

**EXPERIENCING EMOTIONAL LABOR: AN ANALYSIS OF THE
DISCURSIVE CONSTRUCTION OF EMOTIONAL LABOR**

A Thesis

by

MARY KATHRYN HAMAN

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

December 2005

Major Subject: Speech Communication

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Approved by:

Chair of Committee,	Linda Putnam
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ABSTRACT

Experiencing Emotional Labor: An Analysis of the Discursive Construction of
Emotional Labor. (December 2005)

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This study analyzes how employees at a university recreation center discursively construct their experiences of emotional labor, how they conceptualize such behavior in terms of displaying unfelt emotions and faking in good and bad faith, and what these discursive constructions reveal about their perceptions of authenticity. The findings demonstrate that workers construct emotional labor as a natural ability and as performing a role. People who construct emotional labor as a natural ability depict themselves as the controller of their workplace emotion. They display unfelt emotions in good faith when they do so to uphold another's face, and they believe that they possess a true self. Employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role view their supervisors as controller of their workplace emotion. They fake emotions in good faith when doing so uphold their own face, and they fake in bad faith when it upholds the face of a co-worker who they feel needs to be disciplined. These people do not possess a sense of authentic self. They view themselves as multi-faceted and they say that they use social comparison to determine how to behave in particular situations. These findings reveal previously unexplored complexities in scholars' conceptions of emotional labor and authenticity.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

We cannot talk about organizations without considering the role that emotions play within them. Whereas earlier organizational scholars typically presented organizations as essentially rationalistic emotion-free zones, contemporary researchers generally recognize them as fundamentally irrational emotion-laden arenas (see Fineman, 1993; Fineman, 2000a; Planalp, 1999). Emotion is widely considered a primary constituent of organizational life, and scholars have done much to increase our understanding of it (see Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Fineman, 2000a). Research on emotion in organizations crosses disciplines. Psychologists, sociologists, management scholars, and communication researchers have explored the concept of workplace emotion (see Fineman, 2000a). Their work centers on topics ranging from managerial effectiveness (e.g. Goleman, 1995) to feminist rethinking (e.g. Mumby & Putnam, 1992; Putnam & Mumby, 1993). From this research, we have learned that emotion cannot be separated from rationality (Mumby & Putnam, 1992; Putnam & Mumby, 1993), that workplace emotion plays a vital role in organizational success (Martin, Knopoff, & Beckman, 1998; McDonald, 1991), and that corporate leaders frequently attempt to control the emotions of their employees (Hochschild, 1979; 1983). This final discovery has prompted a host of research projects that focus on the concept of emotional labor.

This thesis follows the style of *Management Communication Quarterly*.

Emotional labor is defined as “the act of conforming (or attempting to conform) to display rules or affective requirements that prescribe on-the-job emotional expression” (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000, p. 184). It is a type of emotion management that individuals perform when they modify their actual or displayed emotions to meet the demands of their job. This concept has received a great deal of scholarly attention, yet its effects are not fully understood (see reviews in Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999; Wharton, 1999). Whereas some researchers found that emotional labor negatively affected those who performed it (e.g. Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989; Waldron & Krone, 1991), other scholars demonstrated that the work positively influenced its enactors (e.g. Adelman, 1995; Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Wharton, 1993). The reason for these inconsistent findings likely is complex. Nevertheless, recent scholarship suggests that authenticity may play a critical role in determining the effects of emotional labor.

Specifically, research indicates that individuals who feel as though they are acting in line with their perceived genuine feelings or true selves while they perform emotional labor typically do not experience negative effects. Emotional labor workers who feel that they are acting in a manner that does not reflect their genuine feelings or is out of line with their true selves, however, generally do experience negative effects (see Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Karabanow, 1999). The idea that such authenticity may help to shape individual’s experiences of emotional labor is grounded in well established emotional labor research (see Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Erickson & Wharton, 1997; Morris & Feldman, 1996a). Nevertheless, precise ways in which authenticity and

emotional labor may interact have not been systematically explored. Such exploration is the focus of this thesis.

This study investigates the ways in which people's experiences of emotional labor and feelings of authenticity may be discursively constructed within a particular organizational setting. Specifically, this project uses discourse analysis to analyze how employees at a university recreation center discursively create their emotional labor experiences and feelings of authenticity. The findings hold potential to improve scholars' understanding of the relationship between authenticity and emotional labor. A better understanding of this relationship may add clarity to scholars' somewhat opaque knowledge of the factors that mitigate the effects of emotional labor.

Literature Review

Organizational emotion scholars have explored a variety of issues surrounding emotional labor. Work has focused on such diverse topics as the social rules that shape emotional labor prescriptions (e.g. Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), the methods that individuals use to perform emotional labor and mitigate its outcomes (e.g. Leidner, 1993; Paules, 1991; Tracy & Tracy, 1998), and the consequences that performing emotional labor has on employees (e.g. Adelman, 1995; Waldron & Krone, 1991; Wharton, 1993). The findings of these projects have been both enlightening and perplexing. Results not only have allowed scholars to answer important questions concerning such issues as the precise nature and likely mitigators of emotional labor, but also they have inspired them to create additional significant inquiries (see reviews in

Wharton, 1999; Fineman, 2000a). Thus, as Fineman (2000b) emphasizes, although researchers have learned a great deal about emotion in organizations, “there is much work to be done” (p. 279).

Review of emotional labor literature confirms that while some aspects of emotional labor largely are understood, others remain in need of additional research. The following pages review the concept of emotional labor and synthesize both what we know and what we yet have to discover about its effects. It focuses, in particular, on authenticity and the way this concept affects people’s experience of emotional labor. In so doing, this literature review sets the stage for a research project that explores the ways in which people’s feelings of authenticity may influence their experiences of emotional labor. Research questions are posed throughout these sections and summarized at the end of the chapter.

Emotional Labor

As noted above, emotional labor is the work of altering one’s inner feelings or emotional expressions to meet workplace requirements (Hochschild, 1979; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Emotional labor scholarship finds its roots in the work of Hochschild (1979; 1983) whose analysis of Delta flight attendants led her to realize that certain jobs require individuals to selectively express and repress emotions. Specifically, her study focused on the idea that organizations may regulate and commodify employees’ emotions for corporate gain. Hochschild (1983) argued that maintaining an organizationally acceptable affect display can serve as the primary duty of service

professions. She labeled this central task emotional labor and defined it as the effort “to induce or suppress feeling in order to sustain the outward countenance that produces the proper state of mind in others (1983, pp. 6-7). As Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) explain, emotional labor is “the act of conforming (or attempting to conform) to display rules or affective requirements that prescribe on-the-job emotional expression” (p. 184). Thus, emotional labor occurs when individuals consciously alter their emotional state or affect display to satisfy workplace prescriptions. Emotional labor, therefore, is a form of emotion regulation. The term, however, is not synonymous with the related concepts emotion management and emotion work.

Although sometimes used interchangeably, emotion management, emotion work, and emotional labor refer to unique processes (see Callahan & McCollum, 2002; Lively, 2000). As Callahan and McCollum (2002) explain, emotion management serves as an overarching heading under which emotion work and emotional labor reside. Emotion management describes emotion regulation in general, whereas emotion work and emotional labor designate specific types of this control. For example, emotion work occurs “in situations in which individuals are personally choosing to manage their emotions for their own non-compensated benefit” (Callahan & McCollum, 2002, p. 4). To illustrate, people engage in this type of emotion management when they politely nod and listen as a coworker discusses her political views despite the fact that they find this person’s opinions upsetting or when they smile and laugh at an office mate’s joke, even though they do not find it funny. In such cases, individuals clearly are managing their emotions. Their decision to do so, however, is not mandated by an organizational

authority. In these situations, people suppress, exaggerate, or manipulate their feelings and/or emotional expressions to smooth out social interactions for their own personal benefit. They are not paid or required to engage in this emotion work, they simply choose to do so for themselves.

In contrast, emotional labor takes place “when emotion work is *exchanged* for something such as a wage or some other type of valued compensation” (Callahan & McCollum, 2002, p. 4). For instance, a restaurant server whose job requires him to engage in emotional labor cheerfully greets customers who arrive at the end of his shift, even though he was hoping to go home early. A bill collector who angrily demands payment from her debtor because her boss demands such affect display, even though she is bubbling with joy about her upcoming wedding, is engaged in performing emotional labor. In such situations, individuals are not managing their emotions freely. They are repressing, intensifying, or adjusting their emotional states or expressions in a particular way because a higher organizational power (that ultimately signs their paycheck) requires them to do so. These individuals relinquish control over their own emotions to their employer’s mandates or their company’s policies in exchange for some type of compensation. Thus, for emotional labor scholars, “emotion is not a reaction to work, it *is* the work” and service industry workers “sell their emotional exertions for wages, just as physical laborers sell their physical exertions” (Waldron, 1994, p. 394). This type of emotion management has been the focus of much organizational emotion research. These projects not only have revealed stable findings, but also they have generated important questions that future scholarship may address.

The stable findings of emotional labor research are numerous. For instance, researchers have discovered that emotional labor is experienced within all types of occupations, and they have realized that it can require workers to feign positive, negative, or neutral affect display. Scholars have documented emotional labor within such diverse occupations as flight attendants (Hochschild, 1979; 1983), Disney workers (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989); corrections officers (Waldron & Krone, 1991), 911 emergency call-takers (Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Tracy & Tracy, 1998), table servers, (Adelmann, 1995;), fast food employees (Leidner, 1993), police detectives (Stenross & Kleinman, 1989), Mary Kay sales representatives (Ash, 1984), supermarket and convenience store clerks (Rafaeli, 1989; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987), bill collectors (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991), and health care workers (James, 1993; Smith & Kleinman, 1989). In so doing, they have discovered that emotional labor can require individuals to appear cheerful and pleasant (e.g. Hochschild, 1979;1983; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989), angry and confrontational (e.g. Rafaeli & Sutton, 1991; Stenross & Kleinman, 1989), or detached and unemotional (e.g. Shuler & Sypher, 2000; James, 1993). The expansive presence and varied forms of emotional labor are greatly understood. The effect that emotional labor elicits within these varied occupations, however, remains markedly unclear.

Of all the unanswered inquiries concerning emotional labor, none appear more impenetrable than those which question the effects that emotional labor inflicts on those who perform it. In her seminal writings, Hochschild (1979; 1983) argued that emotional labor had a negative effect on individuals' psychological health. She claimed that

emotional labor created “estrangement between what a person senses as her ‘true self’ and her inner and outer acting” (1983; p. 136). This estrangement caused workers to feel “phony,” disconnected from their true selves, depersonalized, and burnt out. Following Hochschild’s lead, a number of organizational emotion scholars examined the consequences of performing emotional labor. The results of these studies have been inconsistent.

Although many projects confirmed Hochschild’s negative depiction of emotional labor effects (e.g. Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989; Waldron & Krone, 1991), other studies documented positive effects of emotional labor (e.g. Adelman, 1995; Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Wharton, 1993). For example, Van Maanen and Kunda (1989) found that emotional labor caused Disneyland and technology workers to experience intense stress, emotional numbness, and burnout. Waldron and Krone (1991) found that suppressing emotions heightened corrections officers’ tension and stress levels and damaged their interpersonal relationships. On the other hand, Shuler and Sypher’s (2000) study of 911 emergency call-takers indicated that employees enjoyed and sought out emotional labor and revealed that such emotion work helped to create a sense of organizational community. Similarly, Adelman’s (1995) research on the emotional labor of table servers demonstrated that the work increased their job satisfaction, enhanced their extrinsic work benefits (i.e. higher tips) and improved their self-esteem. As a result of such inconsistent findings, the consequences of performing emotional labor remain debatable (see reviews in Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999; Wharton, 1999). Thus, this study begins with the following research question.

RQ 1: *What constitutes emotional labor in this particular organization and how do employees describe their emotional labor experiences?*

Importantly, although research on the effects of emotional labor has yielded inconsistent findings, scholars have begun to uncover factors that help to account for mixed results. For example, Abraham (1998) and Tracy and Tracy (1998) found that strong relationships with co-workers reduced negative effects of emotional labor. Wharton (1993) demonstrated that individuals with high job autonomy experienced less damaging consequences of emotional labor than those with low job autonomy, and Karabanow (1999) discovered that positive identification with one's work role prevented employees from experiencing harmful emotional labor effects. This latter finding has become increasingly important within emotional labor research. In particular, scholars widely have accepted the idea that the negative effects of emotional labor are mitigated by the degree to which individuals perceive themselves as acting in line with their true selves while performing emotional labor (see Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Erickson & Wharton, 1997; Morris & Feldman, 1996b). As a result, issues of authenticity have gained attention within emotional labor research (for examples see Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Tracy, 2000).

Authenticity and Emotional Labor

Authenticity may be defined as “the extent to which one is behaving according to what one considers to be their true or genuine self—who one ‘is’ as a person” (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000, p. 184). The idea of authenticity is grounded in an assumption that

individuals feel that they possess a stable self that they can choose to support or contradict. Much authenticity and identity scholarship indicates that people *believe* that they possess a relatively stable sense of self. (e.g. Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Erickson, 1994; 1995; Gecas, 1986; Kiecolt, 1994; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997). Nevertheless, many theorists reject the notion of a stable self and bolster the idea that individuals possess multiple selves that shift between different contexts (e.g. Foucault 1988; Gergen, 1991; Sande, 1990; Tracy, 2000). Scholars do not know which perspective is correct.

Consequently, this study does not presume that individuals do or do not possess a sense of authentic self. Instead, it explores whether people believe that they are acting when they perform emotional labor, how they conceptualize such behavior (e.g. is it in good or bad faith), and what this means in terms of their sense of self (e.g. do they feel surface or deep authenticity). The focus is on understanding how people discursively create the notions of acting and faking in good and bad faith and examining whether these constructions indicate the presence of a sense of authenticity. As will be discussed below, such issues are important because emotional labor scholarship indicates that people's perceptions of acting, faking in good and bad faith, and surface and deep authenticity affect their experiences of emotional labor.

The notion of acting is important to this project because one factor that contributes to how an individual experiences emotional labor is the degree to which that person feels that he or she is behaving in a manner consistent with his or her real feelings. In fact, researchers increasingly argue that *emotional dissonance*—a perceived

discrepancy between felt and expressed emotion—primarily mitigates the effects of emotional labor (e.g. Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Morris & Feldman, 1996b). This claim is supported within emotional labor research.

In her early writings, Hochschild (1983) emphasized that emotion management in itself is not detrimental. Instead, she argued that dissonance between people's felt and expressed emotions produced negative effects (1983). A number of emotional labor studies support her claims (for review see Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). To illustrate, scholars such Abraham (1998), Morris and Feldman (1996a), and Pugliesi (1999) found that service workers from a variety of occupations experienced emotional exhaustion and job dissatisfaction as a result of emotional dissonance rather than emotional labor. Adelman's (1995) study of table servers demonstrated that job dissatisfaction was associated with emotional dissonance and not the labor itself, and Erickson and Wharton's (1997) research on bank and hospital workers indicated that emotional dissonance (but not necessarily emotional labor) caused individuals to feel depressed. As a result of such findings, many researchers have concluded that the degree to which individuals report actually feeling expressed emotions shapes the consequences of performing emotional labor (see Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993; Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Erickson & Wharton, 1997; Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Wharton, 1999). Thus, as Rafaeli and Worline (2001) predict, for scholars who study emotion in organizations, "the distinction between a genuinely felt emotion and a reported, contrived emotion may become more important than the management of emotion per se" (p. 115).

