

**ORGANIZATIONS, LABOR CONTROL PROCESSES, AND EMOTIONAL
LABOR: THE CASE OF THE RETAIL GROCERY TRADE**

by


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(ABSTRACT)

The literature regarding organizations, labor control, and emotional labor suggests that the labor process within the service sector is fundamentally different from that of the manufacturing sector because the incorporation of a customer into the labor process necessitates an additional type of labor -- namely, emotional labor -- to facilitate the interaction.

This study demonstrates that emotional labor is both heterogenous and dynamic. It is influenced not only by the specific service occupation under investigation, but also by the organizational context in which it is simultaneously manufactured and constrained. Emotional labor enactment varies between organizational contexts, among cashiers employed at the same store, and within the individual. Cashiers are able to shift between six distinct emotional labor enactment styles to accomplish their work: the conversationalist, the minimalist, the pretender, the avoider, the confronter, and the contender.

This study also demonstrates that as the size of grocery establishments increase, labor control systems are altered to accommodate the growth which, in turn, influences emotional labor. Increasing formalization of emotional labor directives not

only promotes uniformity but can also generate variation in the form of cashier resistance. Emotional labor commitment can be enhanced if the labor control system fosters internalization of organizational expectations among the cashiers. Importantly, potential negative effects of emotional labor can be lessened if strategies for handling the competing and oftentimes contradictory demands are effectively disseminated.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The service sector encompasses many different types of work environments and content. The sector includes such areas as "transportation, communications, and utilities; retail and wholesale trade; services [health, business, and educational services]; government; and finance, insurance, and real estate" (Martin and Barron 1992:10). Because of its rich diversity, one cannot discuss the service sector's labor process in the abstract, devoid of a particular context. Depicting a presumably homogenous labor process also obscures a variety of important sociological issues, including the impact of technology, bureaucracy, and authority. I suggest that, in order to fully comprehend critical aspects of the labor process, each particular area of the service sector must be explored singularly and in great detail, and only then might it be compared to another such painstaking inquiry. Thus, similarities and differences across the service sector could emerge in a more meaningful way.

Literature aimed at exploring the complexities of the labor process in the service sector at a more general level is useful to the extent that it increases our understanding of the nature of work in the service sector. For example, Czepiel et al. (1985:4-6) identify the following seven features of service encounters:

1. Service encounters are purposeful....as a specific form of human interaction which is goal-oriented.
2. Service providers are not altruistic....he or she is paid. A service encounter is work. This fact is usually recognized by both parties to the encounter.

3. Prior acquaintance is not required. The relationship between a provider and client is a special kind of 'stranger' relationship.
4. Service encounters are limited in scope....The scope of the interchange is restricted by the nature and content of the service to be delivered.
5. Task-related information exchange dominates.
6. Client and provider roles are well defined.
7. A temporary status differential occurs.

While this broad generalization obscures important differences, it illustrates that service encounters are a unique form of human interaction produced by an organizational structure that simultaneously impinges on the employee and consumer. Organizations prescribe the appropriate behavior of employees toward customers through employee handbooks, training, suggestive selling techniques (would you like fries with that?), and the like, while they similarly regulate customer behavior through signs and surveillance.

An emerging body of sociological literature has focused exclusively on exploring the content of service encounters. From an organizational perspective, in most cases service employees are held accountable for providing a pleasant or at least tolerable interactional experience with the consumer. Hochschild encapsulates this aspect of the service encounter in her notion of emotional labor, "labor [that] requires one to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others" (1983:7). Thus, service employees engage in emotional labor to facilitate the social interaction on behalf of the organization. The extent to which service sector organizations are able to prescribe

emotional labor might be fruitfully depicted as an aspect of the labor control process.

In order for individuals to purchase desired goods/products, they usually engage in face-to-face interaction with service providers located within an organizational structure. Thus, alongside the physical transaction that transfers ownership of an organization's product to an individual, a social interaction emerges with an employee. Within a capitalist economy, profit-seeking organizations will attempt to plan the entire transaction process to ensure efficiency and continuity. This physical transaction and concurrent social interaction is significant because it incorporates both employees and consumers into an organization's labor process.

Past research examining labor control processes focus almost exclusively on the manufacturing sector. Braverman (1974) discusses the de-skilling evident in organizations as management redefines employees' tasks to progressively encompass less responsibilities over time. Edwards (1979) argues that as organizations expand, different types of control systems are necessary to oversee workers. I suggest that literature pertaining to the manufacturing sector is only applicable in analyzing the service sector to a certain degree but must be expanded to include emotional labor.

An in-depth exploration of the retail grocery trade offers one opportunity to examine a number of these crucial issues. My research focuses on one aspect of this labor process: the impact of organizational factors on grocery cashiers' emotional labor. To understand the context in which these interactions occur between cashiers and consumers, it is necessary to describe the larger picture of food distribution in the

United States.

Food retailing is one facet of the food distribution industry. Other elements include food wholesaling and away-from-home food service (Marion 1986:293). The retail grocery trade has emerged as a mechanism that enables individuals to purchase desired foodstuffs. Consumer reliance upon the retail grocery trade has grown steadily over the past decades, and it has slowly become embedded within the culture of the United States. A brief historical review is included in the following chapter to illustrate this development.

With the economic transformation of the United States, particularly the declining manufacturing base and a growing service sector, the labor process within the food distribution industry has drawn increased attention. Much of the research focus has been on away-from-home food service and the dynamics associated with the ensuing interaction between employees and non-employees (Leidner 1988, 1993; Reiter 1986; Butler and Snizek 1976; Whyte 1962). Other research (Reiter 1991; Parcel and Sickmeier 1988) explores away-from-home food service's labor processes at a macro-level and suggests two labor markets exist within the fast food industry: a primary market composed of jobs yielding higher wages, benefits, job security, and the like, and a secondary market consisting of lower-waged, often part-time positions with few, if any, benefits.

Research directly pertaining to food retailing has revealed that the 1970s exodus of urban supermarkets increased food costs for inner city residents (Turque et

al. 1992; U.S. House Committee on Hunger 1987). Thus, lower-income individuals, prevalent in many inner cities, are paying more for food than their wealthier suburban counterparts with access to supermarkets. While this inequality is beyond the scope of this research, it illustrates how fundamentally important retail access to food is within the United States.

Exploration of the labor processes involved in food retailing in the United States has only recently emerged as a viable avenue for sociological research (Tolich 1993). While the labor process in food retailing in Israel has received some attention (Rafaeli 1989), labor studies that mention, at least in passing, the U.S. retail grocery trade primarily focus on how to increase productivity by utilizing customers' labor (Lovelock and Young 1979; Chase 1978). Social scientists have elaborated on this theme noting that service organizations rely on customer labor, primarily women's, as part of the production process, thus increasing women's unpaid labor (Glazer 1987).

Statement of the Problem

One crucial difference between the manufacturing sector and the service sector is the type of labor required. Unlike the manufacturing sector upon which the vast majority of literature on labor control is based, a vital component of the service sector's labor process is the emotional labor engaged in by the service worker (Hochschild 1983). A service encounter refers to the interval of time during which an employee simultaneously accomplishes a physical task and facilitates a customer

interaction by expending emotional labor (Czepiel et al 1985).

Sociologists have begun to study various service occupations with an eye toward understanding how a worker's emotional labor is extracted (Hochschild 1979, 1983; Leidner 1988, 1993; Romero 1988; Stenross and Kleinman 1989). This has facilitated comparisons of emotional labor across different occupations, greatly adding to our understanding of this labor.

In contrast, an overlooked avenue of inquiry is the effect of organizational contexts on emotional labor within an advanced capitalistic society, where the preeminent goal of management is to make labor rational, hence, predictable, so as to increase profits. Ultimately then, the intent is to control labor. Manufacturing literature has shown differences in organizational context in relation to items such as size, technology, formalization, authority, and the like, lead to different methods of labor control (Edwards 1979). Despite Hochschild's (1983) allusion to control of emotional labor, we have not examined how this varies by organizational context.

I suggest, then, that emotional labor is not an homogeneous component of the labor process. Within a particular economic system, such as advanced capitalism, it is influenced first by the characteristics/demands of the specific occupation under study, and secondly, by the organizational context in which it occurs. It is the latter influence, organizational context, which is the focus of my study.

By selecting one occupation, retail grocery cashiers, and varying the size of the grocery establishment in which the cashiers are employed, organizational context

will be altered. Size not only refers to the physical dimensions of the store, but also to the number of checkout lanes, the number of cashiers employed, and the number of other locations if applicable. I expect that each organization will have different policies, procedures, and technologies that affect emotional labor as well as some similarities in assumptions and practices. Secondly, I expect that as grocery establishments increase in size, the level of bureaucracy surrounding the service encounter also expands as organizations attempt to promote uniformity across all of their employees and locations. For example, this increased formalization might be seen by the degree to which emotional labor is "scripted," as well as the ability of workers to deviate from this script. I expect small grocery establishments are less likely than large stores to recommend specific dialogue, "scripts," for cashiers to follow. In fact, small stores might give only general guidelines to follow, such as being pleasant to the customer, but offer no dialogue to mimic. Thus, I hypothesize that the size of a grocery establishment influences the method of labor control chosen to oversee employees. Large stores are more likely to employ structural methods of labor control because of the greater number of employees and locations make simple forms of control obsolete.

By gaining entry into the organizations, conducting archival research regarding company policies and manuals, participant observation, and interviewing, I will examine the emotional labor present in each context, and conduct a comparison to determine whether emotional labor varies depending on organizational context. I

expect this will reveal emotional labor to be dynamic, influenced and shaped according to the organizational environment in which it resides. In this way, my research seeks to contribute to both the literature pertaining to emotional labor as well as literature concerning labor control processes.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

Historical Context

The development and growth of food chains and then supermarkets are the two major innovations in food retailing in the twentieth century (Marion 1986:294). The first innovation, the chain store, emerged in 1912 under the name of A&P and was referred to as an "economy store" (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2). Economy stores eliminated home delivery and credit extension and instead sold items on a "cash-and-carry basis" (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2).

During this time, the grocery clerk was responsible for gathering the customer's goods in addition to determining the price of the purchase and receiving payment or extending credit if a non-economy store. The physical design of the store, high shelves with goods stocked to the ceiling, made it physically impossible for customers to select their own merchandise without assistance. Other items, ranging from dry goods such as flour or sugar, to perishables such as milk or butter, were displayed in bulk form, thus requiring employee assistance to obtain and to weigh the desired amounts (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2). Technology, if present at all, was very simple. And finally, both the grocery clerks and members of management were predominantly men (McAusland 1980: 47). Later, as the responsibilities of the job declined and more women were employed, the title of

grocery clerk was transformed to cashier.

The concept of self-service is "one of the most significant innovations that occurred during the first half of century" (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2). In 1916, Clarence Saunders introduced this type of labor process in stores under the name of Piggly Wiggly and it spread rapidly throughout the country (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2; McAusland 1980:5). To facilitate self-service, stores had to alter their physical designs to make goods accessible to the customers. Thus, self-service

represented the first break in the one-to-one relationship between the food retailer and the customer. For the first time, the customer was responsible for collecting items wanted for purchase. (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:2-3)

Self-service is the mechanism that pulled the customer into the organization's labor process. Customers were now expected to utilize their own physical labor to select items and present them to the clerk.

The second major innovation profoundly influencing food retailing is the emergence of the supermarket, which "combined cash and carry, self-service, and a broad selection of products with a strong emphasis on low prices and high [product] turnover" (Marion 1986:294). So even though self-service had been around since 1916, the actual supermarket was not created until 1930, when "all the components were pulled together" (McAusland 1980:5). The first supermarket, created by Michael Cullen of King Kullen Supermarkets, was located in an abandoned garage and was referred to by the public as a "warehouse grocery" (McAusland 1980:5).

Included in the King Kullen Supermarket was "more than one counter and cash register for checking out orders; this gave the checkout operation stature and identity" (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:3). While other food retailers viewed Cullen's ideas with skepticism, customers flocked to the supermarkets to take advantage of lower prices (McAusland 1980:15).

Other, smaller innovations followed more slowly. During the 1940s and 1950s, "the checkout operation remained virtually unchanged", with the exception of the power conveyor belts for customers to place their items upon. By the 1960s, many realized that the

supermarket industry was lagging behind other industries in the application of new and existing technology....It was apparent that the checkout operation offered one of the greatest opportunities for productivity gains (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:4).

The single greatest expense in food retailing is the cost of labor (Marion 1986:299). In this regard, Harwell and Kinslow (1978:7) suggest that the optical scanner provides a unique way of combatting the "related problems of low productivity and high labor costs at the front end." Cashiers would no longer have to manually key in each item purchased, so time saved with the optical scanners would translate into increased productivity.

The early 1970s brought about "one of the most intensive cooperative efforts that has ever taken place within any industry" (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:13) resulting in the development of the Universal Product Code (UPC):

the now familiar shape of dark and light barsThe 10-digit code is printed in Arabic numerals at the bottom of the symbol so that the item code can be entered manually by the checker if the symbol cannot be scanned, for any reason. (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:13)

In addition to the Universal Product Code and optical scanning systems increasing labor productivity at the check-out, it also eliminated "source-marking" of individual products at the stores resulting in considerable labor savings for retailers (Harwell and Kinslow 1978:12).

In the early 1990s, grocery establishments began accepting alternative methods of payment for goods. According to the Progressive Grocer, an industry magazine, debit cards, "the kind that instantly deduct money from a shopper's checking account to pay for groceries," made inroads into this unexplored territory (Garry 1992:103). And last, but not least, credit cards such as Visa and MasterCard entered the picture. Citing the Progressive Grocer's 1993 Annual Report, Garry (1993:125-128) illustrates the growth of credit card usage in relation to debit cards, noting that "39% of all supermarkets (and 45% of chain stores) accepted credit cards in 1992, up from just 19% in 1990," although "debit cards are accepted at only 19% of stores." Thus, the retail grocery trade has come full-circle since its elimination of credit extension earlier this century. Debate still lingers within the industry regarding whether credit card usage increases sales, hence profit, for the stores, but as a highly visible payment alternative for customers, stores are installing the appropriate equipment in a quest to remain competitive (Garry 1993:125-130).

Theoretical Context

In a capitalist system, the continued survival of economic organizations is based upon their ability to accumulate -- that is, to realize profit. Thus, organizations want to maintain their profit margins. Three general methods exist to do so: increase sales, shift the composition of sales to include higher mark-up items, or decrease costs. The last method, decreasing costs, could involve efforts to increase employee productivity through technological innovation or utilization of customer labor.

As I alluded to earlier, the transformation of grocery clerks into cashiers coincided with reduced task responsibility. This resulted in cashiers ultimately losing skills and knowledge associated with the grocery trade (Braverman 1974:371). In other words, as the task was redefined, employees' knowledge of different areas was progressively reduced. This benefits management by making labor more interchangeable. Furthermore, the newest technology, optical scanning systems, results in new forms of labor control as

the checkout counter then adopts as its own the assembly line or factory pace in its most complete form. The 'production' of each register can be controlled from a single central station and laggards noted for future action....(Braverman 1973:372)

Thus, an important consequence of this technological innovation is the electronic surveillance of the cashier.

Richard Edwards (1979) specifically addresses the evolution of different forms

of control present in organizations by suggesting that "the systems of control correspond to or characterize stages of capitalism" (1979:21). In his view, a system of control must account for three elements: direction of work tasks, evaluation of work performance, and rewarding and disciplining strategies. Thus, when organizations are small, the owner establishes a personal relationship with the workers and 'simple control' is maintained through his or her presence at the location of the production process. In general, decisions are handled on a case-by-case basis by the owner, resulting in possible favoritism to certain workers because no formalization exists for what constitutes proper procedure (1979:25-26). When examining the beginnings of the retail grocery trade in the U.S., it is evident that simple control was the mechanism relied upon to oversee employees.

As organizations grow and develop, it becomes impossible for the owners to establish personal relationships with every worker to ensure loyalty to the organization. Thus, hierarchical control "marked the firm's first accommodation to its growth" (Edwards 1979:30). Under this system, owners could delegate power over the production process to foremen [sic]; however, foremen oversaw the production process through "continuous, direct, ad hoc, and arbitrary instructions" (Edwards 1979:33). The arbitrariness of sanctions, the majority of which were negative, demonstrated to workers the "oppressive nature of capitalist relations" (Edwards 1979:53). While striving to control workers, hierarchical control therefore also created resistance.

Both simple control and hierarchical control were highly visible systems of control which contributed to worker unrest. Eventually organizations developed structural forms of control and "found that the new systems made control more institutional and hence less visible to workers" (Edwards 1979:20). Edwards refers to the new structural forms of control as technical control and bureaucratic control (1979:20). The first, technical control, is structural in the sense that it "is embedded in the physical and technological aspects of production and is built into the design of machines and the industrial architecture of the plant" (1979:131). Technical control exists "when the entire production process of the plant or large segments of it are based on a technology that paces and directs the labor process" (Edwards 1979:113). Even though Edwards' work was mainly derived from examining the manufacturing realm, it is applicable to the retail grocery trade. While technology presently does not directly set the pace of work for cashiers in grocery stores, scanning technology increases the work pace indirectly. As the scanning technology is considered to be a mechanism to increase productivity, fewer workers are scheduled to handle the same amount of people. In addition, the technology is capable of monitoring all aspects of a cashier's performance related to job productivity. Information on the printout can include "the number of customers handled per hour by each cashier, the items checked per minute, the cashiers scanning percent, the number of credits made by the cashier, the time spent in a subtotal state, and the hourly wage of the cashier" (Thomas 1986:118). The interpersonal conduct of a cashier is not monitored

electronically, although inferences might be made about such things as the length of time spent at a certain stage. Thus, the scanning systems contribute data for worker evaluation and the subsequent reward or punishment.

The second structural form of control identified by Edwards is bureaucratic control. In contrast to technical control, bureaucratic control "is embedded in the social and organizational structure of the firm and is built into job categories, work rules, promotion procedures, discipline, wage scales, definitions of responsibilities, and the like" (Edwards 1979:131). Needless to say, bureaucratic control is evident in the service sector as well as the manufacturing sector. The organizational policies surrounding the interpersonal aspect of a cashier's job duties are one indicator of the degree to which this has come under bureaucratic control. Of particular importance to my research, organizationally-suggested dialogue cashiers must follow as well as nonverbal gestures, such as when to smile, offer clues concerning the attempt to control emotional labor under this system. Such mandated dialogue --"scripts" -- are usually composed of a number of items including the greeting ("Welcome to insert store's name"), questions relating to the production process ("Do you have any coupons today?"), dialogue relating to the exchange of money ("Your total is insert monetary amount and your change is insert correct monetary amount" then proceed to verbally count back the customer's change) and finally, the salutation ("Thanks for shopping at insert store's name, come again"). Inherent in the organization's scripting of the dialogue is the time-sequencing of events. For example, a customer's

presence is to be acknowledged before processing the order. Or, a customer is to be thanked to signify the termination of the transaction. As mentioned earlier, along with the recommended dialogue and time-sequencing events, organizations will also suggest nonverbal behavioral cues, such as eye contact and smiles, to accompany certain actions.

Under bureaucratic control, evaluation of employee job performance is institutionalized. For instance, Hochschild (1983:116) discusses Delta Airlines' use of ghost-riders, "plainclothes company supervisors who occasionally ghost-ride a flight" in order to evaluate service. Sutton and Rafaeli (1988:484) note that clerk performance in convenience stores is evaluated by "mystery shoppers" as a condition of employment. Thus, under bureaucratic control, organizations instruct employees about the possibility of their service being evaluated at anytime, unbeknownst to them, and sanctions dispensed on the basis of the evaluations.

Another method organizations utilize to ensure proper job performance is to educate customers about what to expect and then use monetary incentives to engage them in the surveillance/monitoring of employee behavior:

The cashiers at six St. Petersburg and Pinellas Park Winn-Dixie stores are wearing dollar bills pinned to their uniforms these days. It's all part of a company courtesy campaign. If the cashier doesn't come up with a friendly greeting and a sincere thank you, the customer is supposed to get a dollar. (Hochschild 1983:149)

In this way, organizations both increase profits and labor control capabilities through unpaid or low-paid methods designed to have customers act as quasi-assessors of

employee service quality.

Each of the alternative methods of labor control discussed above exist in today's organization of work. Edwards suggests that simple control "survives in the economy's periphery" (1979:36). Additionally, as bureaucratic control began being used, it

came to exist alongside and be reinforced by elements of hierarchical and technical control. Bureaucratic control became the predominant system of control, giving shape and logic to the firm's organization, but it did not completely eliminate elements of other systems of control. (1979:131-132)

Thus, structural forms of control will be found in the economy's core industries, possibly in conjunction with other control systems (Edwards 1979:75).

In addition to different forms of control systems, organizations vary regarding the actual content of labor processes. Although Braverman emphasizes the de-skilling of the employees' jobs as a consequence of changing labor procedures, he overlooks the utilization of the customer's labor in modern grocery stores. Nona Glazer (1987:238) captures this important factor, critically examining how retail trade has progressively pulled the consumer, the majority of whom are women, into the work process. In doing so, the organization is able to save labor costs, since a majority of processes are now defined as self-service: "within commercial capitalism, women as consumers substitute for once-waged workers; their work becomes a source of capital accumulation as their labor within the service sector is appropriated" (Glazer 1987:238). This labor is often "invisible" to individuals because it is utilized on an

irregular basis and for short periods of time; however, when viewed collectively, this labor constitutes a significant amount (Glazer 1987:239). Customers are enticed into performing their own labor by organizational advertisements which state that "choice, control, and freedom" arise from the self-service labor process (Glazer 1987:245). Glazer agrees with Braverman that cashiers no longer have extensive product knowledge because that responsibility has been transferred to the domain of the marketing firms and their advertising schemes (1987:247).

While Braverman and Glazer both provide much insight relating to the productivity aspect of service encounters, they neglect the interpersonal aspect that accompanies the physical transaction. C. Wright Mills (1953) examines this facet of service encounters, suggesting that as the manufacturing sector declines, workers will be called upon to sell more than their physical labor:

In the great shift from manual skills to the art of 'handling,'selling, and servicing people, personal or even intimate traits of the employee are drawn into the sphere of exchange and become of commercial relevance, become commodities in the labor market. (1953:182)

He further notes that the worker's "personality becomes the instrument of an alien purpose," and thus the worker "becomes self-alienated" (1953:184).

Building upon Mills' work, Arlie Hochschild (1979; 1983) undertook extensive qualitative research on airline flight attendants and, to a lesser degree, bill collectors. She suggests, as does Mills, that a "commoditization of feeling" occurs in the service sector (1979:569); that is, a worker's feelings are sold in addition to their physical

labor.

Hochschild's contribution to the literature is her delineation of emotional labor, defined as "the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labor is sold for a wage and therefore has exchange value" (1983:7). In order to perform emotional labor, workers "induce or suppress feeling" within themselves and focus on producing "the proper state of mind in others" (1983:7). Hochschild (1983:7) also suggests, as did Mills, that "the worker can become estranged or alienated from an aspect of self - either the body or the margins of the soul - that is used to do the work." Thus, Mills and Hochschild both propose service employees might experience a qualitatively different type of alienation than manufacturing workers due to the unique organization of their labor process.

Hochschild (1983:119) also expands Braverman's thesis, noting that the de-skilling of their labor processes increasingly includes emotional labor as well. Service workers are expected to draw from an organizationally-approved repertoire of responses, "scripts," to fit the specific circumstances of the situation. Hochschild illustrates this de-skilling of emotional labor by analyzing the standard guidelines flight attendants are supposed to employ in order to interpret certain behaviors of passengers. For instance, annoying customers should be thought of as children, because to do so expands the amount of tolerance employees must show towards them (1983:111). The analogies and skills taught to the flight attendants

...do not subtract from the worker's autonomous control over when and

how to apply them; as the point made in training, 'It will be up to you to decide how to handle any given problem on line.' But the overall definition of the task is more rigid than it once was, and the worker's field of choice about what to do is greatly narrowed. (1983:120)
[emphasis in original]

This narrowing of available options represents the de-skilling of emotional labor.

Hochschild's analysis is also gender-sensitive. She suggests that women rely on emotional labor more than men because "women in general have far less independent access to money, power, authority, or status in society" (1983:163). Certain consequences emerge as a result of this power difference. First, "women make a resource out of feeling" (1983:163). This is one of the many, complex conditions that underlie the fact that females are more likely to be found employed in positions requiring emotional labor. Second, emotional labor requirements change depending on the gender of the worker. Based on her research, she suggests that

....women are more likely to be presented with the task of mastering anger and aggression in the service of 'being nice.' To men, the socially assigned task of aggressing against those that break rules of various sorts creates the private task of mastering fear and vulnerability. (1983:163)

The final consequence Hochschild mentions is that "the general subordination of women leaves every individual woman with a weaker 'status shield' against the displaced feelings of others" (1983:163). Often, Hochschild suggests,

...more deference is generally expected from a woman, she has a weaker grasp on passenger respect for her authority and a harder time enforcing rules. (1983:177)

Thus, gendered identities infiltrate both formal and informal interaction patterns.

Hochschild's research reflects the importance of organizational structure and its impact on the service encounter. Airlines do not want passengers to think about monetary exchange, so flight attendants are supposed to individualize service to each passenger. The commercialized nature of the interactions are downplayed; "impersonal relations are to be seen as if they were personal. Relations based on getting and giving money are to be seen as if they were relations free of money" (1983:105-106). However, following the de-regulation of the airline industry, the passenger-to-flight-attendant ratio increased, making individualized service impossible and triggering considerable resentment among flight attendants (1983:122-124). The flight attendants responded to "the speed-up with a slowdown; they smile less broadly, with a quick release and no sparkle in the eyes, thus dimming the company's message to the people. It is a war of smiles" (1983:127).

Mary Romero (1988) has documented similar methods used by domestic workers to refrain from engaging in emotional labor. She noted that Chicana domestics have redefined what domestic service should include, and "have altered the employer's role from mistress to client or customer. This definition of the relationship lessened the opportunity for psychological exploitation and the extraction of emotional labor" (1988:329).

Diamond's (1986) qualitative study of nursing home assistants provides a contrast to the highly structured interactions of Hochschild's flight attendants. Emotional labor performed by the nursing assistants is not recognized by the

organization; it "remains invisible and unmentioned" (1986:1291). Diamond suggests that "formally, nursing assistants' tasks have nothing to do with talking with patients. It is, in fact, probably more efficient not to converse" (1986:1291).

The nursing assistants in his study received no formal training on interpersonal relations with patients. Rather,

...the social relations of caring work which contextualize these patients' and nurses' aides lives are relegated to an oral tradition. They are not incorporated into the textbooks or charts or reimbursement schemes. They are erased from the formal record. (Diamond 1986:1292)

Diamond realizes the consequences of organizational recognition of emotional labor. He suggests "concrete human relations get changed when they are transformed into the documentary reality of commodities, when care is encoded in reimbursement concepts" (1986:1291). In contrast, James (1989:34) acknowledges when emotional labor is a conscious part of the labor process, such as in hospices, "the job has to be designed to be flexible enough to accommodate emotional labor" and the necessary time it takes to accomplish it. James (1989:35) warns that "the insidious effect of pressure to 'work' is that tasks gradually become pre-eminent, and other work, such as emotional labor, is carried out as 'time' allows," and possibly omitted if need be.

Food Retailing and Emotional Labor

Sociological studies specifically related to food retailing and the interactions between cashiers and consumers are few. Anat Rafaeli (1989), who has done the

majority of research in this area, reports four rather interesting findings. First, customers influence cashiers' behaviors in ways which are "instantaneous, continuous, and simultaneous with job performance" (1989:266). Second, the various human constraints that influence the cashier, such as management, other cashiers, and customers, all "introduce tension into service encounters and put a strain on service employees" (1989:267). Rafaeli's third finding concerns the paradoxical nature of the cashier's interaction with customers: "their interpersonal relations at work are so weak and superficial, in spite of their constant exposure to, and interaction with other people" (1989:268). The last finding reveals that "the dynamics that customers inspire in service encounters suggest several threats to service employees and to service organizations" (1989:266). In particular, Rafaeli stresses that "errors and losses may occur when customers divert attention from a cash register or when they try to sway cashiers from complying with organizational rules" (1989:269).

Research concerning convenience stores has revealed a connection between "store pace or the amount of time pressure on clerks and customers and displayed expressive behavior" (Sutton and Rafaeli 1988:474). Specifically, in busy convenience stores, cashier expressive conduct is low because "norms exist ... to view customers as inputs for rapid processing" (Sutton and Rafaeli 1988:474). Additionally, cashiers intentionally avoid appearing too friendly to discourage customers from engaging in lengthy conversations (Sutton and Rafaeli 1988:476). On the other hand, in slow convenience stores, cashier expressive conduct is high because

cashiers can "take the time to greet customers, establish eye contact, smile, and say 'thanks,'" even more significantly, "clerks in slow stores were often genuinely happy to see customers enter the store." Thus, interactions with customers were viewed as a method to alleviate boredom (Sutton and Rafaeli 1988:477-478).

