CONSUMING CRAFT: THE INTERSECTION OF PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION IN
NORTH CAROLINA CRAFT BEER MARKETS

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A dissertation submitted to the faculty at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department
of Sociology.

Chapel Hill
2018

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ABSTRACT

C. S. Elliott: Consuming Craft: The Intersection of Production and Consumption in
North Carolina Craft Beer Markets
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Can consumer culture affect workplace identity? Asking such a question invites us to

consider the linkages between social structures that produce goods or services, and those that

facilitate their consumption. In recent decades, corporations have increasingly asked workers to

draw on their identities as consumers to strengthen their effectiveness in the workplace.

Corporations use the discourses of consumption to control workers. However, if we examine

workplaces that are *embedded* in the consumptive discourse, we may see a different pattern. In

the craft beer workplaces of North Carolina, workers often use "beer talk," to claim positive

associations with their work—the same discourse that craft beer firms use to legitimate the

consumption of beer. For workers, engagement with "beer talk" creates new opportunities for

making work meaningful, transforming what could be considered "bad jobs" (i.e. servers and

bartenders) into jobs that respondents truly enjoy. In this case, consumer culture can positively

impact the workplace, since those social structures of production (or work) are closely embedded

within structures of consumption. Implications for studying work in the post-Fordist period are

discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Can consumer culture affect workplace identity? If so, how might that affect the way workers identify with their tasks? Workplace identity may be understood as a manifestation of how one makes meaning from their position in the workplace—and performs that position to the self and others (Alvesson, Ashcraft, & Thomas, 2008; Watson, 2008). Under Fordism, or the period of time from the 1930s to the 1970s when stable employment relations were viewed as the foundation for social progress, such questions would have been unlikely. Researchers primarily conceived of three social "spheres" where meaning for workplace identity may be drawn. These included the organization (Whyte, 1957), the occupation (Hughes, 1970), and the informal work group (Gouldner, 1954; Homans, 1950). Sociologists of work and occupations tended to presume that industrial spheres primarily drove the reproduction of social structure. These spheres may be thought of as the principal discursive contexts where words, behaviors, and customs for "doing work"—or performing a certain kind of worker—either have relevance, or take their meaning. Conceptions of workplace identity focused on the tasks, or where tasks were done. The contexts for "making meaning," or creating a positive sense of one's work self, were centered on production.

Recently, researchers have become more interested in how consumer discourse *external* to the workplace affects the productive sphere of discourse (Böhm & Land, 2012; Ramarajan & Reid, 2013; J. J. Sallaz, 2014). For example, Bohm and Land (2012) examine a T-Shirt company's branding strategy. The company, Surf's Up, seeks to connect with customers by offering a progressive, post-materialist message with the purchase of colorful, lively T-Shirts.

Workers are expected to embody this discursive logic in their performance of the self. The implication is that they are not *really* workers, but people *using* the workplace for their own self-realization. An identity one may have previously performed only as consumer—carefree, adventurous, etc.—now becomes comingled with one's identity as the worker. The discursive fields in which one performs a sense of the self *blur*—the boundaries between one's "consumer self" and one's "productive self" become co-mingled in the search for one "authentic" expression of the self.

The issue of external institutions that may communicate meanings to workers inside the organization has a long intellectual tradition. Karl Marx noted a potential for false consciousness, where workers are unable to see their real common interests because elite capitalists control cultural messages (Tucker, 1978). Michael Burawoy built upon this notion in his classic 1979 work, *Manufacturing Consent*. He found workers insulated by external issues of cultural dominance because they had some autonomy in the workplace. Paul Willis (1977) argued working class culture in school prepared subservient, yet recalcitrant workers for the factories. Hence, sociologists have rarely conceived of workplace relations as occurring in a social vacuum, cut-off from the outside world.

However, the recent trend of research potentially suggests a qualitative shift in *how* workplaces are embedded in external institutions. Consumer markets have evolved dramatically across the globe. Buttressed by neoliberal economic policies and a logistical revolution that vastly increased the scale of consumption (Bonacich & Wilson, 2008), an increasingly customizable, internally-differentiated, realm of "hyperconsumption" flourishes (Ritzer, 2010). The logic of consumption is now so embedded in our culture, social relations are constituted by sharing consumptive experience (Dunn, 2008). Consumers do not just "take in" the product;

they incorporate the symbolism of products into their sense of self, and even become involved in co-producing the value of products (Arvidsson, 2008; Jenkins, 2012; Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010a).

Workers are being encouraged to engage consumer markets for symbolic material in constructing their workplace self, while consumer markets become "co-constructed" by active, engaged consumers. A common discursive space could be communicating the meaning of work, and the meaning of consumption—via a collective, shared impetus to use markets to construct an identity. Thus far, however, researchers have not analyzed the "blurred boundaries" phenomena by starting with the consumer culture. These consumptive "lifestyles" may be the coherent thread that blurs the workplace self with the consumer self. The effort to construct a specific *kind* of lifestyle could be a new axis for social organization.

Ongoing developments in the craft beer market make a compelling case for examining the potential for consumer lifestyles to translate into workplace identity. In 1978, there were only 89 breweries operating in the United States. Forty years later, that number was 6,266 (Brewers Association, 2018). As this niche market grows, it has drawn interest from sociology (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000; Rao, 2009), geography (Schnell & Reese, 2003), and marketing strategy (Wesson & De Figueiredo, 2001). This research suggests craft beer is created and sustained by a strong consumer culture. The narratives used to construct the value of beer have ranged from masculine to patriotic, to racially exploitive (Beckham, 2014). From the period following the end of prohibition to the late 1980's, that narrative was controlled by large corporations (Ogle, 2006). "Craft beer" exists today because people who loved beer fought the "big 3's" control over the market—in terms of the meaning of beer, as well as the political and logistical control of the market (Hindy, 2014; Rao, 2009). The "craft beer" market then, is space

where people can resist a certain narrative of capitalism—corporate, centralized control of a product (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000). It attempts to resist the McDonaldization that dominates America's consumer economy today (Ritzer, 2013).

This dissertation examines the extent to which workers use the language of craft beer consumption to account for their experiences of working to produce craft beer. Workers observed often used "beer talk," to claim positive associations with their work—the same discourse that craft beer firms use to legitimate the consumption of beer. "Beer talk" is logic existing in the craft beer market system for creating narrative and practice. It is the moral impetus that beer should be known and shared. Beer is an exciting world to explore, and helping others discover that excitement is fulfilling. The realm of knowledge possible includes both producing and consuming beer. As one brewer said, "We have a saying around here, 'Making a good batch of beer takes a thousand steps, and each one is important." (Interview, Head Brewer at Regional Brewery). Tasting beer also creates room for learning. Beers can be distinguished by different styles, according to four characteristics: color, aroma, taste, and mouthfeel. Styles arose for historical reasons, as we will discuss in Chapter 3, but as knowledge for controlling fermentation has increased, brewers have been playing with the boundaries of style, and even creating new ones. Most references list at least a hundred different styles of beer. Producers and consumers share in a common terrain for discussing, teaching, and learning the differences between these styles. A consumer writes a positive blog review for a brewpub, thus creating the potential for more customers. A brewer travels to another state to attend a festival, and sample the local fare. In this context, parsing the distinction between who is working and who is consuming becomes difficult.

For workers, engagement with "beer talk" creates new opportunities for making work meaningful, transforming what could be considered "bad jobs" (i.e. servers and bartenders) into jobs that respondents seem to strongly identify with. *Autonomy* is a characteristic of jobs that researchers have found reliably predicts a range of outcomes related to workers' experiences of performing the job role, such as job quality, commitment (Breaugh, 1998) and engagement (Christian, Garza, & Slaughter, 2011). These researchers would probably expect low autonomy roles such as bartendars, servers and barbacks to evince frustration, alternate aspirations (i.e. looking for another job or career in another field), or other reservations about their employment. However, for work in the craft beer market system, autonomy, as well as other organizational characteristic for predicting workplace outcomes, may not have the same level of predictive power. The collective project to make, share, and discuss good beer gives workers and consumers alike commong footing. The firms themselves may even become delegitimated if they are deemed to be inadequately pursuing this project. Thus, as organizational boundaries between producers and consumers become blurry, they may also become less meaningful for understanding work in that context. For other systems where consumers are highly engaged— thus blurring the boundaries between who are the workers, and who are the consumers—we may observe a similar "weakening" of the organizational characteristics' analytical effectiveness.

The remainder of the chapters in this dissertation advance by starting with macro level factors, and moving closer to the observation of people actually working with tasks, or at least, their accounts (reinforced by observations). They are organized as follows: Chapter 1 argues that a markets-as-fields perspective could enable researchers to conceptualize the boundaries which constitute meaning in work, meaning in consumption, and mechanisms transferring meaning between boundaries. Increasingly, scholars of work are using "markets" as a

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perspective for examining the employment relationship, managerial strategy, and workers'

adaptations to those conditions (J. J. Sallaz 2009, 2012, 2013). Meanwhile, theorists of

consumer research use markets to analyze how consumers make meaning out of consumptive

practices (Arnould and Thompson 2005). While markets are normally conceived as structures

arising to regulate economic exchange, these theorists argue they have social, cultural, and

material dimensions which interact in complex ways. These dimensions do not interact solely

(or even mostly) according to the logic of "supply" and "demand," however. They are actively

manipulated in order to control the conditions of exchange (Fligstein and Dauter 2007; Fligstein

and McAdam 2012). *Meanings* are manipulated to create and control markets. These meanings

could also create a coherent context by which workers may frame—or make sense of—their

work activities.

Chapter 2 describes the methodologies and data collected. Chapter 3 examines beer's

social and political history. Beer has historically moved from a commodity produced in highly

embedded social structures, to one produced in highly disembedded social structures. The craft

beer case suggests attempts to "re-embed" the dynamics of production and consumption within

the same social space. Chapter 4 then attempts to observe the dynamics that create the craft beer

consumer culture in North Carolina. Two dialectical tensions in the discourse of this market

intersect when consumers of "craft" beer engage market actors who seek to produce content for

consumption. Some market actors seek to maximize the monetary value of their investments,

while others seek to create "philal value"—a concept borrowed from Adam Arvidsson (2006,

2014), used to explain the sort of currency that consumer-driven markets might exchange on.

Meanwhile, the discourses legitimating craft beer's consumption are counterposed as "tasting"

versus "drinking." This intersection allows for a four by four grid, where distinct discursive

domains in the craft beer market system may be articulated. The overall coherence versus contradistinction of the discursive system may then be considered. I find the main theme used to legitimate the consumption of craft beer to be "beer talk," the moral impetus that knowing, teaching and sharing beer ought to be practiced.

In Chapter 5, the life courses of each individual's career trajectory—from the modal consumer of beer (the American pale lager drinker, who knows little of craft beer) to full time paid employment in the industry—are examined. These pathways into craft beer can be constructed by considering how workers moved from consumer to producer. I find that most people in the sample were motivated to work in craft beer because of their identity as "fans" of the craft beer consumer lifestyle. Chapter 6 considers the extent to which workers positively or negatively identify with their job roles across two kinds of extremes, again intersecting to form a four by four grid, against which the sample may be plotted. These extremes are the autonomy of the worker—restricted or unrestricted—and the job roles' direction of focus relative to the organization: production-facing versus consumption-facing. I find that workers in this sample overwhelmingly identified positively with their work, and used the discourses of consumption to explain why, even though several role-based distinctions may be noted.

Finally, Chapter 7 attempts to address the question of "how" the discourses of production and consumption blended in this market system. Based on the findings from each chapter, along with supplementary analysis, three mechanisms may be articulated that blend the discourses of production with consumption in this market. First, workers directly import the logics of being a consumer into the workplace. Fans of the consumer lifestyle bring their knowledge of beer into the workplace, and these overlap strongly with the work that is required. Secondly, the product of labor can in this case be consumed in one social space—the brewery. This constrains the

"circuit of value," the cycle by which products must travel to be consumed, to a specific, concrete location. Third, a macro-level "knowledge project" guides the continued creation and proliferation of craft breweries—thus enabling their seemingly autonomous emergence at the local level. These mechanisms operate in conjunction to help embed the productive-consumptive dynamics of craft beer's market system in face-to-face interaction.

