambiguity fatally undermines the analytical utility of this concept,” she wisely suggests that, “we are not dealing with one concept in various references to community but a

genus of concepts...rather than providing a definition, I want to suggest a working model of community that may lead us to a variety of situations and concepts” (Amit 2012, 4). In the case of both Cohen (1985) and Amit (2002, 2012), the vagueness of “community” represents neither an analytical detriment nor advantage. It is simply a fact which must be acknowledged.

V. Turner (1939, 1974) and E. Turner (2012), whose analyses of community solidarity manifests itself through their development of the term *communitas*, also perceive such solidarity an idea or a feeling, rather than as a structure. In the words of the latter, “Communitas occurs through the readiness of people...to rid themselves of their concern for status and dependence on structures, and see their fellows as they are...Communitas is a group’s pleasure in sharing common experiences” (Turner, 2012, 1-2). Because *communitas*, as it has been studied thus far, concerns face-to-face interaction, it is *necessarily* geographically situated. To study this phenomenon as it may apply to electronic forms of communication, especially social media, would indeed be an interesting venture, but, to my knowledge, is one which has yet to be pursued.

Theorizing Community

With the exception of Amit (2002, 2012), whose scholarship offers the most recent and comprehensive analysis on community, and will therefore be reviewed last, anthropology has tended to view community only as it exists in specialized circumstances. The works of Cohen (1985), V. Turner (1969, 1974) and E. Turner (2012) are perhaps the most well-known and exhaustive examples of such analysis, and present a contrast useful for a review of community studies in anthropology. Cohen (1985, 12) holds that community “expresses a *relational* idea: the opposition of one community to others or to other social entities” and thus makes his focus the “boundaries” that delimit communities and thus define them relatively. Turner (1969, 1974)

and Turner (2012), in contrast, develop the concept of *communitas*, an experience of intensive solidarity, perhaps even harmony, which manifests itself not by way of distinction from peripheral social groups but, instead, through “the sense felt by a group of people when their life together takes on full meaning” (Turner 2012).

Because of his focus on contexts to which the idea of “community” is applied, Cohen (1985) does not stray from this term. He argues that “use of the word is only occasioned by the desire or need to express...a distinction” between two or more communities. Such distinctions are facilitated by community “boundaries” which he describes in the following way:

...the boundary as the community’s public face is symbolically simple; but, as the object of internal discourse it is symbolically complex...The boundary thus symbolizes the community to its members in two quite different ways: it is the sense they have of its perception by people on the other side – the public face and ‘typical’ mode – and it is *their* sense of the community as refracted through all the complexities of their lives and experience – the private face and idiosyncratic mode. (Cohen 1985, 74)

The public face of a community, in other words, is that which relies most heavily on generic language and stereotypes. Were a group of people who identify as “hipsters,” for example, to be met with a perceived “outsider,” these individuals might individually reinforce their community boundary by implicitly *or* explicitly identifying with the *same* generalizations on which they assume the “outsider” relied while judging them. As Cohen (1985, 109) notes, “Looking outwards across the boundary, people construe what they see of themselves in terms of their own stereotypes, this outward view forming a ‘self-reflexive portion’ of their culture.” That being said, the members of our “hipster” group are individuals, and each perceives the world in a distinct manner. Though distinction from other communities may draw these individuals together, it cannot streamline their understandings of “hipster” and “businessman” into objective categories. The private face of a community accounts for this form of internal variability.

By departing from the “earlier sociological orientation [promoted by Durkheim and others] to structure [which] was, essentially, an orientation to the common mask”, Cohen (1985) shifts his concern to culture, and, in so doing, recognizes “diversity beneath the mask.” The private face of a community, as Cohen perceives it, is based on the fact that “we are all...engaged continuously in interpretation.” Words which are central to the identity of a particular community⁶ may be interpreted differently by different members of this community. Furthermore, those community members who do interpret certain words similarly may take this parallelism for granted. Cohen (1985, 73) holds that “when people use words which we use, we *interpret* their intended meaning by assuming that it corresponds to ours.” As such, members of a community “can all use the word, all express their co-membership of the ‘same’ community, yet all assimilate it to the idiosyncrasies of their own experiences and personalities” (Cohen 1985, 74). While I would argue that the word “assume” is oversimplified – that people may *deny* or *suppress* their understanding that symbols are interpreted on an individual level – Cohen’s notion of the boundary as both a “public” and a “private” face is nonetheless immensely helpful in understanding community as a symbol, as a both a communal and shared “idea.”

In contrast to Cohen (1985), Turner (1969, 1974) and Turner (2012) do not base their analysis of community in terms of boundaries created through opposition. Perhaps considering Cohen’s analysis directly, Turner (2012, 5) notes that “Communitas should be distinguished from Emile Durkheim’s ‘solidarity,’ which is a bond between individuals who are collectively in opposition to some other group...in the way communitas unfolds, people’s sense is that it is for everybody – humanity, bar none.” So what is communitas? Even the main promoters of this concept have trouble answering such a question, holding that the only way to understand the phenomenon to which it refers is through experience. In the words of Turner (2012, 220-221),

⁶ Cohen (1985, 73) uses the example of the phrase “I believe in God”

“Communitas – what is it? Trying to answer is like trying to locate and hold down an electron. It cannot be done. Communitas is activity, not an object or state...Communitas resists analysis.” That being said, there are certain contextual elements which sufficiently unify instances this activity for treatment in a theoretical framework.

According to Turner (1969, 1974) communitas most often arises during “liminal” periods, “moments out of time” occurring between ritualized processes of “separation” and “aggregation” in which a society becomes “unstructured or rudimentarily structured and relatively undifferentiated” (Turner 1969, 96-98). Such a “moment,” Turner (1969, 96) holds, “reveals, however fleetingly, some recognition (in symbol if not always in language) of a generalized social bond that has ceased to be and has simultaneously yet to be fragmented into a multiplicity of structural ties.” Communitas emerges as one of two “model[s]’ for human interrelatedness,” the other being “society as a structured, differentiated, and often hierarchical system of politico-legal-economic positions with many types of evaluation, separating men in terms of ‘more’ or ‘less’” (Turner 1969, 96). As Turner (1969, 96) sees them, these two models are “juxtaposed and alternating.” It is also important to note, however, that states of liminality and, by extension, feelings of communitas *can* be extended over long periods of time. Turner (1969) cites members of millenarian movements, court jesters, and even hippies as potential participants in extended communitas.

It is worth noting here that Cohen (1985) disputes the notion of communitas. He argues that “an identification among members which is so absolute as to be tantamount to the stripping away of all those social impedimenta which would otherwise divide and distinguish them” (Cohen 1985, 55) is impossible to achieve due to the inherent ambiguity of symbols. Rather than unity, communitas for Cohen is nothing more than a profound feeling of solidarity. Mutual

understanding remains unreachable. Although I agree with Cohen's point, I would nonetheless argue that the emphasis placed by Turner (1969, 1974) and Turner (2012) on ritualized liminality serves an important purpose in separating those moments of immediate and seemingly intuitive harmony from more deliberate, self-aware forms of communion.

Cohen (1985), Turner (1969, 1974), and Turner (2012) all regard community as something best examined during infrequent or exceptional situations. Rarely considered is nature of community as it exists through stretches of "everyday" life – an exclusion apparently motivated by poor visibility during these periods of time. Whether manifested through pointed distinctions or intense cohesion, community is, according to these three scholars, most perceptible when members enter a brief and unfamiliar space. This is the space of annual ritual as well as sudden conflict. It engenders pervasive discomfort (though not always disconcertion) and profound self-awareness on the part of both individual and group.

At this point, it becomes important to examine those few examples in Cohen (1985) which do concern fairly routine practices. For the most part, this is a text concerned with rituals. Despite wheeling across cultures and continents, jumping from Buryat Mongols to Whalsay fishermen, readers are continually exposed to, borrowing the language of Turner (1973, 1110, "stereotyped sequence[s] of activities involving gestures, words, and objects, performed in a sequestered place." Indeed, of the many practices that Cohen reviews, only several could conceivably be classified as "everyday." These special cases assume particular importance as one attempts to locate them amidst the host of rituals in which they are immersed.

Cohen's (1985) concern with the occasions that such cases signify construes them as being implicitly special, insofar as they are explicitly reactionary, but the reader runs into trouble when attempting to gauge and interpret the frequency of these behaviors. In order to illustrate

this point, let us turn to the most prominent example of non-ritual behavior in this text, namely, lying among the Alcalá, a group of people native to the Andalusian Sierra. By fabricating folklore and local histories, Alcalá individuals paradoxically maintain a “truth” unique to the language of their village and thereby retain community identity. This act occurs regularly and does not appear to be singled out by those who practice it as ritualistic in any regard. What remains unclear is how often this lying occurs, and whether or not its intensity fluctuates with perceived threats to community distinctiveness.

Cohen (1985, 40) argues that a “sentiment of distinctiveness...leads communities and ethnic groups to the reassertion and reaffirmation of their boundaries...assertiveness is likely to intensify as the *apparent* similarity between forms on each side of the boundary increases, or is imagined to increase.” Unfortunately, this paradigm is not applied to his discussion of Alcalá lying. We are left to wonder whether similarity is viewed as a constant and consistent hazard by members of Alcalá villages – which, according to Cohen’s above theory of causality, would make lying a steadily occurring behavior – or, conversely, if its apparent strength fluctuates. This latter scenario leaves open the possibility that lying is a relatively specialized and calculated act: a response to perceived (rather than internalized) threats to community.

Despite the anomaly of Alcalá lying, Cohen’s (1985) scholarship can nonetheless be said to rely primarily on events out of line with a community’s “average” state of existence. The same is true for studies of *communitas* conducted by Turner (1969, 1974) and Turner (2012). Thus, Amit (2012, 10) is dead-on with her assertion that, “While drawing on rather different conceptualizations, Cohen’s [and] Turner’s...versions of community are dependent on the extraordinary and/or the polarized for eliciting communality. To the extent that they do so, they are more likely to limit rather than open up this field of investigation.” While well-intended and,

in many contexts, analytically useful, the work of these two scholars has, admittedly, drawn social scientific attention away from the day-to-day existence of community. A body of literature concerned foremost with this subject has long been needed in anthropology, and Amit's (2002, 2012) scholarship is an important step toward this aim.

Although Amit (2012) finds Cohen's (1985) examination of community both limited and limiting, she does acknowledge that "he still retained a sense that claims of community grounded in the 'social processes of everyday life' were of a different order than those 'oratorical abstractions' asserted on behalf of larger categories'" (Amit 2012, 14). Indeed, to Cohen, community is a fundamentally *everyday* process best studied during *remarkable* circumstances. It is with the latter part of this perception that Amit takes exception.

With this in mind, one can readily see how *communitas*, being a phenomenon concerned entirely with human interactions as they exist outside of the everyday, presents an especially potent theoretical distraction for scholars interested in community's effect on "ordinary" moments. Although she makes no attempt to wholly discredit the utility of this term in describing specialized circumstances of solidarity, Amit (2012, 19) does identify two flaws with Turner's (1974) theory: "first, that, it overestimates the transformative capacity of liminality, and, second, that it underestimates the creative ambiguities, improvisations and reflexivity entailed in quotidian socialities." In order to demonstrate the former shortcoming, she cites recent ethnographic work conducted with travel; for the latter, she turns to a term as of yet untouched – consociation.

In recent years, travel has received significant ethnographic attention. Of particular interest has been tourism and, even more specifically, the exchange programs in which college students frequently enroll. Such programs advertise the unique experience of a scheduled

removal from one's day-to-day existence and, despite proceeding in the name of academic growth, often present students with a lighter workload than that of a conventional, campus-based college term. In the words of Amit (2012, 21), "consistent is the pervasive tendency among these young travelers to interpret this kind of stay abroad as thoroughly liminal, a temporary interlude betwixt and between other kinds of involvements, relationships, and localizations." This is to say that study abroad programs are fundamentally similar to the ritualized "moments out of time" described by Turner.

It is by virtue of this connection that Amit (2012) perceives a hole in Turner's logic. As opposed to a rite of passage, which, despite the liminal state that it produces, is intended to fundamentally alter those involved, studying away holds no such guarantee of profound change and, by extension, lasting implications. Amit (2012, 21) argues, "To the extent that its practitioners see this experience as disembedded from their more usual places, networks, and relationships, they are also less likely to see it as having implications and consequences for what they do when the interlude is over." Rather than an intense stage of disorder set between two discrete periods of structure, study abroad programs and, often, vacations in general offer escape from structure. This fact of contemporary western scheduling has, according to Amit (2012, 22-23) extremely important consequences on conceptions of *communitas*:

...there is a difference between liminality engaged towards purposive efforts at effecting change and liminality insisted upon as a temporary state of transition for its own sake. In other words, revolution has a liminal aspect but liminality is not, in and of itself, revolutionary...The very features of liminality including transience, 'time out' and disembedding that Turner counted on as producing the heightened reflexivity and transcendence he associated with *communitas* could easily...be associated with hedonism and nonchalance

Judging from this quotation, it appears as if Amit (2012) views Turner's (1960, 1974) development of *communitas* as misguided by a certain romanticism, a desire to perceive the

suspension of structure (which rightly carries with it connotations of oppressive hierarchy) as invariably productive. With this viewpoint, of course, comes a certain dismissal of everyday community, the sort of which Amit (2012) is most actively engaged. Turner's (1969, 1974) analysis, as Amit (2012) sees it, is not as incorrect, but incomplete. His focus on those liminal spaces which afford more intensive experiences of communality than quotidian existence does not yield a model applicable to all instances of liminality. There are times, according to Amit (2012), when the everyday is a greater facilitator of community than "time out." She argues that, "when liminality affords experiences and connections that can be shed without consequence, the distinction between out of the ordinary...and ongoing everyday fellowship may actually be closer to the inverse of Turner's ranking" (Amit 2012, 23). Again, this is not to say that any case studies of *communitas* conducted by Turner (1969, 1974) or Turner (2012) are fundamentally "wrong," only that ubiquitous associations between anti-structure and *communitas* which they suggest are misguided.

In order to demonstrate the manner in which periods of time dubbed "structured," "routine," or even "normal" may yield the development of communities, Amit introduces the term *consociation*. Citing research conducted by Dyck (2002) with a Canadian youth track club, she explains that "Consociate relationships do not inevitably or necessarily arise as an entailment either of readily available categories or the workings of existing structures" (Amit 2012, 25). Instead, consociation manifests itself through the establishment of communal narratives which structure the self and group-identification of participants. It exists in accordance with the diversity of commitments to a common goal demonstrated by these individuals. As Dyck (2002, 116) explains, parents of children involved with the track club in question achieve a consociate network "when [they] become capable of putting names to known faces and telling stories about

mutually shared experiences.” Despite the differing cultural backgrounds of these parents, and the array of interactions which these differences produced, consociation managed to develop through a process of joint immersion into a single, albeit scattered, plotline. In the words of Amit (2012, 26), “consociation was not an automatic outcome of involvement in a particular activity...neither was it simply the shared experience of particular event(s). Rather it was the experience coupled with the exchange of stories, that is, the circulation of interpretive narratives that rendered a more limited and superficial acquaintanceship into consociation.” By sharing and hearing stories surrounding a single space, namely, their children’s track club, the parents in Dyck’s (2002) study appear to have found points of overlap among life stories.

Although consociation is a useful tool for examining social relationships that do not occur within liminal periods, this term is neither widely applicable, nor, when viewed in isolation, of particular analytical use. Thus, before concluding this section, it is important to review another method offered by Amit (20012) for the exploration of community: strategic ambiguities. When introducing analytical potential of community, Amit draws heavily from Kenneth Burke’s (1955) notion of “titular concepts” – ideas which must be illuminated by examining “*terms that clearly reveal the strategic spots at which ambiguities necessarily arise*” because it is at these strategic points of ambiguity that conceptual transformations can occur” (Amit 2012, 4). Deeming community one of such concepts, she identifies three strategic ambiguities of her own: joint commitment, affect/belonging, and forms of association (Amit 2012, 6).

A joint commitment is a “special unifying principal” (Gilbert 1994,14), which, in likely contrast to one’s first impression, is “not simply the sum of two or more individual commitments, as it creates a ‘new motivational force’ in terms of which the interlocutors act”

(Amit 2012, 7). Rather than a conglomeration, it is a product – a product which Amit (2012) redefines to demonstrate that community stability is based in both supportive and antagonistic acts. Disputing Gilbert’s assertion that it will inevitably lead to “true unity” (Gilbert 1994), she notes that “this kind of interdependence is just as likely to engender tensions, conflict and anxiety” (Amit 2012, 8). In other words, people who depend on one another for the realization of a common goal will frequently be inclined toward conflict, *especially* if the stakes of this goal are relatively high. Joint-commitments may experience significant alterations or even dissolve if internal tensions reach an extreme level. Amit is careful to note that, because the joint-commitment can underlie a variety of associations, “it highlights the areas of ambiguity attending which forms of sociation enable or require interdependent coordination and which do not or not as much” (Amit 2012, 8). In other words, examining communities for joint-commitments is a useful means to determine how individuals within these groupings rely upon one another, either directly or indirectly.

To structure her exploration of affect/belonging, Amit (2012) asks, “if a joint commitment is not necessarily associated with consensus, by the same token why should we assume that it is associated with only one kind of affect or sense of belonging?” The short answer is, of course, that we should not. But this retort is not as apparent as Amit’s direct language makes it seem. Indeed, that the members of a certain community will respond (both actively and internally) to a single circumstance or set of circumstances in different ways is an essential consideration which, despite its apparent self-evidence, is frequently overlooked by Cohen (1985), Turner (1969, 1974), and Turner (2012). Anthropologists have, over the years, developed a bad habit of considering “sense of place” or “sense of belonging” as sentiments evenly distributed across “native” groups. As will be made evident in the following sections of

this chapter, certain scholars (Anderson 1978; Mandelbaum 1979) have begun to move away from this trend, while others (Mars 1987; Kasmir 2005; O'Carroll 2005) fail to fully, or at least explicitly, recognize the numerous senses of affect that a single event may inspire within a community.

Electing to structure her discussion of affect/belonging in a manner similar to her survey of joint-commitments, Amit (2012, 10) enacts her own theoretical innovation by reinterpreting a concept from previous scholarship – in this case, a “distributive model of culture” (Hannerz 1992). When this model is applied to the notion of belonging, one clearly realizes that “A distributive model pushes us to move beyond us/them distinctions towards a more complex understanding of how unevenly and unequally notions of belonging, in all their permutations of meaning and emotion, may be dispersed” (Amit 2012, 11). While joint-commitment and belonging can certainly overlap on this undulating, potentially mountainous terrain,⁷ they may also slide past one another. The notion that a sense of belonging requires one to be engaged in a joint commitment is false. Amit (2012, 12) reflects, “My friends’ may be foundational to what makes me feel ‘at home’ in certain fields or sites, but these interlocutors do not necessarily know each other, nor are their relationships with me likely to be part of a broader collectively coordinated effort.” Nostalgia is also cited as a “source of romanticized belonging” unattached to joint-commitment.

The third strategic ambiguity introduced by Amit (2012), namely, forms of association, is less a component of sociality than it is a mechanism for structuring one’s examination of such components. As Amit (2012, 13) explains, “In examining the interaction of joint commitment, belonging/affect across a variety of different forms of association, we have an opportunity to

⁷ As seen in Amit’s (2012, 11) assertion that “the person(s) on whom you depend to effect [a] mission may not be willing to recognize this obligation; might not even consider important enough to put aside other commitments; may have a very different idea of who participates or of the nature and extent of loyalty or investment that is required.”

consider such issues as the effect of: scale...duration...comprehensiveness...degree of formalization.” This strategy enables analysis of community which accounts for all of its various meanings and referents from which the pressure to provide a conclusive definition for the term.

Drinking as a Social Act

Sampling a drink is sampling what is happening to a whole category of social life.

- Mary Douglas (in *Constructive Drinking*)

The above quotation from Douglas (1987, 9) articulates a reality understood by most individuals from childhood onward: drinking is a profoundly social gesture. Throughout the world, the consumption of alcoholic beverages is “loaded with socially assumed meanings” (Turmo 2001, 131) which, despite considerable variation, manage to ubiquitously depict this act as a desirable means of locating oneself within the hierarchy of one’s society. To drink is not to simply find another lens through which existing structures may be viewed; it is an active choice, a choice denoting the desire to reaffirm or change one’s identity as a social being. As Wilson (2005, 3) observes, “drinking alcohol is an extremely important feature in the production and reproduction of ethnic, national, class, gender and local community identities, not only today but also historically.” Such identities are produced by virtue of cohesion as well as of distinction. In the drinking environment, alliances form as individuals dissociate.

Anthropology remains an important voice in the study of drinking, which all too often grows fixated on the physiological effects of alcohol. Most notably in the realm of law, the choices made by drinkers tend to be oversimplified as products of “impaired judgment” or, even more vaguely, “drunkenness.” Alcohol consumption is treated as a black curtain behind which all thought and behavior is separated from the outside sober world, and therefore not logically

explicable. Regrettably, this notion, which currently decides the fates of many of those who are said to “have drinking problems” or, perhaps not dissimilarly, to cause problems while drinking, is fundamentally misguided. As Robbins (1979, 172) notes, “drinking behavior, rather than being explained by alcohol's toxic assault on the seat of moral judgment, is behavior that is culturally defined and given meaning within a given social nexus.” When the symbolic significance of drinking is examined, it soon becomes clear that drinkers worldwide are privy to a process of developing identities – identities which remain intact *beyond* the time and, sometimes, even place in which they were constructed.

According to Mandelbaum (1979, 33), the anthropological study of drinking must treat this phenomenon from a symbolic framework. He asserts, “drinking...communicates the social identity of those people who participate in it, demarcating them from other social groups or categories. To speak of securing or communicating identity...uncovers the implicit meaning of the phenomenon as the actors see it.” With similar firmness, Douglas (1987, 9) calls for the treatment of “drinking as a medium for *constructing* [emphasis added] the actual world. The drinks are in the world. They are not a commentary upon it, nor a surface nor a deep structure model of its relations.” Indeed, to conduct ethnographic research on drinking is to study this phenomenon as it materializes the realities of those who experience it, as it reaffirms or modifies their social identities at both the level of the individual and of the group. It is to locate the role of this globally recognized and enacted behavior in the development of professional, political, and personal relationships within specific societies.

As is the case with virtually any mechanism for constructing and maintaining identity, drinking assumes an apparently paradoxical role in social interaction. It functions as both an adhesive and a repellant. Within the domain of drinking behaviors are gestures which offer a

means of establishing group solidarity as well as acts designed to differentiate oneself from one's peers. As Schivelbusch (1992, 171) comments, "Communal drinking is...characterized by a remarkable ambivalence. On the one hand, it creates fraternity among drinkers, on the other this relationship is marked by mutual caution, obligation, and competitiveness, which make it seem much less friendly." The process through which drinking simultaneously differentiates and unites individuals becomes even more complex when one realizes that feelings or expressions of fraternity within a group of drinkers will, in some capacity, be unavoidably motivated by a concern for individual identity.

That drinking can be accurately perceived as both an individual act and a "social fact" (Turmo 2001, 131) is often a difficult argument for the general public to accept, most notably in so-called western cultures. As opposed to asking how the consumption of alcohol can both connect and distinguish individuals or social groups, it has become commonplace to simply construct two distinct concepts of drinking. While it is true that most people who drink (and many of those who don't) readily understand the simultaneously individual and social nature of drinking, the mutual exclusivity often imposed on these two categories prevents them from being perceived as a dualism. This is especially evident in the United States, where drinking has been animated with a pair of opposing personas: the social and the antisocial, the extroverted and the introverted, the joyful and the depressed. In contemporary media, the beer commercial, college-party drinker has become a normative symbol of sociability while the lonely, troubled alcoholic is more or less ubiquitously accepted as emblematic for the pitfalls of extreme introversion.

Through an understandable but nonetheless significant gap in logic, the imagery surrounding drinking as an act of individuation frequently portrays self-destruction. The manner in which drinking can manage complex social hierarchies is ignored and replaced by images of

social alienation. In the contemporary western aesthetic, to assertively establish one's uniqueness in a drinking environment is to ask for rejection from the group. The iconic drinker must become a faceless component of a uniform crowd or else walk away depressed. This is largely due to the decidedly pseudo-medical perception of alcohol so prevalent in society today, which holds that, whether one is viewing drinking behavior over the course of a night, a month, or a lifetime, an initial "high" will invariably be followed by a crushing "low." The "high" is generally associated with social drinking, and the "low" with rejection of one's peers. Having been firmly located on a fabricated timeline, the two personas of drinking (themselves invented) are spared from confronting one another.

In reality, drinking is able to facilitate both differentiation and solidarity because identities are multileveled. Within groups are subgroups and within subgroups are individuals. Before discussing identity any further, however, it is important to consider the following argument made by Robbins (1979, 159):

The study of interpersonal relations requires the delineation of the conceptions held by actors in a given interaction of their social position vis-a-vis others (see Miller 1963). Such conceptions include a person's self-identity – his notion of his place in an interaction; his social identity – the place in the interaction he conceives others attribute to him; and his public-identity – the way others actually view his social standing (see Goodenough 1963; Miller 1963). This identity-interaction framework implies certain assumptions about the nature of man and the meaning of human behavior, the most basic being that a person's image of himself and of others affects his behavior and beliefs (Hallowell 1955). Second, it implies that a person's identity serves as a guide to him and others in orienting their pattern of interaction (Goffman 1956; Goodenough 1963). Further, a person's identity is formed and maintained in the course of his interaction with others (Mead 1934; Schwartz and Merten 1968), and persons need to acquire information which confirms the image they entertain of themselves (Laing 1962).

Being a multileveled phenomenon constructed through social interaction, identity is subject to continual variability. It also changes in accordance with one's motion through space. Further complicating matters is the fact that the ability to discern identity as it is defined in a specific

location depends on one's familiarity with the social norms of this location. In short, identity is spatially and temporally bounded, and its visibility is contingent on the beholder's level of local knowledge (Geertz 1983). Because describing these three elements simultaneously would likely lead to confusion rather than clarity, each will be examined separately.

That identity is spatially defined is something which becomes clear in Anderson's (1979) study of Jelly's, a bar and liquor store in Chicago's south side. Drawing from Cooley (1909), Anderson (1979, 31) defines the frequent patrons of Jelly's as a "primary group," and notes that "When group members travel to different areas of the city, they must negotiate a place anew. Their personal status as defined in the setting of Jelly's cannot readily be carried along into different social situations." Indeed, the identities that members of the Jelly's primary group spend considerable energy maintaining or striving toward are tied down⁸ to the bar in which they are formed. The influence that bars, as both physically and socially closed off spaces, have on behavior will be discussed further in the subsequent section.

In regard to the relatively fluid, or at least malleable, nature of identity, Anderson (1978) once again provides extremely useful examples. The clientele base of Jelly's is, in the words of its patrons, divided into three categories: regulars, hoodlums, and wineheads. Regulars reign at the top of this three tier hierarchy, and consider both hoodlums and wineheads to be "trouble." That being said, it is not impossible for an individual from one of these latter groups to become a regular, or even to assume and give up regular status sporadically. Anderson (1979, 80-91) cites the example of Tiger, a patron of Jelly's who, for a period of time, frequently associated with wineheads, but also identified as a low-ranking regular during certain instances. Despite gaining employment on occasion, and thus attaining the economic stability valued so highly by regulars,

⁸ The vague phrase "tied down" is used here because, as will be discussed in the following section, Anderson never addresses whether or not identities developed in Jelly's can exist in spaces *immediately* outside of the bar.

Tiger's jobs were often "labeled 'shit work' by others in the group, including some regulars" (Anderson 1978, 84). Further complicating his position was the frequent pressure placed on him by his winehead counterparts, all of whom were proudly unemployed, to quit work. As Anderson (1978, 84) narrates, "some of [the wineheads] will talk about Tiger as a 'cat who bustin' his ass workin'. Not me!" In his attempt to deal with such pressures, Tiger often takes days off without permission. He will call his work 'too hard,' quit the job or get fired, and come back to the streets around Jelly's."