Martin Tolich (1993:364-367) suggests that management encroaches on the service encounter in grocery stores in three distinct ways. Initially, cashiers were instructed about "the company's belief that customer loyalty was critical to the store's profitability" and that loyalty was primarily created through the receipt of good customer service. Secondly, in Tolich's study, management often threatened termination of employment as a means of procuring improvement in job performance. And lastly, indirect supervision resulted from either customers or company representatives clandestinely assessing service delivery and advising management of their findings.

Tolich asserts that Hochschild's conceptualization of emotional labor is imprecise because it "presumes that workers are estranged from their emotions" (1993:379) since the labor is exchanged for a wage. Thus, it fails to adequately account for employees that enjoy the interactional aspect of their positions with seemingly no adverse effects. Tolich proposes rather than merely focus on the exchange value of such endeavors,

it would be more fruitful of our understanding of the emotion labor process if the definition of emotion management were based on the presence or absence of control over one's emotion display...The new

dichotomy is regulated emotion management and autonomous emotion management. Regulated emotion management occurs when the conception and management of emotions is regulated by another person. Autonomous emotion management occurs when the conception and management of emotion is regulated by the individual. These new definitions focus on who is controlling the emotion display rather than on who owns the emotion display. (1993 378) [emphasis in original]

In sum, research has revealed the extent to which organizations attempt to include emotional labor into a planned labor process. Furthermore, it has shown how an employee's feelings can take precedence over organizational policy and how the employee can modify the given procedures in action (Hochschild 1983; James 1989; Sutton and Rafaeli 1988; Tolich 1993). Thus, scientific inquiries have exposed the dialectical nature of emotional labor -- namely, how management often attempts to design and control emotional labor execution and the ensuing resistance generated from this regulation among those affected.

Research Problem

The literature regarding organizations, labor control, and service encounters suggests the following. In contrast to the manufacturing sector, emotional labor comprises a vital part of the service sector's work process. Thus, in order to maximize profits, grocery establishments attempt to make the 'check-out' process as efficient and predictable as possible given the organization's resources. This requires selecting appropriate systems of control to oversee cashiers. Variations in the size of grocery establishments are thought to produce major consequences in terms of control

systems, ranging from more simple systems to ones structural in nature, such as technical or bureaucratic control. Thus, I suggest that the presence of emotional labor is a constant across organizations, while the type of labor control system utilized varies and will produce a unique form of emotional labor in each organizational context. I expect emotional labor will be more uniform in large chains due to the presence of bureaucratic control. I expect this because work duties -- including emotional labor -- are regulated by rules and procedures which are recorded and disseminated across all cashiers. In contrast, I expect that the emotional labor present in small grocery establishments will be more variable in content due to the absence of formalization. The content of the interpersonal aspect -- greetings, production-oriented questions, money exchange dialogue, and salutations, as well as nonverbal gestures such as smiling and eye contact -- and the sequencing of this will depend more on a cashier's prerogative rather than on organizational policy.

General Hypotheses

The type of control system present in a grocery establishment will influence grocery cashiers' emotional labor. This research will examine the three components of control systems Edwards (1979) discusses -- direction of work tasks, work evaluation, and rewarding/disciplining strategies -- to determine the predominant type of control system that exists in each setting and how it affects emotional labor. When appropriate, the influence of secondary forms of labor control will be explored as

well.

Visible systems of control (simple and hierarchical control) are more likely to appear in small grocery stores. Within these environments, I expect that little organizational attention will be allocated to training cashiers regarding the interpersonal nature of their jobs; emphasis will be placed on the physical aspect of their duties, such as how to use the equipment, proper procedure for accepting a check, and the like. I expect, due to the absence of formalization, under simple control the expression of emotional labor will vary greatly among the cashiers in content. For example, customers will receive various greetings or none at all, nonverbal actions such as smiling and eye contact will be distributed unevenly, and the sequencing of events will not be in an orderly fashion across all cashiers -- for example, some customers will not be spoken to at all until their order is fully processed and a monetary sum is needed. Additionally, I expect that norms concerning appropriate conduct towards customers will be "relegated to an oral tradition" among workers (Diamond 1986:23). Under simple control, I expect cashiers will be able to improvise more in an attempt to appease the customer. Cashiers will probably express uncertainty about organizationally-approved dialogue and procedure. Evaluation of work duties will emphasize the physical aspect of the tasks, while overlooking the emotional labor. Evaluations for emotional labor will be arbitrary, conducted in a haphazard fashion, occurring when a manager happens to be within ear-shot of a cashier and is paying attention to the exchange. The greater

physical presence of management under simple control might compensate for the absence of formalization surrounding emotional labor. At the same time, the low degree of formalization allows cashiers more flexibility in determining interactional content and what constitutes service. Under this system, I expect rewards and discipline to be handed out on the basis of customer compliments and complaints rather than on institutionalized programs. Thus, simple control as a mechanism to promote uniformity in the labor process, is strained in regards to controlling emotional labor because it neglects the content of what that labor entails. Simple control promotes variable rather than standardized expressions of emotional labor among cashiers which could yield inconsistency in the handling of customers. Paradoxically, simple control may allow cashiers more autonomy to create innovative resolutions to individualized circumstances -- an opportunity that does not exist for cashiers within more bureaucratized settings as certain procedures must be followed.

Structural forms of control, that is, technical and bureaucratic control, are more likely to appear in larger stores due to their increased size and market power. Technical control will be ascertained by the type of 'check-out' equipment and its feedback functions, design of related technologies (i.e. shopping carts, conveyor belts), and communication systems. This control system, I expect, will influence emotional labor less than bureaucratic control because it mainly deals with the physical aspect of job duties. It will produce some influence due to the fact that as technological advances are made within the production process, productivity

expectations change as well. Thus, as stores adopt optical scanning systems, fewer people may be scheduled to handle the same amount of customers because of the anticipated increase in productivity. This actually increases the number of customers processed by each cashier and thus alters the duration of the service encounter. I expect cashiers will feel optical scanning systems are easier to operate than manually keying in item prices, but might impose some limitations over the cashier's interaction with the customer. For example, the need for cashiers to hear the "beeping" of items as they scan might distract them from customers' demands or concerns. Certain technologies, most notably optical scanners, might influence the expression of emotional labor because oftentimes its feedback functions are sensory in nature. Thus, in addition to cashiers being responsive to customers, they now must incorporate visual or audible cues from the technology as well within their labor process.

Bureaucratic control will be determined by the degree of formalization surrounding the position of cashier. The degree to which organizations create dialogue for cashiers to follow, codify proper work procedures, and train, evaluate, and sanction workers indicate the presence of bureaucratic control in the organization.

Under this system, I expect cashiers will have contrived replies to respond to disgruntled customers complaints, concluding with a referral to management for assistance. Thus, I expect to find a certain number of uniform responses. I expect cashiers under bureaucratic control will have extensive knowledge concerning the

recommended dialogue and many ideas regarding the appropriateness and feasibility of it. I expect evaluation procedures of cashiers to be institutionalized and thus, standard policy. For instance, the technique might include some type of "mystery shopper" who, unannounced, will assess a cashier's job performance, including emotional labor, for compliance with organizational policy. Or, an organization might constitute a program of customers receiving a reward if a cashier fails to follow proper procedures such as a standardized greeting with a smile and thanking the customer by name. Needless to say, the exact elements in the promotion will be determined by management. Under bureaucratic control, cashiers' proper behavior and procedure will be dictated but unless it is followed up with stringent evaluation and sanctioning strategies, compliance might be low.

It is hypothesized that structural forms of control will produce a different form of emotional labor among grocery cashiers than simple control. I expect structural forms of control, particularly bureaucratic control, to strive for the greatest amount of predictability and uniformity, hence less variation, in emotional labor as it becomes a conscious, therefore, rationalized part of the labor process.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS AND DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

Research Design

This study utilized a variety of qualitative data-gathering techniques.

Qualitative methods were thought appropriate for two reasons. First, a qualitative methodology was suitable due to the importance of setting and examining labor control processes to the research question (Marshall and Rossman 1989). Secondly, a qualitative design was most apt for assessing the dependent variable, the expression or form of a grocery store cashier's emotional labor. The primary phenomenon of interest was the impact of the organizational setting on the emotional labor of grocery store cashiers. The independent variables were the organizational setting and the corresponding control systems.

The settings for this research included six grocery stores located within ten miles of each other in a southeastern United States city. Data collection began at three stores in the winter of 1994. The study was expanded during the fall of 1994 to include three additional stores. The expansion resulted from the unexpected closure of the smallest store in the study during the winter before data collection formally commenced at that site. This left only preliminary information obtained during my initial visit to the store in which the study was discussed with the owner's son. This unforeseen event left only two large stores in the study, making comparison between

organization contexts at that time rather moot. Efforts were made to replace that particular organizational context as closely as possible and, with much persistence and a stroke of good luck, three additional grocery establishments, one small and two medium-sized in stature, joined the study. While hypotheses were not explicitly defined for medium-sized grocery establishments, the moderate-sized stores were included to yield a third organizational type and will be considered a transitional case in the study.

Initially, contact was made by mail with the manager of each store. The letter explained the nature of the research project and inquired whether the store manager would be willing to participate in the study. If the manager expressed an initial interest in the study, a subsequent meeting was scheduled to discuss the project in greater detail and gather some preliminary information about the store, arrange times for store access, and the like. At the outset, I noted it was much more difficult to gain access to larger stores. Usually, the manager forwarded my request to their corporate headquarters and someone there denied it. In fact, out of five regional chains in the community under study, four declined my research requests.

After gaining access to the organization, the physical design of the cashiers' work area was noted. Number of registers, type (regular versus express), available technologies, and the method of processing customers were documented in each store. This contributed to understanding the physical aspect of the production process in every store and is discussed in the following section.

An analysis of each organization's handbook, training tapes, and manuals began to reveal the level of bureaucratic control of the service encounter. Policies and procedures regulating both aspects of the service encounter, the physical task along with the emotional labor requirements, were examined to determine each organization's emphasis. Interviews with the manager of each store provided further insight into the organization's view of the interaction's importance and the expectations surrounding the encounters. Appendix A contains the management interview schedule. Additionally, in Weber's terminology, each organization's "ideal type" of interaction was identified (Roth and Wittich 1978:20-22) to ascertain if job performance requirements varied according to organizational context. Chapter 4 explores the idea of what constitutes a store's ideal cashier from both management and cashier perspectives alike. Included in this chapter as well are characteristics managers consider important for job applicants to possess in order to perform emotional labor effectively for the store. Throughout the analysis, it is important to note manager and cashier responses are discussed independently in order to illuminate the vantage point from which the speaker resides within the organizational hierarchy and secondly, for comparison purposes. This should by no means be construed as creating or fostering an adversarial relationship between the two groups but, again, it is simply done for the sake of clarity.

The extent to which emotional labor was formalized, evaluated, and sanctioned was also ascertained. This in conjunction with the earlier archival review and

manager interviews is discussed in relation to each organizational type in Chapters 5, 6, and 7. Thus, I will indicate to what degree emotional labor is a conscious part of the labor control process in each context. Cashier feedback regarding their own work experiences is included as well in order to illustrate both the perceived supportive and constraining natures of organizational strategies.

The level of technical control was determined by assessing the technology present in each setting. Appendix B contains the indicators for technical control assessment. Chapter 8 examines the technology available in each setting and gauges both management and cashiers' perspectives on whether it had any notable influence on cashiers' job performance across the various organizational contexts.

In terms of assessing the emotional labor grocery store cashiers actually engage in, my research design utilized the two features Hochschild relied upon when defining emotional labor. One research strategy, participant observation, documented the visible, "outward countenance" employees display such as a cashier giving a smile with a pleasant greeting or an attentive, concerned facial expression in response to being told the store is out of a particular item (Hochschild 1983:7). Appendix C contains observation indicators. During the study, the "participant as observer" identity was used in each location to allow research subjects knowledge about my presence (Denzin 1989:163). Even though organizational consent had been granted beforehand, I asked each cashier whether s/he minded being observed. Of the fifty-five cashiers I approached, all agreed to the observation phase. Overall, I spent 38.5

hours observing cashier/customer interactions and documented a grand total of 1,103 service encounters. I designed the observation schedule to include coverage throughout the week as well as encompass all times of day -- morning, afternoon, and evening -- and the ebbs and flows of customer traffic associated within those periods like the mid-morning slump or the after work rush. Table 1 shows the time spent at each store.

Insert Table 1 Here

The second research strategy, interviews with grocery store cashiers from each setting, tapped the unobservable feelings associated with the work along with the unobservable knowledge the cashiers have concerning the scripts. The cashier interview schedule is featured in Appendix D. Of the fifty-five cashiers observed, forty-nine initially agreed to consider an interview regarding their work at a later date. In the end, only twenty-eight followed through with the formal interview phase. Table 1 also shows the breakdown of interviewed cashiers according to location. This reversal of the initial agreement to be interviewed I mainly attribute to time constraints among the cashiers. Of the twenty-eight cashiers interviewed, nine attended college, eight attended high school, and one also worked full-time elsewhere. Additionally, most of the cashiers that outright declined the interview phase mentioned their hectic schedules as the reason. Thus, cashiers that were motivated

TABLE 1: Observations/Cashiers Interviewed by Site

Site	# Hrs Observed	# Service Encounters Observed	# Cashiers Observed	# Cashiers Agreed to Interview	# Cashiers Interviewed
Adam's Grocery	0	0	0	0	0
Southside Grocery	8.7	313	10	9	4
Boulevard Market	8.7	308	10	9	7
Foodstuffs	9.0	220	14	12	5
Harvest Time	5.8	143	9	7	3
Carter's	6.3	119	12	12	9
TOTALS	38.5	1,103	55	49	28

enough to juggled their schedules and generously offered their time in order to participate in the study are most likely qualitatively different from those who simply declined or changed their minds. Chapter 9 discusses additional interview findings along with observational data regarding cashier experiences of emotional labor. This chapter demonstrates the dynamic quality of emotional labor by suggesting cashiers are able to select from among six distinct enactment styles to assist in performing the work thereby reducing the stresses inherent in the production process. It also addresses the original research concern regarding the effect of organizational context on emotional labor as well as explores the relationship between labor control systems and emotional labor enactment.

The final chapter demonstrates the contribution this study makes to the literature concerning emotional labor as well as labor control. It also suggests an avenue for future research.

The Research Settings

As mentioned previously, six grocery stores are included in this study. Each store was primarily selected due to the size of the grocery establishment. Table 2 displays each store's organizational type based on the various size indicators observed. Organizational consent was also integral to the participation decision as well. Once again, size is hypothesized to influence elements such as the authority structure, labor control strategies, technological acquisition, and the like. Among

other things, the relationship between organizational size and the configuration of authority within the various stores is illuminated. It demonstrates that as the size of grocery establishments increase, the physical presence of the owner in supervising the day-to-day operations decreases and is replaced by an organizational hierarchy of management employees. This delegation of authority to oversee the everyday workings of the store presupposes that the management personnel are aware of the owner's expectations and policies surrounding the operation of the store and are able to work accordingly. Thus, another level of organizational planning emerges to facilitate the transfer of responsibilities in larger stores and increased formalization is the result. This arrangement is nonexistent in small stores due to the owner's presence and direct supervision.

Insert Table 2 Here

Additionally, the manner in which the production process is organized in each setting is discussed by examining the various technologies utilized, such as manual registers, optical scanning systems, automatic change dispensers, and the like. Pseudonyms have been assigned to every store.

TABLE 2: Site/Organizational Type by Size Indicators

Site	Type	Size (sq. ft.)	Number of Locations	Number of Checkouts	Number of Cashiers Full/Part
Adam's Grocery	Small	6,000	1	3	1 / 3
Southside Grocery	Small	7,000	2	2	1 / 10
Boulevard Market	Medium	22,000	14	3-5	0 / 10
Foodstuffs	Medium	36,000	2-4	7	1 / 10
Harvest Time	Large	29,000	87	7	0 / 12-15
Carter's	Large	42,500	24	10	0 / 28

Small Stores

Adam's Grocery

This was a small, independently run grocery store operated by a father and his son for ten years. Permission was granted by the father to include the store in the study. The store was approximately 6000 square feet. Three checkout aisles with conveyor belts for customers to place their groceries upon were located in the front of the store. After reading a price tag or remembering a price, cashiers manually entered item prices into a register. This store was the only one that did not have a standard closing time. It closed between seven and eight o'clock in the evening depending entirely on business in the store. In addition to the father and son, the store employed one full-time cashier during the day and three part-time cashiers at night.

Unfortunately, this grocery store closed unexpectedly for no known reason during the winter of 1994, leaving only preliminary information regarding the research site. The last contact I had with the son was a phone call in which I advised him that I was finishing data collection at two other grocery stores and would be in touch shortly to begin data collection in his store. He agreed and replied "Whenever you're ready, we'll be here." After a few unsuccessful phone calls, I drove by the research site only to see the whole building empty. Adam's Grocery was no longer in existence. Though the data from this site is incomplete, it has been included in this study where appropriate because it illustrates an important phenomenon occurring

throughout our society as small, independent groceries are folding and thus taking with them a unique form of labor organization.

Southside Grocery

This is a small, independently owned neighborhood supermarket. It is owned jointly by a former supermarket chain manager who is responsible for the day-to-day operations and a lawyer who acts as a silent partner. Permission to conduct the study at this grocery store was granted by the owner/manager. At the outset of this research, the partnership oversaw two neighborhood locations. Unfortunately, at the culmination of data collection, this store also closed unexpectedly due to difficulties with its leased location. It had been in that neighborhood for seven years.

Southside Grocery was approximately 7000 square feet. Two checkout lanes with conveyor belts for customers to place their groceries upon occupied the front of the store. Neither were designated as express lanes. Usually, lane one was open continuously during operating hours and lane two was used when necessary. Cashiers manually entered item prices into the registers. This was the only store in the study where cashiers did not wear any type of uniform such as a smock, apron, company shirt, or even a name tag. Most simply wore jeans and some type of causal shirt. Southside Grocery employed ten part-time cashiers and one full-time cashier. Cashiers primarily fall under the supervision of the night manager, the owner, or whoever the owner designated as responsible for a particular shift or day.

Medium-Sized Stores

Boulevard Market

This is a quasi-locally owned supermarket chain. The owner resides in a nearby city. Boulevard Market is approximately ten months old and is one of fourteen locations. After consulting the owner, the store manager granted me permission to include the store in the study.

Boulevard Market is approximately 22,000 square feet. It has three standard checkout aisles with conveyor belts for customers' items. Lane one is usually open and can be considered an express lane to some degree but no signs are displayed to illustrate this idea. During the day when only one lane is open, both large and small size orders are processed through that station. If this lane becomes congested, the cashier will call for additional assistance either in the form of someone to bag the groceries or operate the second checkout lane. After the initial overflow is processed, customers with a greater volume of purchases tend to proceed to lane two. If lane two is closed, customers will often ask the cashier in the first lane if s/he can process the order. In addition to the two standard lanes, the store has two other makeshift checkout lanes that are only used near major holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas. The two improvised checkouts do not have conveyor belts and sit somewhat askew to the three standard lanes. At Boulevard Market, cashiers manually enter the prices of the grocery items into the registers. Presently, the store employs ten part-time cashiers. The cashiers fall under the direction of the assistant store

manager and manager.

Foodstuffs

This is a small, independently run chain of four supermarkets. One local owner actually owns the two Foodstuffs in the area though he does not directly oversee the day-to-day operations. This particular store in the study is ten months old. Formerly, this location housed a large supermarket chain that began experiencing dissent between the employee union and management. The previous company abruptly put the locations up for sale and pulled out of the area within a few months. Just before the sale, permission had been granted to include the large supermarket chain in this study, but again circumstances, specifically the pull-out, prevented it. Once ownership changed hands, I inquired about the possibility of including the store in the study and was granted entry by the new store manager.

The supermarket is approximately 36,000 square feet. Seven checkout aisles with conveyor belts occupy the front of the store. The first two lanes are express lanes, specifically for customers with nine or fewer items. Cashiers utilize an optical scanning system to tabulate an order's cost. This is the only research setting where customers are able to use their credit cards to make payment for their goods as each regular lane is outfitted with the necessary equipment. Cashiers are not directly responsible for authorizing credit card purchases; customers must scan their own credit cards through the machine to see if available credit exists. Cashiers are

expected to oversee this process and, if necessary, instruct the customers on it.

Presently, the store employs one full-time and ten part-time cashiers. The cashiers come under the authority of a teller (a cashier who has been promoted to assisting in the store's office), as well as a night manager and a store manager.

Large Stores

Harvest Time

This is a regionally owned supermarket chain, originating out of another state which contains its corporate headquarters as well. The store's manager also had to contact his corporate headquarters to receive permission to have the store take part in the study. Presently, the store has 87 locations with expected growth of up to one hundred stores by year's end. The chain has been in existence for approximately four decades.

The store is approximately 29,000 square feet. Seven checkout aisles equipped with optical scanning systems occupy the front of the store. The first two lanes are express lanes for customers with less than ten items. Instead of having conveyor belts for customers' items, the grocery cart has a drop-front which enables the cashier to remove the groceries directly from the cart and scan them.

Presently, Harvest Time employs no full-time cashiers and twelve to fifteen part-time cashiers. Cashiers fall under the direction of the customer service manager, assistant store manager, and the store manager.

Carter's

This is a locally owned, expanding supermarket chain operated by two siblings. Carter's was established approximately six decades ago by their parents. Presently, they have twenty-four locations as a result of somewhat rapid expansion over the past few years. As a result of its increasing size and increasing complexity, Carter's established a corporate headquarters earlier to assist in its operation. The store's manager had to obtain approval from corporate headquarters to permit me to include the store in this study. The fact that this store has continued to expand and maintain a high level of emotional labor across its employees alongside the task-oriented duties intrigued me as a consumer and, more importantly, as a researcher. Thus, among the stores in the study, Carter's is the one that piqued my intellectual curiosity the most concerning how they are able to sustain such a high level of emotional labor execution across their employees as well as throughout their expanding locations and, for this very reason, it was very much sought-after for inclusion in the study.

The location included in this study is approximately 42,500 square feet. Ten checkout aisles equipped with conveyor belts for the customers' goods occupy most of the front of the store. The first three lanes are deemed express lanes, set aside for customers with ten or fewer items. The cashiers utilize optical scanning systems to determine the price of a customer's order. Cashiers also have access to automatic change machines at each register. This is the only store that closes on Sunday.

Currently, Carter's has twenty-eight part-time cashiers and no full-time cashiers employed at the particular location included in the study. Cashiers fall under the authority of two front-end managers, an assistant store manager, and the store manager.

CHAPTER 4

THE IDEAL CASHIER

Similarities Among the Store Contexts

An exemplary grocery store cashier is an employee that combines seemingly genuine friendliness with task proficiency. All managers tended to discuss similar job performance expectations of their cashiers. The following is a composite of cashier responsibilities across all stores: greet the customer; determine an order's price by ringing or scanning the desired goods; know applicable codes such as produce or bakery; weigh produce; engage in conversations with customers if appropriate; deduct coupons/discounts; collect payment; follow appropriate procedures (verifying the identity of a check writer or age for an alcohol purchase); clean around the register; thank the customer; and bag the order if necessary.

Finally, the ideal cashier also never gets angry. All managers interviewed indicate that cashiers always have the option of calling management to assist if a situation is escalating with a customer. Apparently, this easily accessible organizational remedy nullifies a cashier's need to exhibit either anger or frustration toward demanding customers. Thus, the ideal cashier should always, in management's opinion, conceal such negative emotions and instead transfer the customer to the next organizational level for processing.

All managers interviewed specified they would prefer an extremely slow

cashier with a friendly demeanor to a highly efficient cashier who seldom speaks or is not very pleasant. This acknowledged preference illustrates the crucial nature of emotional labor within this occupation and is elaborated on in the following section according to the specific organizational context in which it transpires. The chapter concludes with cashier perspectives concerning what characteristics constitute an ideal cashier.

Management Expectations

Small Stores

Southside Grocery's owner discusses the personal nature of interactions at his store:

In a small business...you got to understand that you're fighting for every dollar that comes through that front door, I mean every single day and more so now than when I started in business,...I mean, a customer can go to [X], [Y], or [Z] or me to get Campbell's Pork and Beans, you can get those anywhere, but the thing that sets us apart, it sets a lot of small businesses apart, is the friendliness, you know, the fact that you'll greet them by name, you know, not just hey you, you say "Hi Mrs. Smith, Hi Mrs. Jones" or what have you and you do get to know your customers a lot better in a small environment...a small store environment.

Thus, he emphasizes the competitiveness within the food retailing industry and the importance of quality service to win customer loyalty; speed does not necessarily mean quality service. He specifies friendliness first and foremost, then accuracy before speed, contending, "Some people try to go too damn fast and, you know, they don't do the job right."

In response to a troublesome customer, Southside Grocery's owner states cashiers should not get angry. In his opinion, anger would only be justifiable if the situation escalated to a physical rather than verbal confrontation. This differentiation between the types of clashes, physical versus verbal, illustrates his expectations that cashiers should accept various degrees of verbal confrontations without displaying irritation:

...I've always told my people, they know that, 'I can get angry [be]cause I don't have a boss.' And I think that customers would accept that from me even begrudgingly more than they would a cashier or any other worker in the store...

Thus, the status and prestige he perceives is societally accorded to him as a small business owner exceeds that granted to both cashiers and even customers. Based on the status differential and the fact that he is the absolute authority concerning what transpires in his store, he believes it easier to mediate conflicts between cashiers and customers and achieve resolution.

Similarly, the other small store in the study, Adam's Grocery, is also known for the intimate character of the service encounter. According to the owner's son, the cashiers at his father's store "know whose kids are in college, who has a new car -- they know specifics." Since the interaction "is not as general as in chain stores" he believes the more personal level gives them an added advantage.

Medium Stores

Boulevard Market's manager emphasizes the ideal cashier possesses a good attitude, specifically:

Not having a chip on your shoulder ... treat[ing] people like you want them to treat you....I would rather have the slow cashier who was courteous to the customers. The reason being [in] this type of volume store ... I don't do a tremendous amount of business like in a big superstore anyway, so with me, personal customer contact would be more important. If I was in a high volume store, then that may not be as critical, you know, as what I consider it to be here.

He also suggests cashiers have different strengths. Notice how he begins by praising Lisa as his best cashier, but then mentions other qualities he deems important:

[Lisa is best] as far as working within company policy, looking out for the company's assets, accuracy...The only fault I find with her is in dealing with the customers. She seems to be kind of, uhm, abrasive. And like you said, you want complete honesty, and she seems to have problems with food stamp customers. Then the next best person that is probably ... a better all-around cashier would be Susan. She's got a real pleasing personality, she'll do anything you ask her, whenever you ask her.

Even though this manager espouses in theory the necessity of courteous cashiers, when given the opportunity to identify his finest cashier, he selects Lisa over Susan. Lisa, a cashier who obviously allows her prejudices concerning a specific type of clientele to show through, is designated as a superior employee based solely on her productivity. In this context, her lack of emotional labor skill is overlooked. This contradiction and its theoretical importance in relation to the tensions inherent in emotional labor will be discussed further in Chapter 9.

Boulevard Market's manager only partially excuses a cashier's display of anger in response to unruly customers:

[It is only justifiable] if the customer becomes abusive. And then, the cashier herself [sic] shouldn't have a confrontation with the customer but should call the manager....If the situation ever escalates to where the customer is being abusive or cussing or fussing, hollering, whatever, they should immediately call the manager. Let the manager handle it.

In comparison, the manager from the other medium-size store in the study, Foodstuffs, elaborates on what qualities the ideal cashier exhibits: "honesty, friendliness, someone who takes pride in their job, and somebody who wants to be helpful." This manager is also more consistent in regards to his selection for best cashier. He chooses Ruth because

she has probably gotten the greatest amount of experience for one thing. She's mature...takes a great deal of pride in her work. And probably the most customer friendliest person, you know, which is very important...She has a conversation with, you know, almost every customer that comes through her line. She is well-liked. She just has a way of working with the public where people feel at ease with her...she's probably my slowest cashier, but by far my friendliest, so like I said we don't emphasize speed.

Foodstuffs' manager rejects the possibility of cashiers demonstrating their anger towards difficult customers or, for that matter, even of becoming angry initially. He explains the store's perspective:

I don't think they should ever become angry. I think before it comes to that point, they always have the option of calling a management person or office person to help them.

Large Stores

Harvest Time's manager mentions the importance of greeting the customer and, if it is someone who comes in routinely, a cashier might be able to inquire about the customer's family, and the like. If the cashier does not recognize the customer:

Hopefully, if she [sic] doesn't know the lady's name, if she has taken the check, she'll say "Thank you Ms. So-n-So" by getting the information off the check itself.

Thus, the cashier is encouraged to introduce an element of familiarity into an otherwise impersonal interaction.