Taken together, the findings in this dissertation suggests that a strong consumer culture can serve to "embed" the workplace in a discursive context that can potentially become meaningful for workers. These discursive contexts are substantiated by face-to-face interaction between workers and workers, workers and consumers, and between consumers. These discursive contexts, enabling the consumer lifestyle, may potentially transcend—even transform—structural conditions for making work meaningful which are more established in the work literature, such as organizational culture (branding), occupations, and autonomy. As consumption continues to mature in the global economy, becoming increasingly specialized, and as the productive capacities for producing goods or services central to those lifestyles become increasingly decentralized, we may observe more and more types of market systems where the productive-consumptive dynamic can become embedded in face-to-face networks.

CHAPTER 1: BLURRED REALMS OF WORKPLACE IDENTITY

While the concept of "identity" has gained recent traction, the questions it seeks to answer have been long-standing in the sociology of work. Early in the 20th century, researchers began to speculate that a firm's productivity goals might be harmoniously aligned with the human proclivity to identify with a group (Mayo 1945). Human resource management rests on the assumption that a firms' productivity is best maximized when workers view the firms' goals as a vehicle for their own self-realization (Swanson & Holton, 2009). Meanwhile, critics view this project as ultimately dehumanizing: it attempts to create social contexts in which moral worth is contingent upon commitment to an obfuscated hierarchy of value-creation (Burawoy, 1979; Casey, 1999; Ezzy, 2001). A variety of academic journals routinely publish papers examining, on the one hand, managerial strategies for creating an effective organizational culture which fosters commitment and loyalty, and, on the other, workers' responses to those strategies. Central to these long-standing debates is the extent to which workers view their interests, and those of their employer, as either consistent, or antagonistic.

Identity, and more specifically, *identity work* has recently found traction in this literature (Alvesson, Ashcraft, and Thomas 2008). Identity work is an ongoing negotiation between the self, and a social context which makes potential selves available for expression (Watson 2008). In the contemporary world, there are many competing ways peoples' actions, language, style of dress, and lifestyle choices can be interpreted—both to others and one's own self. In this environment, individuals must accomplish their identity by constantly signaling their allegiance to (or distance from) symbolic material for making meaning out of oneself (Giddens 1991). This

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negotiation of self-meaning occurs both internally (self-talk) and externally with others. Individuals learn how to positively perform certain identities, and gravitate toward situations where those identities can be performed (Goffman 1982). The available meanings, or potential selves, which one may lay claim to, are referred to as "social identities" (Watson 2008). People work to incorporate these social identities (e.g. tough boss, helpful co-worker) into their "personal identity" through reflection and performance (Watson 2008). Social identities exist in an even more diffuse discursive context. Because social identities have meanings for the actor's construction of personal identity, it will imply a context, or a discursive space which provides meaning for the social identity.

Consistent with Fordist-era strands of workplace research that investigate how workers make their tasks meaningful, identity work research has overwhelmingly found that workers want to perform the most positive version of themselves (Alvesson et al., 2008). These findings would come as no surprise to researchers from the eras of Donald Roy (1959) to Michael Buroway (1979) who found a range of ways that workers can make their tasks, or roles, meaningful. Michael De Certeau (1984) argues that workers have an adaptive capacity to make meaning out of nearly any conditions. The workplace is a site where workers will seek to be productive, and make the work meaningful, even despite interference from management. Dignity is constantly sought (Hodson 2001). Management's' efforts to control meaning can potentially backfire—especially if it crosses normative conventions of legitimate domination (Halaby 1986) or workplace norms (Gouldner 1954; Hodson 1999). This line of research first developed as a critique of the early 20th century industrial sociology research (Mayo 1960; Roethlisberger and Dickson 2000). In contrast to that research, which assumed workers' contentious belief systems were irrational since they did not further the goals of the organization,

this research found workers' meaning systems can form to control the pace of work (Chinoy 1992; Dalton 1948; Thompson 1983) divert monotony (Roy 1959) or even make work more productive (Burawoy 1979). Workers have an autonomous, adaptive capacity to make a wide range of work place conditions meaningful for them, thus providing symbolic material for positive identity work.

Two notable literatures have considered the consumer-driven shifts in workplace identify brought on by the macro-level changes to the labor force. One is called the "enterprising self" literature. It argues that the Post-Fordist labor market contains a general discursive feature requiring workers to "sell" themselves, using techniques similar to the branding strategies used by companies. The other "branding" literature considers how organizations expect workers to embody the specific emotional affect communicated by the brand to consumers. Neither literature, however, has examined how market-level, consumer-driven discourses may affect the workplace conception of self. One reason for this lack of focus could be a theoretical blind spot. The entrepreneurial discourse focuses on "The Market," writ large, presuming a general discourse of labor markets that applies evenly to specific kinds of market environments—its focus is thus too broad. On the other hand, the branding literature's focus is too specific, defining the organizational climate particular brands are meant to induce.

This chapter describes each of these literatures, and the difficulties they have encountered vis-à-vis their respective levels of focus. I then propose field theory to offer a mid-range analysis. Field theorists presume society is composed of spheres of social action, which are nested, embedded, overlapping or counter-posed to one another (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Rather than a grand social structure, wherein specific social features are repeated or reproduced at the micro level, field theorists presume that some structures might be related—either through

some dependency relationship, or nested within, while seemingly related fields may actually operate according to different rules. Field theory is a perspective for examining how social structures relate to one another, potentially aggregating to larger ones. These questions should be framed for the investigative purpose. Using this perspective, The Market may be framed on a more granular level—where specific kinds of consumer discourse may shape specific kinds of market systems. Organizations embedded in some market systems may open spaces for identity that are very different from other kinds of market systems. By failing to understand how workplaces are nested in some consumptive context, we may miss a critical structural condition shaping discourse inside the workplace.

Blurring the Boundaries of Work and Consumption

The Enterprising Self

Let us begin by examining approaches presuming the individual worker and the labor market in the broadest sense. A growing literature, using the terms "entrepreneurial self," or "enterprising self," argues discourse emanating from the labor market mandates individuals to actively view themselves as commodities (Du Gay, 1996a; Hong, 2014; Vallas & Cummins, 2015). A package of "shoulds' and "oughts" prescribe behavior for individuals if they are to remain employable. Workers should be independent, economically rational actors. They ought to choose work that is personally satisfying. Attitude becomes preeminent, overriding skill and experience in labor market selection (Witz, Warhurst, & Nickson, 2003). One should choose a line of work that allows passions to flourish. Yet, contradictorily, workers ought to be flexible for market fluctuation—and view any opportunity as the chance to develop their skills (Cappelli, 1999).

To accomplish the entrepreneurial self, workers are expected to select the right career and organization to "fit" their own personal identity (Vallas & Cummins, 2015). Forming this

personal identity, a process largely articulated through the language of branding, is the responsibility of the worker. Individuals are expected to know their capacities, and then choose the right setting for deploying them. Hong (2015) analyzes career guidance exercises, such as flower-mapping or balloon drawing, intended to help job seekers find their true passion—as it should manifest in a job—and then go out and find that job. As a labor market commodity, one should strive to understand one's strengths, weaknesses, passions, and then package them in a way that is easily communicated to potential (i.e. all) employers.

The origins of this discourse are often tied to broad-based changes in the employment relationship (Cappelli, 1999; Du Gay, 1996a). Since the late 1970's, neoliberal economic policy, improved mechanization in manufacturing, along with outsourcing, have reshaped the occupational structure (Wyatt and Hecker 2006). The result has been a significant reduction in middle class, blue collar jobs in manufacturing (Autor and Dorn 2013). Central to this restructuring is the shift from a "push" to a "pull" economy. The "logistics revolution," or the increased focus on rationalizing the efficiency and capacity of supply chains, is largely responsible for the dropping cost of consumer goods, and their proliferation (Bonacich and Wilson 2008; Levinson 2006). The variety and complexity of consumer goods have expanded far beyond what is necessary to reproduce the necessities of social life. Increasingly, company supply chains must respond to the "mass-customization" of consumer demand (Frenkel et al. 1995). As manufacturing has declined, and consumption has increased, the jobs which have grown are customer service jobs (Wyatt & Hecker, 2006). Over the same period, there has been a growth in contingent, or non-standard employment practices (Kalleberg, Reskin, and Hudson 2000).

As labor market "precarity" (Arnold & Bongiovi, 2013; A. Kalleberg, 2009; 2011) has deepened, the workplace discourse seems to increasingly reflect that instability. For example, Jeffrey Sallaz (2014), working six months in a call center, found workers were expected to embody the "permanent pedagogy" of the labor market. New comers are constantly having to learn the job, with the expectation that no one will be around long enough to actually develop the requisite skills. Rather than a pedagogy of improvement and stable experience, the workplace reflects, in a fractured way, the recent labor market precarity, teaching constant turnover and incomplete skill sets.

Researchers began using consumption to understand these new employment relations following Paul du Gay's 1996 book *Consuming Identity*. Cited over 600 times in business and organizations journals (Web of Science search, February 13th, 2017), du Gay's book has kicked off an intense debate regarding the existence of an enterprising discourse, and the extent of power it may actually have over workers' conception of self. Sparked by an interest in how "…new modes of organizational conduct blurred traditional differences between production and consumption identities," (p. 5) du Gay reasons that, since consumption is becoming more central to the economy, companies must be able to "connect" (emotionally) with the needs of their consumers; be responsive to their desires. He labels this discourse that of the "sovereign consumer." The enterprising worker is one who is always thinking about the consumer, no matter their position in the company's hierarchy.

"Enterprising" means to make the customer feel wanted, all the while adding value to the self, contributing to the culture of the company, and being responsible for one's action. He offers evidence along several dimensions, collected from 4 different retail companies, that an enterprising individual is expected of each and every employee, from senior management to

cashiers. The "sovereign consumer" is thus a discursive image used to motivate managers and cashiers alike toward thinking about their work a certain way. This means understanding the consumer, predicting his or her needs, and adjusting to meet their expectations. A corollary implication suggests less security for workers in their employment relationship—as consumers come and go, labor should flexibly adjust. The idea, or the concept of the consumer, then, becomes a logic, a way for companies to think, in order to meet market fluctuation. A general idea of what the consumer is and wants—external to the company—shapes what workers should be.

Du Gay found that, despite his hope that the "sovereign consumer" could disrupt traditional power structures in the workplace and give a broader range of workers the ability to determine their own workplace identity, workers expressed reserved, almost sullen acceptance of the enterprising discourse. Researchers have since considered the *enterprising self* a form of workplace control. Spicer (2011) argues that "authenticity" forces workers to monitor their actions in new ways, becoming a new form of self-regulation. One's "true self" is increasingly expected to be reflected in both work and non-work activity (Peter Fleming & Spicer, 2004; Land & Taylor, 2010). For example, workers are encouraged to surround their desks with consumer brands, family photos, or whatever makes them feel at home. Work is arranged so people can "be themselves."

Further research has been interested in how the discourse of the enterprising self might be evolving—specifically as labor market precarity deepens. Vallas and Cummins (2015) show that labor market uncertainty leads people to internalize the belief they must do "branding work" (on themselves) to get a job. First, the researchers examine the discourse on career guidance. Then, they interview people in the labor market, both employed and unemployed. Interviewees

without work were likely to invoke the career guidance discourse, describing anxiety over how to use social media platforms, business cards, and resumes to promote a personal brand. They found that the personal brand was viewed as short hand communication for what kind of work one can do—what kind of labor the employer is going to consume. Workers express pressure to strategically survey their capacities, and then use whatever opportunities are available to create "demand" for that consumption, and thus attain a job.

Human resources managers have built upon Paul du Gay's notion of the sovereign consumer to detail how costumer-worker interactions may unfold (Bolton & Houlihan, 2005; Korczynski & Ott, 2004; Korczynski, Shire, Frenkel, & Tam, 2000). While the idea that identity may flow from communication seems well established in the literature, the particular effectiveness of "labelling from above," seems to be an issue (Bruni, Gherardi, & Poggio, 2004; Gabriel, 1999; Storey, Salaman, & Platman, 2005; Thomas & Davies, 2005). For example, Doolin (2002) examines how hospitals in New Zealand restructured, and took on a new managerial regime based on the enterprising discourse. He found individuals that accepted, rejected, or compromised with the new expectations for workers—a range of outcomes, not as clear as du Gay might portend. Fournier and Grey (1999) took issue with du Gay's seemingly over-deterministic power of the enterprising discourse. They argue he gives too much credence to the persuasiveness of external discourse to shape subjectivity, and even go so far as to suggest that du Gay's own prolific, retreading of arguments in various publications may have done much to solidify the notion of the enterprising self (in other words, they hold du Gay to task for practicing what he preaches.) Subsequent researchers have examined the extent of the enterprising self in cases such as freelance work in media (Storey, Salaman, & Platman, 2005), amongst doctors and nurses (Halford & Leonard, 2006) as well as the police, social and

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educational services in the UK (Thomas & Davies, 2005). They find that "discourse is different here." In other words, if there is an enterprising discourse out there, its effects at the micro level are always contested by individuals.

