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ABSTRACT

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The Grad Student: Organizational Socialization of a Participant-Observer's Experience in Ethnography

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As part of the requirements for a graduate level course in intercultural communication, students at Northern Illinois University were required to conduct an ethnographic study by first making contact with a group different from their own, then gaining access to that group for a period of time, and gathering data about their experiences through field notes and/or interviews. The goal of the assignment was to understand as much as possible about the group in the time frame of the semester and to describe these experiences.

This manuscript first presents my findings in the form of a case study conducted with NIU Hillel, the university's organization for Jewish students. Data compiled into a narrative case are presented, then applied to the phases found in the organizational socialization process (e.g., anticipation, encounter, and metamorphosis), and recommendations are offered in terms of the course assignment and its usefulness for future pedagogical research projects. Details of the current project and data gathering are integrated within the recommendations. The newcomer, who is of the Methodist religion, presents the concept of acceptance by the group through socialization, knowing that the only way to ever become a full-fledged member of the group would be to convert to Judaism.

Hillel Case

My interest in Hillel, the student organization for Jewish students on NIU's campus, is twofold. First, I have very little knowledge of the Jewish religion because my own religion is Methodist. I have not had much chance for exposure to this religion, even throughout my education, partially because the majority of people where I grew up are Catholic and Protestant. I have been to religious services in Catholic and Lutheran churches, as well as services at my own church, but I have never been to a Jewish service.

The second reason why I chose to study the Hillel group lies in the differences that I initially believed were present between the Methodist and Jewish religions. While both religions have a number of practices and rituals that they abide by, these customs are different in each faith including the holidays celebrated and their meanings, the places of worship, and the religious books followed.

Gaining entry to the group was accomplished essentially through a single phone call to the organization's president. Upon contacting this organization, I was almost immediately well-received by the Hillel president, who seemed eager to have both extra help and someone who was interested in learning more about the group. The president and I both agreed that my role would be to help the group work towards a goal. During our initial conversation, I was also asked what my own religion was and when I said that it was Methodist, the president stated that this was "no problem."

The first meeting with the Hillel organization was a bit intimidating, since I had no idea how the group members would receive me. Through one particular half-hour meeting, the concept of hate garnered a whole new meaning for me. The evening of October 9, 1997, proved to be an eye-opening experience. This was the day that I first actually met the members of NIU Hillel. For this initial meeting, I had been asked by the president to come up with some ideas for increasing membership and raising money for the group. Some of my particular ideas involved putting out flyers or ads in various places around campus. While this seemed to be a common thing to do, based on all of the other flyers I had seen around campus, in this situation it was a potentially serious mistake.

In response to my suggestions, the Hillel President stated that it was difficult to advertise and use an address or phone number because the group was susceptible to bomb threats or prank phone calls. At the time, I felt a little silly for having overlooked this possibility when designing my ideas. However, the lesson from that experience proved to be very powerful.

When I first began working with Hillel, the group was getting ready to celebrate what are called the High Holidays. The High Holidays consist of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Because I was so new in the group, I did not take part in the campus services that were offered in honor of this holiday, but I at least gained an awareness of them. A rather interesting occurrence shed some more light on the meaning of these two holidays. This year, during the High Holidays, NIU decided to hold its homecoming festivities.

I interpreted this scheduling conflict as essentially a major mistake on the part of the athletic director, but it was received as an insult by some members of the Jewish community. While services for the High Holidays were held on campus, it seemed bizarre that there would also be an athletic celebration. One form of response to this incident was a letter that was written to the athletic director by the NIU Hillel. This letter gave the dates of the major Jewish holidays for the next five years, so there would be no more confusion over when to plan events.

Soon after the High Holidays, I began working with the group on some of the goals they were trying to meet during the semester. Generally, I would be responsible for helping the group to increase its membership and raise money. The first major project on which I worked was a fund-raiser. The group had received a donation of two tickets to a Chicago Bears game and had planned to raffle them off. So, it was my job to find out what kind of regulations applied to holding a campus raffle. With the help of the legal office on campus, I found out that it would be less complicated to do the raffle as a city project and obtain a license. The licenses were rather inexpensive and easy to acquire, which essentially made my first mission a success for the group. The raffle turned out to be a semester-long project for us. After obtaining the proper license, we conducted the raffle. The group seemed to consider the raffle to be a success and the winner received the two tickets for a Bears' game in Chicago.