Additionally, he indicates a good cashier is "...a friendly person, an outgoing person. You basically have to be pretty self-confident because ... customers in retail now, will just try to run over ya." Thus, Harvest Time's manager proposes an additional element, namely one of composure, that an ideal cashier should possess in order to simultaneously interact effectively with customers and safeguard the company's property. He emphasizes cashiers should not display anger towards the customers but instead should concentrate on satisfying them if at all possible. If accord cannot be reached, management should be summoned to assist:

...we ask them if they can make the customer happy in the beginning to do so. If not, they have a one-sentence response to a customer, and that's "Let me call my manager for you" or "Let me get you to speak to the manager" or whoever is in authority in the store at that particular point in time. And the management personnel go through much more extensive training than the cashier. You can't afford to give every cashier the training that the manager has....So, she [sic] has a one sentence "out," so there is no way she should get mad.

Thus, management personnel are perceived and touted to be more equipped to handle volatile situations due to the more extensive and costly training they receive. The company considers this instruction not cost-effective enough to disseminate to all employees that routinely interact with customers. Harvest Time's manager dismisses the cashier's right to display the emotion of anger or frustration, legitimate or otherwise, because the difficult customer can be transferred to another employee higher up the organizational hierarchy. In order to facilitate the transfer, cashiers employ emotional labor in two distinct manners. First, cashiers attempt to ensure the customer is satisfied or at least agreeable to the transfer. And secondly, cashiers must conceal any contradictory feelings the customer might have induced such as frustration or anger.

The manager from the other large store in the study, Carter's, discusses the ideal cashier for their company: "Number one with us is personality traits ... how to meet the customer." The initial greeting is considered extremely important. After this, if the customer wants "to talk some [then] the cashier is going to share a few words with the customer to make them feel comfortable and let them know that we do appreciate them coming in to shop." Carter's manager also believes the ideal cashier would be efficient at processing customer orders. He suggests the company's productivity standards are established in such a way that

...most everyone could be comfortable with [them]. It's not something that is really out of reach, that [requires that] you have to go every minute, you know. Then [cashiers] don't spend time talking with the

customer and all. We don't want it set that way. We want it where they can maintain that level which we're comfortable with but also meeting the customer and taking care of the customer's needs as well. [emphasis added]

At Carter's, emotional labor is recognized as an integral part of the production process. In order for cashiers to engage in this labor effectively, the company realizes productivity standards must be constructed to reflect the time necessary to accomplish this type of labor. However, even with this recognition, Carter's still prescribes an organizationally acceptable time frame in which to execute both the physical and emotional types of labor required.

And finally, Carter's manager emphasizes that it is unacceptable for cashiers to exhibit irritation or anger toward difficult customers because it goes against their company's philosophy:

We definitely operate on the theory that the customer is always right....And honestly, we all know that it's two sides to every story but our philosophy is the customer is always right...we do try very, very hard to satisfy our customers and I guess that's one reason that we don't feel like we have a large problem with it [conflict].

Carter's manager discusses how a displeased customer would be processed in accordance with the company's organizational hierarchy:

If I'm here, I take care of it. If I'm not here, then the assistant manager would step in....It's like a chain reaction the way our company is structured. And then the front-end manager if the assistant manager wasn't here. And, of course, sometimes the assistant front-end manager is running the store. So long as it's the front-end management staff, we always handle the complaints...So, we are well-managed but also I think in being well-managed you are satisfying your customers better.

Hiring Practices: Personality Matters

Most of the managers readily seek certain personality traits, such as friendliness or vivaciousness, when interviewing job applicants thereby insuring cashiers are well-suited to emotional labor. For example, the owner of Southside Grocery indicates that, in addition to personal references,

...I look for somebody that is outgoing, that is pleasant, that talks, not one of these strong silent types. I mean, I like someone who likes to communicate a lot and that's clean and neat and generally uses good common sense. And you can determine a lot of those things on the interview by how they walk into your office and present themselves...

Similarly, Boulevard Market's manager discusses that during the interview process:

...what I do when I talk to the people, I see what kind of attitude they have when I talk to 'em. If they seem to be friendly and open and not sarcastic then, what I judge people on, which is probably in a lot of cases is wrong, is on my first impression. When I first -- someone comes and puts in an application -- when I first meet 'em, if they seem sincere and that they want a job, they want to work and that they have a good, positive attitude, then that's what I look at and that's what I judge 'em on.

Carter's manager also emphasizes that "the first thing that I think we will look for is someone with an open personality. I think with our company that is totally necessary."

Foodstuffs' manager indicates the first characteristic he considers is previous cashiering experience, followed by personality traits that are particularly well-suited for emotional labor:

Well, first of all, I look to see if they have been experienced in the cashier position before. O.K.? That tends to make it easier when you

train them. Secondly, I like to look for someone with a lot of personality, who is friendly, who smiles a lot, intelligent, I'm looking for a mature person, one who could be responsible.

Harvest Time's manager prioritized his list of preferences regarding characteristics an ideal job applicant would have:

We look for prior experience....I would look for a more mature person, I look for people I know....I would go for a person trying to supplement his [sic] income first that has responsibilities...

Thus, Harvest Time's manager represents the only store that does not actively acknowledge they seek certain personality traits favorable to emotional labor in the hiring process. But by relying upon applicants with previous grocery cashier experience, s/he utilize another store's initial judgement about the suitability of the person for emotional labor responsibilities.

Ultimately, then, all stores in the study, to some degree, evaluate job applicants on the basis of the manager's evaluation of whether the applicant has a capacity to engage in emotional labor effectively for the store.

Differences Among the Store Contexts

The one significant difference between the stores regarding the ideal cashier revolves around additional job responsibilities. In small store environments, cashiers often had the additional duties of stocking merchandise for sale such as general merchandise, eggs, milk, beer, and the like. To some extent, additional duties also occurred in medium-sized stores as well though not to the same degree. This did not

occur in the larger store environments. I attribute this to the greater division of labor in existence at the larger stores. Within the smaller store contexts, some cashiers -- primarily males -- had to willingly move between different types of work as time permitted. The allocation of additional duties is important because it may have consequences in terms of the degree of emotional labor feasible for those cashiers assigned extra tasks.

In contrast, cashiers at larger stores tended to be less mobile, assigned to a particular checkout aisle. Oftentimes, they would remain at a particular aisle throughout their shifts. During slow periods, smaller tasks were expected such as cleaning around the register, bagging for another cashier, returning unwanted merchandise, or straightening a nearby aisle by "facing" or "blocking" the merchandise (pulling all items forward to achieve visual symmetry). Labor intensive re-stocking activities, often found in the smaller store contexts, were not assigned to cashiers. Those duties were designated to specific, organizational personnel hired for just that purpose.

Cashier Expectations

Twenty-six cashiers discussed what specific qualities an ideal cashier exhibits. The majority of the cashiers, eighteen, stated some combination of the two traits, friendliness and quickness/accuracy, as the foundation for an ideal cashier. Seventeen of the eighteen emphasized the interactional aspect of their jobs as taking precedence

over the productivity side. Importantly, only nine cashiers, eight from the original twenty-six respondents and one from the combination response, suggested the productivity side as paramount.

Small Stores

Allen, a Southside Grocery cashier, emphasizes the importance of attitude in performing emotional labor as well as with accomplishing the physical task at hand:

Politeness, I guess, and definitely a positive attitude. You've got to have a positive attitude. Patience. Accuracy definitely. Because I mean, if you're sitting there and going, you're typing -- I mean punching -- all the numbers and the prices and stuff like that, and you're going really fast, that's good in one way. But if you mess up, then it takes twice as long as if you just went slow and accurate[ly]. So you have to be, you know, patient and all that kind of stuff. And mature about it, definitely. Because if you're not mature about it, you're just not going to get anywhere with it.

One of Allen's co-workers, Karen, describes the ideal cashier as "flexible, efficient, and friendly." She explains some cashiers spend too much time talking with the customers or select inappropriate topics for conversations. Thus, an exemplary cashier would interact with customers but not to the point where it becomes inefficient.

Karen describes another colleague's job performance as an example:

She talks to the customers and bothers them (laughs). {So you think maybe she talks a little too much or?} Way too much. {And you think it annoys the customers?} The customers and the co-workers. {Just cause you're kind of picking up her slack maybe?} Yeah, yeah, we pick up her slack cause it takes her way too long and it's annoying hearing about a cat's urinary track infection or whatever she wants to talk about that day.

Medium-sized Stores

At Boulevard Market, one cashier, Wendy, explains the combination of skills, emotional labor along with physical task proficiency, necessary to accomplish the work:

You gotta be outgoing, nice. And well, with the cashiers [sic] we have -- where we have to punch everything in -- you gotta try to be a little bit quick. And you gotta pay, give your full attention to the customer.

Another of Wendy's colleague, Gwen, emphasizes emotional labor is preeminent to performing the job well:

You have to be outgoing in a way. And you have to ... you have to get along with people and you have to have ... to enjoy interactions with people. I mean if you're just standing back there and you don't want to talk to anyone cause you're nervous or something, that's not good. {Anything else?} Happy disposition.

Ryan, a cashier at Foodstuffs, the other medium-sized store in the study, prioritized what he considers most important:

Got to be good at customer interaction that's like the main, number one [characteristic of an ideal cashier]. And then after that, then you have just got basic stuff. You just got to know what you are doing, like math, I guess, [and be] good at dealing with money. Don't get too aggravated because you run into all types of personalities. Some people may be mean, some aren't.

One of his co-workers, Meredith, discusses the importance of a cashier's attitude to performing emotional labor, the distinction between knowing what is a cashier's fault versus the store's responsibility and how both of these, attitude and accountability, influence the other:

You have to be really patient. You have to learn to take things. You can't talk back to the customer....It may not necessarily be that the customer is always right but they should probably leave you thinking they are. You know, so you just kind of like have to swallow it and swallow your pride really and realize that they're not really talking directly to you. They're talking about the store or, in most cases. I mean, sometimes it's something wrong that you did or something wrong [that] they think you did, and they do mean you. But in most cases, it's something that the computer did or something like that. And they may or may not blame you for it. But you just have pretty much to sort out what is your fault and what isn't your fault and just deal with it in that respect.

Thus, according to Meredith, ideal cashiers will readily assume responsibility for organizational practices or policies beyond their own control in order to expedite the service encounter. Being able to distinguish, at least in one's mind, where the accountability rests assists in de-personalizing the customer's dissatisfaction and promoting the essential attitude cashiers need to have in order to enact the emotional labor required to either process or transfer the displeased customer. Similarly, Carol, a co-worker of Meredith's, agrees that having patience with difficult customers actually assists in avoiding confrontations: "You have to really have a good attitude....not letting you get mad at them and causing an argument."

Large Stores

One Carter's cashier, Connie, provides an overview of what characteristics make an ideal cashier:

A willingness to work, good communication skills, I don't think they necessarily have to be fast but they do have to be careful in what

they're doing; attentive both to what they're doing and to the customer, and honest....

One of her colleagues, Daniel, mentions the smile as a meaningful element to include in the ideal interaction, "Friendly greeting and smile, which I don't do enough of and I think it's very important." Daniel notes that when he is shopping, he prefers store employees to be courteous to him, so he extends the same courtesy when he serves others. He suggests that the superior cashier should be "reasonably fast but accurate. People don't like to be charged in error, leave [the] store and find [an] overcharge."

Another Carter's cashier, Leslie, feels the ideal cashier should refrain from talking amongst other cashiers or customers while processing an order. She cites a fellow cashier's job performance as an example:

...this guy named [Matthew], talks a lot while he's cashiering, to other people, if there's certain people that he's friends with around and you can tell the customers are just kind of like 'Hmmm.' He's talking to the other people but not having to do with cashiering, not like asking codes, just like talking talking. {And you can kind of sense that the customers aren't really particularly liking that?} Yeah, they don't, they don't want you talking to somebody else if it's not work-related.

Thus, Leslie distinguishes whether a diversion of attention away from the customer at hand is legitimate or not. Some distractions are more acceptable than others such as momentarily assisting another cashier with a specific code or procedural question. The ideal cashier would skillfully offer assistance to colleagues but would avoid participating in prolonged conversations of a private, or even public, nature with co-workers or other customers.

Conclusion

It is apparent that the emotional labor grocery store cashiers engage in with customers is recognized by both management and cashiers as an extremely important aspect of their jobs. And for the most part, managers and cashiers are remarkably similar in beliefs regarding what qualities constitute an ideal cashier. This consensus of opinion signifies the successful conveyance of management's expectations onto their employees, at least as far as being able to articulate the organization's viewpoint. A later chapter, Chapter 9, will specifically examine if attitudes and behaviors are always in accord with management's directives. But before this attitude/behavior relationship can be explored, the next logical question at this juncture is, how does management plan the labor process among its cashiers and train them sufficiently to result in this unity of expectations? And secondly, how are cashiers' job performances regulated and sanctioned to ensure at least the minimum performance standards are achieved and maintained? The following three chapters will examine each organizational type in relation to these questions. The predominant labor control system utilized in each organizational type will also be identified. The analysis begins with the small store setting (Chapter 5), progresses to the medium-sized environment (Chapter 6), and culminates with the large store context (Chapter 7). Cashier perspectives are included as well.

This present chapter also revealed that all managers selectively screened job applicants in regards to how effectively they perceive the applicant would be at

engaging in emotional labor for the store. While this criteria is not formalized in content, it is present during the interviewing process as a subjective assessment of the applicant's friendliness and personality.

CHAPTER 5

SMALL STORE CONTEXTS

This is the first of three organizational types each of which will be discussed separately over the next three chapters. Within each organizational type, findings relevant to training, job performance evaluations, and sanctioning are discussed in relation to the specific store under investigation. Cashier experiences are then explored to determine if consistency exists between organizational conceptualization and actual practice. But before the discussion commences, recall that for the "original" small store in the study, data is incomplete -- but illustrative nevertheless -- due to its untimely demise. Ironically, the other small store is no longer in existence either.

Adam's Grocery: Incomplete Case

Training

Adam's Grocery relied entirely upon on-the-job training for new cashiers. This consisted of observing an experienced worker, touring the store to learn the placement of items and general layout, and spending some time bagging customers' groceries. The owner usually "phased in [new cashiers] working by themselves" after three or four nights of training. At Adam's Grocery the register also had the capacity to be placed in training mode, so cashiers could practice more difficult transactions like food stamp purchases. No handbooks or manuals were distributed to cashiers; all

information was verbal in nature. Both the owner and the owner's son discussed the importance of being friendly with the new cashiers.

Evaluating Job Performance

At Adam's Grocery, cashiers' job performances were evaluated on an informal basis. Adam's Grocery's manager specified either his father or he was up front routinely and could observe and speak to a problem, such as cashier discourtesy, if one became apparent.

Southside Grocery

Training

Similar to the previous store, Southside Grocery also utilized on-the-job training for new cashiers. Job information was imparted primarily by working with an experienced cashier. New cashiers were also expected to become familiar with the store's layout and learn bagging techniques. At Southside Grocery, training was limited to four hours instead of a few shifts. After the initial training period, new cashiers began processing customer orders immediately -- no opportunities existed to practice transactions. Customers were advised that the cashier was new to the store. The owner did prefer the initial training be done the day prior to the cashier's first working shift "...so it's still fresh in their mind when they start." The owner emphasized to the cashiers the importance of friendly customer service. Similar to

the other small store, all job information was verbal in nature.

The owner deliberately plans the labor process to include few explicit policies:

You want your cashiers to be productive and efficient but you want 'em to be nice....You want them to be able to communicate with customers, other employees, supervision ... on a fairly comfortable, easy basis....I've always felt like the more rules you throw at a cashier and the more policies where you restrict 'em, the longer average time it takes to get a customer out. And so I try to hire cashiers that have a good sense of what the grocery business is about, what service is about primarily, and give them some authority to handle things at the register without having to bog the line down with, what I consider to be, trivial questions. So, as far as it goes, we don't really have any strict policies that we adhere to. We try to base it on hiring right to start with and then reorienting cashiers as things change. [emphasis added]

Thus, the owner imparts expectations rather than regulations to his cashiers. And, as demonstrated in the previous chapter, relies on hiring individuals well-suited for emotional labor.

Evaluating Job Performances

Southside Grocery's manager indicated there was no standard format regarding evaluations of employees at his store. He tended to consider items like how well a cashier's money till balanced at the end of a shift, lack of sick days/tardiness, few requests for time off, and a "balance between, you know, friendliness but giving service in a timely fashion." He indicated:

The thing you do look for ... is a balance. You don't want to love the customer to death while you got eight other people standing around....You've, you've got to be nice to 'em but you've also got to get the other people through or then for the sake of treating that one

nice you just p.o.-ed about eight people standing behind them.

Thus, the necessary "balance" noted above between emotional labor and physical task proficiency is the crux of the labor process in this small grocery store as well as in the service sector in general. The accomplishment of emotional labor alongside of physical tasks -- both within an organizationally dictated time frame -- demonstrates the constraining character the organization asserts upon the service encounter. This, along with possible strategies cashiers employ to reduce the tension that results from such an arrangement, will be discussed further in Chapter 9.

Rewarding Good Job Performances

Cashiers are eligible for pay increases every six months based on job performance. The owner reflects on his management philosophy by comparing his previous nine years of experience managing a chain store to his time spent running his own store:

What I try to do is, of course, I give vacations but I don't have a formal policy, quite honestly, for sick pay, for birthdays off, or holidays off or that kind of thing. But what I have managed to do is, I've created an environment that most of my people, my good people want to work in [here] and they wouldn't want to go to work for a large chain. And I have managed chain stores and I know, you know, there are a lot of strict policies about, especially if you've got a unionized shop, about benefits and time off for birthdays and holidays and vacations and constantly getting them off but in most of those cases those people want to get away from the job because they're not happy in the job. They're in [it], they're there for the money and for the benefits only and and I've seen that side, I've managed that way, and I know that's not the best way to manage a store and most people aren't

happy in an environment like that, so what I try to do is create a good work environment where the people are making probably ten percent less than what they would make working for a large dealer but treating them right and treating them with respect....So, you know, as far as benefits go, I don't really have a formal benefits procedure but they know if they have a funeral to go to or they have some reasonable request, then I'm going to honor it.

The owner expands on this idea noting that if "you take the emphasis off of money benefits, bonuses, and put it on more of the, you know, relating to their problems and relating to their families, a better relationship is constructed." He indicated greater leeway and more exceptions are granted to exemplary employees. Thus, at Southside Grocery, cashiers are rewarded in terms of monetary increases, individualized circumstances, and general store atmosphere.

Instead of the reliance on a structural form of control such as bureaucratic control, the labor process is organized predominantly around the principles of simple control. The paternalistic control methods utilized by the owner hinges upon highly nurtured employer/employee relationships which, ultimately, yield differing outcomes, and most likely, favoritism. Under simple control, cashiers have no formal avenue to redress grievances or unpopular decisions regarding time off, additional duties, and the like, and must rely entirely upon direct appeals to the owner. In fact, the work conditions become a form of labor control. For example, scheduling consideration and benefits are dispersed based upon the owner's personal appraisal of a cashier's performance -- an appraisal that, in effect, cannot be effectively contested.

Disciplining Poor Job Performances

Southside Grocery's owner initially responds to unsatisfactory job performances with verbal warnings. He explains that the strength of the reprimands depend entirely upon the situation:

It depends on the severity of the thing obviously. Most of the time, I can take them in the office and talk to 'em and read them the riot act or whatever you want to call it. And at that point, after a meeting like that, they are either going to stay and turn the corner and be a good cashier or they're going to quit.

In addition, he might overlook small transgressions if it involves a particularly good employee. Once again, this illustrates the presence of simple control strategies in place as certain employees receive preferential treatment. He laughingly refers to one of his cashiers whose interactions are too lengthy at times:

I've got one cashier that I have to sort of move along like that. She knows everybody that comes in there by name, knows their families, their birthdays, their anniversaries, she knows everything about 'em but consequently she'll stand there and talk with 'em for thirty minutes and (laughs) you've got to, sort of have a balance there.

Thus, this cashier's job performance is imbalanced because she exceeds the organization's allocated time frame for emotional labor execution and in doing so, becomes unproductive labor. Yet her performance is effective in the sense that it contributes to the highly visible personal-like relationships between store employees and customers that, emphasized earlier by the owner, are only found in the small store environment.

Southside Grocery's owner indicates suspension from duty is a possibility as

well. He also relies on one other disciplining technique before termination:

So most of the time, I don't really have to fire them, most of the time I can put enough pressure on 'em where if they're not really a good employee they get the message...

Within the labor process, this wielding of personal influence on an individualized basis confirms the presence of simple control as a labor control strategy.

Southside Grocery's owner discusses one cashier he plans on terminating:

I'll probably release her after the end of this week...She's, ... I think her problem, honestly, I think her actual problem is she's hyperactive and she's too preoccupied to deal with what's going on right in front of her face and generally that's the customer. Two weeks after I hire her, she wondered when she was going to get a raise. And in the course of that same conversation she said 'Well, I would like to tell you what hours I'm going to work now' and, you know, thinking the store existed for her instead of vice versa....This girl has only been working about a month and this is the third time she's called in sick, and she's not particularly good to the customers. It's not that, she's not rude to the customers. She's just not real friendly because she's living inside her head somehow and not really realizing what's going on right in front of her.

Thus, the cashier's minimal adherence to emotional labor guidelines, along with other performance transgressions such as unplanned absences and lack of availability factored into the owner's decision that she was unsuitable to continue working at his store. Recall that highly developed employer/employee relationships are the basis of simple control strategies and, if effective, promote loyalty to the owner thereby inspiring good job performance. Based on her past performance, it was evident that the cashier was uninterested in following the owner's directives. Since her loyalty to the owner was questionable, there was no reason for the employment relationship to

continue.

Cashier Experiences

Training

Helen, a cashier at Southside Grocery, explains what the owner expects in terms of job performance:

Well, my particular boss prefers you to be friendly with the customers. If you're not feeling good then you try not to let the customer know it. You can have a bad day ... and you still can't let the customers know it. It's just not the thing to do. {And how do you manage that?} (laughs) I bite my tongue a lot of times. Just count to ten and try to cool off. It's not easy always....you know, try to say 'Hi, how are you today?' or if they have a problem, I listen to it, 'Oh, wish we could help you' or whatever, 'If there's anything we can do.' Sometimes if they just have somebody to listen to, then they leave the problem there. But the boss wants us to, to always try and be friendly and don't be grouchy with the customers and cut them short if they want to talk to you, unless you have a long line. [emphasis added]

Thus, Helen notes how the expectations surrounding emotional labor vary in response to organizational features such as customer congestion in the checkout area. If a bottleneck occurs, customers should be processed quickly with minimal interaction in order to increase productivity.

Another Southside Grocery cashier, Allen, confirms the owner's expectations:

They wanted me to be very polite, you know, no matter what, you know, if there's ..., if the customer had any problem with any of the things to always be totally optimistic about it and if I couldn't answer the question, then I ask the manager, make sure I get the manager.

Both Southside Grocery cashiers indicated the owner provided the general guidelines

of being friendly and listening to the customers but it was their decision on exactly what to say.

Additional Responsibilities. Ann learned that the allocation of work in the store hinges upon an employee's job classification. She elaborates that females are routinely classified as cashiers with no explicit stocking duties. Conversely, males are classified either as 'person on the floor' or bag boys -- both of which include stocking responsibilities. Allen explains his job duties in addition to cashiering:

Cause the manager will give me kind of a little list of things, you know, that I definitely need to take care of and then those are the first things I do. {And that's things throughout the store?} Right. Putting drinks up, milk, all that kind of stuff. {Now does every cashier get this?} Only the males. Every once in a blue moon you'll see a female do it, but rarely. Females are basically cashiers. {What does your list typically include besides milk?} ...putting the fresh milk back in the refrigerators, the drinks, ... tak[ing] out the trash, sweeping, ... stock[ing] -- big boxes of stock, crates, eggs -- all [of] those things that go on the shelves, pricing, [and] lottery.

In the five months that Allen has worked at the store, he witnessed a female cashier receive a list similar in nature once.

Allen explains that cashiering is different in nature than floor responsibilities:

I'm fine with the register. It's just, [be]cause you deal with people at the register, you know. You don't deal with people when you're doing the milk or stocking or all that kind of stuff. You can say or do whatever you want while you're doing it ... as long as you get it done. But when it comes to the cash register, you have to be on your best behavior basically.

Thus, Allen recognizes the additional organizational constraints regarding the

emotional labor requirements of cashiering not present when performing manual labor.

Allen admits some confusion over why he needs to run the register in addition to all of his other responsibilities:

...I don't understand why we would have to operate the register if you have the girls up there doing it. I mean, bagging is something I can definitely understand because ... it's not right to make the female do all the cashiering and bagging at the same time. Because, I mean, it would take forever and they do that sometimes. But when they call me to bag ... I mean, that's totally understandable. But when they want you to do the cash register and everything else at the same time ... that just doesn't make sense to me.... [emphasis added]

Allen's narrative demonstrates the additional pressure some employees experience because they need to accomplish other tasks. This probably influences the degree of emotional labor if many tasks await their attention.

At Southside Grocery, every employee is cross-trained and should be able to perform any job. Oftentimes, bag boys run the registers to assist with the flow of customers out of the store as Allen discussed earlier. Occasionally, Ann works the floor but primarily she cashiers. To the best of her knowledge, no wage differential exists initially between cashier and bag boy/floor person. As discussed earlier, merit increases over time would account for any known differences. Ann sees the main responsibility of the female cashiers is the emotional labor display. In contrast, her male co-workers are valued for their physical strength:

Yeah, most of the guys lift and the girls [do the] cashiering....The [guys] do the manually [sic] labor work, like the old saying that

'Women do the hosting and greet the guest coming in the door,' that's sort of what us [sic] cashiers are doing.

Karen, another co-worker, agrees with Ann's assessment, "the girls are suppose to be the cashiers and the boys aren't, but the boys do [cashier] ... they're suppose to be doing the stock."

Ann discusses her understanding of the owner's rationale for the different classification based upon gender:

...The only reason the management sees it that way is, is that there's a lot of lifting being done when you're doing the stocking but, it's not....[Bonnie] who's head cashier during the day, who's kind of gotten [in]to a management position, she's on the floor now, so she does a lot of lifting. But we still got [sic] the men around so it's not like she has to do [it]. She goes to the supervisor and says 'Look, I need help here, would you please help me?' ...so if we have to do the stock or in the interest of any of the lifting, it's not but so heavy....I can lift it or, most of the girls can lift [it]. It's not but so heavy. It's like what you carry if your moving. A box -- I don't know -- thirty, thirty-five pounds is probably the most we have to lift, if anything.

The perceived rationale to justify this classification system -- the inability of females to lift stock -- falters on two counts. The first being that the weight of stock under consideration is not extraordinary. It is not beyond the realm of a female's capacity. This is evident in that presently at the store Bonnie routinely engages in this physical labor. And secondly, females are able to request assistance to move stock when necessary. Thus, some other explanation must be underlying this system of allocating work at the store.

During our interview, Ann also expressed an interest about becoming a

manager at the store but explained that was highly unlikely. She discussed the owner's viewpoint:

'Cause he's more like[ly] to hire a man as a manager anyway. We've only had one woman, actual woman, manager....I see a reason why as in the sense of, because a robbery....Just [as] somebody [is] closing up ... There are usually girls, either me or another girl, working late at night. The threat ...It's like, you're going to have a more harder [sic] time robbing a place, maybe, if you've got ... a guy [manager], you know, young, strong.

The potential threat of robbery effectively justifies the exclusion of females into management, especially the night manager position. Conceiving of female employees as physically weaker and needing protection and thus limiting job responsibilities, in part, due to these inaccurate beliefs is the rationale behind the classification system. Traditional gender roles held by the owner are reinforced by the manner in which he plans the labor process at his store.

The traditional gender role assumptions do not end with the owner. Other employees hold these beliefs as well. Ann explains one on-going quarrel over job responsibilities with a co-worker:

He sees [cashiering] as a female job I think. Especially [when] I've asked him to wipe counters. [Joe] said 'That's a female job.' Well, it's not just a female job, it's for whoever [sic] is on the register. I mean, I've gotten so mad ... I've said 'Look, fine. You just stay on the register. I'll clean the counters.'

Ann realizes the necessity of cleaning around the register and that it is a responsibility of whomever is cashiering, not a function of one's gender. In order to ensure the task is accomplished, Ann avoids an argument and completes it herself. While it is

easier in the short-run, it actually reinforces traditional gender roles rather than challenges them.

Performance Evaluations and Sanctions

Allen, a Southside Grocery cashier, discusses how his job performance is assessed:

I suppose I've heard, I mean, the owner always tells me that I'm doing a great job. He [is] just like 'Just like I thought you'd be' and all this kind of stuff....[Another cashier] told me that if you work a lot that means that he likes you and I noticed as the more I worked, the more days I was working. I ended getting like four days a week, you start out at two days a week and then it went to three, then it went to four and I said 'You know, I can't work four days a week, I really can't' and then he cut me back down to three.

Thus, Allen received a combination of both verbal praise from the owner and an increase in scheduled hours as evidence he was meeting the store owner's performance expectations.

Two other cashiers at Southside Grocery, Helen and Ann, also indicate no formal evaluation procedures exist at the store. Employees are eligible for a yearly raise based on job performance. This evaluation is based solely upon the owner's overall impressions of the cashier's job performance for a specified time period: either positive or negative, worthy or not. Thus, denying a pay increase is one method the owner uses to illustrate his dissatisfaction with a cashier's job performance.