Researchers have increased their attention to emotional dissonance (e.g. Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Wharton, 1999). In so doing, however, they have realized that the effects of reportedly displaying truly felt and contrived emotions are not highly predictable. Emotional labor workers who report displaying unfeigned emotions often experience more emotional dissonance and negative consequences than emotional labor workers who do not report displaying false emotions (see review above). Nevertheless, some people who say that they display unfeigned emotions while at work do not experience damaging effects (see Adelman, 1995; Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Wharton, 1993). Similarly, others who display what they perceive as genuinely felt emotions experience negative effects of emotional labor (see Miller, Birkholt, Scott, & Stage, 1995; Miller, Stiff, & Ellis, 1988). Scholars have not isolated the factors that contribute to these inconsistencies. Efforts to do so, however, have led researchers to realize that people use different methods to display unfeigned emotions and meet the demands of their emotional labor. These varying strategies appear to hold a key to explaining why the reported genuineness of one's emotional expression does not consistently indicate whether or not that person will experience negative effects of emotional labor.

Hochschild (1979; 1983) argued that emotional labor workers use two main strategies to display emotions that they do not really feel. She termed these methods *surface acting* and *deep acting*. According to Hochschild, (1979; 1983) individuals employ surface acting when they use verbal and non-verbal cues (e.g. facial expressions, bodily gestures) to feign an emotion that they do not genuinely feel. They rely on deep acting when they force themselves to internally experience the emotion that their

emotional labor requires them to display. For instance, an irritated restaurant host who feigns a cheery countenance to greet customers performs surface acting. An irritated restaurant host who alters his emotions to actually feel cheery engages in deep acting. In both cases, individuals express perceived insincere emotions. The difference is that in surface acting these emotions only are presented externally, while in deep acting they are presented externally and felt internally. In either situation, genuine feelings and/or emotional expressions are adjusted, intensified, or repressed to meet emotional labor demands.

As Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) point out, however, individuals who perform surface and/or deep acting may conceptualize their emotional expression in different ways. Some people who report displaying unfeigned emotions believe that such expression should not be a job requirement. These individuals are *faking in bad faith*. For example, a check-out clerk in Rafaeli and Sutton's (1987) research on convenience store workers disliked acting friendly because "pasting on a smile should not be part of the job" (p. 32). Other people who engage in surface and/or deep acting feel that their forged emotion displays should be part of the job. These actors are *faking in good faith*. To illustrate, a dietician interviewed in Ashforth and Tomiuk's (2000) research rationalized that although acting overly positive about a client's chances of losing weight could be seen as inauthentic, "if this over-enthusiasm is going to help them lose weight, then it's actually beneficial to them, so I'm not being that bad" (p. 197). This project poses the following question about emotional labor and faking.

RQ 2: *How do employees describe their emotional labor experiences in terms of faking in good faith and faking in bad faith?*

Hochschild (1983) argued that both types of faking elicit negative outcomes because they create disparity between genuine and expressed emotion. Recent scholarship, however, suggests that faking in good faith and faking in bad faith result in different consequences. For example, Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) interviewed nearly one hundred individuals employed in service occupations and found that workers who faked in good faith typically did not experience negative effects of emotional labor while those who faked in bad faith often did. The reason for this difference was rooted in how individuals experienced this dissonance. Specifically, the authors concluded that individuals may experience two types of authenticity, *surface authenticity* and *deep authenticity*. The differences between these types may explain some variation in the effects of emotional labor.

Before beginning this discussion, however, it is important to point out that the following research on authenticity assumes that individuals *believe* that they have a true self. This study does not presume the existence of such a stable identity. This project looks at whether discursive and behavioral manifestations of acting and faking in good and bad faith indicate the presence of a sense of authenticity. Rather than authenticity per se, the focus is on people's reported and observed behavioral congruency across situations and their discursive creations of acting and faking. Because these concepts tie into authenticity, however, it is important to understand findings of research on emotional labor and authenticity.

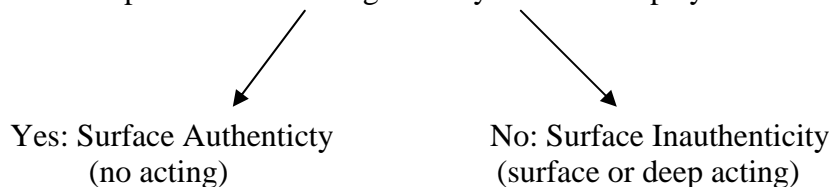
Emotional Labor and Surface/Deep Authenticity

People say that they feel surface authenticity when their emotional displays match their inner feelings. For example, a basketball coach who genuinely feels angry about her players' poor performance may claim to experience surface authenticity when she derides them during half time. In this situation, she does not engage in any type of acting because her emotional display naturally reflects her internal state. This coach may report experiencing surface inauthenticity if she does not truly feel upset about the game and forges an angry demeanor to rouse her team. In such a case, the coach engages in surface acting because her affect display does not match her internal feelings.

Individuals are likely to claim to experience deep authenticity when their emotional expressions are consistent with their sense of self—even if those expressions do not match their actual feelings. For example, a cocktail waitress who asserts that she defines herself as a flirtatious woman may report experiencing deep authenticity when she acts teasingly and playfully around her male customers—even if she finds them revolting. In this instance, the waitress could have employed either surface acting or deep acting to experience deep authenticity. Experiencing deep authenticity is likely when people enact emotional displays that are congruent with their sense of self--the method that they use to do so does not matter. In an alternative scenario, this waitress might report feeling deep inauthenticity if she claimed that she saw herself as a timid and modest woman and acted in the same manner—even if she found her customers alluring. Again, she might perform either surface or deep acting to meet her emotional labor requirements. Deep inauthenticity is likely to arise when individuals feel that their

displayed emotions contradict their sense of self--the degree to which they actually feel the expressed emotions do not matter. Figure 1.1 illustrates the relationship between surface and deep authenticity, surface and deep inauthenticity, and surface and deep acting.

1. Does the individual report that he or she genuinely feels the displayed emotions?



2. In these perceptions, are an individual's displayed emotions consistent with his or her sense of self?

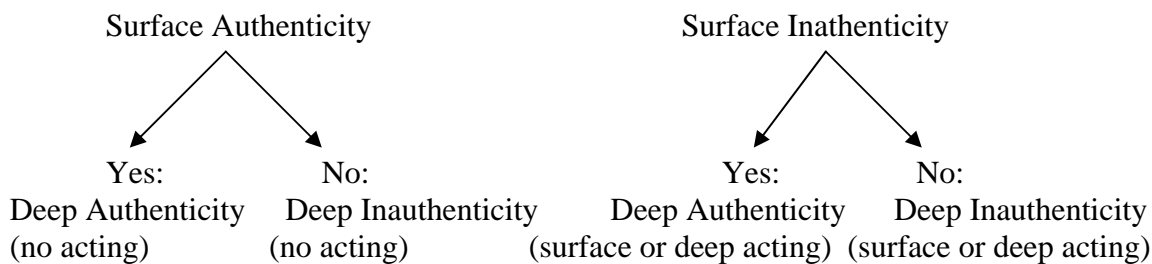


Figure 1.1 Authenticity and Acting

This conception of surface and deep authenticity helps to account for why some individuals who report displaying unfelt emotions at work do not experience negative effects of emotional labor while other people who report displaying genuinely felt emotions do experience damaging consequences of their emotion work. To explain, Ashforth and Tomiuk (2000) report that workers typically fake in good faith when they experience deep authenticity. In other words, individuals tend to view their emotional

labor positively when the work supports their sense of self. Thus, people who believe that their emotional behavior is consistent with their sense of self may not experience negative effects of emotional labor (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; see also Karabanow, 1999). This finding may explain why some emotional labor workers who report displaying unfelt emotions do not experience negative effects.

Conversely, employees generally fake in bad faith when they do not experience deep authenticity. Individuals view their emotional labor negatively when the task contradicts their sense of self. As a result, regardless of whether or not people actually feel the emotion that their emotional labor requires, if that emotion does not correspond to their sense of self they likely will suffer negative consequences (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; see also Karabanow, 1999). Thus, if the basketball coach mentioned in the earlier example of surface authenticity defines herself as a forgiving woman who is slow to anger, she is prone to experience some negative outcomes from her angry emotional display. In this scenario, her emotional expression contradicts her sense of self. Consequently, the fact that she says that she feels the emotion prescribed by her emotional labor may not prevent her from experiencing negative workplace outcomes. Such a finding helps to account for why some emotional labor workers who display sincerely felt emotions experience negative consequences. This study poses the following question about emotional labor and surface and deep authenticity.

RQ 3: In what ways do employees' discursive and behavioral manifestations of acting and faking in good and bad faith indicate the presence of a sense of surface and deep authenticity?

The three research questions posed by this project aim to improve scholars' understanding of the relationship between emotional labor and beliefs about authenticity. The following summary reviews the literature presented and explains the contribution that this study offers.

Summary

Since the work of Hochschild (1979; 1983), much research on emotion in organizations has focused on the concept of emotional labor. These projects have uncovered many stable findings and have increased scholars' understanding of such issues as the nature of emotional labor and the ways in which it is enacted in the workplace (e.g. Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987; Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989). Nevertheless, the effects that emotional labor produces within these work environments are not well understood. Some scholars have discovered negative effects of emotional labor (e.g. Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989; Waldron & Krone, 1991), and others have found positive effects of emotional labor (e.g. Adelman, 1995; Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Wharton, 1993). The reasons for these inconsistencies are likely to be complex. Nevertheless, research suggests that reports about authenticity may play a critical role in shaping people's experiences of emotional labor.

Studies of authenticity have indicated that the negative effects of emotional labor are mitigated by the degree to which individuals view their emotion work as a positive part of their job and perceive themselves as acting in line with their actual feelings and sense of self while performing their work. Specifically, scholars have determined that

individuals who perform their emotional labor in good faith typically do not experience negative effects while those who fake in bad faith generally do experience harmful consequences of their emotional labor (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). Emotional labor workers tend to fake in good faith when they experience deep authenticity, and they typically fake in bad faith when they experience deep inauthenticity (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). These findings suggest that faking and authenticity may work together to shape the effects of emotional labor. Since few studies address these concepts, however, the relationship between them remains somewhat speculative.

This project examines the ways in which individuals discursively create their experiences of emotional labor, faking in good/bad faith, and authenticity/inauthenticity. By analyzing the language that people use to discuss these concepts, this study aims to discover not only how they are discursively brought into being, but also the ways in which these discursive creations may interact. These issues have not been explored via a discursive approach. Consequently, this study offers a new perspective from which to explore the possible relationship between emotional labor and authenticity. The results may help researchers to account for the inconsistent effects that emotional labor tends to produce. This project addresses the following research questions:

RQ 1: *What constitutes emotional labor in this particular organization and how do employees describe their emotional labor experiences?*

RQ 2: *How do employees describe their emotional labor experiences in terms of faking in good faith and faking in bad faith?*

RQ 3: *In what ways do employees' discursive and behavioral manifestations of acting and faking in good and bad faith indicate the presence of a sense of surface and deep authenticity?*

To understand the context in which these questions are explored, the next chapter describes the organization and the participants involved in the study. Chapter two also explains the design of the study, the data collection process, and the data analysis method used. Chapter three presents the findings of the study and chapter four addresses conclusions, implications, and directions for future research.

CHAPTER II

DESIGN OF STUDY

Case Description

Data for this study was collected at The Student Recreation Center (SRC)—a pseudonym for the home of a large Southwestern university’s Department of Recreational Sports.* As will be discussed below, the Department of Recreational Sports is comprised of six separate facilities—one of which is the SRC. I decided to gather data at this facility for several reasons. Most importantly, results from a study that I conducted within the SRC approximately one year earlier suggested that the organization’s workers engaged in much emotional labor. As a term paper for a graduate course on organizational culture, I examined norms and formal and informal rules and practices within the SRC. Although not the focus of this earlier project, I found that the organizational norms, rules, and practices demanded that workers presented themselves as having fun despite the fact that many of their duties were unpleasant and difficult. In this respect, the experiences of SRC workers appeared to be ripe with emotional labor and the facility seemed to be well suited to explore this project’s research questions.

The SRC also seemed to be an ideal location to observe, interact with, and interview the individuals that this study chose to focus on. Scholarship indicates that the

* Descriptive information about the Department of Recreational Sports and the SRC was obtained during two interviews with the director of the Department of Recreational Sports and an informational booklet that the department created for employees and visitors.

effects of emotional labor often are less salient for individuals with low levels of job commitment than for people with high levels of job commitment (see Wharton, 1999). Consequently, this study directs its attention to the experiences of workers who are most likely to hold high levels of job commitment. Based on data obtained from the earlier study and discussions with SRC staff members, this project assumed that the department's full-time professional staff members possessed more job commitment than its part-time student workers. The following statement from a SRC professional staff member illustrates:

It's different because they [student staff] may do it [work at the SRC] for fun because they need money to go to school. They know two or three years they're out of here. A professional staff person, this is how they feed their family. And that's a different level of commitment there. And you hope that you can still kind of get them to be all committed on that level too, but it's a problem sometimes that people aren't more committed on the student end than they are on the professional end.

Most (35 out of 46) of the Department of Recreational Sports' professional employees spent the majority of their time working within the SRC. Thus, this facility appeared to be the best location to study the department's professional staff. Additionally, since the SRC served as the home base for the entire department, this location seemed to furnish me with better overall understanding of the department than could be obtained at one of the other facilities. The following section first will describe the Department of Recreational Sports and then will discuss the SRC.

Department of Recreational Sports

The university's Department of Recreational Sports has been in existence for nearly eighty years. Over that time, the department has grown from a small intramural program into one of the nation's leading university recreational departments. The department supervises six separate facilities that are located on the university campus. The Write Building** contains multiple courts that may be used for basketball and volleyball, a dance and fencing room, handball and racquetball courts, and several multipurpose rooms. The Black Building houses multipurpose courts for basketball, volleyball, and badminton. The Intramural Sports Center includes seventeen acres of multipurpose intramural fields and a support building with classrooms, storage and maintenance units, and an intramural supervision area. The Golf Course is an eighteen-hole public course. The Tennis Courts contain twenty-two tennis courts with full lighting. The SRC is the university's primary recreation center. It houses most of the Department of Recreational Sports' professional staff and contains a multitude of recreation services.

All six facilities are available for use by university students, faculty, and staff, retired faculty and staff, spouses of students, faculty, and staff, and visiting guests. However, the facilities primarily are visited by university students who automatically pay \$78.00 each semester (or \$39.00 for five week summer sessions) for their use. Faculty, staff, and spouses pay \$120.00 per semester (or \$220.00 for two semesters, \$300.00 annually) to enter the facilities. Guest visitors pay \$6.00 per day with a student,

** All building titles are pseudonyms.

faculty, or staff sponsor and \$8.00 per day without a sponsor. The golf course and several department activities such as intramurals, group exercise, personal training, instructional classes, and massage therapy require extra fees. These fees support facility upkeep and maintenance and contribute to the salaries of the department's employees.