By begging and drinking alongside his winehead companions while still acknowledging the "decency" of regulars by showing them deference, Tiger assumed a "dual identity" (Anderson 1978, 85) for a yearlong period. He would eventually abandon this duplicity, however, upon finding a steady job as a janitor – a job which he consistently reminded other patrons of by making such offhanded comments as "Is it six yet? How long before I gotta go to *work*?" (Anderson 1978, 87). Anderson (1978, 88) notes that, along with consistently bringing up his work in conversation and "flaunting his money...Tiger began to put his winehead buddies down" as they begged to him for help in paying for "a taste." One-time allies became victims: platforms for the maintenance of social status. The example of Tiger demonstrates the nebulous quality of identity wonderfully well, as it involves a series of ephemeral shifts in identity followed by a permanent change.

Although Tiger's situation is more extreme than most, the continuous pressure in Jelly's to act in accordance with the normative codes of behavior which segment this establishment's primary group leads Anderson (1978, 35) to conclude that "An individual's personal sense of rank and identity is precarious and action-oriented." In the world of Jelly's or, indeed, any space populated by a primary-group, "identity as somebody is not just achieved and consolidated once

and for all, but rather must be constantly renewed during social interaction” (Anderson 1978, 19). Thus, the identity that an individual may hold in a drinking group during a certain moment, and within a specific location, is limited to this single juncture of space and time. To borrow a term used by Bakhtin (1981), the identity of a drinker adheres to the *chronotope*⁹ structuring the collective consciousness of this individual’s primary group.

Now to the question of perception. That drinking can serve two roles at once is a phenomenon attributable to the *relative* nature of identities which it amplifies. Indeed, one’s awareness of behavioral conventions and personal histories will affect one’s ability to distinguish between the groups and individuals within a certain space. Imagine that you walk into a bar for the first time. With careful observation of body language and conversations, you may be able to distinguish between regulars and non-regulars. You may even find yourself intuiting which patrons within the establishment hold the most authority. But when it comes to specific subgroup designations (regulars, hoodlums, wineheads), or the power dynamics within these groups, you are at a loss. You perceive the regulars of this establishment, despite their attempts at individuation, only as members of a group. Indeed, as eager as certain individuals within a group of drinkers may be to differentiate themselves from their peers, such people do nevertheless recognize their sense belonging to the group by drinking. Anderson (1978, 34)

⁹ Over the past half century, the term “chronotope” has been reinterpreted by a number of theorists from varying disciplinary backgrounds. Bakhtin initially described the concept as follows: “We will give the name *chronotope* (literally ‘time space’) to the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature...In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope.” In the context of this discussion, Fox’s (2004) use of chronotope as a platform for the formulation of life histories and social memory is most relevant. Fox (2004, 81-82) claims chronotope to be “an alignment of space, time, and subjectivity in a genre-bound narrative universe. This chronotope is implicated in ideas about the mimetic *space* in which social life and human movement happens, and in the way that imagined *places* come to occupy and organize that space. Space and experience align along different physical and imaginary scales, but the problem space presents to culture is always the establishment – the emplacement – of knowable, narratively real locality...orders a way living in, on, and with *time*, on both the intimate scale of conversations and the grand scale of generations.”

acknowledges this fact, noting, “All the men have an affinity for [the drinking establishment] Jelly's in contrast to the wider society outside. The men of Jelly's are peers in this fundamental respect.” Although everyday posturing in Jelly's may frequently be intended as a means of establishing or maintaining identity-based power dynamics, the act which enables such behavior, namely, that of entering Jelly's, is itself a gesture of communality.

Certainly, within the Jelly's crowd there exists a continuous and unstated acceptance of the general “peer” status underlying the identities of all patrons, but outright recognition of this membership is a far less common occurrence. As is the case in many drinking cultures (Robbins 1979; Mandelbaum 1979; Turmo 2001), regular patrons of Jelly's are normally most interested in maintaining individual and group identities within the closed-off “arena of social life” (Anderson 1978, 29) that this drinking establishment represents. Expressions of solidarity may come across as redundant or, worse yet, as signs of weakness or insecurity.

That being said, Anderson (1978, 36, 187) does note that “In certain circumstances, especially in times of group trouble or triumph, the extended group can become characterized by an intimate 'we' feeling...The men can easily close ranks and orient to an equality in a group that is otherwise stratified into particular crowd identities.” In other words, when Jelly's is itself threatened or experiences notable prosperity, the establishment's patrons are willing to overlook a social hierarchy which they themselves have constructed. That behavior in Jelly's fluctuates (albeit unevenly) between acts of differentiation and communality suggests that patrons of this establishment *desire* both to connect with and reject members of their peer group on a regular basis. Once again, this is not a phenomenon unique to Jelly's. Summarizing research conducted with the Camba people of Peru by Simmons (1959, 1960), Mandelbaum (1979, 25) explains that “a Camba man wants to have two different kinds of relations with his fellows. He wants to

insulate himself from them, and yet at the same time he wants some safe interaction with them. He achieves both through drink.” In the case of both Jelly’s and the Camba, there appears to be an odd sense of anticipation involved with drinking. A patron of Jelly’s may enter the bar intending to provide “evidence” (Anderson 1978, 60) of his employment in the form of capital – an act which will reaffirm his status as a “regular” and thus place him in a position of greater social standing than “hoodlums” and “wineheads” – but also be ready to completely abandon this course of action and express support for Jelly’s as a symbol not only of union but of uniformity.

The gesture of showing off one’s money at Jelly’s is one of innumerable ways in which drinkers may distinguish themselves from their peers. The attitudes motivating such acts of differentiation (not only in Jelly’s but bars worldwide), however, can readily be classified into a fairly small number of general categories. Among the most compelling systems of classification are those provided by Robbins (1979) in his study of drinking behavior among the Naskapi. By analyzing the alcohol-fueled “identity-resolving forums” in which Naskapi men are often engaged, this essay (1979, 160) distinguishes between “friendly,” “assertive,” and “aggressive” behaviors. Each of these types of behavior is designed to elicit a certain response from one’s peers, which will then maintain or alter the actor’s identity. Indeed, Robbins concludes that, “when drinking a [Naskapi] person is permitted to defend an identity that has been challenged, claim an identity he believes he is entitled to, or rectify an identity that has been spoiled by failure, and, that such interactions aim toward allowing the person to receive from others information which confirms the identity he is seeking.” The forum in which Naskapi men actively construct identity is one of feedback. Participant behavior is calculated: designed to elicit certain responses which, whether deferential, affirmative, or even antagonistic, will result in a more secure concept of self.

Returning to Jelly's, we see that the social climate in this bar is remarkably similar to that of Naskapi drinking ritual. As Anderson (1978, 29) explains, patrons of the establishment "present themselves in the roles that peers allow them. Here they engage in ritual exhibitions of deference and demeanor that, when properly reacted to by significant others, allow them a certain affirmation of self." In Jelly's, patron behavior follows the same general distinction between deliberately amicable or antagonistic acts that Robbins (1979) identifies. Assertion and aggression occur regularly, as do gestures of submission or assistance. Virtually all patron behavior, like that of Naskapi men during bouts of drinking, is intended to construct, maintain, or change identity. Anderson (1978, 24) notes "the importance of something as seemingly trivial as a seat in defining social order." It should also be stipulated that "seemingly trivial" codes of social order, when disrupted, can elicit intense reactions. The above quotation follows Anderson's account of a fight which had nearly erupted in Jelly's when two patrons exchanged words over a chair which, apparently, each viewed as a symbol of status.

Anderson (1978) also examines the role of subgroups, something yet to be explored in this discussion. Following his conclusion that patrons of Jelly's "find ways to draw distinctions between themselves and others with whom they do not want to be confused," he continues, "At the same time, through a process of selective association, [these individuals] align themselves with others they are proud to claim as 'partners,' or fellow crowd members" (Anderson 1978, 34). These crowds are themselves stratified, with patrons constantly jockeying for positions of greater status. That being said, to maintain one's *affiliation with* a subgroup, rather than one's *position within* this subgroup, is generally the first priority of Jelly's patrons.

In order to maintain subgroup identity, patrons are required to fulfill a number of expectations. As seen in the case of Tiger, some of these expectations readily satisfied by one's

behavior within Jelly's. Showing off one's money and putting down wineheads are both ways of reaffirming one's status as a regular. Other expectations, however, are not as easy to meet. It is expected that regulars, for example, have fairly stable family situations (Anderson 1978, 55). Positive experiences in the military (with an honorable discharge as evidence) are also valued highly among regulars (Anderson 1978, 70-71), as are clean public records free of "trouble" (Anderson 1978, 72-73).¹⁰ The fact that many regulars "often take a participatory interest in politics" (Anderson 1978, 68) requires that time be spent outside of the bar keeping up on current events and, in some cases, acting "as prescient captains or as voting-day marshals at local polling places" (Anderson 1978, 69). In short, to be a high-ranking regular, one must be able to prove that his projected sense of "decency" is supported by a "respectable" life story. Thus, individuals such as Tiger, whose rise to regular status was enabled by a very public change in lifestyle, can only go so far in moving beyond a "troubled" past.

Hoodlums and wineheads have similar mechanisms for maintaining their subgroup identities as regulars. For hoodlums, a history of gang activity and the ability to acquire money illegally are highly important qualities. Wineheads, many of whom might be defined as alcoholics, value "getting a taste" (Anderson 1978, 93) above all else, but insist – as Tiger was forced to recognize – that it be paid for with money unearned by regular employment.

Considering the dualistic nature of drinking – the internal complexity of drinking cultures versus their externally observed uniformity – we return to Cohen's (1986, 74) notion of faces.¹¹

Rather than an unfortunate basis for caricatured and indistinguishable perceptions of

¹⁰ A term used repeatedly to describe many behaviors out of keeping with the expected conduct of a regular.

¹¹ Although Cohen's scholarship deserves criticism for its confined focus on "extraordinary" circumstances, his concept of boundary-making can, luckily, be applied to "ordinary" situations quite cleanly. It is important to remember that Cohen's affinity for the extraordinary results from his view that boundaries become most visible when communities are pushed out of their quotidian routines. He expresses no contempt for the notion that community *exists* in everyday life.

individuals within a drinking group, drinking behavior may in fact function as a boundary. It seems plausible that group identity, despite its opposition to processes of individuation so important to drinking behavior, can hold a useful function: repelling outsiders. The process of becoming a regular, as Anderson (1978, 67-79) recounts, requires significant amounts of time and patience, and holds no guarantee of success. I would argue that, in order to maintain spaces conducive to identity development, spaces in which gestural and linguistic cues are appropriately understood and answered, drinking groups must make the sure that new members will not deviate from the codes of normative behaviors which structure their internal hierarchies. If these groups are difficult to join, only those with absolutely no desire to step out of line with such codes will be disposed to attempt assimilation.

The possibility that drinking groups form boundaries in order to maintain their internal structures casts such groups as communities, at least as Cohen (1985) defines the term. In fact, Cohen (1986, 88) goes as far as to argue that a “sense of community...is *built* [emphasis added] upon the dialectical interplay of internal and external pressures” on which this section has focused almost entirely.

This interplay, however, is not the only point of focus able to construe drinking groups as communities. Also important is the topic of language. Because the act of drinking elicits within the individual an emotional response which then prompts this person to engage in social interactions ultimately designed for self-identification and, by extension, further individuation, parallels between drinking and language are unavoidable. Indeed, the shifting of meanings associated with various drinking behaviors closely mirrors semantic development. As Turmo (in de Garine 2001, 142) explains:

Drinking is, today like yesterday, a powerful identification mechanism. It is also an unquestionable form of communication. What happens is that the drinks and

the drinkers change, as has been the case relentlessly throughout history. The meanings of some messages also change, but the capacity to create networks and to display identities remains. Each expression, each acceptance and each rejection speaks without a voice, as has always happened, because drinking is an almost silent language.

As was seen in the case of Alacá lying, language as means for the construction of socially defined truths is a potentially vital mechanism for the construction of community. Like language, the only consistent elements of drinking are found not in what this act *means* but in what it *does* – its persistent stimulation of both interpersonal interaction and self-identification. And if drinking is viewed as language, we see that it may indeed assume a similar role to that held by fabrication in Alacá villages. To reiterate a previously quoted claim made by Douglas (1987), drinking is not a commentary on the world; it is a series of concrete messages constructing reality.

Some of the linguistic cues conveyed by a drinker, such as the type of beverage purchased, the speed at which a beverage is consumed, or the purchasing of beverages for others, will be covered in my analysis (Chapter 4). Other, more subtle behaviors (how glasses/bottles are held while drinking, how they are placed on the bar or a table, etc.) will not be reviewed due to limitations on time I was able to spend in the field.

The Bar: A Site of Manufactured Community

...the sites where drinking takes place, the locales of regular and celebrated drinking, are places where meanings are made, shared, disputed and reproduced, where identities take shape, flourish change.

- Thomas M. Wilson (in *Drinking Cultures*)

Even more than coffee, tea, and other beverages often associated with ritual, the potential of alcohol to enable those phenomena described above (Wilson 2005, 10) is highly contingent on

place.¹² As important as the act of drinking itself is that of entering a location designated for drinking which, in the case of many cultures, is a bar. Wilson's insightful claim that "drinking places are often particularly significant and culturally patterned for drinking and other intercourse" (2005, 14) highlights the fact that codes of normative behavior within bars concern gestures unrelated to drinking. Bars are as much symbolized by the specialized social circumstances that they enable as they are by their abundant supplies of alcohol, not that these elements can be concretely separated. It is the goal of this section to deconstruct such circumstances into the elements of community identified by Turner (1969, 1974), Cohen (1985), Turner (2012), and Amit (2012), and then discuss the implications of these elements on the bar community, which, by virtue of its reliance on a business, I consider to be "manufactured."

Currently there exists some debate among anthropologists and other social scientists regarding the insulation and, by extension, isolation enacted by drinking places. Can the identities developed in bars exist outside of these establishments? Are the identity-producing behaviors learned in bars used in other social contexts?

Rather frustratingly, most ethnographic accounts of bars seem to favor one answer to these questions without considering the opposing possibility. With his assertion that identities developed in Jelly's do not accompany patrons to different parts of Chicago, Anderson (1978), for example, seems to imply these identities are confined to the site of their creation. The spaces immediately surrounding Jelly's, however, remain unaddressed. If a regular were to meet a winehead on a street corner two blocks away from Jelly's, how would these individuals treat one another? Would their interaction differ substantially than those witnessed by Anderson (1978) in

¹² I use the word "place" as it is used by Hunt and Satterlee (1986, 524), who "distinguish the drinking space, which can be created instantaneously and practically anywhere and the drinking place, with its more elaborate physical structure" as two different forms of drinking "arena." Hunt and Satterlee (1986, 524) cite "areas created by meth drinkers, on parch benches or under railway arches, and 'pitches' created by Australian Aboriginals" as examples of drinking spaces, and "taverns, alehouses, wine shops, pulquerias or pubs" as examples of drinking places.

Jelly's? Would the regular, despite being outside of an "arena," perceive his counterpart as a winehead and vice versa? We can only guess.

In complete contrast to Anderson, Mars (1987, 99) observes that, in the Canadian city of St. John's, a longshoremen "gang's drinking group articulates the spheres of leisure, family, and work" but fails to identify the geographical and social range of such identity groups. We are never informed of how local and therefore proximate the "spheres of leisure, family, and work" are to one another, as well as to the sphere of the bar.

It is regrettable that, with the mobility of bar-based identity rendered unclear by such incomplete depictions as those offered by Anderson (1978) and Mars (1987), the only treatments of this phenomenon that can be trusted are broad and, thus, of limited analytic utility. Indeed, Wilson's¹³ (2005, 15) claim that, "no matter how socially significant drinking arenas seem, their importance also rests with their roles in the framing of actions, networks and other social relations beyond their own bounds" seems perfectly believable. The manner in which "framing" unfolds, however, remains unclear.

If we follow Wilson's assertion, and assume that omissions in Anderson (1978) and Mars (1986) are oversights rather than negations, it is possible to finesse the ambiguity of observations made by these ethnographers into a general rule: the further that one travels from a specific bar, the less likely it is that social roles developed within this bar will be recognized. But there is also the question of gestures through which these roles are constructed. When Schivelbusch (1992, 168), for instance, asserts that "What is natural in a bar is meaningless on the outside," he is making a claim about behavior, not hierarchy. The "unspoken obligation to participate in rounds of drinks" experienced by bar patrons are his focus and, as such, his claim is not a direct change to that made by Wilson.

¹³ Citing Hunt and Satterlee (1986)

At first, it may seem tempting to simply state that, while the *consequences* of bar behavior, namely, hierarchically situated identities, may remain with patrons outside of the drinking place, this behavior *itself* will not. After all, who acts as they would in bars while at home or at work? At least one answer to this question is, according to Mars (1987), longshoremen. Indeed, in the lives of these individuals, “obligations and reciprocities from the dock are carried through to drinking and vice versa” (Mars 1987, 99). Due to its presentation of an activity/vocation which involves reciprocal activity similar to that found in bars, this observation is, admittedly, alone among source material used in this study – but this uniqueness means little. I have no doubt that, cross-culturally, a number of rituals involve such activity. Cherry-picking specific examples from a world map is neither a productive nor convincing method of testing the notion that behavior associated with bars cannot transcend an establishment’s walls.

Let us turn instead to a general claim made by Anderson, that social identities require continuous maintenance. With this point in mind, it seems difficult to argue that certain behaviors can be limited to bars if the identities that they produce are able to exist in the outside world. We are left with no choice but to assume that Schivelbusch disagrees with the conclusions proposed by Mars and Wilson. In this case, I side with the latter camp, acknowledging that the majority of Schivelbusch’s scholarship, including that concerned with reciprocity in the bar, does not rely on the concept of behaviors which are *only* “natural” in drinking places.

Of course, much of the terminology used above – “transcend,” “outside,” “exist” – is terribly vague. Even if identities developed within a bar are not completely lost outside of this drinking place, they surely experience some alteration. Similarly, normative codes of behavior

are more likely to be reinterpreted outside of bars than removed from these establishments completely intact. Because such processes of transferal have, as of yet, been given minimal attention, I will not attempt to draw my own conclusions about them. What can be said with certainty is that bars are unique due to the more or less ubiquitous set of behavioral expectations which inform their nature as drinking places. Whether or not these expectations are themselves unique to bars is not an answerable or, for the purposes of this discussion, particularly pertinent question.

So what is “natural” in a bar? Various means of establishing individual, subgroup, and group identity through drinking were discussed in the previous section, but those normative behaviors associated specifically with bars have not yet been addressed. As touched on above, among the most conspicuous bar-specific behaviors are those enacted under the expectation of reciprocity. Referencing the potlatch, a ritualized form of gift-giving first analyzed by Mauss (1925) in which purposefully excessive bounties are regularly exchanged between neighboring chieftains, Schivelbusch (1992) reflects on the pre-capitalist significance of gifts as a method of establishing social hierarchy. In those few societies still dependent on the potlatch as a status-keeping mechanism, the giving of a gift anticipates a response far beyond the gratitude and obligation to reciprocate seen in contemporary western culture. According to Mauss, the codes of normative behavior governing such societies ensure that “Giving is a way of demonstrating one’s superiority, of showing that one is greater, that one stands higher...[while] to accept, without reciprocating or giving more in return, means subordinating oneself...One forever ‘loses face’ if one does not requite a gift or does not destroy something of corresponding worth” (as quoted in Schivelbusch 1992, 173). Implicit in the potlatch is a much more concrete demand for reimbursement than those found beneath a Christmas tree or beside a birthday cake.

Only in the bar does reciprocity (used here to describe a *fully conscious* exchange of goods) hold the threat of immediately decreased social standing if unrealized. As Schivelbusch (1992, 176) muses, “The rules and rituals that accompany drinking in a bar or pub survive in our modern civilization as relics from a long-forgotten age...In a sense, the bar is a thoroughly archaic place, with more than mere vestiges, hints, or sublimations of what one was clinging to it. Here, the genuine article lives on: drinkers sharing rounds are participants in a potlatch.” Although Schivelbusch does not go into detail about how, exactly, the sensibilities of a potlatch have been isolated to the bar like “archaic” species to an island, it does appear as if his conclusion is indeed correct. Pervasive in many bars is a commitment to “old fashioned values” insofar as this moral system encourages a continuous exchange of favors.

In his discussion of “regulars,” Anderson (1978) notes that the reciprocity facilitated by Jelly’s is not necessarily confined to an exchange of economic favors. Members of this patron group are expected to do far more than simply purchase drinks for their peers. Indeed, while these individuals do “expect their fellow regulars to be willing and able to share, not to ‘always be bummin’ off people,” this is not the extent of reciprocity and Jelly’s. As Anderson (1978, 63) repeatedly stresses, “Regulars give one another *various* [emphasis added] forms of help, particularly social favors.” That acts of reciprocity within a bar such as Jelly’s may concern needs and desires not directly related to alcohol is quite a profound realization. Anderson’s analysis suggests that the exchange of favors and resources can, perhaps quite readily, be more an element of bar culture than of drinking culture more broadly.

With the reciprocity of bar culture now thoroughly reviewed, we may finally move on to the topic of community. Does reciprocity signify feelings of belonging? What about joint-commitments? Although these questions will not be examined in full until chapter four, I will

argue here that reciprocity is based in more than camaraderie. When, in the previous section, drinking behavior was treated as a process of establishing boundaries, a joint-commitment held by members of drinking groups was also inadvertently revealed: these individuals all desire to maintain a space of identity formation. Certainly, in cases such as Jelly's, where certain members of the extended group (wineheads) receive less respect than others (regulars), levels of commitment to this goal vary considerably. But as Amit (2012, 11) has reminded us, such unevenness is perfectly normal in communities. The wish to keep up drinking spaces as relatively exclusive appears motivated by the sense of belonging which such spaces allow, something which, again, will be discussed at greater length in chapter four.

With discussion of drinking behavior (which, in bars, is more or less wholly the domain of patrons), questions regarding the role of bar ownership in processes of identity formation inevitably arise. The title of this section deems bars communities in bars to be "manufactured." Are owners the part of their own product? Regrettably, the current anthropological literature largely overlooks the importance of those individuals who manage drinking places. Although much ethnographic research focused on drinking does touch on bars in one way or another (Honigmann 1979; Mars 1987; Kasmir 2005), the owners of these establishments, if mentioned at all, are certainly not made a central node of analysis. Even studies concerned entirely with bars (Anderson 1978; O'Carroll 2005) are more or less entirely focused on patron behavior. In consequence, the dialogue between patrons, staff, and ownership – between drinkers and non-drinkers, enactors and enablers – has been only tangentially explored. This incompleteness in analysis is plainly evident in the following assertion by O'Carroll (2005, 53), whose fieldwork concerns the prevalence and popularity of Irish pubs in Germany. Rather than reaching an

epiphany (as it seems to want to do), the argument simply dances around the presence of ownership and staff.

Do the pub promoters dupe Germans into uncomplainingly paying well over the odds for their wares by giving them a distorted, 'inauthentic' version of Ireland? Irish customers tended to name four or five Irish pubs in Berlin as 'real,' and reject the rest as inauthentic, lacking the correct atmosphere or 'feel.' Does this mean that the less selective German customers are somehow being fooled because they 'don't know any better'? I suggest that the German customers are anything but passive consumers. Their agency comes to the fore when we examine the other category mentioned as a reason for frequenting Irish Pubs: community...The pubs provide a range of imaginative materials with which to work, and participants are planting desire in the rich imaginative ground provided, using the resources to engage in symbolic self-definition and the building of 'imagined communities'"

What first seems like a discussion geared to address the significance of "promoters" (a vague referent which I take to signify ownership and staff), in fact wanders farther and farther away from this essential consideration. Bar patrons and owners are wrongly placed at opposite sides of a struggle for power. As agency is granted to the former, it is illogically taken from the latter. By the conclusion of this argument, owners are obscured completely; it is "the pubs" that provide "imaginative materials."

While O'Carroll's insights regarding the means through which pub patrons go about constructing communities are not necessarily "incorrect," they are lacking in no small way. Owners do not simply open a bar and then leave it behind for patrons. If we are to consider bars as sites of manufactured community, we must understand these spaces as inventions subject to a process of continuous adjustment. And just as it is vital that we treat this process as the result of interaction between individuals on both sides of the bar table, so too is it necessary to acknowledge that the roles of patrons, staff, and ownership in facilitating adjustment differ substantially.

A similar incompleteness is found in Kasmir's (2005) discussion of radical politics and identity in Basque bars. Identifying Douglas (1987) as its main theoretical inspiration, this article, not surprisingly, focuses more on drinking *behavior* (as patron interaction) than on the drinking *place* that facilitates such interaction. The identities negotiated in Basque bars are, in line with Wilson's introductory remarks, focused primarily on nationality as an expression of political allegiance. What remains untouched on is the *dynamic* and *competitive* nature of these bars. Like O'Carroll, Kasmir (2005,2012) often acknowledges decisions clearly made or, at least, approved by bar owners without explicitly bringing these individuals into her discussion.

While Txlaparta's clientele overlaps considerably with that of Bar Jai, the bar appeals especially to those who prefer its more stylistically (though not politically) conservative character. Txlaparta is brighter than Jai and its décor is neater. The tables and stools are free of graffiti, and 'tradition' is invoked by a ceramic wall plaque of a peasant grandfather in his *biona* (Basque beret).

This passage falls short of fully illuminating reasons for certain choices in bar décor and design by removing owners from the conversation. With her juxtaposition of two establishments, Kasmir lays the groundwork for discussion of bar owners and competition, but, ultimately, elects not to pursue this route. Because their respective decorative schemes are unattributed to any human intentions, Txlaparta and Bar Jai come across as static entities. The fact that the atmospheres of these establishments have been produced by a continuous reinterpretation of bar identity – a conversation between bar owner, bar staff, and bar tenders not unlike that occurs within the primary-group of Jelly's (Anderson, 1979) – remains a blurred footnote.

Kasmir (2005, 215) does, eventually, approach the radical bar owners on whose establishments his article is focused, explaining that these individuals "form a solidaric group whose relations are not unduly strained by competition" because "good business for one bar typically means good business for others." That being said, this statement is not examined

critically, nor is it revisited later in the article. A subsequent discussion of three leftist bars faced with the threat of closure (Kasmir 2005, 214-216), for example, proceeds without referencing the manner in which other “bartenders”¹⁴ reacted to the potential loss of these establishments. While the “good business for one bar..means good business for others” attitude is by no means uncommon (several New London bar owners express a similar perspective), the fact remains that bars in close proximity to one another are, inherently, competing for patrons. In the case of New London, many bar owners are looking to attract out-of-towners, and see an increase in business of all kinds as the path to greater publicity and popularity among non-locals. In the case of radical Basque bars, however, patronage seems to be more or less exclusively local. Thus, a decrease in bar density could, feasibly, yield positive results for those establishments that do stay in business. This is not to suggest that Kasmir’s insights into bar competition are misleading, only that they require further development.

As an analysis of the manner in which “constructive drinking” facilitates national identity formation, Kasmir (2005) is perceptive and thorough. But can such an analysis proceed without also taking into account the role of “bartenders?” Kasmir (2005) herself seems to think not, as evident in the following passage:

In part, their decision is economically motivated since a larger portion of their business comes from teenagers who are spending small allowances, and lower prices can help to regularize that customer base. But their stance is politically and socially motivated, as well: lower prices keep the establishments hospitable to young people. Given that going to radical bars is often young people’s earliest experience of participation in the radical world, it is important from a political standpoint to facilitate access. For this reason, bars even welcome non-consuming customers...Consequently, bars are public spaces that transcend pure business logic. (Kasmir 2005, 215)

This discussion is perhaps the more explicitly supportive of the tension between community and profit than any other in the anthropological literature (though whether Kasmir’s claim holds true

¹⁴ Used by Kasmir (2005) in reference to the individuals who run and manage bars

for bars not affiliated with any political agenda remains a question to be pursued in chapter four). But how does the fact that bars “transcend true business logic” relate to their potential as sight of community development? Must business logic and the formation of community identity always be at odds? These are important questions. The disproportionate control exercised by owners and patrons, respectively, over a bar atmosphere have profound implications for the manner in which barroom interactions manifest both individual and community identities.