A second method, used year-round, is summoning the problematic cashier into his office for a talk. The absence of such a summons indicates, at least, acceptable performance. Helen concurs, explaining her performance must be adequate because "...so far, he hasn't yelled at me or called me up in the office." Since raises come yearly and owner feedback regarding job performance is indiscriminate, Ann often relies on customer comments to determine if she's doing well. Some customers seek her out and wait to go through her line which brings her much satisfaction and constantly re-affirms her mastery of the job.

Ann has received some feedback concerning small transgressions, "little things like 'Don't sit on the counters' or 'Don't read the magazines up here.' Nothing real major just little minor things." Above all, Ann indicates that a cashier knows s/he is performing well if the owner or night manager "will interact with you besides on a business level. On a personal level, if they're teasing you." Thus, to Ann this coveted type of interaction is a reward but, as discussed earlier, it also establishes the foundation for simple control strategies to be effective.

Conclusion

The predominant control system in the small store context is simple in design. The control of the cashier's labor process hinges upon the everyday supervision of the owner, highly cultivated personal relationships between employer and employee, and variable rather than standardized outcomes. This results in favoritism and

paternalistic treatment among the employees at times. Bureaucratic control is minimally present but does not outweigh the simple control exercised by the owner.

Under simple control, the owner stresses the importance of emotional labor. The exact expression and techniques are left up to the individual cashier -- as long as the owner's expectations are fulfilled. The next chapter will examine what transpires when a store begins to increase in size.

CHAPTER 6

MEDIUM-SIZED STORE CONTEXTS

Of the three organizational types in the study, the medium-sized context represents the transitional case. Medium-sized stores have expanded to the point where owners no longer have a daily presence in the store and thus, must delegate their authority. Within this organizational context, stores also begin to have more employees working simultaneously and a greater number of locations.

Boulevard Market

Training

Cashiers do receive a small company handbook documenting such procedural items like sick days, dress codes, disciplining strategies, and the like. Similar to the small store contexts, on-the-job training is utilized to impart job knowledge. The initial placement with an experienced cashier might last a couple of shifts or be reduced if the new employee has sufficient previous work experience.

Boulevard Market had previously been under the ownership of a regional chain, known as The Cupboard. According to my classification design, had the store's ownership not changed, it would have been considered large in stature. The present manager at Boulevard Market had also served as the store manager for The Cupboard as well. He was able to compare the training methods between the different contexts, providing useful insight:

When we were part of [The Cupboard] we did have a formal training program where they went somewhere which was out of the store and were trained for three to four days before they came to work. And it, in my opinion, it wasn't as effective as working in the store. {And why?} Because it looked like the training that they got at the other place, even if it was the same type cash register ... [with] the added pressure of dealing with the customers and things, it looked like they, they were not ready to be left by themselves [sic]. The purpose of the formal training was supposed to be that they could come to the store and [there] wouldn't be any nonproductive labor involved with training 'em. In other words, the nonproductive labor was taken care of before they arrived at the store, but that wasn't the case.

Thus, this manager recounts how under different ownership, training was centralized but ineffectual. Significantly, the training provided cashiers actual "hands-on" experience with machines but overlooked the emotional labor requirements. Thus, at the outset cashiers often had difficulty with being able to process customers despite the intent of offsite training. They still required a transitional period to incorporate actual customer interactions in conjunction with their physical task knowledge. This points to the fact that the emotional labor performed during a service encounter is not merely supplemental to the physical task but rather is an integral aspect that has to be performed -- to some degree -- to accomplish the physical task.

Evaluating Job Performances

Boulevard Market's manager relies on observation of a cashiers' performances, lack of complaints, and their attitudes toward the customers to evaluate cashiers' job performance. He specified "whether they show contempt for the customers or

whether they want to help the customers" as primary indicators of their attitude.

Rewarding Good Job Performances

At Boulevard Market cashiers are rewarded in three ways: pay increases, praise, and scheduling considerations. To begin with, cashiers are eligible for pay increases every six months based on job performance. The store manager also relies on verbal praise if a cashier is performing well, "my management style is that I do try to tell 'em, 'Hey, when you do good [sic], you do good'." The last technique is "by giving 'em the hours that they desire."

Disciplining Poor Job Performances

Boulevard Market's manager uses verbal warnings but adds an additional technique:

I'll talk with 'em or give 'em a warning, cut their hours. See we don't have any full-time cashier positions. All of our cashier positions are part-time, so there are no guaranteed number of hours.

Additionally, he follows a particular, standard sequence of events to discipline his cashiers. The first action consists of a verbal warning. The second involves a written warning given to the employee and copied to the employee's personnel file. The third stage is dismissal.

Cashier Experiences

Training

Janet, a cashier for almost two years, explains what management stressed:

They try to make it so you're friendly as possible. Customer service is a big thing that they try to push....Usually, smile, 'Hi, how are you?', 'Thank you, come again' stuff like that.

Wendy, a co-worker of Janet's, agrees about the emotional labor requirements of the work. She explains the management advises cashiers "...to be polite and nice to the person....It's expected though. I mean, they don't really stress it that much cause, I mean, you know [what you are supposed to do]." In contrast, another co-worker, Steve, notes the lack of direction he received regarding emotional labor:

Nah, they didn't really tell you anything. {Uhm, how did your performance compare to what they wanted? If you weren't really sure with what they wanted?} Well, the whole time I worked there, they never told you anything about how to treat a customer or anything, but I already knew cause I worked in a couple other grocery stores.

Janet discusses how she learned the job through "trial and error" after she completed on-the-job training with an experienced cashier. Steve mentions he did not receive any training whatsoever, in his case "They just gave me a till and I knew what to do." He relied entirely on his previous work experience.

Two other Boulevard Market cashiers corroborate Janet's assessment about the management's focus. Susan indicates cashiers need to "acknowledge people, say 'Thank you.' People don't understand [that] without them [customers], there's no you." Susan proceeds to discuss the high level of competition among grocery stores in the area. Gwen also discusses the emphasis given to customer interaction in her

training:

Oh, when I first came they told me you always have to be pleasant, say 'How are you?', 'How are you feeling today?', and tell them 'Thank you' and 'Have a nice day', 'Thank you for coming' always be, always be nice even if they're really rude, you know.

She admits to feeling "bombarded" with the one day on-the-job training placement she received.

Additional Responsibilities. Steve discusses the division of labor at

Boulevard Market is apparent in the hiring process:

Usually, people are hired only for certain things. For only certain positions, like they hire cashiers and that's all they do. But I was hired, since I know how to do everything, ... [the manager said] wherever they need me at that day, that's what I do...{How many people over there are classified as 'everything'?} Just me [sic] and Andrew.

Steve explains that whenever the store is short-staffed in relation to cashiers or cashiers cannot make their assigned shifts, he operates the register. Otherwise he performs manual labor throughout the store. Thus, gender as a basis for allocating work exists at Boulevard Market, the smaller medium-sized store. The majority of cashiers are female and the 'everything' category, though small, is entirely male.

Janet, a co-worker of Steve's, discusses how occasionally the manager will make her stock merchandise -- an activity that is not in her job description:

...it's like, they stick you with an aisle and say 'You can't go home until you have that aisle done.' And yeah, you're kind of like 'O.K., I'm suppose to get off in a half an hour, you know.'....If you're like

doing cans or whatever, you've got to make sure everything's evened up and blocked up. {So that was, I guess, frustrating for you?} Yeah, cause I mean, they'd always end up letting you go home, maybe not exactly on time, but they'd make it so you felt like you had to rush and get everything done....They didn't hire too many [stockers]. And when they did, they wouldn't [discipline them]. If they didn't work up to speed, they wouldn't punish them. They'd just make us do it.

Thus, cashiers at Boulevard Market had extra job duties of stocking merchandise whenever the actual stockers responsible for this work were unable, for whatever reason, to accomplish it. Janet emphasizes that it was not an aspect of her job, "But was an added thing that they got us to do when nobody else got it done." This organizational practice accentuates the lack of control cashiers experience in relation to their labor process. It undoubtedly influences emotional labor enactment, especially when cashiers realize they cannot leave the premises until the extra labor is performed.

Performance Evaluations and Sanctions

Wendy summarizes how the evaluation process is primarily observational but only negative findings tend to be discussed:

I guess they, they watch us, you know. And they really, if you're doing something wrong they sit down and explain it to you. But as far [as] doing something right, you know, they really don't ... congratulate you for it because it's expected.

A co-worker of Wendy's, Claire, concurs: "They don't really say anything unless you come up short [in your register] a lot or if somebody complains about you."

Conversely, another colleague, Susan, was recognized at a company meeting: "The manager embarrassed me at a meeting one time. He just said that he 'wished that people would welcome people [to the store] like Susan'."

And lastly, Gwen, explains the feedback she has received regarding her performance:

I haven't been yelled at yet (laughs). [They advised] just for me to watch out on the different category keys like the meats and the deli [items], I get those confused every once in awhile.

Because Boulevard Market uses manual registers as opposed to a optical scanning system, cashiers have more responsibility in terms of processing considerations.

Foodstuffs

Training

At the larger medium-sized store, Foodstuffs, cashiers receive a booklet when hired that advises about company policies and procedures. It also stresses courtesy towards the customer and closes with the following reminder:

REMEMBER.....

It only takes a few kind words for customers to remember [Foodstuffs]. In the checkstand, it takes a smile, a friendly attitude, courteous service, accuracy, speed and good appearance to make a customer want to come back to [Foodstuffs]. You may be the last contact with a customer as they leave the store. Make it pleasant and memorable.

Be Proud of Your Job...

We Want to be Proud of You...

After cashiers read the handbook, they are instructed to sign the coversheet stating they have done so and return it to the manager. This procedure merely indicates a greater level of formalization the cashiers must signify they received a handbook and are knowledgeable about its contents.

Foodstuffs primarily utilizes on-the-job training to convey task information.

As Foodstuffs' manager explains,

...well, what we do is we take them down there and explain the operation of the register as far as the technical aspect of it and, of course, we'll go over the check cashing policies and different things. And we'll put 'em in the checkstand and we'll put someone with them and we'll just let them sort of go through and make whatever mistakes they're gonna make or [answer] any questions they might have. And we'll keep somebody out there with them for a couple hours and then we'll usually put them in between two experienced checkers.

Thus, over the course of the shift a new cashier at Foodstuffs is gradually weaned from working directly with an experienced worker to relying upon cashiers in the adjacent aisles if questions arise. Before any cashier is assigned their own register, the manager first explains that "the most important thing is contact with the customer: greeting the customer, being friendly, trying to have complete focus on each customer as they come along."

Evaluating Job Performances

Foodstuffs' manager plans to annually evaluate cashiers' job performances. The evaluation phase has yet to occur but will most likely be formalized in nature.

Cashiers will be evaluated on items such as punctuality, attendance, and accuracy. The latter he considers most important since it affects all the departments in the store. If the merchandise is rung improperly, those departments do not receive appropriate credit for the sales. Friendliness toward the customer will also be included in the proposed evaluation phase which includes "the smile, the greeting...going the extra mile."

Rewarding Good Job Performance

Foodstuffs' manager primarily relies on pay increases and scheduling considerations to acknowledge good job performance. As the manager explains,

A lot of times we reward by giving the hours that the cashier requests or the days off that they request. We try to help 'em out, you know, as much as possible as far as scheduling. Raises are considered a reward.

Presently, the manager indicates that no special awards exist for outstanding service but that is not necessarily his cashiers' main interest:

Right now, most of my cashiers are part-time, they're school kids. The main thing I think they're looking for right now instead of recognition is they're looking to get as many hours as possible, to make as much money as possible.

Thus, it is quite effective to utilize scheduling considerations as a recognition technique.

Disciplining Poor Job Performances

If a cashier is inefficient in handling money, specific procedures are enacted:

We put cashiers on something called "cash control" whenever their tills are short at the end of the day. When there are continuous shortages over a period of time, we would probably give them so many days off. I haven't had too many that I've had to do that to but normally, I would suspend them for three days if they have cash shortages in excess of a certain amount....it's treated as a failure to perform work and is subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. Any amounts over these limits must be reimbursed to the company.

Foodstuffs' manager comments on the rarity of firing cashiers in his store, noting that "the only people I've terminated so far are people who I have found to be dishonest, ... not mistakes but actual dishonesty."

Cashier Perspectives

Training

One Foodstuffs cashier, Ryan, recounts his on-the-job training experience and how it left him feeling unprepared:

I learned, [Jim] taught me how to be a cashier. He's another employee. He just threw me in. He taught me a couple basic things, but mostly when I first started I had to ask somebody something every like three minutes....they was [sic] like 'well, O.K., you push this, you push this, you push this, bye.' You know what I mean? I'd say 'Oh, how do I do this, how do I do this?' And the customers used to get aggravated at me most of the time. {So was [Jim] at your register with you or was he working another register?} He was at [my] register but most of the time he was away because he had to take care of his own customers.

Another Foodstuffs cashier, Meredith, worked at the same geographical location under the former company, Provisions. Meredith compared how she was initially

trained at Provisions -- what would have been a large store according to my classification scheme -- to what the current process now entails:

Well, truthfully, the one thing I really don't like about [Foodstuffs] is they really don't train you (laughs). There are no training programs at all. When it was [Provisions] you had to go through a week long program to be a cashier, and go through, you had take and pass certain tests. You were drilled on certain things like how to react to situations and you knew what you were doing when you got on the register. And now, it's nothing like that. I believe you were observing me actually one time when there was a person [that] they just kind of threw up on the register. And actually, he didn't even want to be there. He was a bagger and he kind of wanted to stay a bagger. And they said, 'You're going to cashier today' and he didn't know the first thing about it. I mean, they gave him a really, really quick summary and said 'If you need help, ask anybody else.' Which if I'm not busy, I'm glad to help. In fact, [even] if I am busy, I'm glad to help which usually runs me into some problems (laughs) because I then feel bad because I'm ignoring a customer or that I'm ignoring the cashier. It puts us in bad positions ... so they really don't tell us much.

Furthermore, according to Meredith what little training is offered relates to the physical aspects and overlooks the emotional labor. She explains, "...I've actually never heard anything from anyone saying to be congenial, et cetera." Ryan, a co-worker of Meredith's at Foodstuffs, also worked under the former company, Provisions, as well. Under Provisions, employees were advised to avoid inflammatory topics of discussion. Ryan recalls being advised not to talk "...to the customers about religion, politics, or sports because you can get in an argument or whatever." Under Foodstuffs, no such conversational restrictions exist. Both Meredith and Ryan's experiences are significant because they again illustrate how

organizational size influences the expression of emotional labor. The reverting of organizational context -- from large to medium -- exposes not only the encompassment of emotional labor in the large context, but also accents the absence of similar consideration in the medium.

Meredith also elaborates on the lack of training uniformity in regards to new technological acquisitions at the store:

'Cause we got a new check verifying system with this register and basically I just had to read the directions. They pasted directions up on the side and you taught yourself and if you had questions you just asked somebody else who had already asked somebody else. And basically, the same thing happened with the credit card system when they established that. I just, I came in and there it was...and, but once again, I had to just ask somebody you know but probably, maybe, the day they established it, they probably gave a little tiny training thing to everybody but I just didn't happen to be there so I didn't get that, so it's just a matter of being at the right place at the right time.

Thus, a lesser degree of formalization is evident surrounding the acquisition of new technologies at Foodstuffs because cashiers receive varying amounts of materials concerning technological upgrades, including no information.

Additional Responsibilities. Of the five cashiers interviewed, no references are made to additional duties such as stocking. One cashier, Jessica, noted that under the previous company, cleaning duties were incorporated into the cashier's job description. Under Foodstuffs, those obligations were removed.

Performance Evaluations and Sanctions

Ruth discusses what the lack of organization feedback regarding her job performance signifies to her:

Well, to me as long as they don't stay at you about something that's good enough....Because if they don't have to ride you constantly, you must be doing something right, you know. Because if they've got to stay on me then that tells me 'Hey, I'm not doing my job as well as I should,' you know {so the lack of saying anything} tells me something of course. {tells you that you're at least satisfactory if not more?} I hope so (laughs) because what I'm saying is this, you know, if someone's got to come out every five minutes and tell me this and that and the other, then that tells me 'Well, there's something I'm not doing right.'

Recall that Ruth is the same cashier nominated as outstanding by her manager. She does not conceive of herself as such because of the absence of positive performance feedback.

Another co-worker, Meredith, indicates again the uncertainty surrounding the evaluation process under the new ownership. She states that previously, evaluations were conducted routinely and cashiers knew what to expect. Presently, this degree of formalization is not the case. This is most likely attributed to the organizational context changing -- from large to medium -- discussed earlier. Meredith explains how she recently inquired about a raise and was told she needed to wait until the outcome of the yearly evaluation process, "...so that's pretty much the first I heard of evaluations..." She explains that currently an informal type of system exists based upon manager discretion about certain types of transgressions:

...if they thought it was a valid complaint or whatever they would talk to you about it. As far as I know, they have some sort of system ... [For example,] when it comes to calling in sick too many times. Sort of a strike system, you know, and I'm not sure if it is just a really informal system where basically each manager sort of judges it for himself [sic] or if it's something that's written out. I really don't know....you find out someone's been fired, you ask why and they say 'Oh, they called in sick like three times in the past two weeks' or something like that and it wasn't all together or whatever ... it's just assumed ... they weren't really sick (laughs) or whatever. It was assumed just because of the way it was done I suppose. But ... that's, I think, relatively informal in the way they do that.

Another of Meredith's colleagues, Ryan, explains about the progression from verbal warnings to termination if management concludes the action warranted:

...usually he'll give two or three warnings like you need to work on this, you need to work on this, you need to work on this and after a point, after that he'll be like 'well, if you don't change this pretty soon, we're going to have to let you go.' You really know how you're doing just by the way they treat you.

Thus, both Meredith and Ryan's comments reveal another labor control strategy in place, namely hierarchal control in addition to simple control. The day-to-day operation has been delegated to a manager who yields a great amount of discretion regarding how closely to adhere to company policy. This discretion ultimately results in variable outcomes among employees.

Ryan also discusses when customers complain about unsatisfactory service, the complaints reflect on all the cashiers. He mentions a co-worker's poor job performance, especially her lack of emotional labor as an example:

It's not her cashiering abilities. It's mostly the way she treats the customers. And the customers get like aggravated and then they

complain, you know. And it just makes it look bad on us because whenever a customer complains about one cashier, we all fall into the same boat so we all have to work on something. {How does she treat the customers? Is it abrupt?} It's more abrupt and sometimes like if a customer has a discrepancy. Like cheese was \$1.29 or something like that and it rang up \$1.39, the customer will complain about it. And she'll be like 'Well, sorry it rang up \$1.39, I can't really do anything about it so I'm sorry.' When people are spending their own money, you should at least be a little nice to 'em. They are paying the checks really.

Even though the cashier is apologetic about the price, she lacks the caring, concerned attitude customers expect. They perceive this omission, become frustrated and complain. Thus, emotional labor display goes beyond dialogue to include demeanor as well.

Conclusion

This chapter illustrates that as grocery establishments increase in size, simple control becomes infeasible. Within the medium-sized context, owners no longer have a daily presence within the store. Management personnel are delegated to oversee the day-to-day operations. As a result of this delegation, procedures and policies are formalized in an attempt to ensure uniformity among employees. Hierarchical control, another simple labor control system, emerges in this environment due to the great amount of discretion store managers possess in deciding how closely to adhere to company policy. And simultaneously, a shift toward a control system more structural in nature, namely bureaucratic control, is evident as policies and procedures become

more formalized. Importantly, within the medium-sized context, bureaucratic control strategies emphasize the physical aspect of the work over the emotional labor requirements. The next chapter examines what occurs in terms of labor control systems in even more immense contexts.

CHAPTER 7

LARGE STORE CONTEXTS

This is the final of the three organizational types. This particular context faces a greater challenge than the other two types because it aims to coordinate labor processes not only across more employees but an expanded number of geographical areas as well.

Harvest Time

Training

In addition to a company handbook, Harvest Time cashiers view approximately four hours of videotapes to learn about their job responsibilities and complete a self-paced manual that corresponds to the lessons before a transitional period with an experienced cashier. The videotapes encompass both the interactional aspect of the position as well as the productivity side. In regards to emotional labor, the new employee orientation videotape advises cashiers they are "not working for [Harvest Time], they are [Harvest Time]." In a second videotape on customer service, cashiers are instructed that it does not take any more time to be friendly towards customers, smiling or frowning can be accomplished within the same time frame. A third videotape on customer courtesy informs cashiers that courtesy can be "used to prevent problems." Cashiers are given a standard format to emulate if a customer is dissatisfied. This includes showing concern and apologizing for any inconvenience,

listening to the customer, showing appreciation to the customer for bringing the problem to the store's attention, satisfying the customer by resolving the problem or locating someone who can. And lastly, cashiers are cautioned in a fourth videotape to never attempt to prove a customer incorrect, embarrass a customer, or argue with a customer. This videotape includes a small skit in which a customer complains to a store manager that a cashier did not smile or speak during the transaction. The manager advises the customer that "corrective action will be taken" and apologizes for the incidence. This videotape emphasized that the "customer complaint [was] turned into an asset." Cashiers also view additional videotapes related to the operation of their registers, good scanning techniques, coupon processing, alternate methods of payment, and the company's monthly video update.

As part of the new employee packet, all Harvest Time cashiers must sign a Pledge of Honesty form. The manager emphasizes "honesty is mainly the basic [job] requirement because of the time we are allotted to do [training]. That's about the only thing you can't train anybody to do is not put the money in their pocket." Overall, Harvest Time allocates fifteen hours to train new cashiers.

Evaluating Job Performance

Harvest Time evaluates cashiers on productivity, accuracy, friendliness, and punctuality. They utilize a system referred to as "Service Appraisal" for part of the evaluation. This involves a member of management asking a customer whether s/he

would forfeit his or her order's receipt so that the store might inspect it for accuracy. In exchange, the customer receives a two dollar coupon valid on his or her next purchase. Also included is a questionnaire that contains items gauging the cashier's friendliness towards the customer and if the customer was thanked by name. At a minimum, each cashier must be assessed once every three months with Service Appraisal.

Harvest Time's manager indicates the customer service manager usually evaluates a cashier's interpersonal relations:

Basically...her main responsibility is going to be down there on the floor to supervise...So her job will be, to basically sit down there and make sure everybody is asking 'em if they want the plastic or paper bags. And [make sure the cashiers are] smiling at [the customers], when they can. When they haven't gotten on your nerves so bad. And [make sure the cashiers are] thanking 'em -- that type [of] thing. That's probably the most subjective point, part of the evaluation. Where that can't be, you just can't measure it with a score, ...[But] if [a cashier] comes in smiling most of the time [and] that type [of] thing, that cashier will get a decent score.

Contrary to this manager's opinion regarding the elusive character of emotional labor and how it cannot be objectively encompassed within the evaluation process, this labor is still assessed to ensure that Harvest Time's requirements are being attained. For example, the performance and quality of emotional labor is evaluated simply by the presence or absence of elements Harvest Time's management deems important such as the greeting, production-oriented questions (bag preference), the salutation, and nonverbal actions such as eye contact or a smile. Cashiers can be compared and

ranked according to the outcomes of such an evaluation. Thus, at Harvest Time a three-pronged approach exists to assess job performance which includes results from Service Appraisal, productivity data, and the customer service manager's observations regarding emotional labor performance. Cashiers are evaluated in full at thirty days, ninety days, and every six months thereafter. The first ninety days of employment is considered probationary in nature.

Rewarding Good Job Performance

At Harvest Time more avenues exist for recognition than in the small and medium store contexts. To begin with, as with the previous stores, merit raises correspond to the outcomes of the performance evaluation. Secondly, according to Harvest Times' manager, another type of recognition strategy exists:

...another incentive for the cashiers, we have a program called [Exceptional Achievement Honors]. And that's a piece of paper ... it will list exactly what you've done and what you've done well. The employee gets a copy of it, human resources gets a copy of it for their file, and the area grocery supervisor gets a copy for their file, as well as the employee. It's a four part form. It's like brownie points. It helps you toward your raises and that type [of] thing. If you've done an outstanding job or come in above and beyond the call of duty: come in when there's a foot of snow on the ground and everybody else can't make it in, and you've made it in, that type [of] thing.

The award originates from the management level. And finally, Harvest Time also has a program in place for customers to vote on their favorite cashiers. The manager explains:

...We have a campaign, a three month campaign, for a customer courtesy winner....and the customers will actually vote on the most friendly bagger and cashier. And should you be an ultimate winner, you're sent down to [corporate headquarters] for lunch with [Bob Smith, CEO of Harvest Time] all expenses paid.

Customers are asked to vote for their favorite bagger and cashier with ballots provided at each store,

the ballot does include the customer's name, address, and phone number because they have, you have an opportunity as a customer to thank someone for giving them a good job but you also have an opportunity down there to tell us where we can improve.

Thus, at Harvest Time the recognition process is more formalized in terms of input garnered from both management and customers. In the smaller store contexts, customer feedback was often erratic to the process, contingent upon the customer's internal motivation to complain or commend. In contrast, at Harvest Time, customers were actively incorporated into the evaluation process, especially through Service Appraisal. By participating in such an arrangement, in essence, they unwittingly become very low paid members of management.

Disciplining Poor Job Performances

Harvest Time's manager discusses a cashier not meeting the items per minute minimum requirement and how he would initially handle it:

...I'm not hardcore enough to where I'd lower their evaluation score because they're not at the standard for our company. I'll go back and investigate, you know, why? Was this person not trained exactly right? Or whatever, and go through that before I'll say 'You're not doing it

fast enough.’ Show ’em again, and then give them an opportunity to improve.

If the employee is not suitable for cashiering, Harvest Time’s manager will attempt to transfer that person:

...I want to try and find something everybody can be successful at, so we may take them from, off the cash register and make them a bagger working on their customer courtesy angle versus having to work ... trying to train ’em to do a little bit better than that, having to worry about their productivity as far as their scanning and handling the money. Some people just can’t handle money. They get confused. So, if they’ve been hired as a cashier and that type thing happens, well then we’ll say, you know, ‘You’re not going to be successful at that, would you like to try to be a bagger?’ or some other area in the store where they think they may be successful.

In essence, these transfers can be considered demotions because they involve fewer job responsibilities. For example, an inefficient cashier converted to a bagger loses all monetary responsibilities. Or, an unfriendly cashier becomes a stock clerk, responsible for handling merchandise instead of interactions. The job content is considerably narrowed and thus, lessened.

Cashier Experiences

Training

Nancy discusses her lack of adequate training and how it hampered her job performance for her first few weeks at Harvest Time:

...well, they just put me on it and they were like ‘Just go.’ I didn’t like the way they trained me. They didn’t really train me. They had a cashier that was there for a while just stand by me and help me out like

the first day ... but he wasn't there the next day and I basically had to do everything on my own and I like, I called the manager down like six times trying to get help. I was always messing up. They really, they did not do a very good job training. They made you watch the movies and that was about it, so, it was pretty much hands-on experience. {Did you feel confident?} No, [I] didn't talk to anybody not at all, cause I was so worried....I mean, my line was always long cause I was so slow. It doesn't bother me now but {But did it?} Yeah. {I guess it gave you pressure to go quicker?} Yeah, I mean, when I was finished I would realize I hadn't scanned certain items like I put the bananas up on the scale and I'd forget to type it in because I was in such a hurry and afterwards, I'm just, I'm not even going to worry about telling [the customers] cause it's my fault. I didn't ring them up and they have already given me the money, so I'm not even going to worry about it.

Thus, viewing training videotapes depicting job content, procedures, and the like, without any actual "hands-on" experience does not necessarily translate into developing the necessary skills to perform the work. General expectations and procedures are conveyed but cashiers need time to acquire appropriate techniques and a sense of competency. For Nancy, lack of proficiency with the physical tasks directly influenced her ability to engage in emotional labor and hence her overall job performance.

A fellow colleague, David, discusses the videotapes briefly regarding the emotional labor requirements:

Their films [instruct you to be] attentive to [the] customer or whatever, make them feel comfortable, like you actually care. I mean, unless I'm in a bad mood, I do care but at [the] end of [an] eight hour shift, you don't really care.

One Harvest Time cashier, Elizabeth, who was promoted to the office staff, summarizes what the store expects of customer interactions: "They always say [you]

have to greet the customer and thank them at the end of the thing."

Additional Responsibilities. At Harvest Time, certain cashiers did have additional duties. The cashier designated to be the primary cashier until the store closed -- referred to as the closing cashier -- was responsible for re-shops. This refers to the process of returning unwanted merchandise to its proper location in the store. Nancy admits enjoying this aspect of the work because it gives her more autonomy:

...I'd rather do re-shops than scan because I just like to walk around. And I get tired [cashiering], my legs get tired [just standing there scanning] and it's good to walk around. You have a lot of freedom when you're doing re-shops. You can go to the bathroom if you want to. You can talk to people. So, I usually ask if I can do 'em before I have to go home. Because I'd rather do that if there aren't a lot of people in the store....If they need me [up front] they can call me up.