Because the department oversees such expansive facilities and varied activities, it employs a large number of workers. The department provides jobs for forty-six full-time professional staff members. These jobs are located within one of six organizational divisions: office of the director, business services, golf course, intramurals and sport clubs, programs, and facilities. Organizational divisions are illustrated in the figure in Appendix A. The office of the director division employs five professional staff. Individuals who work in this division provide administrative assistance to the director and senior associate director of the Department of Recreational Sports. The business services division provides jobs for nine full-time employees. People who work within this division handle accounting, payroll, and information technology. The facilities division is comprised of ten professional staff. Facilities workers provide both indoor and outdoor upkeep for the department's facilities, manage facility reservations, and coordinate university events that use the department's facilities. The programming division has five full-time employees. These individuals organize and run personal training, weight room, group exercise, and outdoor programs. The intramurals and sports clubs division employs six professional staff. These workers organize, direct, and oversee all of the department's intramural activities and the university's sport clubs. The golf course holds positions for eleven professional staff. Individuals who work within

this division manage the department's golf course, handle golf course maintenance, and direct the pro shop. These professional staff members have lengthy tenure within the organization. At the time of this study, the newest full-time hire had been employed for four years and the longest employed staff member had been working for thirty-two years.

In addition to these professional jobs, the department also offers a variety of part-time positions. These positions primarily are filled by university students. In fact, the department acts as the largest student employer on campus and provides jobs to over 1,000 students each year. Students are employed within all six organizational divisions. Examples of common student jobs include facility receptionist, golf operations cashier, weight and fitness room attendant, lifeguard, maintenance worker, and intramural official. The majority of student employees work in the intramural division. This division employs about five hundred students each year to referee intramural games and organize intramural activities. Results from the earlier study revealed that many of these student workers hold jobs that require them to perform customer service duties and maintain organizationally appropriate affect displays. The majority of these students, however, are employed for relatively short periods of time (i.e. one semester to four years) and do not seek professional employment within the department or the fitness industry. As a result of this seemingly low job commitment, student workers are not included in this study.

SRC

The SRC is the most popular department facility. During the university's 2002 fall semester, 66.99% of the campus' approximately 45,000 students visited the SRC, and during the 2003 spring semester, 73.10% of students entered its doors. (Statistics past these dates were are not available.) The SRC is able to accommodate a great number of students because it is very large and contains a wide assortment of recreational opportunities. The SRC spans approximately thirteen acres of ground and is 373,000 square feet. Its construction began on March 25, 1993, and the building opened on August 26, 1995. Building costs topped \$36.4 million. Recreational opportunities within the SRC include gym space for basketball, volleyball, soccer, badminton, racquetball, handball, squash, and aerobics, a fitness area with strength training and cardiovascular equipment, an indoor track, a rock climbing wall, and an Olympic size pool with springboard and platform diving wells. In addition, the center offers numerous activities in which members may participate for an additional cost. Examples of these programs include personal training, Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, self-defense, massage therapy, intramurals, and outdoor trips.

To oversee all of these activities, the SRC keeps a large number of staff on hand. The building contains two main levels, and the second floor primarily is devoted to offices and meeting space for professional staff members. Of the department's forty-six professional employees, thirty-five of them are located within the SRC. These thirty-five individuals may spend portions of their work day at other locations such as the Write Building, the tennis courts, or the Intramural Sports Center. Their offices and

primary work duties, however, typically are held within the SRC. The eleven full-time staff members who are not housed within this facility are part of the golf course division. All full-time golf course employees have offices at the golf course and mainly work within this location. Consequently, these individuals are not fully part of the SRC professional staff community. Since this project sought to explore the discursive practices of individuals within a particular organizational setting, golf course workers were not included in the analysis. The next section discusses the general approach that this study used to analyze the discourse of SRC stationed employees.

General Approach

This study analyzes the ways in which SRC professional staff members discursively create their experiences of emotional labor and their feelings of authenticity and the ways these discourses interact. Specifically, the project focuses on 1) how SRC professional employees discursively create their experiences of emotional labor, 2) how these individuals describe their emotional labor experiences in terms of faking in good and bad faith, and 3) how these discourses indicate the presence of a sense of surface and deep authenticity. In particular, this study seeks to understand the ways in which people's discursively constructed experiences of emotional labor relate to their reported experiences of authenticity.

To address these issues, this study employs a qualitative method of data collection and uses an interpretive approach to analyze the data. Data is gathered through participant observation of SRC professional staff members during organizational

meetings and daily workplace interactions, analysis of discourse in organizational documents (e.g. company mission statements, core values statements, and informational brochures), and formal interviews with professional employees. These multiple data sources aid in deciphering consistency of the data through triangulation (see Berg, 2001). Transcripts from formal interviews with SRC staff members serve as the primary data source. Notes from participant observation and analysis of organizational documents comprise secondary data sources.

As a qualitative study, this project is the product of a particular theoretical school of thought. The general goal of qualitative research is to achieve understanding (Lindlof, 1995). Specifically, qualitative studies function to “allow researchers to share in the understandings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives” (Berg, 2001, p. 7). This type of research produces context specific understanding of the ways in which particular people create perceptions of social reality at a particular point in time (Berg, 2001). Thus, qualitative research does not approach data with preconceived hypotheses or strive to obtain findings that may be transferred to other settings. Instead, it comes to the data with open-ended research questions and seeks to gain in-depth understanding of the people and situation under analysis. Because of this open-ended approach, understanding arises inductively from the data, rather than deductively from preconceived hypotheses.

Even though most qualitative research operates within such a general format (see Berg, 2001; Lindlof, 1995), qualitative research methods display much diversity. Qualitative researchers use a variety of methods to collect data such as complete, active,

moderate, and passive participant observation (Spradley, 1980), formal, informal, semi-formal, and focus group interviews (Berg, 2001), and document analyses of texts ranging from informal corporate stories to national newspaper columns (Philips & Hardy, 2002). Scholars using such data collection methods employ an equally vast number of techniques to analyze their data. Examples of data analysis methods include content analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, and network analysis (Miller & Dingwall, 1997). The remaining portion of this chapter describes the data collection methods and analytic techniques used in this research. Specifically, the following sections describe the data collection methods of participant observation, artifact data collection, and interviews, and explain the data analysis technique employed. Before doing so, however, it is important to note the project's institutional review board approval and my role within the organization.

This study was approved and governed by the Institutional Review Board of the participating university. Written permission for me to conduct this study was obtained from the director of the Department of Recreational Sports. All SRC professional staff members were informed of the study via an email message and an oral announcement at a department professional staff meeting in which I was introduced to the group. Employees who participated in interviews signed individual informed consent forms. I did not have a personal relationship with any SRC professional staff members. I had interviewed several full-time employees as part of an earlier study, but I had no additional connections with anyone involved in the research.

Participant Observation

During the course of this study, I conducted approximately forty hours of participant observation. This observation occurred between March 7, 2005 and April 29, 2005. Participant observation is a method of qualitative data collection in which the researcher examines organizational members as they go about their natural, everyday life. According to Spradley (1980), the participant observer must enter this natural environment with two purposes: “1) to engage in activities appropriate to the situation and 2) to observe the activities, people, and physical aspects of the situation” (p. 54). In this respect, individuals who perform participant observation undergo both an insider and an outsider experience during their research (Spradley, 1980). As an insider, the participant observer becomes part of the social situation and experiences the activities under analysis in an “immediate, subjective manner” (Spradley, 1980, p. 54). As an outsider, the participant observer mentally steps outside of the situation and views the scene and the people involved as objects. The researcher may alternate between insider and outsider experiences or engage in both at the same time. The degree to which the participant observer becomes involved in the activities that he or she studies depends on the constraints of the particular situation.

Scholars use different labels to categorize types of participant observation based on the researcher’s degree of involvement in the situation (see Lindlof, 1995; Spradley, 1980). According to Spradley’s (1980) classification system, the participant observer’s role can range from nonparticipation (e.g. observing football players during a game) to complete participation (e.g. being a member of the football team and actually playing the

game). Based on this typology, the participant observation style used in this study may be labeled moderate participation. In moderate participation participant observation, the researcher occupies a middle ground between insider and outsider. This participant observer participates in the scene and interacts with others, but he or she does not actually do what organizational members are doing or become a member of the community. This style of observation does not allow the researcher to separate him or herself fully from the situation. However, it prevents the researcher from becoming engulfed in the participant role. In this sense, moderate participant observation encourages an appropriate balance between insider and outsider experiences (see Spradley, 1980).

For this project, I observed SRC professional staff members as they performed customer service work and interacted with each other on both the public lower floor of the SRC and the office level second floor of the building. For most of the observations (approximately thirty-five hours), I entered the SRC as a student member and engaged in typical member activities. I participated in group fitness classes, used cardio and strength training equipment, sat at open tables and benches within the building, observed intramural teams playing basketball, volleyball, and badminton, and visited the pool areas. During most of these experiences, I did not have direct contact with SRC professional staff members. Instead, I observed them interacting with customers, student workers, and other full-time staff from my particular vantage point.

For example, during group fitness classes, I not only watched full-time employees perform a primary aspect of their job, but I also saw them converse with SRC

members before and after class and answer members' questions. In some cases, I observed full-time group fitness instructors as they talked with student workers or fellow professional staff members before or after class. From the cardio and strength training equipment, I observed personal trainers as they worked with their clients and interacted with each other on the gym floor. Open tables and benches within the SRC provided places for me to watch professional staff members interact with customers, student workers, and each other at the member services desk and other highly populated areas of the building. Observation areas around the indoor courts and pool allowed me to view staff as they performed their jobs, communicated with customers, and talked with one another.

From many of these locations, I could not hear SRC employees' conversations with customers and each other. Noise from equipment, music played throughout the building, and other members' voices frequently drowned out staff members' discussions to anyone who was not close by. To behave as a typical SRC member and not disrupt the normal setting, I usually was not able to hear their conversations. As a result, observations within these settings centered on employees' outward behavior. In particular, it focused on behaviors that indicated the performance of emotional labor and display of inconsistent emotions (e.g. displaying frustration when talking with co-workers and appearing cheery when interacting with customers).

During observations on the office level of the SRC, I often heard staff members' conversations. Observations made from this area, however, were not as frequent as they were on the public grounds. SRC members were not banned from the office area of the

SRC. However, an office assistant's desk was located at the entryway to this section of the building. Visitors told her their purpose before they entered this area. Unexpected visits from members did not seem to be welcomed. I observed staff members in this area when I conducted interviews. On days in which interviews were scheduled, I arrived early and waited for the participant on one of several chairs that were placed in the hallway of this office area. On days in which more than one interview were scheduled an hour or less apart, I sat in one of these hallway chairs between meetings. These waiting periods allowed me to observe professional staff members as they interacted with each other in the hallway and the mailroom/copy room, which had a consistently open door.

While making these second floor observations, I focused on behaviors that indicated emotional labor (e.g. shifts in SRC employees' emotional displays, emotional expression changes within different contexts). These observations provided a glimpse at professional staff members' "off stage" behavior. Specifically, they allowed me to witness the actions and to hear the language of many professional staff members that I observed on SRC's lower level when they were shielded from public view.

Whenever possible, I made handwritten notes about both first floor and second floor observations during the actual event. I added additional detail after I left the SRC. In some instances, however, I was not able to take notes on the spot. In these cases, I documented my observations as soon as possible after I left the building. I recorded these observations within a few days after the event.

Artifact Data

To triangulate data and understand the SRC workplace environment and professional staff, this study included published documents produced by or written about the SRC and/or its employees. These documents included company mission statements, core values statements, employee profiles listed on the Department of Recreational Sports' web site, an informational brochure about the SRC created by the department for both the public and the professional staff, and university student newspaper articles that focused on the facility and/or its staff. These artifacts were accessible to the public and obtained without any special permission.

Interviews

Transcripts from formal interviews with individual SRC professional staff members served as the primary data source for this study. To select and recruit participants, I first compiled a list of full-time employees whose job requirements seemed suited to the focus of this project. At the start of the earlier study within the SRC, the director of the Department of Recreational Sports provided a list of the entire department's professional staff members, their titles, and their primary duties. This study used two criteria to narrow this list and select individuals for recruitment.

First, since this study centered on the SRC, any employees who did not work within this building were excluded from analysis. Hence, the eleven golf course professional staff members were removed from the list. Second, because this study was grounded in the concept of emotional labor, any employees whose job requirements did

not require them to engage in emotional labor were omitted from the list. As discussed earlier, emotional labor might occur within a variety of occupations. However, scholarship indicated that emotional labor emanated from individuals whose jobs required “front line” interaction with customers or clients. Consequently, any professional staff member whose job did not require customer interaction (or required very minimal customer interaction) was taken off of the list. This process led to removing twelve individuals from the list. Most of these people were employed in the business services division. Examples of jobs that were excluded include such titles as senior IT consultant, IT consultant, accounting services manager, assistant accounting services manager, computer manager, SRC gardener, and facility maintenance foreman. After these eliminations, twenty-three professional staff members remained on the list. One of these individuals was on a semester long sabbatical and unavailable to participate in the project. Before the study commenced, another person transferred to a different department within the university. Thus, twenty-one potential participants remained.

These individuals were invited to participate via an email message that was sent by the director of the Department of Recreational Sports. Seven people responded to this message and agreed to participate. To recruit more participants, I obtained permission from the director to individually contact the remaining fourteen employees via a second email. This invitation yielded four additional participants. Three other people said that they were not able to participate. During the course of the study, I recruited two more participants through informal conversations at the SRC. I informed the director that I would like to obtain a few more participants. To do so, the director

personally introduced me to four of the individuals who remained on the list and reminded them about the project. Two of these people immediately volunteered to participate.

Thus, thirteen participants representing all the department divisions were included in this study. Two were from the office of the director, one was from business services, five were from facilities, three were from programming, and two were from intramurals and sport clubs (see Table 2.1). Participants' length of service ranged from four years to twenty-five years. Six of the participants were male and seven were female.

Table 2.1 Interview Participants

Department Division	Office of the Director	Business Services	Facilities	Programming	Intramurals & Sport Clubs
Participants	2	1	5	3	2

Interviews were conducted from March 7, 2005 to April 29, 2005. All of the interviews were held within the SRC in a setting selected by the participant. The majority (10) of the interviews were carried out in participants' private offices within the SRC. Two were held in a private mini-conference room on the second floor of the SRC, and one took place at a public seating area on the first floor of the building. The interview that occurred in this public setting was conducted during the university's spring break and very few people were in the seating area. At the start of each interview,

participants signed an informed consent form that granted permission to be interviewed in the study and to have their interview audiotaped and transcribed. All participants signed the form and all interviews were audiotaped and transcribed. Interview lengths ranged from thirty to seventy-five minutes.

Interviews followed a planned protocol that is included in Appendix B. However, additional inquiries often were inserted to clarify information or prompt the participant to continue speaking about a particular topic. Interview questions were used to encourage participants to talk about 1) their experiences of emotional labor, 2) their representations of faking in good faith and faking in bad faith, and 3) their conceptions of surface and deep authenticity.

After each interview, I typed a reflection about the interview experience. Whenever possible, I composed these reflections immediately after the interview. All reflections were written within a few days of the interview. When more than one day passed between the interview and the writing of the reflection, I listened to a portion of the audiotaped interview to jog my memory of the experience before I began to write. These reflections focused on the degree to which participants' responses indicated congruency between their reported and observed behaviors within different situations. Interview transcripts and reflections yielded 118 pages of single-spaced text.