In the process of assisting the group with another one of their projects, I ended up gaining knowledge about the Jewish diet. While just about the only diet-related activities that I had observed in the Methodist religion at my church include potluck dinners and pasty sales (a Finnish food), the Jewish religion has certain guidelines and foods that are specific to this faith.

As a fund-raiser, Hillel decided to sell what were called "lox boxes." Upon learning of this project, I did not ask exactly what they were, which I should have, but instead I volunteered to help distribute them. I happened to find out that lox were a type of smoked salmon. On the day that I volunteered to help, I ended up learning a great deal more about the Jewish diet. The time that I spent at the Hillel building that day was dedicated to waiting for people who were picking up the lox boxes that had been ordered earlier in the semester. I learned that a lox box did not have to be in an actual box (I had envisioned a bakery-style box with a clear cellophane top), but could be in a grocery bag. Besides the lox, other items included in this package were bagels, cream cheese, and frozen orange juice. I discussed the significance of these items with the Hillel member in charge of this fund-raiser, and was told that bagels had originated as a Jewish food - something I did not know beforehand.

In addition to the lox, on the day of the fund-raiser I was able to sample another traditional Jewish food - matzah. In the Hillel kitchen, there were boxes of matzah (a large, unsalted cracker). Having sampled some, I also learned about matzah balls, which are part of a dish made using this food.

In addition to helping with the raffle and sale of lox boxes, I also helped the group with ideas for increasing membership. Because of my own graduate status on campus, I asked the group if it was acceptable to target graduate students as potential members of the group. It seemed to me that graduate students were frequently left out of the loop when it came to student organizations. In my own department, I knew that if a graduate student was not also some type of teaching/research assistant, then he/she was essentially,

but not deliberately, excluded. Therefore, I wondered if there were potentially isolated graduate students elsewhere around campus who needed a group to join.

The members of Hillel thought my idea was all right and we somehow came to the conclusion that it may be beneficial to put out a flyer promoting the group, at least to the graduate students who had mailboxes on campus. That way, all we would have to pay would be photocopying costs, and hopefully, the graduate students who received the flyers would pass along the word to other graduate students in their departments.

However, what seemed to be a reasonable plan ended up being somewhat amusing. I was put in charge of obtaining the number of flyers we would need to send out. Upon calling the Graduate School, I found that the staff was most willing to help, but there were about 1,600 graduate assistants with mailboxes on campus that would require a flyer. The scope of the project became a little too big for Hillel's budget at the time. Regardless, the Graduate School still printed up labels addressed to every department on campus that employs graduate assistants. The group did not seem to be upset by the lack of feasibility (i.e., the high cost of photocopies) with the plan. I obtained the labels from the Graduate School and gave them to the group anyway. There may be another cause for them at a different time.

The final goal with which I helped the group was a fund-raiser called the CROP walk. I was familiar with this activity because my mother had taken part in it for our church at home. It is basically a walk-a-thon, as we called it, in which participants obtain pledges to give a certain amount of money for every mile that they walk. I remember having done a bike-a-thon for cystic fibrosis when I was little. The proceeds for this particular Hillel/NIU activity were to go toward fighting world hunger.

The Hillel president asked if I would mind taking part in this activity, even if I did not have much time to contribute. My participation in the event consisted of collecting donations. The CROP walk was a community-wide event and from what I gathered, several groups and organizations took part. The member of Hillel who was coordinating

the group's participation seemed pleased that I contributed. He felt that the donation given by Hillel was good for the group as a whole and for the community.

Of course, when one is working with a religious group, one inevitably becomes involved in religious services. This was the aspect of the group that intrigued me the most. I was very interested in observing how Jewish services were conducted. When I was invited to attend one, I was very excited to have been included. This was the one experience I had hoped to gain from the group, but I did not want to express this at any previous time, and essentially invite myself along. It meant more to me to have been invited by the group to take part.