A second task assigned to the closing cashier at Harvest Time is blocking. According to Nancy that involves pulling "everything forward like cereal boxes for instance. If they're in the back, [then] you have to pull them forward so they're all straight." The closing cashier is always responsible for blocking two aisles: the cookie aisle and the medicine aisle. The remaining aisles are handled by the blockers. Both re-shops and blocking must be completed before the closing cashier can leave for the night. If the store closes before the tasks are accomplished, the closing cashier must continue working past his or her assigned end of shift to finish. Thus, it is probable that the closing cashier might decrease his or her emotional labor

enactment to generate some spare time in which to accomplish the tasks and, if applicable, enjoy the advantages such mobility offers.

Performance Evaluations and Sanctions

Elizabeth indicates that while she was a cashier she did not receive any evaluation of her job performance but was offered a promotion into management.

Oftentimes, Elizabeth explains:

a lot of places you don't get that positive feedback. It's only negative feedback a lot of times. A good word can go a long way which I try to give if I'm not too bogged down. I always try to keep that in the back of my mind, but a lot of people in management don't do that.

Thus, Elizabeth draws upon her own personal experience of not receiving praise or generally any type of performance feedback as a reference point and incorporates such actions into her management style. In essence, Elizabeth has realized the usefulness of emotional labor from an organizational perspective, not only towards customers to instill loyalty to the store but also in relation to enticing good job performances from the employees she now supervises.

Nancy realizes cashiers are evaluated through Service Appraisal and their item per minute percentage; however, she has not received any feedback through either method. In regards to her item per minute ratio, she explains:

...and you also have to keep a number, a certain number of items you have to scan per minute. And, if you don't keep the number, then, I don't know. I don't think I've kept the number personally but I haven't been fired yet and they haven't said anything to me, so I don't know if

they really push that or not. I don't know what the number is either.

Thus, Nancy expresses a great deal of uncertainty over the application of evaluation procedures and phrases the outcomes entirely in terms of disciplinary measures against cashiers rather than potential benefits.

Carter's

Training

Carter's, the other large store, designates nine hours to train a new cashier.

The actual amount of time allocated to training is much higher, as I will illustrate and includes both paid and unpaid time periods. Upon hire, Carter's cashiers receive the company handbook and are urged to read and study it before training commences.

Task information dominates the forty-eight page manual but the following is included:

Courtesy

The customer at your checkstand deserves your undivided attention. For that reason, please do not carry on conversations with other associates or with other customers, and never turn your back to the customer at your work station.

Many customers shop with us on a regular basis. When you can do so, please call these customers by name (look at the name on the customer's check). This makes them feel special and also adds a feeling of "neighborhood closeness" to our stores. Practice learning and calling customers by name. We want our customers to leave our store knowing that their business is appreciated. [emphasis in original]

Carter's cashiers are also expected to attend classes at the company "university" located at the corporate office. Attendance at the classes is mandatory

but employees are compensated for their time. These classes are not factored into the original nine hours of training allocated per new employee. The curriculum is composed of four core classes. The topics are orientation, values, difficult customers, and diversity. Of particular interest is the values class. According to one of Carter's corporate officials, six weeks after a new cashier is hired, s/he attends this class. Carter's president, vice president, and president of human resources attend to discuss the mission and values of the company, and the corporate official felt "their presence illustrates [the] importance" of the subject matter. Carter's distributes plastic-laminated cards to each new employee with the company's vision, mission, and ten shared values profiled on them. The first value is exceptional customer service which is a blend of attentiveness, flawless processing, and timely delivery. Cashiers are encouraged to memorize all of the shared values and recite them to the manager when ready to do so. Carter's corporate official expresses that employees are "constantly reminded how to behave; if a person doesn't buy into it, [they] go on to a different company]." Thus, if new cashiers are dissatisfied within Carter's highly regulated environment, they simply leave the company.

Carter's relies on trainers from corporate headquarters to visit each store and train new cashiers, commonly referred to as associates. Often this training is done in pairs, one trainer to two new cashiers. Certain lanes are closed and the registers are placed in training mode so the cashiers can practice. After these instructional hours are completed, the new cashiers are placed with an experienced cashier for a

transitional period. Carter's manager specifies "they are monitored at that point to where we feel [that] when we turn them loose on their own, we feel that they are able to handle the job efficiently for the customer as well as the company."

Evaluating Job Performance

Similar to the other large store, Carter's also has a formal evaluation system in effect. New cashiers are evaluated at intervals of three weeks, six weeks, six months, and thereafter annually. According to Carter's manager, accuracy is a primary component of the evaluation but not in terms of the money till balancing to the exact penny at the end of the shift. Instead, accuracy is assessed in relation to the absence of processing errors:

...what it takes to check that customer out correctly, without mistakes on their receipt. We do not want to inconvenience our customers in any way as far [as] having to get on the phone to call us about a mistake or drive back to the store to show a ticket where someone had charged them wrong.

At all the stores in the study, cashiers are responsible for rapidly distinguishing, on sight, produce selections and subsequently, entering the correct retrieval code into the system for the pricing scheme. At Carter's, which offers an expanded selection of produce items, in order to minimize the error associated with the human eye, weekly "produce tests" are administered to calibrate the cashiers' recognition of the products. Carter's manager explains:

We usually on ... Monday mornings, we will go through the

department, have someone go through the department, and pick out certain items. We'll number them like one through ten. And we will have the cashiers go over there and write on a pad what those items are and what the look-up number is that goes with them...the harder items of course, the trickier items, I guess is a better term to use. And this forces them to get into that department more, see? Cause they know that test is going to come.

The produce test begins at different times but runs continuously throughout the remainder of the day. Cashiers usually complete it before going on to their workstations or by their first break at the very latest.

The other fundamental component in terms of job performance at Carter's is a cashier's personality and attitude. According to Carter's manager, the management staff, particularly the front-end managers and himself, observe the cashiers' job performances regularly. If a problem exists, he or his management staff will address it immediately instead of postponing it to the formal evaluation.

From time to time, Carter's does utilize a "mystery shopper" evaluation system. This evaluation would originate from corporate headquarters. The mystery shopper would be a Carter's employee from a different location who would come through the store and assess a cashier's service as well as the store in general. No prior notification that an evaluation will be conducted is furnished to the store. Results are compiled at corporate headquarters and then sent to the appropriate store managers.

Rewarding Good Job Performance

Out of all the stores, Carter's provides the most avenues for cashier recognition including both financial and social incentives. According to Carter's manager,

Our company works on a bonus program and actually, each quarter -- we've been lucky, I think twenty-nine quarters in a row -- that the company has shared [monetary] bonuses with the majority of all our part-time as well as full-time associates. And the thing that is necessary for someone to receive this bonus, they must work ten weeks out of the thirteen, that's our requirement....without some unusual problem, very unusual problem, everyone would be eligible for that....We feel like we perform as a unit, as a team, and that's the kind of the way, I think, the whole company operates.

An additional financial incentive is an anniversary paycheck once a year which is based upon the average number of hours worked per week. Another benefit is that part-time cashiers can elect to have hospitalization coverage through the company as well. In order to be eligible for this coverage, cashiers must average working at least thirty hours each week during the quarter.

In terms of nonmonetary incentives or rather, incentives of a social nature, Carter's has a Celebration of Excellence each year. This coincides with the annual company picnic,

...everyone who has received any type of compliment from a customer at that point in time will be awarded a special pin and also we give a golf shirt to 'em....I think the most important thing is being recognized in front of so many people. I perform my job well, to the point that someone recognized and complimented me on my performance....Some extra little procedure you do, something that makes the customer feel that you went that extra step to help them or maybe answering a question or product, helping them find a product.

In addition, Carter's routinely utilizes other methods to acknowledge and reward superior job performance. To begin with, cashiers receive a special pin to attach to their uniforms when they successfully recite all ten of the company's values to their manager. Secondly, outstanding employees' names are included on the company honor rolls located at each store and at corporate headquarters. And lastly, complementary letters from customers are often featured in the company's quarterly internal news magazine which is distributed to all employees.

Both of the Carter's representatives I interviewed, the corporate official as well as the store manager, discuss the opportunity for advancement within the company. The corporate official states that good performance is induced by the "organization's culture, [the] ninety-eight to ninety-nine percent promote from within" strategy. Cashiers perceive they can work their way up the organization's hierarchy but it is very competitive and only the best will succeed into management. Individuals are selected early to be groomed for future management teams. As Carter's store manager explains,

A real energetic young person will probably spend three or four weeks here and I may walk across the front and have them say 'How do you think I'm doing it this morning?' And that's very encouraging to me as a store manager because this is someone [who] is interested in what's going on. And it alerts me to watch that associate to see if they continue on that path and if so, they're definitely going to be a top candidate, you know, for cashier.

Just as the best baggers are often promoted to cashiering at Carter's, the finest cashiers can move into management. The manager emphasizes it is not a matter of

time spent with the company; instead, "we try and select the people who work the hardest and try the hardest to excel."

Disciplining Poor Job Performances

At Carter's, managers rely mainly on verbal warnings but can indicate when improvement is necessary and impose a deadline. They specify the particular area on the employee's evaluation form by completing the following item: "Associate's progress must improve significantly by [date] or employment will be terminated."

Cashier Experiences

Training

Jean indicates that managers "...prefer you talk to customers. They tell you ... 'and always try to smile'." Leslie, a co-worker, discusses her training experience:

I had the most wonderful trainer. They, they train us two at a time. And, they put us down on the far end register and they just go through one step at a time ... And we trained for two days. Five hour shifts a day. And on the third day she was with us but we were on the registers and [with] real-life customers.

Brian's training was similar except he actually travelled to another Carter's location to attend training:

Well, I went to, to a different [Carter's] store... for two days and they trained for four and a half to five hours. I think five hours each, two days straight. And we just do [sic] nothing but practicing. Doing it over and over, scanning orders. And then, after our training, I went home for a weekend and tried, tried to memorize all the codes and tried

to memorize all the procedures. ... [I remember that] on my second day of training we practiced with the trainer....Then when I came over here to this store, I was on my own.

Both Leslie and Brian indicated that they felt confident and prepared when they initially started processing customer orders at Carter's. This self-reported competency surrounding their work responsibilities suggests the successful conveyance of Carter's expectations and methods. Recall earlier it was suggested that mastery of the physical task appears to positively influence emotional labor execution.

Connie discussed a class she recently completed at the company university. She explained that the company is changing an aspect of emotional labor and every cashier will be sent to the training to be updated:

...They want us to think in terms of not just telling someone to have a nice day but to thank them for choosing Carter's. Thank them for coming into our store when there are so many competitors around that they could stop anywhere else. That'll take some adjustment in thinking. And, they don't want you to appear robotic, you know. And sometimes, you know, you can get like that. I've noticed it like if I get tired (laughs). You really do start to sound robotic. Or somebody will set their own cloth bags on the counter and you just automatically say 'Paper or plastic?' [emphasis added]

Thus, the company's emotional labor expectations are modified to account for increasing competition in the area. The new expectations are effectively disseminated to all employees through the company university. Employees are encouraged not merely to recite a specific phrase, but to internalize the rationale for doing so.

Additional Responsibilities. None of the nine Carter's cashiers interviewed

discussed any additional duties they must accomplish other than processing the customer.

Performance Evaluations and Sanctions

Most cashiers mention the three evaluations within the first year -- one at three weeks, six weeks, and then six months -- though there is considerable variation regarding what occurs after the latter. For example, Beverly has worked at Carter's for five years and when asked if she received any feedback concerning her job performance lately she shakes her head, laughs, and replies "I just figure I'm still here, I guess I'm O.K....I mean, I think, if you do something that you wasn't [sic] supposed to do, they'd talk to you but they don't come say anything." Another co-worker, Daniel, mistakenly explains evaluations are to occur every six months but he has only received one evaluation in four years. As far as he knows, his performance is acceptable simply because he has not heard otherwise from the company.

Connie explains that when she first began working at Carter's two years ago she received regular evaluations. She has not received any feedback lately and instead gauges her job performance in other ways:

They have a form that they went over. It seems like forever ago. They went over that. They went over my performance just after I started and then a given time, just after that. And I really haven't had an kind of official things since then....I feel like if I'm doing something wrong, they'll let me know. And there are things that they ask me to do that they only ask people to do who are doing O.K. for themselves. One afternoon, I watched a new cashier ... so just to like give him that

extra support....I feel if they would ask me to do something like that then they must feel that I know what I'm doing.

By serving in an advisory capacity to the new cashier, Connie not only receives personal satisfaction but an increase in status as well.

Tyler mentions how customer feedback is utilized: "It's like if you do something bad to a customer, nine times out of ten the customer is going to go back to the manager and tell on you." In essence, Tyler is describing a supervisory role the customer enacts during a cashier's job performance. This is a critical aspect of labor control within the service encounter. Another of Tyler's colleagues, Jean, concurs: "And let me tell you one thing, if you do something wrong, you know, if a customer complains, you get called up in the office." She explains the usual complaint procedure:

...I have been on a register and then they send somebody to relieve me and I said 'Where am I going?' and they say 'Well, the managers want to see you in the office' and they would tell me what the complaint was.

Thus, Jean notes customers typically complain directly to management and offer compliments to her alone, "And then you'll hear someone say 'I just, I just wait, I stand in line, I wait to come through your line.... The management never hears that, you know.'" Both Tyler and Jean realize the critical role customers can potentially assume as assessors of their job performance.

If Leslie, another colleague, perceives a customer to be dissatisfied with her service, then she immediately discusses it with a manager primarily to protect herself

and secondly, for possible reassurance:

...just in case they call back or something, so he'll know. And so they usually tell me what I've done wrong or tell me 'It's alright, don't worry about it,' so that makes me feel better.

Oftentimes, cashiers perceive customer's performance assessor roles as not being enacted impartially but in response to dissatisfaction rather than contentment. In contrast to customer complaints, Leslie also indicates that if a customer compliments an employee by name, then that employee will be awarded a special pin to display on his or her uniform. And if the compliment was in the form of a letter, it could possibly be included in the company magazine.

Another Carter's cashier, Martha, explains how recently she has had difficulty arriving at work on time. Both the assistant store manager and store manager have discussed the tardiness with her, emphasizing the effects of her lateness on her colleagues and concluding with the assistant manager's warning, "Figure out what to do about being late or I'll figure it out for you." Martha indicates that she did not appreciate the tone of his statement. Presently, she finds herself rather unmotivated about her work and the "monotonous" nature of the position and this manifests itself in her being tardy. Again, the progression of disciplinary strategies is revealed as a cashier receives a verbal warning indicating some type of change is mandatory and the threat of dismissal, implied or otherwise, if that change does not occur in a timely fashion.

Conclusion

Within the large store context, bureaucratic control is the primary organizing principle as work is standardized among an increased number of employees and locations. Store manager discretion is still evident within the large store environments. However, the predominant labor control strategy is structural in nature. It is within this particular context, the formalization of emotional labor is explicitly delineated in addition to the physical tasks.

The following chapter will examine the second structural labor control strategy, technical control, in relation to the store contexts. The technology present in each setting will be discussed. Importantly, the relationship between technology and emotional labor will be explored as well.

CHAPTER 8

THE INFLUENCE OF TECHNOLOGY

A labor control system rooted in technical control -- another structural strategy -- incorporates a variety of technologies that influence or dictate the pace of the work. In regard to grocery stores, the optical scanning system is the most significant source of technical control.

Optical Scanning Systems

Foodstuffs, Harvest Time, and Carter's all use optical scanning systems and represent the larger medium-sized store and both large store contexts. This suggests that the acquisition of this type of technology is due, in part, to the size of the grocery store establishment as well as the cost-effectiveness of such a purchase. And, as previously demonstrated, the size of a grocery establishment factors into the selection of labor control systems.

All six managers interviewed mention the accuracy associated with the optical scanning systems. Foodstuffs' manager alludes to this in his discussion of the reduced probability of cashier error:

...we tend to find out the less buttons they have to push, the less mistakes are made. It's very easy to hit a wrong department key or whatever. And if you do that very often it tends to mess your inventories up.

Carter's manager elaborates the other side of the pricing equation in noting the fewer

mistakes associated with the optical scanners:

Well, you know, you've got less people pricing and when you have less people working or pricing, I think it's less room for error. The more people you have involved in pricing, I think it's a common sense thing, to believe that you're gonna have probably more wrong prices in your store.

Boulevard Market's manager prefers the optical scanning over the manual keying method currently used at his medium-sized store. He explains,

you're always more accurate with scanning systems than you would be with manual pricing because then you control the price and not the cashier. And also too, with -- this doesn't relate to the cashier in itself, but with doing price changes and things -- in a scanning store, all you change is a shelf tag, then one person changes it in the machine, so you don't have to re-mark everything when a price changes, so it's a tremendous amount of labor here.

This manager also comments on the tendency for cashiers to memorize prices with the manual method and the drawbacks associated with this

...they may learn the prices on certain items whereas with the optical [scanner], they would never have to know because when they pass it across the scanner it's going to automatically ring it up. Which, that is a double-edged sword because if you have a price change, if the cashier automatically assumes it's a certain price, then they're going to ring that price instead...

In addition, Harvest Time's manager mentions that his industry has proven optical scanning systems are "a little bit faster" than the manual entry method. He raves about the amount of information the system can generate, emphasizing the data generated assists in scheduling the appropriate amount of cashiers to handle customer flow:

...because of scanning, you have, the, the computer will remember your busiest hours and your slowest hours and once you can key that information in ... it will print a schedule that says you need four baggers and three cashiers or five, five cashiers at five o'clock and that's what you schedule.All you basically have to do is fill in the names almost...It really works well. It's the neatest system I've ever seen instead of just taking a guess at it.

Granted the computer system assists the manager in scheduling cashiers, but it also illustrates how de-skilling can occur at any level within an organization, even management.

Another member of Harvest Time's management indicates the information stored in the computer system assists in ascertaining dishonest cashiers. She recounts a recent customer's allegation of cashier misconduct and how the technology was utilized in the investigation:

A guy came through one cashier's line and he bought a single pack of cigarettes. Which almost anybody [working] in here ... knows how much a single pack of cigarettes cost[s]. And what she did was she told him how much it was. And he observed her just hit 'No sale,' take the money, and give him back his change. And, you know, basically the cigarettes were never rung up. And to be quite honest with you, I wasn't sure what to do. I mean I called the assistant manager there and we covered it that way. I didn't know whether I should just take her off the register right then....Because the customer actually came up to me and told me about this. He pulled me aside and said this is what happened and I wanted to make you aware of it. Which I thought was pretty noble of him. He gave his name and everything....All we could do was ... we pulled her detail tape, no where on her detail tape was a single pack of cigarettes rung up ... [that] type [of] thing.

After the initial technological inquiry indicated no single purchase of cigarettes, the matter was turned over to Harvest Time's Loss Prevention Division for further

investigation.

In contrast, Southside Grocery's owner who relies upon manual registers in his small store discusses the economy of scale necessary to support such an expensive technological acquisition as an optical scanning system:

...it does provide reams of computer information that you can sometimes use to update your inventory or your ordering or that kind of thing but, you know, in a size operation that I have, and I've studied this forward and back, it's, it's like shooting an ant with a shotgun. I mean, it's going to provide you a lot of information that I already know and don't really need...

Related Technologies

Related production technologies are very similar in all the stores with the following two exceptions. First, Harvest Time's shopping carts are designed with a drop-front which enable the cashiers to remove the goods directly from the cart, saving customers from unloading their goods. In all of the other stores, customers are required to place their groceries upon conveyor belts to initiate the production process. Occasionally, some customers such as the elderly will need additional assistance in completing this task; however, the vast majority of customers easily participate in this unpaid labor process.

Secondly, communication technologies are quite comparable across the majority of the stores in the study with one discernable difference. In both the medium and large store contexts, cashiers have access to a phone to communicate directly with the store office or send an announcement out over the public address

system such as when management's assistance is necessary. In contrast, both small stores did not have any type of communication technology available for the cashier. Because they were considerably smaller stores, cashiers tended to rely on sending messages through other employees or politely shouting if necessary. Thus, the size of the grocery establishment appears to influence the acquisition of communication technology as well.

Cashier Experiences

Optical Scanning Systems

Of the twenty-eight cashiers interviewed, twenty-four (85%) display a definite preference for optical scanning systems. Accuracy and speed are the most often mentioned rationales for optical scanning by the cashiers. Connie at Carter's favors optical scanners because of the increased accuracy:

There's, I think, more room for error having us key punch say each price in. I think there's less room for error with the scanner though there are some things in the computer with incorrect prices. I just think there's less of a chance of error. That one or two items might be mispriced versus having however many cashiers we have on that day key punching each of the millions of things that go out of that door.

Ryan at Foodstuffs emphasizes the quickness of scanning:

It does have its weaknesses like the wrong price might come up or something like that but mostly for [its] speed. Cause the scanning is used for the customer, [I prefer it] so the customer can come in, get their groceries, give us the money, and get out.

This increased productivity expectation is supported by David, a Harvest Time

cashier, who elaborates on the benefits for both the cashier and the customer:

It's a whole lot quicker and more efficient quicker to get the customer out, you know, more satisfying for them plus it's easier on our job, it makes us nicer, more pleasant. {and why does it make you nicer and more pleasant?} Because ...[there is] less to worry about, less on your mind, and you can talk to the customer more, [you] don't always [need to] be punching buttons.

Thus, the optical scanning system allows David more time to focus primarily on emotional labor execution rather than the physical task.

Meredith, a Foodstuffs cashier, mentions two other advantages with the optical scanning systems. The first benefit is in relation to training new cashiers and the second is the detailed registered tape optical scanner provide:

...but for the beginner cashier it's much, much easier just to have the scanners because they have so many things to worry about anyway, you know, and I think it's a lot better in that, it's much more precise. It has a different encoded message for each item instead of being just grocery or dairy or meat which is all you can do when you're manually punching it in. It has the name brand in most cases and sometimes the flavor and you know it just makes it easier for returning; it makes it easier for the customer to find mistakes and ... for the tellers to be able to tell if they're being cheated (laughs) -- if this is, you know, a legitimate complaint or exchange that a person wants to make.

Manual Keying Method

In contrast, Wendy, a part-time Boulevard Market cashier for three months, selects manually ringing over scanning because "It gives you more time and plus it gives you something to do. You just don't run things across the scanner all day long, but I think the customers would prefer the scanning." Wendy's personal preference is the manual method because she is more engrossed with the physical tasks. For

example, with manual registers cashiers are responsible for entering an item's correct department, price, and whether it is a food or nonfood item. The latter is important if the customer pays by food stamps because nonfood items are exempt from the program and must be purchased separately. In contrast, optical scanning systems are programmed to automatically register the necessary purchase information and in doing so contribute to the de-skilling of the work as the cashier's product knowledge decreases. Although Wendy prefers a more active role in the production process, she recognizes that her customers would probably select optical scanners due, in part, to expectations of increased productivity.

Helen, a cashier at Southside Grocery suggests that manually ringing items gives cashiers more time to interact with customers:

...I think, really, the type of registers we have give us a chance to be friendlier with the customers since we don't have to worry about the scanner and watching to see if it does scan or doesn't scan. That's one reason why I prefer small, independent groceries, because you have more chance to get to know your customers better.

Diane, a Boulevard Market cashier for one month, prefers the optical scanner but currently uses a manual register. She still views herself as being able to talk and ring items simultaneously, "...because the register is easy. I mean it has everything written down on there, there's no way you can get confused, not on the register anyway." Interestingly, one of Diane's co-workers, Wendy, mentioned earlier, disagrees with Diane's self-assessment concerning her accuracy:

...she's made a lot of mistakes but I don't think it's her fault. I just

think, you know, that, I don't know really how to explain it. It's not really worse but you know out of everybody there she seems to have a harder time with it than we do, but she's improving. {Is she new?} Yeah, she's real new ... {She's making more technical mistakes, like, I guess, ringing things?} Yeah, ringing things up and, she doesn't understand things as much.

Wendy refers to her own experience when she began at that store and mentions it was difficult manually ringing items initially but gradually she adjusted:

...I've gotten used to it now. I feel it's kind of better because, you know, it takes a little while instead of just scanning it, you know....Customers might like that better [scanning] but I feel it doesn't give you as much time to talk to them, you know, but it doesn't bother me. I can talk and listen and do all that at once.

One Southside Grocery cashier, Allen, agreed with Wendy regarding the challenge of manually ringing items and interacting with the customers at first, "In the beginning I couldn't [combine both]; I had to stop. But now, it's like, I'm pretty fluent with it."

The Relationship Between Technology and Emotional Labor

Of the twenty-eight cashiers, sixteen (57%) felt like the technology present in their workplaces did not influence their interactions with customers at all. Eight cashiers reported the technology did routinely affect interactions and four thought it played a part occasionally. The latter was most often attributed to a malfunction of equipment or a delay in the process. For example, Ruth at Foodstuffs discusses what happens to customers' demeanors when a price does not scan:

...when someone has to go and look up a price, that bothers them (laughs). Because it means they are going to have to wait, you know,

to get a price on an item and I expect that happens in all stores. {I think so too. Do you feel obligated to try and kind of, as they're waiting, to chat with them?} Yes I do. I don't feel obligated to, it's just something to, to me, to kind of ease it a little bit, to help the time go by more pleasantly shall we say.

Another Foodstuffs cashier, Meredith, agrees that when prices either do not appear or are programmed incorrectly it makes her work harder:

...when it comes to things like the computer being programmed correctly and prices being in there (laughs), you know, you're going to end up, in most cases, [with] a much more tense or much more irritated customer if the price that they say was on the shelf is not what's in the computer or if the price does not ring up at all....Mostly, it's impatient people that that affects, you know. I'll apologize over, for the price not being in there, 'I'm sorry you have to wait for this' and they're 'Oh, you know, it's not your fault, it's no big deal' and they realize that and they don't mind. But more often, people are in a hurry, they want to get out of there...

In order to ensure efficiency, Meredith explains the computers need to be programmed more accurately:

...I wish everything would be perfect. All the prices would always be right. And, you know, what rings up is what the price is and you wouldn't even have to question it. If they question it, they're wrong (laughs). But, of course, you wouldn't be able to tell them that.

One Carter's cashier, Martha, notes that if a price does not scan "it stops everything." In most cases, she will try to obtain a price verification as is consistent with store policy. At Carter's, cashiers are unable to leave their work stations while processing customers to check prices and must summon assistance. If Martha perceives this process to exceed five minutes, then she usually accepts the customer's price suggestion "to try and calm them down."

Similarly, Susan, the Boulevard Market cashier whose manager earlier referred to her as an exceptional cashier, discussed the effect of missing price tags on her productivity:

...[if] things aren't priced, and you don't have them memorized, you know, most of 'em I've got memorized, but you have to run to the aisle, look for the item, look for the price on the item, you know: Those little stickers, they come off or they're frozen, you know what I mean? They don't stick good [sic] and that can hold you up.

In contrast, Wendy, a co-worker of Susan's, routinely asks customers the price of items if the price tag is missing or she does not remember the price instantly, "...I'll ask them 'Did you happen to see the price on this?' You know, instead of having to make people run out and get it [be]cause I trust 'em." Thus, Wendy avoids the organizational procedure of verifying the price because she believes the customer's estimate and, by accepting the figure, she does not need to stop production.

One Foodstuffs cashier, Jessica, mentions that when a register runs out of recording tape

...it's really annoying when there's a lot of customers in line. And [if] you can't get it in there or something is wrong with it; they get very upset about it.

Another cashier, Ryan, from Foodstuffs discusses the check approval system and how it constantly disrupts his productivity and disturbs the customers:

We have a little machine and whenever the customer wants to like pay by check it has to go through the machine. And like, I don't know if you've ever seen a movie or anything where something gets real quiet and you just wait. It's like three minutes but it seems like fifty years...{So what do you do?} I try to start up a conversation with the

customer but if they're in a bad mood or something, I can't really do nothing [sic] about it and they get even angrier, and they're like 'Can't you hurry up with this?'

Thus, Ryan uses emotional labor to avoid prolonged silences with the customers.

These attempts to interactionally engage the customer in order to downplay the lengthy processing time are only successful if the customer feels inclined to participate as well. According to Ryan, if the check approval machine determines the customer has too many outstanding checks at his or her bank, a manager's approval is necessary to proceed with the transaction:

It won't go through and it will say 'Manager needed' ... but the customers get their feelings hurt, they're like 'Why do you need your manager?' Cause it is kind of embarrassing if you're in line and you have to have somebody else come in there and look at your check and ask to see your ID, you kind of look like a fraud.

Meredith, a co-worker of Ryan's, agrees that the drawn-out processing time of the check approval system at Foodstuffs makes customers uneasy:

...[I]n many cases, if their check takes a long time to process, no one seems to understand that the length of time has absolutely nothing to with if the check is bad or good and so they just assume if it takes a long time, it's a bad check and they say 'What's wrong, what's wrong?' and you have to explain to them it's nothing (laughs), you know, that sometimes even the system gets disconnected...