The argument that actors may change discourse as they engage it is not new. For example, the criticism that "discourse is different in this context" would appear strange to some institutional theorists (Beckert, 2010; Hallett & Ventresca, 2006). For institutionalists, it may be viewed as a question of structural discourse versus local agency. As agents meet structural constraint, cognitive frames or networks explain potential outcomes. There is a great deal of uncertainty regarding how actors will actually "enact" discourse. Tim Hallett and Marc Ventressca (2006) demonstrate the original thread of this debate when they revisit Alvin Gouldner's (1954) classic work, *Patterns of Industrial Bureaucracy.* They describe Robert Merton's efforts to advance Talcott Parson's grand structure theory by gathering observations for how structure was actually lived. His student, Alvin Gouldner, is thus guided to observe Weberian bureaucracy in the workplace. Gouldner finds that, in practice, the classic "Weberian bureaucracy" did not exist in his case, the gypsum mine. Three *different* kinds of bureaucracy can be observed—each interacting with the resources and constraints faced by individuals in that context. This means that bureaucracy should be conceptualized less as a structure, and more as a *logic* individuals *use* to create social structures (potentially not unlike contemporary developments, where the "sovereign consumer" seems to have become a logic for capitalist organization). Hallet and Ventressca (1996) argue that social interaction impacts not only the experience of structure, but the actual structuring of structure. Hence, there is always some dialectical tension between discourse and actors in any specific context.

Local level variation does not preclude the existence of "macro-level" discourse, however. It is still something actors must negotiate, accept, reject, or position themselves with respect to (P. Fleming & Spicer, 2003). This means the enterprising discourse could exist at the macro level—in the labor market—as real phenomena, even though it appears to have a somewhat random effect on particular workplaces. As subsequent research has shown, workers, whether they conform to it or resist it, must negotiate an enterprising discourse (Cohen & Musson, 2000).

The Branded Self

A second literature has emerged parallel to the enterprising self literature. It deals with a similar question: how is Post-Fordist consumption affecting the workplace? However, the question is focused entirely on one specific tool: the brand. The brand is a mechanism, developed by powerful organizations of the Fordist period (although its history can be traced back to early European capitalism) to control the meaning of consumption. This tool has gone through three broad waves of transformation. At first, brands simply marked products as being owned or produced by a particular company—a crude form of the original copyright protection. Pete Brown (2003) finds evidence that brands began on beer barrels (a literal brand) in England in the late 17th century to distinguish a particular a style of beer, the "porter," from imitators. (The imitators sold as well, but for a lesser price.) At some point in the 1960s, it evolved into a tool for communicating the *meaning* (rather than just the authenticity or utility of the product) of the organization to the consumer—a process that accelerated rapidly in the 1980s (Lannon, 1994.)

Social scientists agree that brands in this second stage developed to control consumers engaged with markets of massive choice (Arvidsson, 2006b). As capital becomes more flexible, it requires new ways of organizing social relations to consistently realize the accumulation of

capital. These new pathways for creating value, or *valorization processes*, may be more diffuse, emergent, or characterized by networks. The increasing flexibility of capital also "disembeds it" from the shopfloor (Hardt & Negri, 2000). This suggests that the social relations inside the workplace are only a small link in the chain (rather than a microcosm) of value creation. These arguments follow concepts such as the "informationalism of capital," "liquid capital," and the financialization of the economy (Arvidsson, 2006a; Böhm & Land, 2012; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hardt & Negri, 2000). The forms of valuation become increasingly symbolic, and within a hyper-differentiated landscape of meanings.

Brands organize this symbolic smorgasbord into narratives (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). They present consumers a platform for participation in a kind of lifestyle. The purpose of the brand is not to just communicate the product, but to communicate a certain kind of emotional affect—that consumers associate with those products, and themselves. When consumers *co-construct* these relationships, they become more durable methods for creating capital (Arvidsson 2006; Böhm & Land, 2012). The circuit of value creation thus depends on organizing consumption into lifestyle narratives. Since the 1980s, value-creation has become a tighter and tighter feedback loop between consumers and companies, rather than the company simply sending products to the market, and then waiting to see what sells. Brands are the symbolic "glue" that hold these loops together. Instead of just being an endpoint where the product is consumed, the consumer is linked to the entire process of product creation.

It was during this second stage of brands that some management theorists realized that those same meanings (the communication of a certain lifestyle) once mobilized, could be applied to workers as well (Manolis, Meamber, Winsor, & Brooks, 2001). They described workers as "partial-consumers," engaging the logic of the brand's narrative, using the same identity-building

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set of skills needed as consumers. They encouraged companies to consider how employees

perceive the brand, and if that transferred to behavior, or attitude, in the workplace (King &

Grace, 2007; Miles, 2004; Wilden, Gudergan, & Lings, 2010).

The notion of the brand as a management tool has since become ubiquitous, having taken

hold in both the popular press and academic journals. In *Living the Brand: How to Transform*

Every Member of Your Organization into a Brand Champion, the author Nicolas Ind (2001)

writes: "…the Patagonia brand comes to life because the idea behind the purpose statement and

values really lives inside the organization. The brand attracts people to join the company, it

defines how they behave toward each other and toward other customers, and it helps them to

make key decisions" (2001: 210). Brands are therefore used to mobilize the meaning of the

company through multiple steps of the employment relationship: from labor market selection, to

expected workplace behavior.

The content of the brand's meaning organizes particular employment practices. At

Patagonia (an outdoor supply company) employees can take time off to work for an

environmental charity, or spend three-week stints working in the park. Ind writes that

"…organizations need to see living the brand not as a project but as a way of life." (2001: 214).

Miles and Mangold (2004) describe the brand as "perceptual mechanism," operating on a

feedback loop, that, when functioning, allows employees to add value to the company. They

develop a flowchart so managers can more effectively develop and deliver the brand message.

Particular companies, such as Southwest, Google and Ikea, are typically held as exemplars for

others to learn effective strategies for branding as employee control (Miles & Mangold, 2005).

Meanwhile, journalists—commenting on high profile companies such as Apple—have

noted the role brands play in socializing its labor (Segal, 2012; Gurman, 2012). David Segal

(2012) found Apple enjoyed a 90% retention rate, despite underpaying its sales force. Apple, it seemed, had apparently leveraged the popularity of its brand. Employees traded the chance to be a part of Apples' success for comparable skills compensation. For many, this exchange became bitter in the end, as stories documenting the emergence of "Apple Anonymous" demonstrate (Gurman, 2013). Apple workers turned to this online community to vent their frustrations at "living the brand."

In academia, critics of branding-as-management argue it is simply a new asset in a struggle dating back to Pre-Fordist capitalism: to control worker's identity (Böhm & Land, 2012; Brannan, Parsons, & Priola, 2011; Land & Taylor, 2010). While brands may empower consumers to feel a certain way about their product, the employees who work for those companies are *expected to embody* those feelings (Pettinger, 2005.) In *Surf's Up*, for example, Land and Taylor (2010) describe a T-Shirt company that was meant to embody a reckless, carefree attitude toward life, and perhaps a hostility toward "work" (i.e. corporate cubicle work). One employee, Gael, used a "too nice [weather] to work voucher" to kayak. She took pictures and put it on the company blog. The authors interpret this as value producing, since it contributes to the brand. Another, Richard, proudly shows his skateboarding scars on the company website. Land and Taylor view this as exploitation, since value is freely created for company, over and above the value created from the employees' labor. The kind of workplace identity one performs in relation to the meaning of the brand becomes a terrain for management-labor struggle (Branan and Hankins 2007; Witz et al., 2003). Many argue this extends the frontier of control beyond the workplace, seeking to merge the "authentic" identity one has developed as consumer, with identities for production.

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Like other forms of worker resistance, we should therefore expect the strategies developed will be varied, complex, and rarely consistent (P. Thompson & Ackroyd, 1995). Kärreman and Rylander (2008) argue that the brand can backfire. Found in the case of an IT consulting firm, the brand message actually increased expectations of the employees. It opens the company up for criticism—if it cannot live up to the brand. In college education, researchers have found the university's brand can help guide administration through ambiguous decision making (Vasquez, Sergi, & Cordelier, 2013). Following the workplace resistance literature, researchers have found that brands can be used in multiple, contradictory ways—sometimes increasing value for the company, but sometimes to resist (Brannan et al., 2011). In the introduction to *Branded Lives: The Production and Consumption of Meaning at Work* (2011) Paul Willis writes, "Cultural production of meaning [stemming from workers' engagement with brand narratives] may be deployed against, not always in line with, employer expectations. Mediated via the body, these meanings can open up different ways of being, thinking and sensing in the multitude of ways in social groups from below in a period of epochal change" (Brannan et al., 2011:xi).

Hence, as these contradictions in the usage of brand-as-management unfold—along with the deepening of differentiation and capacities in consumer markets—we may be witnessing a third stage of the brand's development. It appears that, what began as a means of *control* has become a pervasive *logic*, a general approach to communicating meaning in a wide array of contexts. Adam Arvidsson (2006), working to extend Marx's predictions related to how capitalism would evolve social relations in market systems, describes this development. Arvidsson sees the emergence of a general set of social skills in the creation value—across the population—as a step toward *socializing* capitalism. Because brands partially rely on consumers

and producers to create value (and meaning), this empowers consumers—and the results can be difficult to control. Arvidsson regards the contradiction of organizations that need brands, coupled with growing autonomous customer power in the consumer world, as the central "crisis of informational capitalism" (2006: 137).

Linking Consumer Culture to Identity in the Workplace

In the previous sections, I have argued that an enterprising discourse shapes the labor market, while branding discourse shapes the workplace. However, both have uncertainty regarding the effects upon workers. A common theme in these literatures is that consumer market discourses are more and more shaping workplace identity. At the level of the labor market, the logic of pleasing "the consumer" shapes the pursuit of success. Once selected out of the labor market and into a particular work organization, the brand conveys a more targeted consumer ethos; a kind of lifestyle becomes promised by that symbol. From labor market selection to organizational performance, workers are primed to identify with their work via the consumer markets that shape their workplace.

Below, Table 1 compares these two strands of literature. While the enterprising self describes a general labor market discourse, and the branding literature is focused on the organization, both confront the individual worker with expectations for behaving like a certain kind of worker. Both have evolved from increased competition of the post-Fordist era as lifestyle narratives (in the context of hyper-consumption) have become the central logic shaping the economy.

Table 1: Consumer Discourses for Workplace Control

Literature	Source of Discourse	Discursive Content	Workers Accept	Workers Reject	Workers Adapt
Enterprising Self	Labor Market	Passion for work, Know-thy-self, Flexibility	du Gay 1996, , Vallas and Cummins 2015	Fournier, 1998; Gabriel, 1999	Halford & Leonard, 2006; Storey et al., 2005
Branded Self	Organization	Certain lifestyle offered by the company	Land and Taylor 2010; Pettinger 2005	Cushen 2011; Russell 2011	Brannan 2015; Kärreman Rylander 2008

The key questions cutting across these literatures concern how workers identify with these consumer-driven discourses intruding into the workplace. Do they positively identify with these discourses, folding them naturally in their conception of self? Or do they resist these meanings of work, thereby creating an excessive burden? In terms of how workers are affected, there is a common theme of inconsistency in both literatures. At the micro level, the range of responses to the enterprising culture runs the gamut. Workers may grudgingly, knowingly *accept* their fate as commodities, as evidenced by the anxiety of performing that acceptance well enough to actually get hired (du Gay 1996, Land and Taylor 2010, Vallas and Cummins 2015). Other studies have documented cases where workers inside these companies have been able to resist the discourse, and use them for their own ends (Fournier, 1998; Gabriel, 1999). For example, Brannan (2007) finds workers engaging the logic of the brand sarcastically, as a way to stave off monotony or boredom. By and large, the question of whether workers accept or reject a brand is rarely cut and dry. Many studies find workers have adopted these logics, according to what makes sense in that context (Halford & Leonard, 2006; Storey et al., 2005). Whether the discourse is being prescribed, in the case of brands, or being critically examined, in the case of

the enterprising discourse, both literatures assume that consumer market discourses "press down," like a form of control.