The frequent convolution of bars with bar owners, combined with an implicit portrayal of these drinking places as unchanging entities, prevents Kashmir’s conclusion from achieving full effect. It is not enough to simply explain that a single decision made by certain bar owners is motivated by a combination of economic and sociopolitical factors. In order to identify how, within bars, joint-commitments may articulate feelings of belonging (Amit, 2012) or vice versa – to recognize the symbolic “boundaries” distinguishing bars as “communities” *and* understand how such boundaries are continually reproduced – the motivating factors behind a *variety* of choices made by bar owners (concerning such factors as décor, staff training, and event scheduling) must be illuminated and examined. This information will be revealed most readily by treating the bar as a *dynamic* entity for which a single individual is ultimately responsible.

Indeed, the notion of responsibility is key when discussing bar owners. While these individuals can be said to wield substantial authority within their establishments, the nature of this authority is easily exaggerated. When, for instance, I described bar owners as being *responsible* for displaying photos of radical prisoners, I did not intend to imply a direct causal relationship. It is not necessarily the case that these photos were personally mounted by bar owners, nor can we be sure whose idea (a patron? a bar tender? a prominent political figure?) it

was to display them in the first place. I simply meant that no photos (or any other decorative elements, for that matter) would have been displayed without an owner's *approval*.

Earlier, I used the words *enactor* and *enabler* to describe bar patrons and ownership/staff respectively. While I understand that this distinction clumps bar owners and bar tenders (as well as other staff members) together into a relatively general category, I nonetheless think it to be a useful way of delimiting the role of patrons in a bar community. As extensively as the behavior of bar patrons as drinkers has been discussed, this discussion has given little attention to what these individuals *cannot* do, which elements of the bar community lie out of their hands. Although the demands of patrons will inevitably sway decisions made by a bar owner and, in consequence, a bar's staff, changes in bar culture – in the physical appearance, reputation, and atmosphere of an establishment – are invariably *enacted* by the establishment's owner. This is not to say that owners are unfailingly able to bring their visions to life, only that it is, ultimately, decisions made by these individuals that inform the fates of their businesses. Bar owners choose how their establishments are decorated, how beer and food are priced, how staff members are hired and trained, how entertainment is scheduled, and, most important for the purposes of this discussion, how patron input is treated.

Although O'Carroll's study avoids discussing the processes through which bar owners enact change in their establishments, its analysis of patron response to these drinking places is nonetheless valuable. For example, the observation that "Irish Pubs are treated as spaces of difference to the German everyday by both promoters and German customers, spaces where people can do things that they wouldn't normally do, just as if they were on holiday and 'free'" (O'Carroll 2005, 53) brings to prominence the question of awareness as it relates to those practices of identification which so often accompany alcohol consumption. Unlike Camba

individuals, German patrons of Irish Pubs appear to ignore the processes of “insulation” that must surely take place in these establishments. These individuals’ desire to escape their “normal” existence for more exotic experiences suggests that a profound cultural change is perceived to accompany one’s entering of an Irish Pub. But rather than a displaced “slice” of Ireland, the culture in which patrons feel themselves as immersed is entirely synthetic – a combination of Irish symbols and German sensibilities. Indeed, “The ‘reality’ or ‘authenticity’ of the representation of ‘Irishness’ in the Irish pubs is wholly immaterial...it is a language being used primarily by Germans to talk to Germans about their own lives.” (O’Carroll 200, 54) Along with carrying with it the illusion of Irishness, the culture of these pubs apparently leads patrons to ignore competitive and intensely communal elements of drinking and, especially, barroom environments. It bases itself on the misguided equation of geographical distance to “freedom” from those fundamentally human and universal experiences of stress, competition, and obligation. Considering the discussions of drinking and bar behavior discussed thus far, it is clear that such a culture could never exist within a drinking place.

While there is no reason to doubt the claim that “A large number [of German patrons] remarked that they enjoy sitting at the bar in Irish pubs, ordering their beer in English and engaging in ‘chat’ with the bar staff: all modes of engagement with a setting of spatial relations and social interaction which allow them to travel away from the everyday and ‘to relax’” (O’Carroll 2005, 53), it does appear as if these patrons were engaged in a process of mild self-delusion. The alcohol-based interaction described in the above quotation, like those of the Naskapi, patrons of Jelly’s, and the Camba, must surely follow a model of simultaneous self-identification and community building. German patrons of Irish pubs undoubtedly behave

differently from one another while in these establishments according to their levels of familiarity with and, by extension, comfort in these establishments.

Just because Irish pubs are depicted as “relaxing” and “free” by regular and semi-regular patrons (who, judging from the content of O’Carroll’s comments about these individuals, I assume to be the primary subjects of her interviews), does not mean that new customers are immediately at home in these establishments. The patrons of Irish pubs in Germany are, like all other bar patrons, part of “a community inhabiting a space in which they are ‘at home’: a closed community, which may not welcome outsiders and in fact make fun of them or ‘bother’ them by causing social pollution, whether that be drunkenness or rowdiness, or the fact of being workers” (O’Carroll 2005, 58). Unfortunately, O’Carroll does not offer much information about the means through which one may become a regular patron of an Irish pub, or the mechanisms through which regular patrons develop identities for themselves and each other. How social hierarchies are created in these establishments thus remains a mystery. That being said, the explicit observation that Irish pubs in Germany are “closed communities” (in conjunction with the gesturing aimed at both individuation and alliance observed in other studies of drinking “arenas”) suggests that patrons of these establishments likely jostle for positions within a social hierarchy, even if they perceive the pubs as providing “relaxing” experiences.

With this in mind, it becomes clear that information concerning the intentions of bar ownership would be of immense help in articulating what actually occurs behind the walls of an Irish pub in Germany. Do the owners of such establishments go through special measures to ensure that patrons will define their experiences as relaxed rather than competitive? What stock do owners place on being “authentically” Irish? Do owners care if patrons understand that they are being positioned to ignore the processes of identity formation which dominate bar culture?

Most importantly, is there a level of patron communality (on the scale from consociation to *communitas*) which these individuals perceive as ideal for their establishments? A wealth of information regarding agency and communication remains unattainable. Without examination of bar owners, joint-commitments, catalysts for affect, boundaries and even liminal periods cannot be readily identified, not to mention analyzed. All feelings of community within a bar are, by one means or another, traceable to the person or persons whose vision keeps the establishment in operating condition. It is only by expanding the focus of bar research to include all individuals involved with these drinking places – to concern the manner in which struggles for identity are managed by an environment which is itself the product of continuous dialogue between enactors and enablers – that a full picture of the bar as a site of manufactured community can be attained.

Chapter 3: Methods

Locating the Field

Before attempting to identify the “field” of my own research. I think it important to first briefly review the history of this integral but often undervalued step in ethnographic methodology. Just as “fieldwork” has experienced a number of reinterpretations in past decades, so too has the process of identifying locations in which this practice takes place. Throughout the twentieth century, the Malinowskian concept of an isolated field populated by an isolated people – a concept which construes the process of field delimitation as more organic than calculated – served as an “archetype” for ethnographic research (Stocking 1992). In recent years, however, notions of a geographically bounded field site have largely fallen out of favor. As anthropologists grow more self-aware, the distinguishing of such a site increasingly seems a practice inseparable from anthropology’s colonial roots (Clifford 1997; Gupta and Ferguson 1997; Narayan 1993). No longer can the discipline treat those “fields” on which it must, in some capacity, continue to rely as localities *prepared* for ethnographic research. Ethnography fails to retain reflexivity “when notions of ‘here’ and ‘elsewhere’ are assumed to be features of geography, rather than sites constructed in fields of unequal power relations” (Gupta and Ferguson 1997, 35).

With cultures worldwide becoming rapidly globalized in recent decades, the *utility* of research conducted in accordance with the Malinowskian paradigm has also been subject to substantial questioning.¹⁵ As Gupta and Ferguson (1997, 5) note, “the field is a clearing whose deceptive transparency obscures the complex processes that go into constructing it...it is a highly overdetermined setting for the discovery of difference.” What once needed no explanation (to

¹⁵ “utility” is used here in opposition to ethics, though the two categories are not entirely separable

study Trobriand islanders was to make the Trobriand Islands one's field) must now face a daunting series of questions: how do the "natives" who populate the field of an ethnographer's research associate with broader discourses concerning social identity?; how does the local economy of this field interact with fiscal issues on state, national, or even global levels?; how do emigration and immigration facilitate the construction of local knowledge (Geertz 1983)?

Recent disciplinary wariness of the "field" holds particular significance to my own fieldwork, which was conducted in an area geographically close to "home" on the Connecticut College campus. At most, it is thirty-minute walk from campus to downtown New London. Both sites (with the exception of the college's northern edge) are located in the City of New London. As such, my visits downtown never lasted more than several hours, and, even if out late, I would always return to campus for the night.

As Clifford (1997) muses, "exotic" fieldwork pursued over a continuous period of at least a year has, for some time now, set the norm against which other practices are judged." Thus, ethnographic research conducted close to home is especially predisposed to consider certain adverse effects of exoticization, among which is the unreflexive definition and demarcation of geographical space. Anthropology is far removed from "the days in which natives were genuine natives (whether they liked it or not) and the observer's objectivity in the scientific study of Other societies [as geographically bounded entities] posed no problem" (Narayan 1993, 672). No longer can we perceive an ethnographer's "home" as being an equally static and conclusively delimited site as his (or, in several exceptional cases, her) "field." The traditional "fieldwork injunction to go elsewhere construes 'home' as a site of origin, of sameness" and, in so doing, mistakenly portrays this vague locative as representing "a site of immobility" (Clifford 1997, 213). Despite its reputation as a "bubble" (something on which I will touch on further in

Chapters 4 and 5), the Connecticut College campus, which I identify as my “home,” is hardly an isolated or inert space. Various elements of the institution based in this site are part of a continuous yet variable dialogue with downtown New London. Both of these loci would, in fact, be best described as “shifting locations”: politically motivated “ongoing projects” (Gupta and Furguson 1997, 37) whose dynamic nature prevents them from being juxtaposed.

While I do not regard the boundaries drawn (by myself and others) between Connecticut College and downtown New London as “invented or unreal,” they can be readily “crosscut by other borders or affiliations also potentially relevant to [one’s] project” (Clifford 1997, 214). Geographically speaking, these two locations are discrete spaces which require their respective populations to learn partially distinct sets of normative behavior, but it is undeniable that certain segments of the college’s population are substantially more connected to particular facets of downtown culture than others, and vice versa. The manner in which these connections (which may be motivated by employment, residence, leisure activities, shopping needs, etc.) change over time is the result of “shifting” goals which each location has collectively set for itself. As Connecticut College shifts its mission and, in so doing, its identity, so too do those members of the campus community who are involved with downtown New London shift this involvement. What was once an individual interest going “against the grain” may be transformed into part of a broad campus initiative quite readily. The treatment of Connecticut College by downtown New London is subject to similar processes of development.

The notion of the “native” is equally as complex and problematic as that of the “field.” As a direct consequence of increased multicultural heritage on the part of both ethnographers and informants, this term is frequently rendered ambiguous to the point of near uselessness (Narayan 1993). Because “a person may have many strands of identification available, strands that may be

tugged into the open or stuffed out of sight,” (Narayan 1993, 673) the identity of a so-called native informant, as well as that of the more recently conceived “native anthropologist,” are hardly concrete entities.

It comes as no surprise therefore that anthropologists such as Caputo (2000, 27), who conducted her doctoral research in her “home” city, may recall a “fieldworker persona...made up of a series of partial identities that abruptly shifted according to changes in context.” This example is particularly useful, as it offers a direct connection between ambiguous nativism and the indefinite divide between “home” and “field.” Caputo recalls “an experience of continually coming and going to and from the field, to the point where, at times, the field became indistinguishable from home” (2000, 26).

While conducting fieldwork, I often felt a similar ambivalence to Caputo. As a New Englander, I am “native” in New London; as a college student from Boston, I am not. My taste for rock n’ roll gave me a level of native status at Harley’s, but my relatively young age differentiates me from most of this establishment’s patrons. Of course, as Narayan has reminded us, the navigation of one’s identity as a composite of normative and non-normative elements (in the context of their “location”) is a task not exclusive to ethnographers. It is a lifelong process through which all individuals must go, “natives” included.

Not all bar owners involved with this study are native New Londoners, nor do all reside in New London. Each of these individuals locates themselves within the city differently: some feel a sense of geographical security and comfort, while others, such as Tomás, owner of The Crashing Umbrella, identify with a “subculture” which extends beyond New London but finds a home in the city by virtue of a certain establishment.

Because locations “shift” in accordance with the decisions and goals of those individuals who populate them, local knowledge is not developed holistically but through a mess of ideological tangents – some of which will never cross paths. In consequence, “no one can be an insider to all sectors of a community,” nor can anyone be a complete “outsider” (Clifford 1997, 214). It has become “more profitable to focus on shifting identities in relationship with the people and issues an anthropologist seeks to represent” (Narayan 1993, 682) than to study “natives” as static entities privy to comprehensive local knowledge.

To very briefly summarize, it is impossible to decisively separate home from field, native from nonnative, and, by extension, research from “non-academic” life. Now, I return to the task of locating the work conducted in this study. According to Clifford (1997) the process of field location may actually be made easier by conducting fieldwork in proximity to one’s place of residence. He muses over the fact that, “ironically, now that much anthropological fieldwork is conducted...close to home, the materiality of travel in and out of the field becomes more apparent...becomes constitutive of the object/site of study” (1997, 198). Rather than means of “dwelling,” (Clifford 1997, 198) those processes of traveling to, from, and through the field achieve foremost prominence in the mind of an ethnographer whose travel to the field is brief and frequent.

Clifford (1997, 197) defines travel as “an inclusive term embracing a range of more or less voluntaristic practices of leaving ‘home’ to go to some ‘other’ place. The displacement...involves obtaining knowledge or having an ‘experience’ (exciting, edifying, pleasurable, estranging, broadening).” I follow his contention that such practices should be the foremost contention of ethnographic inquiry, particularly in the case of projects such as mine, which require fieldwork to be conducted in a number of small, geographically distinct loci (i.e.,

bars), and understand my data to be the result of travel between various establishments in New London and my “home” at Connecticut College. This is not to suggest that I have disregarded those practices of “dwelling” to which Clifford refers, but my own experiences as a “dweller” were so apparently tied up in a matrix of travel that to divide time “in the field” and “out of the field” would leave my data with little analytic utility.

Due to my own social and geographical location, this project can be best described as a study of the “socially established routes” (1997, 198) that guide individuals (myself included) through the landscape of downtown New London, as well as of those which link this neighborhood to Connecticut College. In order to study the bar as community, it was imperative that I not confine my analysis to observations of solidarity among patrons and staff. The question of what draws individuals to certain bars cannot be fully answered within the walls of these establishments. The routes which I have examined are not just geographical, but also social, economic, and political. Along with the eight bars on which this study is primarily focused, the scope of my research extends into the streets and sidewalks on which patrons travel; the networks of discourse amongst owners, staff, and patrons; even the municipal governance that shapes the coexistence of drinking establishments in New London.

The process of conducting fieldwork close to home includes a number of notable advantages over other forms of ethnographic research, while also forcing the ethnographer to content with several unique challenges. In Caputo’s eyes, the fieldworker who conducts research near home, and as such “is never able to be completely in the field,’ nor...‘leave the field,’” (2000, 28) possesses an array of practical advantages over anthropologists who travel great distances for completely immersive experiences (Caputo 2000; Dyck 2000; Messerschmidt 1981). Noel Dyck, who conducted fieldwork focused on Canadian youth sport leagues in which

his own children were involved presents a simple example of such an advantage with the following reflection:

...without prior personal involvement in the realm of children's sporting activities, I doubt that I would have been able to identify the pertinent social dimensions of parental involvement in this field of activity, let alone recognize the opportunities that these present for ethnographic research. My biography as a parent participant in these activities had, among other things, afforded me a basic familiarity with the scale, complexity, intensity and contingency of community sports for children. These insights emerged out of personal experience that made visible and interesting a situation and set of relationships that would, in the absence of such non-professional involvement, likely have escaped my attention. (2000, 40)

As can be seen in this anecdote, proximity between home and field enables the ethnographer to *immediately* conduct research with advantageous levels of familiarity and comfort. According to Caputo, "the unique insights and experiences that are gained through fieldwork are apparent *despite* the actual physical distance travelled," (2000, 29) rather than because of it. I agree fully with this sentiment, as with Dyck's argument that previous experience in a cultural "realm" can amplify the ethnographer's perception when this realm is transformed into "the field."

My own experiences as a native English speaker who has lived his entire life in the northeastern United States (most recently as a resident of New London) have enabled me to navigate the urban landscape in which my field is located with a greater adeptness than would otherwise be possible. Everything from my comprehension of local gestural and linguistic cues to my comfort with climate has had a subtle yet significant impact on my research, particularly because my level of ethnographic experience is, at this very early point in my academic career, minimal. Had I come from another country, or even a part of the United States in which codes of normative behavior differ dramatically from those present in New London, this project, being my first experience with ethnographic research, would have been significantly more difficult to

pursue. Thus, I defend my willingness to blur the lines between home and field as being, in part, the product of necessity. That being said, conducting fieldwork close to home is not without any pitfalls. For example, McCracken (1988, 11-12, 22), suggests that fieldwork conducted close to home may in fact prove detrimental to interview protocol and analysis:

It is precisely because the qualitative researchers are working in their own culture that they can make the long interview do such powerful work. It is by drawing on their understanding of how they themselves see and experience the world that they can supplement and interpret the data they generate in the long interview. Just as plainly, however, this intimate acquaintance with one's own culture can create as much blindness as insight. It can prevent the observer from seeing cultural assumptions and practices...Those who work in their own culture...carry with them a large number of assumptions that can create a treacherous sense of familiarity.

McCracken's insight can be applied to other methods of collecting qualitative data, such as the recording and analysis of fieldnotes. During all stages of data analysis for this project, I felt compelled to identify my own assumptions in order to recognize those being made by individuals around me. Generally, I found that such assumptions, whether mine or someone else's, would build on one another. Just as the motivation for a person's behavior (why does Tim go to this bar?) was often a platform for divergent conjectures (to get drunk vs. to socialize), so too were the semantic ambiguities of supposedly straightforward words or phrases on which initial conjectures were based. Whereas I am inclined to consider "drunkenness," for example, as describing a state of visibly affected movement (loss of balance) and speech (slurring of words) caused by alcohol consumption, a bar owner might deem anyone unable to drive legally as being "drunk."

My proximity to the field also presented challenges during initial attempts at immersion. Ironically, my ability to return to campus every night after conducting fieldwork prevented me from reaching the same "insider" status that anthropologists who travel away from home for

fully immersive experiences often attain. I was always an “outsider” while in downtown New London, despite not living particularly far “outside” of my field. The time I spent downtown was also limited by coursework and extracurricular obligations which frequently held me on campus. An increase in time allotted to fieldwork would have likely moved me closer to achieving “insider” status, though the *extent* to which such a change in schedule would have altered my perceived identity remains unknowable. Had my research spanned a longer period of time, time which could have been more fully devoted to research, I may have considered moving downtown, or at least visiting downtown bars on a daily basis, to dissolve the cultural boundaries that separated me from the individuals with whom I regularly interacted. For my modest purposes of limited field-observation and interviews, however, these boundaries never proved to be a significant obstacle.

Field Observations and Notes

Although interviews with bar owners are the most heavily referenced form of data in my analysis, I also conducted regular observation sessions at each bar on which this study focuses. It was during these sessions (which generally placed me at the bar silently drinking a beer) that I took fieldnotes on an iPod touch. I always made sure to tell bar owners during a first or, at the latest, second interaction that I would be frequenting their establishments for this purpose.

In terms of fieldnote style, I followed disciplinary convention and attempted to record as much material as possible with minimal concern for grammar or syntax (Emerson et al. 2001; Lanham 1983; Lofland and Lofland 1995). Although my notes generally possessed a matter-of-fact tone (*three men at bar, two Caucasian, likely in twenties, one black, also likely in twenties...*), my aim during note-taking was not to produce any form of objective documentation,

nor was it to record material from viewpoints other than my own. By virtue of their human authors, fieldnotes reflect a specific individual's "stance" (Emerson et al. 2001, 360) toward his/her environment, and are thus "selective, purposed, angled, voiced" (Emerson et al. 1995, 106).

In writing up fieldnotes, I opted to employ a highly reflexive rhetoric dubbed "confessional" by Van Maanen (1988). "Confessional tales" make the ethnographer a central figure in the ethnographer's text and "attempt to explicitly demystify fieldwork or participant observation by showing how the technique is practiced in the field" (Van Maanen 1988, 73). In the context of taking fieldnotes, to "confess" is to acknowledge the limitations – both physical (an obscured view) and mental (particular interest in a certain element of the field) – of one's observational capabilities. I should note here that, although I find Van Maanen's distinction between "realist," "confessional," and "impressionist" rhetoric in *ethnography* to be useful, I question the validity of *fieldnotes* written as "realist tales." To record fieldnotes from the false perspective of an omniscient observer seems a less-than-ideal way of "capturing" one's observations and will likely translate into a distortion (rather than a reaffirmation) of memory upon the ethnographer's return to these writings. Even Emerson et al. (2001, 360) contend, "the omniscient point of view holds particular dangers for fieldnotes," despite previously asserting (with a claim which I take as describing rhetoric rather than "truthfulness") that third person narration "can convey the words and actions of others very effectively."

Fife's (2005) two-stage strategy for note-taking, which mandates that one's recording of "general observations" be followed by the logging of "focused" notes designed to illuminate specific "patterns of behavior," influenced my own note-taking practices heavily. Referencing fieldwork which he conducted in Papua New Guinean schools, Fife (2005, 72) explains that "the

research goal during [the] general observation period is to record as fully as possible the micro-level context of schooling inside of [a] classroom.” In the case of my own research, it was the micro-context of interaction inside of a bar that I attempted to document with extensive, “unfocused” notes. My compilation of such notes began in the summer of 2013, during which time I made frequent trips to each of the eight bars on which my study is focused, as well as 12 others also located in downtown New London. Although my desire to meet business owners frequently propelled me to make conversation with bar tenders and patrons, much of my time during these forays into the New London bar scene were spent creating “sketches” (Emerson et al. 1995, 85-99), i.e. taking highly detailed general observation notes. Such notes concerned bar décor, patronage, music, television programming, alcohol selection, and features of built environments (how many rooms? where is the bar located? tables? stage? dance floor?), among other social and material attributes.¹⁶

After several visits to each bar, I had compiled adequate information on the more permanent facets of these spaces (mainly décor and built-environments) and my sketches began focusing heavily on those elements of bar atmosphere subject to considerable variation: music (broken down into categories of volume, genre, and form – live, DJ, karaoke, recorded, etc.); number of patrons; ethnic, gender, and age distribution of patrons (as I could best discern); and any non-musical special events (trivia, open mic, etc.). On several Friday and Saturday nights, I opted to look through the windows of numerous establishments for the purpose of recording quick notes on these more variable elements. I would make several “rounds” through the field at different times of night (generally every half hour or hour), to track any changes in activity experienced by certain establishments. This strategy proved an effective means for gathering

¹⁶ At this point, I should mention that I have no delusions regarding the limitations of my own perception. I agree with Fife’s [2005, 73] description of general observations as “the best record possible about what is occurring.”

fairly broad, even if not comprehensive, data set from a single night. Such data sets (which I refer to as “survey notes” were useful for gaining an idea of the general “schedule” of establishments in terms of patronage and events, which were then used to contextualize more focused field notes. For example, when I attended my first concert at the Waterfront Pub, previously taken survey notes enabled me to determine that the crowd was slightly smaller than is “usual” for a concert night at this venue.

Fife (2005) asserts that, before more focused notes may be recorded, the ethnographer should code general observations in accordance with behavioral categories.¹⁷ Categories are informed by the ethnographer’s “theoretical orientation,” which directs a careful scansion of fieldnotes for “repetitive themes” relevant to research goals (Fife 2005, 75). Because the leading focus of my project is the community concept, the categories that I created for the coding of my fieldnotes all concern behaviors (both in the bar and behind the scenes) potentially important to the formation of a community (table 3.1). Some of these categories, like those used by Fife, regard interpersonal interaction. *General disinterest*, *general hesitance*, *general engagement*, *disinterest toward non-regulars*, and *hesitance toward non-regulars*, for example, are all categories that I used to describe the treatment of patrons by bar tenders. Other categories, however, involve physical elements of the bar. *Personal memorabilia* and *material history* were employed to code notes regarding décor, while *active audience*, *mostly passive audience* and *passive audience* were used to code documented reactions of patrons to live music. In creating categories, I attempted to locate a balance between unnecessary specificity (categories ultimately being a means of generalization) and the oversimplification that can be caused by loosely grouping or dichotomizing certain elements of an environment. Measuring the extent to which

¹⁷ Because these categories are not based in the language of the “native” (Geertz 1974), they are fundamentally different from domains identified through ethnographic interviews. See pages 94-95 for a discussion of domain analysis

bartenders seek social interaction with patrons is not the only way to examine bartender behavior, nor do the three categories listed above cover all potential dispositions which bartenders may possess (a bartender could be outright antagonistic to patrons, for instance). What my categories for bartender disposition do provide is a coding system based on behavior recorded in *my* fieldnotes which is relevant to *my* interest in the bar as a manufactured community. Once again, it is the interaction of “theoretical orientation” and “repetitive themes” present in fieldnotes that informs category development.

In regard to “focused” fieldnotes, Fife (2005, 83) claims that “the researcher needs to begin by selecting a specific pattern of behavior [based on a category or categories with which a prior set of notes was coded] that he/she wishes to investigate”. I, too, employed this strategy while identifying the object(s) of focus for later interviews but, unlike Fife, I modified categories derived from coding general observations before using them to guide my focused observation. This decision was, in large part, based on the specificity of the categories that I initially developed. For example, rather than focus an entire observation session on the *general disinterest* of a bartender, or even the disposition of this individual as a combination of behaviors expressing *disinterest* and/or *hesitance*, I elected to include categories of bartender behavior as elements in several broader patterns of bar atmosphere.¹⁸ The following patterns were identified *encouraged self-initiation* – the process through which bars passively pressure new or infrequent patrons to become regulars (the presence of casual photos depicting regular patrons on the walls of an establishment is an example of this, as is a bartender who only pursues or engages conversation with familiar patrons); *initiative action* – an active approach to the same goal of expanding a regular patron base (seen in an outgoing bar staff who consistently attempts to meet new patrons and thereby encourage return visits); and *indifference* – which, not to be confused

¹⁸ An entity largely constructed by bar owners; see Chapter 2

with any form of detachment or antagonism, includes elements of a atmosphere which neither discourage nor encourage regular patronage (bartenders willing to converse but makes no attempt to “sell” their place of employment to patrons, or décor that is highly impersonal would be classified as examples of *indifference*). (See table 3.1 for a flowchart of the note-taking process).

It is important to mention that my fieldnotes are not entirely qualitative. I concur with McCracken’s (1988, 18, 28) contention that “the qualitative and quantitative approaches are never substitutes for one another” and, as such, “the qualitative researcher must also be prepared to take full advantage of quantitative methodologies.” While I would hold that most patterns of bar-based behavior manifest themselves in unquantifiable ways, my focused observation did make use of several counting schedules (Fife 2005). For half-hour periods during weekday afternoons, weekday nights, and weekend nights I counted how many times a bartender and patron greeted each other by name; how many times a bartender had to cut a patron off or postpone that individual’s next drink; and how many times a patron approached a bartender with a problem or personal anecdote.¹⁹

At this point, all note-taking discussed has concerned bar tenders. Despite their status as interviewees, however, bar owners were also the occasional subjects of my fieldnotes. More than a practice of verifying claims made during interviews (ex: *I generally let the bar tenders here do their own thing. I try to stay out of their way*), this strategy was designed to acquire data unobtainable via interviews. Even if bar owners were completely honest while describing their behavior within their respective establishments, certain facets of this behavior (body language, tone of voice, interaction with space) would have invariably escaped extensive description.

¹⁹ Certain bar owners rarely visit their establishments. thereby reducing the likelihood of me encountering one of these individuals during a bar visit. As such, I elected not to use counting schedules while studying bar owner behavior.