Data Analysis

As Philip and Hardy (2002) explain, qualitative discourse analysis may take a variety of forms. The analysis technique that a researcher uses must be shaped to fit

such factors as the questions asked, the type of data collected, and the contribution intended. Consequently, discourse analysis does not follow a lock-step analysis formula. Instead, researchers use existing literature as a guide to develop their own data analysis technique for their specific purposes. For this project, I drew from data analysis examples presented in Philip and Hardy's (2002) text and qualitative data analysis procedures recommended by Lindlof (1995) to develop a technique. The following discussion describes the data analysis process used in this study. To increase clarity for the reader, this process is presented somewhat linearly. In practice, however, the process was much more iterative. As is necessary in qualitative research, movement through the data reduction, coding, and interpretation stages was fluid (Lindlof, 1995). Rather than linearly progressing from one stage to another, I moved back and forth between them throughout the analysis process.

In essence, data reduction commenced as soon as the study began. Choice of research questions, study design, organizational site, and participant qualifications limited the data collected. In particular, this project's focus on emotional labor and authenticity directed my attention in important ways. Throughout the data collection process, I strove to observe behaviors that indicated the performance of emotional labor and changes in authentic expression (e.g. shifts in SRC employees' emotional displays, emotional expression changes within different contexts), aimed to collect artifacts that made references to these topics (e.g. SRC statements about prescribed emotional displays), and elicited discussions of emotional labor and authenticity via interview questions that asked participants about their experiences of displaying emotions at work.

Cursory observations that did not center on emotional labor or authenticity often were made, and off-topic discussions frequently occurred during or after interviews. For the purposes of this project, however, I did not devote much attention to issues that did not clearly relate to this study's focus.

Once data was collected, further reduction was needed to break it into an analyzable form. To do this, I used a thematic analysis technique illustrated by Philips and Hardy (2002). I began by reading interview transcripts and looking for instances in which participants' discourses centered on emotional labor or authenticity. Specifically, I looked for language that discussed acting, faking, behaving naturally and unnaturally, and behaving consistently and inconsistently across contexts. As I read through the data, I highlighted all discourse that related to issues of emotional labor or authenticity. Once all instances were noted, the coding process began.

I started to read through the highlighted text and look for statements that indicated particular representations of emotional labor and authenticity. I assigned these representations to a tentative label and placed them into a chart that illustrated a theme, documented discourse exemplars, and included excerpts from the data. Thematic labels were created, modified, combined, and deleted as the researcher continued to map the data and classify representations within a theme. I looked for words and phrases that depicted employees' experiences of emotional labor as a talent, a natural ability or skill, a knack, a personal trait, a job, or some other function.

Once all of the participants' constructions of emotional labor were categorized into a theme, I looked for additional themes in their depictions of displaying unfelt

emotions and/or behaving in a manner that individuals perceive as inauthentic. To do so, I looked for themes in their discussions of what it means to act, who an actor is, why and when a person should and should not act, and consequences of acting. I paid particular attention to words and phrases that individuals used to both justify acting or faking emotions (i.e. faking in good faith) and condemn engaging such behaviors. These representations were labeled and placed into a chart that illustrated the themes, documented discourse exemplars, and included excerpts from the data. Also, as I read through the data, I noticed differences in employees' discursive constructions of SRC's culture—specifically how they depicted the meaning of the SRC's promotion of fun. I analyzed and labeled these themes and placed them into a chart as well.

Before I placed the themes identified in a participant's discourses within a chart, however, I examined the manner in which the participant constructed his or her experience of emotional labor (i.e. as a natural ability or as performing a role). I charted all themes according to the construction of emotional labor from which they stemmed. This categorization helped to identify relationships between participants' constructions of emotional labor, faking, and perceived authenticity. When I completed this analysis, I identified eighteen separate themes about acting, faking in good and bad faith, and SRC culture. Refer to table in Appendix C for a list of themes and exemplars.

The next chapter presents these findings. This chapter first offers a brief discussion of emotional labor within the SRC. The first main section then describes the discourses of workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability. This section reveals the themes that arose from disavowing acting and faking emotional displays.

The next main section discusses the discourses of workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role. This section also describes the themes that arose from their discourses about acting and faking in good and bad faith. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ways in which employees' constructions of emotional labor stem from their different enactments of SRC's culture.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS OF ANALYSIS

The purpose of this study is to examine the ways in which SRC professional staff members discursively construct their experiences of emotional labor and to consider how these discourses indicate the presence of a sense of surface or deep authenticity. In this respect, this project focuses on the ways in which experiences of emotional labor and feelings of authenticity are socially constructed. Results of analysis indicate that SRC employees construct emotional labor in two main ways: emotional labor as a natural ability and emotional labor as necessary or essential to perform a role effectively.

Individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability construct acting as insincerity. Their discourses about acting reveal three major themes. These themes present an actor as someone who is 1) disingenuous, 2) inauthentic, and 3) inconsistent. These workers express a belief that all faking is bad, and they claim that they never fake their emotions while at work. Nevertheless, their discourses and behaviors suggest that they often display unfelt emotions while on the job. For these individuals, enacting unfelt emotions should be a part of the job (i.e. is performed in good faith) when it is 1) triggered by another person and 2) done because the worker wants to elicit a positive consequence from a negative situation. Importantly, although these people's discourses suggest that they display unfelt emotions in good faith, they construct acting as leading to highly negative consequences. Specifically, their discourses reveal two major themes about the consequences of acting: 1) acting can cause others to see you in a negative

light and 2) acting can make you feel unhappy. These workers' discourses about their emotional labor experiences appear to be influenced by their construction of self and how they enact SRC's culture.

Employees who construct emotional labor as necessary for performing a role effectively construct acting as a tool that they use to perform their jobs well. Their discourses about acting reveal two major themes: 1) acting is stepping into one's work role and 2) acting is adjusting to meet situational demands. Unlike individuals who construct acting as insincerity, these workers openly admit to faking emotions at work. They construct faking in bad faith as acting friendly towards an SRC staff member when an actor believes that the other worker needs to be disciplined. They construct faking in good faith as acting that is done when the worker is feeling organizationally inappropriate emotions. These workers' discourses about the consequences of acting reveal four major themes: 1) acting can help workers elicit good customer service. 2) acting can raise morale and enhance productivity among SRC staff. 3) acting can help workers manage a staff of student employees, and 4) acting can create personal difficulties. These people's discourses about their emotional labor experiences appear influenced by their notion of self and their social comparisons with other workers. Their constructions of emotional labor also relate to the way in which they enact SRC's culture.

The following chapter presents these results. This discussion begins with an explanation of emotional labor within the SRC. The next sections describe the discursive constructions of acting and faking that are employed by workers who

construct emotional labor as a natural ability and then by employees who construct it as performing a role. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the ways in which employees' constructions of emotional labor relate to their enactment of SRC's culture. The table in Appendix C illustrates the themes described throughout this chapter.

To begin, SRC emotional labor typically involves displaying a cheerful countenance while on the job. Such emotional labor prescriptions are prevalent throughout the organization. During interviews, two individuals described emotional labor situations that required them to be "the bad guy." However, SRC employees usually state that their job requires them to pretend that they feel cheerful and are having fun. One reason that SRC employees feel a need to engage in emotional labor stems from the fact that their supervisors expect it. During an informal conversation with one of the top-ranking SRC staff members, this professional explained that SRC leaders strive to make sure that everyone who uses or works within the facility enjoys his or her experience. In fact, this individual said that he feels a responsibility to talk to staff members who appear upset and to help them feel better.

Similarly, another top-ranking SRC staff member stated, "When I evaluate staff, it [fun] does play a big role... Their attitude when they come to work needs to be upbeat because we're here to serve the students." Thus, SRC management expects workers to exchange their emotional expressions for positive performance evaluations. Such an expectation embodies emotional labor in its purest sense. However, managers also say that workers can "choose" whether or not to "control" their attitudes and meet emotional display expectations. This language implies that they believe that workers have a choice

as to whether or not they will display appropriate emotions. Since SRC leadership requires particular emotional displays, however, their language is contradictory.

Workers cannot both engage in emotional labor and possess emotional display choice.

As emotional labor, their expressions are not self controlled. Indeed, SRC staff members recognize that their emotional displays are more of a commodity than a choice.

During interviews, workers noted that “part of your evaluation is attitude” and reasoned that “in a way it does tie in” to their ability to receive pay increases and promotions. Employees also commented that people who do not display appropriate emotions “don’t last very long” in the organization. In this respect, workers seem to regard their emotional expressions as a commodity that may be exchanged for good performance evaluations, pay increases, promotions, and continued employment. Thus, the work of SRC professional staff members seems to require significant emotional labor. The manner in which workers construct their emotional labor experiences, however, displays variation. For approximately one half of the employees who were interviewed, emotional labor is a natural ability that one instinctively performs. For the other half of participants, emotional labor is essential to perform a role effectively. Table 3.1 highlights the major contrasts between these two types of participants that are detailed in the pages that follow.

Table 3.1 Participant Contrast

	Emotional Labor as a Natural Ability	Emotional Labor as Performing a Role
Acting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being disingenuous • Inauthenticity • Inconsistency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faking in good faith • Faking in bad faith
Displaying Unfelt Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive
Reasons For Displaying Unfelt Emotions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triggered by another person • Elicit positive outcome 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee feels inappropriate emotions
Consequences of Acting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See employee in a negative light • Cause you to feel unhappy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help perform good customer service • Raise staff morale and productivity • Help manage student staff • Create personal difficulties
Views of Self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stable and consistent • Natural 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-faceted and changing • Socially constructed
Views of Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun is for everyone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fun is for customers

Emotional Labor as a Natural Ability

Seven (7) SRC professional staff members constructed emotional labor as a natural ability. The discourse of emotional labor as a natural ability treats maintaining an organizationally appropriate affect display as a talent or skill that some SRC workers naturally possess and others do not. Individuals who construct emotional labor in this fashion typically do not describe it as a difficult part of their job. Instead, they depict expressing positive emotions as easy and natural behavior that individuals who are blessed with a knack for customer service work instinctively perform. For these

workers, displaying organizationally prescribed emotions is automatic or out of their awareness. Some of these individuals credit this ability to a higher power. As one individual explained, “with customer service and myself, I just think it’s something that God blessed me with the skill to communicate with people.” The majority of these people, however, attribute their aptitude to display organizationally prescribed emotions to their natural talents. These people frequently claim to be “a people person,” and they describe their ability to appear cheerful as a “knack” that they always had or a “natural” part of who they are.

Thus, individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability tend to depict their display of appropriate workplace emotions as instinctive. Consequently, these people typically do not believe that they are acting when they perform emotional labor. In fact, SRC workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability tend to construct a negative representation of acting--acting as insincerity.

Acting as Insincerity

When asked about acting during interviews, participants who construct emotional labor as a natural ability typically stress that individuals in their position do not or should not act. Their discourses employ three major themes (see table in Appendix C). These themes present an actor as someone who is 1) disingenuous, 2) inauthentic, and 3) inconsistent.

The first major theme equates acting with being disingenuous. Workers who embody this theme state that they conceptualize acting as displaying emotions that are

not “genuine and honest.” For them, acting means expressing emotions that are not truly felt. Employees claim that individuals who act are “fake,” and they emphasize that people who engage in acting “just tell you what you want to hear or see” and try to hide their real feelings. In this sense, this perspective constructs acting as expressing emotions that are “not genuine”.

The second related theme depicts acting as inauthenticity. This discourse differs from that which defines acting as being disingenuous in that it constructs acting as being untrue to one’s real self, rather than one’s real feelings. Individuals whose discourses fall within this theme express a belief that people should not act “because that’s not who you are.” With such a focus on being true to oneself, these workers claim that both they and other SRC employees are themselves while at work. In fact, these people state that the ability to be yourself “is one of [the SRC’s] successes, and they say that “most people here are all very natural” and that SRC work is “who we are.” As one employee explained, workplace behavior involves “myself being myself.”

The third related theme defines acting as inconsistency. Workers whose discourse reflects this theme claim that acting involves behaving differently in different situations. These workers speak out against this behavior by saying, “don’t change who you are around them [students]” and warning that an actor may “forget how [he or she] acted the last time.” These individuals also state that their behavior does not change in different contexts. They say that “when you see me out [of the organization] I’m the same person that you see me at work” and that “whether I’m at home, whether I’m with my family, or on the sports fields, or little league fields, or you know, back porch

barbeque setting, that's the way I am here." For them, a person does not have to change his or her behavior to meet the demands of the workplace or become "a true believer" in the SRC's mission. As one employee explained, "you've got to love what you do...I love my job...so I'm consistent. I'm very consistent with people."

In summary, individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability describe acting as behaving disingenuously, inauthentically, or inconsistently. These people view their emotional displays as genuinely felt, in line with their true self, and consistent across contexts. Nevertheless, these workers do not always respond in ways that support this representation of their behavior. In fact, all people in this cluster present at least one situation in which they display emotions that they do not genuinely feel, behave out of line with their true self, or act differently in different situations.

For example, during interviews, one participant spoke out against displaying false emotions while at work saying, "I think you have to be somewhat genuine." The participant also emphasized natural and consistent behavior claiming, "I'm very consistent with people. I am." This person described himself as extremely fun-loving. "If you talk to people who work with me, they say I am the life of the party." Nevertheless, when I observed this participant in his SRC job, his behavior seemed stoic and serious. During observations, this person assumed a strictly businesslike and professional manner. The participant answered telephone calls, worked on the computer, and walked purposefully throughout the hallway without stopping to speak to anyone. During an SRC professional staff meeting, this individual sat attentively, took notes, and contributed to work-related discussion. Although several staff members made

jokes or funny remarks, this person never did. In this respect, this participant did not always appear nonverbally to behave in line with how he constructed his natural and fun-loving true self.

Similarly, another staff member stressed that she never displayed unfelt emotions while at work and claimed that her workplace behavior “is not acting. It’s real. This person also stated that her behavior is “the same everyday, everywhere I go.” The participant explained that her ability to act naturally happy and positive stemmed from her “biggest rule,” which she always follows and uses to guide her behavior: “Have a smile on your face when you greet someone.” During observations, this individual smiled when greeting SRC patrons who were entering the facility or approaching the participant to ask questions. However, this participant did not always appear cheerful. When the researcher met the participant for the interview, this person did not act happy. The participant did not smile when the researcher approached her and did not appear cheerful during most of the interview. When answering interview questions, the participant spoke in a flat tone and made markedly brief responses. The following excerpt from my reflections describes the participant’s behavior:

I found it difficult to get this person to really talk and expand on ideas. For most of the interview, the participant acted like she was unhappy, in a hurry, and did not have time to talk. I felt as though she did not really want to participate and that she wanted to get it over with as soon as possible. I felt uncomfortable.

This individual loosened up and became friendlier at the end of the interview. This person’s initial behavior, however, was not consistent with her “biggest rule.”

Thus, although individuals who discursively construct acting as insincerity claim that they never express emotions that they do not genuinely feel, that they always act in line with their perceived true selves, and that they constantly behave in a consistent manner, the findings of this study suggest otherwise. Nearly all of these participants made statements or behaved in ways that indicated that they sometimes enact emotions that they do not feel. Most of these people were not aware of these contradictions. In fact, in some instances, individuals spoke about displaying unfeared emotions immediately after stressing their ability to be themselves while on their job or emphasizing their tendency to be consistent. These workers' belief that they never fake their emotions also influences their construction of faking in good and bad faith.