However, if consumption is being organized more and more by "lifestyles," or by consumer cultures, then perhaps a mid-ranged level may be articulated for observation. This field of discourse may develop "in between" the organizations' brand and the labor market. Here, specific markets for specific kinds of consumer products might alter the kind of self one needs to perform. For example, environmentalism is a strong way for consumers to identify with their consumptive habits. Marketing researchers attempt to measure a company's effectiveness at targeting environmentally conscious consumers (Leary, Vann, & Mittelstaedt, 2017). A discourse of "caring for the earth" may run through these market systems. Would that clash, or complement, the discourses on the shop floor that produce those products? Could people get fired for littering? Would that create greater burden for these workers, or a greater sense of belonging? The next section describes a field theory approach for potentially observing how market-level consumer discourses may affect workplace identity. I then apply that concept to literatures on the continued development of "consumer culture," to suggest strong consumer cultures could form a mid-range context—or a social field—to embed workplaces in a meaningful discursive regime.

A Field Theory Approach to Consumer Culture

According to field theorists, social spheres, or fields, exist when a set of social actors share a view of some goal as valuable (Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992; Fligstein and MacAdam 2012). They argue that macro society is composed of these mezzo-level spheres, which condition micro-level interaction. Fields are spaces—varying in duration, symbolic and material dimensionality, intensity, and stability—where collective or individual action can occur. While

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the social sciences have long argued over the mechanisms which organize markets, the perspective here gives credence to the cultural, historical, and/or political factors.

Classic market dynamics (i.e. supply and demand) may occur within, between, or across fields. Each dimension will play some role, revealed through observation. However, it is expected that *some overarching discourse does organize the market.* Narratives and practices will exist stabilizing some dimensions of economic practice. These discursive spaces are a component of the field (Fourcade, 2007). They provide context for making sense out of symbols in the field—language, positions, goals, and what is worth pursuing. Because markets require both workers (producers) and consumers, the extent to which discursive spaces overlap (to contextualize the meaning of the employment relationship, or the meaning of consumption) is an open question.

Consumption refers here to either the act of purchasing and/or using goods and services to satisfy personal needs or wants (Dunn, 2008), or the structures where those goods and services are purchased and/or consumed (Stillerman, 2015). For much of the 20th century, most social science research on consumption has been left to economists. Consumption was a utilitarian action, whose patterns were explained by patterns in supply and demand.

Sociology made inroads by showing social relations affect market exchange in ways economists' do not examine (Granovetter 1985; Zelizer 2011). On a parallel track, marketing scholars increasingly recognized the choice of products in markets as social processes (McCracken 1986). Products reflect consumers' values (Zelizer 1994a; Zelizer 1994b). That is, people choose products not simply because they maximize a utilitarian preference, but because the practice of consumption occurs within a social context. Rather than simply analyzing the individual consumer's preference for utilizing a particular product, the cultural meanings that

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collectively operate to secure individual's engagement with a context should also be considered. The purchase of goods allows consumers the opportunity to connect with one another by sharing in the construction of meaning (Arnould and Thompson 2005; Dunn 2008).

Seeking to understand how subjective variability in consumer patterns are distributed in society, the "sociology of consumption" has developed within the context of hyper-consumption (Stillerman, 2015). A more persistent and traditional concern in sociology examines power in the construction of consumer subjectivities (Arvidsson, 2008; Ritzer, 2010). How is the meaning of a consumer product transmitted? Who controls those meanings? What are the effects of its transmission? These questions have been central to the sociological analysis of consumption under capitalism practically since the emergence of modernity. Following the rich anthropological research in marketing research journals (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), the answers to these questions probably depend on how particular consumer markets are constructed.

As mentioned above, consumption has increasingly become organized by lifestyles. In some parts of society, consumers have become active in contributing to market systems that enhance their consumption (Belk & Costa, 1998; Kozinets, 2001; Raven & Pinch, 2003). Henry Jenkins, a researcher in the discipline of communication, has also noticed the trend of active consumers, and believes it could be transforming our culture. In *Textual Poachers: Television Fans and Participatory Culture*, Jenkins (2012) documents the enormous energy and attention to detail that Star Trek fans, and other types of fandom, put into their own creations, that they then share on the web—freely—with other fans. This energy on the part of consumers deepens their connections to the products, but also raises their expectations. For example, Star Trek fans actively lobbied the show's creators to include homosexual characters, since they felt this more accurately reflected the kind of society implied by the setting. Minecraft, a video game, is

another example of this trend. Despite, or because of, the relative simplicity of the product, thousands of communities have developed to modify the game in unique and unpredictable ways (Banks and Potts 2010). On the strength of this autonomous and "free" labor, the product has sold over 54 million copies (Makutch 2014).

Consumer cultures may be defined by the sets of beliefs that certain groups of consumers share, as they engage in producing (and/or consuming) products for these markets. Consumers and companies seem to work hand-in-hand to create the ideal, collectively imagined version of the consumptive experience. In particular markets, some cultural narrative knits these consumers together, as they engage in the production of value for that market. Arnould and Thompson (2005) review 25 years of research in consumer cultures to demonstrate how consumers, engaged in the production of specific market contexts, incorporate those values into their sense of self. Consumer cultures form as consumers *identify* with the lifestyle narrative required to participate in that market context. It is possible that, as consumers work to produce some market context, they also develop a coherent social *field,* enveloping the market context.

Therefore, the characteristics in a consumer market that might impact the workplaces within those markets could hinge upon how engaged consumers are in the production of that market. For a particular consumer market then, the organizations responsible for their lifestyles may come to represent the epicenter of their consumer-constructed narratives. Consumers may come to see those workplaces as not just producing a product, but as the engines behind a type of life experience. Furthermore, these kinds of consumer markets may supply workers with a coherent narrative for engaging the workplace tasks. Specifically, consumer markets that are energized by engaged, and empowered consumers may develop into a localized substratum in which productive social relations become embedded.

Consumers who are highly engaged with the consumer markets—like fans—could create a mid-ranged social field of discourse for workers to engage. Moreover, they may try to find work in the industry supporting that lifestyle, thus directly "importing" the logics of the consumer discourse into the workplace. They may remain consumers of those products, even as they become producers, truly blurring the boundaries of consumer discourse and workplace discourse. However it occurs, these discursive fields could embed the workplaces at the center of the consumer market—the central producers of that market—with a discursive space that is "in-between" the structural levels of the enterprising discourse, and the brand. In this way, features of the market system could significantly alter how the enterprising and brand discourses (if they do) become part of the worker's conception of self. Since workers can make a range of discursive materials into a source for meaning (Certau, 1984), it is quite likely that these consumer-driven discourses could become a source for positive identity performance, and less oppressive than these literatures imagine them to be.

Conclusion

Can consumer culture affect workplace identity? Both the enterprising and branding literatures present workers with complementary discourses for using the consumer market to identify with their workplace. Much of the literature presumes these discourses seek to control how workers' identify with their tasks, so that the organization's value creation is enhanced. Whether workers accept, reject or adapt to these discourses becomes only explainable at the workplace level. We may be missing the effects of the market-level context—especially those driven by engaged consumers—that could challenge the presumptions of these literatures. As boundaries between the workplace and consumption blur, workplace identity could be performed through, or in tandem with, discursive logics found in the consumer culture of that particular market.

To observe the mechanisms connecting consumer culture discourse to workplace discourse, and the potential effects on workplace identity, the discursive regimes that shape consumer markets should be observed. These discursive regimes may be considered a "lifestyle," "subculture," or "consumer culture." They could be part of some overarching narrative, or they could be competing narratives. These logics may "animate the market" in surprising or unexpected ways. These include, but are not limited to, an analysis of branding—how firms communicate themselves to consumers. In other respects, the boundaries of these markets are not known in advance, but are defined by research on the extent to which patterns in consumer behavior—and how organizations seek to create consumers—may be defined.

Consumer research has been largely anthropological the past two decades, and their journals' pages are filled with studies analyzing the logics, or language of legitimation, that give these consumers frames for communicating their lifestyle to themselves and others (McGraken 1986). These may be considered coherent narratives which exist to explain why these consumptive practices exist. Rituals, narratives, and institutions will exist with some degree of stability to communicate these meanings. If a high degree of internal coherence exists with respect to consumer markets—where consumers and market actors share in the discursive production necessary for creating a coherent lifestyle—we may then observe workplaces highly embedded in a distinctive kind of market system. The nature of consumer discourse could impact workers' conception of self as they engage work in those markets.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND SAMPLE DESCRIPTIONS

Chapter 1 asked, "Can consumer culture affect workplace identity?" Both consumer culture and workplace identity are concepts that develop within discursive regimes. Chapter 3 will argue that "craft" beer makes for a compelling case to examine this question. The craft beer market was developed by agentic consumers. Some people had tasted beers from other parts of the world, knew something of beer's rather complex and varied history, and sought ways to recreate those products in their homes and communities. Over the course of about four decades (from the late 1970s to 2018), craft beer has grown into a full-fledged, money-making industry. A distinct consumptive lifestyle seems to drive this market forward. How do the people who work in these places identify with their jobs?

The aim is to observe those discursive regimes relative to the consumption of craft beer, and then the language workers use to account for their decisions to hold jobs producing craft beer. Three data collection steps were used, with each building upon the last. First, the political and cultural history of craft beers's emergence was investigated, using research of secondary source materials. Secondly, using close to two hundred hours of participant observation, the discourses legitimating craft beer consumption were observed. Third, forty-nine people who work in craft beer breweries, bottleshops, or craft beer specialty bars were interviewed for descriptions of their career motives and trajectories. If workers draw upon the same meanings to legitimate their decisions as market actors use to legitimate craft beer consumption, we have observed blurred boundaries of consumption and production, and hence consumer culture

impacting workplace identity. The remainder of this chapter describes each of these methods in more detail, and the data collected.

First, a few points regarding the role of field theory in data collection and analysis should be noted. Recall from Chapter 1, social fields are stabilized when dynamic processes become repititous. Intersections of various agents, and their capacity, or capital, occur within some context where the pursuit of goals occur, leading to the creation of social structures. However, excepting the work of Jefferey Sallaz (2009, 2013) precious few studies have used field theory for direct observation of structures where some fields are being produced. The dynamics of the field are reconstructed through content analysis of newspaper articles (Lei, 2016), or archival analysis of magazines (Haveman, 2015). Bourdieu used surveys and industry analysis to examine the structure of European housing markets (Bourdieu, 2014). Hence, the perception of actors as they dynamically engage some field is under studied.

A question becomes then, how does one observe dynamics that are occurring in "real time" to reproduce or stabilize some field? This dissertation's method was to consider opposites or extremes—relative to the stabilization of some field—as frameworks for those dynamics. This borrows from theoretical usage of systems or information theory to study organizations embedded in some environment (Morgan, 2006).

Chapter 3 employs this idea to examine beer's social and political history. The extremes observed across the history of beer's emergence as a commodity are its embeddedness versus disembeddedness. Chapter 4 reports observations regarding the legitimation of the craft beer consumer culture in North Carolina. Some market actors are no doubt seeking to maximize the profit potential of craft beer. Others are extremely passionate about making and sharing beer. These two types of valuation philosophies—or orientations towards what is valuable in the

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production of some social field—are contradictory. Meanwhile, consumers also seem to hold contradictory frames regarding beer's consumption. Many will say, "craft beer is not about getting drunk." Others will become heavily intoxicated, and celebrate the consumption of beer for that purpose. As contradictory frames for market actors and consumers intersect, we have the potential for distinct types of social fields to develop within the craft beer market space. Chapter 4 describes these differenct social spaces, and what they share in common.