In the Jewish faith, the Shabbat is observed from sundown on Friday night to sundown on Saturday night each week. Hillel's Shabbat services were held at 7:30 on Friday evenings and were conducted primarily by the religious programmer in the group. While the services would be rather informal and only the other group members would be in attendance, I was still apprehensive the first time that I attended mainly because I did not know what to expect.

The first service I attended was at the end of October. It ended up being a small event, with only four of us present. That was rather comforting in a way, though, because of the fact that I was so new to the event. The first thing that I noticed about the service was that it was conducted partially in Hebrew. While I had no understanding of what the words meant, this language was another thing that I found fascinating about the Jewish religion. I had never been to a religious service that was not conducted in English. What I really wondered was how all of the members knew all the Hebrew words, and how difficult it had been to learn them. Even the alphabet was different, so it would be just as difficult as learning something like the Japanese or Chinese languages. It seems to me that a religion which requires knowledge of another language would also require a great deal of dedication.

The service proved to be rather short and consisted of a few different rituals. Everything that was needed for the service was set out on a small table in the front of the worship area. First, two candles were lit on the table, and recitations in Hebrew followed. I obviously could not participate in the recitations, and felt bad about it, but just listening was rather enjoyable. Next, there was some bread that was broken and passed around so that we could all have a small piece. This reminded me of the communion services that we have in the Methodist church.

However, while I was reminded of what happens in the Methodist church, I was not thinking about what was going on presently, which led to an occurrence that was rather funny. The breaking of the bread was followed by the drinking of wine, which is also done in the Methodist church. However, the difference between the Methodist service and the Jewish service is that the Jewish service uses real wine and the Methodist service uses grape juice. I found this out in a hurry when I proceeded to down almost the entire glass in one drink, as I had observed being done by the religious programmer. All I was really trying to do was the appropriate thing, so I did a lot of watching of other people during the service. When the wine hit my stomach I suddenly realized that it was real, and felt very silly for not having known that! The two other participants, on the contrary, had not downed their glasses in one gulp, so I guess it really did not matter if one drank the wine slowly.

The service, however, continued on and some reading of verses was done. This part was in English, and the verses were printed out on sheets of paper, so we ended up taking turns reading sections. I felt very pleased to have been included in this portion of the service, even though I was essentially an outsider. At the conclusion of the verses, we cut the desert cake (that was similar to pound cake) that was on the table and each had a piece. This was the end of the actual service, but we all talked for awhile afterward.

I was provided with some especially interesting information at the conclusion of the service. It was explained to me that not all Jewish people are accustomed to doing the Shabbat services in the synagogue, and that the services were commonly done in the home. Depending on the observation of the religion, some families would not even turn on the stove or tear toilet paper on the Sabbath, because it was viewed as being too much work. The Sabbath is strictly a day of rest.

The mistake that I made when confusing wine with juice, which I did not mention at the time, caused me to consider why it was that I simply substituted my previous experiences in a situation that was dissimilar. It was strange that I did this subconsciously and mindlessly. I simply associated the Jewish service with the services in my own religion.

Afterward, while thinking about the experience of Shabbat services in general, I felt especially fortunate to be studying this religion while actually participating in the activities. Through this single service, I gained more understanding and appreciation for the Jewish faith. While I had been interacting with the group for a few weeks prior to the first service, I felt that the service was really part of what the religion was all about. The other group members were extremely understanding of my ignorance and made me feel so welcome that I was able to relax and really observe what was going on.

I attended another Shabbat service with the group members in November, and the procedure was similar to what had been done before. What I had not realized at the time was that the Shabbat services I attended with the group were, for me, really a form of "practice" for the service that I would later attend with the entire Jewish congregation. In DeKalb, the NIU Hillel uses the Hillel building for its activities, but the building is also used by the synagogue's congregation from the community. So, once a month, the rabbi holds Shabbat services for the congregation, and in mid-November, I attended.