Thus, at Foodstuffs, a related technology to predict available funds so as to ensure profitability -- the check approval system -- increases the level of emotional labor as cashiers constantly have to explain the system and attempt to alleviate customer apprehension.

In contrast to the technology directly affecting the emotional labor requirements, as was the case with the check approval system, sometimes the cashier's response to the technology itself influences emotional labor execution. For example, Leslie, a Carter's cashier, remarks that she constantly monitors the equipment and occasionally this technique interferes with her interactions with customers:

I have to ... I watch the light....If you listen to it beep, sometimes it doesn't right off, so I'll watch the lights on the registers and sometimes it'll keep me from maintaining eye, eye contact with [customers] but I think they're more worried about their bill being right than me looking at 'em every second, so I don't think they mind.

Thus, Leslie justifies her intense concentration on processing the order and monitoring the equipment because, ultimately, customers are more concerned with being charged correctly. Michael, a colleague, concurs about the necessity of monitoring the equipment in order to ensure accuracy:

On the register, when something rings up a green light flashes. And when something is not being rung up there's a red light that stays on. And those two lights are right beside each other....Most of the time I rely on the beep. You'll hear a beep when something rings up. The only time that I really rely on those [lights] ... is when it's real busy and like a lot of registers are open. And so, once you get so many beeps going at the same time it gets harder and harder to discern your own beep. But usually since you're, you're right next to it, you can figure out which beep is yours. But sometimes when it really gets busy and [it] gets really loud in there, it's kind of hard to hear your beep. So you kind of have to rely on the lights a little bit or ... you might overcharge somebody or undercharge somebody...

In contrast, Connie at Carter's also monitors the equipment but it does not interfere

with customer interactions. She attributes her ability to handle competing demands on her attention to motherhood, "maybe that comes from having a child." Connie elaborates on her technique:

Somehow I've trained myself....I hear that beep constantly and then I can talk to the person. And, and I know when I've hit something either that doesn't scan or if I've done something twice or if I've keyed something wrong. A lot of times, I'll know it before I even look.

Nancy, a Harvest Time cashier, points out that when her equipment malfunctions it limits her productivity and increases the length of the service encounter:

...sometimes it won't scan and sometimes I have to type it in and it makes it slower. Sometimes it doesn't beep and I've noticed that really makes me go a lot slower....And I've been put on a register before where the beeper was broken and it really, it did make it hard.

Nancy also admits to circumventing the technology if necessary. At Harvest Time, cashiers are able to directly scan coupons and the computer system will determine if the coupon's criteria were attained such as brand, size, expiration date, and the like. Occasionally, the system instructs Nancy to reject a coupon, but she ignores it:

... 'cause I had some people come through my line that have coupons for just like tons of things and they stack the coupons and they only bought like twelve [of those] items. And it does make it hard cause they say, 'I bought some of those things.' And I have to go through all of them. I usually end up typing it in manually cause it's just too hard.

Even though the technology exists to increase accuracy among redeemed coupons and

thus, ensure that the company will be reimbursed by the coupon's manufacturer, Nancy's case shows how periodically the technology increases her work. First, emotional labor increases as it becomes necessary to explain the rejection of certain coupons and possibly mediate a challenge. And secondly, physical tasks increase because items need to be retrieved and compared to the coupon's specifications. Thus, if a customer adamantly challenges the system's decision, Nancy has a number of options. She could choose to uphold the system's recommendation knowing this might increase her labor in the manners noted above. Secondly, Nancy could acquiesce and override the technology primarily in order to avoid the additional labor. Or, she could accede to the customer's demand, not primarily for her own benefit but in order to fulfill the underlying "labor" goal of her work -- to make the customer happy. The variety of options demonstrates a conflict between the types of labor that comprise "productivity." Thus, opting for an emotional labor goal at times might actually contradict other aspects of productivity such as not accepting expired coupons.

Conclusion

Technical control is minimal at best among stores whose cashiers manually key items during the production process. The manual method was used within the small store contexts and the smaller medium-sized store in this study. This method does furnish simple productivity statistics such as items rung per hour to evaluate cashier

productivity but, as demonstrated earlier, smaller store contexts tend not to rely upon structural labor control strategies.

Technical control is greater among stores with optical scanning systems because increased productivity expectations abound and more information can be retrieved regarding job performance. Optical scanning systems were used in the larger medium-sized store and both large store contexts. This suggests an economy of scale exists to make the acquisition of such a technology cost-effective. Within the larger store contexts, technical control exists alongside of bureaucratic control elements but does not supersede them.

Technical control as a strategy to regulate emotional labor fails because its focus centers upon the physical task and excludes the interactional aspect. In fact, occasionally, technologies aimed at increasing the profitability of a store actually expanded the emotional labor requirements. If possible, cashiers actively conceived of ways to ease the tension between technology and emotional labor such as bypassing a system decision or accepting a price without verification. The latter example regarding pricing information is actually a reaction to a breakdown of technology as well as the avoidance of a bureaucratic procedure. If the technology is designed in such a manner that it cannot be circumvented, some cashiers deliberately employ emotional labor techniques to avoid prolonged periods of silence in order to mask the production process.

CHAPTER 9

EMOTIONAL LABOR EXPERIENCES

This chapter examines cashiers' experiences concerning emotional labor.

Cashier perspectives are discussed in the aggregate -- across all organizational types -- to illustrate the contradictions inherent within emotional labor, tensions that result from competing demands on one's attention, and strategies used to alleviate the strains. Surprisingly, cashiers' experiences illuminated six different ways to express emotional labor. All styles correspond to distinct purposes or motivations. The presence of the various enactment styles demonstrates the dynamic, rather than static, nature of emotional labor.

The last section of this chapter reconceptualizes emotional labor to encompass the various enactment styles and then applies the new insights to the original research question -- the effect of organizational context on emotional labor. It also explores the relationship between labor control systems and emotional labor enactment strategies.

The Paradox of Emotional Labor: A Synopsis

My analysis of cashiers' experiences suggests that within the production process, emotional labor requirements generate two distinct types of tensions for cashiers. The first tension is between emotional labor demands and productivity standards. Two competing obligations -- basically, friendliness versus efficiency --

must constantly be negotiated by the cashier. For example, Michael at Carter's explains the difficulty inherent in the service encounter: the cashier's attention is divided between two competing and often contradictory responsibilities, the physical task and the emotional labor obligation:

...I try to make conversation as I go along. But then again, one of the hard things about that is you also try to keep your mind on your job and also, you know, make interaction with the customer. Those two things are kind of hard to do simultaneously, so, but it's something you always work on.

In comparison, the second tension stems from contradictions within emotional labor itself. Cashiers might become noticeably estranged from their feelings when they are obligated to act in ways counter to what they genuinely feel. Not only is alienation possible, it is highly probable in certain situations such as appeasing difficult customers, concealing contradictory emotions, or managing customers whose needs exceed those of which the production process is designed to handle. Susan's experience at Boulevard Market demonstrates the latter situation. She suggests occasionally customers desire particular types of interactions that are infeasible. The additional expectations of certain customers collide with the organizational framework for emotional labor and oftentimes leaves the cashier caught in the middle trying to negotiate between the opposing demands. This clash reveals the inherently commodified nature of emotional labor. Becoming noticeably upset, Susan recalls what transpired while she was working an afternoon shift a few days before our interview:

The only time I've got[ten] upset since I was working at this store was two days ago when a lady came in and told me her husband died and she was hugging me and crying. And I got upset...I've listened to her, talk[ed] to her about her husband for eight months now and I just told her 'Hang in there' and 'He's not suffering no [sic] more'....She just came through the door and grabbed me and started crying and ...[It] broke my heart....It hurt me to see her like that. I feel like I should have left and walked with her somewhere, you know, just for a little bit. I think that's what she wanted me to do. But I was up there by myself. And [I] felt like I kind of let her down because she, I think she needed me and I wasn't there. But that's not my job description, you know? I'm not there as a social worker. I'm there work working. But I think she really truly did need me at that moment. [I] kind of felt like I let her down.

This narrative demonstrates a few important considerations. To begin with, the grief-stricken customer simply does not "fit" into the production process. Customers are expected to purchase groceries and not require prolonged emotional support. This illustrates what a variable element in the production process the customer actually represents -- a dynamic that manufacturing workers do not have to contend with in their labor process. Manufacturing workers' production processes are highly predictable, barring technological malfunctions. In contrast, service workers must adjust their labor process in response to the customer in order to accomplish their work which can sometimes be quite taxing on the cashier. Interestingly, Nancy at Harvest Time acknowledges the adverse effects of constantly processing customers, concluding that "...sometimes I get so sick of people I don't even want to be near them."

Secondly, Susan's earlier example reveals the tension she directly experienced

as a result of the competing demands. She tried to modify emotional labor to encompass the crisis thereby stabilizing the situation but perceived the superficial nature of her efforts as well as the customer's disillusionment with her attempts. And lastly, Susan's experience illustrates how cashiers will attempt to depersonalize events in order to lessen the internal effects of alienation. She justifies not being able to meet the customer's needs for two reasons: crisis counseling is not part of her job and she was the only cashier working -- she simply could not leave the area. Since Susan still felt remorseful days later, it is apparent that her explanations were inadequate to relieve the internal stress the incident produced. Susan's narrative, as well as Michael's previous account, highlight the competing tensions cashiers mediate. Additional influences -- internal as well as production-related elements -- also influence emotional labor execution and will be demonstrated in the following sections.

Internal Influences on Emotional Labor

Out of twenty-eight respondents, sixteen (57%) cashiers indicated their moods influence their job performance. Cashiers can either experience internally-induced moods such as coming to work happy, sad, tired, upset, and the like. Additionally, cashiers can have their moods altered as a result of some externally-generated force such as troublesome customers.

Non-work Related, Internally-induced Moods

Janet at Boulevard Market summarizes how moods influence her job performance, both in terms of productivity and emotional labor execution:

If I'm in like a really good mood, I have ... more items per minute and I'm more friendly and I'm more upbeat. If I was tired, if I ... stayed up too late the night before, or if I just had a bad day then I'd be slower, more sluggish, and not always so chipper.

Leslie at Carter's emphasizes that she performs well regardless of moods. She concedes that bad moods require more effort to induce the same type of performance:

If I'm in a real good mood, I do a real good job. And if I'm in a fairly raunchy mood then it's a little harder to do a good job....I still think I do about the equivalent of jobs. It's just a lot harder if you're in a bad mood cause you've got a lot more to think about [regarding] work. [When] you're already happy, you don't have to worry about smiling or anything like that.

So for Leslie, the visual display -- the smile -- is still expected but harder to produce when she is feeling contradictory emotions. Gwen at Boulevard Market agrees, specifying that regardless of her mood, she talks about the same amount but when in a bad mood she smiles less:

I admit I have bad days ... I speak the same [amount] [be]cause talking -- I love to do that. It's just I don't smile a lot. I act pleasant to them but when they leave I get back to being grouchy.

In contrast, Carol at Foodstuffs explains that while a bad mood does not adversely influence her productivity it has serious consequences in terms of her emotional labor execution:

Sometimes, sometimes it is hard. Sometimes I just don't feel like

coming in and I'm just lousy. [I] just keep myself quiet.

Wendy at Boulevard Market concurs that bad moods influence her emotional labor execution more so than her productivity:

It doesn't affect my job performance like as in ringing up stuff but it may have a little effect on my attitude depending on if I'm upset at something, you know. I won't be as talkative but I try not to let it affect me.

Importantly, Ryan at Foodstuffs notices an increase in his productivity during a bad mood primarily because he limits his degree of emotional labor involvement:

To tell the truth, if I'm in a bad mood [then] I'll work more than I will when I'm in a good mood. When I'm in a good mood, I like to talk to the customers and everything. But if I'm in a bad mood, I'm like 'How are you doing?' Scan their groceries and just get them out.

His experience highlights the contradictory aspects of emotional labor. While emotional labor may increase profits by winning customer loyalty, it may simultaneously decrease monetary gain by slowing checkouts. These paradoxical elements occur simultaneously -- which prevails depends on the situation, including the specific customer.

Most cashiers emphasized the importance of not taking bad moods out on customers, intentionally limiting the extent of interaction is an effort on the cashier's part to prevent this transference from occurring. An action which itself shows a denial of one's feelings in order to engage in an economic exchange. Cashiers use a number of strategies to manage their own moods' impact. David, a Harvest Time cashier, explains that when he is in a bad mood, he decreases his emotional labor

execution, "...I'm pretty much quiet, I just do what I have to do and don't say a lot to anybody." Ruth at Foodstuffs concurs, elaborating about how she deals with moodiness in the context of the emotional labor required:

...and we all have our moods, don't we? Well, no I try not to let that bother my customers. If anything, with me, if I am moody -- I'll rephrase that, if I'm particularly ticked about something -- I'm very quiet. I'm not my normal chatterbox self, which [is what] the customers are accustomed to. I simply say 'Good morning' and talk for a second and wish them a nice day as they are leaving. I don't take it out on them. {But you just do the minimum in those situations?} I do, I do my job. And, of course, if they talk to me, I listen. If it requires an answer, I answer but nothing {maybe you're not as engaging?} Exactly, Well, I'm not. And see I would not be very truthful if I said anything different because I'm not [as engaging].

Thus, David and Ruth, both usually very engaging with customers from what I observed, alter their degree of involvement in response to internal influences.

Michael, a Carter's cashier, intentionally surpasses his ordinary level of emotional labor execution in response to a bad mood. His experiences also point to the contradictory nature of emotional labor as he is aware that his greater involvement in this aspect of the labor process corresponds to a decrease in productivity. Michael elaborates:

I would try to put on a smile even though it would kind of be hard to do. That's one of the things I've tried. And ... I try to talk a little bit more than I usually do. It might slow down my efficiency by, by talking to the customer. I find that about, you know, positive thinking. It makes your mood better. [It] makes you forget about other things if you're making conversation with a customer. At least that's what it seems to me.

Michael does concede that if he becomes angry in response to a specific customer's

action then he only enacts the minimum amount of emotional labor necessary to process the irritating customer. The handling of difficult customers is an art unto itself and will be discussed throughout the chapter. Importantly, demanding customers highlight the precarious nature of the service encounter.

Work Related, Externally-generated Moods

Connie at Carter's attributes the coerced "friendly" atmosphere of the store as instrumental in enhancing her mood so she can perform her job:

I think just being there can change your mood....Knowing that you need to put a smile on your face and somehow it just all comes together. After you're there, you kind of forget whatever it was that was bothering you. [emphasis added]

For Connie, not only realizing the store's emotional labor expectations but internalizing them as well assists in the performance. She also takes comfort in the fact that other cashiers are performing emotional labor:

...everybody else is doing it, so it's not so hard. It's like everybody conforms if everybody else is doing it....And you kind of want to do it when you get in the store.

Another example of external forces altering a cashier's mood would be demanding customers. Difficult customers highlight the one-sidedness of the service encounter. Service employees must adjust to the customer and not vice versa.

Recognition that the service encounter is not reciprocal in nature -- namely, that it may not be mutually satisfying to all participants, particularly the service employee --

does not alleviate the stress but most likely reduces it. Ultimately, then, the service encounter should not be conceived of as social interaction but rather a monetary exchange.

The absence of reciprocal courtesy is oftentimes a mood-degenerating event. Karen at Harvest Time dislikes when customers are unresponsive to her efforts to initiate conversation or are inconsiderate when making payment:

The people you talk to [and] you cannot get them to say anything back to you. They will not smile. They like throw their money down, that really bugs me when they throw their money down. I'm standing right here, what are you doing?

David, a co-worker of Karen's, expresses similar feelings concerning the lack of respect he receives at times:

It's hard. Cause you're always going to have your customers that [are difficult]. It's just really hard, I mean, to be nice to [them]. It's little things that get to you, like if you stick your hand out when somebody's going to give you the money and then they set [it down] instead of putting the money in your hand. They kind of set it on the counter. I mean, it's really tempting to just like [react]. I mean, I want one of those customers when they get ninety-nine cents back in change and I'll just put it all back on the counter and let them pick it up. It goes by that much smoother [if they hand the money to me]. 'Cause [when they don't] then I have to slide it all off [the counter] and then it falls on the floor and then I've got to find the change on the floor. But if they just put it in your hand [then all of that would have been avoided].

Actions such as being responsive when spoken to or being considerate while exchanging money, are gestures ordinarily found in personal relationships and should not automatically be expected from customers. Unlike cashiers, customers are not

exchanging their labor for a wage.

Handling Unpleasantness: Limit the Interaction. One Carter's cashier discussed earlier, Michael, regards the difficult customer "as not being an inconvenience because it's work. It's part of it." A moment later he contradicts himself by explaining difficult customers "might be an inconvenience but ... [I] put, you know, put up a front and pretend that it's not an inconvenience." Michael recounts one experience in which a customer angered him by asking if he was a new employee, implying his performance was not up to Carter's standard:

...And at that point I'd probably been there five or six months ... and that really made me angry. It really did. And I, I just didn't say anything to her. Maybe customers don't understand though but, but something like that ... it kind of hurts you ... [especially] when you're not new.

To fulfill the most rudimentary emotional labor obligation, Michael did recall thanking the customer at the end of the transaction. Michael deliberately restricted his interaction while he was processing the order because "I was afraid I was gonna say the wrong thing...."

Karen, a Southside Grocery cashier, explains that she also intentionally limits interactions with unpleasant customers. She maintains "minimal contact with 'em and ... just kind of smile at everything they say." Thus, similar to tactics designed for internally-induced bad moods, limiting emotional labor execution is an effective way to resist alienation for work-related bad moods as well.

After particularly difficult interactions, Karen employs a second strategy -- leaving the register to recuperate. Another of Karen's colleagues, Helen, agrees that if she becomes angry

...then I will take myself off of the register for a while to cool down because I don't want it to rub off on any of my customers. We have had some to make us very angry....Or if they [management] think that I'm really, really mad, then usually, especially the young guy that's the night manager, he'll say 'Come up to the office and talk to me and cool down.' You know, they're pretty good about it.

Similarly, Gwen at Boulevard Market will leave her register after a particularly exacting encounter if feasible. She fulfills her emotional labor obligation while processing the problematic customer but afterwards she needs to unleash her pent-up feelings:

I stay pleasant ... when they're there but when they leave I let it all out. I'll come back here [to the loading dock/break area] and I'll yell and that's about it. Let it out then or let it out when I get home.

Meredith, a Foodstuffs cashier, agrees about the necessity of leaving the register at times:

...I try and put my best foot forward and sometimes if I feel like I'm not in the mood to, you know, or if something is going wrong, if it's possible I'll try to get myself out of the register and do something in which I'm not interacting with people like stocking something, or something like that...

Importantly, cashiers are not able to leave their registers on impulse or in the midst of a transaction; they must be granted permission to do so from management. This lack of personal control and autonomy they exercise in relation to the production process

can create a significant obstacle to resisting alienation, a commonality shared between manufacturing and service workers.

Calculating the Outcome: Selecting the Method. The dilemma of how to respond to a demanding customer arises periodically. Allen at Southside Grocery indicates sometimes it is very difficult to know exactly how to reply to a customer, especially if they are being rude, and incorporate the customer back into the production process. He explains on occasion the need to pause before responding to devise his approach, "it's been pretty hard....If I have to sit there and not say anything for like thirty seconds just so I can think of what I should say then I'll do it you know (laughs)." Allen recounts one customer who became upset over the price of beer:

This guy came in one time and he was [buying] some beer I believe and our beer is real expensive. And when I put the price on there, before I rang it up, he just freaked. He said, 'There's no way it's that much.' And I said, 'I believe so.' And then I asked, you know. I knew that's what it was but I asked the employee next to me. I said, you know, 'Do you know the price on the brand he bought?' And she said whatever it was. And ... he totally just blew up. He was just like 'I cannot believe it. I could go get it for \$5.99 at [a convenience store] or something.' And of course you're thinking, you know, 'Why don't you?' but, you know, you don't say that (laughs). So, of course, I didn't say that. But, I mean, he was just so, he goes, 'Alright fine.' And he threw down his money and I rang it up for him. And I [asked] 'Would you like a bag?' And he didn't say a word and just ran off with it. [emphasis added]

In addition to showing how Allen does not react to a customer's anger by becoming

angry himself, his narrative also illustrates how cashiers are able to consciously manipulate service encounters in some circumstances, thereby greatly enhancing the probability of certain outcomes. Allen placates the customer momentarily by verifying the purchase price with an adjacent cashier -- all along knowing the other cashier would confirm the same price -- and waits deferentially for the customer's consent to proceed with processing the order.

Susan at Boulevard Market agrees with Allen about the importance of not reacting to customer rudeness:

I just don't let it bother me, I just don't. It is inside but I don't let it bother me....I'll just apologize, tell 'em 'I'm sorry' if they're in the wrong and the next thing you know they've turned their attitude around....if you let them make you react, they're getting what they want from you....Some people do it because they want you to react, they want you to make their day cause when you react back you're giving them a reason to really get angry, so why give 'em that reason?

Susan acknowledges that customer comments or actions might bother her internally but she will conceal her feelings in order to perform the work. If she were to explicitly demonstrate her annoyance or frustration, then the customer has more justification to complain. By deliberately not reacting, she avoids additional conflict. By appearing apologetic, she manipulates the customer into acquiescence.

Concealing Contradictory Emotions. Because cashiers exchange both physical as well as emotional labor for a wage, they are expected to adhere to emotional labor guidelines even when their real feelings are quite contrary. Karen at

Southside Grocery concedes that there are "some people I'd like to be rude to but, but since I know you have to be pleasant" she prevents herself from being impolite.

Wendy at Boulevard Market discusses the importance of concealing anger at times. Wendy indicates that if she becomes angry at a particular customer, she would

...just be polite as I could, you know, and not show that they have made me angry 'cause usually that makes 'em more, you know, that makes them angry ... I wouldn't let them see that I was angry 'cause that's not the proper way of doing it. I mean, I wouldn't jump over my counter and punch them out or anything like that. But, you know, I just, I'd get frustrated but I'd cool down. I wouldn't take it out on anybody.

A co-worker of Wendy's, Claire, asserts that she tries to cover her anger as well: "I just hold it in, I don't say anything ... They might be able to tell by my facial expression but not by me saying anything." Still another Boulevard Market cashier, Steve, notes that if he becomes irritated with a customer, his standard response is to avoid eye contact, "I just try to like block it out and keep going, doing my job....I'd look at the prices and the cash register." And Gwen, one final cashier at Boulevard Market, explains that she ignores customer impoliteness altogether in her attempt to stay within the emotional labor guidelines:

You stay pleasant. I mean, show them that you're not going to get upset as they are about something. Stay pleasant. Really, let it go in one ear and out the other like you do when you're listening to your mother yell at you.

Meredith at Foodstuffs admits that occasionally it is difficult to pretend that she is not annoyed:

...maybe it's just something about the customer, how they reacted to something and it just gives you a bad impression. And then you don't feel like being as cheerful as you were before. Even if you try to mask that, I'm sure it comes through a little bit.

Connie, a Carter's cashier, concurs explaining that sometimes she will subtly display her frustration:

We do have a couple of customers that come in that I would just prefer not come through my line because, it's just their personality make-up, it's just how they are. They can't be pleasant. They probably can't be pleasant to anybody...I don't think it matters what cashier they get, it probably doesn't matter who they interact with in their life, that's just the way they are. You can bend over backwards and kiss their toes, and they're just not ... nothing is going to make them happy and you have to remember that before you act or before you think. I know the body language doesn't always match what's coming out of my mouth. {Can you give an example?} I might tap on the keys a little harder than necessary (laughs).

So for Connie while she might be adhering to all the verbal requirements of the position such as greeting and thanking the customer, at times her body language might indicate something other than a deferential presence. Additionally, to effectively process the demanding customer, Connie realizes the critical or unpleasant nature of the customer and the likelihood that whatever actions she takes will not produce satisfaction and then adjusts her approach accordingly. This technique assists in de-personalizing the labor and alleviating alienation she might otherwise experience.

Recipients of Personal Criticism. Nancy at Harvest Times recalls a personal insult from a customer, one that she responded to by withholding emotional labor:

...Because I mean I know that I had to work on Easter and I was in a really, really bad mood and I was really rude to this man and I felt bad afterwards but he was really being rude. He was like 'This line needs to hurry up.' And I just didn't say anything to him or smile at him or anything and he said something to my manager I don't know whether it was about me or not but it kind of scared me, I felt kind of bad afterwards...I mean, it wasn't like...they were personal things [that he said] like 'You sure are slow' and I wasn't going to put up with that. I thought that was rude. I think the better thing is for me not to say anything when people are like that {But the manager didn't say anything?} No, they were standing there, they knew what happened....I mean, if he wants me to be nice to him than he should be nice to me, I mean, because I don't think I have a problem with being nice to people or pretending like I am (laughs) and I think the customer should be like that too.

Nancy's account reveals several items of importance. In response to the customer's personal insults she suspended any attempts at emotional labor -- a silent but effective rebuke, so effective in fact that the disgruntled customer spoke with a manager afterward. While it is impossible to verify the topic of that conversation, it most likely was either Nancy's lack of emotional labor or a complaint about waiting too long for service. Regardless of the topic, the customer's action of seeking out the manager after the transaction worried Nancy. Nancy realized she was acting contrary to the organization's directives by withdrawing and her stance could possibly result in disciplinary action, a risk that she consciously accepted when she became silent. In addition, Nancy's account also reveals a note of personal guilt. She admits to feeling badly about the incident. It is unclear whether this guilt would have surfaced if the customer had not spoken directly with a manager. Nancy justifies all of her actions on the basis that the customer should be at least minimally courteous -- an

expectation, discussed earlier, that is faulty. The service encounter is primarily a business rather than a social exchange. And lastly, Nancy makes an explicit distinction between being nice and pretending to be nice. An important contrast that will be discussed at length shortly.

At Foodstuffs, Meredith's technique for dealing with impolite customers is to disregard inappropriate comments:

I have been personally insulted ... but it wasn't people I would take seriously, so I just said 'Forget it' (laughs) 'Who cares?'

Understanding that the social exchanges are not authentic but are merely part of the production process, assists Meredith de-personalize discourteous treatment. Thus, the potentially alienating part of emotional labor -- the artificial or manufactured interaction -- actually assists the cashier manage in this instance.

Ryan, a co-worker of Meredith's, agrees about selective listening. He explains his approach:

...if it's something good, I'll pay attention but if it something bad I'll let it go in one ear and out the other. Unless it's something that I think I'm at fault. Like this one man, I swear I was being as nice and as pleasant as possible. And he was in a bad mood. I don't know why. Then he goes to the manager and complains about me. I don't see what I did. And I apologized to him afterwards even though I didn't think I was wrong, I still apologized. {What did he complain about?} He said that he just didn't like my personality. I was joking around with him a lot. I [said] 'Hi, how are you doing?' He [replied] 'Fine.' I [said] 'Like shopping today sir?' And he [replied] 'I don't think that is really none [sic] of your business, I buy what I want. Now, hurry up and give me my groceries before I complain to your manager.' [I said] 'O.K., sorry.' Most of those customers, you'll run into maybe three times a day. Most of the customers that come here are nice 'cause they

know what to expect from me. They know the check processing is going to be long and they know I'm going to have to call for the manager, so they're pleasant.

Most customers realize that Ryan is not responsible for how the production process is designed at Foodstuffs and thus do not use it as a basis for personal criticism.

Wendy at Boulevard Market's experiences demonstrate that customer criticism does not need to be verbal to be disheartening:

...and they're just kind of like sighing and stuff, you know, not saying that you're taking a long time but giving you subtle hints, it seems like to me. {And how does that make you feel when they do that?} It makes me feel bad cause I feel like I need to improve on something when really it's not me, it's just them being impatient...

In this regard, the service encounter resembles other forms of social interaction in which meanings are constructed in a variety of ways.

Recipients of Organizationally-related Criticism. In addition, customers direct anger and criticism at cashiers for activities they have no direct control over. David at Harvest Time explains that cashiers often receive the brunt of customer criticism regarding inaccurate prices programmed into the computer:

I mean that's the really messed up thing. It's like the cashiers and the baggers, I mean, we have no idea of anything. I mean, we just, the only thing that can actually be [the cashier's] fault is produce and that's because that's the only thing we punch in. And other than that we just run it across the scanner so whatever it says [is another employee's responsibility]. They'll say 'You overcharged me.' I'm like [thinking] 'Well, you could say that in a way but I didn't.'

By consciously recognizing that he is not personally responsible for the overcharge,

David does not take the criticism as a reflection of his abilities.

Diane at Boulevard Market discusses an incident in which a customer became upset with her due to a change in store policy:

A customer I had, you know, we had a new sign up saying that we do not accept checks over the amount. It has to be the exact amount. The man went off on me. And I was like [thinking] 'Wait a minute, hold up, I'm not the one that makes the rules, you know. You've got problems, I'll get the manager up here.' That's exactly what I did. I was like [thinking] 'There ain't no need for you to get all mad and huffy puffy 'bout that, you should have just read the sign before you wrote the check.' You know what I'm saying? (laughs) {So did the manager handle it?} Yeah. They explained it and he got all mad with her too and he's like 'I ain't coming in here no [sic] more.' He comes in here everyday now (laughs). He just writes the check for the exact amount. You know, he didn't buy the stuff he wanted though that day, he didn't buy nothing [sic].