Faking in Good/Bad Faith

Individuals who construct acting as insincerity typically do not make a distinction between faking in good faith and faking in bad faith. To them, all forms of faking are bad. As illustrated above, these people generally disapprove of acting while on the job and espouse an idea that all SRC workers either do or should behave genuinely, authentically, and consistently at all times. This view supports a construction of faking that depicts all faking as wrong.

Importantly, when participants describe situations in which they display unfeared emotions, their discourses construct their behavior in positive ways. For these individuals, displaying unfeared emotions should be a part of the job (i.e. is performed in good faith) when it occurs under specific conditions. These conditions appear in the two

major themes that arose from their discourses about this process: 1) enacting emotions in good faith occurs when it is triggered by another person and 2) enacting emotions in good faith occurs when it is done because the worker wants to elicit a positive consequence from a negative situation (see table in Appendix C).

The first theme is that false emotional expression occurs in reaction to another person. When these participants describe displaying unfeared emotions while at work, their discourses indicate that they feel a need to do so because of the behavior of another person. They say that expressing unfeared emotions is “necessary” when dealing with “angry,” “displeased,” and “challenging” customers. These workers believe displaying unfeared emotions is the only way to make customers “get past the anger” so that they can figure out “how can I make it better for you.” Thus, for these individuals, enacting emotions in good faith occurs when other people’s behavior renders it necessary. They display unfeared emotions to make customers feel valued and believe that the worker wants to resolve their problem.

In line with this theme, the second theme is that enacting emotions in good faith occurs when workers desire to bring a positive outcome from a negative customer situation. Employees describe displaying unfeared emotions as something that they “just have to do” during such events as “angry situations with the customers” and incidents in which customers “had a bad recreational experience.” According to these workers, SRC staff members should not display genuinely felt emotions when dealing with angry and upset customers. Instead, they claim that workers should “be as stoic and I’m sorry” as possible “because otherwise some things that you might do might escalate it [the angry

or unpleasant customer situation].” Thus, for these people, preventing a negative situation from escalating is more important than displaying felt emotions. After all, “you have to turn a negative into a positive all the time. You just have to.” Enacting unfelt emotions in good faith, therefore, occurs when employees do so because they find themselves in a bad situation that they want to make end in a positive manner.

To summarize, workers who construct acting as insincerity typically express a belief that all faking is bad. Nevertheless, their discourses reveal that these individuals often display unfelt emotions at work. When they do so, they conceptualize it as motivated by the actions of another person and as a desire to bring a positive outcome from a negative situation. Given these constructions, however, it is important to remember that these workers reject acting and believe it is an undesirable practice. Even though their discourses indicate that they believe that displaying unfelt emotions is necessary under certain conditions, they depict it in a negative fashion. In fact, their discourses often construct acting as leading to very negative consequences.

Consequences of Acting

Workers who construct acting as insincerity typically do not only equate displaying false emotions with being disingenuous, inauthentic, and inconsistent. Their discourses also present such behavior as dangerous. Specifically, these individuals’ discourses reveal two major themes about the consequences of acting as causing: 1) others to see the actor in a negative light and 2) the actor to feel unhappy (see table in Appendix C).

The first theme is that acting can cause others to see you in a negative light. These participants imply that other people can detect and may resent false emotional displays. They state, “I think if you acted around them [student patrons] it’s not a very good deal because they’ll see it” and “I think somebody would see through your acting.” To them, the transparent nature of acting is problematic because it can cause others to regard the actor as “dishonest.” Thus, they construct acting as an ineffective strategy for hiding one’s feelings. Their discourses espouse an idea that individuals can detect acting, and that when they do, they view the actor negatively.

The second theme is that acting can cause you to feel unhappy. Workers state that “once you get into a work environment, I don’t think you can carry on who you are not for a very long period of time.” Consequently, they suggest that the job will negatively affect individuals who cannot meet the SRC’s emotional labor prescriptions naturally. These individuals claim, “that can get very tough on you—acting everyday,” and they note that persons who have to act “don’t stay very long because they’re unhappy in the situation.” In this respect, their discourse depicts acting as behavior that can harm a person’s job. Thus, for these workers, the consequences of acting are that customers will view the actor negatively and that the actor will feel unhappy at work.

Considering the tendency of these employees to enact emotions they say they do not feel, however, their discourses counter their behaviors. Their inability to reconcile these inconsistencies may relate to their discursive construction of self. As mentioned above, participants who construct acting as deception tend to discursively construct a stable and consistent representation of self. The self these persons create typically is

someone who is naturally fun, friendly, and happy while at work. After all, these workers describe themselves as “a people person,” who naturally “likes people, “likes interaction,” and is “fun” and “the life of the party.”

Such constructions of self are suited nicely to the SRC’s emotional labor prescriptions of appearing friendly while at work. Thus, for these individuals, displaying unfelt friendly and positive emotions may contradict their genuine feelings, but support their discursive construction of self. Their inconsistencies, therefore, are homogenized into their sense of self. Instead of focusing on the enactment of unfelt emotions, they may center their attention on the self as constructed authentically. The discourses of SRC employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role, however, present a different conception of self. These workers construct a multi-faceted view of self and a keen awareness of faking.

Emotional Labor as Performing a Role

The other half (6) of SRC professional staff members discursively constructed emotional labor as performing a role. The discourse of emotional labor as performing a role presents maintaining an organizationally appropriate affect display as a difficult act that SRC employees are required to perform. Individuals who construct emotional labor in this fashion typically depict expressing positive emotions as “hard,” “tough,” and unnatural behavior that all SRC staff members experience. These workers comment that even though they have personal problems, they “need to walk in here and act like [they] are having a great old day.” They say that their work “is all acting” and that people in

their position “have to be good actors.” After all, they freely admit to feeling “tired,” “stressed,” and “bothered” while on the job. Thus, for these workers, displaying organizationally prescribed emotions is unnatural and requires conscious effort.

This representation of emotional labor stands in stark contrast to that of the other half of SRC workers who construct it as natural and unconscious. These disparate representations of emotional labor seem to influence workers’ constructions of their jobs. Whereas the previously discussed employees construct displaying unfeigned emotions as insincerity, these workers construct it as a tool. As a tool, their discourse presents acting as a necessary and valuable part of the SRC workplace.

Acting as a Tool

As mentioned above, SRC workers who construct emotional labor as a performing a role regard it as difficult and unnatural. Hence, these individuals recognize the importance that acting can play within the organization. Specifically, these workers construct acting as a tool necessary to meet the expectations of one’s work role and to perform one’s job. Their discourses reveal two major themes about acting: 1) acting as stepping into one’s work role and 2) acting as adjusting to meet situational demands (see table in Appendix C).

The first major theme—acting as stepping into one’s work role—presents acting as consciously behaving in a manner that is appropriate for one’s job. As one employee explains, acting occurs when a person “assumes a certain role in order to get things done.” For these workers, acting is “not necessarily pretending and not not being serious

with their job.” On the contrary, it is “putting up a front,” “putting aside personal issues,” and “putting on a good face” to meet workplace demands. Such discourse does not construct an actor as someone who is insincere. Instead, it presents an actor as a person who “puts on a good show” to “be effective and successful.” According to one participant, “You’re there for the people in your class, to give them a great workout, to motivate them, to encourage them...that is your job...so you leave all of your feelings out the door.” Acting, therefore, is being a good employee.

The second major theme about acting presents it as adjusting one’s behavior to meet the demands of specific situations. In contrast to workers who disavow acting, workers who construct it as a tool present a multi-faceted view of the self. Instead of describing themselves as consistent, these workers typically claim that their behavior changes in different situations. Employees note that “work is work and play is play,” that their personality is “a little bit different” outside of the office, and that a non-work friend who observed them on the job “would be surprised” by their behavior. Thus, for these individuals, acting involves “making that distinction” between work and play and knowing when to “hold back a little bit” or to change their behavior to meet situational demands.

To them, effectively adjusting behavior to fit different circumstances, rather than behaving consistently across situations, is the goal. Indeed, these workers often claim that they behave differently when interacting with customers than they do when talking with co-workers. As one participant pointed out, when you deal with customers, you need to act like “what happened before you came to work didn’t happen.” When you

interact with fellow employees, however, you usually can get “on a personal level” and “be normal.” These different situations require employees to adopt different roles.

Thus, employees construct acting as a tool for their work roles. In this respect, although they typically do not construct their behavior as genuine, authentic, or consistent, they typically fake their emotions in good faith.

Faking in Good/Bad Faith

Individuals who adopt this perspective typically construct acting as faking in good faith. As discussed above, these people acknowledge the importance of acting while on the job and espouse an idea that all SRC workers either do or should behave ingenuously, inauthentically, or inconsistently to meet the demands of their work roles. Indeed, when these participants discuss faking their emotions while at work, their discourse typically expresses the idea that such false display should be part of their job. Few participants described situations in which they personally felt required to unnecessarily or wrongly display unfeigned emotions (i.e. faked in bad faith). Those who did talk about such incidents (which were occasionally purportedly hypothetical) told stories involving staff relations. These stories of faking in bad faith held a common theme: Faking in bad faith is acting fun and friendly towards an SRC staff member when the actor believes that the other worker needs to be disciplined.

For example, one participant explained that she does not believe that staff members should feel required to appear fun and friendly when dealing with one another because doing so can create discipline problems. This person worried that “when you

actually need to approach that person [about a problem]...those issues don't get dealt with like they should." Thus, she believes that faking friendly emotions towards fellow staff should not be a part of the job. If she fakes such emotions, she does so in bad faith.

Another worker described a situation in which he chaired a committee with someone "who didn't work." This individual said that although he wanted to approach the co-worker about the problem, he felt unable to do so because the two of them were expected "to have thus fun friend relationship," which made it "hard to really talk about work." This participant did not want to display friendly emotions towards his co-worker, but he felt required to do so. In this sense, he faked his emotions in bad faith.

The third employee whose discourse revealed a construction of faking in bad faith stated that she believed that workers should not be expected to fake happy emotions when they are displeased with their student staff. She said that "if they've [student staff] impacted a customer negatively...at some point you have to show the real deal." When she is unhappy with her student staff members and represses her angry emotions, therefore, she fakes in bad faith. In these situations, she feels required to act happy, but she believes that she should show her anger. Thus, each of these employees construct faking in bad faith as displaying unfeigned positive emotions towards SRC staff members when you feel that they have done something wrong and need to be disciplined. In this sense, faking in bad faith is situational. It occurs in-house among employees and prevents open and honest discussion of performance problems. Outside of these situations, however, participants who construct acting as a tool construct their faking in a positive light.

Employees who construct acting as a tool typically present their behavior as faking in good faith. These individuals' discursive constructions center on one major theme: Faking in good faith is done when an actor feels organizationally inappropriate emotions. They believe that they should hide their true emotions when they "get real stressed," feel "tired," are experiencing "personal issues," and generally feel "bad." These workers state that no matter how unhappy they feel, they should try to "not let them [customers, student staff, co-workers, and supervisors] know that." They say that they want people to think they are upbeat and positive and that they aim to "present everyone with the same face—hopefully a happy one all the time." These individuals are fully aware of their faking, and they express a belief that "you're going to have problems if you can't act." They believe that all employees have days when they "come to work in a bad mood" and do not genuinely feel fun and friendly. Thus, for them, faking in good faith happens when workers hide such feelings and prevent others from seeing that 'Oh, man this [emotional labor] is a burden to me.'" As individuals who openly admit to faking their emotions, these workers present the consequences of acting in a positive light.

Consequences of Acting

The discourses of workers who construct acting as a tool reveal four major consequences: 1) acting can help workers perform good customer service, 2) acting can raise morale and enhance productivity among SRC staff, 3) acting can help workers manage student staff members, and 4) acting can create personal difficulties (see table in

Appendix C).

The first major theme is that acting can help workers perform good customer service. Employees justify their tendency “put [up] a front,” “put aside personal issues,” and “not bring it [unhappy feelings] to work” by explaining that they do so to benefit the customer. These individuals say that they fake their emotions “to make people feel more comfortable, “to motivate them,” and to present them with the enthusiasm that “they really want.” For these workers, faking emotions is something that they do when they are “having a bad day,” when they “feel bad,” or when they are “tired” because they want to make the customer happy. As one worker explained, if you can act well enough to make customers believe that you really are happy, “try to do that because it’s a customer service job.”

The second major theme is that acting can raise morale and enhance productivity among SRC staff members. Although employees who construct acting as a tool represent faking in bad faith as acting during staff interactions, their discourses also locate faking in good faith within such situations. Employees state that faking positive emotions is “very important in order to keep attitudes up” among SRC staff members, and they express a belief that “acting is important for morale.” These workers place such importance on acting because they believe that appearing upbeat among other staff members aids productivity. Participants note that when workers “unload” problems onto each other, “bring too much of their personal life to work,” or “say exactly what they feel,” they “take away from whatever we’re really trying to accomplish.” Faking positive emotions, therefore, serves as a strategy to keep employees upbeat and focused

on their work tasks.

The third major theme is that acting can help employees manage student staff. Like focusing on morale and productivity, this discourse depicts acting as a useful tool to get work accomplished. Nevertheless, discourse that falls within the second and third theme retains two crucial differences. First, whereas discourse within the second major theme describes faking emotions when dealing with fellow SRC professional staff, discourse within the third major theme discusses acting when dealing with SRC student staff. Employees state that they fake their emotions to get student staff members to “submit it [paperwork] in a timely manner” and “be quiet” during meetings. For them, acting is necessary to show students that they are “serious” and to help them “discipline” unruly workers when tasks need to be completed. In this respect, these workers act as a means to help them control student staff.

The second important difference between the second and third themes is that the third theme focuses on faking negative rather than positive emotions. Workers talk about “acting like I’m the bad guy” and “treating them [student employees] like kids,” even though they really see them “as smart, functioning adults.” Faking, therefore, involves displaying unfeared anger and pretending to look down on student staff members. Of course, such depictions of acting are not consistent with SRC’s practices of emotional labor because they depict SRC’s emotional labor as displaying unfeared angry and demeaning emotions, rather than fun and friendly ones. Thus, even though SRC leaders encourage staff members to appear fun and friendly, this theme demonstrates that displaying a tough and unpleasant demeanor is also part of a worker’s job. In this

respect, it serves as a reminder that in spite of this study's trends, participants' experiences of emotional labor do not follow a uniform pattern.

The fourth theme is that acting can create personal difficulties. Although these workers proclaim the importance and value of faking emotions while at work, they also state that doing so often is "hard," "difficult," and "tough." These individuals admit that faking positive emotions when they feel badly is not an easy task, and they point out that their true feelings often are "hard to let go of." In fact, some of these employees "wish I was better at that [faking positive emotions]" because they frequently find doing so to be very difficult. Thus, although these individuals largely present acting as creating positive consequences, their discourse reveals that enacting these behaviors can leave them feeling strained.

To summarize, workers who construct acting as a tool cast it as stepping into one's work role and adjusting to meet situational demands. These employees construct complex conceptualizations of self in that they admit to assuming different roles and displaying different behaviors for different audiences. They unabashedly admit to faking emotions while at work, and they typically represent their actions as faking in good faith. For them, faking in good faith is done to perform good customer service, to raise morale and enhance productivity among SRC staff, and to manage student staff members. They construct faking in bad faith as acting fun and friendly towards an SRC staff member when the actor believes that the other person needs to be disciplined. In spite of this conception of faking in bad faith, however, these workers generally construct themselves as actors who shift their behavior to meet the demands of particular

situations. An explanation for why these employees possess such awareness of or willingness to admit their faking behavior may stem from their construction of self.