Because such facets fall into the vague realm of semi-conscious decisions which generally fly below the radar of one's self-awareness (and avoid consistent inclusion in memory), they do not constitute subject matter particularly conducive to interview questions. Asking one to describe one's "typical" body language will almost certainly breed a contrived or unhelpfully brief response. Perhaps Mintz (1979, 20) addressed the complementary nature of interview and field note data best with his simple contention that, "even if fieldwork is confined at some point to dealing with a single informant, there is great benefit in being able at least to observe that informant interacting with other members of the group."

Interviewing

I derived the majority of data analyzed in this study from personal, semi-structured interviews with seven bar owners and one manager. Two interviews, the respective structures of which were largely based on Spradley (1979), were conducted with each interviewee. These interviews were scheduled in advance, generally for a time in the afternoon or early evening (when business for bars tends to be fairly slow), and all transpired within the establishments where interviewees worked, respectively. As such, they occurred in a temporal "location outside of everyday events" (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006, 315) despite being in the same physical spaces as field observations. Although the target time for each interview was 30-40 minutes, length varied from 15 minutes to nearly two hours. Prior to each interview, I presented the interviewee with an Informed Consent Document which included my contact information. Although this document made clear that interviewees should feel free to refrain from answering any question(s) throughout the course of an interview, I was always sure to state this explicitly. After the conclusion of an interview, I presented the interviewee with a Debriefing/Explanation of Research Form briefly outlining the methods and goals of my project.

All interviews were documented using a digital audio recorder, something which interviewees were alerted to during the scheduling process. Although videotaping would have provided interesting data regarding the body language used by bar owners (as well as by myself) during interviews, I felt that the presence of a video camera would be more likely to distract or unsettle interview subjects than an audio recording. All audio recordings were transcribed in full, and then coded.

I did not seek to pay any interviewees involved in this project. Such direct reimbursement would have, I believe, been readily perceived of as overcompensation or, worse yet, charity. As such, I reject Levy and Hollan's (1998, 339) absolutist assertion that, "under modern conditions, informants and respondents...become professionalized" and are therefore posed to communicate most effectively if money is exchanged for time and services. Although offering interviewees monetary compensation for their troubles was, admittedly, never a possibility for me, I do feel quite certain that, had I attempted to give a bar owner several dollars following an interview, this individual would have immediately refused the payment. Small business owners (and managers) generally take pride in their self-sufficiency and organizational savvy, and New London bar owners are no exception to this trend.

My own social standing in New London was also an important factor to consider while gauging the potential for attempted payment to strain relationships with interviewees. That I attend (and thus represent) a wealthy institution of higher education was a fact not lost on bar owners, nor was the unfortunate reality that New London is often perceived as an economically unstable and decidedly middle-class city. As such, I view the claim that, during fieldwork conducted in what Levy and Hollan (1998, 339) refer to as "premodern" societies, "overt quid-pro-quo offers of payments 'settling' the interviewer's obligation are disturbing and, often,

insulting to the respondent” as also being applicable to ethnographic research conducted within “modern” social frameworks.

As far as I could discern, all of my interviewees were completely open to the idea of being interviewed without any form of immediate payment. One reason for this appeared to be a sense of pride in the social standing granted to small-business owners. According to Levy and Hollan (1998, 339), “high-status interviewees...may consider helping the anthropologist to be a part of the responsibility (and validation) of their status.” More than any reaffirmation of rank in the socioeconomic hierarchy of New London, however, bar owners appeared to interpret my requests for interviews as a chance to validate identity. All interviewees in this study place considerable emphasis on being socially dexterous, and although these individuals certainly have diverse personalities, each seemed to consider the prospect of refusing an interview to contradict the persona that he or she was attempting to uphold.

While I can only guess at the expectations that bar owners (and other bar employees aware of my research) had for me, these individuals did seem to appreciate my frequent patronage of their establishments. Seeing me on a semi-regular basis undoubtedly increased their comfort with my presence and made my task of requesting interviews less awkward and seemingly arbitrary than it would have been otherwise. I would further hold, however, that my bar visits were also interpreted as acts of reciprocity, as the matching of my academic concern for New London bars with a personal investment in these businesses. Thus, the claim made by Levy and Hollan that “in most premodern places, the respondent assumes that an exchange relation is being set up and that some sort of obligation on the part of the interviewer will result” (1998, 339) holds true for many so-called “modern” cultures as well.

Another important ethical concern implicit in the interview process is that of interviewer control as it relates to interviewee freedom. When, if at all, should the interviewer explicitly seek from the interviewee a more relevant (as relevance is defined in the moment) response? By noting that “[it is] through the use of open-ended questions the interviewee is given the opportunity to shape his or her own responses or even to change the direction of the interview altogether” Fife (2005, 95) implies that inherent in the semi-structured interview is a very passive treatment of interviewee responses, but it hardly seems prejudiced to suggest that the worth of an interview may be compromised if these responses change direction with great frequency.

It has become the general consensus of anthropologists (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006; Johnson 2002; Fife 2005; McCracken 1988; Mishler 1986) that interviewees should be allowed to deviate from material directly concerning the interviewer’s questions. As McCracken rightly acknowledges, “what appears to be an abrupt change of topic may be a simple and important piece of clarification” (McCracken 1988, 39). What remains a subject for debate, however, is the acceptable extent of this deviation, both in terms of content and time. Certainly, there exists a fine line between the interviewer’s retention of “control” (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006; McCracken 1988) over an interview and his/her potential subjugation of the interviewee. Some researchers (Ribbens and Edwards 1998, 46-75) have gone as far as to say that, by “attempting to control for the social roles of the interviewer and the interviewee,” (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006, 317) the ethnographic interview is itself an inherently oppressive method, while others (Fife 2005, 93) emphasize the “openness” of the qualitative interview so fervently that potential variability within this openness is never addressed.

McCracken (1988, 22), like the majority of his contemporaries, holds that “it is important that the investigator allow the respondent to tell him his or her own story in his or her own terms,” but makes sure to address the balance between passivity and influence that an ethnographer must maintain. He stipulates, “it is just as important that the interviewer exercise some control over the interview...[for] the scholar who does not control...data will surely sink without a trace.” My own loyalties regarding notions of interviewer control lie with this moderate perspective.

Two main considerations support my contention that the occasional redirection of an interviewee’s response is indeed valid ethnographic practice. First, I feel that, along with providing an indirect form of payment for interviews, the reciprocal relationships that I established with interviewees facilitated the “creation of knowledge” (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006, 317) regarding a potentially untapped clientele base (i.e., Connecticut College students) and, as such, control which I exercised during interviews can be placed within a larger process of information exchange. Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, is my continued discomfort with parallels drawn between the redirection of an interviewee’s responses and a *seizing* of power. In contrast to what may seem like a logical assumption, the interviewer who relinquishes or loses control of an interview is not necessarily, or even likely, leaving this control with the interviewee. Control can be lost by both parties simultaneously. The notion that interviewees will consistently possess the experience and/or composure to retain complete command over their responses if given total freedom by an interviewer – as implied by Fife’s contention that “the person being interviewed has the ‘right’ to interpret the question and take it any place he or she pleases” (2005, 93) – is misguided.

Fife, through his association of a “right” with a desire (“as he or she pleases”), makes no distinction between the capacity to *pursue* an objective versus the ability to *realize* this goal. He ignores the simple fact that interviewees may not necessarily cover material which they desire to impart to an interviewer. The “right” to answer questions with complete sovereignty may in fact entice responses which interviewees will retrospectively regard as limited, rather than extensive and uninhibited.

An excellent example of this potential circumstance is found in my own interview data. While responding to a question regarding the variability in patronage demography across a “typical” week at Waterfront Pub, Paul, the manager of this bar, diverged from the subject at hand for several minutes to offer an anecdote concerning one of his bartenders. This change in topic did not appear to be so much calculated, however, as unconscious. Paul’s description of the “service industry guys” who frequent Waterfront on Tuesday nights led him to mention that Cliff, the bartender in question, works this shift, which, in turn, led him to speak about Graham at length and temporarily abandon the matter of patronage. When he had finished his this tangent, I asked, “so [Cliff] gets along with the service industry guys?” to which he laughingly responded, “oh, yea the service industry guys – I love how you just keep keeping me on task, cause I keep going off into these stories.”

In this instance, Paul clearly appreciated my reminding him of the subject that my initial question had regarded. His response reveals a sense of obligation to remain on task, rather than the sort of sanctimonious response one might expect from someone under the impression that a fundamental “right” of his had been violated. (I should note here that I attempted to lessen (though not dissolve) Paul’s sudden compulsion to produce “relevant” responses by reassuring him that storytelling was a conventional way to engage this sort of interview).

Judging from this and similar experiences, I would hold that most interviewees will – perhaps as a demonstration of their own conversational skills – desire to remain on topic, rather than to exercise their right to an unencumbered response. Thus, the interviewer’s redirection of an interviewee can, if practiced with appropriate irregularity, become a cooperative rather than oppressive mechanism. Assuming that the interviewer shows respect for the interviewee’s right to interpretation by allowing divergent anecdotes and descriptions to continue for limited periods of time, a polite and reserved redirection of the interviewee’s response is unlikely to be viewed as overbearing.

Paul’s response is also important in a reflexive context, as it offers otherwise inaccessible information regarding the interviewee-interviewer relationship. Although I never planned (or even hoped) to redirect an interviewee’s response, especially if this act required interruption, those rare moments of redirection were by no means useless when it came time to analyze interview transcripts. Such moments frequently possessed the “shock value required to reveal assumptions made by both interviewee and interviewer” (Buroway 1998, 18; Karp and Kendall 1982, 260-2). I would go as far as to argue that Buroway’s (1998) concept of “intervention” as it relates to the interview process as a whole can also be applied to moments within this “speech event” (McCracken 1988, 12) during which the interviewee is prompted to change subjects. Indeed, Buroway’s defense of interventions as acts which “create perturbations that are not noise to be expurgated but music to be appreciated, transmitting the hidden secrets of the participant’s world” (1998, 14) casts the concept as being an entirely appropriate description of redirection. The interviewee’s reaction to the interviewer as a purposeful, non-omniscient partner in conversation holds important insights into the potentially subjugating or, in the case of Cliff, mutually supportive aspects of interviewee-interviewer relationships.

Also important to consider is the nature of the semi-structured-interview (e.g., Bernard 2002), which relies heavily on preconceived questions. Does this model detract from the potential of interviews to elicit uninhibited responses? According to McCracken (1988, 25), the answer to this question is no. Citing the potential of premeditated questions to elicit a variety of responses as evidence for this stance, he asserts, “use of the questionnaire does *not* preempt the ‘open ended’ nature of the interview” (emphasis added). Certainly, the casualness of unstructured interviewing which, in Fife’s (2005, 101) words, “occurs every time a researcher participates in a conversation and, upon hearing a subject come up that interests her/him, decides to try to keep that particular conversation alive” may enable certain interviewees to answer questions more candidly than they would otherwise. That being said, carefully prepared questions can also point interviewees in any number of directions.

In accordance with Spradley’s (1979) approach to ethnographic interviewing, my first interviews with bar owners relied primarily on descriptive questions, while subsequent interviews largely consisted of structural questions and contrast questions. Later interviews did not, however, completely abandon descriptive questions. I follow Spradley’s “concurrent principle,” which holds that “[structural questions] complement rather than replace descriptive questions...[and so] it is best to *alternate* the various types of questions in each interview” (1979, 120). Of course, the term “descriptive question” is, in itself, a relatively vague designation. Spradley (1979, 86-91) identifies five distinct categories of this question type (grand tour questions, mini tour questions, experience questions, example questions, and native-language questions) as well as four subcategories of grand tour questions (typical, specific, guided, and task-related) and three subcategories of native-language question (direct-language, hypothetical-interaction, and typical-sentence).

Particularly in studies such as mine, which focus on human interaction with physical spaces, grand tour questions are a good place for an ethnographic interview to start. In the words of Spradley (1979, 86), “a grand tour question simulates an experience many ethnographers have when they first begin to study a cultural scene.” This form of inquiry “usually takes place in a particular locale” and, as the name suggests, ask for information regarding a *new* (to the ethnographer) space or, potentially, time period or sequence of events. Typical grand tour questions request that interviewees describe a regular element of their lives as it “typically” unfolds or appears, whereas specific grand tour questions encourage descriptions of single events. Mini tour questions are “identical to grand tour questions, except that they deal with a much smaller unit of experience” (Spradley 1979, 88). Both of these question types were of particular use when discussing bars such as Waterfront, which, as Paul recognized with his consideration of Cliff and the “service industry guys,” count on groups of patrons which consistently visit the bar at a certain time of day during a specific day of the week.

Questions which fall under the categories of typical or specific grand tour questions, or of mini tour questions, can be further explored in accordance with the “informant” and “respondent modes” described by Levy and Hollan (1998). The first of these modes employs questions which “[use] the interviewee as...an expert witness...about some community procedure” and thus function on a relatively general level, while the latter “treats the interviewee...as an object of study in him- or herself; it explores what he or she makes of the procedure” (Levy and Hollan 1998, 336). To borrow Levy and Hollan’s (1998, 336) own examples, the ethnographer who requests that an interviewee “describe for [him/her] exactly how and why supercision...is done by Tahitians” is considering this person as an informant, while the query, “can you tell me about *your* supercision?” regards the interviewee as a respondent. Thus, typical grand tour questions

could be said to treat the interviewee as an informant, while specific grand tour questions appear to consider this individual as a respondent.

Typical grand tour questions and mini tour questions (Spradley 1979), as well as more straightforward inquiries (*are you the original owner of this establishment?; how long has your bar been open?; what is your best selling beer?*), dominated the majority of my initial interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to entice as “thick” (Geertz 1973) of descriptions as possible from interviewees, while still sparing these individuals from the self-reflective linguistic analysis required to answer native-language and structural questions. By limiting the intensity of first interviews – encouraging extensive description and frequent anecdotes (often by virtue of follow-up mini tour questions) but never asking interviewees to reflect on their own word choice – I attempted to eliminate any trepidations bar owners may have had prior to being interviewed. I hoped that, if successful, this strategy would make following interviews, which did include structural and native-language questions calling for analysis (in the form of clarification) of language used in initial interviews, less likely to result in abbreviated and/or defensive responses.

I also used in initial interviews to pose experience questions (Spradley 1979, 88-89) which, similarly to specific grand tour questions, ask interviewees to recount incidents with which they were personally involved. As opposed to asking, *could you describe this incident* (as a specific grand tour question would) however, experience questions simply request that interviewees describe *any specific incident*. Thus, experience questions grant interviewees their “right to interpretation” (Fife, 2005) more explicitly than specific grand tour questions. Rather than simply choosing which elements of an event are most significant, interviewees faced with an experience question may also chose which events (out of their arsenal of available memories)

are most relevant to the ethnographer's question. While discussing bar fights during a first interview, to cite one example of subject matter broached with experience questions, I would frequently ask interviewees if they had been involved with any such incidents, rather than bringing up a fight which I had witnessed or been informed of.

It is worth mentioning that, in most cases, experience questions would conform to the flow of conversation, and needed not be asked in a completely straightforward manner. During an interview with Conall Treacy, owner of the Irish Pub, Garryowen's, for instance, I posed the following mini-tour question: "what is...your protocol...if you think someone has had too much to drink or if someone's getting out of hand?" Rather than speaking in general terms, Conall, much to my excitement, responded to this inquiry with a recent and relevant anecdote. He recounted how, "just the other night," he'd been forced to eject a particularly drunken patron from Garryowen's after this individual had refused to stop leering at a group of young women. Following the brief recollection, I was compelled to ask, "so do you usually try to speak with someone before you call the cops?" to which he responded with another anecdote, this one concerning a group of rowdy firefighters. Despite *technically* being answerable with a simple yes or no, this second inquiry was, in fact, an experience question. Its intended subtext can be readily paraphrased as, *have you ever had an experience in which you've been compelled to speak with an unruly patron rather than to contact the police?*, something which was certainly not lost on Conall.

To say that conversational interviews allow a certain informality in the wording of questions, however, is *not* to imply that this forum considers word choice a tangential concern. By the time I brought up police protocol with Conall, the owner had already shown himself to be a forthcoming respondent with a penchant for anecdotes; it would have not only been

unnecessary to ask him a question beginning, *have you had any experiences...*, but, potentially, tactless. When respondents are asked outright to select experiences of theirs which hold particular relevance to a specific question, agency shifts from respondent to interviewer, and, in consequence, the pressure to produce an “appropriate” answer is heightened. When I asked Tomás, for instance, to “describe a few experiences that you have had, wither witnessing or demonstrating ‘good etiquette’” he was caught slightly off guard, and, following a brief pause for thought, admitted that the question wasn’t entirely clear to him. I was eventually forced to generalize my inquiry, asking “what would you say...someone who has good etiquette in Crashing Umbrella behaves like?” Conall, in contrast, was able to share an experience of his because he *wanted* to, because *he* felt that it bore relevance to the discussion at hand.

During subsequent interviews, I would frequently ask a specific grand tour question regarding an experience described by the interviewee during our first interview: *last time we spoke you mentioned that a fight had broken out while you were tending bar. How was this matter eventually settled?* I would then follow this inquiry with another question of the same type which concerned a similar incident not mentioned by the interviewee: *One of your regulars informed me that, several weeks ago, two patrons exchanged words and had to be separated. Could you describe this incident?* The purpose of this exercise was to explore the potentially different treatments of similar incidents (one of which, for whatever reason, was not brought up in response to an experience question during a previous interview) by interviewees. It is worth noting, however, incidents which this strategy attempted to illuminate had to be fairly uncommon. Most bars in New London do not experience a particularly high rate of fights. For an interviewee presented with an experience question regarding fights, the decision (whether

fully conscious or otherwise) to go without mentioning a recent patron conflict is a notable omission.

Second and third interviews were primarily made up of structural and contrast questions, but, as discussed above, made use of specific grand tour questions as well. Native-language also proved useful during these interviews. Structural questions, which attempt to uncover semantic relationships between terms used by interviewees in previous interviews, were developed following intensive domain analyses (Spradley 1979) of initial interview transcripts (see interview analysis section). Of the five types of structural questions that Spradley (1979, 126-131) outlines (verification, cover term, included term, substitution frame, and card sorting) my interviews made use only of the first three. These types all involve a causal enticing of interviewees to categorize certain words as cover terms or included terms.

Verification questions (which Spradley divides into four subtypes: domain verification, included term verification, semantic relationship verification, and native-language verification) attempt to validate the ethnographer's hypotheses about the relationships between folk terms. *Would you classify Stone IPA as a good beer?* is a verification question. Cover term questions, not surprisingly, use a potential cover term to discover included terms. *Are there different types of hipster?* is an example of a cover term question. Included term questions, conversely, encourage interviewees to group potential included terms by domain. *Would you place Guinness, Sam Adams, and Dogfishhead in the same group of beers?* is an included term question. These three types of question are direct but also casual, and thus encouraged interviewees to reflect on their own language without creating (or so it seemed to me) high levels of discomfort.

Verification questions also held the potential to illuminate semantic relationships beyond those which they were designed to illuminate. When I asked Ron Daniels, co-owner of Vertigo Bar and Grill, for example, if his willingness to allow residents of a nearby apartment complex to enter the bar through its back door is an element of being a “neighborhood bar,” he enthusiastically affirmed that this was indeed the case, but did not hold his response to a simple nod of the head. “They’ll be hangin’ out back already,” he told me, “I’m not worried if they spend money or not, they can come here and just hang out.” Thus, from a single inquiry, I was able to identify “use of the back door” *and* “freedom to hang out without spending money” as elements of what Ron deems a certain type of drinking establishment.

It is important to note that there exist significant grounds for overlap between categories of structural question. This is made visible in table 3.3, which provides examples of each type of structural question used during the interview process. Indeed, the sample domain verification question and cover term question both read: *Are there different groups of regulars?* In the case of the former question type, this phrasing is being used to determine whether or not “regulars” is a cover term. The interviewer has heard the interviewee use this word but remains unsure about its status as a folk term. When used as a cover term question, in contrast, *Are there different groups of regulars?* is being asked with the knowledge that regulars is indeed a cover term. In this instance, the interviewer is sure that there are different types of regulars, but desires a *comprehensive listing* of these types.

Native language questions (Spradley 1979, 89-90) often proved to be a useful precursor to structural questions in second and third interviews. These questions, which ask interviewees to clarify the language that they would use to describe certain situations (while speaking with certain people) ensured that the potential cover terms and included terms (Spradley 1979, 100) I

had isolated in a domain analysis were indeed terms which interviewees used regularly. Of the three types of native-language questions outlined by Spradley, I used of direct-language and hypothetical-interaction questions. The former attempts to identify important terminology by simply asking interviewees how they would refer to something, while the latter uses a hypothetical situation to elicit “native language” which might not otherwise be used in an interview. (See table 3.2 for examples of both types of question).

Another question type used in second and third interviews was the contrast question (Spradley 1979). Similarly to structural questions, contrast questions are designed to define a folk term relative to other words which make up an interviewee’s vocabulary. Rather than searching for a semantic relationship, however, contrast questions attempt to discover differences in the meanings of terms which appear to be quite similar and may even share a domain. Folk terms defined relative to one another by virtue of contrast questions form a contrast set, which is any subset of terms within a domain organized according to their differences (Spradley 1979, 158-60).

Spradley lists seven types of contrast questions: contrast verification questions, directed contrast questions, dyadic contrast questions, triadic contrast questions, contrast set sorting questions, twenty questions game, and rating questions. Due to their relative accessibility, as well as their ability to operate without the use of note-cards,²⁰ I relied exclusively on the first three of these question types. Contrast verification questions, similarly to structural verification questions simply ask the interviewee to verify whether a relationship – in this case, a contrast – perceived between two or more folk terms by the interviewer is in fact valid. Directed contrast

²⁰ Spradley recommends that all contrast questions make use of cards coded with different folk terms, which the interviewee can then reference while attempting to establish distinctions. Although I agree with Spradley (1979, 160-161) that this strategy enables interviewees to work with multiple folk terms more easily than would be otherwise possible, the fact that bar owners were frequently occupied with tasks behind the bar as I interviewed them, and seemed to value the “conversational” nature of the interviews, I refrained from using cards.

questions, conversely, focus on an already verified characteristic of a folk term, and ask if this characteristic applies to any other folk terms. In asking dyadic contrast questions, the interviewer's focus is narrowed, as these queries concern the differences between two specific folk terms. (See table 3.4 for examples of these question types)

Rarely prepared or asked in first or second interviews were example questions (Spradley 1979, 88), which, because they frequently request the clarification of specific terms, possess fundamental similarities to structural questions (discussed below). Due to these similarities, I made only infrequent use of example questions. The utility, for example, of asking *can you give me an example of a good beer?* versus that of asking *what are the different types of good beer?* is fairly minimal. Even in more open cases – such as that which arises with the query, *what are some examples of elements which go into great vibe?* versus *what are the characteristics of a 'great vibe'?* – example questions request quantitatively less information than structural questions.

Although the analytical rewards of the two-interview approach will be discussed in greater depth in the following section, it is important to note here that this methodology also holds ethical advantages. By relying on descriptive questions during initial interviews, and thereby encouraging interviewees to share their own vocabularies with me, I largely avoided the vaguely oppressive protocol of depending on externally produced terminology (Mishler 1986 123-125).

Analysis

Spradley (1979) and McCracken (1988) informed the majority of my analytical methodology. Following initial interviews, I conducted extensive domain analyses and

preliminary taxonomic analyses on which structural and contrast questions asked in second interviews were based. Following second interviews, I conducted further taxonomic analyses as well as componential analyses as a means for discerning cultural themes (Spradley 1979).

Domain analysis proceeded with the identification of both cover terms and included terms (Spradley 1979) within interview transcripts. All terms were analyzed in the context of a single semantic relationship: *X is a type of Y* (X being an included term and Y being a cover term). The process of searching for these terms was relatively unstructured, and relied on my scansion of transcripts for sections of text which seemed to hold substantial analytical potential.

Influential on scansion protocol was the first stage in McCracken's five-stage method of transcript analysis. It is in this stage that analysis must remain focused on "the 'intensive' relations of the utterance, the meanings contained within its range of implication" (McCracken 1988, 44). The dynamics between utterances, what McCracken (1988, 44) refers to as "'extensive' relations" should be ignored for the moment. According to McCracken (1988, 44), the first stage of analysis mandates "use [of] the self as an instrument." Rather than drawing from different sections of a transcript in order to contextualize specific words and phrases used by an interviewee, it is important in this stage to "hear a stream of associations evoked by [each] stream of utterances" (McCracken 1988, 44). In so doing, the anthropologists frequently "activates...his or her imaginative capacity to glimpse the possibility of alien meanings" (McCracken 1988, 44). In my scansion of transcripts, such "glimpses" were treated as red flags – plausible referents to systems of meaning.

Once a series of related terms or *possibly* related terms were extracted, tentative domain analysis worksheets (Spradley 1979, 113) were filled out (figure 3.2). If potential subsets within a domain (ex: Innis and Gunn and craft beers were both described as being types of "good beer,"

and it is *likely* that Innis and Gunn would be considered a type of craft beer), could be discerned, the domain was further deconstructed into a *provisional* folk taxonomy (Spradley 1979, 142-147) (table 3.5). Due to the mix of tentative and confirmed relationships present in these taxonomies, a simple coding scheme was used to differentiate between three types of data. Cover terms and included terms whose relations to other terms had been *verified* by an interviewee were recorded in a normal font; terms mentioned by interviewees but not clarified to be cover terms or included terms were italicized; terms not mentioned by interviewees but suspected to be components of a specific domain were italicized and followed by question marks.

It was through the process of constructing these initial taxonomies that the second and third stages of McCracken's model of data analysis (1988) were carried out. The second stage, which McCracken (1988, 45) describes as being broken into three stages itself, first requires the ethnographer "to extend the observation [of a term] beyond its original form until its implications are more fully played out." With this more complete observation, which McCracken likens to a "lens" the transcript is then reexamined as a whole. Following this stage, observations are then compared to one another. Ultimately, the protocol outlined by McCracken for this stage (which is, admittedly, nebulous) can be described as the formation of hypothesis concerning how each potentially useful term has influenced the interviewee's language.²¹

McCracken's third stage of analysis involves only a slight progression from the tasks of which its precursor consists. Defining and delimiting this stage is the shift from a holistic view of a transcript to exclusive concern for observations and terms which they concern. Such a shift

²¹ For example: *if a bar owner has described "blue-collar guys" as a positive component of the clientele base – and also deems these individuals "regulars" – how have individuals who are not considered "regulars" been treated in the rest of the interview?*

arises fairly organically from McCracken's second stage, and therefore was also integral to the development of provisional folk taxonomies.

After provisional folk taxonomies had been completed, structural and contrast questions (*What are types of craft beer? Is Innis and Gunn a craft beer?*) were developed to clarify the various ambiguities within these tables. The eventual goal of the domain analyses outlined above was to uncover cultural themes on which interviewee responses were based. Due to their broadness and the abstract level on which they function, these themes have been subject to a variety of interpretation but may be best described as "elements in the cognitive maps which make up a culture...They consist of a number of symbols linked into meaningful relationships" (Spradley 1979, 186). It is on cultural themes that most ethnographic analysis ultimately base themselves.

In describing his fourth stage of transcript analysis, McCracken (1988, 46) suggests that observations developed during third-stage comparisons become "coral-like formations" by being "allowed to multiply profusely." In other words, comments concerning the relationships between terms of varying specificity (*good beer vs. craft beer vs. Stone IPA*) will have produced a mass of insights, most of which must, in this fourth stage, be funneled into one of several broad themes. These themes themselves must be "organized hierarchically" (McCracken 1988, 46), so that the relatively limited are positioned as components of the more expansive.

As Spradley (1979, 190) notes, cultural themes may become apparent to an ethnographer by virtue of "immersion" into the field, and thus my fieldnotes were valuable tools for their identification. It was only through domain analyses, however, that I was able to connect these themes to the language of "natives." Accordingly, I spent considerable time reviewing the folk taxonomies that I had made in search of notably similar domains or levels of contrast which,

combined, could point to a cultural theme (Spradley 1979, 191, 196). During these periods of review, I would also keep an eye out for organizing domains (Spradley 1979, 197), which generally concern the stages of an action or, conversely, the components of a physical entity or idea. Such domains frequently relate to other, smaller domains, and through these relationships can provide valuable insight into the nature of a cultural theme.