One of Diane's colleagues, Janet, remarks that she dislikes it when customers complain about grocery prices to her "...because it's not our fault, you know, we can't [be] held responsible, it's [up to the owner], not us." Claire, another co-worker, also speaks to the necessity of determining where the responsibility for a complaint really falls: "I just don't worry about it cause it's not my fault if things go wrong here. I don't own the store, I just work here (laughs)."

Requesting Manager Assistance. A cashier's last recourse is to summon assistance from management to handle troublesome customers. Connie at Carter's explains:

Usually, I try not to let them make me angry cause if they are difficult

... it's usually something that I can just call the manager and let them deal with it. It's one of the things they taught us, in cashier training, we don't have to put up with anything. If there's, if there's anything that we can't handle or anyone ... who has something that we just can't take care of on our own, ... all we need to do is call a manager....At the point that I pick up that intercom and call the manager, then it becomes his or her problem and I just don't have to worry about it anymore.

Leslie, also at Carter's, calls in management at the first opportunity available if she is unable to resolve a situation, "Yeah, most of those customers I kind of ditch off on a manager (laughs) ... they've got more experience of how to deal with it then I do."

One of Leslie's colleagues, Jean, agrees about calling in management but only when absolutely necessary. Jean first attempts to resolve the matter individually. If no progress is being made, then she relies on management intervention:

...because most of 'em are just, you know, kind of irate. You know, when you get these people....But once I explain it and, and they don't understand and everything's right there in black and white and [they] still don't understand, then I get the manager. Now, you tell 'em. It's your job, you know. But really, I mean, I've done all I can [do], everything's right here in black and white. If they don't comprehend what I'm saying, you deal with it. I have other customers, you know. And not that I'm trying to get rid of 'em, and I take my time and explain. I even take my pencil and circle on the tape...

Thus, the ability to summon assistance is a beneficial aspect of bureaucratic control and assists in maintaining the flow of customers out of the store. Importantly, bureaucratic control also allows cashiers a way to de-personalize customer dissatisfaction. Both are methods to reduce or resist alienation.

Production-related Factors Influencing Emotional Labor

Similar to how moods affect cashiers' emotional labor execution, production-related factors also exert influence. Elements integral to the service encounter, customer-specific in nature such as characteristics of the order, adherence to the process, customer expectations, as well as extraneous factors like the presence of others can influence a cashier's emotional labor enactment.

Customer-Specific Factors

Order Size / Customer Compliance. The actual length of the transaction and thus, the interactional component, is dependant to an extent on the size of a customer's order. Interactions can range from less than a minute for a single-item purchase on an express lane to several minutes for an extra large order or a transaction that corresponds to a breakdown in the process, such as a technological malfunction or a missing price. Foodstuffs' Meredith points to the importance of customer's adherence to the checkout procedure as well:

Let's see, I'd say for an express line, it's normally very, very short. It very much depends on whether the customer follows the rules or not. You know, it's the "nine items or less, do not write a check idea." I've had interactions maybe as short as twenty seconds, you know, if they were just buying a pack of cigarettes or something like that. But maybe if it's an older person who has maybe ten items and then decides to write a check and then, it can be as much as five to ten minutes. If you have a price check you have to do that also adds time. But I'd say the average regular line would be between five and ten minutes. 'Cause of course you have to ask now for [Foodstuffs' preferred customer] card at first and sometimes people have to shuffle around and

look for it. And every once in awhile you won't have a courtesy clerk and so you'll have to take care of bagging yourself too, so that can, all, you know (laughs), all these are factors that will make it a longer interaction. But I try to be as polite as I can and ... actually be interested in what's going on. I think that's really important.

A co-worker of Meredith's, Jessica, recalls a customer who did not follow the norms for the checkout process: She stopped placing her items upon the conveyor belt midway through emptying the grocery cart. Unaware that only half of the customer's desired purchases were offered, Jessica scanned all the merchandise before her, determined the order's price, and requested payment. The customer, realizing all of the goods had not been scanned, became angry and told her to "Scan it again" and demanded a new receipt that would reflect the entire purchase amount. Jessica agreed to re-scan the order in its entirety a second time to appease the customer. In order to do so, Jessica first voided the earlier partial transaction and re-scanned all the goods previously processed. By mistake, when she reached the same point in the transaction -- no other goods were awaiting processing -- she automatically totalled the order again, annoying herself and angering the customer even further. Jessica attributes the second mistake to the customer's continued noncompliance with the production process -- contrary to what Jessica had expected -- and she ended her earlier pleasantries. Jessica recalls her motivation and the duplicate processing error:

So I took [the partial transaction] off and gave her a 'fresh ticket.' That's what she wanted. I rang it up again. By accident, I hit ... total because she did not take the rest out of the basket like she was suppose to. I guess she wanted me to break my back to reach over there and pick it up, I don't know. [She said], 'You're going to have to do that

again. If you can't [give me] a fresh ticket, I'm going to another line.' I said 'Bye.' I'm not going to argue with her. She just left. I had to call the person in the office to get the stuff off the register. She left half of it on the counter and half of it in the basket. It's like she wouldn't continue putting the rest of it up there....She was the type of person that liked to see people get ticked off. I was pleasant with her. I was nice. I did everything she wanted me to do but when she kept saying that [she wanted a new receipt] and I said 'I'm not allowed to keep giving you another ticket over another ticket because that's going to mess everything up.' Well, she got real mad about that. I haven't seen her since.

After that aggravating experience, it is no wonder why Jessica occasionally prefers not to talk with customers. Whenever this happens, Jessica requests an express register. She explains, "Somedays I like express better because somedays I don't feel like talking to customers. And I like just to get them out of the way -- like fast and easy and no complaints."

Jessica also mentions she is occasionally the recipient of "ugly faces" customers display to communicate their displeasure when another customer is taking too long to make payment -- an activity Jessica has no control over. And the fact they make such faces to her is an acknowledgment of her lack of control. It is "conspiratorial" in a sense. She and the displeased customer share the understanding and frustration regarding the slow-paying customer. The displeased customer is not unhappy with Jessica directly but with the lag in the production process. Similarly, Daniel at Carter's explains that occasionally he is forced to wait, thus halting production, while customers "dig and dig to get rid of seven pennies." Daniel admits that he does not know how to handle the situation tactfully so as to increase their

speed, so oftentimes he will "stand there and hold my patience." Daniel realizes that he is scheduled to work regardless of the customer's efficiency but he "hates for them to take unnecessary time."

The Unpredictable Customer. Meredith at Foodstuffs suggests that customers and cashiers have different expectations regarding the interaction:

...it's much more important to be friendly, to me, when you're in a longer [regular] line, when a person is there for a longer period of time. Because I think [that] they care more about it too. When they're in the express line, oftentimes they're in a hurry. They don't really care what you say to them (laughs) as long as you charge them correctly and you get them out of there, you know. So in express, I think it's important to be quicker, not sacrificing accuracy. And then in the longer [regular] lines, it's very important to be friendlier because you don't want to tick them off in the beginning and then, you know, have them be there for another five minutes and you just have to deal with it ... [I]t's awful...

According to some of the cashiers, customers differ in regards to how much of an interaction they require. Ryan, a Foodstuffs cashier, sums up the range:

...it's like different categories. It's like -- how should I say -- three categories. It's like you have the people who just don't want to be bothered at all, so you just say 'Hello', 'Have a good day' and they just like go out the door. Then you have your people ...[to whom you say] 'Hello, how are you doing?' and they talk to you and you can get a little conversation. It's like your medium [range]. And then you have your final person, and they'll just like talk you to death but I mean, it's a good talking to death, but they'll still talk you to death.

Jean at Carter's discusses the rushed customer and how some have even advised her to increase her processing rate, "[They say comments like] 'Hurry up.' 'I'm in a

hurry and I don't have a whole lot of time. I gotta do this and I gotta do that.'"

Conversely, Elizabeth at Harvest Time agrees that certain customer interactions are excessive at times:

Sometimes, you know, they'll come in and ... [I'll say], 'How are you doing?' and ... [they'll answer] 'I was sick last week,' you know and they go on and on and on and it's like, 'O.K., I'm sorry I asked,' you know, that's what I'm thinking in the back of my mind but, you know, I always try and listen to them. Cause we get that, especially from the older customers and I love being around older people anyway.

The Contradictory Nature of Listening. Ruth, a Foodstuffs cashier, emphasizes the importance of listening to the customers, "It's important enough for them to be telling me things, so the least I can do is listen." Ruth elaborates on the transactions with customers who come in frequently:

...no matter where you're at, you're going to get basically the same people all the time. And you learn [about] those people just like they learn [about] you, [and] that, like so many other things, is a two-way street while you are learning [about] them, they are doing the same thing. That's why some of them confide in you. I told somebody one time, I said 'Hey, being a cashier is as good as being a bartender (laughs) if you'll listen.'

Susan at Boulevard Market agrees about the relationships that develop with frequent customers, often referred to as regulars:

...I treat them [well] and I remember the things they tell me and they love it. And I like the fact that they remember me. It's like a friendship, you feel like you're friends with 'em but you don't even really know their names. Isn't that (laughs) [funny][?] You know what I'm saying? But you recognize their face ... [and I remember what we've discussed] but that's, something I just do myself.

Thus, attentive listening, a significant aspect of emotional labor, presents contradictions as it can interfere with the physical activity of processing. As Susan continues,

I try not to be too long-winded. If we're slow, [then] I'll listen and listen. But sometimes that can only be a bad habit to get into because some of them are so lonely, for somebody to talk to, that they don't realize that when I'm really busy, you know what I mean, I don't have the full attention span for 'em. So, I'm trying to listen to them and at the same time I'm trying to be gentle with 'em. You know, putting their stuff down right (laughs) while everybody's standing there waiting in line (laughs). [I'm] like [thinking], 'I'm busy right now' (laughs) cause they just don't pay attention. They just want me to listen to 'em at that moment, you know, so it's hard for me...

Susan realizes the strain produced by the intersection of organizational productivity standards, emotional labor expectations, and the always variable customer. The customer who interacts with a cashier who plays the role of a patient listener one day, should not always assume the cashier will be available to do so again.

The Presence of Others

Line Length. Some cashiers feel pressure to increase their productivity in response to customer congestion in the checkout area. Karen at Harvest Time distinguishes her performance of emotional labor during slow periods in the store versus peak demand:

If you're not busy, it doesn't really matter. But if you're busy, then, you know, it's nice to be nice to these people and chit chat with them but the people behind them don't really appreciate that type thing.

Beverly at Carter's agrees that the number of customers waiting in her line affects her interaction length:

Well, a lot of times too the customer sees that you are really busy so, you know, you do sort of get them through faster; some of them don't, some of them keep on talking, I mean, some of the cashiers, they just, they just keep on talking, talking, and talking but I don't. I mean, I talk but I don't say 'Well, did you hang your wash out today?' you know, 'you gonna iron it tomorrow?' and you know, I don't but you know, I'm just nice but not....Mainly they're telling you stuff while you're ringing up their order but I don't hang on to 'em, you know {O.K., so you sort of follow their lead?} Yes, sort of, in a way, yeah. Well, open up enough so that they get started, you know, but, but most of them you don't have to because you've been waiting on them for so long, you know, that they're going to tell you what's on their mind while you're checking them out (laughs) whether you want to hear it or not (laughs).

Tyler, a co-worker of Beverly's, mentions how long lines of customers motivate him to increase his pace:

I don't like [it] when the customers are waiting in a long line, you know. I try to get them out as soon as I can ... cause I [can] tell [that] when they wait in a long line, they get all frustrated. And customers don't like long lines, so I just try to do my best and get them out of there.

Another Carter's cashier, Connie, explains customers appear to wait longer than they actually do:

When you start looking at the time frames on the journal tapes, it hasn't, not that much time has elapsed. But it seems like a lifetime (laughs). It just seems like a long time that they've been standing there waiting when in fact it's only been a few minutes.

Thus, Connie realizes that customers often perceive time to pass very slowly when they are anticipating receiving her service rather than being actively processed.

Jessica at Foodstuffs agrees that the number of customers waiting for service affects her work. She uses certain techniques to speed up the processing of customers such as not pausing to allow customers to hunt for change and opening bags ahead of time for the next order. In relation to emotional labor execution, she is not as engaging with the customers, and performs only the minimum requirements -- in essence, "Hello, goodbye, get out (laughs)."

Similarly, many cashiers respond to difficult customers by increasing their pace. Troublesome customers infuse uncertainty into the production process. Unresolved disputes could potentially halt the production process at a particular aisle and leave other customers waiting while the situation is being resolved. At Foodstuffs, Ruth's approach is to hasten the pace of processing if she encounters a demanding customer: "And if you're running in low gear that particular day, then you put it in high gear and get 'em out (laughs)." Ryan, a colleague of Ruth's, concurs: "But what it really all boils down to is like how fast you can check them out to be honest with you."

Elizabeth at Harvest Time's intent is two-fold. First, she concentrates on processing the troublesome customer as quickly as possible to avoid making others wait. And secondly, Elizabeth wants to restore order back into the production process:

Just try to get them out as quickly as possible but with them being pleased with, you know, trying to please them in whatever way you can and just try to get them out of there. {If the customer ends up making

you angry how do you handle that?} Just try to get them out of there and then just punch a wall after they leave or something or try to joke it off, one or the other, especially if there's other people in line, you know, you don't want that snowball effect, you just kind of make a subtle little joke about it or something and then go on. {So you feel like if you do have a line with people who witnessed this, you kind of need to make them at ease and try to relieve your stress?} Yeah, you know, a lot of them are like, they'll walk up there and they'll be like 'I can't, what an asshole' you know, so you just kind of joke it off, it just makes everybody at ease.

Jessica at Foodstuffs echoes the concern about other customers waiting too long for service. Her worst customer was argumentative about the price per pound of apples. Jessica admits initially miskeying the price but then adjusting it. To the best of her recollection, Jessica attempted numerous times to explain the correction but the customer would not listen and continued disagreeing. Furthermore, Jessica's line was backing up with other customers. Jessica finally referred the customer to the office. Jessica explains her perspective "Yeah, just take it to the office. 'Cause I don't want to make too many people get upset with the line being held up." Meredith, a co-worker of Jessica's, cautions that referring customers to the office for assistance sometimes annoys them, "I try to say it with a smile and I try not to have any kind of tone in my voice and usually they'll read one into it anyway. But that's just what happens."

Remarks by Other Customers. Meredith also relates how her emotional labor involvement is influenced by unsolicited customer opinions. She explains one

of her least favorite events:

...It makes me very uncomfortable if one customer will start talking about another, and that just really, I feel like I'm in a really awkward position there because I don't want to talk about the customer beforehand and I don't want to really disagree with this customer who is obviously just arrogant (laughs)....I just don't understand people who do that and I think that's putting me in a very bad position because, it just is. And a lot of times it's racial or small-minded, whatever they're commenting on, you know. And I usually don't say anything at that point and ... am usually rather silent for the rest of the order, you know. And I'll give them their change and I'll say, 'Have a nice day' and I may or may not mean it.

Meredith's example further illustrates how cashiers can minimally adhere to emotional labor directives in order to fulfill their emotional labor obligation. However, even this minimum level could mean acting contrary to what one feels. Meredith uses silence to convey her disapproval and resists alienation by following the script verbatim when absolutely necessary -- fully conscious of the fact that she does not wish them well. Disassociating her true feelings from the emotional labor directives assists in alleviating alienation.

Martha at Carter's occasionally uses her discretion to process customers through an express lane whose orders exceed the maximum amount of allowable items and receives disapproving comments by other customers for doing so. Martha's gesture fulfills the underlying emotional labor goal of the work -- pleasing the customer -- because the customer realizes a special favor has been bestowed. However, other customers become irritated with her decision, even if they were not in line when the initial decision was made, because it decreases her productivity. One

customer counted the previous customer's items and quizzed Martha, "Do you know how many she had?" Recently, a customer quipped "Can't you count?" Such remarks undoubtedly influence a cashier's subsequent interaction during the service encounter.

Reducing the Tension: Emotional Labor Enactment Styles

Cashiers accomplish their work and mediate the tensions inherent within emotional labor by, either consciously or unconsciously, relying upon a variety of different emotional labor enactment styles to accommodate changing circumstances. Six distinct styles surfaced during this study as strategies cashiers could adopt: the conversationalist, the minimalist, the pretender, the avoider, the confronter, and the contender. Each style corresponds with different goals and will be discussed momentarily after a brief note of caution. While the six enactment styles are exhaustive in terms of my study, they most likely do not represent a definitive inventory of all conceivable strategies of resistance within the service sector. However, the sheer presence of enactment styles supports the view that emotional labor is a dynamic, non-homogeneous component of the service sector's labor process and can be altered if necessary.

Establishing Rapport: The Conversationalist

As a result of the training process at each store as well as being cultural

citizens -- for example, they have been customers -- cashiers recognize that emotional labor is a necessary component of their duties. For the most part, cashiers realize it is their responsibility to initiate the interaction. One Carter's cashier, Jean, explains "Oh, I always approach [the customer saying,] 'Good morning' or 'Good afternoon' or whatever, 'How are you doing?' and a lot of them I know, so I usually carry on a general conversation, and most of 'em are pretty nice." A Boulevard Market cashier, Janet, concurs, saying "...well, they come through your line, ... [and you ask], 'Hey, how's it going?' You gotta be friendly ... you've got to make the experience friendly for them. Basically, just ring them up and say 'Goodbye' (laughs)."

Susan at Boulevard Market mentions she also typically initiates the verbal exchange and waits for a response: "...it's up to them. I make the first step and from there I see what happens." Ruth at Foodstuffs always greets her customers with a smile and is prepared to listen:

And if they want to talk, I listen. Sometimes, we get into a conversation if we're not busy. For the most part, it's very pleasant. Most of the conversation is during the scanning part. And then, some of them, especially the older ones, they will, if I'm not busy, they will stand and talk for a few minutes after the sale is completed. But for the most part, it's just during the time I am scanning items that we do talk.

And lastly, Beverly at Carter's admits that occasionally her greetings might be too boisterous:

'Cause some of the customers say 'You're in a good mood today.' And, it's like 'Oh, O.K. I'm sorry. I'm sorry, did I come on too strong?'

Ann at Southside Grocery discusses one atypical bagger who operates the register frequently:

....actually one of the bag boys is just as comfortable greeting, is very cheerful, very outgoing, and, you know, if he knows the customer well enough that day, he kind of kids around with them....It's more of his personality....He's not 'shy.' Some of the other [baggers] are kind of like, they won't say anything. They'll say 'Hi' ... They're just not very outgoing people. They're used to one to one ... Different customers come in that they might know very well [but] if [it's] a stranger, [they] back off and do the very minimum just to get by.

Thus, Ann's account confirms two important elements regarding emotional labor.

The first being that there are certain personality traits better suited for emotional labor enactment and, in her opinion, females are more likely to possess these traits. And secondly, cashiers can vary their level of enactment depending upon the circumstances surrounding the service encounter and their intent.

Interestingly, Michael, another Carter's cashier, describes his favorite customers as ones that take the initiative during the interaction instead of relying on the cashier to begin the dialogue:

But some people ... I don't know if they're in a good mood all the time but every time they come through the line it seems like they're always in a good mood. And those kinds of people, basically, they take the ... I guess a way to put it is that they take the burden off the cashier which is nice ... you know, making the conversation and everything ... Like, they'll, they'll ask you, before you can even ask 'em 'How are you doing?', they'll ask you, 'How are you doing?' ... And that totally turns things around ... And I think, when the customer goes out of his or her way to ... make friendly relations with the cashier, I think that's, I think that's the ideal customer. [emphasis added]

So for Michael, customers that assume the responsibility of initiating the conversation

offer a type of respite for him, one that he appreciates.

After cashiers perform the greeting, many attempt to establish a connection to the customers so that the customer will participate in a conversation. It could be some type of compliment, as Susan at Boulevard Market explains:

I try to say something complimentary to them to bring 'em out, like 'You've got a pretty ring on', 'pretty broach', 'I like your tie.' And then it seems, right after that, people like it, I like it, you know...I like people to treat me like I treat them...

Michael at Carter's relies on a different tactic, product discussion, to generate conversation:

...most of the time it depends on like the content of their order. Like I'll say 'Oh, those are good' or something like that, you know. Or, I'll see something they got, like for instance if they got dog food, you can ask them what kind of dog they have. You know, stuff like that. You try to, you know, make conversation with them by the content of their order. That's what I try to do anyway sometimes.

Wendy at Boulevard Market also uses product discussion to stimulate interactions:

You know, if nothing is really being said, to start conversation I'll like pick an item, you know, 'Oh, you have cats?' you know, if they have cat food ...[I] just try to bring on conversation like that, but it can be tricky sometimes too.

Wendy recalls an incident in which she casually commented on the size of a customer's order and the customer became upset:

There was this lady in the line and she had a really large order and I said, you know, cause we were chit-chatting, being real nice and I said 'You know, this is the largest order I've had since, you know, I've been working here' and ... another employee there said 'Yeah, didn't you get about that much last week?' And it kind of insulted her. And she went and talked to our manager about it. But I apologized to her, I

didn't mean no [sic] harm by it. You just got to watch what you say cause you don't no how that person is going to react ... She thought we were being rude.

Wendy's example illustrates two important considerations. First, attempts to induce conversation can be difficult because one's comments are open to interpretation by the customer. And secondly, the intimate nature of the service encounter is illuminated. In all likelihood, it was probably not Wendy's initial observation about the size of the order that offended the customer, but her co-worker's interjection about the customer's previous purchase that caused the controversy.

Connie at Carter's uses both techniques, complimentary statements or product discussion, when appropriate as well as personal knowledge:

...one woman that comes through for the longest time, her [sic] and I wore the same watch and it was something to talk about. And other people come through and I know they have children or I know what they do for a living so, you know, touching on some little something....but some people will have on like, they'll have on an unusual outfit or unusual pin or something and I'll remark on it. If I see that they're buying like a lot of children's cold stuff, I'll say something about, you know, 'Has it been a rough day?' (laughs).

Brian, a co-worker of Connie's, suggests that personal knowledge flows both ways. He likes customers who "...know what I'm about and what I do [away from work]. And they ask me questions, you know, 'What am I doing?' 'What's going on?' They just make easier conversation."

And lastly, doing something to make oneself noticeable can also generate conversation. Connie, mentioned earlier, intentionally wears unusual jewelry that

customers tend to notice and discuss with her. Thus, complimentary statements, product discussion, personal knowledge, and making oneself noticeable are all techniques cashiers employ to attempt to establish rapport with their customers. For my purposes -- which are to illustrate the dynamic nature of emotional labor and the variety of enactment styles that exist -- cashiers that rely upon rapport-generating techniques can be classified as having a **conversationalist** style of emotional labor enactment. Cashiers with this particular style of emotional labor execution tend to enjoy customer interactions as part of their labor process. The conversationalist style emphasizes emotional labor goals before productivity concerns. Importantly, as Wendy's earlier example demonstrates, conversationalists might not always be successful due to the always variable customer.

Just the Basics: The Minimalist

One Harvest Time cashier, Nancy, explains that she does not ignore customers but does not routinely engage them in conversations. She indicates not talking is easier, but emphasizes "...just because I don't talk to them and have a conversation, doesn't mean that I'm not friendly. I always smile at people....I'm sure they would rather I have a conversation with them, but, you know." In this context, Nancy adheres to the minimum requirements for emotional labor and, in doing so, can be conceptualized as a **minimalist**. While this second style of emotional labor enactment fulfills both productivity and emotional labor goals, more emphasis is placed on the

productivity aspect. Cashiers perform only what is necessary in terms of emotional labor directives, no embellishments are apparent. Diane at Boulevard Market also indicates that occasionally she only meets the most basic guidelines for emotional labor, "There's sometimes, [when] just like [all] you say [is] 'Hi' (laughs). You know, you don't feel like talking." Leslie at Carter's discusses how her dialogue becomes more routinized the longer she works:

...[I]f you listen to me, most of my stuff is ... after about the first hour I work ... I'm real set in whatever I say, it doesn't change much just 'cause it's repeated so long. I'm just like 'O.K. I'm tired of saying this now' (laughs).

Allen at Southside Grocery admits that he should be more engaging with customers:

If a customer makes a comment like "It's so cold out' and that kind of stuff. I should be more, I guess, responsive to it. Instead of saying 'Yeah, I know' (laughs) or something like that...

Thus, Allen realizes some phrases can either stimulate or deter customer conversation.

In order for Nancy, the cashier discussed earlier who typically only smiles, to increase her emotional labor involvement the customer must take the initiative:

I mean, most of the people don't say anything to me. But if somebody says something to me, I listen. And that's when I start talking. For me to talk, they have to start....But if they say something to me, most the time, I'm usually interested. If I'm not, [then] I act like I am. {And how do you act like you are?} Just smile and nod. If I know anything about the subject, [then] I'll start talking about it too.

Thus, two elements important to understanding emotional labor emerge from the cashiers' narratives. First, within an individual cashier a fluidity of performance

styles is evident as s/he shifts to find a suitable enactment style to fit the occasion.

And secondly, if cashiers are not genuinely interested in interacting, they can utilize appropriate impression management techniques to appear involved.

The Illusion of Interest: The Pretender

Michael at Carter's agrees with Nancy and explains in great detail about why he is not always attentive and what he does to create the illusion that he is interested in the customer:

It's hard to concentrate on everything you're doing with your job and also concentrate on everything they're saying. I always try to pay attention to what they're saying because if you pay attention to what they're saying, you can comment back and when you comment back that shows that you care. And when the customer thinks that you care, that makes them feel better ... it makes them want to come back to the store. And when I can't [listen], it's usually because, you know, I'm trying to get something rung up that won't ring up. I'm trying to get it to ring up and I concentrate, you know, getting what needs to be done out of the way and I, and I try to listen, you know, to the customer at the same time. And what you do in a situation like that as far as I'm concerned, at least what I do is, is if you're not really, kind of can't pay attention to what they're saying at the same time while you're trying to concentrate on a problem, just kind of nod your head [and] say, 'Yeah, yeah,' you know. Kind of act like you're paying attention. You kind of, it's kind of an act, even though you can't pay attention to them right now, you kind of look like you're paying attention. You kind of pretend [that] you're going to pay attention. That way they still have the same feeling in a sense that you are paying attention even though you can't at that present time. Because I think, some people don't realize ... that you're trying to do things and they can talk to you and they, they won't mess you up...

Another of Michael's colleagues, Leslie, also mentions feigning interest in customers

occasionally:

...when I've had a rough day it's, it's a little harder than if I had a good day. {And, and how do you do it, even if you've had a hard day?} Fake it, uhm (laughs), you just think about something good, there's got to be something good with everything bad, it can't be completely miserable ... {And how do you keep focused?} It's, I've been doing it so long. It just happens. I can be tired and I can be dreaming about scanning groceries {so it's just something that you've trained yourself to do?} It just happens, the being friendly and smiling I have to work on but the actual scanning and codes, it happens.

Thus, Leslie indicates the interactional component of her position is unlike the productivity aspect in that it cannot be accomplished automatically but is always variable due to changing circumstances. Both Michael and Leslie's accounts illustrate a third emotional labor execution style, which I refer to as the **pretender**. This particular style of emotional labor execution satisfies both emotional labor and productivity goals but the interactional aspect is not as intrinsically fulfilling for the pretender as it is for conversationalists discussed earlier. The pretenders are primarily interacting because they are paid to do so. In order to accurately distinguish between pretenders and conversationalists, especially when pretenders master their masquerades, inner motivations need to be ascertained.

Precedence of Physical Task: The Avoider

In an attempt to alleviate the strain of competing demands on their attention, oftentimes cashiers will give precedence to the physical task over the interactional aspect. This can occur either at certain key points during the production process or

for the entire duration of the exchange. For instance, one Carter's cashier, Jean, explains that she will not divert her attention when handling money to engage in emotional labor:

... but if I'm tendering a check ... If I'm in a check business or whatever or making ... change, cash, whatever, then I'll say, 'Oh, excuse me, what did you say?' You know, because I have to do that first. Money first.

One of Harvest Time's cashiers, David, mentions the need for a greater degree of concentration on larger orders. After the order's price is determined, then he engages in conversation. A Foodstuffs cashier, Jessica, concurs:

If [there's] something that's really going on that you need to really pay attention to ... Like when we have a really big sale and it's a really big order. You don't want to mess up ... Like it's two for one something, you know, you have to check and make sure it's all there. And sometimes you don't get to listen to [the conversation] as close[ly]. And I always try to find at least two or three minutes in that whole process to listen.

Diane, a Boulevard Market cashier, may concentrate so intently on processing the order, that she does not realize she is being spoken to, sometimes to the detriment of what she is trying to accomplish:

...sometimes, they have so many groceries. And I'll be so busy trying to ring the stuff in. They'll be trying to tell me [that] they have a coupon or something like that. I just miss it because I'm busy trying to get them out of the way. Especially if it's like a lot of people in line and they have a whole lot of groceries....And then when I finish, I'll be like, 'Were you talking to me? What did you just say?'