In Chapter 5, the extremes used cross the life course of each individual's career trajectory, as they potentially move from consumer of "regular," or "macro" (the American pale lager) to "craft" beer. Are people who work in the industry all former converted fans of the craft beer lifestyle, or have they found their way into these jobs in other ways? Understanding these trajectories could offer insight regarding how (and why) consumer culture might be "getting into" the workplace. Finally, Chapter 6 considers the extent to which workers positively or negatively identify with their job roles across two kinds of extremes, again intersecting to form a two by two grid, against which the sample may be plotted. These extremes are the autonomy of the worker—restricted or unrestricted—and the job roles' direction of focus relative to the organization: production-facing versus consumption-facing.

By using field theory to conceptualize extremes operating to stabilize social structures, or situate actors in the field, we may observe dynamics needed to reproduce the overall system of North Carolina craft beer. This may allow for observation of how the discourses of various actors, institutions, or social spaces are nested or related. Thus, if discursive boundaries are becoming blurred, we may be able to make sense of how that occurs, and how that impacts the experience of work.

Step One: Case Study of Beer

What kinds of social structures have been associated with the production and consumption of beer? Were these structures of production and consumption occuring within the same social spaces or face-to-face networks, or have they historically been separated? How did "craft" beer emerge in the first place? Does the North Carolina case represent some serious deviation from this historical track record? Answers to these questions allow us to conceptualize how blurred boundaries might be occurring in this case, as well as establish some expectations regarding how to observe the consumption of craft beer in North Carolina. It may also allow us to understand the relevance of the contemporary moment relative to the history of beer. Thirty-one books and articles regarding the history of beer, craft beer and North Carolina were consulted for answering these questions. Thousands more have been written on the subject, but the goal here was not to be exhaustive, but comprehensive relative to the "embeddedness" versus "disembeddeness" of beer's production and consumption. These results are reported in Chapter 3.

Step Two: Observing the Discourses of the Consumer Culture

What messages or meanings are communicated in order to stabilize the market? Likely, there is not one discourse, but many. How do these various discursive regimes relate to one another? To articulate distinctions in these regimes, I attempt to observe two types of market construction processes. These are a) narratives that legitimate the consumption of craft beer and b) practices that facilitate its consumption. This concept is developed by synthesizing aspects from McGraken (1986) descriptions of consumer culture, and Fligstein and MacAdam (2013) discussion of fields. Both narrative and practice are processes that stabilize the production and consumption of craft beer, creating patterns in how the market systems are organized.

Market actors work to organize the market—producing both commodities and spaces for consumption—while also generating narratives, through branding, advertising, and the language of interaction, for attracting consumers. Who are these actors? How do they legitimate consumption? Consumers engage these spaces, but may not perfectly share the logic of narratives offered by market actors. Consumers will also produce their own content, through blogs, reviews, tweets, and interaction with other consumers that suggest their logics for craft beer consumption. In order to disentangle this web of competing and overlapping interests, I take the perspective of the consumer seeking to "discover" craft beer. I make the effort to become a craft beer consumer.

While not offering a complete picture of the craft beer market system, this method will at least focus the observations to that of a generalizable form—the consumer. Even though my own perspective and location will be that of a particular consumer, the market itself seems pitched to attract, keep and indoctrinate general consumers into a craft beer lifestyle. This method attempts to adopt a particular, narrow focus for answering how that lifestyle is articulated to "outsiders." By doing so, I should be able to observe narratives and practices organizing the consumption of craft beer.

From August 2014 to December 2016, I attempted to become a craft beer consumer. I began the study by volunteering at beer festivals (five of them) introducing myself and openly discussing my study whenever the opportunity arose. My intent was to make connections for interviewing workers, but to also observe the consumption of beer. I also attended seven more festivals as a consumer. During this period, I visited 34 different breweries or brewpubs, touring several—either with an employee, owner, or tour guide. I visited 8 different bottleshops, 5 different craft beer bars, and 10 restaurants that served craft beer—many of these I visited on

multiple occasions. These observations sometimes occurred before or after interviewing one or more of the employees. I spent close to 200 hundred hours making these observations.

In addition to participant observation, I also analyzed the brands of 40 out of 215 breweries in the state of North Carolina. These brands were analyzed by cutting and pasting the narrative text (from "about us," or "history" tabs on their websites) into a word document, and coding that text for themes indicating why this brewery exists (and why the consumer should choose it). These 40 brands were alphabetically chosen (A, B and C) from a list compiled by the author, using several different websites. I included observations from these narratives here since a clear pattern had developed, one that supplements my participant observations.

Another 40 hours of participant observations was devoted to internet and social media research. Using Twitter, I followed breweries, news groups, clubs, and organizations dedicated to North Carolina craft beer. I spent time reading tweets and taking notes on my observations, saving only a few tweets that seemed to significantly highlight a pattern of observation. I searched "followers" and "following" of the breweries and organizations to identify organizations operating to somehow promote craft beer. When these groups tweeted out articles, I read them and took notes. I visited their websites to learn about their purpose and scope. Doing so allowed me to document a number of craft beer groups that had been formed by fans, advocates, or promoters who did not seem to be commercially motivated. I found 35 such groups in all. Excepting 3, all of these groups had more than 100 twitter followers. Finally, 49 interviews with workers, conducted for the purposes of Chapters 5 and 6 in the present study, included many thoughts on consumers—especially where jobs involved customer service. These were often offered unprompted, and allowed a fuller picture of the market system to develop, particularly when it comes to grocery stores and distribution companies. Taken together, I

attempt to describe how the market system was constructed by actors central to its systematic

valuation, or reproduction. This description should yield reliable observations of craft beer

discourse.

Step Three: Interviews with Workers

The final data collection method involved interviewing craft beer workers. The data

collection technique adopted here was semi-structured interview. Using 7 questions, the

interview focused on the workers' trajectory from the consumer market (if they had one) into the

job they currently possess. It asks them to account for their decision to possess this job, and

assesses the degree to which they see the job as part of their future career trajectory.

The interview may be described as an intervention in their conception of self. It asks

them to communicate a narrative of the work self, thus creating an interaction. The interview

proceeds from their labor market and/or consumer market history into the job they currently

hold. This is the focus of the narrative. Following the discourse of the enterprising self—a

general, broad backdrop in which decisions to pursue craft beer careers are situated—we thus

expect the interviewee to rationally account for their decision to engage in this particular social

sphere. I ask them to describe the "pros" and "cons" of their work. Why do they have this job?

Why would they consider it worth doing in the future? These are all opportunities for

respondents to positively or negatively identify with the job role they possess. If workers

negatively identified with the management relations, for example, this should come out in this

conversation.

The interview process therefore creates "identity work," the main concept to be observed.

Identity work consists of actions or behaviors that people exhibit to perform a socially-legitimate

person (Watson, 2008). These behaviors and actions—which may be communicated in the form

of language during interaction—are drawn from some discursive context. These contexts are

basically fields, or institutional domains that the respondent, or agent, seeks to either occupy (if they are positively identifying with) or distance themselves from (negative identification.) They could be the workplace, the brand, the craft beer market system or something more ambiguous, such as political ideologies. Regardless, the respondent is drawing upon some discursive system to perform their conception of self. These interview performances thus offer opportunities to observe the content of discourse relevant to the worker's identity.

The workers sampled consisted of 49 people: 7 owners, or people who got their "job" by founding a company, 5 brewers, 6 assistant brewers, 9 sales/service managers, 12 sales reps, and finally 10 servers or bartenders. Of the owners interviewed, only 2 were also the head brewer at the time of interview, meaning the breakdown for production versus service jobs was 13 to 36. All of the people on the production side, including all of the owners, had some background in home brewing. A handful of people in service jobs had dabbled in home brewing, having attempted it a handful of times. Some claimed to have aspirations toward learning to brew, and finding work making beer. One male bartender described his desire to get, "Closer to the source." However, about two thirds of the sample were not accomplished home brewers. Men outnumbered women, by a ratio of 3 to 2. Twenty-four respondents were working their first craft beer job at the time of the interview, with the rest on their second or third job in the business. Two were on their fourth job. The average length of tenure in the current job was twenty-three and a half months.

The sample was drawn through a combination of unsolicited emails, approaching random people at bars or festivals, referrals, and on two occasions, owners encouraged multiple workers to participate in the interviews. While some elements are snowballed, it was not a difficult population to sample. Therefore, we might expect some degree of heterogeneity with respect to

the demographic composition of the sample. However, two patterns predominated. First, the respondents were overwhelmingly white—forty-eight of forty-nine persons. This was not surprising, unfortunately, since the world of craft beer consumption is largely a white world. The demographic composition of consumers observed and workers interviewed appear closely matched. I did approach people of color and women when possible, and made an effort to include them in the interview sample. I only met 3 persons of color working in craft beer during the period of study, and I was only able to get one of those persons for interview. The other two were willing but the logistics proved prohibitive.

Secondly, the respondents seemed like very competent people, who could have excelled in a variety of working situations. To begin with, forty of the forty-nine participants had at least a bachelor's degree, with seven of those people having a master's degree. One person had obtained a doctorate in chemistry. Interestingly, twelve people had a college degree, but were working entry level service or sales jobs. Several had plans to attend graduate school that were changed by the desire to pursue careers in beer. Moreover, twenty-one respondents had left a "successful" career (meaning, they had earned promotions, or they went to school for a particular field, and found work in it) from another industry before coming to work their first craft beer job. The sample thus consists largely of people who had enjoyed some degree of labor market or educational accomplishment before choosing to work in craft beer. Being white, educated, and relatively successful, the sample overall represents people with opportunity to "shop" for their preferred career path. They may have had chances to seek their "passions," to find jobs that offer more than just the bare survival of a paycheck.

The discourses of consumption and production operating in the craft beer space are the main unit of analysis. Observations of bars, brewpubs, and interviews are done to illustrate the

complex and sometimes contradictory nature of this discursive space. Do the meanings overlap? If so, how? What seems to be the effect of the overlap? The main goal of this dissertation is to empirically establish the answer to the first question, and then, hopefully in the course of doing so, develop some suggestive answers to the latter. To this end, this dissertation employed a field theory approach to observe the extent to which discursive content—or meanings—operating to create social spheres overlap, or do not. The advantage of the field theory approach is that is allows us to conceptualize social spaces—and the meanings that stabilize the engagmenet of actors necessary for reproducing those spaces—as either embedded, connected, overlapping, or contradicting one another. The boundaries of social spaces should be established based on observation. The methods employed here proceed from the broadest possible conception of the social space to the perception of actors engaged in those spaces.

CHAPTER 3: BEER: A TRAJECTORY OF EMBEDDED TO DISEMBEDDED PRODUCTION

In 1978, there were only 89 breweries operating in the United States, by 2017 there operated 6,266 breweries—the vast majority of which are small, independent companies known as "microbreweries" (Brewers Association, 2018). People who loved beer fought the "big 3's" control over the market—in terms of the meaning of beer, as well as the political and logistical control of the market (Hindy, 2014; Rao, 2009). Past research therefore suggests craft beer is created and sustained by a strong consumer culture. Such a rapid expansion of these businesses suggests the owners and brewers starting these enterprises may be closely enmeshed with the consumer culture.

Following recent research by field theorists, this chapter sketches the broad historical context of beer in general, and craft beer in particular. In doing so, the nature of the craft beer case, as potentially blending consumptive and productive logics—by embedding those logics in social relations—will be considered. These considerations should also yield insight into the boundaries of analysis for the market system.

Using secondary sources, I sketch an overview of craft beers' major political, cultural, and economic milestones. This sketch suggests that the social systems which have existed to stabilize the productive-consumptive dynamics of beer have gone through various degrees of *embeddedness*. That is, the social relations between producers and consumers have either been characterized by close degrees of contact, or they have been arms-length, anonymous exchange. High degrees of embeddedness could be a characteristic of market structures that corresponds to blurred organizational boundaries. As social exchange becomes more connected by face-to-face

networks, the roles separating producers from consumers could become less static. In this

chapter, I describe the history of beer, and then characterize various stages as operating to embed

or disembed the social relations between producers and consumers in those social systems.

From Discovery to the Market

Beer was discovered three times—independently—in three different parts of the world.

The earliest records place its origins in Sumeria around 10,000 BC (Sewell, 2014). In ancient

China, the people brewed a beer called "kui" around 7000 BC; and finally, in South America, the

Incas made "chica" for ritual purposes (Sewell, 2014). Since alcohol can happen any time some

fruit or grain breaks down in water (Hornsey, 2013), it is not hard to imagine hunter-gathers

learning to recognize the telltale signs of a rewarding treat in the wild. (Sorry friends, graduate

students probably did not invent "day drinking.") Some anthropologists consider these early

adventures as catalytic to civilization itself. Humans may have deemed it necessary to settle,

plant those interesting plants, and thus cultivate ingredients for fermenting beverages (Standage,

2006).