It is important to note here that McCracken's (1988) fifth and final step of transcript analysis involves a transformation not mentioned in Spradley (1979). By the conclusion of this step, "one is no longer talking about the particulars of individual lives but about the general properties of thought and action within the community or group under study. Furthermore, one is no longer talking about the world as the respondent sees it. One is now talking about the world as it appears to the analyst from the special analytic perspective of the social sciences" (McCracken 1988, 46). Indeed, I take what Spradley refers to as "cultural themes" as products of the shift in both voice and viewpoint described above. Thus, the transition from domain analyses to the identification of cultural themes requires a profound jump, a jump in which the voice of the native is partially obscured but by no means abandoned.

In order to make this jump, I followed Spradley's (1979, 197) suggestion that "organizing domains," which systematize relatively large quantities of information and, as a result, often include several domains indirectly, be identified from taxonomies and expanded into themes. By indirectly, I mean that so-called "included domains" (my phrase) do not appear within an organized domain explicitly, but are directly related to included terms.

It is easiest to illustrate this point, which will likely remain unclear if kept in the abstract, with an example from my own fieldwork. The largest organizing domain in my data was, without question, *types of patron*. Indeed, while referencing each group of individuals who

frequent their respective establishments, bar owners often would offer a wealth of information regarding drink preference, musical taste, sociability, and various other elements of behavior. Thus, domains such as *drunkenness* or *hanging out*, which were generally brought up while discussing certain groups of patrons, are clearly “included” in the *types of patron* domain, despite not being types of patrons themselves.

Another strategy for deriving themes is the development of schematic diagrams (Spradley 1979, 197), which offer a visual for the relationships between themes (figure 3.3). I often used these diagrams to clarify chronologies and, by extension, cause and effect relationships. By grouping domains temporally, I was able to more clearly delimit the steps necessary to develop a manufactured community, thereby illuminating relationships between domains dissimilar in content (*making a name for yourself* and *beer selection*) which would have likely gone previously unnoticed.

Following my identification of several cultural themes, I produced a concise summary of my findings. The purpose of this exercise was to “condense [my knowledge of the language used by interviewees] down to the bare essentials” (Spradley 1979, 201) for the purpose of discovering more themes and identifying potentially useful domains which had gone unnoticed during previous analyses.

Alongside my examination of interview transcripts, I conducted an analysis of field notes. The basic progression of field note analysis – which shifts the ethnographer’s focus from highly specific codes to more general patterns and finally to broad themes – closely follows that of interview analysis. Thus, it made sense to deconstruct both types of data simultaneously. As Fife (2005, 126) notes, “one of the benefits of comparing concepts across material gathered through different research methods is that it often enlarges our understanding of the concepts that

were coded during the initial period of fieldwork...categories or patterns of behavior have a tendency to become transformed...when we add new examples or parallel concepts to them.” Indeed, many of the domains derived from interview analysis were relevant to categories and patterns identified during examination of fieldnotes.

Because my strategy for coding unfocused notes involved the development of patterns broader than those used by Fife, the process of “cementing together the various levels of data collection [in order to] form a larger analysis of the patterns of human behavior (Fife 2005, 123) had already been started when I returned to my completed field notes. It is important to note here that Fife uses the term “pattern” quite broadly, and appears to use it in reference both to “categories” used as guides for focused notes (Fife 2005, 74-82) and what a number of other resources (Spradley 1979; McCracken 1988; Dewalt and Dewalt 2010) call “themes.” In this study, the former use of patterns was retained, with “themes” substituting for the latter. It is themes that are created by “cementing together” patterns.

Most resources concerning the analysis of field notes (of which there are few) offer fairly general suggestions for extrapolating themes from coded field notes. This is not to say that current methods for making this jump are insufficient, only that they vary significantly from project to project and, therefore, cannot be easily explained independently of specific ethnographic data. Dewalt and Dewalt (2010, 189, 190) question the very utility of a distinct stage of field note analysis by arguing that, “Drawing conclusions and attempting to verify them takes place at every stage of the research process...there is no reason *not* to begin to code and index materials while in the midst of field research.” As indicated by my decision to code unfocused notes *before* taking focused notes, I agree fully with this assertion.

Upon compiling a sufficient collection of both focused and unfocused notes, I began coding my focused notes with categories of the same specificity as those used to code unfocused notes. This was done for a simple reason, namely, that not all material described in a section of focused notes necessarily relates most closely to the pattern guiding that section. My notes focused on “general engagement,” for example, are not merely lists of “sociable” acts which I witnessed in bars. These notes relied on those individuals within an establishment who seem most gregarious as “lenses” through which to view bar activity, and therefore wound up documenting a diversity of behaviors. Thus the potential for important “linkages” (Fife 2005) between sets of notes “focused” on different patterns was considerable. By making these linkages, I began to determine how patterns may be combined into themes of a manufactured community.

The process of connecting patterns, while facilitated by coding, was ultimately enacted by my following of “hunches” based on the theories presented in the current social scientific literature on community, drinking, and bars as well as on my own research experience (Dewalt and Dewalt (189). Both Fife (2005) and Dewalt and Dewalt (2010) emphasize the need to repeatedly review field notes for the purpose of developing these hunches into concrete hypotheses, which may then be tested by further rereading of notes. I, too, placed considerable stress on careful and frequent rereading.

Table 3.1

Initial categorization scheme for unfocused notes

	Category	Description	Example
Interpersonal Interaction	General Disinterest	Bartender does not engage patrons in conversation; rarely makes eye contact; removes her/himself from bar table interactions (watches television, steps outside, goes into the kitchen, cleans, etc.).	<i>The bartender was seated at the far (east) end of the bar, using her smart phone. When she asked me what I would have, she spoke extremely softly and did not smile. I was not carded. After pouring my beer, she grabbed a pack of Newport menthol full-flavors from a shelf behind the bar, and went outside to smoke... Upon finishing her cigarette, she resumed her place at the end of the bar and continued to use her phone. Occasionally she would look up to make sure that patrons were not in need of another drink.</i>
	General Hesitance	Bartender stands at bar table; listens to conversations and occasionally chimes in; rarely asks questions or attempts to otherwise fully enter a conversation; does not introduce her/himself.	<i>As I was about to leave (my visit ran roughly twenty minutes) three more young men (twenties) entered the bar... They were certainly not regulars, and seemed relatively inexperienced when it came to the task of ordering beer at bars. They asked the bartender what he had that was seasonal, and, after giving them a slightly quizzical look, mentioned a summer ale that was on tap</i>
	General Engagement	Bartender encourages conversation among patrons; enters conversations; makes a point to meet new patrons and greet regulars by name.	<i>An older couple (probably in their sixties) told us that they come to Eugene's every Wednesday specifically to say hello to Carla. Carla was very personable... Carla remained extremely busy and I did not have a chance to introduce myself and talk about the project... Apparently feeling obliged to converse with all patrons, she even apologized to Sam and I for "ignoring" us.</i>
Physical Attributes of Bar	Personal Memorabilia	Objects reflecting what a bar owner, staff member, or patron deem an element of her/his "personal" life	<i>Gary explained to me that most of the posters on the wall come from events that he booked. He described the bar room as being "like [his] living room"</i>
	Maritime History	Objects reflecting the maritime history of New London in an impersonal way.	<i>The bar at The Galleon is shaped like the bow of a ship.</i>

Figure 3.1

Progression from unfocused notes to focused notes by virtue of category-coding and the discernment of patterns.

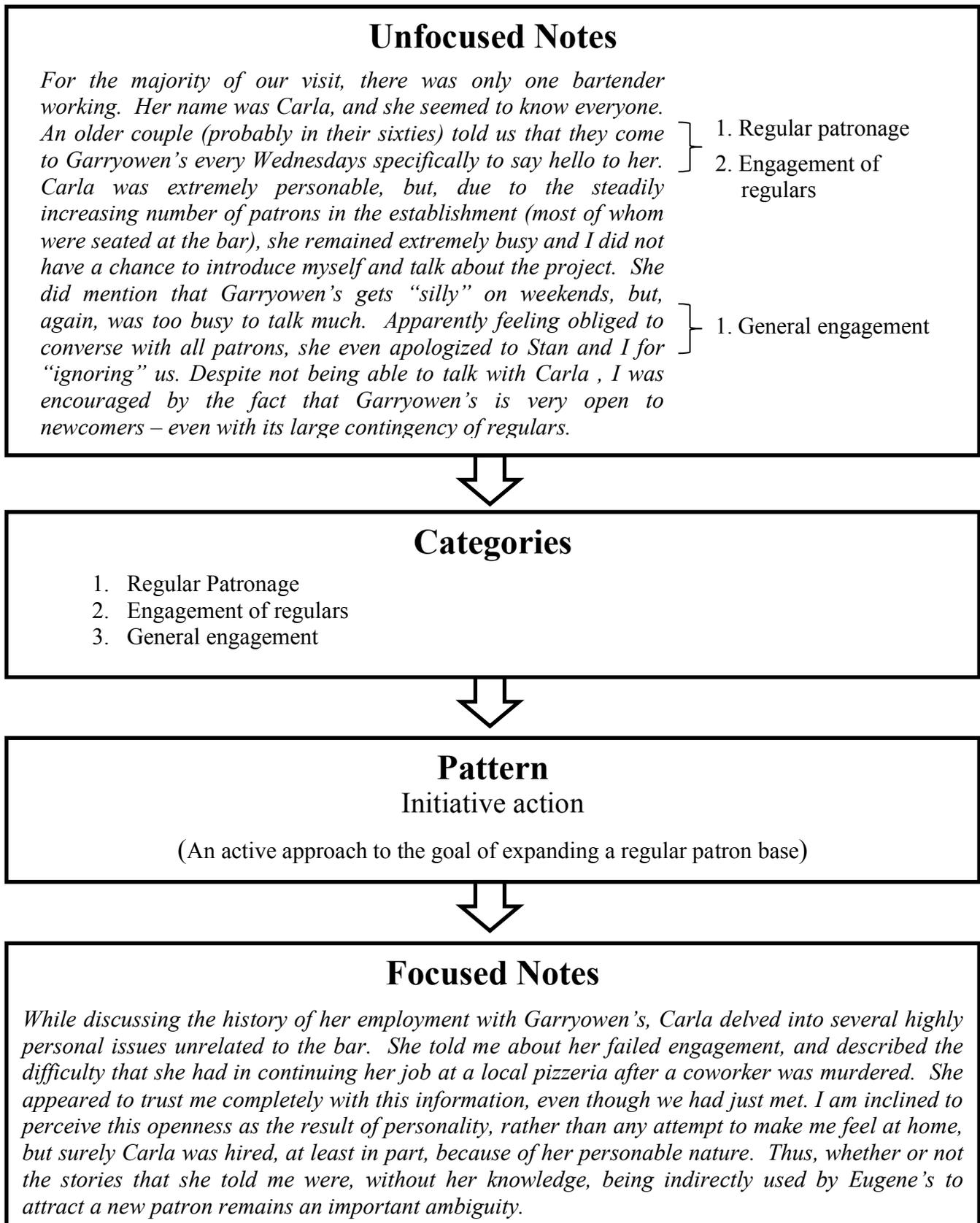


Table 3.2

Descriptive question types and subtypes used in interviews (with examples)

Grand tour questions	Typical grand tour questions	<i>Could you describe a typical Saturday night at Harleys?</i>
	Specific grand tour questions	<i>Could you describe how the “bum” was escorted out of the bar?</i>
Mini-tour questions		<i>Could you describe how a fight is broken up?</i>
Experience questions		<i>Have you ever had an unpleasant experience with a band or DJ? If so, could you describe this experience?</i>
Native language questions	Direct-language questions	<i>How would you refer to someone who comes into bars and solicits drinks from strangers?</i>
	Hypothetical-interaction questions	<i>If you were cutting someone off (from drinks), what would you say?</i>

Table 3.3

Structural question types and subtypes used in interviews (with examples).

Verification questions	Domain verification questions	<i>Are there different groups of regulars?</i>
	Included term verification questions	<i>Do you consider navy guys and Coasties to be “kids”?</i>
	Semantic relationship verification questions	<i>Would you ever call bikers “late-night” patrons?</i>
	Native-language verification questions	<i>Would bikers call themselves “late-night” customers?</i>
Cover Term Questions		<i>Are there different groups of regulars?</i>
Included Term Questions		<i>Are hipsters, punks, and musicians all in the same social group?</i>

Table 3.4

Contrast question types and subtypes used in interviews (with examples).

Contrast verification questions	<i>Would you say that weeknights are “slow nights,” while weekend nights are “busy nights”?</i>
Directed contrast questions	<i>Out of all the groups of patrons that you just listed, which are regulars and which ones are not?</i>
Dyadic contrast questions	<i>What are the differences between a “family vibe” and a “party vibe”? How about a “laid-back” vibe?</i>

Figure 3.2

Domain Analysis Worksheets

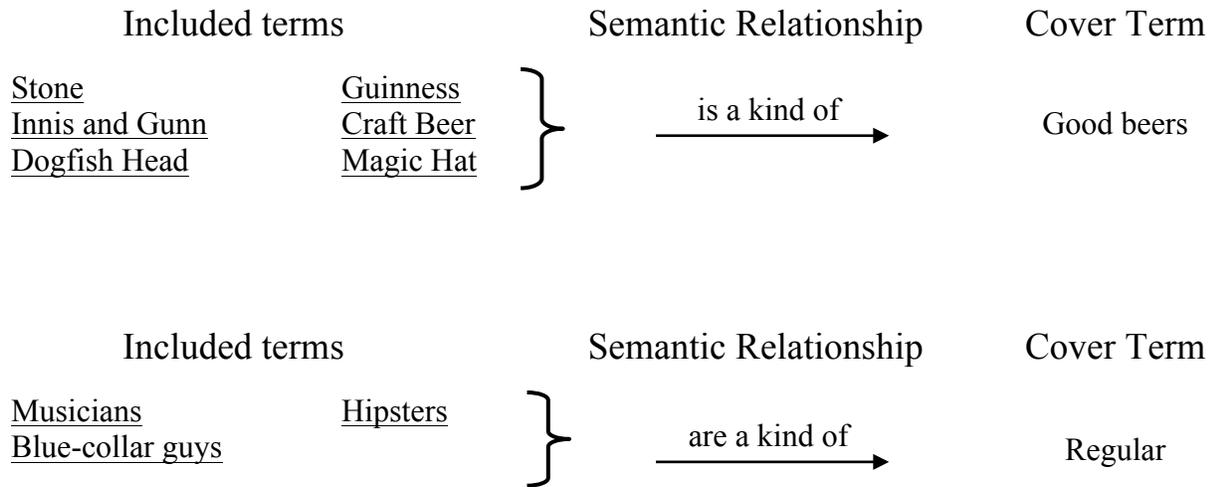


Table 3.5

Provisional folk taxonomies for domains: “types of beer” and “types of patron”

Types of beer	Good beer	Craft beer	Stone
			<i>Innis and Gunn</i>
			<i>Dogfish Head</i>
			<i>Sam Adams?</i>
			<i>Magic Hat</i>
		<i>Normal good beer?</i>	Guinness
	<i>Normal beer?</i>		<i>Budweiser?</i>
	Cheaper beer		PBR
			Bud Light
		Coors Light	

Types of patron	Regulars	Blue-collar guys	<i>Bikers?</i>
		<i>Hipsters</i>	Musicians
	Occasional customers	<i>College kids</i>	<i>Conn College kids?</i>
			<i>Mitchell College kids?</i>
		Coasties	
		Navy Guys	
	Out-of-towners/travelers		

Table 3.6

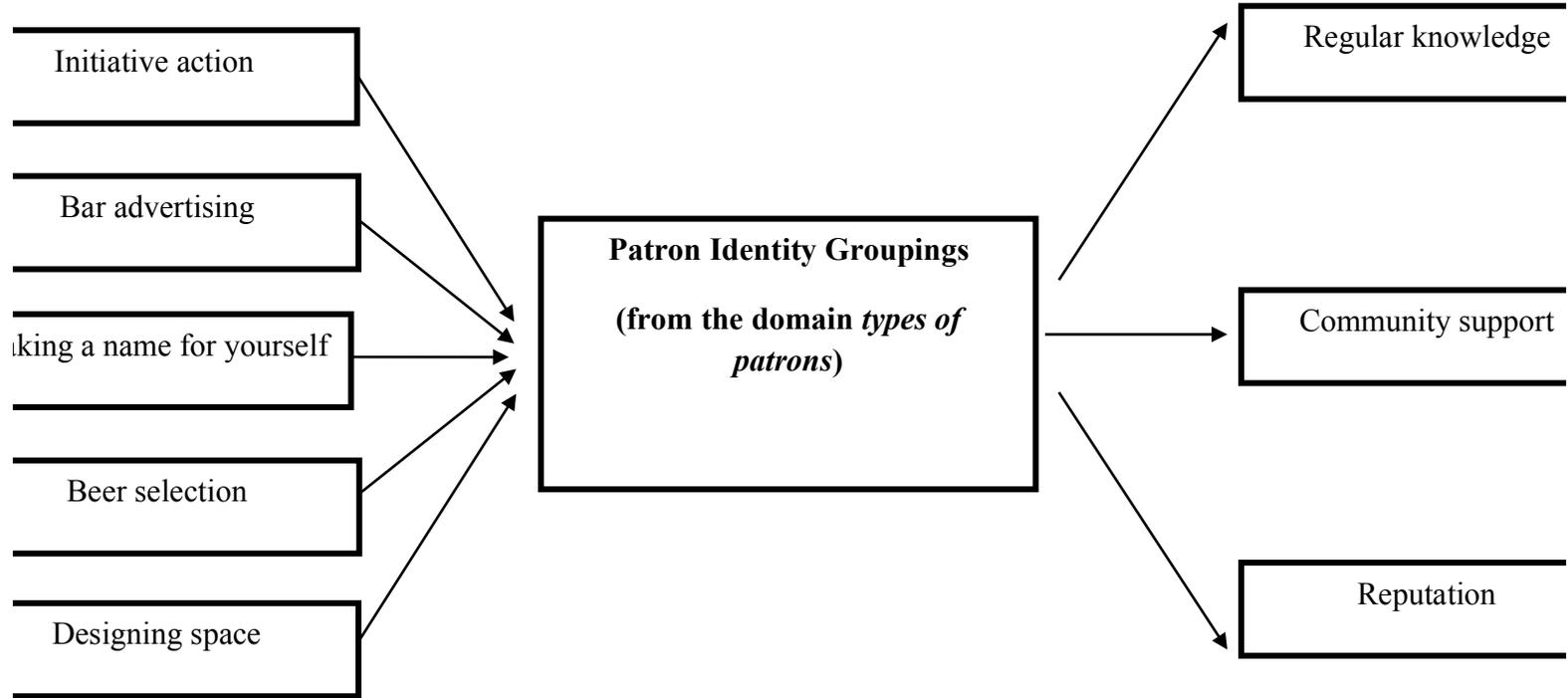
Completed folk taxonomies for domains: “types of beer” and “types of patron”

Types of beer	Good beer	Craft beer	Stone
			Innis and Gunn
			Dogfish Head
		Classics	Guinness
			Sam Adams
	Middle-of-the-road beer	Heineken	
		Budweiser	
	Cheaper beer	Hip	PBR
			Bud Light
		Coors Light	
		Miller Light	

Types of patron	Regulars	Blue-collar guys	E.B. Guys
			Construction crew guys
		Bikers	
		Hipsters	Musicians
		Occasional customers	College kids
	Mitchell College kids		
	Coasties		
	Navy Guys		
	Out-of-towners/travelers		

Figure 3.3

Conceptual diagram outlining the causal relationships between domains relating to the organizing domain of *patrons* (rephrased here as “Patron Identity Groupings.”)



Chapter 4: Manufactured Communities: A Tour Through Eight New London Bars

The Bar as an Extension of Self

This place is like my living room

- Sol Lachapelle, owner of Harley's

It is 6:15 PM on a Friday, and I am sitting at the counter in Harley's, nursing a can of PBR. The bar has just opened. With the exception of myself and Sol, who, moments earlier, darted into a back room, there is no one here. Willie Nelson's "Whiskey River" plays softly over the speakers, a fitting overture to the stream of classic rock and punk queued for later hours of the night. Though I have been to Harley's a number of times at this point, I nonetheless take advantage of Sol's absence to glance around the bar. Particularly in this establishment, there consistently arise nuances in décor which had escaped my sight during previous visits.

Despite its basement location – something which, Sol will later reveal to me, he "wasn't sure about at first" – and small size, Harley's exudes a professional aura. The carpeted floor is always clean and, despite weak ventilation, the two-room establishment remains odorless and cool. The red and black palette of the walls and ceiling ("the only colors for a bar" according to Sol) maintains a "lounge feel," soon to be intensified by dimmed lighting as the night wears on. At early hours such as this, however, all lights are turned on in full, and Sol's eclectic and extensive décor can be viewed in plain sight. Aware of the observational freedom afforded by an empty room, I turn my stool to face the wall behind me. Standing approximately fifteen feet away, it displays a series of large, framed pictures. Several depict figures whom I recognize immediately – Joe Strummer, Audrey Hepburn – but most are concert posters from events which,

as I was informed just minutes ago, Sol has booked. I scan the images from left to right, noting the dates and band names of each chapter in Sol's scattered material history, until my eyes reach the perpendicular wall, out of which is carved the entrance to a narrow corridor. At the other end of this hall, currently out of my sight, are two lavatories and, further down, a back room in which a single pool table and two dart boards are located.

Stretching only about twenty feet in length, the wall of posters, if followed from right to left, soon gives way to a steep staircase leading to the bar's entrance. From my current position, I can see only the bottom three steps. The inner edge of the flight is lined by another wall which, stretching to the ceiling, masks the crawl space and extends through the vertical plane in which a banister would normally be set. It too, features a number of concert posters. Set against this wall are four small, circular tables painted black. Two wooden chairs, also black, have been placed at each table. Beyond these chairs, in the far corner of the bar, is a small section of floor space, adjacent to which is a stage. The stage nearly touches the far end of the bar counter.

Behind the counter, jutting out from a mirrored wall, are three shelves. It is on these shelves, a small percentage of which are reserved for the storage of available liquors, that Sol's interests and passions can most clearly be seen. Black and white photographs of Tom Waits, Johnny Cash, and Dirty Harry peer past my face, while, further down the bar, sits a series of New Orleans Saints helmets. Along the shelves is also a smattering of PBR memorabilia, which Sol had begun amassing prior to opening Harley's. The collection has grown to such an extent that numerous patrons, as well as a pleasantly surprised distributor, now periodically add to it. Priced at \$2.00 a can, PBR is Harley's best-selling beer.

With his typically purposeful gait, Sol suddenly pops back into the room, blithely singing, "whiskey river, take my mind..." He is wearing a newsy cap and a black t-shirt, and

holds a dishcloth in his hand. Still nodding his head to the music, he begins to wipe down the counter. “So,” I ask, recalling that patrons will soon begin to trickle in, greet Sol with anecdotes of the past week and, in so doing, put an end to this interview, “do you consider this to be a very personal space?” Pausing to examine a tear in the cloth, he responds, “Oh yea man, like, all of this stuff, I brought it from home. This place is like my living room.”

While I’ve never asked Sol if he frequently entertains guests at home, it seems safe to bet that most visitors of the Lachapelle household would have a good time. The New Orleans native’s public “living room” is certainly popular, and has quickly become known as one of the most successful drinking establishments in town. So how does a bar owner such as Sol arrive at the decision to construct his business as an extension of himself – of his own tastes and hobbies? In large part, the answer to this question can be found in personal history.

Before opening Harley’s in December of 2011, Sol Lachapelle had bartended in New London for ten years. But this was hardly the beginning of his experience with bars. “I grew up in a bar,” he told me the first time that we spoke. Upon being asked what, exactly, this meant, he paused and continued, “I’m a bar person...I was the little kid eating chips playing pool in the corner of a bar at one o’clock in the morning.”

Sol’s story is not altogether unusual in New London. Most of the city’s bar owners, in fact, can look back on an adult life filled with barroom experience acquired at both sides of the counter. As explored in chapter one, Gary McAllister had already spent two decades at Nine Innings before purchasing the tavern. Similarly, Mel Collingwood, co-owner of The Barquentine, opened his establishment in a building space previously taken by the restaurant at which he had tended bar for two years. Even Conall Treacy, whose ownership of Garryowen’s,

followed a lengthy tenure in the navy, credits his impulse to open a drinking establishment with personal connections to this form of business. “Eh, it’s, it’s an Irish thing, y’know” he told me before later reflecting, “there’s a reputation of Irish Pubs going back you know, what, 150, 200 years in this country...a tradition of Irish people and hospitality.” Conall’s comment suggests an upbringing not entirely dissimilar from Sol’s, in which individual experience mirrors broader, even stereotyped, cultural traditions. Just as Sol’s adolescence in a city known for nightlife saw him exposed to the barroom from a very young age, Conall’s childhood in Ireland, famous, of course, for its numerous pubs and taverns, appears to have granted him substantial experience with such environments.

Similarly to Sol, Gary, Conall, and, increasingly, Mel (whose bar just passed the one year mark) perceive their bars to be personal spaces. Substantial time spent in bars appears to have influenced these individuals’ business sensibilities in no small way; notions regarding the perfect bar have, judging from my interviews and observations, repeatedly occupied their thoughts. For Gary, who has “always been kind of a bar guy,” becoming owner of Nine Innings was a long awaited opportunity to extend himself, his ideals and aspirations, into a physical location. It just so happened that the establishment of which he took control already met his highest expectations, and, thus, extension of self became a project of maintenance rather than transformation. Recalling his first days in charge of Nine Innings, the tavern owner reflected, “I just thought, I want to preserve what’s there, cause, uh, I think it’s, it’s not new, it’s not trendy, it’s not, it’s like what I think of as a bar.” Other bar owners, conversely, most notably those like Sol who construct new establishments, rather than taking control of preexisting businesses, extend themselves into completely novel spaces. Nowhere else in town is there a basement bar with the rock n’ roll attitude of Harley’s.

In part, extension of the self is conducted through elements of bar locality. Décor, as is evident in Harley's, is a means through which bar owners can personalize their establishments. The walls of Garryowen's, for example, are lined with Conall's "personal shit," much of which concerns either Irish culture or naval activity. To quote the droll bar owner, "people who know guns, and know stuff, they'll walk in and they'll go, oh yea, this isn't, this isn't out of a box, this is somebody's personal, this is somebody's personal shit, they'll say, somebody collected this shit, you know, somebody, somebody, you don't just go to the store and buy all this, some fucking freak collects all this shit, you know." As touched on in the introduction to this study, Nine Innings similarly features decorations in line with Gary's passion for New London history and the "old-fashioned" bar. On the same note, Tomás Coupe, former owner of the now-closed underground music club and bar, The Crashing Umbrella, expressed his apolitical agenda and wariness of "mainstream culture" through decorations which he defined as "abnormal" due to their opposition to "the grain of the status quo." (Among these adornments was a particularly memorable "drunken babies" painting.) That being said, these elements of locality are, by themselves, inadequate to form community. Necessary is a more direct communicative element. To perceive a community "boundary" (Cohen 1985), all members of a bar community must be continually interpreting behavioral and linguistic symbols.

Indeed, extension of the self also occurs on a quite literal level, as most New London owners spend substantial amounts of time present within their establishments. At The Crashing Umbrella, a live musical performance would see Tomás manning the door of his club; Sol bartends every Friday and stops by Harley's each night; Beth Holiday, owner of Flossie's, bartends at her establishment several nights a week and, also, stops by on a nightly basis; Conall

felt no trepidations while telling me, “I’m here all the time” – a statement validated by my own field observation. Gary, too, spends considerable amounts of time at his establishment.