The first thing that I noticed was that the rabbi for the Congregation Beth Shalom is a woman. I attended the service with the other members of Hillel, and, once again, I

was grateful for their help. I felt that I would be extremely out of place at this gathering, but that was not the case. One of the group members helped me to keep my place in the text throughout the service, which was difficult due to the Hebrew language. Even though I was not quite sure what was going on all the time, I found this service to be intriguing.

The service progressed in somewhat of a different manner than the Hillel services had. There were responsive readings and singing, and the lighting of the candles, but the majority of this service was geared toward the children. Many of the congregation members that were present had children with them. The rabbi herself had even brought her daughter to the service. The rabbi proceeded to tell the children all a story about a person who had done good things and been rewarded for them. The children seemed very responsive to the rabbi. They eagerly answered her questions, and also seemed to listen to the lesson she told. It was clear to me that the children had respect for the rabbi. Although they had a bit of difficulty sitting still at times, they seemed receptive to the message at hand. At this time, I wondered what kind of a relationship the children had with the rabbi outside of the services. They did not seem to be intimidated by her, but instead had some kind of a relationship that must have been built over time.

While the service was primarily geared toward the children, the aspect that had the most impact on me was the singing. Since the songs were sung in Hebrew, I could not really sing along. At first, I thought this would make me feel uncomfortable, since everyone else would have known the words to the songs. However, the fact that I was just able to listen spoke to me in a way that words could not have. The songs sung in Hebrew turned out to be beautiful and maybe it was because I had never heard this type of singing before. The Hillel members had sung at our services, but there had only been a few of them, while this was an entire congregation singing together.

Following the services, the members of Hillel and I went out for coffee together. By that time in the semester, I can say that I felt comfortable and accepted with them.

Discussion during a social time such as this was just normal conversation between students. Now and then, something about the Jewish religion would come up, and I would have the chance to learn. The Hillel members were always careful to explain things that I might not have understood about the religion. The bottom line is that regardless of our outlooks or beliefs, we were all united in a sense, due to the fact that we were all college students. We were all dealing with classes, tests, papers, friends, and some interesting living conditions. These were things we had in common, and it did not take much for these commonalties to become evident.

When I first began working with Hillel, I noticed something. The name that I had been given by the group was "The Grad Student." It was the name that was used to title me in an issue of the newsletter, and the name that was used when introducing me to other members. While it did not bother me at all, I found it to be somewhat amusing, and useful, as well. For example, if I ever had to call one of the members that may or may not have known who I was, I just told them I was the grad student working with Hillel. It usually worked.

However, what I have noticed at this point is that my name within the group is now Wendy. To me, this signifies acceptance, because an effort has been made to both learn and use my actual name. At this point in time I feel more like a part of the group. I feel that the shift in what is used as my name signifies that I accomplished something and I appreciate the fact that the group accepted me in that manner.

I feel very privileged that the group I worked with was as open with me as they were. For some reason, when interacting with groups other than "my own," I tend to be rather apprehensive about discussing differences, so as not to offend the other group. That was one of the obstacles I had to deal with when joining Hillel. I obviously would be called upon to discuss certain things, and I would have to be open in order to do that. In some cases, it is not advantageous to focus on the differences between groups of

people. However, in this case, through discussing the differences, I believe I also found some similarities.

The most important and simplistic conclusion to be drawn is that the members of Hillel and I really are not that different. Although we may have different beliefs and traditions, I did not feel a large gap between the way my life works and the way the Hillel members' lives work. I felt that our conversations and interactions were primarily those that would be held by typical college students. I also felt that the group was genuine in nature, and as I stated previously, we were very open in acknowledging the differences between us.

Early December brought my last meeting with the group for lunch and the end of my study as a participant-observer. What are primarily known as the Christian "holidays" incorporates another dimension for me each year. The members of Hillel would also be celebrating a holiday of their own, and, even though I wouldn't directly experience it, I would be thinking of it.