Early brewing was not a well-understood process, even though the benefits of such drinks

were immediately clear (Hornsey, 2013). A hearty meal providing plenty of calories, clean

drinking water, as well as the preservation of food were all difficult to come by for early

civilizations. Beer provided all three. Even children would drink beer with meals in many

ancient societies (Mazumdar-Shaw, 2000). Either as stimulant or intoxicate, beer has been

incorporated into a range of social, political, and religious interactions, from ancient China to

South America (Mandelbaum, 1965).

Not all ancient societies embraced the production and consumption of beer. The Greeks,

for example, considered beer (as opposed to wine) an effeminate drink, because it was "cold"

and made from cereal (Nelson, 2014). In the ancient world of the Romans, wine had been the

drink of choice in most of the empire, and beer was considered only fit for the barbarian Germanic tribes. Owing to these cultural divisions, European countries have traditionally been divided into wine drinking countries, such as Italy, and beer drinking countries, such as Great Britain (Nelson, 2014). A debate even today considers whether these differences are because of cultural practices, or the climates' suitability for grains versus grape vines (Nelson, 2014; Sewell, 2014). Some surmise the disdain for Roman soldiers, drinking in their outposts, may have lead the Germanic tribes to embrace beer as an alternative to Roman tastes—who viewed beer as more appropriate for sheep or cattle—who also eat grain (Brown, 2003).

Over the centuries, ancient Sumerian beer spread into Egypt, Greece, Rome and then Medieval Europe (Sewell, 2014). In the Medieval Ages, the methods for making beer were a household skill, like most skills when the family was the primary unit of production and consumption. Rather than a "pub," or a tavern, or even a "common room," peoples' homes formed an informal gathering spot for the collective group—where anyone may drop in and know everyone else (Brown, 2003). The wives most commonly brewed the beer (Hornsey, 2013). Some gained a prominent reputation for brewing, and thus the nickname "ale wife," would signal "ale houses" where delicious beer could be expected. Those homes tended to be popular gathering spots in the village. In those centuries, and much like ancient times, beer often served a dietary purpose—it contained low alcoholic percentages, and was primarily a component of the meal. The knowledge, skills, and actual practices of producing and consuming beer, therefore, varied by village and then by region, depending on the techniques, ingredients, and traditions that were available (Nelson, 2014). "Beer styles" refers to the idiosyncratic capacities, knowledge, and trajectories of recipe development. Because global markets had not yet reached any degree of sophistication, brewing used whatever grains grew in the region. We

may add to this unevenness in ingredients, different traditions for the processes of fermentation, which were not well understood, as well as the types of yeast that were used.

For roughly the first 10,000 years of its existence, beer existed firmly within a highly embedded productive-consumptive social dynamic. Market relations can vary by their degree of "embeddedness," meaning the degree to which social relationships shape the conditions of exchange (J. Sallaz, 2013). Consistent with the concept of "gemeinschaft," first described by Fredrich Tonnies, but then elaborated by Max Weber (Adler, 2015), the simple social structures and mutual commitment of village life limited beer's production and consumption. Production occurred largely in the home or the village, where it was either traded or consumed in face to face networks.

Monasteries took the first steps toward disembedding that dynamic. One of the first was in Italy in 525 AD, established by St. Benedict (Nelson, 2014). He felt monasteries should be completely self-sufficient; cut off from the rest of the world. This of course meant one needed to brew their own beer. More than that, however, monasteries sold their brews commercially, to supplement this self-sufficiency. Monks had a systematic approach. They stored their recipes, recorded their steps in producing particular batches, and tried to improve the beer (Mazumdar-Shaw, 2000). Sometime in the 10th century, monks added hops to beer, improving shelf life—for purchase by travelers (Lawrence, 1990). Hops also added a unique bittering flavor, balancing out the cloying sensation of malty, earthy, traditional beers, and have since been universally adopted as one of the four basic ingredients to beer: grain, hops, yeast, and water. The monks worked very hard to keep their equipment clean, something that is also in widespread practice today. These practices spread with the rise of monastic life, and with the need to produce a stable, consistent product. In the Germany of the Middle Ages, 400 monasteries brewed beer

(Nelson, 2014). As the reputation of their beer spread, monasteries became the first social institution to demonstrate the profit potential of beer.

Industrialization of Europe, and Beer

In England and Germany, the 18th century, factories began to dot the cityscape. When three circular spinning machines were powered by a single water wheel (Calladine, 1993), thus organizing people en mass to run them, the factory system began to take shape. Suddenly, gangs of men were moving in step in the streets of European cities, going to work, to lunch, or heading home. Taverns, inns, or "pubs" thus increasingly became central to social life (Brown, 2003). Still at a relatively low alcoholic percentage, tavern beers served the traditional purposes of dietary sustenance for the working class. They also formed the center of a new kind of social practice: spending time at the pub (Brown, 2003). Moreover, to serve the growing tavern crowds, commercial beer grew. Through new technology, along with the social practice of organizing workers to produce en masse, beer production began to specialize. The prices of grains dropped. It became cheaper and easier for people to purchase their beer. The era of small batch home production faded as local markets produced beer for consumption in taverns or the home.

The productive-consumptive dynamic appeared to be organized regionally, perhaps even by neighborhoods within cities. For example, the porter style was thusly named because it was a favorite of the porters in the London shipyards (Lawrence, 1990). The style began in tavern rooms frequented by porters, as an informal "crowd favorite" practice of mixing two other kinds of beer. Finally, some brewers capitalized on the style, brewing a batch to capture that flavor, color, and consistency. In these pubs, the working men may have carried the politics of the shopfloor into conversations with tavern owners and servers. While anyone could walk into a pub, order a round, and become fast friends, the relationships were probably still highly

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embedded. Styles, flavors, popular spots, and the like, were still highly local—shared by word of mouth. The people producing the beer were likely closely connected to the communities where beer was consumed.

Beer Travelled

On the Mayflower, 1620, the ships' captain chose Plymouth Rock as the landing spot, even though they were looking for the Hudson River, New York. The captain feared there would not be enough beer for the return voyage (Mittelman, 2007). With no beer aboard the ship, the likelihood of drinking infected water increases, and thus a very miserable return voyage would have been ensured. Meanwhile, settlers in the Virginia colonies requested trained brewers from London, so that good beer could be brewed (Mittelman, 2007). Thus, with a new world, came a new dynamic in the production and consumption of beer.

At first, the traditional practice of brewing beer in the home followed, although the knowledge may not have been as evenly diffused throughout the frontier villages and towns (Baron, 1962). Very early, industrious persons sought to establish production breweries. In New Amsterdam of 1660, there were 26 breweries and taverns in operation (Baron, 1962). The settling Europeans mainly drank ales up until the 1840s. At this time, German and Dutch immigrants began pouring in, bringing with them the lager style of beer (Stack, 2003).

Ales and lagers form the broadest distinction in beer styles. Each uses different species of yeast in the fermentation process. Ale yeast ferment on the top, and lager yeast ferment on the bottom of the brew. Lager yeast also take about twice as long to complete their transformation (Bamforth, 2009). This difference may seem slight, but they produce completely different products. Ales have a cloudy, thick body, and often must be hopped heavily to balance out the flavor. These features also allow them to more easily maintain a much higher alcohol percentage, since they also hide that flavor as well. Lagers, on the other hand, have a crisper,

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cleaner look and taste. The longer, bottom fermenting yeast are also more sensitive to temperature changes, and require more care throughout the process. With less hoppiness and body, they also tend to be lower in alcohol content. The historical record on how these distinctions arose, however, is unclear.

It is clear that, while the lager process immigrated with the Germans, the American market experienced large growth. In the 50 years following the Civil War, the national production of beer rose from 3.7 million barrels per year, to 59. 8 million barrels (Stack, 2003). It was also during this time that a few companies became massive goliaths in the industry. Miller, Pabst, and Anheiser-Busch were all founded in this period, but one beer left an indisputably indelible mark on the American pallet.

The lagers that the Germans drank were hearty, full-bodied beverages—sipped over the course of a full meal or long conversation. In St. Louis, a brewer named Carl Conrad wanted to introduce a lighter, crisper beer (Lockhart 2006). Conrad had tasted such a beer years before in the European kingdom of Bohemia, in a town called "Budweis." Two years of trial and error eventually yielded Budweiser, a pilsner style beer with a golden color, and a light, crisp taste (Ogle, 2006). Conrad contracted the beer to Adolphus Busch, his friend who had, years earlier taken over his father-in-law's failing brewery, and renamed it "Anheiser-Busch" (Lockhart 2006). They used rice instead of wheat as the grain (Ogle 2006.) This made the process more expensive, but gave Budweiser its light, easy-drinking body. The beer was an overnight sensation, ordering out of stock as fast as it could be delivered. It seemed to fit the new environment of the American market: something that could be consumed more quickly in the fast paced, crowded saloon (Ogle 2006). Dozens of imitators soon followed, and the "American pale lager" style of beer was born. Today, the top 10 selling beers in the United States are all

American pale lagers (Grocery Headquarters, 2016). In the 1880's, Carl Conrad and Co. went bankrupt. His friend and creditor, Adolphus Busch accepted the rights to brew "Budweiser" as a settlement for $94,000 in money owed (Lockhart, 2006).

More than simply framing America's taste pallet, Busch also framed the practices of big business. Anheiser-Busch spearheaded corporate efforts to envision national markets. He pasteurized his beer before companies used the technique on milk, so that it could travel farther (Ogle, 2006). Busch pioneered the vertically integrated business model, investing in rail manufacturing, in order to control the cost and efficiency of shipping (Stack, 2003). Budweiser advertised nationally, and used railroads to distribute beyond its local region—both pioneering business practices (Ogle, 2006). Busch developed assembly line automation for filling and capping bottles in 1873 (Beer Advocate, accessed 2016), 40 years before Henry Ford's assembly line.

Brewery companies of the "robber baron" era helped develop national markets, and some of the first massive corporations. Given these innovations, however, regional and local breweries, still dominated the vast majority of the American market. In the oldest of the American cities, the urban decentralization of production probably looked much like England: hundreds of local pubs, with a few regional players (Ogle 2006.)

Prohibition

The first national-level social movement in American history came from a centuries' worth of local, communal responses to social problems with alcohol. Thus far, in our consideration of beer's history, I have focused on the positive reasons for cultures to adopt beer's production and consumption as central institutions in social life: calories preserved, clean drinking water, the merriment of the social gatherings, and the perceived sacred effects of intoxication. However, those same effects have not been universally embraced. Beginning in

1835, the Temperance Movement reached its zenith in 1920 with the passage of Amendment 18. There was a collective, organized response to the widely-held view that alcohol was socially dangerous.

Nationally organized, the Temperance movement advanced at the level of municipalities. Laws for banning, or otherwise restricting the sale of alcohol, were passed county by county, sometimes town by town, and then eventually state by state. Once the national amendment passed, 60% of the nation already practiced some form of imbibed restrictions. Prohibition has not just been limited to America, however. In Egypt of 4000 bc, there were attempts to control drinking, because it was felt it countered productivity (Bamforth, 2009). Some form of prohibition has been found in Sumeria. Temperance movements have a rich history in England, though not the same level of success (Brown, 2003). As of this writing, in 2017, 16 countries enforce some type of prohibition (Wikipedia, 2017). Public laws limiting alcoholic consumption seem to intrinsically follow the production of beer. The effects continue to shape American markets today.

Post Prohibition Leads to Intense Market Concentration

During prohibition, brewing beer was illegal. In 1915, there were 1,345 breweries that produced nearly 60 million barrels of beer (Stack, 2003). In the days following the 1920 signing of the 18th Amendment, what happened to all that brewing, bottling and distribution equipment? Some of it was sold to breweries in other countries (Ogle, 2006). Some was simply boarded up, in hopes of one day being fired up again. As soon as prohibition was passed, speculation on its long-term viability ran rampant. Larger breweries attempted to put that equipment to use making other products—such as near-beer or soda—in the hopes that prohibition-viability was on the shorter end of that term. They sold malt syrup, yeast, and grains that were probably used to produce beer by homebrewers (Stack, 2003).