“I’m here every day doing the cooking,” Gary explained to me, “but I’m also doing the ordering. I’m the one who keeps an eye on we’re running low on this, we’re out of this, we need to get more of this.” Indeed, life at Nine Innings is busy for its owner and, despite the friendships that he makes while working or even overseeing the work of others, his role in the bar is fundamentally different than that of the consumer or, for that matter, even the bartender. Although his substantial experience with bars clearly inspired his adoption of Nine Innings as a highly personal space, Gary is not simply some sort of graduated patron; the tavern is not just a place to socialize, but an investment as well. Sol may see Harley’s as being *like* his living room, but, rather than invited guests, his patrons are customers and, rather than a casual host, he is a businessman hoping to turn a profit.

While the distinct position of the bar owner underlined and punctuated virtually every conversation that I had during my fieldwork, one instance in particular stands out. It involves Ron Daniels, who, at the age of thirty-three, is among New London’s youngest bar owners. Along with his even younger partner, Silvia Cooley – a Wisconsin based veteran who identifies with all things punk rock – Ron has been at the helm of Vertigo Bar and Grill for just over two years. Having sat down with Ron and Silvia on a Monday night for our first interview, I soon asked both individuals if their position within the local business hierarchy ever compels them to frequent local drinking establishments other than their own. Following the latter’s reflection that she would often stop by The Crashing Umbrella before its closure, Ron hesitantly interjected. With a slight chuckle, he said, “I don’t wanna sound all corny, but I’m kinda too old for this scene...I more or less want the dinner and the glass of wine...I don’t really wanna go hang out

on a Friday or Saturday night, like, at bars.” This comment, at least initially, comes across as quite surprising. Ron works at Vertigo, generally in the kitchen, from open to close, 5:00 PM – 1:00 AM (2:00 AM on Fridays and Saturdays), six out of seven days each week. Moreover, like the owners discussed above, Ron has made himself visible through means beyond his physical presence; a picture of his father as a young man hangs prominently from one of the bar’s walls, and all of the menu items are based on his and Silvia’s original recipes. In his own words, “everything on here, everything on the walls, everything that we play, everything we cook, it’s us.” How can someone who admits to preferring “fancy restaurants” over bars invest so much of himself in the latter?

For Ron, “hanging out” at a bar clearly involves a series of responsibilities fairly discrete from those required to own and, at least in accordance with his particular business model, actively run this type of establishment. Neither he nor Silvia see hours put in at Vertigo as equivalent to time spent at another business. It thus comes as no surprise, that, following Ron’s reflection on his changed tastes in nightlife, Silvia quickly added, “Plus...we never can leave here really,” a statement with which Ron readily agreed. Clearly, both owners perceive “here” to be a place quite different than the “bars” that Ron no longer feels particularly compelled to visit. Nevertheless, just like their peers down the street (or, in the case of Conall, next door), both Silvia and Rom can generally count on a bar full of friends and acquaintances.

The position of bar owners such as those mentioned above holds an unavoidable tension – a tension continually reproduced by the apparent opposition of business transaction and community solidarity. In one sense, owners can be considered community leaders. Each has been able to consistently develop nuanced and deeply personal relationships with patrons while also encouraging open and friendly interactions among clientele. As extensions of self, Harley’s

and Nine Innings, for example, promote comfort and sociability through visual and behavioral cues; the respective patron populations of these establishments largely consist of tightly knit “regulars” who identify with the atmospheres²² that Gary and Sol have constructed.

That being said, the presence of reliable clientele also yields profit. Patrons who enter Nine Innings and immediately find comfort in the tavern’s “old fashioned” atmosphere will likely to stay for several drinks, and may even be inclined to return to the establishment at a later date. As such, Gary and Sol must contend with the fact that they are, in a sense, selling themselves. Their establishments, though personalized, present the elements of their respective identities most likely to appeal to certain patrons and patron groups. Further complicating matters, of course, is the frequent desire of bar owners to expand their clientele bases. Is this the gesture of a welcoming community which desires to strengthen its capacity for networking and knowledge exchange through increased “diversity?” Or is it simply a bid for new customers?

In reality, neither of these questions can be truthfully answered in the affirmative. A highly personal bar such as Harley’s or Nine Innings is both a means for profit and a community development. As such, the feelings of shared identity manifested within the bars on which this study is focused will be examined as “manufactured community,” a seemingly paradoxical term intended to draw attention away from motivation to process. What matters here is not the extent to which every decision made by a bar owner was prompted by the allure of increased profit. Of primary concern is the manner in which business models can be reconciled with a desire to facilitate networking and stimulate feelings of camaraderie.

It is worth noting that symbols which stimulate interpretation of community identity within bars such as Harley’s and Nine Innings are, themselves, highly complex. Gary and Sol

²² Atmosphere here is used as an overarching term encompassing the combined effect of floor and furniture layout, décor, music, lighting, beer selection, food, patronage, staff, and ownership.

are, despite their status as business owners, in no way *exempt* from the broad social groupings that organize social life in New London and beyond. The “selves” reproduced within their respective establishments are in constant dialogue with aesthetics and ideals of identity, both collective and individual, which extend far beyond the New London city limits. Harley’s may be Sol’s second living room, but the establishment has also earned the status of a “neighborhood bar.” According to many patrons with whom I’ve spoken, this venue is a “rock n’ roll” club.

Continuous conversation between bar ownership, staff and clientele endlessly negotiates the potential of general and nonexclusive language to adequately describe an establishment. It is by virtue of collective identification *with* widely accepted labels such as “neighborhood bar,” for example, that Sol bonds with his patrons. We must also recognize, however, that the symbolism of this label is interpreted on an individual level and, therefore, *cannot* be said to represent any uniform “emic” interpretation of Harley’s as a community (Cohen 1985, 73). Recall Cohen’s (1985) concept of a community’s idiosyncratic “private face,” which accounts for the inherent subjectivity of unifying symbols: Sol and his patrons are likely to have at least marginally divergent conceptions of the behaviors and aesthetic qualities essential to a “neighborhood bar.” But because there exists in Harley’s a shared vocabulary as well as a shared set of symbols complimenting this vocabulary (types of beer, décor, and normative codes of dress and behavior, among other elements of the establishment, may collectively represent a “neighborhood bar”), diversity of interpretation can be “masked” (Cohen 1985, 73). The sense of community potentially developed within bars is *special* because owners possess substantial influence in the discursive processes which define both public and private face. As suggested by the term “enactor” in chapter 2, these individuals provide a platform from which community identity can be developed. Of course, it is not as if bar owners simply design a space and then leave it for

their patrons to interpret. Their role in community identity formation is *active*; changes in décor, music, as well as alterations (both conscious and unconscious) in behavior provide patrons with an endless supply of symbolic data to interpret. If bars can be said to “manufacture communities,” we must understand such communities as symbolic constructions which, despite being individually interpreted and collectively produced, require continuous *remanufacturing* under the direction (but not control) of a single individual or, in some cases, pair of individuals.

Furthermore, we must take into account the fact that such communities are temporarily manifested and rarely, if ever achieve full attendance; even bar “regulars” are unlikely to stop by an establishment every day, and if they do, their stay will, almost certainly, not span from open to close. Variability in the frequency with which patrons, regulars and non-regulars alike, visit certain bars results in disproportionate feelings of “affect” and “commitment” (Amit, 2012) to the communities embodied by these establishments.

Targeting a Crowd

I think that Shangri-La captured lightning in a bottle really...I mean, you just felt it when you walked in

- Paul Elston, manager of Waterfront Café

Paul Elston has been booking bands for bars in New London since 2003, a pursuit which, despite often holding the status of an unpaid second-job, he now enjoys as an essential responsibility of his current position at Waterfront Café. The tale of how Paul arrived at Waterfront is long and peppered with anecdotes full of both insight and comedy – a bar fight broken up by a soulful hippie owner and his secret chain whip, a gay bar with a campy name and

even campier dog tags, the list goes on and on – but there is no part of this story more important, for both Paul and the present study, than its opening chapter.

Paul’s booking career in New London began following the unexpected success of a record listening party which he hosted in the now-defunct Shangri-La. He’d organized the event at the request of a friend who, as a representative of Capitol Records, had been tasked with promoting the latest release by Ben Harper. Paul readily admits he is “not a huge fan” of Ben Harper, but, having been passionate about the music industry for a number of years, saw no reason to pass on the opportunity at hand. And though I never received the details on how Paul advertised the party, it seems that he mustered a convincing show of enthusiasm. As he recalls, “a hundred people came out for no good reason, I mean, to listen to a fucking Ben Harper record.” Indeed, the publicity stunt exceeded all expectations impressing not only Paul’s friend, but also the ownership of Shangri-La. The latter promptly asked Paul if he would consider booking.

Paul remembers Shangri-La as a “the best club that’s ever been here,” alleging that “the art was amazing on the walls, the vibe was incredible...it was really beautifully done.” Beyond décor, however, what truly made the bar “lightning in a bottle” was its ability to remain “really, really, really eclectic” and, yet, still embody intense feelings of solidarity. Were you to stop by this establishment during its two-year tenure, it is quite likely that, in the words of Paul, “you would have a night where you’d see – and you were friends with everyone – but you’d see, like, [for example], the old school hip hop crew and you knew who they were.” Indeed, Shangri-La, at least as Paul remembers it, held no loyalties to a particular crowd. “It was kind of like high school” he reflected to me during our first interview, “you knew, like, oh there’s the old school hip hop crew hangin’ out over there, and there’re like the indie rock hipster kids over there, and

there're, these kids over there, and the hippies over here...and the punk rock kids over here, and they all hang out." Far from the chaos of a crowded High School cafeteria, however, is the decidedly "peaceful vibe" that Paul recalls as pervasive in Shangri-La. Touching on the club again during a subsequent interview, he concluded, "that was the most magical place...every kind of crowd was there, it was just a really, really accepting place...there was sort of a camaraderie that everyone really felt when they went there." Regrettably, the establishment closed down after only two years, and its magic, according to Paul, has yet to reappear on the New London landscape. No bar has quite managed to make a name for itself through such intense focus on eclecticism.

Indeed, many New London drinking establishments, especially those smaller in size, target specific groups of patrons. This is certainly the case for Gary, who feels "that the people who end up [at Nine Innings] are the people who belong here...they *find* it." Although Gary prefers to advertise his establishment exclusively through "word of mouth" (and, therefore, would likely resist the suggestion that he has targeted specific crowds), Nine Innings is clearly designed to be most inviting to a certain group of individuals – those "who walk in...and [feel] like they've found their home." Maintaining identity is Gary's foremost priority, more important even than winning over new customers. He is quick to reflect, "a lot of people...walk in here, look around, and say, *oh no, I don't want to be here*, and leave. And, good, they'll find, they'll find the place they wanna be." Of course, it is not as if Gary's willingness to see people depart his establishment prematurely denotes complete nonchalance toward financial concerns. By "preserving" the tavern, he has also preserved a core group of regular clientele.

Conall, too, has manufactured his bar as a space designed to attract certain crowds. The military-themed décor, Irish music, and, most prevalently, the bar owner's consistent presence in

Garryowen's maintain an environment attractive to families, middle-aged/older individuals, and Coast Guard cadets. And, even more so than Gary, Conall attempts to ensure that these groups will keep coming back. "[We're] very tight with the Coast Guard cadets, and very tight with the Coast Guard seniors, core officers," he explained to me, but also admitted that not every year sees an equal level of interest from these individuals. "There's a senior year every year that we get to know," he reflected, "some years, they're really good, some years they're really quiet, and some years, they're really bad...some years we can have a group in here that, they have their going away parties in here and the parents come to say goodbye to me, and then other years, I never see them." That being said, Garryowen's has always been among the main destinations of Coast Guard cadets, and it would probably take a great number of "bad years" to change this. That Garryowen's can contend with one or two inactive senior classes and not lose its ties to the Coast Guard Academy is, in fact, a testament to the strength of Conall's desire to see cadets in his establishment.

Tomás also revealed that the majority of his patronage identify with a specific crowd. "The bulk of what we do caters to the punk hardcore and metal community," he noted, before later more candidly reiterating "we try to cater to the crowd that we want in here." Like Gary, Tomás was more loyal to the identity of his bar and, by extension, the limited crowd that appreciated this identity, than the prospect of attracting a broader patron base. He laughingly reflected, "[patrons] either walk in and expect martini glasses and get disappointed and walk out, or they walk in, and say, *hey, wow, this is dark and comfortable, and a little bit dirty, like me.*"

The tendency of New London bars to rely on certain crowds is something that Paul was soon exposed to after Shangri-La closed, when he began booking for a gay bar called Stallion. Despite reflecting on his time at Stallion positively, Paul is quick to admit that "it was just really

weird at one point cause I was starting to really push [the owner's] gay crowd away by doing these shows...[they felt] a little ostracized, I think, like, when we had shows.” Beyond just differing musical tastes, this tension was, more broadly, rooted in concerns with identity. As Paul sees it, his booking indie bands at Stallion forced the bar's gay crowd to ask if this establishment, in which they had once felt entirely at home, was slowly losing – if not abandoning outright – its status as a gay bar. He recalls receiving visual evidence of this fact one summer afternoon:

...there's one case where I just had to laugh because there was, there was one point when somebody just started playing guitar, just started checking their guitar, and it was like rrrring! and there were, like, two gay guys– all of a sudden, like, these two gay guys just run from the bar and, like, run out of the door and I'm, like, ok this is clearly not working very well for them.

In this instance, fleeing Stallion appears to have enabled several members of a community, namely, the gay crowd of Stallion, to “mark” the boundary delimiting their collective identity. While bar crowds may, themselves, be made up of fairly distinct groups (see Section 4: “Private Face”), for two or more communities to populate a bar would require extraordinary circumstances. “And I understand that” Paul is quick to say, “the gay bar versus indie rock club thing started coming to a little bit to a head... and I was starting to get real tired so I decided, ok, I'm just gonna do one last show.” Paul called the show his “retirement,” and promptly stopped booking.

This hiatus from the music scene proved short-lived, however. Not long after his brief stint at Stallion, Paul was hired by Mick, owner of the Waterfront Café for only a single year at this point, to serve as bar manager – a position which involved booking as well as a number of other responsibilities. Waterfront was relatively bereft of regular patronage, and Mick saw Paul's familiarity with the music scene as a means to establish a steady clientele base. Paul,

conversely, saw Waterfront as a place in which he could attempt to reinstate the “magic” of Shangri-La, but soon realized that this would be only moderately feasible.

Describing the New London bar scene in 2006, when he first went to work for Waterfront, Paul reflects, “at the time, all the bars were just doing the same fucking thing, it was not interesting...it was really boring and sort of drab here...it was the same kind of food, the same kind of beer specials...the same music pouring out of every place, the same kind of jukebox, the same kind of crowd.” Centrally located on Broad Street, long the hub of bar activity in New London, the Waterfront Café, at least as Paul saw it, embodied an opportunity to improve the then-lacking diversity of downtown nightlife. His desire to replicate the eclecticism of Shangri-La, however, was hindered by a division which he perceived within the city’s population. He recalls that, separate from the crowds frequenting the “plain Jane bars” which dominated Broad St., “there was this underbelly, of, like, a music scene and an arts scene that you didn’t really see out too much.” It was to the members of this scene that Paul began to reach out. In so doing, he was forced to partially sacrifice eclecticism for the security of a niche.

Paul frequently refers to Waterfront as a “hipster bar,” and acknowledges that, especially during the formative months and years of the establishment, his sights were set on the aforementioned New London “underbelly.” While redesigning the bar as a more accommodating music venue, he repeatedly told Mick – who neither identifies as a “hipster” or expresses particular interest in the nuances and internal variability of this label – “we really need to fix this up, if I’m going to get the right crowd to see this.” Eight years later, the Waterfront has diversified its crowd, but Paul feels that a certain exclusivity remains prevalent in the bar, and keeps the magic of Shangri-La out of reach.

“I know it happens here,” Paul disclosed during the opening minutes of our first interview, “I know people take—and it’s a good and bad thing—people take ownership of this bar because they love and they are passionate about it, which is great, but it makes it very difficult for new people to come in and really feel comfortable because they come in and everyone’s like *oh, who’s that?*”

The symbolic “boundary” (Cohen 1985) that delimits the patron community in Waterfront, despite Paul’s ideals, does base itself heavily on stereotypes associated with “hipsters.” And, while certain individuals who do not identify as hipsters may, due to ignorance or self-assuredness, challenge the public face with which these stereotypes have “masked” Waterfront, the fact that stereotypes also informs the *private* face of the Waterfront community makes this community all that much harder to penetrate

Bar Owner/Manager Identity: A Brief Note

I come out of the DIY punk hardcore community...I kinda run this like a big basement

- Tomás Coupe

Considering Cohen’s (1985, 109) comment that, within a community, “people construe what they see of themselves in terms of their own stereotypes,”²³ it is worth mentioning that Paul himself identifies with the “hipster” label. “I consider myself one in the positive way in that I look for different kinds of music,” he explained to me. So what is a hipster? In the words, of Paul, “my core definition of a hipster is very simple...someone who looks outside of popular culture, outside of the immediate norm for new sounds.” Waterfront, according to its manager,

²³ See Chapter 2 (pg 26)

offers “hipsters” the opportunity to *re*interpret a defining element of their identities, namely, music, as a symbol of the community embodied by this bar.

Paul is not the only bar manager/owner who identifies with his targeted patrons on a broad level. Tomás , for instance, described The Crashing Umbrella as a venue in which the DIY “community” could gather. With such comments, the relationship between “extension of self” and the targeting of specific crowds becomes clearer. Quite simply, most bar owners in New London who develop their establishments into highly “personal” spaces seek patrons with whom they associate.

Like his regulars, Gary describes Nine Innings as a “home,” something which prompts immediately feelings of camaraderie. Similarly, Conall’s military history and Irish conception of the bar as a “meeting house...[in which] it’s not about getting drunk” visibly informs the values of his core patrons. While stopping by Garryowen’s for a quick drink on Tuesday afternoon, for example, I witnessed a man stop by the bar to ask Conall for assistance in organizing a high school graduation party. “I said to myself” the man told Conall, “if there’s one person who can help me out, its Conall Treacy.” Interactions of this type suggest that profit is not the only reason bar owners seek to attract patrons with whom they are likely to identify. Social networking is also enabled by feelings of camaraderie across the counter. Certainly, there is the practical concern of constructing an environment which people will react to positively. To borrow a word used by Ron – whose own establishment maintains both a “sports” crowd and an “alternative” crowd which roughly coincide with his and Silvia’s respective personalities – a personalized bar will have the greatest chance of making patrons “comfortable” if these individuals broadly identify with the bar’s owner. Comfortable patrons will, in turn, spend time

at bars and, presumably, money. They are also likely to befriend other members of a bar community.

Private Face

I see the way people are not...one-note, I guess.

- Paul Elston

When asked about his relationship with other bar owners, Tomás seemed, once again, to bring up the notion of “crowds,” commenting, “each bar owner that I am personally friends with...they all have their own niche.” Nevertheless, a niche is not equivalent to a crowd, insofar as specialized environments will not necessarily draw relatively uniform crowds. Just because a certain bar has designed itself to pull in certain crowd does not mean that it will do so successfully or exclusively.

Attesting to the slight gap between niche and crowd is a remark made by Tomás during his consideration of the latter. The club owner referenced a “route that our, all our regulars pretty much all pop through,” which, along with the Crashing Umbrella, consists of Vertigo, Harley’s, and Waterfront, before reviewing the distinct identity of each establishment listed. He explained, “[Vertigo is] known for their really good beer selection, [Harley’s] known for being like, kind of a neighborhood bar, and [Waterfront] known for being more of like a hipster bar,” indicating that patron overflow is still possible – especially in a small city such as New London – even across bars with distinct niches established to target specific crowds.

Interestingly, bar owners tend to reference crowds when asked to consider their establishments in contrast to other local businesses. “I think everybody has their own core clientele,” Samantha Treacy, wife of Conall and co-owner of Garryowen’s, once told me as we

schmoozed about the New London bar scene. Her husband was quick to follow up, saying, “Yea, there’s certain groups.” Similarly, when asked if there is any patron overflow between Garryowen’s and Vertigo (located directly adjacent to one another), Silvia replied, “I don’t think our crowds are the same, no.” In response to questions concerning their clientele exclusively, however, owners were often prompted to discuss patron diversity. When asked if the majority of their crowd consists of younger individuals (between the ages of twenty-one through thirty five), Silvia and Rodney made it a point to describe their older crowd. “I would say late, late twenties to, like, fifties,” Silvia contested, “we have like an older crowd.” Agreeing with Silvia, Ron reflected, “my mom, she’s sixty four, and...she’ll come in on a Friday and not really be alienated or be, like, kinda, like, looking out of place.” He also referenced a regular group of Connecticut College professors who generally arrive “around five on Thursday,” remarking, “they’re probably around my mom’s age, so, I mean...they’re comfortable here.”

Tomás took the notion of patron diversity even further by stating, “I *hope* this place is known for a place where people of all walks of life can walk into, feel comfortable, have a better chance of making a friend than an enemy” and, later, commenting, “you might walk in here any given day and see some dude that’s six foot three and jacked, covered in tattoos sitting at the bar next to some little dude in a, in a pink shirt with a lisp, and they’re cool with each other, and that’s how I want it to be.” Even Gary, with his focus on those patrons who, now personal friends of his, have found a “home” at Nine Innings, discussed “cross-section of business people downtown” who frequent his establishment more or less exclusively for lunch, as well as an “artistic crowd” made up of “the local, young folk” which generally arrives during later hours of the night.

It is with the presence of such groups within “crowds” in mind that Cohen’s (1985) notion of the “private face” becomes especially relevant. “Private face” is, as mentioned in Section 1, produced by the potentially diverse interpretations of symbols central to a community. That the crowds of certain bars are themselves distributed into different patron groups (wineheads versus hoodlums; artists versus businesspeople) may imply a variability to which discrepancy of interpretation is itself subject. Do members of Gary’s “artistic crowd” interpret the community “manufactured” in Nine Innings similarly? More similarly, at least, than to a lunch-hour businessman? It seems entirely possible. Indeed, the concept of a “private face” is important not only because it accounts for interpretation as an individual act, but also because it recognizes that the results of interpretation may vary in congruence *relative to one another*. The presence of internal groupings does not, necessarily, dissolve community.

While Waterfront is, at least in terms of its “public face,” a hipster bar, the establishment by no means survives off of a uniform clientele base. Despite his initial bid to attract New London’s underground, Paul hardly sees Waterfront as a space occupied exclusively by “hipsters.” He uses the term because, he feels, “it gets the point across,” but recognizes that a number of regular patrons at his bar might resist the hipster label. Many of these regulars come to Waterfront specifically to enjoy one or two elements of the bar’s atmosphere, generally music or craft beer, but do not necessarily come from New London’s artistic “underbelly.” So what differentiates Waterfront (and other bars in which communities consist of fairly discrete patron groups) from Paul’s recollection of Shangri-La? The answer is simple: openness

Recall that Paul explicitly mentioned patrons taking ownership of his establishment and, apparently aware of the “hipster” stereotype informing the bar’s community boundary, ignored or passively ostracized new patrons who seemed, for whatever reason, to be aesthetically

incongruent with this image. While no bar owners interviewed in this study felt the need (even when prompted) to discuss purposeful alienation of “outsiders” within their respective establishments, their very use of terms such as “crowd” or “group” while discussing clientele suggests that each is aware of insularity produced by community development. Even Vertigo, with its dualistic identity of an “alternative sports bar,” does not embrace an openness as complete as that which Paul recalls having informed the “vibe” at Shangri-La. Over the course of the bar’s two years in business, Silvia has accepted that “people with families and stuff...and think its kinda the Buffalo Wild wings type atmosphere, they’re gonna not really be into it.” Indeed, the acceptance of multiple groups into a community does not necessarily translate into a completely open atmosphere. What makes Shangri-La unique is that, according to Paul’s testimony, its public face was neither hipster, punk, sports, nor any other label pertaining to preexisting communities in the New London area. The club apparently based its reputation directly on eclecticism.

Undoubtedly, Paul’s recollections of Shangri-La are shaped by some combination of nostalgia and idealization. Shangri-La emerges here as a mythological entity – an ideal to which Paul feels the Waterfront and other New London bars should aspire. It seems quite unlikely that the establishment was *completely* free of exclusivity, especially considering the difficulty that Paul has faced in replicating this unique public face.

The challenge inherent in reaching out to new patrons seems to arise from the “tension” discussed in Section 1, not because seeking new patrons is, inherently, a profit-driven venture destructive to community, but because it may readily be *perceived* as such. The “gay crowd” at Stallion, for example, were most likely upset with the owner of this bar for hiring Paul to book bands, and may have even felt betrayed. Regular bar patrons often expect a level of loyalty from

owners, part of which involves maintaining the exclusivity of a bar community from outsiders, who may interpret this community in relatively radical ways. Harley's, for instance, is not a hip hop bar, but does have hip hop on its jukebox. What if a group of people were to enter the bar and, interpreting the concept of a "neighborhood bar" differently than regulars, play nothing but hip hop for hours on end? Sol's usual crowd would not be happy. Because of potential clashes such as this, bar owners are limited in their capacity to seek new clientele.

Of course, having a usual crowd is not without benefit. That most of Paul's patrons, at the very least, enjoy "hipster" music, informs the public face of Waterfront as a community. And public faces *are* important; they provide inexperienced patrons a rough "cultural map" of the New London bar scene. As mentioned at the start of Section 3, stereotypes *do* inform self and community identity among regular patrons. The music playing in Waterfront is the music that an outside would probably expect, as is the décor in Garryowen's, as is the familiarity of Nine Innings.

The Barquentine, being a very young bar, must place considerable energy in navigating the initial stages of finding a balance between eclecticism and uniformity. When asked if there is a particular crowd to which she would like to reach out more, Jenny reflected, "I guess it's kind of a tough question because I like the fact that we have such a diverse crowd in here." To call The Barquentine's crowd diverse seems on point – the bar counts among its regular and semi-regular patrons "college kids," "navy guys," "coast guard cadets," "seasonal workers," a "business crowd," and even some of the "art-oriented" individuals with who Paul identifies – but, as a result, this establishment lacks the security that Waterfront and similarly established bars enjoy. Their relationship with the "hipster" crowd is more tenuous than that shared by this group with Waterfront; their connection to the Coast Guard Academy is less developed than that

maintained by Conall at Garryowen's; and, in contrast to Nine Innings, their lunch crowd of businessmen and "blue collar workers" is seasonal rather than year round. It is not surprising then, that, reflecting on how a local might describe The Barquentine to out-of-towners, Mel concluded, "it depends on the time of day." His bar has yet to identify and attract a crowd on which he can largely rely; its public face is *not* "symbolically simple" because there are no stereotypes or generalizations which can readily serve as a "mask."

Similarly to Paul, Jenny values eclecticism, but unlike Waterfront, The Barquentine has, thus far, not felt compelled to partially undermine this value by targeting a specific group of patrons. Following her assertion that she "likes" the diversity of her patronage, Jenny, for example, somewhat conspicuously added, "That's, personally... businesswise, I guess I would like to continue to have more Navy people come in. And more single females." This comment seems to entail that Jenny desires her bar to exist in the tradition of Shangri-La, attracting numerous groups of patrons and *refraining* from clumping them under a single generalization. She readily perceives the tension between profit and community, believing that an influx of Navy people and single females might compromise her currently "diverse" patronage.

Establishing Regularity

...we still have a lot of regulars that come in... Whatever they're normal time was, they're still here

- Jenny Collingwood

As was demonstrated in the previous two sections, bar owners may attract "crowds" with whom they identify by constructing and maintaining their establishments as highly personal spaces. That being said, bars are dynamic entities insofar as they must be continuously reviewed

and, potentially, revised in order to keep core patron groups content. Bar owners are occasionally forced to face circumstances in which their “extended selves” prove unsatisfactory to members of these groups. Rather than a continuous dialogue between owner and patron base, however, bars function as an expansive conversation. Patron desires and complaints will not always be aligned with one another or explicitly pitted against the current business model of an establishment. It is from the mess of varying opinions produced by continuous interaction between that bar owners, bar patrons, and bar staff that the members of the former must develop appropriate directions for their establishments. Shaping the decisions that go into such development is a concern for community identity as well as considerations regarding the profit necessary to stay in business. The bar owner, as an “enactor,” must maintain an infrastructure which allows patrons to feel as if the subject of their affect has not been changed beyond recognition; in order to understand their consistent presence in a particular bar as the result of a joint commitment – a desire to ensure that the establishment stays in business and, consequently, that broader communities retain a site for networking and expressions of solidarity – patrons must simultaneously feel influential and secure.