Socialization

The processes by which individuals adapt to organizational life are complex (Miller 134). Socialization is the way in which newcomers become organizational members (Bullis 10). Organizational socialization has been explained through models. Socialization takes place gradually and over time through phases that are often known as the anticipatory socialization phase, the encounter phase, and the metamorphosis phase (Miller 134). These stages provide an accurate description of the way a newcomer was accepted into the organization in the Hillel case.

Anticipatory Socialization

Anticipatory socialization refers to socialization processes that occur before an individual actually enters an organization (Miller 134). While socialization takes place within a particular occupation and a particular organization, one channel through which anticipatory socialization can take place is the media. With regard to the Hillel case,

anticipatory socialization in relation to the group was evident through the author's lack of knowledge about the Jewish religion in relation to the Methodist religion. However, with regard to the organization of Hillel itself, anticipatory socialization took place following the first contact the author made with the organization's president. It was through this contact that the newcomer was granted entry into the organization, which led the way for anticipation of what was to come. The fact that Hillel is a religious organization was also drawn in by the president's question of the researcher's religion during the initial conversation. The group's name of Hillel has been given to the national organization for Jewish students at colleges and universities (Rubin-Dorsky and Fishkin 479). Hillel is generally the name given to the building that houses this organization, as well. Because there were no formal interviews needed in order to enter this organization, as might be required in a workplace setting, informal conversation with the group's president served as the primary source of knowledge in anticipatory socialization.

Encounter

The second phase of socialization, encounter, occurs with the point of entry into an organization (Miller 135). This phase takes place throughout the initial weeks or months of one's employment in an organization (Jablin and Krone 713). Within this phase, new members may experience surprise, contrast, and change (Louis 226). These experiences are critical in shaping the individual's long-term adjustment to the organization (Louis 230). The encounter phase is especially important for gathering information about the job and the culture of the organization (Miller 136). The content of socialization is made up of information related to roles and organizational culture (Miller 138). Role-related information includes the skills, procedures, and rules that an individual must grasp in order to perform a job. Information about the organizational culture typically involves observation of behavior and artifacts in order to draw inferences about cultural values and assumptions (Miller 138).

Surprise was part of the encounter phase with Hillel. In the first meeting, an unfortunate part of the group's culture was exposed in the form of hate. The suggestions for advertising with posters on campus were met with the reality that using a phone number or address can result in bomb threats or harassing phone calls for the group. This brings to the forefront the idea that random hate can be targeted toward Hillel. Hate speech is defined in part as having a message which is persecutorial, hateful, and degrading directed against a historically oppressed group (Sandmann 242-243). Victims of hate speech can be limited in personal freedom and forced to leave jobs and schools where such speech is present (Sandmann 244). Victims may often try to disassociate themselves as individuals from their ethnicity. The tolerance of such speech in a university setting is argued to be even more harmful than it would be in a larger setting since it challenges the goals of universities, which include education and development of knowledge (Sandmann 246).

Throughout the last decade, college campuses have encountered a growing number of hate incidents including racist, anti-Semitic, homophobic, and sexist incidents (Sidel 45). Hate crimes are based primarily upon a victim's membership in a demographic group (Craig and Waldo 113-114). Any single hate-motivated incident has threatening implications for all members of a group. Victims of hate crimes are most often members of negatively stereotyped groups. Students who come face to face with prejudice and discrimination often realize the fear, hatred, and contempt with which their subgroup is viewed by the dominant culture (Sidel 51).

In addition to potential hate, another unfortunate reality was faced by the group at the time of encounter, which involved observance of The High Holidays. Sharot states that the High Holidays are widely observed in the faith, even by Jewish people who do not attend services on a regular basis (259). Rosh Hashanah is the day that God "judges" every human being (Himelstein 75). Those who are totally righteous are immediately sentenced to "life," while those who are totally evil are sentenced to "death." Those who

fall into neither category, which includes most of society, are given a grace period, until Yom Kippur, to improve their ways. This is when their "decree" will be decided.

The university's scheduling mistake served as one of the surprises encountered by a newcomer in an organization, since Hillel interpreted this conflict to be an insult. However, this incident also served to expose another aspect of the organization's culture in that observance of Jewish holidays is not given the same recognition as that of Christian holidays.