Unlike employees who say they avoid acting, workers who construct acting as a tool do not see a fun and friendly workplace as a natural reflection of who they are. Instead, they describe their displays of such behaviors as conscious choices that they make to step into their workplace role or meet the demands of a particular situation. In this respect, these individuals bifurcate their sense of self around serving different audiences. Such awareness of the social malleability of their sense of self likely directs these workers' attention to inconsistencies in their behavior and allows them to recognize their faking. Indeed, these individuals indicate that they compare themselves to other workers to determine how much fun and friendly behavior they need to display in particular situations.

SRC workers who construct acting as a tool often describe situations in which they and others model their workplace behaviors according to the actions and comments of other employees. These participants discuss ways in which staff members use peer evaluations to compare enactments of fun and to let workers who are not acting appropriately know that they need to change their behaviors. Workers explain that when the staff see their coworkers "having too much" or "not having enough" fun, they "put little comments" on their peer evaluations to encourage them to act more appropriately. However, these individuals indicate that they believe that workers should know how much fun to display by observing and modeling the emotional displays of other employees. As one person explained, people often "look at each other's jobs and think,

‘Oh, well, that person’s having more fun than I am. I should have more fun.’” In this respect, workers compare themselves to others to determine how to act in a given situation. They depict social comparison—rather than natural disposition—as a guidepost for their behavior. Such awareness of their engagement in social comparison and behavior modeling may promote a flexible construction of self and aid them in realizing their faking. Perhaps the most notable difference between the two groups of employees, however, is how they enact the SRC’s culture through their different constructions of emotional labor.

SRC’s Culture

As indicated throughout this chapter, the Department of Recreational Sports strives to maintain a culture of fun. The department’s statement of core values asserts “We believe that fun is a necessary ingredient in everything that we do,” and SRC staff members are well aware of this claim. When asked about the statement during interviews, all SRC professional employees were familiar with it and acknowledged the importance of fun within the organization. As one participant remarked, “Fun? Fun is the ultimate thing.” Indeed, on one occasion the researcher observed a SRC professional staff member speaking to a student fitness instructor before a group exercise class. The professional employee told the student to “get excited” and “turn it on.” The “it” appeared to be a happy facial expression because the student quickly smiled and began to greet patrons who were entering the room. All participants say they feel some degree of responsibility to make the SRC a fun place. Their perceptions of who this fun was

for, however, varied between those who construct emotional labor as a natural ability and those who construct it as performing a role.

Individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability express a belief that the organization's culture of fun is for the patrons, the student workers, and the professional staff members. These people claim, "One of my objectives, one of my goals, is to make sure [that] students have fun. Not just students, but staff that I supervise, and all the staff." Indeed, these employees commonly state that they have a great deal of fun at work. Participants claim, "every day is a great day," coming to work "is a joy," and "I love what I do" because the job is "unbelievably fun." For these individuals, fun is a central component of their workplace experience. Their discourse depicts the culture of fun as something that is not limited to SRC customers. Instead, these individuals see it as something for the staff members as well.

Conversely, the discourse of employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role suggests that they enact fun as an experience they are required to give customers. For these workers, the culture of fun is not meant for them. These individuals explain that their job is "to program fun," and "offer activities" that customers find enjoyable. They construct maintaining SRC fun as "serious" work that requires a great deal of effort and responsibility. As one worker explained, "Of course teaching fitness classes is fun, but you're also responsible, you know. You're doing your job." Indeed, these individuals state that they feel a great deal of pressure to make sure that customers have fun and return to the facility. "Anything we do can't lose money...so it's a little stressful to make sure you have enough people to be involved in

programs.” For this reason, workers comment that they work hard to make sure that customers “have fun doing it [working out]” and “want to come back.” As one participant explained, “even though the environment is set up for fun and leisure and activity and things, you still have responsibilities. You still have things you need to get done.” Thus, for these individuals, the SRC’s culture of fun is constructed into a culture of responsibility to make the facility fun for others.

These disparate representations of SRC’s culture relate to employees’ constructions of emotional labor. For example, individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability discursively construct themselves as naturally fun individuals. For them, emotional labor does not require any acting--their expressions of fun are genuinely felt and an outgrowth of who they are as a person. In fact, these people construct acting as a deplorable behavior that produces negative outcomes. Such constructions seem likely to encourage these workers to interpret the SRC’s culture of fun as a culture that encourages fun for employees as well as customers.

To explain, if these workers exclude themselves from the SRC’s culture of fun, they might experience inconsistency among their constructions of emotional labor, acting, and sense of self. By depicting emotional labor as a natural ability, these workers construct themselves as purely genuine, authentic, consistent, and naturally fun. If they construct the organization’s culture in a manner that depicts fun as something for customers only, however, these individuals must negate the belief that they are fun people who never act while at work. They would have to admit to faking emotions or behaving out of line with their true selves. After all, if they felt that their job expected

them not to have fun, they could not maintain that they always act in a fun manner while at work.

Workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role also interpret SRC's culture through their construction of emotional labor. These people construct themselves as multi-faceted individuals who act to meet their emotional labor requirements. For them, acting is a tool that employees use to step into their work role and meet the demands of particular situations. They see displaying fun emotions as difficult behavior that requires conscious effort. Such constructions encourage these workers to interpret SRC's culture as promoting fun for customers, rather than employees.

If these individuals interpret SRC's culture in a manner that includes them in the group of people who should experience fun, they might experience inconsistency among their constructions of emotional labor, acting, and sense of self. If these workers believe that they genuinely should experience fun while at work, they might have difficulty defining themselves as actors who often do not feel the fun emotions that they display. After all, doing so would imply that they are not capable workers. If SRC workers are supposed to have fun, these individuals' frequent inability to do so may indicate that they are not well suited for their jobs. In this sense, SRC workers enact the organization's culture through their constructions of emotional labor.

Summary

Emotional labor prescriptions at the SRC typically require employees to appear fun and friendly on the job, and SRC employees seem well aware of this expectation. Workers who engage in such emotional labor tend to construct the labor as either a natural ability or as performing a role. Emotional labor as a natural ability presents the work of maintaining an organizationally appropriate affect display as a talent or skill that some SRC workers naturally possess. Individuals who construct emotional labor in this fashion depict acting as insincerity, and they usually claim that they do not fake emotions at work. They also cast the consequences of acting in a negative light. Nevertheless, their discourses and behaviors suggest that they often display unfelt emotions while on the job. When they engage in such behaviors, these participants adopt a view of doing it in good faith. These individuals' inability to reconcile these inconsistencies may relate to their discursive construction of self. Their enactment of SRC's culture as a culture of fun for customers, student workers, and professional staff members may relate to their construction of emotional labor as a natural ability.

Workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role present the work of maintaining an organizationally appropriate affect display as a difficult task that SRC employees are required to perform. These individuals construct acting as a tool and they openly admit to faking their emotions at work. Unlike employees who disavow acting and yet display unfelt emotions, these workers realize that they fake in good faith. They construct the consequences of their acting, however, more favorably than members of the other group. These workers' awareness of or willingness to admit to faking also may

relate to their construction of self. Their enactment of SRC's culture as culture of fun for customers may stem from their construction of emotional labor as performing a role.

The next chapter discusses the results in light of this study's research questions and extant literature, explains the study's limitations, and presents theoretical implications and directions for future research.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although emotional labor has received a great deal of scholarly attention, its effects are not fully understood. Whereas some researchers found that individuals who perform emotional labor experience negative consequences (e.g. Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989; Waldron & Krone, 1991), other scholars discovered that people who engage in emotional labor benefit from the work (e.g. Adelman, 1995; Shuler & Sypher, 2000; Wharton, 1993). Although the reasons for these inconsistent findings likely are complex, research indicates that individuals who feel their behaviors are consistent with their genuine feelings or true selves typically do not experience damaging effects (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Emotional labor workers who feel that their behavior contradicts their genuine feelings or is out of line with their true selves, however, often experience negative effects (see Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Karabanow, 1999). Nevertheless, few scholars have examined the precise ways in which people's experiences of emotional labor may relate to their perceptions of authenticity. This study uses a discursive approach to examine this issue.

Specifically, this project explores how individuals within a particular organizational setting discursively construct their experiences of emotional labor, how they conceptualize such behaviors in terms of faking in good and bad faith, and what these discursive constructions reveal about their perceptions of authenticity. In so doing, this project aims to improve scholars' understanding of the relationship between people's experiences of emotional labor and beliefs about authenticity. The following

chapter reviews this study's findings in light of the research questions posed and extant literature in the field, acknowledges limitations, and discusses implications and directions for future research.

Research Question One

What constitutes emotional labor in this particular organization and how do employees describe their emotional labor experiences?

The findings of this project both support and question researchers' typical conception of emotional labor. In her seminal writings, Hochschild (1979) defined emotional labor as emotion regulation that occurs when individuals manage their emotions in exchange for some type of compensation (see Callahan & McCollum). Emotional laborers display unfeared emotions because they believe that their jobs require them to do so--not necessarily because they feel that such emotion regulation is right, good, or indicative of who they are as a person. In this study, participants' discourses suggest that SRC workers who engage in emotional labor are motivated by compensation to some degree.

SRC leadership establishes a workplace environment in which employees exchange their emotional displays for tangible benefits. SRC leaders explain that workers' ability to control their emotions and behave in an organizationally appropriate way factors into their evaluations. These evaluations are used for promotions and merit pay increases. When employees discuss the regulation of emotion in the workplace, they often allude to this compensation. Few workers explicitly state that they manage their

emotions to improve their evaluations, obtain promotions, or receive pay increases. However, all participants describe displaying unfeared emotions as important for their job performances and as effective employees (e.g. to handle difficult customers, to perform good customer service, to increase staff members' productivity, to help manage student staff). In this respect, participants' discourses link their emotion management to workplace compensation. Employees display particular emotions and suppress or modify others because they believe that doing so facilitates success in their jobs, and consequently, keeps their pay checks coming in.

All participants' discourses reveal some aspect of this traditional conception of emotional labor. The degree to which it does so, however, varies substantially. Approximately one half of participants construct their experiences in a manner that neatly models Hochschild's (1979; 1983) original definition. These workers construct emotional labor as performing a role. To them, displaying organizationally prescribed emotions is a workplace task that often requires considerable effort. They depict themselves as actors who selectively express and repress emotions to display a face that is appropriate for their work role and the demands of particular workplace situations. For these individuals, displaying organizationally prescribed emotions frequently is not natural or instinctive. It is a part of their job requirements, and as such, it is a duty that they perform. This construction clearly reflects the idea that individuals consciously adhere to workplace prescriptions for emotional display; thus, engaging in emotional labor (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). Interestingly, not all SRC employees construct their experiences of emotional labor in this traditional manner.

The other half of participants construct emotional labor as a natural ability. These employees describe emotional labor as a talent or skill that they naturally possess. They claim that they express organizationally appropriate emotions because they want to and because such expressions are real—not because doing so is a requirement of their jobs. In this sense, these workers do not believe that they engage in emotional labor. During interviews, however, all of these individuals described at least one situation in which they expressed unfelt emotions to better perform their jobs. Apparently, these workers also engage in emotional labor, but in a different way. Existing literature does not offer a clear explanation for why some emotional labor workers might construct their work as a natural ability.

For example, Hochschild (1979; 1983) argued that emotional labor workers employ deep acting to conjure internal experiences of the emotions that their jobs require them to display. Individuals who do so actually feel their displayed emotions. In this sense, deep acting could explain why SRC workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability construct their workplace emotion displays as truly felt.

The problem with this explanation, however, is that deep acting literature suggests that individuals who engage in this behavior are aware of their actions and perceive such behavior as beneficial. Hochschild (1979) compares an emotional labor worker who engages in deep acting to an actor who uses the Stanislavsky method. Both people alter their inner feelings to achieve a desired emotional state. However, both people also are conscious of their acting and believe that it helps them to perform their jobs. The discourses of SRC workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability

do not demonstrate an awareness of or a willingness to admit to their deep acting behavior. Thus, although these individuals may perform deep acting while at work, this emotional labor technique does not account fully for their construction of emotional labor as a natural ability. It does not explain how individuals simultaneously are able to manage their emotions according to organizational prescriptions and construct their emotional displays as purely self regulated. In this respect, the findings of this study call for a more complex understanding of emotional labor.

Additional complexity may be found in Tolich's (1993) conception of "autonomous emotional labor" (see also Callahan & McCollum, 2002). While studying supermarket clerks whose supervisors required them to smile and appear friendly to customers, Tolich found that some employees claimed that their employers did not control their emotions. These people said that they loved their jobs and genuinely wanted to smile and act friendly. Tolich explained this finding by creating two categories of emotional labor. The first, regulated emotional labor, "occurs when the conception and management of emotions is regulated by another person" (p. 378). This is the traditional representation of emotional labor in which individuals feel that emotional displays are controlled by another person. The second, autonomous emotional labor, "occurs when the conception and management of emotions is regulated by the individual" rather than another person (p. 378). In these emotional labor situations, individuals behave in ways that meet their emotional labor prescriptions. They perceive their decision, however, as stemming from within. These people claim that they truly want to act in ways that their employer mandates and that they do so of their own

accord. Tolich argued that this distinction accounts for differences in individuals' experiences of emotional labor.

Tolich's (1993) distinction between regulated and autonomous emotional labor sheds light on this study's findings. Such differences exist between the discourses of SRC workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role and those who construct it as a natural ability that the two groups were scarcely talking about the same concept. Tolich's treatment of emotional labor suggests that they may be talking about different types of emotional labor. Individuals who construct emotional labor as performing a role seem to experience regulated emotional labor. They depict their workplace emotional expressions as being controlled by SRC management. Workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability experience autonomous emotional labor. They present themselves as the controllers of their workplace emotions.

In this sense, the findings of this study bolster an idea that emotional labor is a multi-dimensional concept that may be experienced in highly disparate ways. The findings also underscore the role that discourse plays within these different emotional labor experiences. Specifically, they suggest that differences in people's experiences of emotional labor may stem from who they discursively construct as the controller of their workplace emotion. Of course, these constructions are not the only factor that shapes people's experiences of emotional labor. Research indicates that workers' conceptions of faking in good faith and faking in bad faith also play a role.

Research Question Two

How do employees describe their emotional labor experiences in terms of faking in good faith and faking in bad faith?

Rafaeli and Sutton (1987) coined the term faking in good faith to describe the experiences of emotional labor workers who display unfeigned emotions and believe that such false expression should be part of their job. They created the term faking in bad faith to describe the experiences of workers who believe that the required emotional displays should not be part of their job. Recent scholarship suggests that individuals who fake in good faith experience less harmful effects of emotional labor than those who fake in bad faith (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). However, few studies have explored the ways in which people conceptualize faking in good or bad faith. SRC workers' discourses indicate that people construct these concepts in very different ways. In fact, the findings of this study demonstrate that although some individuals possess clear conceptions of faking in good and bad faith, other people do not associate faking with their experiences of emotional labor.

For workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability, all faking is bad. They claim that employees should never display unfeigned emotions, and they suggest that those who choose to do so are not well suited for their jobs. For them, a talented employee who genuinely wants to perform good work does not need to display unfeigned emotions. An unskilled worker who is not fit for the job, however, needs to do so. In this sense, these workers disavow the notion of acting and faking. In fact, when they describe situations in which they display unfeigned emotions at work, they do not see their

behaviors as acting or faking. These workers explain that they display unfeigned emotions to help upset customers feel appreciated to make them believe that their complaints are important and valued because they believe that doing so is part of being a good worker.

Thus, for these employees, faking is isomorphic with being an effective employee. These people see themselves as talented workers who are naturally fun and friendly. Thus, displaying unfeigned friendly and positive emotions contradicts their genuine feelings, but supports their discursive construction of self as an effective employee. Their faking behavior is homogenized into their construction of self. The notion of faking in good and bad faith, therefore, does not apply to these workers. They see their displays of unfeigned emotions as part of being an effective employee—not as being fake.

Workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role, however, possess a conception of faking in good and bad faith. They depict faking in good faith as faking done when the actor feels organizationally inappropriate emotions. These people say that all employees have days when they feel upset and unhappy. They say that workers should hide such negative feelings and fake happy expressions on the job to make other people see them in a positive light. When they perform such faking, therefore, they construct it in good faith. These people construct faking in bad faith as faking that occurs when one acts friendly towards staff members when he or she feels that they need to be disciplined. They believe that faking happy emotions prevents open and honest discussion of performance problems. As a result, they feel that this type of faking should not be part of the job, and they perform it in bad faith.

What is interesting about SRC workers' constructions of displaying unfelt emotions or faking in good and bad faith is that they reveal target differences. These target differences relate to Ting-Toomey's (1988) face negotiation theory. Face is "a claimed sense of favorable social self-worth that a person wants others to have of her or him" (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Drawing from the work of Goffman (1955), Ting-Toomey maintains that when people interact, they feel varying degrees of concern for their own and other's face (Ting-Toomey, 1988; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003). People are concerned with self-face when they desire to maintain their own sense of positive social self-worth. They are concerned with other-face when they desire to uphold another's sense of positive social self-worth. Differences in people's concern for self-face verses other-face often are culturally bound, but variation within cultural groups exists (see Cocroft & Ting-Toomey, 1994; Oetzel & Ting-Toomey, 2003; Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1998). Variation between SRC workers' concern for self-face verses other-face may affect their conceptions of enacting emotions in good and bad faith.

Employees who construct emotional labor as a natural ability display unfelt emotions to uphold another's face. They display unfelt emotions to make the other person believe that they feel positively about them. For example, they hide their resentment of a complaining customer to show appreciation for this person. In contrast, workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role fake in good faith when they uphold their own face. They fake to make others see them in a positive manner. For instance, these workers display unfelt friendly expressions when they are sad to make others see them an upbeat person and believe they have a positive attitude. In fact,

these employees fake in bad faith when they uphold another staff member's face. They believe that faking is wrong when it is done to protect a co-worker who deserves censure. Thus, SRC employees' perceptions of enacting emotions in good and bad faith are affected by their degree of concern for both their own and other's face. For people who construct emotional labor as a natural ability, the concern is for other's face. For those who construct emotional labor as performing a role, the concern is for their own face. Given these face concerns, people's experiences of displaying unfeigned emotions are linked to upholding images of self. The final research question moves to issues of self. It wrestles with differences between the two groups of employees in how they define their sense of self.

Research Question Three

In what ways do employees' discursive and behavioral manifestations of acting and faking in good and bad faith indicate the presence of a sense of surface and deep authenticity?

Authenticity may be defined as "the extent to which one is behaving according to what one considers to be their true or genuine self—who one 'is' as a person" (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000, p. 184). The idea of authenticity is grounded in an assumption that individuals feel that they possess a stable self that they can choose to support or contradict. Much authenticity and identity scholarship indicates that people *believe* that they possess a relatively stable sense of self. (e.g. Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000; Erickson, 1994; 1995; Gecas, 1986; Kiecolt, 1994; Sheldon, Ryan, Rawsthorne, & Ilardi, 1997).

Nevertheless, many theorists reject the notion of a stable self and bolster the idea that individuals possess multiple selves that shift between different contexts (e.g. Foucault 1988; Gergen, 1991; Sande, 1990; Tracy, 2000).

The findings of this study are interesting because they demonstrate that both perspectives have merit. The discourses of workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability indicate that they believe that they possess a stable true self. The discourses of workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role, however, suggest that they see themselves as multi-faceted and do not believe that they possess a true self. In this sense, the findings demonstrate that people who construct emotional labor as a natural ability think of themselves in a different way than those who construct it as performing a role.

Workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability describe themselves as naturally fun, stable, and consistent. These individuals say that they are talented workers who are naturally good at customer service work. They claim that they are upbeat and positive people, and that these defining personal characteristics are stable across contexts. Thus, employees who construct emotional labor as a natural ability believe that they have a true self, and they feel that this self is ever present and unchanging.

In contrast, employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role describe themselves as multi-faceted, changing, and socially constructed. These workers say that they assume different roles in different situations and that who they are depends on the contexts that they are in. In fact, they say that they compare themselves

to others to determine who they should be in particular circumstances. These workers explain that when they enter situations in which they are unsure how to act, they model other people's behaviors. These workers believe that they change who they are to step into different roles and to behave appropriately within them. In this sense, employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role do not believe that they possess a stable self.

Consequently, like much previous research (e.g. Foucault, 1988; Gergen, 1991; Sande, 1990, Tracy, 2000), this study calls the idea of authenticity into question. In fact, it not only problematizes the notion that individuals possess a sense of stable self, but also it counters the idea that people *believe* that they possess a stable self. Workers who construct emotional labor as performing a role do not have a sense of authenticity. They aim to behave in ways that match the behaviors of others. They do not strive to behave in ways that are consistent with a perceived true self. Hence, the findings demonstrate that authenticity is not a functional word to describe all people's experiences of emotional labor.

The notion of surface and deep authenticity, therefore, becomes problematic for studying the social construction of emotional labor. To explain, scholars define surface authenticity as feeling that your displayed emotions match your inner feelings and deep authenticity as feeling that your displayed emotions match your true self (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). If people lack a sense of true self, these distinctions become irrelevant and confounding. Authenticity is the belief that one is behaving in line with his or her true self (Ashforth & Tomiuk, 2000). By definition, individuals who do not believe that

they possess a true self cannot experience feelings of authenticity. The distinction between surface and deep authenticity is contingent on the idea that individuals feel that they have a sense of true self. Without this belief, using the term authenticity becomes irrelevant or inappropriate. These findings hold implications for theory and future research. Before discussing such contributions, however, it is important to acknowledge this project's limitations.

Limitations

This study explores issues that have not been addressed fully in emotional labor research and helps to narrow some gaps in scholars' understanding of the concept. The picture of SRC emotional labor that it presents, however, is not complete. This study could be improved by recruiting more participants. Interviewing more people may reveal additional themes in the data and would ensure that the findings accurately represent the experiences of all SRC workers.

Also, all scholarly research operates within a particular worldview that both reveals and conceals important aspects of the phenomenon under investigation. This study is no exception in that it focused on the ways that people described their experiences of emotional labor, rather than how they actually enact them. Triangulation of participant observation and artifact analysis complimented interview data and provided alternative perspectives from which to examine SRC emotional labor. Increased methodological variety, however, would enhance the findings.

For instance, this study would benefit from greater use of participant observation. In particular, it would be strengthened through observation in which the researcher acts as a full participant in SRC work. A complete participation vantage point (see Spradley, 1980) would provide the researcher with a first-hand understanding of workers' emotional labor demands. It also would offer opportunity to observe more fully people's on-stage and off-stage behavior and to analyze how people's actual behaviors compare to their accounts of their behaviors. Employment as a full-time professional staff member, however, typically requires a degree in an exercise field and several years of relevant work experience. Without these credentials, the researcher's ability to perform complete participation observation was limited.

The interview data used in this study also could be enhanced with increased methodological variety. Multiple interviews with each participant would allow the researcher to build a closer rapport with participants, and in consequence, reduce the possibility that participants would attempt to respond to questions in socially desirable or organizationally appropriate ways. More interviews also would allow the researcher to ask additional questions, clarify answers, and probe for deeper discussions of interview topics. Doing so would foster a more complete understanding of participants' responses and might uncover additional themes within the data.

This study also did not examine the effects that emotional labor had on employees. Research on the effects of emotional labor demonstrates that it can produce feelings of stress, emotional numbness, depression, and burnout, or that it can increase job satisfaction, enhance intrinsic benefits (e.g. improve tips), and strengthen co-worker

relationships (see reviews in Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999; Wharton, 1999).

Scholars continue to search for factors that could account for these inconsistent findings (e.g. Abraham, 1998; Tracy & Tracy, 1998; Wharton, 1993; Karabanow, 1999).

Extending this research could contribute to this investigation. That is, workers'

disparate constructions of emotional labor may shape the effects that it has on them.

Constructing emotional labor as a natural ability likely produces different effects than

constructing it as performing a role. Workers who construct emotional labor as a natural

ability view their workplace emotion regulation as easy and natural. Those who

construct it as performing a role sometimes see it as difficult and unnatural. Because

workers in this latter group report that their emotional labor is harder than people in the

former group, they may experience more work stress and be more likely to experience

burnout than members of the other group. A measure of participants' stress levels would

contribute to this research. Interview data could be supplemented with a work stress

survey such as the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

In spite of these limitations, however, this project contributes to emotional labor

literature and offers directions for future research. Even with a small sample size, this

project revealed a clear bifurcation of workers into two groups and discovered markedly

consistent findings about the groups. These findings suggest that emotional labor may

be experienced in two separate ways: autonomous and regulated. They indicate that

people's conception of enacting emotions in good and bad faith stems from their concern

for self versus other face, and they demonstrate that some people do not experience

feelings of authenticity. The next section discusses the implication of these findings for theory and future research.

Implications and Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study follow a growing trend in literature that points out that emotional labor may be experienced in different ways. Research on the effects of emotional labor demonstrates that not all individuals experience negative outcomes from their emotional work (see reviews in Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Pugliesi, 1999; Wharton, 1999). Scholars increasingly recognize that people do not experience emotional labor in a uniformly damaging fashion. Although this project does not explore the effects of emotional labor, it demonstrates that individuals do not construct their experiences of emotional labor in a consistent way. These findings underscore the value in using a social construction approach to study emotional labor. Past research relied heavily on surveys and aggregate perceptions that did not capture the ways employees make sense of their emotional labor (see reviews in Rafaeli & Worline, 2001; Wharton, 1999). This project's focus on the discursive construction of emotional labor provides a unique perspective and encourages scholars to view studies that cast people's experiences of emotional labor in a uniform fashion with a critical eye.

In this respect, this project highlights the need for scholars to develop a more complex conceptualization of emotional labor that recognizes its various forms. The findings of this study lend support to Tolich's (1993) proposition that individuals may experience two different types of emotional labor: autonomous emotional labor and

regulated emotional labor. Identifying such varied forms of emotional labor may help scholars account for differences in people's experiences and inconsistency in the effects these experiences produce. Thus, this study encourages researchers to seek out variation in people's conceptions of emotional labor and to develop effective ways to label and identify different forms of emotional labor.

The findings of this project indicate that people construct their emotional labor either as a natural ability or as performing a role. These different constructions of emotional labor create differences in who people discursively construct as the controller of their workplace emotions. Specifically, people who construct emotional labor as a natural ability depict themselves as controller of their emotions, and people who construct it as performing a role put organizational authority in control. Future studies should continue to analyze people's discourses and test the idea that individuals conceptualize their emotional labor either as a natural ability or as performing a role and that these different conceptualizations correspond to experiences of autonomous and regulated emotional labor. Such projects also should use established measures of worker stress and burnout to examine whether or not these different experiences of emotional labor lead to different effects. This research could help scholars determine various forms of emotional labor and gain new understandings of why emotional labor workers do not experience uniform effects from it.

This study also indicates that emotional labor workers discursively construct their experiences of displaying unfelt emotions in different ways. Emotional labor literature says that people display unfelt emotions in good faith when they feel that the

false expression should be part of their job. They display unfeigned emotions in bad faith when they feel that the false expression should not be part of their job (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1987). The findings of this project demonstrate that displaying emotions in good and bad faith mean different things to different people. Specifically, it suggests that people's conceptions of enacting emotions in good and bad faith stem from their concern for both their own and other party's face. Individuals who construct emotional labor as a natural ability display unfeigned emotions in good faith when they express unfeigned emotions to uphold another's face. People who construct it as performing a role, however, fake in good faith when they do so to uphold their own face. These findings suggest that emotional labor workers target their unfeigned emotional displays to different audiences. The target of people's emotional labor determines whether or not they conceptualize their faking and displaying of unfeigned emotions in good or bad faith. Future scholarship should explore these comparisons in more depth.

Scholars should conduct studies that focus on how people construct their conceptions of faking in good and bad faith. Researchers might ask interview participants to discuss how they feel they should handle a variety of emotional labor situations that require them to display unfeigned emotions and analyze the conditions under which workers feel they should display unfeigned emotions. Studies of enacting emotions in good and bad faith, however, should find novel ways to elicit information about participants' emotional display behavior. For example, researchers could ask emotional labor workers to keep a weekly log of their emotional labor experiences in which they write down situations in which they displayed unfeigned emotions at work, note why they

felt compelled to enact such false expression, and comment on whether or not they felt that their behavior was good or bad. Research that centers on participants' lived experiences of displaying emotions in good and bad faith may offer additional insight into how people construct these conceptions and why they display varying degrees of concern for their own and other party's face.

This study also problematizes the idea that people believe that they have a true self. Although the findings demonstrate that some people possess such a conception, they also indicate that other people do not. Thus, this project demonstrates that authenticity is not a functional word to describe all people's experiences of emotional labor. Individuals who do not believe that they possess a true self cannot experience feelings of authenticity. As a result, the notion of deep authenticity does not apply to them. Without deep authenticity, the idea of surface authenticity becomes confusing. Scholars cannot label displaying felt and unfeared emotions as surface authenticity if people do not have a sense of authenticity to begin with. Future scholars may do well to find a different term to examine how people conceptualize the appropriateness of their emotional labor behaviors.

For example, people who possess a sense of true self aim to engage in emotional labor in a manner that reflects their perceived self. Individuals who do not have a sense of true self try to behave in ways that match the behaviors of others and are appropriate for a given situation. For these people, social comparison plays an important role in their experiences of emotional labor. Scholars may want to focus on the degree to which people feel that their displayed emotions are consistent with their varying goals (e.g. to

display emotions that match their true self or to display emotions that match those of others) rather than the degree to which they feel their displayed emotions are surfacey or deeply authentic. Terminology that speaks in terms of consistency rather than personal authenticity may better serve scholars' purposes and reflect the varying experiences of emotional labor workers.

Conclusions

This study analyzes how employees at a university recreation center discursively construct their experiences of emotional labor, how they conceptualize such behavior in terms of displaying unfeigned emotions and faking in good and bad faith, and what these discursive constructions reveal about their perceptions of authenticity. The findings demonstrate that workers construct emotional labor as a natural ability and as performing a role. Marked differences exist between these two groups in terms of how they conceptualize their emotional labor experiences, emotional displays in good and bad faith, and perceptions of authenticity.