Bar owners establish a sense of security within their establishments largely through the development of a regular schedule. Because bar communities never gather in full and, rather, manifest in the convergence of certain patrons and patron crowds, bar owners need to ensure that these “waves” of customers are met with an experience which, despite emphasizing certain symbols central to community (“hipster,” “alternative,” “old-fashioned,” etc.), is also specialized. In some cases, such as booking musical events or other special nights (karaoke, trivia, drink deals etc.) this schedule is wholly in the hands of owners. Such events tend to attract certain groups and, thus, enable owners to assume partial control over patronage. Jenny,

for example, can readily predict who will enter The Barquentine when local disc jockey, Lombard Blue is playing. She can say with confidence that, “when he’s here...my navy guys will come in and I’ll know that, oh, they’re probably gonna be here and they’ll probably be here [at] eleven, eleven thirty, maybe ten, maybe nine, but one, two, four groups of them are gonna come in.” Similarly, Paul can count on the Monday night beer special at Waterfront to bring in a group of Electric boat engineers on a weekly basis. Even Gary’s lunch business, despite being a daily offering, draws in a distinct enough patron group to be considered a special attraction. Most bars in New London, however, do not host events every night and, therefore, bar owners must come up with less direct strategies of encouraging a regular patron cycle to develop organically.

Before delving into such strategies, it is important to first review the manner in which regularity breeds security. “I know ninety percent of the people’s names, and what they’re gonna have,” Gary once told me, indicating that regularity goes well beyond getting to know certain bar and is, in fact, the state of being *known by* the establishment. Feelings of affect and joint commitments are developed through an exchange of ideas (patron input versus the guiding influence of ownership) as *well* as of knowledge. Patrons who feel as if a bar somehow understands who they are will inevitably be more inclined to identify with the establishment on a deeply personal level. Thus, for a bar owner such as Jenny, who asserted, “I know everyone’s drink...every time someone walks in and I can say, *oh, there’s so and so*, and I just go grab a Guinness glass and I start the Guinness,” preemptively getting a drink for a patron functions as a form of community development.

While the initial feelings of having found a “home” – a process largely facilitated by the loyalties to broad, externally existing communities (i.e. hipster) embedded within an

establishment's public face – that Gary describes are certainly important, they are, by themselves, insufficient to fulfill the development of a community. Indeed, a sense of belonging sufficient for community membership, as well as the commitment to a community's future that accompanies this sense, are untenable to someone who cannot yet enter a bar, be greeted by name and, potentially, with their usual drink.

Among the most common ploys used by bartenders to ensure that patrons will begin to visit their establishments not only frequently but *regularly* is to hire bartenders who they think can attract a “following.” Paul, for example, reflected that a small group of “service industry people,” who don't necessarily identify as “hipster” stop by Waterfront once a week because they are particularly comfortable with Cliff, who tends bar that night. “I'd say, Wednesday we get probably the most service industry,” Paul told me, “and mostly, I think, that's...due to Ray, who's a bartender here.” Out of all the bartenders at Waterfront, Cliff is, in the words of Paul, the least “hipstery,” and his outgoing personality, as well as his physical appearance, often wins over patrons who might initially have trepidations about the bar – either because of its reputation (public face) or its actual appearance (music, décor, beer selection, etc.). Laughing to himself, Paul reflected, “people walk in here and they're like, oh man, this is going to be a total hipster bar, and they see Cliff, it also sort of throws them off a little bit cause they're like, this dude's just like, a big dude, that could kill everyone in here and he's got tribals and shit, like, it doesn't make any sense.” This initial surprise is sustained by Cliff's pronounced geniality, which radically contradicts widely accepted assumptions about hipsters and hipster venues as being exclusive or even snobbish. According to Paul, this sociability was apparent on Cliff's first day, during which the bartender proved that “he could start a conversation with anybody...even if he didn't understand what they were talking about. Like, if people started talking about music...he

would be like, *yea man, like, uh*, and just kind of play along, and it was really hilarious.” Because Cliff is “not...too hipstery looking or anything” and can be counted on to greet all patrons enthusiastically – or, to borrow Paul’s language, “he’s just like, *yo man, what’s up?*, and is like broin’ down with you immediately” – groups such as the service industry people, who might not otherwise frequent Waterfront, can now be counted as regular patrons.

Of course, groups who frequent bars to see certain bar owners are not always “outsiders” relative to these establishments’ core crowds. Staffing choices can also establish regularity amongst members of a bar’s “core clientele” (to borrow a term from Samantha). A dramatic example of this is Flossie’s, the crowd of which is predominantly based on bartender friend groups, as opposed to umbrella terms such as “hipster” or “alternative.” Beth asserted that, “a lot of times, the clientele changes based on the bartender,” and continued on to reflect that all of three of her bartenders attract relatively distinct crowds, as does she. “Like Winona,” she explained, “her friends don’t come in when I’m here...they come in when she’s here, cause we’re different...I’m fifty years old, she’s thirty years old, her friends are twenties...my other bartender, Cliff, has an eclectic group of friends who only come in when he’s here, and I have people that only come in when *I’m* here.” So apparent is the association between bartender and crowd at Flossie’s that Beth has begun to hire bartenders who she knows have extensive friend groups. “You always try to hire people that you know are gonna bring a crowd in,” she told me, before clarifying her reasons for hiring Flossie’s newest bartender, Sam. Before offering Sam the position, Beth was well aware that “he has a lot of female friends,” and, as such could draw in a considerable crowd. “When the females come in, the men are gonna come in, so that’s what you wanna hire,” she said, before laughingly recalling, “I talked to a friend of mine yesterday...and she says, ‘that was a good move, you hired a good looking man with big muscles

who people like to look at!” Striking about Beth’s choice to hire Sam is the fact that he had no prior bartending experience, which implies that the attitude at Flossie’s in regard to hiring is similar to that which guides staff choices at Waterfront. According to Paul, “it’s really not the experience you’re looking for, because, anybody can go, *alright, rum and coke*...that kind of stuff is learned. What you don’t learn is personality. You have personality.” And with personality, at least from Beth’s perspective, comes a network of acquaintances who will visit their friend at work on a regular basis. In the case of both Waterfront and Flossie’s, having a recognizable face behind the bar facilitates security on two fronts. Patrons are comforted by their familiarity with the bartender *as well* as their acquaintance with other regular clientele.

It is important to mention, however, that patrons of Flossie’s are not completely grouped in accordance with the establishment’s bartenders. Most recognize the establishment as Beth’s bar, and, thus, interpret the owner herself as a central symbol of community boundary, *even* if they have stopped by to spend time with another bartender. That Beth can assert with confidence, “I know almost everybody that comes in here,” is attributable to her high level of visibility with Flossie’s. Even when other bartenders are working, she is frequently present. “When I’m not working,” she explained, “I still hang around here. I have to support my own business.” Clearly, Beth views the considerable amount of time that she spends in her bar as, foremost, an economic necessity, but, as a form of “boundary marking” (Cohen, 1985) it is also a community-oriented gesture. Because making Beth’s acquaintance is a central element of community membership at Flossie’s, new patrons can gain acceptance in this community with relative ease. Flossie’s harbors no loyalties to any broad social categories, such as “hipster” or even “young person.”

That patrons are loyal to Beth, rather than to an ideology or aesthetic, also yields practical benefits. In regard to keeping Flossie's free of any fighting, for example, Beth commented, "there's a lot of guys that come in here at night that, if I say, *hey* [snaps her fingers], they'll have our back in a heartbeat...even though I'm older than all...of them, a lot of them consider me like their mom and [are] respectful, [and] with Winona, she's young and she's beautiful, they'll protect her all day long too." Clearly, Beth finds security within regular patrons, just as they find security, as a motherly figure, in her own regular presence. Indeed, for longtime patrons of a bar to develop nearly familial relationships with the establishment's owner is not uncommon in New London, and is directly attributable to owner visibility.

Visibility: Reaffirming Friendship, Reproducing Atmosphere

Oh yea, I know them all, I know them all, I know the patrons. I know every bum on the street out there, I know everybody.

- Conall Treacy

As discussed in section one, numerous bar owners remain highly visible in their establishments. There are two main reasons for this, namely, the development of close friendships with patrons and the need to maintain control.

Why would bar owners want to become close with their patrons? In part, it is certainly for financial gain. Beth relies heavily on patrons who she brings in specifically and, thus, even if she desired to stop bar tending, she would not be able to. That being said, there also appear to be factors beyond profit which entice bar owners to befriend patrons. This is largely due to the fact that, as mentioned in section two, bar owners frequently develop a public face which they hope will attract patrons with whom they identify. Indeed, highly visible bar owners who have

designed their establishments as highly personal spaces – and, in so doing, created a locus of congregation for broader social identity groups with which they identify – are likely to develop friendships with their patrons out of the joint commitments and feelings of affect which sustain such communities. Certainly, this is apparent in the case of Beth and the male patrons who she feels would assist her in subduing any fights; only a territorial desire to protect Flossie’s (both from immediate violence as well as the long-term consequences that such activity could bring) would motivate individuals into such action. That being said, highly personal relationships, associations even stronger than those which Beth shares with her informal guardians, are capable of developing in bars as a result of visible ownership.

Gary’s main crowd at Nine Innings, for example, includes individuals with whom the bar owner, primarily due to his consistent presence within his establishment, is extremely close. He feels “that the people who end up here are the people who belong here...they *find* it.” Because, in Gary’s mind, Nine Innings is “the classic bar,” he understands his regulars as feeling a loyalty to this model which parallels that motivating his own agenda of “preservation.” Indeed, far from considering his intense relationship with Nine Innings exclusive in any sense, Gary readily admits, “there’s other people who walk in, and it’s like they found their home.” And this in this sense of “home” is a detachment from the economic reality of the bar as a business. Gary does not just treat certain patrons as close friends while they are inside of Nine Innings; these relationships extend beyond the bar in which they were formed:

...when somebody in here has trouble, a lot of people will band together to help them...when something good is happening, like a wedding, we’re all there to band together, and like, we’re there. So, we go to each other’s parties, we go to each other’s funerals. Y’know, we’re there good and bad times. Um, [my wife] Martha and I run a bus trip every year to one of the ballparks and it’s always, y’know, it’s sixty people sign right up. It’s fun, it’s like an extended family

As seen in this quotation (with which the introduction to this study began), the friendships, even kinships, that Gary has formed with his patrons clearly require more time and effort than that necessary to keep people in his establishment. That being said, these relationships are also inextricably tied to Nine Innings. Feelings of affect which members of this friend group feel toward one another are, albeit indirectly, pointed at Nine Innings itself. The tavern is both a unifying place and a unifying symbol. With this example, we get a peek into how members of a broad community— in this case, a community foremost defined by preference for the “old fashioned” model of bar and its accompanying codes of decorum – may form a smaller, more tightly knit community within a bar. This smaller community may then, in turn, extend beyond the walls of the bar in which it developed (as is seen in the case of the baseball bus trip).

Conall has similar relationships with members of his “core clientele” as Gary, in that his commitment to relate to certain patrons is beyond that of a salesman. So close is the bar owner to some of his regulars that, during our first conversation, he was able to assert, “we’ve actually had weddings here. We’ve had funerals here...and christenings.” Although such events will likely reaffirm the loyalty felt by certain regular patrons of Garryowen’s to Conall and his establishment, they are clearly not organized with increased profit in mind. Clearly, it is Conall’s visibility (as described in section one) in Garryowen’s which facilitates feelings of affect amongst certain patrons sufficient to ensure that these individuals will desire to hold significant rituals within the establishment. Such feelings are not only directed to the pub but to Conall himself. Even the most loyal patron of Garryowen’s would be unlikely to deem it an appropriate space for a highly personal ceremony were they only marginally acquainted with the establishment’s owner. Friendships which patrons develop with Conall as a result of his steady presence within his establishment can, judging from Conall’s own reflections, lead to profound

senses of security. Weddings, funerals, christenings – these are events generally sequestered to purportedly “sacred,” and, by extension, divinely *protected* spaces. That patrons of Garryowen’s have elected to host such services at the pub suggests that they deem it to be among the most secure places on the New London landscape.

At this point, it becomes important to momentarily step away from discussions of regularity and cyclicity as platforms for productive relationships to review the other motivation behind bar owner visibility: control. Indeed, not all of the conversations (verbal and nonverbal) which transpire between bar owners and their patrons, as well as their staff, consist primarily of positive feedback. While visibility ensures that patrons will feel a heightened sense of familiarity and, by extension security, within a particular establishment, it also acts to make owners themselves feel secure. To take one’s eyes off of one’s bar is too allow behavior which may blur the establishment’s community boundary. Owners who remain in their bars attempt to reproduce the atmosphere which they find most conducive to community development. While this atmosphere may change in accordance with time of day or event schedules, certain elements must remain consistent. Tomás, for example, maintained that the community of The Crashing Umbrella behaved in accordance with a consistent code of “etiquette.” Despite booking a variety of musical performances, the club owner always expected his patrons respect “etiquette,” which he described as granting an individual the right to “do anything you want as long as you’re not harming anybody else.”

“I just like keeping an eye on this place, making sure that the music doesn’t get turned up too loud, or there’s not something stupid on TV,” Gary revealed during our first interview. “And, in general,” he continued “[my bartenders] know that now...they run the place pretty much like I want it run. I think they get it, you know, they get that that’s what I want this place

to be like.” Because Gary only hires regular patrons to serve as bartenders at Nine Innings, it seems safe to say that he has closer relationships with his staff than any other bar owner in town. Thus, that his decision to remain in the tavern for the majority of each day is, in part, motivated by a desire to ensure that these individuals keep the atmosphere of Nine Innings exactly as he wants it is especially striking. Gary realizes that the steady atmosphere of his establishment, on which its status as a “preserved throwback” depends, is credited to elements beyond his own presence (music, TV, etc.). Any slight change in these elements, even if not initiated consciously, could turn patrons away, putting his bar in jeopardy as both a business and as a community.

Another form of control that bar owners such as Gary like to maintain is control over any sort of “trouble” which may occur within their establishments. Asked to define trouble, Gary reflected, “it generally has to do with, you’ve asked somebody to leave, and the person has to leave. And it’s like *ok, I’m not going to get confrontational with you, I’m just gonna call the cops.*” Because he is the owner of Nine Innings, Gary wields particular power in giving such warnings, but he also hopes that his presence in the bar will enable him to avoid such confrontation by loosely keeping track of how much patrons are drinking, or how much they have already drunk. “If we suspect that someone’s, like, been over served somewhere else, or maybe even has had enough here,” he explained, “it’s just like, no, you’re done for tonight, we don’t want anyone to drink more than is a good idea.” For Gary, however, “trouble” extends beyond extreme intoxication and verbal confrontation to more casual interactions. Without hesitation, he told me, “I prohibit, like, loud, vulgarity, and obscenities. You know, like, if, if people pepper their conversation with swear words, and I don’t hear it, I don’t care, but, if you’re talking loud enough for me to hear it, that makes me realize that other people can hear it too.”

With this assertion, it becomes clear that Gary's main concern in regard to trouble is not so much any legal ramifications or even bad publicity (although he is certainly aware of both of these consequences). His primary goal is to retain the "normal" atmosphere of the bar, which is quiet and subdued.

Beth, too, remains visible in Flossie's as a means to discourage trouble. Although she can count on her male patrons to "have her back," she also sees herself as an obstacle in the way of trouble. During our first interview, she was quick to assert, "I don't have any fights in here, because I have a reputation that I will jump over the bar to stop a fight before a fight will start. I have been punched in the face numerous times, I have literally had my hair pulled right out of my head." Like most bar owners, however, Beth much prefers the route of passive prevention than of active intervention. This is a mindset echoed by Jenny, who reflected that "some of [my regulars] like to sit in the same spot every time...they could be a fixture, and, but, if someone's already sitting there, you never hear a complaint...I think that they recognize that, um, other regulars know who they are...we know them." Although Jenny has, fortunately, not yet been forced to develop a reputation akin to Beth's, she nonetheless realizes that her presence in The Barquentine, as owner, is enough to discourage outright antagonism.

Like Gary, Conall also expressed a concern for the way his bar might be run were he to leave for extended periods of time. And, in large part, this is due to his proactive and personal protocol for dealing with trouble, which is equally direct as Beth's approach to breaking p fights. Although Conall has, on occasion, been forced to call the police to diffuse tense situations at Garryowen's, he much prefers to confront any "trouble" himself before resorting to outside help. Discussing unruly patrons, he explained, "you give them a chance. You say, *you know what, phone call for you outside*, and take 'em outside and then say, *get the fuck out of here*. Say, go

ahead, get the step on. You don't want to touch anybody. The police get paid for that." Because, in Conall's mind, his staff should never be physically confronting patrons, (with the rare exception of "cases...when you have to do something"), he feels the need to stick around Garryowen's into later hours as a means of ensuring that his staff will mishandle "trouble." He also has another practical reason for standing watch over the bar, once which has little to do with community development or maintenance. "If it's your bar, you wanna watch," Conall once stressed to me, "when people start talking about money, money's not a good thing y'know, money, when there's cash money, it disappears, you know, if you're not there watching. Next thing you know, it's gone." It is due to trepidations such as this that bars, if they are to be called communities, must also be deemed "manufactured." Bars run on profit, capital which must be tracked and distributed by a single individual or set of individuals. Obviously, if a bar fails to receive adequate income, it will close and the community which developed within it will disband. This is not to say that bar owners such as Gary or Conall, if and when they decide to retire, will completely lose contact with the patrons to whom they are closest. But the locus that once facilitated feelings of affect and demanded joint commitments will be no more; the consequences of this distributed loyalty – the bus trips, the weddings, and, most importantly, the guarantee of daily interaction – will all vanish.

Along with encouraging regular cycles of patron groups to develop, bar owners also foster feelings of security amongst patrons with a consistency in elements of bar *locality* such as décor, beer selection, and music. These more concrete features may function as "primordial material for the containment of history, for remembering the past" (Lovell 1998, 14) capable of promoting the feelings of belonging necessary to community formation. Among the reasons that The Barquentine has yet to fully establish a public face is its continued development of décor.

Stickers and prints advertising various breweries and liquors, as well a number novelty posters featuring bar related jokes grew steadily in number during the course of my fieldwork. The wall on which available drinks were displayed changed several times, as did the arrangement of furniture. Nine Innings, conversely, boasts much of the same décor as that which covered the tavern's walls and shelves while Gary was still tending bar. When asked if he made any substantial changes upon purchasing the establishment, the owner responded, "I cleaned it up... but in general, no. I tried to maintain what I loved about this place, which was already here." Similarly, Beth revealed to me that, upon purchasing Flossie's, "all I did was clean the place, and I painted," because the bar already "had a great following" before she became owner. Even Conall, who has "a basement full of shit" from which he constructs his ever-changing wall displays, maintains a thematic concern with Irish heritage, naval history, and military pride in the décor at Garryowen's. In this sense, the adornments of his wall parallel the taps at Waterfront and Vertigo, which are swapped on a regular basis. All the draft beers at these establishments (with the exception of PBR) are purchased from craft breweries. Just as Conall's displays change in content but not in theme, so too do beer choices made by Paul, Silvia, and Ron stay within a certain type of beer which, not coincidentally, is frequently (though, by no means exclusively) associated with alternative or hipster sensibilities.

Maintaining Community: The Bar as Conversation

...I take their input as highly valuable and I try to make them know that I care about what they think...

- Tomás Coupe, speaking about his patronage

Although consistency is often valued by bar owners concerned with maintaining the public faces of their respective establishments, there are instances in which extension of self

conflicts with patron demand. Gary, for example, good-humoredly recalls an instance in which his own beer preferences were not mirrored by those of his patrons. “I’ve tried a few things that haven’t worked,” he admitted, recalling, “I like Foster’s Lager a lot and I put that on, but it ended up that I was the only one drinking it, so that didn’t make any sense, so I took it off.” More than the nonverbal conversation that inspired this change, however, is Gary’s shift in language while describing it. Initially, the bar owner framed his decision to put popular beers on tap as a business decision, explaining, “it’s not worth it to me to have something that doesn’t sell, so it’s all about whether the beer moves,” but soon deviated from this profit-based vocabulary. He reflected, “they [the beers] all have regular patrons, you know, patronage,” implying that even something as seemingly insignificant to the process of developing patron affect as beer selection can, in fact, be of great import in making patrons feel at “home,” or, conversely, alienate them to no small degree. “People would be disappointed if I switched around a lot,” Gary told me, “they want to come in and get their Brooklyn Lager, or they want to come and get their Cottrell Ale, or IPA.” In Nine Innings, consistency and reliability are valued; patrons enter the bar hoping for a similar experience to their last visits. Although this expectation contrasts with those of patrons at Waterfront and Vertigo, both of which anticipate that taps at these establishments will change on a regular basis, the fact remains that regular customers of all three establishments expect a certain routine, whether it be of stasis or continuous change. Also important here is the fact that patron input enticed Gary to overcome his own tastes and, in so doing, sacrifice a small component of the “self” that his bar embodies. Indeed, patron input is a difficult concept to wrestle, holding the potential to both amplify and retard community development.

That certain bars in New London may be considered communities themselves (as well as sites for broader communities to congregate and network), is an argument greatly strengthened

by the fact that the owners of these establishments frequently take patron input into account. In order for joint commitments and affect to be felt, bar patrons must feel as if they have some impact on establishments which they visit, and, while supporting a business by regularly purchasing its product certainly grants patrons a considerable sense of involvement, there are other means through which to amplify this perceived influence even further. At the Barquentine, for example, liquor selection is largely decided through a very open dialogue with patron groups who have begun to acquire the status of regulars at the young bar. Jenny recalls an instance of this occurring in early January.

I do listen to the customers...ever since we've opened, people have come and said, *Do you have Cîroc?*...and I'm thinking, no we don't have Cîroc, and I asked Mel about it. I said, *well how come we don't have this?* And he said, *it's really expensive to get, and I just don't know if we're gonna be able to price at what we need to price it to make money off it.* And, um, so, a couple weeks ago, I said, *y'know what? Here's what we need to get rid of, here's what we need to get.* And I looked at the price of it, and I said, *it's actually not so bad.* Um so, I said, *well, let's get it.* And the first night that we had it, I sold three drinks and it paid for the bottle, so I said, *guess what? The rest of it's profit...*and people come in and saw that we had that, and that makes them happy.”

Because the Barquentine is a new bar still searching for a central crowd and, in so doing, still developing its public face, Mel and Jenny are especially open to patron input. Nevertheless, as seen in the case of Gary, this sort of exchange is something which all bar owners must invite. The priority for a bar owner to construct a space with which patrons will identify on a personal level. Even something as small as a type of liquor can facilitate that process.

With the above quotation in mind, it seems worth noting that the current attraction of The Barquentine is, somewhat surprisingly, its openness not only to verbal patron input, but visible patron participation. The establishment has recently begun allowing patrons to “tag” its boat-shaped bar counter with signatures and other messages written in sharpie marker, and relies on its jukebox for music (alongside DJs and live acts). In Jenny's eyes, the jukebox is a useful

means to facilitate patron interaction. She reflects that, one night, when a group of “navy guys” proceeded to purchase a particularly eclectic sequence of songs, her regular patrons responded very positively.

Jenny’s faith in open access to music contrasts sharply with Paul’s outlook on song choice, which he feels should be under the control of bar management. As a “hipster bar” which bases its definition of hipster primarily on musical taste, Waterfront, in Paul’s eyes would boast a less compelling atmosphere were a jukebox installed.

...we don’t have a jukebox for a reason: cause I refuse...because, you get...one ass hole in here that’s like, *yea I want to listen to the entire Disturbed collection, or I want to listen to Hoobastank*, and...everyone’s like, *what the fuck is this?*...you want to keep, like, [laughs] at least decent music that, like, even if it’s a little poppier, like hipsters would still, hipsters or just fucking people, cool people in general that like decent music are like, *alright, that’s cool*.

For Paul, increased patron influence at Waterfront by way of a jukebox would actually decrease feelings of affect and awareness of joint commitments by casting the bar’s very identity in question. Waterfront is known in New London for playing good music, a reputation based only in part on live acts. The bar’s weeknight playlists are also filled with music out of top 40, pop realm. Of course, because most of the regular patrons at Waterfront frequent the bar in part due to its soundtrack, it could be argued that the same music would be played on a jukebox. But this is not necessarily the case. Reflecting on Harley’s – which, judging from Sol’s décor as well as the music that he chooses to begin each Friday night, has an affinity for older rock music – Paul noted, “I’ve heard, just some of the weirdest shit on [their jukebox], I heard, like, I’ve heard some good stuff, and then I’ve heard fucking *Disturbed*.” While I was visiting Harley’s one night, Sol himself expressed his displeasure with the music playing on his jukebox, revealing, “man, I hate Meatloaf...I get fifty cents for every dollar spent on that, that’s what I keep telling myself.” Indeed, with a jukebox, all it takes is one individual to dramatically change the

atmosphere of a bar. For some bar owners, such as Sol, this risk is made worthwhile by the profit that it will yield, while individuals such as Paul simply see patron control of music as a sacrifice with potentially counterproductive initiative.

Even Jenny admits that there are times when she has to limit the number of songs a particular patron has played, reflecting, “do some people kind of tend to take it over a little bit more than others? Yes. And I could probably count them on one hand...and, luckily, they are regulars who do that so I can say, *hey, you know, these people over here might want to listen to something.*” Despite the occasional reassertion of control, however, Jenny has noticed that, regardless of the music playing, “generally, people will stay, and, so, it, it doesn’t ever really get to be a conflict.” In part this is, again, likely due to The Barquentine’s lack of a single core crowd at who identify with a broader community. Opposition to most elements of the bar is likely to be scattered and variable. Contrastingly, one out-of-place song in Waterfront would garner the attention of most patrons. The spectrum from patron influence to passive experience, it seems, often runs parallel to the stretching from undefined public face to distinct and, thus, recognizable public face.

Among the most compelling establishments in regard to patron input is The Crashing Umbrella. While Tomás remained completely open to patron input, he also zealously retained control over the “ethical” uniformity of his clientele. Indeed, during our first interview, the former owner made clear to me that he was less concerned with “genre” than he was with “ethics,” something readily apparent in the quotation with which this section begins. For Tomás, ethics involve a code of conduct, while genre refers to aesthetic tastes in music, clothing, et. Although Tomás’s own cultural background ensures that most acts booked at The Crashing Umbrella will be hardcore or punk, he was adamant in maintaining, “we’re open to doing any

kind of music.” When it comes to “ethics,” however, Tomás is far less open to suggestion. This is not to imply that his code of ethics is itself stringent, only that he upholds it strictly. Indeed, Tomás is quick to describe himself as being “pretty lax with the way people act in here,” and felt no hesitation in stating, “you can throw your beer on the floor if you want, that means you’ve gotta buy another one, that doesn’t make me upset.” Once Tomás perceives an “ethical” line to have been crossed, however, he does not stop to reconsider his initial stance on the matter. Throughout his ownership of The Crashing Umbrella, the bar owner stood by his commitment to a nonviolent and relaxed environment open to all ages, even when it meant coming into direct conflict with patrons or, ultimately, closing his doors.

While discussing his desire for patron diversity during our second and final interview, Tomás was quick to stipulate, “if, for one reason, one of [my patrons] is making the other ones uncomfortable, they get booted.” Indeed, any violence on the mosh pit, hateful language, or – as Tomás made sure to note with a particularly memorable anecdote – nudity, was unacceptable in The Crashing Umbrella. With Tomás, the ethical code that defined his crowd, as well as the broader underground community to which it belongs, could not be renegotiated.