Miller states that the encounter phase of socialization can be stressful for the newcomer (136). Both the scheduling conflict and the hate through potential bomb threats were capable of causing stress for any newcomer not accustomed to forms of opposition encountered by Hillel.

As part of the encounter phase, the newcomer began to help the group work toward its goals. The first activity of this sort was a raffle, which served as more of a role-related event, rather than an aspect of organizational culture. Role-related information is relatively straightforward and encompasses the skills needed to perform a job (Miller 138). It was the established job of the newcomer to assist the group with its goals, so the raffle assisted in performing this duty. A raffle would not be unusual to almost any organization attempting to raise funds, which also makes it a role-related activity, rather than a part of the organizational culture.

Events continued to take place in order to help with the transition into the new organization. Jablin and Krone's model of socialization integrates the idea that the process is developmental and ongoing (712). Cheney states that socialization is both an individual and collective process that allows for one person to acquire and use the cultural symbols available while enabling the social order to reproduce itself (19). One of the significant events involves the role of food in Hillel. Distribution of the lox boxes served as a setting for encountering the tradition of food in the Jewish religion. Foods in general must be considered kosher, or kashrut, which refers to the system of Jewish

dietary laws including foods which are allowed and foods which are forbidden (Rubin-Dorsky and Fishkin 479). The major categories of food within the kashrut include milk products (milchig), meat products (fleishig), and pareve, which is neither a milk nor meat product.

The discovery of lox as being a type of salmon, bagels as being a Jewish food, and the fact that these items can be packaged together and sold in a lox box all served the function of encounter in socialization with Jewish food. Sampling of matzah, to which the newcomer had never been exposed, and discussion of the dish of matzah balls served to further the encounter with the organization and introduce the group's culture. In particular, the difference in preference for food and its consumption was presented to the author in terms of the Jewish organization's beliefs in comparison to prior knowledge of the Methodist organization's beliefs.

The preparation of food and dietary practices have rarely been studied by sociologists, although such knowledge may allow for the understanding of cultural identity in communities, knowledge construction, and gendered social relations (Beoku-Betts 535). Because of the fact that this area of work and cultural activity has traditionally been assigned to women, its value in cultural knowledge systems has not been acknowledged (Beoku-Betts 535). Women in the Jewish faith have traditionally been in charge of keeping the house in a manner consistent with Jewish traditions, which includes following kashrut, the Jewish dietary laws (Bowen 37). Food preparation in marginalized groups can help strengthen cultural identity. Beoku-Betts examined the significance of cultural practices related to food, and the role women play in these practices in Gullah communities in the coastal regions of Georgia and South Carolina (536). In part, attention was given to the efforts to preserve these practices under pressure of social change and intrusion by the dominant culture. In relation to Hillel and the newcomer's socialization, the role of food played an important part of the

organization's culture which consisted of an established set of guidelines for dietary practices.

Encounter with the organization and the ongoing socialization process included the newcomer's introduction to Jewish religious practices through the Shabbat services. Particularly with the first service attended by the newcomer, some of the religious practices and customs were introduced as being new aspects of the organization's culture. In order to draw inferences about cultural values and assumptions, the newcomer frequently relies on ethnographic techniques, such as observation (Miller 138).

The word Shabbat is Hebrew for Sabbath, which is the holy day of rest and worship (Rubin-Dorsky and Fishkin 483). Among the many sacred days observed in the Jewish faith is the Sabbath. As defined in Proto-Judaism, this was the seventh day of a seven-day cycle, in which all Jews, the animals, servants, and resident strangers were not to engage in their regular occupations (Sigal 20). Among the activities originally forbidden on the Sabbath were agricultural labor, kindling of fire, and gathering of firewood. Einstein and Kukoff state that some appropriate activities for the Shabbat include attending services, visiting friends, going for a walk, taking a nap, and spending time with each family member (136). It is not acceptable to work at one's job, drive a car, deal with money, write, clean the house, or shop.