One of Diane's colleague, Claire, admits to intentionally ignoring the customer in order to process the order quickly, "Sometimes I'm just not paying attention, I mean,

I'm just trying to hurry up and get their groceries." When Claire purposefully omits emotional labor display altogether -- an extreme case of preoccupation with the physical task -- she is enacting a fourth style of emotional labor execution, the **avoider**. Thus, avoiders fulfill the productivity side of their work while dismissing their emotional labor obligations.

Processing Difficult Customers

Strategies to manage difficult customers generate two additional types of emotional labor enactment styles: the confronter and the contender. The underlying goals of both strategies are to reestablish order into the production process. Confronters resist emotional labor directives and assert more of themselves into the service encounter, making it a much more risky approach to adopt. In contrast, contenders tend to remain within emotional labor guidelines but view the disturbance as a challenge -- in other words, a game or contest to engage in and test their skills. Importantly, when processing difficult customers cashiers can also select from among the four earlier styles as well. At any point in the service encounter, cashiers are able to modify approaches to accommodate changing circumstances.

Defying the Rules: The Confronter

Nancy at Harvest Time communicates her anger by intentionally remaining silent. An unspoken admonishment she considers extremely meaningful:

I usually, I just don't even talk to 'em. If they have questions or something, I'll answer 'em to the best I can, I really don't say much to 'em....If they make me angry I look right at 'em and I just don't say anything to 'em because I think that makes them mad at me and I don't really care if they're mad at me (laughs), it doesn't bother me, that's fine because I don't think that people should act like that.

Thus, Nancy deliberately withholds emotional labor at times to illustrate her dissatisfaction with a customer's behavior. Additionally, if Nancy perceives a customer to be slowing down the production process during a peak period then she communicates her dissatisfaction by her facial expression:

...I look really annoyed when they don't have their checks ready (laughs). And when people are carrying those little [hand] baskets, and they can tell I'm in the middle of another transaction -- I'm filling out the check and I'm waiting for it to verify -- I'll be getting the items out of the [next customer's] little [hand] basket. [Be]cause it's really a pain, that slows everything down ... And they don't really do anything, they just stand there. I mean, I'm like [thinking] 'You know, you could get this out for me.' I mean, it's not like it's going to break their back or anything. And I always do it when I go through a line. I take everything out, [be]cause it [is] faster.

David, a co-worker of Nancy's, discusses an incident in which a customer became angry because he did not leave his register to retrieve an item for the customer:

He was like, I guess he was waiting for me to get it....He just said 'I don't know why you can't go get it your damn self.' And I was just like 'Well, I'm not the one buying the cigarettes.' ... I was [thinking], 'I don't need anybody cursing at me like that.' I mean there's a way you talk to people and there's a way you don't and, I mean, I wouldn't do that....[Anyhow, the customer] went and got it. 'Cause I mean, I almost didn't ring up his order. I was just [thinking] 'Well, I'll go ahead and get him out of the store'.

David's responsibility to process customers, courteous or otherwise, outweighed his own personal desire not to do so. David had already asserted his true self once in the production process. This allowed him to alter his motivation and his intent became to rid the store of the difficult customer.

Ruth at Foodstuffs agrees about showing irritation if warranted. She explains her worst customer:

[He] used to come in the store every day and bought one beer, it's one of the big long neck bottles. I don't even know what it is, I don't deal with beer except selling it. Uhm, he's nasty....His attitude. He come [sic] in one day and I was waiting on a lady. There were four cash registers up and down there [and] he comes to mine....The lady in front of him wanted some gum and told him as much. All she had to do was turn around and pick it up. He bolted around in front of her [and] set his beer up there. I said, 'Sir, I was helping the lady.' [He answered,] 'No, you weren't. You were through.' I mean he got nasty. I said 'Sir, I don't know if you are aware of it or not but you are a very rude individual.' So he had a lot more to say and I said, 'Ma'am I'm going to void this out, if it's O.K. with you, and get him out of here.' She said 'Please do.' So that's exactly what I did. I voided her two items off, rang him up and got him out of there....{And does he still come in?} Sure he does. {Does he still come through your line?} He's fairly nice to me now. Yes. See, if he had just took [sic] it out on me that would have been one thing, but he took it out on my customer. I didn't like that, nor did I appreciate that. If he had just said it to me, I would have, it would have went on over my head. I would have waited on him and said 'Goodbye, good riddance.' I wouldn't have said it, I would have thought it. But he insulted a customer and I won't stand their taking it. It may be my job to take that, but I'm not going to take that for my customer.

Ruth indicates enduring inconsiderate behavior from customers is part of her job one that she routinely deals with by disregarding such irritations; however, she will not accept one customer's mistreatment of another. She justifies challenging the one

customer's inconsiderateness, not for her own sake, but for the other customer's benefit. By viewing the event in these terms, Ruth effectively places the confrontation within the context of emotional labor for the another customer and is able to proceed with a reprimand.

Ruth also discusses a similar occurrence at her previous company. The main difference was she defended an assistant manager rather than a customer:

There was this one man I shall never forget. [He] used to come in the store every Sunday morning. Without fail he found all kind[s] of stuff wrong. Everything. So one Sunday morning he came in and took off on the assistant manager. I had had it with this gentleman because I was there every Sunday morning at 7:00am. So I said, 'Sir, you are in here every Sunday. You're complaining every Sunday about ... everything and basically nothing. No one made you come in here.' And do you know from that day on, that man still came in that store every Sunday a different person just as nice and pleasant. I'd told him off long before had I known it would have that effect (laughs). I won't ever forget him though. This happened a good five years ago but it's still very fresh in my mind because he was something else (laughs). He was a terror [that] was what he was.

Thus, Nancy, David, and Ruth's accounts all illustrate a fifth style of emotional labor enactment, the **confronter**. This style offers cashiers an opportunity to assert themselves in the production process because emotional labor directives are cast aside. If successful, then the immediate productivity goal of ensuring the continuation of the production process is met. If unsuccessful, then confronters might face disciplinary actions from management for adopting the strategy.

Meredith at Foodstuffs admits that she admires cashiers who occasionally utilize a confronter style of emotional labor enactment:

It's just amazing to me ... and every once in awhile you envy that because you wish that you could react to a customer like that. But you can't or at least I couldn't allow myself.

Consider It a Challenge: The Contender

Difficult customers can be conceived of as challenges as well by cashiers -- basically, unwilling participants in the production process. Participants that cashiers must somehow placate to ensure the production process will continue. Janet at Boulevard Market relies on extra emotional labor in an effort to induce positive reactions from the customers:

...to be as sickly [sic] sweet as possible (laughs), just to like try and make them leave at least a little bit happier than what they came in or ended up being. {Did that always work?} No (laughs)....{If it gets to the point where the customer makes you angry, how do you handle it?} Bite my lip and grin and bear it (laughs). Just act like it doesn't bother me because I'm not supposed to show that they're upsetting me.

Ruth at Foodstuff agrees:

...I like people, even the bad ones, cause my aim with them is to get a smile out of them before they leave (laughs). I think that's half of it, with me [it] really is. I like people, I'm a people person. {So you take the good with the bad?} You have too, you learn to roll with the punches because if you don't you're going to get punched out, I guarantee it (laughs).

Similarly, Beverly at Carter's goal is to cheer up unhappy customers:

I think the people that come here ... they're probably by themselves so they need someone to be nice to 'em, you know....There are some women in here that are grouchy, but if you go about, just, I can't even think what you might say to 'em but it like brightens them up, you know, and they aren't as grouchy when they leave....Well, some of

them, it's like they just need to find something to growl about, that's their outlet, you know. But you get them over that and then they're [fine].

Susan at Boulevard Market discusses one particularly daunting customer who she has to modify her emotional labor with in order to satisfy:

...he's a terror, even with me he is. {Just in terms of?} Personality. He's just, he's a terror, you know, that's him (laughs). Don't let it bother you. If you know he's a terror why let it bother you, you know? Just grin and bear him and let it go (laughs)....He's rude, very, very rude but he's old, goodness. And sometimes he'll, like one day he danced for me and sang for me. To me that was a big step (laughs). He brings a whistle and whistles for attention immediately (laughs).... You feel like ripping his head off but you just smile at him a lot (laughs).... 'cause with him you know, I don't say 'How are you doing today?' because he'll say 'You don't care and it's none of your business.' So I learned [that] you just don't say it to him. You know, you learn. You watch people, you learn from them what they want and when to do it....He don't [sic] like his receipt. Don't [you] dare give it to him. He doesn't want it. He'll throw it back to you, so I learned the things he doesn't like and I don't do 'em. I just skip over that part of it with him (laughs). And now we get along fine.

Due to Susan's expertise in emotional labor execution, she is able to adjust her emotional labor execution in order to incorporate this unwilling customer into the production process and gains a great deal of personal satisfaction from being able to do so. Janet, Ruth, and Susan's experiences illuminate the sixth, and final, style of emotional labor enactment, the contender. If effective, both emotional labor goals and productivity goals are satisfied by this enactment style which is intrinsically satisfying to the successful contender as well.

Recapitulation of Emotional Labor Enactment Styles

Cashiers respond to emotional labor requirements in six different enactment/execution styles: the conversationalist, the pretender, the minimalist, the avoider, the confronter, and the contender. Table 3 illustrates the various enactment styles along with the particular aims and/or benefits of each -- all are instrumental in relieving tensions inherent in emotional labor. The first enactment style is the conversationalist. Oftentimes, cashiers will use personal knowledge, product discussion, complementary statements, or making oneself noticeable as techniques to launch the conversation. Overall, cashiers with this particular enactment style enjoy customer interactions. The second style of emotional labor enactment is the minimalist. This is a cashier that meets the bare minimum standards for emotional labor. S/he does not often participate in conversations and all dialogue is business-related.

Insert Table 3 Here

In contrast to the more authentic interaction of the conversationalist, the third emotional labor execution style is the pretender. Cashiers who create a veneer of interest toward the customer would be included in this group. The smile and nod as a sign of fabricated interest in response to a customer's observation is an example of this type of performance. The cashiers do attempt to meet the emotional labor

TABLE 3: "Goals" of Emotional Labor Enactment Styles

Emotional Labor Enactment Styles	Emotional Labor Goal: Customer is Satisfied	Productivity Goal: Profitability	Cashier's Rationale
Conversationalist	Yes	No	Enjoyment
Minimalist	Yes	Yes	
Pretender	Yes	Yes	
Avoider	No	Yes	
Confronter	No	Yes	Assert Self
Contender	Maybe	Yes	Challenge

requirements of the position but derive no great satisfaction from doing so other than the customer's satisfaction. Importantly, the only way to accurately distinguish between the conversationalist and the pretender is to ask the cashier directly. The difference between these styles lies in the inward motivation, which only the cashier can reveal, and not the outward display. Even less engaging than the minimalist would be the avoider, a fourth style of enactment. This cashier does not adhere to the emotional labor requirements and offers no interaction to the customer whatsoever. For example, cashiers preoccupied with the physical task are included in this group as are cashiers who process customers while they simultaneously interact with another person. Both minimalist and avoider styles can be distinguished solely by the outward display, internal motivation while insightful is not necessary for classification purposes.

Techniques for handling difficult customers yield the remaining emotional labor enactment styles. The confronter is the fifth style. Cashiers who do not adhere to emotional labor directives and admonish customers for rude behavior would demonstrate this style. Shifting to a confronter style could be either based on self-protection or defending another person and is an observable occurrence. The sixth, and final emotional labor execution style, is the contender. These are cashiers that perceive demanding customers as challenges -- opportunities to use or develop their emotional labor expertise in order to lure the unwilling customer back into the production process. The cashier's internal motivation is critical to distinguishing this

style. Observation alone will not reveal if they perceived the customer as a challenge. While cashiers can be classified according to the style of enactment used most often, they are able to shift back and forth between the different enactment styles in the production process. This demonstrates that emotional labor is both heterogeneous and dynamic. For example, a conversationalist could convert to a minimalist in response to a difficult customer if his or her typical response is to become quiet and hasten the pace. Thus, not only can emotional labor execution vary between cashiers working at the same store but also within the individual cashier as s/he adjusts the enactment style to either assist in the production process or help in mediating the requirements and effects of emotional labor.

Organizational Context Revisited

It would be remiss of me to conclude this chapter without examining the original research question: the relationship between emotional labor and organizational context. In order to explore this relationship adequately, the conceptualization of emotional labor has been expanded to encompass the various enactment styles put forth in this chapter. The following section draws from interview responses as well as observational data and demonstrates general trends that emerged across the participating stores in terms of emotional labor execution. It also discusses the relationship between labor control systems and emotional labor enactment styles as well.

Small Store Context

The majority of cashiers at Southside Grocery rely upon a conversationalist style of emotional labor enactment. On a few occasions, a minimalist strategy was employed due to customer congestion in the checkout process or in response to a difficult customer; however, the minimalist style was the exception and not the rule. For reasons I explained earlier, shifting to a minimalist style in response to difficult customers was imparted during the interview process. No troublesome customers were actually processed during any of my observation periods. Interestingly, cashiers spoke about the necessity of concealing emotions that ran counter to the service encounter, such as being irritated or not feeling well. No reference was explicitly made to feigning interest in the customer within the small store context.

Recall that within small store context, the predominant labor control method is simple in nature. Store owners emphasize the importance of emotional labor to cashiers but specify no particular methods. While the content and scope of interactions vary, the underlying goal of emotional labor is achieved -- friendly, personalized service. Thus, simple control is quite effective in governing emotional labor execution.

Medium Store Context

Within the medium-sized stores, the transitional case in this study, a greater mixture of emotional labor enactment styles appear. At Boulevard Market and

Foodstuffs, cashiers tend to fall primarily within the conversationalist or minimalist enactment styles. Some of each were found at both stores. It is within the medium-sized organizational context that conceiving of difficult customers as "challenges" first appears, yielding the contender style. Additionally, the confronter style of emotional labor enactment also emerges as a possible strategy to handle troublesome customers. And lastly, the question of who is ultimately accountable for store policy as a strategy to handle customer dissatisfaction surfaces among the cashiers as well.

Recollect that under medium-sized contexts, the predominant labor control system was structural in nature -- namely bureaucratic control -- though elements of technical, hierarchial, and simple control remain as well. Also recall, that within this environment, emotional labor had not been fully "captured" by bureaucratic control. Thus, either enactments were engaging, minimal, or lacking -- no real "acts" could be distinguished because cashiers had not received the knowledge and skills necessary to accomplish such performances. And finally, cashiers differentiated between actions they have direct influence over and those actions beyond their control as a technique to handle customer criticisms.

Large Store Context

All types of emotional labor enactment styles are evident within the large store context. Importantly, there is divergence regarding the specific enactment styles employed at the two stores in the study. At Harvest Time, the majority of cashiers

observed utilized a minimalist emotional labor enactment style. A few conversationalists were evident as well as a few avoiders.

At the other large store, Carter's, the majority of cashiers vacillated between conversationalists and pretenders. Oftentimes, the pretenders' enactments were so authentic in appearance that only interview responses revealed the underlying motivation. In this regard, it is significant that Carter's cashiers were the most well-versed in the importance of appearing friendly even if it meant occasionally or routinely feigning interest in the customer. Carter's cashiers were also the cashiers most likely to quickly summon management's assistance in order to handle difficult customers. This rapid transfer is most likely attributed to the company's goal of ensuring that the carefully orchestrated harmony surrounding their production process remain undisturbed.

At this point in the discussion, I would like to suggest that the presence of different types of enactment styles -- namely Harvest Time's minimalists versus Carter's conversationalists and pretenders -- is a meaningful difference between the two large stores which will be theorized in the next chapter. But for now, it is important to note that under the large store environment, the predominant labor control system is structural in design, primarily bureaucratic control, but technical control as well as hierarchial control still exist as well. It is within this context, emotional labor is explicitly defined and regulated in an attempt to promote uniformity in the labor process. Remarkably, the greatest amount of variation in

emotional labor is revealed instead. This significant finding suggests that in addition to promoting uniformity, increasing formalization of emotional labor also generates variation. This variation -- namely, the six enactment styles -- represents cashiers' resistance strategies to the tensions inherent in emotional labor and intensified by bureaucratic control.

Conclusion

Cashiers experience different types of tensions in relation to their labor process. One fundamental conflict is between emotional labor obligations and productivity considerations. The second underlying tension is experienced internally and involves the possible estrangement that one could experience when compelled to behave contrary to what one feels. Additionally, both sets of tensions experienced by cashiers are influenced by a wide variety of factors, internal as well as production-related.

In order to effectively manage the contradictory elements of emotional labor, six distinct emotional labor enactment styles were revealed: the conversationalist, the minimalist, the pretender, the avoider, the confronter, and the contender. The various enactment styles suggest, unequivocally, the dynamic nature of emotional labor. Consequently, to continue conceiving of emotional labor as a homogeneous experience, as commonly done, obscures these significant differences.

Emotional labor enactment was shown to be not only variable between

organizational contexts but among the cashiers at a particular store and, importantly, within the individual cashier as well. It was also revealed that as stores increase in size and correspondingly adjust their labor control systems in an attempt to promote uniformity, they also generate variation in terms of resistance strategies cashiers devise to reduce tensions intensified by the increasing formalization of emotional labor.

CHAPTER 10

DISCUSSION AND THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

This study illustrates that cashiers are able to shift between six distinct emotional labor enactment styles -- each with its own intent -- to reduce the tensions inherent in emotional labor and accomplish their work: the conversationalist, the minimalist, the pretender, the avoider, the confronter, and the contender. This malleability suggests an intrinsically dynamic quality to emotional labor. Furthermore, it hints that emotional labor is a process itself. Cashiers are constantly modifying their expression to accommodate changing circumstances and must also continuously mediate the underlying contradictions between emotional labor directives and physical task responsibilities as well as internal tensions that result from such an arrangement. Such tensions become intensified in certain situations such as customer congestion or acting contrary to what one feels.

In addition to emotional labor enactment varying within individual cashiers as well as among cashiers employed at the same store, it also varies according to the organizational context in which it resides. This study demonstrates that as organizations increase in size, labor control systems are altered. Within the small store context, the predominant labor control system is simple in design and relies primarily upon the everyday supervision of the owner and highly cultivated personal relationships between the owner and employee which produces variable outcomes such as favoritism or paternalistic treatment. The importance of emotional labor is

emphasized by the owner, but the specific content and techniques are left up to the cashier’s discretion as long as the owner’s expectations are fulfilled.

Within the medium store context, simple control is infeasible because owners are no longer responsible for day-to-day operation of the stores and must delegate their authority to management personnel. Procedures and policies become more formalized to assist in the delegation of authority and management discretion is evident in regards to how closely policy is followed. While elements of simple control systems are evident, the labor control predominantly becomes structural in nature, based upon bureaucratic processes. Importantly, within this medium-sized context, bureaucratic control primarily focuses upon the physical task and overlooks emotional labor requirements.

Within the large store context, labor control systems are predominantly structural in design. The level of bureaucratic control is increased in terms of training, evaluating, and sanctioning as organizations promote uniformity in job performances across more employees working simultaneously as well as among an expanded number of geographical locations. Tables 4 and 5 show summaries of training methods, evaluation indicators, and sanctioning methods across all participating stores and illustrates the increasing formalization.

Insert Table 4 Here

TABLE 4: Synopsis of Training Methods by Site

Site	Handbook	Videos	Company Trainer	Transitional Period with Cashier	Entirely On-The-Job Training
Adam's Grocery	No	No	No	No	Yes
Southside Grocery	No	No	No	No	Yes
Boulevard Market	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Foodstuffs	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Harvest Time	Yes	Yes *	No	Yes	No
Carter's	Yes **	No	Yes	Yes	No

* Indicates cashiers must complete self-paced manual that accompanies the videos prior to transitional period.

** Indicates cashiers are required to learn and recite company's values. In addition, cashiers complete weekly "produce" tests.

TABLE 5: Job Performance Indicators/Sanctions by Site

Site	Indicators	Rewards	Disciplining Strategies
Adam's Grocery	Friendliness; Pace	Unavailable	Verbal Warning
Southside Grocery	Money Balancing; Adherence to Schedule; Lack of Special Requests; Balance between Service and Speed	Pay Increase; Reasonable Requests "Honored"; Working Conditions	Verbal Warning; Pressure; Released from Store (i.e. Terminated)
Boulevard Market	Lack of Complaints; Attitude	Pay Increase; Verbal Praise; Scheduling Considerations	Verbal Warning; Hours Cut/Reduced
Foodstuffs	Punctuality; Attendance; Accuracy; Friendliness	Time-off Requests "Honored"; Pay Raises	Cash Control; Suspension; Termination; Reimbursement to Company if Money Missing
Harvest Time	Productivity (items/min); Accuracy; Friendliness; Service Appraisal; Punctuality	Merit Raises; Exceptional Achievement Honors; Customer Courtesy Winner	Verbal Warning; Termination; Demotion
Carter's	Accuracy; Personality; Attitude; Productivity (items/min); Produce Tests; Mystery Shopper	Advancement Opportunity; Bonus Program; Celebration of Excellence; Hospitalization Coverage Available; Anniversary Paycheck; Recognition Pins; Company Honor Rolls; Company Magazine Features	Verbal Warning; Termination

Insert Table 5 Here

Significantly, within the large store context, emotional labor is explicitly delineated in addition to the physical tasks. As I had anticipated, increased formalization of emotional labor promotes uniformity. Importantly, contrary to my original expectations, it can also generate variation in the form of cashier resistance to emotional labor directives.

When analyzing the large store context as a whole -- both Harvest Time and Carter's concurrently -- all six enactment styles are present. Thus, the large store context contains the most variation in terms of emotional labor enactment. When the organizational type is deconstructed to examine both stores separately, an important finding emerges. Even though the two stores are similar in stature, emotional labor enactment styles varied between them significantly -- namely, Harvest Time's minimalists in comparison to Carter's conversationalists and pretenders. In terms of fulfilling emotional labor goals, Carter's is more "successful" as their cashiers select approaches -- either authentic or fabricated -- that satisfy emotional labor goals rather than productivity concerns. My primary question became: What factors account for this greater level of emotional labor commitment among Carter's cashiers?

At first, I attributed the success to a greater level of bureaucratic control. In particular, training methods that involved personalized attention as opposed to

passively watching videotapes were credited. Upon greater reflection, Carter's training methods became just one part of the explanation. In addition, Carter's highly regulated environment, its many avenues for cashier recognition, and its emphasis on the company's values appeared as instrumental in understanding the divergent outcomes within this organizational type. Carter's relies more upon their employee's internal motivation as a controlling factor and thus is similar, in part, to the intent of labor control processes found among direct-selling organizations such as Mary Kay or Amway (Biggart 1989). As Biggart notes:

The more management can do to get the employee to genuinely embrace the appropriate emotional posture, the better the performance, and the more business interests are served....Only the wholehearted complicity of the person of the worker produces quality work. Physical labor can be exacted through supervision, but intellectual, emotional, and morally committed labor is more elusive. It requires commitment to ideals as well as routines and to people as well as positions. [emphasis in original] (1989:170)

Once that commitment to the company's ideals is fostered, the employee is internally motivated to execute good job performance. Biggart also suggests that:

Self-control does not feel controlling. If an individual accepts the standards that attach to the social ideal -- and this is a critical hurdle -- then there is a perception of self-determination. There is an experience of autonomous competence. [emphasis in original] (1989:164)

Recall that Edwards (1979) documents the shift from visible systems of control to invisible -- namely, structural -- systems of control as manufacturing organizations increased in size. My study demonstrates the limits bureaucratic control confronts in terms of cashier resistance to attempts to promote uniformity of emotional labor

execution. It also shows that when company ideals are internalized by cashiers, as is the case at Carter's, resistance decreases in terms of the visible performance. Some cashiers still resisted but did so internally. Thus, Edwards' original work supplemented with Biggart's notion of self-control or personalistic control is essential to understanding the labor process in the participating grocery stores. In order to modify Edwards' work so it can be applied to the service sector as well, a second tier within invisible labor control systems needs to be incorporated -- essentially, self-control or personalistic control.

Avenue for Future Research

An interesting, and yet unexplored, avenue for future consideration would be the influence of a fourth party on the service encounter. Presently, it is studied as a triad: the organization, the service employee, and the customer. This study reveals that this service trilogy, so to speak, is too simple. Service encounters are intimate in nature, and thus influences outside the immediate service encounter that might alter this intimacy must be taken into consideration as well. The sheer presence or commentary from managers, co-workers, and other customers can exert influence and thereby alter the emotional labor enactment. Occasionally, the actual customer or recipient of service becomes convoluted as was the case when cashiers defended one customer from another customer's rudeness. Even though I tried to be as unobtrusive as possible while observing, my presence as a researcher undoubtedly influenced the

service encounters. Cashiers were probably more conscientious in terms of their performances. And though many difficult customers were discussed during the interview phase, none were actually observed firsthand.

Conclusion

My study demonstrated the importance of context in relation to understanding sociological phenomenon. By focusing exclusively upon one occupation, valuable insights about emotional labor and labor control processes emerged. These new insights can -- and should -- be applied to other service occupations. In all likelihood, the findings will be expanded upon and thus, will yield an even greater understanding about the labor process within the service sector.

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APPENDIX A

Management Interview Schedule

1. Describe, step-by-step, the duties a cashier performs during the check-out process.
2. What are your store's policies/rules regarding cashiers? Do you think they are adequate?
3. How do cashiers learn these policies/rules?
4. Who is your best cashier? (Name) Why?
5. Who is your worst cashier? (Name) Why?
6. How does your store select individuals to become cashiers? Is there any particular trait that is looked for in the applicants?
7. What qualities make a "good" cashier?
8. How is a cashier's job performance evaluated? By whom? Exactly what criterion are used and how are they ranked? How are cashiers disciplined or rewarded? Does a "mystery shopper" program exist? Are there any promotional strategies used that emphasize service quality?
9. Where does a cashier's interpersonal conduct come into the picture? How are a cashier's interpersonal skills evaluated?
10. Are cashiers recognized for outstanding service? If so, how is this decided upon? Either way, how would you define "outstanding service"?
11. Which would you prefer, a highly efficient cashier who seldom speaks to customers or is not pleasant or an extremely slow cashier who is very courteous and friendly to customers? Why?
12. Which would you prefer, cashiers who use the optical scanning systems or who use the manual method of keying in individual prices? Why? How do each of these systems affect the cashier's job performance?

13. Under what conditions is it justifiable for a cashier to become angry at a difficult customer?

APPENDIX B

Technical Control Assessment

Technology:

type of register:

mechanical:

electronic:

optical scanner:

type of conveyer belt:

design of grocery cart:

design of bagging area:

type of payment equipment:

check:

debit card:

credit card:

automatic change:

method of handling produce:

APPENDIX C
Participant Observation Indicators

Store: Date:

Cashier: Time:

Lane:

Customer Description:

Sex:

Age:

Race:

Disability:

Order Size:

Extra-small (1-4 items):

Small (5-9 items):

Medium (10-24 items):

Large (25-49 items):

Extra-large (50 plus items):

Length of line:

Emotional labor:

Verbal Communication:

Greeting:

Production-oriented questions (i.e. coupons):

Small talk:

Money-exchange dialogue:

Salutation:

Nonverbal Communication:

Eye contact:

Smiling:

Body language:

APPENDIX D

Cashier Interview Schedule

1. How long have you been working at _____?
2. How many hours a week do you usually work?
3. Why did you choose to work at _____?
4. Age
5. Sex
6. Describe or demonstrate a typical interaction with a customer. What do you say? How do you act? What do you think is the average length of time you spend with a customer?
7. Describe _____'s view of that interaction. How does your performance compare to what they suggest you do, include verbal and nonverbal actions?
8. Who do you think is the best cashier? Why?
9. Who do you think is the worst cashier? Why?
10. What qualities make a "good" cashier?
11. How did you learn to become a cashier?
12. How is your job performance evaluated by management?
13. Overall, how do you evaluate your job performance?
14. Does the equipment you work with affect your interactions with customers? (i.e. Do you need to listen for items beeping when scanned?)
15. Which would you prefer during the check-out process, using an optical scanning system or manually keying individual prices into the register? Why?
16. How do you feel about the need to be pleasant during your shift? Why? Do you pay attention to what customers are saying to you? Why?

17. Does your mood affect your job performance? How?
18. If you could improve one aspect of your job performance, would you rather process the customer's order quicker or be more friendly? Why?
19. How do you feel about the expression, 'The customer is always right'?
20. Describe the "best" customer you have checked out.
21. Describe the "worst" customer you have checked out.
22. If you experience a "difficult" customer during your shift, how do you handle the situation? If the customer makes you angry, how do you handle it?
23. Do you ever speed up or slow down your work flow? Why or why not?
24. Do you find your job stressful? Why or why not?
25. Additional comments...

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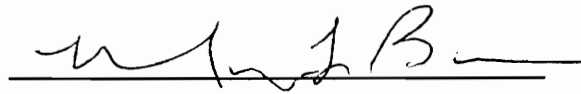
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. L. B.', is written over a horizontal line.