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Once it finally did come to an end, only 756 breweries opened their doors back up (Beer Advocate, 2016). While there was much fanfare around the return of beer—even a parade of Clydesdales delivering the first case of Budweiser brewed in over a decade—the consumption habits of the populace had changed (Ogle, 2006). The consumption of liquor may have actually increased during prohibition, but beer had not been so fortunate (Stack, 2003). American consumers were now turning to soda, liquor or wine as their beverages of choice.

On top of this, beer had largely been consumed in draft form (on tap) prior to prohibition (Stack, 2003). However, following prohibition, the saloon culture largely responsible for selling draft beer never returned. Partly this was because the old business model that created the saloon culture was still illegal following prohibition. Saloons had been owned by the breweries. Post-prohibition legislation allowed states broad powers in taxing and regulating alcohol production, distribution and sale. However, the difficulty of taxing and regulating corporations that controlled all three of these areas become a concern. What is now known as the "three tier system," was introduced. It is a philosophy of regulation for the alcohol industry. Basically, companies that produce or import beer are not allowed to sell their beer. They must sell to a distributor, who then turns around and sells to retailers. Each state in the United States enacts some form of the three-tier concept, but each state does so differently. These legalities have a direct impact on the relative power of producers, distributors, and retailers to dictate contracts, prices, and control over the market. Because of this, state-level legal structures create dramatic differences between the compositions of markets. It also meant that new dynamics linking the productive sphere to consumptive sphere had to be imagined. After prohibition, the consumption of beer was primarily in bottles, which was incredibly cost-prohibitive (Ogle, 2006). During prohibition, the largest breweries dabbled in canning and bottling soda, improving their

technology in these respects. Post prohibition, the primary method of consuming beer came from a bottle (Stack, 2003).

A new and complicated legal environment, changing tastes in American consumers, and steep subtraction in the equipment available for producing beer all favored the largest of the breweries. In fact, this new market was so daunting, no new breweries were founded until New Albion made the attempt in 1976—43 years after prohibition ended. Only breweries that had been in operation prior to prohibition reopened (Beer Advocate, 2016). The cash reserves that had kept the Pabst, Miller, and Anhieser-Busch companies afloat during prohibition now allowed them strong advanced footing in this complex, new market. Between 1942 and 1978, the number of breweries in the United States dropped each year, until it reached a low point of only 78 breweries (Brewers Association, 2016). Of these breweries, 3 controlled 93% of the total market: Pabst, Miller and Anheiser-Busch (Stacks).

During this time, the separation of productive and consumptive social spheres in the American market became starkest. The productive-consumptive dynamic was organized at the national level. A handful of breweries supplied the vast majority of America's consumers. When we consider the concept of the three tier system actually *requires* the disembedding of production and consumption, this may not be surprising. However, there may have been cultural shifts in post-WWII America that also contributed to the gulf between producers and consumers. In the 50s and 60s, the streamlined, sleek, efficient magic of corporate production had captured the imagination of the public. Maureen Ogle (2006) argues processed foods, along with instant mashed potatoes and other bland foods, were flying off grocery shelves. Americans were also choosing bland beer. The range of beer's expression was limited to the American pale lager. Millions of American consumers had come to presume *that* taste *was* beer—the only flavor,

color or aroma that beer could be (Hindy, 2014). The period of the 1940s to the late 1980s may be described as producers deciding, and consumers drinking. With no knowledge of how beer was made, or its history, or its range of cultural expression throughout history, how could American consumers demand anything else from the "big 3?" Because the productive-consumptive dynamic is organized at this level, there is very little meaningful interaction between the spheres where beer is produced, and where beer is consumed.

Breweries of this "fordist" period seemed out of touch with consumers, yet remained profitable on the entrenchment of consumptive practice, and their size. In the case of Coors, there appeared to be mass dysfunction inside the company, as mid-management focused on increasing their bonus by artificially driving sales numbers (Burgess, 1993). A hyper masculine culture of sales competition, coupled with conservative ownership and management style, drove many talented advertising youths out of the Coors company. Meanwhile, new markets for beer were left off the table, as Coors began to think of beer simply as "Coors Banquet," or Coors light. Sales campaigns pushed new kinds of alcoholic drinks (e.g. wine coolers, Zima), especially to target women (ignoring the potential of women beer drinkers) but fell flat, costing the company millions of dollars. Similar stories come from the record regarding the hostile-takeover of Anheiser-Busch (MacIntosh, 2011). A bloated corporate upper management—one too many executives having private jets with personal expense accounts, and little oversight—weakened the company's financial strength, and made it vulnerable to corporate buyout (MacIntosh, 2011).

Market Specialization And "Re-Embeddeness'

In the 1980s, new breweries slowly began to open, a trend that increased into the 1990s. These breweries were small, independently owned start-ups. They called their products "craft beer." They served them either on site or very close to their communities. By word of mouth,

these start-ups and their fans grew into a full-fledged consumer movement. For example, the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, founded in 1980, would grow to 68,000 barrels of production per year before they hired a single person to focus on sales (Grossman, 2008). This section tells the story of those early brewers, and the winds of change they seemed to be sailing on. It describes how beer production and consumption may have become "re-embedded," if in a very different way.

Few would argue that Coors was the first "craft beer." However, while Coors started in 1873, it took off in the 1960s as a regional brewery. Coors used Rocky Mountain spring water to brew, and developed a cold filtration technique for pasteurization. For the first few decades following prohibition, Coors only sold its beer in a handful of states around Colorado. A loyal, intense following of beer fans resulted (Lakeland Ledger, 1975). People drove for hours to get their hands on Coors beer—the local, independent success, eschewing the industrial methods, brewing beer using natural processes. In other words, in the context of massive corporations that had dominated the market for over a hundred years, Coors was "authentic."

Even though Coors Banquet was an American pale lager—tasting only marginally different (and mostly because of the water used) from a Budweiser or Miller—the company had tapped into a vein in the American consumer that was beginning to pulse: a desire for alternatives to corporate homogenization. By the 1990s, those changes began to reshape the market. Before prohibition, the highpoint in the number of breweries in the United States had been 3,286, in 1870 (Stacks, 2003.) By 1978, there were only 78 breweries in the United States. 15 years later, in 1993, that number had mushroomed to 446 (Brewers Association, 2016). Only five year later, that number would triple. Between 1978, the low point of the industry's diversity, and 2016, more than *five thousand breweries* began production. The composition of

the market had undergone a tremendous shift. A kind of cultural movement had opened up space for artisanal, locally produced (and consumed) beers. So, while Coors is certainly not part of the craft beer market today, its emergence signaled a shift in the degree of complexity in American consumption.

Many writers of "craft" beer emergence begin the story with Fritz Maytag, in the San Francisco streets of 1965 (Hindy, 2014). Fritz was the grandson of the founder of the Maytag appliance company. A graduate student dropout, Fritz was looking for some way to live up to his family's expectations. With a deep passion for the *idea* of brewing, Fritz purchased the failing Anchor Steam brewing company (Associated Press, 1972). After spending some time in bars in the city, he noticed that young people were ordering the more expensive, imported beer. Fritz wondered if a new market might be developing in front of his eyes. Seizing upon this idea, he places this phrase on his beer labels: "exceptional respect for the ancient art of brewing " (Ogle, 2006: 256).

Fritz blazed a trail for small independent brewers in two ways. First, he laid out the "small is beautiful," marketing logic that has been a staple of craft beer's uneven emergence. He developed strategies for how to market beer that could, if not compete, then at least survive, while being served next to the macro breweries. That strategy was to emphasize the tradition of brewing, the passion for its history, and the difference from the American lager. Secondly, he shared his hard won, trial and error knowledge for how to actually brew beer—especially on a production scale—with the dozens of like-minded entrepreneurs who would come to visit his facility (Hindy 2014; Ogle 2006). This spirit of collaboration against industrial beer would also become a staple of the craft beer market.

Two other important influences on the craft beer movement's early stages should be mentioned. As noted above, in 1976, Jack MacAucliffe opened New Albion brewery in Sonoma, California. Jack had been a sailor in the navy, and greatly enjoyed the more flavorful, bolder flavors of European beers. He opened his brewery to make those kinds of beers. While New Albion closed its doors only 6 years later, Jack influenced countless others in the California area. Ken Grossman, founder of Sierra Nevada, would open his doors a few years after New Albion's closing.

Finally, Jim Koch, founder of the Boston Beer Company, has been a major—if controversial—force in the legitimacy and growth of craft beer. Koch started out contracting his beer (Hindy 2014). This meant he did not own a brewery, but instead paid someone else to brew the beer. Koch focused on the sales and retail aspects of building his flagship brand, Sam Adams. Many brewers look askance at this business model (Hindy, 2014). Ken Grossman considers it a kind of deception (Grossman 2008). At any rate, Koch was a skilled business man. By offering a more flavorful alternative to the American pale lager, Sam Adams became one of the bestselling independent beer brands in the United States. Koch was also instrumental in developing the political power of the Brewers Association, a group of independent brewers. Koch recognized the political need for a united front against big beer (Hindy, 2014). The Boston Beer Company, while often not considered a "craft beer company," has thus done much to expand the pallet of the American consumer.

To this list of early brewers who influenced the growth of craft beer, we should also probably add President Jimmy Carter. In 1978, he signed HR 1337 into law, which would legalize homebrewing. When Fritz Maytag purchased Anchor Steam Brewing Company, it was illegal for someone to brew beer in their own home. The language between Amendments 18 and

the 21 (repealing prohibition) was not consistent, and so homebrewing remained an illegal activity. While the law was not actively enforced, there was no infrastructure for supplies or books that would be necessary for learning the craft. With no homebrew market, there were precious few opportunities for nascent entrepreneurs to hone the skills necessary to brew beer. (This probably also helps explain why the brewery population did not expand between 1933 and 1976.) What had once been common knowledge shared in every home had become a secret activity punishable by jail. Such laws again highlight the separation of consumptive spheres from productive spheres in the Fordist period of beer's history. For example, in the 1980 publication *Dictionary of the History of the American Brewing and Distilling Industries*, the author reports that the New Albion brewing company had been a significant influence on the spread of "homebrewers" (Downward, 1980: 131). The quotation marks around the term mark its distinction from the "real" industrial brewers.

The individual contributions of the figures described above only tell part of the story. Following this landmark legislation for homebrewing beer, homebrew supply stores sprang up all over the country (Hindy, 2014). Homebrew clubs evolved from this, and then, the homebrew festivals. These "market rebels" formed the substratum on which the craft beer market would grow (Rao, 2009). According to Hayagreeva Rao (2009), they wanted alternatives to the macro-produced, American pale lagers. The promise of homebrew was a promise arming consumers with ability to take back production, so that the range of beer's expression could be expanded. That hope reflects the backlash against corporate control of consumption that was occurring more generally in American society.

Sociologists and geographers have written about "neolocalism," a counter trend developing in late capitalism, where people respond to the homogenizing effects of

multinational, corporate capitalism, by seeking to create local identity (Harvey, 1990). Beer appears at the forefront of this larger trend. By the 1960s, national writers were arguing that the "big three" put chemical additives in their beer (Ogle, 2006). When the Homebrewing Association of America was formed by Charlie Papazain in 1979, he wrote in a letter to the founding members proclaiming the struggle between "beautiful David versus grotesque Goliaths" (Hindy, 2014: 281). This sentiment—apparently fomenting diffusely throughout the country—helps explain the intense popularity of Coors, a drink whose style and taste were nearly identical to the "grotesque Goliaths." The microbrewery movement has been built on this appeal. In 2003, Schnell and Reese systematically examined the branding language used by microbreweries, and found a consistent theme for "reconnecting with the cities or towns in which they live, to resurrect a feeling of community tied to a specific landscape" (2003: 66).

Population ecologists Glenn Carroll and Anand Swaminithan (2002) took an interest in the first wave of craft beer's expansion in the 1990s. They find these craft, artisanal markets occur in communities where affluence can support the higher prices, and educational levels seemingly explain interests in specialty markets for niche products. In this market segmentation theory, the total beer market had "matured," and now special niches could open up. However, they also found it was not just the quality of the product—in other words, market specialization was not enough to explain why consumers gravitated toward craft beer. Carroll and Swaminithan had festival goers blind-tasting craft beers alongside "crafty" beers, or craft-like beers brewed by the corporations. The big company beers tested just as well, but festival goers expressed disdain when they found they had been drinking beers owned by Miller or Anheiser-Busch. The authors conclude that consumers were identifying the microbreweries as "authentic," and with their passion for brewing. Consumers did not just want quality—they were

not just maximizing their consumption—they wanted to support organizations that were not just "in it for the money." Breweries in the craft beer market attempt to legitimate this organizational identity: the authenticity of hand-crafted, local beers.