Among the facets of The Crashing Umbrella most prized by Tomás was the club’s identity as an all-ages venue. When asked what differentiates his establishment from bars in town which also have live music, he was quick to respond, “the fact that we’re all ages.” In large part, it appears as if the code of ethics to which Tomás attributes patron solidarity within his club was of particular importance when it came to ensuring that younger patrons would have a positive experience. During my visits to The Crashing Umbrella, I repeatedly saw teenagers interacting comfortably and familiarly with older individuals; never did I witness any age-based fragmentation. That being said, underage patrons of The Crashing Umbrella were, undeniably,

an economic burden on Tomás. Not only could they not purchase drinks, their presence within the establishment was only enabled by an expensive “juice bar” permit in which Tomás was forced to invest. Although a number of factors, including considerable overhead costs and the relatively small population of New London’s hardcore/punk scene, played a part in putting The Crashing Umbrella out of business, Tomás’s commitment to maintaining an all ages venue certainly didn’t help him financially. Nevertheless, he remained steadfast in contending that the hardcore scene was not limited to individuals over the age of twenty-one, and, thus, should not be treated as such. When asked if he had ever considered eliminating the all-ages element of his club, Tomás responded, “Never...I would get rid of the bar before I’d get rid of the all-ages” before continuing with a chuckle, “Which is basically what we’re doing.” With this contention, we see Tomás resisting not patron input, but the input of the market. It would have, almost certainly, been financially beneficial to abandon the all-ages business model and the various costs that came with it. But this would have disrupted the hardcore community of which Tomás had become a central part and, I would argue, the derivative community which he had manufactured in his establishment.

All bar owners are, on occasion forced to make small sacrifices for the sake of profit (think of the jukebox at Harley’s) which counter the interests or tastes of the community with which they align most closely. To Tomás, however, including younger members of the hardcore community within his club was obviously too fundamental an element of this community to abandon. The fact that The Crashing Umbrella struggled immensely and, eventually, closed as a result of this conviction produced profound feelings of affect and a sudden awareness of joint commitment among members of the New-London area hardcore scene in regard this establishment *specifically*. Tomás had, undeniably, made a noble attempt to embody the

hardcore code of ethics in a business landscape unforgiving to establishments which don't demand at least semi-regular purchases from patrons. This fact was a fact not lost on local individuals who ascribe to this code, though their recognition of Tomás's sacrifice ultimately came too late. "Since we've announced we'd be closing, we've had a rapid influx," Tomás reflected on the afternoon before his club's final show. "You know, four months ago," he told me, "I was fourteen thousand dollars behind in my rent. Today...I'm thirty-two hundred, and that's, that's a huge step, that's like, we're basically tripling what were bringing a month since we told people we were leaving. Now they're like, *shit they're leaving, now it's time to go!*" Despite the apparent delayed reaction of Tomás's supporters, their willingness to help him with personal debt after the fate of The Crashing Umbrella had already been sealed represents an intense attachment to place. The compulsion to assist the owner of this establishment goes beyond the code of ethics which he so vehemently upheld; it is personal gesture indicating a deep sense of affect to place.

Attachment to People and Place: The Role of History in Bars

...they didn't care. Fine dining, white table cloths, they were still coming out. It was their home!

- Mel Collingwood, on regulars of Skipper Jack's frequenting Ozean

At just over one year old, The Barquentine is among the youngest bars in New London. The building in which its located, however, has a boasts a long history of bar activity. During the 1990s and early 2000s, an establishment by the name of Skipper Jack's slowly built a reputation as one of the central bars downtown. As Mel recalls, "it was definitely one of the busier bars back all through the nineties and early two thousands...a lot of the bigger weren't here. That *was* a big bar." Following the closure of establishment came a dramatic change.

Skipper Jack's was replaced by high-end restaurant Ozean, at which Mel tended bar. Ozean would last through two years until its owner, looking to move on to something new, offered Mel and Jenny the space and, by extension, the opportunity to recapture the "rowdy bar" atmosphere of Skipper Jack's.

As demonstrated in the quotation with which this section begins, certain regulars of Skipper Jack's held, and still hold, intense feelings of affect toward the *place* in which The Barquentine is now located. So strongly were these individuals attached to the building – which, with its extended front porch and large rear deck, is a unique fixture of Broad St – that they chose to frequent an establishment completely at odds with their preferred bar atmosphere, namely, Ozean, rather than find a new "home."

When it comes to bars, objects of affect and, in consequence, loyalty tend to vary considerably. In some cases, such as that of Sol and Harley's, an individual will have already established a following while working as bartender; when this person becomes owner of a bar, the process of gaining regular clientele has more or less been accomplished already. Paul's career ran a path similar to this. Fans of the music that he booked at Shangri-La and Stallion started to frequent Waterfront shortly after the pub manager began his current position at the latter. In other instances, Nine Innings, for example, an community's boundary will be so pronounced that patron loyalty is more the product of the establishment's symbolic place within an area (i.e. New London's token "old fashioned bar"), rather than its physical location. While many patrons of Nine Innings stop by the bar to speak with Gary, Gary's own identity has, for three decades now, been so influenced by the tavern that he is as much an extension of his establishment as it is an extension of him.

And then there is the case of The Barquentine, in which the building itself, the locality of the bar community, functions as a primary source of attachment. It should be noted that this bar is alone in its acquisition of regular clientele by virtue of being in a certain “place” – Beth recalls that, before her acquisition of Flossie’s, the establishment had “a great following” – but the example of Ozean is unparalleled in extremity. Flossie’s is primarily an extension of Beth’s self by virtue of her own visibility. She is physically inside of this bar so much that, despite changing almost nothing in regard to physical layout or décor, the space has now become definitely *hers*. Thus, while Beth’s acquisition of Flossie’s certainly brought with it profound changes, these changes were not nearly as abrupt or obvious as those which marked the transition from Skipper Jack’s to Ozean. Thus, patrons of Flossie’s were less likely to have been repelled by new ownership than those of Skipper Jack’s, who were faced with the very explicit question of what had happened to their “home,” if this “home” still existed at all.

Some regulars of Skipper Jack’s, Jenny has observed, simply couldn’t handle the shift in atmosphere that came with Ozean. “There were already so many regulars from when [The Barquentine] was the Skipper Jack’s...that left Ozean because it was just not their, their thing” she told me. And now that The Barquentine, a more similar establishment to Skipper Jack’s than Ozean, is open, the feelings of affect interrupted by the latter are on full display. According to Jenny, “we often have people come in and say, *oh, I used to sit here, at this spot, and this is where I used to come all the time, I haven’t been here forever, and I’ll say, where’ve you been?...and, [they’ll say]...I came back one day, and it was a restaurant, and I thought, ok I don’t want to go there, and, they say, but I really like that you brought it back to a bar now.*” Quite strikingly, the individuals which Jenny described were willing to align themselves with her

establishment before even completing a first visit. Merely the fact that a “bar” had been opened at their favorite spot in town was enough to win them over.

Although feelings of affect toward a particular bar can be based in the history behind this establishment (The Barquentine), the history *of* this establishment (Flossie’s, The Crashing Umbrella, and Nine Innings), or even the history of this establishment’s owner or staff (Harley’s and Waterfront), it is the personal histories developed within an establishment that allow consociate relationships to form and, from these relationships, joint commitments to be realized.

On the wall of Nine Innings is a black-and-white print of an elderly man sitting alone at the tavern’s bar counter, beer in hand. A soft grin is fixed across his face. His shoulders are relaxed. The photo does not seem posed, as if it were taken on a whim during another quiet weekday afternoon. The man’s name, Gary told me, is Cal Seabrook, and he was once among the most regular patrons at Nine Innings. “He came here every day for the first ten or twelve years I worked here,” Gary explained, “and then he got sick, went to a nursing home. I used to go visit him a couple times a week, and then he just passed away one day.” Clearly, the example of Cal demonstrates the familial relationships that can occur through bar owner (or, in this case, bartender) visibility, but the fact this his photo now graces the wall of Nine Innings goes beyond any element of friendship. Cal Seabrook now belongs to the history of Nine Innings. His story, to use the language of Amit (2012, 26), is one of those which, “coupled” with the patron “experience,” renders the “limited and superficial acquaintanceship [shared by patrons] into a sense of consociation.” The fact that people such as Cal have passed through Nine Innings, that these individuals have counted the tavern among the most important places in their life until

death, encourages patrons to immediately associate with one another. Unfamiliarity is overcome through a sense of participation in shared history.

Although Nine Innings, being the oldest drinking establishment in New London, boasts and, I argue, *embodies* more stories than any of its neighbors, other bars are not devoid of history. The business closest to Nine Innings in this regard is probably Garryowen's, which has been open long enough for Conall to see his regular patrons contend with substantial changes in their lives. Among the most compelling stories are those of individuals who have formed lasting romantic relationships in the pub (something which Gary has also noticed occurring in Nine Innings). Describing his patron base, Conall reflected, "they'll come back here and they'll say, *we met here and we got married and we have kids.*" With such stories, as well as those of the weddings, funerals, and christenings described in Section 3, the apparently temporary act of visiting a bar gains the potential to, in fact, see lifelong consequences.

It is often possible to see history being made as bar owners based in younger businesses initiate tradition. Ron, for example, explained that the formation of relationships within his bar is often highly visible, recalling, "I had a friend whose in here—he's a crazy die hard forty-niners fan. Then we have another friend whose like a diehard Seattle fan...but it's all friendly and they actually became friends behind it." Although Vertigo is a very young establishment, Ron and Silvia apparently view their potential to develop a history within the bar by virtue of events, such as football games, which encourage intense and intensive interaction. The more personal "stories" that emerge through retrospect – the more relationships that form, both amongst clientele as well as between patrons and staff/ownership – the more conducive the patron experience at Vertigo is to feelings of consociation. Patrons at a "storied" bar are more likely to feel as if they are part of a shared history. In the case of Nine Innings, this feeling might occur

during a first visit. With repeated visits to such a bar, patrons will, both subconsciously and consciously, begin to locate themselves as part of joint commitments concerned *specifically* with the continued existence of the establishment in question.

Community Development and the Allure of Non-Regulars

I think they have this vision that its gonna be like a New Haven or Providence, and it's nowhere near that.

- Ron Daniels

Although this study is focused only on eight bars, there are, as mentioned in Chapter Three, over 20 bars in downtown New London, as well as a number of restaurants with liquor licenses and bar areas. And with this extremely high density, inevitably, comes competition. Although the bar owners interviewed in this study about how supportive other owners were of their respective establishments, more important is the nature of competition itself. Speaking candidly, Conall Treacy once told me, I don't know if the word is competitive. There isn't that much to compete for." Indeed, if at least eight of the bars downtown rely predominantly on regular patron "crowds," where is the source of unrealized potential? Who, outside of a bar's main crowd, is being targeted?

It is Conall's comment on competition which enticed Samantha to mention the concept of a "core clientele" and reflect, "each place..is different...whatever's left over, you know, they would be the ones you would be competing [for]." Implied here, along with the concepts of public faces and targeted crowds, is the notion that, by targeting specific crowds, bars actively avoid competition. In doing so, however, they may also impede community development. If certain bars, or certain groups of bars, are designed with a particular community of potential clientele in mind, this group will be further separated from others by frequenting this

establishment. The comment made by Mel – that competition is healthy – seems to hold as ideal a bar scene in which patrons bar hop frequently and, more importantly, open-mindedly enough to sustain a high density of drinking establishments. While bar hopping is common in present-day New London, much of this activity is directed by “routes” such as that described by Tomás. Would it be possible or, for that matter, constructive for such routes to be dissolved? In terms of regulars, I would argue, the answer to this question is no. As long as communities exist in New London, and identify themselves largely through distinction from other communities by virtue of public faces (Cohen, 1985), these groups will seek semi-exclusive sites of interaction.

Mel, perhaps because The Barquentine has just finished its first year and is, therefore, less exclusive than other bars, expresses a particularly strong desire for traffic from out-of-towners and even tourists, who, due to time constraints, might be looking to experience several dramatically different atmospheres in a single night. In his opinion, “the more bars that we have in downtown New London, the more people will come, so if there was, you know, five or six more big bars or restaurants in New London, and we’d probably be more of a destination like New Haven or Mystic, or Hartford or Providence.” In larger cities, especially those as crowded and expansive as New York or Los Angeles, for example, nightlife is governed as much by novelty as it is my comfort. Travelers often desire experiences outside of the quotidian and, certainly more so than locals, are willing to temporarily disassociate themselves from the broad community (hipster, alternative, sports) with which they generally identify. Of course, as was evident in Paul’s comments regarding “ownership,” throngs of new patrons may also be accused of polluting or interrupting the community solidarity felt by regular and semi-regular bar clientele. Thus, New London’s future, at least insofar as bars are concerned, hangs in the balance. Because locals currently make up the majority of bar patronage, feelings of affect,

consociation, and joint commitments develop readily, but business is never quite booming. Were the city to become a greater tourist attraction, profits would increase, but at the potential cost at community development. A one-time visitor of Nine Innings is unlikely to care deeply about Cal Seabrook.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

A “Strong” Community

This study addresses the capacity of eight New London bars to “manufacture” community. By exploring this potential, it is my intention to clarify how the bar owner, as an individual with disproportionate influence over the locus of community, figures into the manufacturing process. This conclusion will proceed in response to two queries: 1) *can* bars manufacture community?; and, 2) how does the tension experienced by bar owners, as central figures of bar-based communities who must also turn a profit, affect the continuous reproduction of such communities?

The notion of bar-based community is made difficult by the fact that bar patrons frequent bars with varying degrees of regularity. A such community membership is scalar, something which Amit (2012) recognizes with the concept of uneven and unequal “dispersal.” That is, individuals discreetly and variably gauge their responsibility to a community’s future, as well as the extent to which this symbolic identity grants them a sense of “belonging.”

To further explore the idea of community membership, I turn to a substantial contrast: the oldest drinking establishment in New London, Nine Innings, versus The Barquentine, which has only been open for about a year. Ask anyone familiar with these two bars which establishment has a “stronger” community, and the answer will, almost certainly, be Nine Innings. But how is this exemplified? Through what processes does a community achieve “strength?”²⁴

²⁴ “Strength” meaning stability. I use the former because the phrase “strong community” is prevalent in today’s discourse. “Stability,” as it is referenced here, does not imply the lack of dynamism attributed to communities by those 20th century anthropologists described by Cooke (1990, 5). Instead, it refers to the ability of a community to continually reinforce its boundary.

Accepting the private face of a community as the product of individually interpreted symbols (Cohen 1985), and keeping Amit's notion of "dispersal" in mind, I argue that the *intensity* of community identification is also variable. Returning to Cohen's example of Catholic symbolism, it seems reasonable to postulate that, just as certain members of the Catholic Church will interpret the word "God" differently, so too may these individuals feel varying levels of "closeness" to "God." Such dispersals are, of course, impossible to quantify (we cannot say, for example that Person A feels X times more committed to her community than Person B), as is any *cumulative* "notion of belonging" felt by individuals toward a certain community. Nevertheless, as explored in Chapter 4, there are many reasons to consider Nine Innings a *stronger* community than The Barquentine, most of which relate to the considerable comfort demonstrated by patrons of the former.

In contrast with The Barquentine, which must still concern itself with carving a "niche," Nine Innings has, for decades now, been owned by individuals who disproportionately value conversation, regularity, and the familiarity that this combination brings over other potential elements of a community. As such, the tavern can count on more developed joint commitments (understood in terms of recognized levels of responsibility and agency) and feelings of belonging (Amit 2012). Perceived threats to the "boundary" (Cohen 1985) of this establishment, threats such as potential closure, influxes of new patronage, or the potentially radical changes to atmosphere enacted by a new owner (such as the installation of big-screen TVs), would likely be met with substantial resistance – what Cohen (1985, 53) refers to as "boundary-marking" – from Gary's current regulars. The same might not be true for The Barquentine.

I do not advocate sorting through individuated feelings of belonging and individually understood joint-commitments; this is a task which would lead us to nothing short of an analytical dead end. Of importance here is *process*, not product. It is not the intention of this study to compare joint-commitments or feelings of belonging across bars, but, rather, to explore the manner in which such elements of community may *develop* within these establishments. This development is facilitated by the negotiation of identity, the “socialization mechanisms” described by Cox (1997) to “transmit” the “life world.” By reviewing such mechanisms, I will return to notion of strength as it relates to the process of *becoming* a community member.

At this point it becomes important to recall that individualized interpretations which develop the private face of a community as “idiosyncratic” and “symbolically complex” (Cohen 1985, 74) are often vocalized or otherwise conveyed through actions.²⁵ The “drinking behavior” explored in Chapter 2 which, as discussed in regard to patrons of Jelly’s and the Naskapi, facilitates individual and community identity formation; it “transmits” the life world of these communities and, in so doing, reifies community boundaries by confining interpretations of which the “private face” is composed (Cohen 1985) to a single “systems of meaning” (Cox 1997). When individual identity is negotiated amongst members of a community, interpretations of symbols important to that community (i.e., “God”) are exchanged and, in consequence, are located relative to one another.

New members of a community, as individuals who, in general, are not fully *aware of* or *comfortable with* the manner in which more experienced community members interpret important symbols, may struggle to achieve a sense of normalcy. A telling example of this fact came one Friday evening at Harley’s. It was only 7:00 PM and the first wave of patrons had yet to arrive. Only myself and Gerry, a regular who often stops by the bar at this time, were present

²⁵ Consider the example of bar patron input in Chapter 4.

to converse with Sol over the usual can of PBR. We were discussing our respective plans for Saint Patrick's' Day which, at that point, was just a week ahead, when a young couple walked downstairs and sat at the center of the counter. Gerry and I were, somewhat tactlessly, seated at about seven barstools apart (Harley's only has ten stools) and, as such, the newcomers found themselves positioned directly between us. Having been subjected to our ruminations over green beer and Irish police officers for about thirty seconds, the man shyly asked, "sorry, are we in the way, should we move?" Sol, echoed by myself and Gerry, told them that, of course, they could remain seated where they were.

But there was a problem. Sol likes conversation, conversation between friends as well as between strangers. And when regulars enter the bar, they recognize themselves as part of a community which values those who are forthcoming. The language that Sol uses to describe his establishment – "living room," "neighborhood," even "bar" itself – has, for myself and, as I well as I could gather from observation, the majority of his regular patronage, come to symbolize a sense of openness and geniality. Despite several attempts on Sol's part to incorporate the young couple into the existing conversation, however, these individuals elected to talk quietly to one another.

Judging from the clear discrepancy in behavior between Sol, Gerry, and myself, on the one hand, and the young couple on the other, to say that the private face of community is idiosyncratic does not mean that this symbolic construct is *inclined* toward idiosyncrasy. In fact, community membership, through interactions such as those in Jelly's or among the Naskapi, entails a motion in the *opposite* direction; while universal interpretations may never be achieved, they are, consciously or unconsciously, sought. Sol wants patrons to interpret his bar as *he*

interprets his bar. Why is this? Because, to Sol, owning a bar is more than a platform for profit, it is means to manufacture community.

The boundary of a community, it seems, demands interpretive unity despite the impossibility of achieving this. In the case of the young couple, it becomes apparent that perceptions of community identity – what lies behind the boundary – cannot be overly disjunctive, lest behaviors based on these perceptions lead to miscommunication, social discomfort, or (were Gerry and I more belligerent individuals) conflict. To use another example, everyone in a Catholic church must interpret “God” or, for that matter, “prayer,” “priest,” “faith” etc. with sufficient congruence to ensure that services may proceed without confusion or interruption. Similarly to new parishioners of a Catholic Church, who must tailor their interpretations in accordance with a multi-layered “system of meaning” (Cox 1997) (one layer, in this case, being Catholic doctrine, and another being the specific church’s interpretation of this doctrine), new patrons of a bar must understand the manner in which members of this community interpret the symbols that demarcate its boundary.

In the case of the above anecdote, it is unclear how, exactly, the young couple interpreted the community identity of Harley’s. The behavior of these individuals is not especially surprising, as most people demonstrate a certain degree of reticence while exposed to new environments. Indeed, it would be presumptuous to claim that either patron had interpreted the identity of this establishment’s community differently from regulars, staff, or ownership *solely* because they refrained from engaging strangers in conversation. Furthermore, the community identity of Harley’s, as a “neighborhood bar,” does not appear to have been totally lost on these newcomers. About two minutes following their arrival, I heard the man say to the woman, “Yea,

so this place is really cool...its super chill down here.” While this statement does not necessarily take Sol’s emphasis on conversation into account, it does imply an understanding of Harley’s as what many have called an “open” and “laid-back” environment. The young couple did not enter the establishment expecting a hip-hop club or college bar; they didn’t arrive with a large group of friends expecting to dance. Whatever the man’s previous experience in Harley’s, he appears, at least partially, to have understood the community of this bar to value geniality and acceptance.

With this in mind, it is important here to recognize the fact that public face has important connotations for community membership. Members of a community may draw from the generalizations that a public face symbolically embodies (Cohen 1985, 109). The behavior of Sol and his patrons is undoubtedly based, in part, on pervasive stereotypes concerning the “typical” atmosphere of a “neighborhood bar.” The more recognizable such labels are, the less likely new patrons are to interpret them differently than bar owners.²⁶

Public faces are, for drinking establishment, a form of advertizing. In New London, bars rarely broadcast commercials on television or radio. Special events frequently appear as small advertisements on various local news publications, but the primary form of marketing for drinking establishments appears to be “word of mouth.” Each of the bar owners to whom I posed questions concerned with publicity – Tomás, Ron, Gary, and Mitch – referred to this strategy as the most effective way to develop awareness and interest among potential clientele bases. Through word of mouth, certain concrete attractions (craft beer, music, special nights, etc.) may be highlighted, but public face is also likely to arise. Ask someone on the street what type of place Waterfront Café is, and they will use the term “hipster.” Ask about Garryowen’s, and the first words out of your informant’s mouth will be “Irish Pub.” Nine Innings is, like

²⁶ Although most people, especially those with bar experience, will interpret the phrase “neighborhood bar” similarly to Sol, I would, nonetheless, hold that this expression is still less accessible than terms such as “hipster,” which experience frequent use in major media outlets.

Harley's, often called a "neighborhood bar," and The Crashing Umbrella, before its closure, was a "punk rock club." By announcing their public faces through "word of mouth," bar owners attract patrons familiar with the stereotypes informing these "masks." Somewhat ironically, new customers inclined to interpret a certain bar-based community in terms of generalizing imagery (punk rock club = Mohawks and tattoos) may achieve "regular" status more readily than the individual who enters a bar with a completely open mindset. Once again, this is due to the fact that bar communities require a certain level of congruence between interpretations of central symbols – a goal often realized through partial reliance on stereotypes .

Worth noting is the fact that public face, by virtue of its basis in generalizations, may also *limit* patronage. Until this point, the potential for a public face, such as the "hipsteriness" of Waterfront, to negatively affect new community member inflow has been framed in such a way that grants communities agency in rejecting "outsiders." Also possible, of course, is the scenario in which "outsiders" reject a community. There is a reason that not many older individuals frequent Waterfront, just as there is a reason that not many hipsters frequent Garryowen's. Patrons avoid establishments in which they feel they don't belong

Ironically, awareness of community boundaries may make the bar owner who attempts to attract new patrons – a strategy essential to the continued existence of a bar-based community – appear as the *antithesis* of a community leader. Unlike communities based in residential areas, those formed in bars cannot count on real estate agents or familial inheritance as means of repopulation. Bar owners must consistently attract untapped clientele bases or else close their establishments, a fate which, along with subject these individuals to unemployment and, in all likelihood, substantial debt, would profoundly affect the social lives and identities of their regular patrons. Judging from the data collected in this study, certain bar owners, perhaps most

obviously Gary, harbor intense feelings of loyalty to their regular patrons as a relatively unified and uniform community. Others, like Jenny, appreciate “diversity” not as a disjunctive phenomenon, but an element of community which promotes novelty in the patron experience. Interestingly, where Gary is likely to see an influx of new patrons as potentially disruptive, Jenny also places her desire to attract more individuals from certain groups at odds with the “diverse” community which her bar currently embodies.²⁷ Whether looking to preserve sameness or difference, however, all bar owners *must* seek new patrons and patron groups to remain in business. Thus, the role of a bar owner involves an unavoidable tension.

If current patrons are satisfied with the promise of consistency (in terms of patronage as well as other elements of bar atmosphere), these individuals will experience stronger feelings of belonging and commitment; if *more* patrons are attracted, conversely, there emerges a possibility that such feelings will become increasingly widespread. In order to ease the tension felt between the need to attract new patrons and community reproduction, bar owners encourage “patron cycles” through regular bar tender shifts and event scheduling. They also remain present within their establishments as a means of directly influencing patron interpretation of community identity. Similarity across interpretations is most probable when bar owners can speak with patrons directly about their respective establishments, while simultaneously ensuring that elements of locality (such as music and television programming) remain consistent.

While feelings of belonging and commitment may be “unevenly dispersed,” (Amit 2012) the fact remains that, the *stronger* these feelings are, on average, the *stronger* a community will be. A strong community is one relatively unlikely to dissolve as a result of abandonment, rejection, or apathy. Bars with strong communities can count on regular patrons who frequent

²⁷ See Chapter 4 (pg 129)

their bars for years, who care about the future of the bar community, who consider their fellow community members as “family” and the bar a “home.”

The Potential of Communitas

It seems fitting to conclude this study with brief consideration of a term which has remained conspicuously absent from my analysis: *communitas*. Because this term is so challenging to define, and the expression of solidarity that it signifies so difficult to recognize with certainty, I have elected not to draw any conclusions, however tentative, about its potential role in the “manufacturing” of bar-based communities. Although I did experience moments of intense communality – stretches of time during which bar patrons, staff, and owners seemed to rise beyond the idea of their community as existing in a niche – I would not venture to say that I ever witnessed *communitas* as Turner (1969, 1974) defines the word.

Take the night of Monday, April 7th. Following several failed attempts to track down various owners with whom I wished to be photographed²⁸, I stopped by Nine Innings, more to be indoors than anything else. It was cold outside, and I was both exhausted and totally frustrated. The idea of warmth and quiet atmosphere appealed to me. Upon entering the tavern, however, I was met with silence beyond that which usually pervades the tavern. All eyes pointed at the television. Glancing to the screen, I recalled that UConn was playing Kentucky in the NCAA men’s basketball championship. There were about ten people in the tavern, and, as I soon gathered from comments being flung across the room, few, if any, could call themselves die-hard basketball fans. Nevertheless, everyone was fully invested in the game. When, about fifteen minutes following my arrival, UConn emerged from the contest victorious, the bar filled with

²⁸ The photographs (which I did, eventually, take) were used during a TEDx talk concerning locally-based student-faculty research. I presented the talk alongside Professor Anthony P. Graesch.

cheers. People smiled and chuckled, commenting to each other about this play or that call. Tod, on duty bartending that night, stood behind the counter with a smile on his face. He did not scan the glasses before him and took no note of which patrons were finishing drinks and might be compelled to buy another. Gary sat at a table, also smiling, seemingly unconcerned with the volume of the television or profanity being used by several patrons. And, most notably, conversation proceeded without inhibition. Despite being at least a decade younger than any other patron and a complete stranger to most, I found myself discussing the game – of which I had only seen about the last five minutes – without hesitation. It would have seemed rude to remain silent.

This instance, along with a number of others – a record release party at Harley’s, “Spring Fling” at Waterfront Café, the third birthday of Vertigo (which just so happened to fall on the establishment’s third birthday) – presents a certain inertia on the part of bar communities. Negotiation of identity suddenly pauses as community members find reason to feel an intense camaraderie. In such moments, community boundary, as manifested through the interpretation of symbols, seems less present in the minds of patrons than usual. The outside world, the various stresses of quotidian life from which so many bar patrons seek a temporary escape, is forgotten, overshadowed by solidarity.

That being said, Turner (1969, 95) describes the moments of liminality from which *communitas* is born as being “betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial.” *Communitas* is more than an intense expression of solidarity; it is a temporary dissolution of structure. In order for this phenomenon to overtake a bar, the roles of owner, bartender, and patron would need to be *completely* dissolved. Although Nine Innings was seemingly unified by UConn’s victory, Gary did not lose his status as owner of

this establishment. He retained the *authority* to turn off the television at any moment, to ask certain patrons to leave, or even to close the tavern prematurely. That the owner did none of these things is a reflection on his commitment to the Nine Innings community, but does indicate an absence of structure sufficient for *communitas* to arise.

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