Metamorphosis

The final stage of socialization in an organization involves the metamorphosis where a newcomer has made the transition from insider to outsider (Miller 136). During this stage, the newcomer begins to become an accepted, participating member of the organization by learning new behaviors and attitudes (Miller 136). However, to the extent of learning new behaviors and attitudes, the newcomer in the Hillel case could not possibly make a complete transition into the group without converting to the Jewish religion. Under the ethnographic circumstances in which data was gathered, such a transition would be unethical. Frey, Botan, Friedman, and Kreps define the problem of

researchers being unable to separate themselves from the group as "going native" (238). This occurs when researchers ignore or deny unethical aspects of their behavior. Therefore, if the newcomer in the Hillel case did join the organization, she would be guilty of such a violation.

Although the differences are apparent between the newcomer and the group, religion is an aspect of life that has potential to change. Loden and Rosener describe two categories of differences that individuals experience (18). Primary dimensions of diversity are defined as those that are inborn or those that exert an important or ongoing impact on our lives (Loden and Rosener 18). Examples of this type of diversity include age, ethnicity, gender, physical abilities, race, and sexual orientation. Secondary differences are those that can be changed since we acquire them throughout our lives (Loden and Rosener 19). Examples of this type of diversity include educational background, geographic location, income, marital status, military experience, parental status, religious beliefs, and work experience. With the exceptions of geographic location, income, and religion, most other secondary dimensions exert little impact on us until later in life. Individually, each secondary dimension helps to shape self-esteem and self-definition (Loden and Rosener 20).

In terms of becoming an accepted, participating member, there are several examples of how the newcomer was embraced by the group, regardless of the differences present. First, the most apparent aspect of acceptance occurs with the eventual use of the newcomer's name, Wendy, rather than the initial title of "the grad student." This signifies acceptance on the part of the organization's members since an effort was made to adopt use of the proper name, rather than a generic title that had initially been assigned. A second example of acceptance was present in the Shabbat service held with the Jewish congregation. Although the newcomer was not able to follow along and participate completely, a member of the organization offered assistance. Acceptance becomes

involved since at least one member was willing to help the newcomer play as much of an inside role as possible in the situation.

Finally, acceptance was evident through the conversations held between the newcomer and the group. In particular, upon having coffee together, normal topics of discussion for college students emerged in the conversation. In addition, an effort was made to include the newcomer in any discussions about the Jewish faith, knowing that explanation would probably be needed in order for her to understand. Despite the fact that the newcomer and the organization have very different religious values, a metamorphosis was able to occur in terms of the newcomer's acceptance and participation in the group.

A variety of findings in the data helped contribute to the organizational socialization of the newcomer in this group, as per Miller's phases of socialization (134-136). Through examples of hate, food, religion, differences and lack thereof, it was possible for the newcomer to transform into the group and take on the role of an active participant, despite a religious barrier.

Recommendations for Future Assignments

Frey et al. define ethnography as examining patterned interactions and significant symbols or specific cultural groups to identify the cultural norms (rules) that direct their behaviors and the meanings people ascribe to each other's behaviors (229). The ethnographer must ultimately decide which role to assume while observing. For the purposes of this study, the perspective of a participant-observer was used. Frey et al. state that a participant-observer lets people know they are being studied and becomes fully involved in the social situation that is being studied (238). This seemed to be the most appropriate form of observation because the group was well aware that they were being studied, and every effort was made on the author's part to participate in the activities of the group. There were some aspects in which the author could not directly participate due to a language barrier, but it was possible to observe in these situations.

The author became a sort of full-fledged member of the group because of participation in religious, social, and fundraising activities over the course of the study.

In total, 35 pages of field notes were taken over the semester in which the study took place. The duration of the study was roughly two and a half months. Field notes were never recorded in the presence of group members, since the author took part in the activities. As soon as possible after an event with the group, the author composed a detailed account of what had taken place. Over this time period, the author engaged in numerous phone calls with group members and attended nine meetings, social, and religious functions. The author was not able to attend all of the group's meetings over the course of the study; periodic phone calls with the group's president and other members helped to keep the author updated.