Specifically, the findings demonstrate that workers who construct emotional labor as a natural ability depict themselves as the controller of their workplace emotion. They display unfeigned emotions in good faith when they do so to uphold another's face, and they believe that they possess a true self. Employees who construct emotional labor as performing a role view their supervisors as controller of their workplace emotion. They fake emotions in good faith when doing so uphold their own face, and they fake in bad faith when it upholds the face of a co-worker who they feel needs to be disciplined.

These people do not possess a sense of authentic self. They view themselves as multi-faceted and they say that they use social comparison to determine how to behave in particular situations.

These findings indicate that the traditional straightforward representations of emotional labor, displaying emotions in good and bad faith, and feelings of authenticity may not accurately reflect the experiences of emotional labor workers. These terms are marked by complexities that need to be teased out in future research. Doing so holds potential to improve scholars' understanding of emotional labor and better explain the experiences of those who perform it.

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APPENDIX A

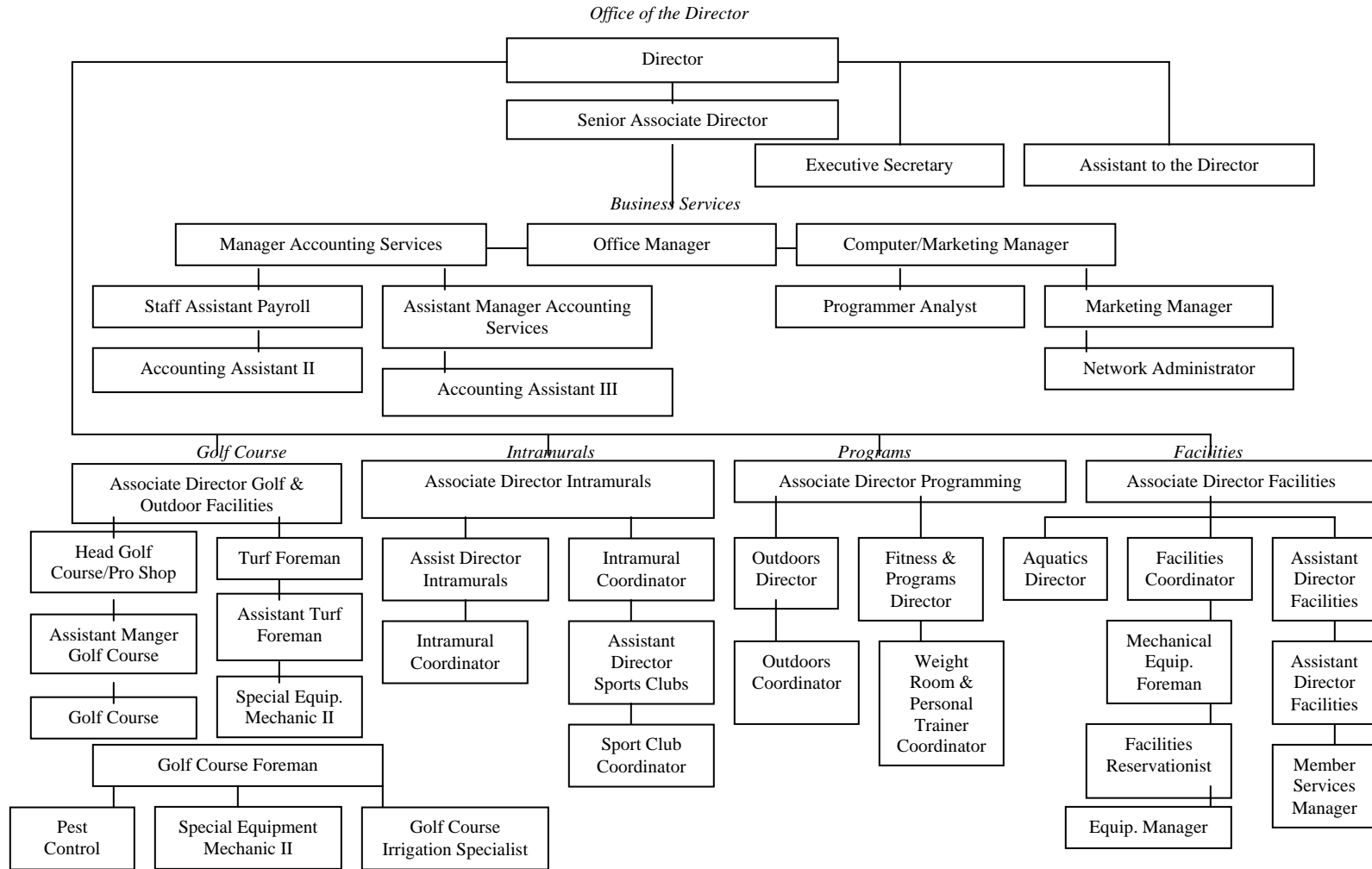


Figure A.1 Department of Recreational Sports Organizational Chart

APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. What is your job title and role? How long have you worked at the SRC?
2. I saw a line in the SRC's statement of core values that says, "We believe that fun is a necessary ingredient in everything that we do." To what extent do you agree or disagree with this statement? What does having fun mean? How can you tell when someone is having fun? Not having fun? To what extent is it easy or difficult to have fun? In what ways? Can you tell me about an instance where you found it difficult to promote fun?
3. How widespread is this philosophy of having fun? To what extent does it affect all jobs in the organization, all activities, all members? Are there any job functions that are not fun? How do you handle them?
4. In what ways do you think the Rec is different from other fitness centers in town or recreation centers at other universities? What makes this place unique?
5. Imagine that a close friend of yours secretly videotaped you interacting with your customers at work. When that friend watched the tape, would he/she say, "That's the person I know" or "That person is different than my friend?" Why do you say that? What about if your friend taped you interacting with your co-workers? Your employees?

6. To what degree would you say someone in your position here at the SRC needs to be a good actor? Can you tell me about a time when you felt like you had to act when on the job?
7. Under what conditions do you think it's good for someone to act or "fake it" on the job? Under what conditions do you think it's bad for someone to do so?
8. To what degree would you say that other workers at the SRC act or "fake it" when they do their jobs? How do you know?
9. To what degree would you say that you feel that you are able to be yourself when on the job? To what degree would you say that other SRC workers are able to be themselves here? Why do you say that?

APPENDIX C

Table 3.1 Discursive Themes

Theme	Discourse Exemplars	Interpretation	Data
Emotional labor as a natural ability	naturally goofier	Workers construct emotional labor as a talent or skill that they naturally possess.	Maybe I'm just naturally goofier than most of them [other SRC staff] so it's easier for me to try and smile a lot.
Acting is being disingenuous	you better be genuine and honest; it's gotta come from here	Workers construct acting as being untrue to one's real feelings.	I think you better be genuine and honest...I think it's gotta come from here [Participant points to heart]. I really do.
Acting is inauthenticity	that's not who you are	Workers construct acting as being untrue to one's real self.	I don't think you can posture yourself to do that [act] because that's not who you are.
Acting is inconsistency	very consistent; I'm the same person	Workers construct acting as behaving differently in different situations.	I'm very consistent with people. I am...I think people, some students know that when you see me out I'm the same person that you see me at work
All faking is faking in bad faith	no acting needed; you can get in trouble trying to act	Workers construct all faking as faking in bad faith.	I don't think there's any acting [needed to perform my job]. I really don't. I think you can get yourself into a lot of trouble trying to act.

<p>Enacting emotions in good faith occurs when it is triggered by another person</p>	<p>if a customer is angry you may have to act</p>	<p>Workers construct enacting emotions in good faith as displaying unfeelt emotions that is triggered by the behavior of another person.</p>	<p>If a customer is angry and you need to talk about what happened, then you may have to do that [act]...You want to come across as positive no matter what.</p>
<p>Enacting emotions in good faith occurs when it is done because the worker wants to elicit a positive outcome from a negative situation</p>	<p>if you let that [true feelings] become too obvious, I think that can make situations worse; otherwise some things that you might do might escalate it</p>	<p>Workers construct enacting emotions in good faith as displaying unfeelt emotions that occurs when workers are motivated to do so by their desire to bring a positive outcome from a negative situation.</p>	<p>With angry situations with the customers, I think if you let some of the thoughts that you're thinking sometimes, I think if you let that become too obvious, I think sometimes that can make situations worse. I think you just have to be as stoic and I'm sorry sometimes and let them get their displeasure out. Because otherwise some things that you might do might escalate it.</p>
<p>Acting can cause others to see you in a negative light</p>	<p>somebody would see through your acting; say 'he or she is fake and really doesn't care.'</p>	<p>Workers construct a consequence of acting as acting can cause others to see you in a negative light.</p>	<p>I think somebody would see through your acting. You know, I think they would say, 'He or she is fake and really doesn't care. He just tells you what you want to hear or see.'</p>
<p>Acting can cause you to feel unhappy</p>	<p>they don't stay very long; they're unhappy in that</p>	<p>Workers construct a consequence of acting as</p>	<p>If they [SRC employees] don't have the passion to do</p>

	situation.	acting can cause you to feel unhappy.	that [act fun and friendly while at work], then they shouldn't do it anyway. They do occasionally have workers that just can't do that, and they don't stay very long because they're unhappy in that situation.
Self is stable and consistent	home, sports, back porch...that's the way I am here	Workers construct the self as consistent across contexts.	Whether I'm at home, whether I'm with my family, or on the sports fields, or little league fields, or you know, back porch barbeque setting, that's the way I am here.
Self is natural	people are very natural; don't mind [what other people think or expect of my behavior]; it's who we are	Workers construct the self as natural and free from outside influence.	People here are all very natural... We have a very, very casual office...Some people are turned off by us because, you know, people think, 'You people should be more professional in your office.' ...I don't mind...it's who we are.
Culture of fun is for everyone	make sure students have fun...and all the staff	Workers construct the SRC culture of fun as something for everyone.	One of my objectives, one of my goals, is to make sure students have fun. Not just students, but staff that I

			supervise, and all the staff.
Emotional labor as performing a role	can't come to work in a bad mood...even if you really are feeling that way; have to put on a good show...to be effective and successful	Workers construct emotional labor as a difficult act that SRC employees often are required to perform.	If you want people to believe in you and what you do, you can't, you know, come to work in a bad mood all the time or you can't come to work and be slow and tired and I mean, even if you really are feeling that way. I think you have to put on a good show for people to believe in you and trust you to do things and have a positive attitude and to be effective and successful.
Acting is stepping into one's work role	play into that role that you need to be; assume a certain role	Workers construct acting as consciously behaving in a manner that is appropriate for one's job requirements.	You have to play into that role that you need to be. I guess that's what I'm thinking of when you're talking about acting. Not necessarily pretending and not, not being serious with their job or anything, but having to assume a certain role in order to get things done. Yeah, I think we all do that to an extent when we're trying to get work accomplished.

<p>Acting is adjusting to meet situational demands</p>	<p>work is work and play is play; different in that situation because it's not work</p>	<p>Workers construct acting as adjusting one's behavior to meet the demands of specific situations.</p>	<p>I tend to look at it as kind of like work is work and play is play...Outside of work, if I see my staff and I do sometimes hang out with the ones who are old enough to hang out with. And it is a little bit different in that situation, you know, because it's not work...So what we do outside of work is fine. But inside of work, you still need to take me seriously.</p>
<p>Faking in bad faith is acting fun and friendly towards an SRC staff member when the actor believes that the other worker needs to be disciplined</p>	<p>Because we're supposed to have this fun friend relationship, it's hard to really talk about work—which is why we're here</p>	<p>Workers construct faking in bad faith as acting fun and friendly towards an SRC staff member when the actor believes that the other worker needs to be disciplined.</p>	<p>I see that everyday in different things that we do. Like I chaired a committee here with somebody who is a friend of mine, but who didn't work. You know, who's not helping me. And because we're supposed to have this fun friend relationship, it's hard to really talk about work—which is why we're here.</p>
<p>Faking in good faith is faking that is done when the actor is feeling</p>	<p>no matter how bad they feel, they have to act that they are feeling great; no one wants to</p>	<p>Workers construct faking in good faith as faking that is done when the actor is feeling</p>	<p>Group exercise instructors have to be actors. Because no matter how bad they feel,</p>

<p>organizationally inappropriate emotions</p>	<p>hear how tired you are</p>	<p>organizationally inappropriate emotions.</p>	<p>they have to act that they are feeling great. They have to motivate you. No one wants to hear how tired you are, or how many tests you have, or how much sleep you've missed because they've all done that. So they really want someone that doesn't feel like that. It's all acting.</p>
<p>Acting can help workers to perform good customer service</p>	<p>do that [act] because it's a customer service job; try and not let them [customers] know that [real negative feelings]</p>	<p>Workers construct a consequence of acting as acting can help workers to better serve the customer.</p>	<p>If you can put up a front to make people feel more comfortable, try to do that because it's a customer service job...I'm tired sometimes and I'm stressed out and things...but it's best to try and not let them [customers] know that.</p>
<p>Acting can raise morale and enhance productivity among SRC staff</p>	<p>important in order to keep attitudes up; going to have problems if you can't act; acting is important for morale</p>	<p>Workers construct a consequence of acting as acting can raise staff morale and productivity.</p>	<p>You need to be able to put aside personal issues that you have with people [i.e. other SRC workers]. I think that's all very important in order to keep attitudes up I guess. I think if you don't, I think you're going to kind of drown. I think you're going to have problems if you can't</p>

			act. I think that acting is important for morale.
Acting can help workers to manage student staff	have to act in order to get my point across with students; where I can't be flexible, I have to act like I'm the bad guy	Workers construct a consequence of acting as acting can help workers to manage student staff.	In my position you have to be a good actor...I always have to act like I'm the bad guy in order to get my point across that I'm being serious when I'm asking for paperwork for them [student patrons who are traveling to compete in athletic events] to submit it in a timely manner. Because normally I'm, you know, easy go lucky, you know, happy go lucky, just easy going. And I'm willing to work with the students and I'm flexible with their schedule and things like that...But in situations like that where I can't be flexible, I have to act like I'm the bad guy.
Acting can create personal difficulties	it's [acting fun and friendly] hard; I really wish I was better at that	Workers construct a consequence of acting as acting can cause workers to feel burdened and strained.	I am not a good person when somebody says, 'What do you really think?' I'm apt to tell them what I really think...So I really wish at times, like when I'm stressed

			people know it and my teeth clench, and you know, I get real stressed. But it'd be so nice to go out and smile when I'm stressed and just breathe. It's hard. So I really wish I was better at that.
Self is multi-faceted and changing	I have a kind of different role; different than I am now	Workers construct the self as changing within different situations.	I do a lot of coaching with kids and my son and his sports teams and things like that and they [other people] definitely see...they might see a little bit more of, more warmth from, you know what I'm saying. It's a little bit different...I have a kind of different role with them...So it's a little bit different I guess than I am now.
Self is socially constructed	talk about each other; look at each other's jobs; that person's having more fun than I am. I should have more fun	Workers construct the self as socially constructed via social comparison with other people.	They [SRC staff members] always talk about each other...And so they kind of look at each other's jobs and think, 'Oh, well, that person's having more fun than I am. I should have more fun.'
Culture of fun is for customers	you're responsible; you're doing your job; for	Workers construct the SRC culture of fun as an	Of course teaching fitness classes is fun, but you're also

	employees, there is not fun in everything	experience that they are required to give to customers.	responsible, you know. You're doing your job. For employees, there is not fun in everything that we do at the SRC.
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