The nature of this study resulted in several limits. First, the study was limited due to the fact that it took place over the course of roughly two months. Stacks and Hocking state that good participation-observation research takes a long time to complete, and many researchers take several years to conduct their work (168). Therefore, had the author been able to spend more time with the group, there would have been more interaction and sharing of knowledge. Perhaps the fact that the group members and the author were all college students, who had numerous other responsibilities in addition to the activities of the organization, also impacted the amount of time that the author could spend with the group. Second, the results of participant-observation studies are not usually generalizable (Stacks and Hocking 168). The results may not be generalized to similar groups or compared to similar studies. Research of this nature is more focused on understanding rather than predicting behavior for future situations (Stacks and Hocking 168). A case study is what results.

The study was advantageous with respect to the fact that the author joined the group as a participant-observer, rather than as a complete observer. By assisting the group to reach its goals, there was almost no way around becoming involved in their

organization, which contributed to the socialization process. Stacks and Hocking state that participant/observer methodologies allow for the researcher to be directly involved in the communication process (168). In addition, the researcher can see patterns of behavior rather than isolated instances due to the amount of time invested in the study (Stacks and Hocking 168). Findings are generally highly valid in participant/observation research, as data represents what occurred when it occurred.

Since the project was done as part of the requirements for a graduate seminar, there were two ways in which the data could be gathered. First, the group could elect to have the oral histories recorded from at least five members. However, in order for this to be done, it would be advantageous to speak with members who had been part of the group for quite some time. Hillel did not have this benefit, due in part to the fact that it was a student organization. Instead, Hillel decided that it would be better to use the second form of gathering data, which involved help working toward group goals including fundraising and increasing membership. In addition to the manner in which the data would be collected, the group had full editorial rights to the final paper that was submitted for evaluation in the intercultural seminar. Therefore, prior to the deadline for turning in the paper, Hillel was provided with a copy and given permission to request changes, which were made prior to the paper's submission in class.

Members in the group were also asked for their permission to identify their participation in the study. All members who were involved in activities related to the study decided that it would be acceptable to use first names in the manuscript. However, individual names were eventually masked as a courtesy to those who participated.

From the perspective of a student, this project was extremely worthwhile in the sense that it provided those who took part with a very realistic, authentic exposure to doing ethnographic research from the perspective of a participant-observer. It has several advantages including student familiarity with the data collection process in ethnographic research. Frey et al. state that important issues confronted by ethnographic researchers

include what to study, how to gain access to the field, the role to assume, how observation affects the people studied, and how to record observations (236). By the end of the semester, students collected and analyzed ethnographic data, which contributes to the overall research background.

The project's major restriction was the fact that all research had to be done over the course of less than one semester. There was also a short period of time between the beginning of the course and making contact with the group, which decreased the available time to be spent with the group. This limit is almost unavoidable, however, since students generally remain in courses for only one semester and must complete all work in that time frame. In order to expand the experience, the amount of time spent in ethnographic studies should be more than what was available as part of this course. Moreover, students do become aware of this limit through conducting the research under the time constraints of the semester. With regard to Hillel, it would have been valuable to take part in and observe the major holidays celebrated by the Jewish religion in one year's time.

Conclusion

Through the above methods, organizational socialization and its three phases have been applied to ethnographic data in the form of a narrative case study, and recommendations have been offered for further pedagogical projects such as the one used to create this manuscript. While the study is limited due to its lack of generalizability resulting from ethnographic data collection, it does examine the successful socialization of a newcomer into an organization where the newcomer will not be able to become a full-fledged member without converting to a different religion. Such a change would have the potential to alter self-definition. However, despite the barrier of religion, metamorphosis into the organization was attained quite well. Miller states that a new employee typically relies on observation of behavior and artifacts in order to draw inferences about cultural values and assumptions (138). Therefore, future research may

examine the extent to which ethnographic tactics are used by newcomers in the socialization process. Additionally, the success/failure of socialization in groups where it may be difficult, due to secondary differences, to become a full-fledged organizational member serves as another area of future research.

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