From National to Local: The North Carolina Story

While a national backlash against Fordism sets the framework, the emergence of craft beer breweries—and craft beer communities—is, mostly because of prohibition, a state-by-state story. States have very different laws regarding the restriction of alcohol sale. Moreover, markets reflect different levels of saturation where segmentation can occur. For example, San Diego, a city in California, has over 200 breweries. The entire state of Mississippi has only 9. What is the difference? To begin with, the craft beer movement began largely in 2 areas: Southern California and Colorado. The three tier system has only partially been utilized in California, allowing breweries to sell and distribute their own products. Until recently, Mississippi has strictly enforced the three tier system, making it impossible for small breweries to connect with consumers in their communities without massive startup capital. Culturally, Mississippi is well known for its Baptist heritage, and proliferation of "dry" counties. Today, 36% of Mississippi's counties are dry, versus 0 counties in California (NABCA, 2017). Municipalities can make these even more complicated. In Oxford, Mississippi, the county was dry, but the city was wet—except on Sundays. Moreover, beer could not be purchased cold on any day of the week. These restrictions on alcohol consumption may reflect the strong presence of Baptists in the state. California, on the other hand, is historically liberal. Economically, San Diego is a diverse, urban area of 1.3 million people—likely containing pockets of affluent, educated neighborhoods. Mississippi is a sparsely populated rural state, with a population of nearly 3 million. State-level economic, cultural, and legal factors will thus explain market dynamics shaping craft beers' emergence.

North Carolina makes for a particularly compelling state for the study of the craft market discourse. North Carolina was the first southern state to enact prohibition, in 1908—12 years before the national amendment. When the 18th Amendment was lifted, North Carolina kept prohibition in place until 1937. Today, North Carolina supports more breweries than any southern state—200 to be exact (Brewers Guild, 2016). There is both a strong southern legacy of Protestant-inspired prohibition, and a vibrant, booming beer culture.

How did the state get to this point? The story is similar to the "market rebel" (Rao 2009) account of craft beer's national emergence. In the years between 1937 and 1986, there were a handful of regional breweries that located production in North Carolina, but there was no locally produced beer. North Carolina still contained many dry counties and towns, for whom alcohol was viewed as a social ill (Fitten 2012). Furthermore, the three tier philosophy was heavily enforced. Breweries could not sell their own beer; they had to be sold to a distributor, and then sold to retailers. This restriction posed a significant barrier for start-ups.

Uli Bennewitz began a campaign to change that in the early 1980s (LeClaire, Bryan, 2010). In 1985, the state passed a house bill legalizing "brewpubs." Breweries that produced under 25,000 amount of barrels per year could sell their own beer, and sell it for onsite consumption. They still could not bottle and sell for off-premise consumption, but this was progress. It meant that homebrew enthusiasts all across the state could offer their products for onsite consumption, without having to pay for distribution. In the following year, Uli Bennewitz would open Weeping Radish, the first microbrewery of North Carolina, in Manteo. Within the next decade, Carolina Brewery, Top of the Hill, and Highland Brewery would all open their doors, thanks to that legislation.

In the 20 years following the legalization of brewpubs, about 20 to 30 microbreweries opened their doors. In the 10 years between 2005 and 2015, however, over 120 breweries opened. A number of factors have contributed to the explosion of breweries in the state, which are not adequately covered here. The key watershed moment in 2005 came when the Pop the Cap movement succeeded, and another barrier to alcohol sale from the prohibition movement was defeated.

In a conversation with the movement's founder, Sean Wilson, the "Pop the Cap" story was recounted as follows. In 2004, he had attended a party with some friends. At this party were a number of strange and interesting beers Mr. Wilson had never seen before: barleywines, imperial stouts, double IPAs, etcetera. Sean asked his friends where these beers had come from; they explained they had been purchased out of state. Why? Because they were illegal to sell in North Carolina. When bans lifting the sale of alcohol were repealed in 1937, there was a restriction placed on beer: it could not be above 6% alcohol by volume. As Sean tells the story, this law infuriated him. It seemed both archaic and counterproductive. It meant that many styles and flavors of beer could not be enjoyed in the state (legally) since those styles entail higher ABV. It meant tax dollars the state was losing out on. The homebrew community in North Carolina was still very strong at that time, and many people had been making these arguments for years. Sean formed the Pop the Cap group, hired a lobbyist, and began campaigning to raise awareness about the proposed legislation. Receiving bipartisan support, legislators signed a bill in 2005 that would raise the cap to 15% ABV. Four years later, Sean would go on to open Fullsteam Brewery in Durham.

It would be difficult to estimate the economic and cultural effect of the bill's passage. In the 12 years that have passed, more than 170 breweries have opened. North Carolina became a

destination spot for beer tourism, writers, and other brewers. The range for beer's potential

expanded, and enthusiasts rushed to embrace the possibility. Between 2009 and 2012, Asheville

won the USA Today Beer City Poll 4 years in a row (McLeod, 2012.) A study of beer tourism in

North Carolina found it is a viable and growing niche of tourism, driven largely by craft beer

(Francioni, 2012). Beer tourism occurs when individuals plan a trip specifically to visit a

brewery. Of 511 brewery visitors surveyed, 68 reported they were "beer-focused" tourists. In

2012, Oskar Blues and Sierra Nevada, two nationally reputed, West Coast craft breweries would

announce their plans to open production facilities near Asheville, cementing that city's status as

"beer mecca."

The pathway of "market rebels," described by Rao, that spurred the national craft beer

scene, has been replicated here on the state level. People who were passionate about expanding

the range of beer's potential, lobbied in their communities to change laws. They went onto to

become pioneers in establishing breweries of their own in those communities. Festivals, beer

clubs, beer tourism, and microbreweries attract beer fans from across the United States. In towns

across North Carolina, local breweries have opened as hobbyists and enthusiasts have placed

their dreams on the line. The North Carolina craft beer scene should therefore offer insightful

examples of people and firms who have managed to turn their consumer passions into productive

careers.

Conclusion

The production and consumption of craft beer make for a compelling case to examine to

potential for new boundaries in the discursive regimes of the "post-fordist" workplace. Beer has

been central to the organization of social institutions throughout various stages of civilization.

Anthropologists now believe that the desire to produce beer may have encouraged hunter-

gatherer nomads to settle and plant crops. In industrial Europe, beer production was one of the

first manufacturing industries—but the techniques for such business practices had begun centuries before in the monastic abbeys. The beer commodity thus spurred early adoption of modern production practices. When American corporations of the 19th century began their expansion into national level powerhouses, it was the industrial production of beer that presaged practices of vertical integration, national advertising, assembly lines, and pasteurization. The first nationally organized social movement—the Temperance Movement—came to combat the perceived social ills of alcoholic consumption. It seems that the organization of social systems producing and consuming beer may indicate more general trends shifting in the reproduction of society.

Finally, the craft beer market has emerged from the enthusiasm of the consumer discourse. What happens to the nature of workplace identity under such conditions? North Carolina fits as an appropriate unit of analysis for examining the consumer discourse, and the workers who may or may not embrace it as they engage the labor process. The next chapter considers the practices and narratives that constitute that market discourse.

CHAPTER 4: DOMAINS OF DISCOURSE: SHAPING THE CRAFT BEER CONSUMER

In Chapter 1, I argued that specific markets where consumers are highly engaged could create discursive fields surrounding workplaces (central to those markets) with positive frames for making sense of the work required. Chapter 3 documented the emergence of "craft beer" on the strength of such consumer engagement—i.e. the market rebels (Rao, 2009). Here in Chapter 4, I want to document the content of craft beer consumer discourse as it appeared in the state of North Carolina. What messages communicated the value of craft beer consumption to consumers? Why should they drink "craft" beer? Observing these messages are important, since these same messages are expected to appear if workers identify with their jobs using the consumptive discourses.

As craft beer markets have grown rapidly, the consumer engagement bringing about its emergence may no longer fuel its mainstream expansion. Different kinds of market actors may have stepped in as craft beer's passionate consumers legitimate economic opportunity. The discourses spurring craft beers' consumer engagement may have splintered, evolved, or changed dramatically. Hence, this chapter attempts to assess the content and degree of coherence in North Carolina's craft beer market, so that expectations for the *kind* of discourse appearing in craft beer worker's identity can be made.

Discourses of Consumption

First let us turn to the theoretical question of how market systems legitimate consumers' lifestyle choices. Field theorists argue that markets are socially produced and organized, at least partially, by discourse (Beckert, 2009). Discourses exist as "texture" for symbols—they form

the parameters for language to take meaning within interaction. Symbolism manifests in the form of social identities, roles, and positions that are articulated to actors or observers of the market system. In the development of social fields, discourse plays a critical role in conveying, and legitimating, what is valuable in the field space (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Discourse manifests when actors articulate goals that are worth pursuing—which practices, narratives, or sentiments are "good," and which are "bad"—within a particular field.

Therefore, in order for actors to engage a space, some shared perception of *value* must be orienting the cognition of actors (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). However, sociologists and economists alike recognize that value does not have to monetary. On a football field, points are valuable. This is determined by institutions that regulate the rules—the size of the playing space, how points are scored, when they do not count. In American football, the National Football League is external to the "field" where the game is played. The playing field is highly controlled, and nested within that institutional domain. But on the field, the players act in the interest of their team to produce value. Each team values points, yet it is uncertain from game to game which team will gain the most points, and thus be labelled "winner" by the external institutions governing the space.

Discourse is symbolic texture for helping actors make sense out of what is valuable. In contemporary markets, companies have been using brands to engage consumers to perceive particular consumptive acts as part of some lifestyle experience (Mosmans, 1995). However, consumers do not just accept these branded messages passively (Cayla & Zwick, 2011). Consumers dictate to companies the meaning of messages as well. Feedback loops between companies and consumers once depended solely on the success of a product once it reached the market. Today, social media and information technologies make feedback—either directly in the

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form of comments and product reviews (on Amazon, Yelp, etc) or indirectly in the form of real time sales data—easier for companies to digest and adjust. Market discourse is therefore not a "one-way street." There is a dynamic back and forth; the nature of which likely varies from market to market.

Where market actors (those seeking to dictate value) and consumers have settled into a regular, stable pattern of economic exchange for particular types of craft beer consumption, I expect to find a "domain of discourse." These are fields *within* the craft beer social system. Particular types of establishments, presumptions about value, practices, and narratives create a distinctive "realm" of consumption. Domains of discourse are spaces where craft beer's meaning—what makes it valuable for consumers and producers—takes on a particular characterization. This characterization may or may not be reflected consistently in other domains of the craft beer space. It is an empirical question—one that should be answered through observations of valuation processes in the craft beer space.

Mapping the Discursive Domains

Based on the previous chapter's discussion of the historical conditions surrounding craft beer's emergence, it appears at least two different forms of valuation orient the interest of market actors: "monetary" and "philal." While both can be considered forms of value, the economies they exchange on are quite different. Monetary valuation occurs when actors seek monetary rewards. Goods or services are offered in a market space for consumers, in the hopes of creating profits. For these market actors, economies of scale probably drive the organizational form— increasing its size and cost of technological infrastructure—toward maximizing either short or long term profits.

On the opposite end of this spectrum, philal valuation comes from Adam Arviddsons' (2013) conception of value in the *Ethical Economy*. It is creating something—goods, services,

or even something as simple as strategies, concepts, or words—that is *useful* to others involved in the same market space. Philal valuation can be most prevalently seen amongst the open source code community. Wikipedia offers another example. Reviews of products on Amazon or establishments on Yelp can be driven by philal production of the consumers. Philal is Adam Arvidssons' way of conceptualizing what happens when consumers produce in the new, participatory economy: a new kind of economy emerges, one where paying attention, or using some concept, good or service thereby makes it valuable. In the craft beer market space, then, we are interested in philal valuation—by how, where, and who—as well as monetary valuation.

Both monetary and philal forms of valuation appear to drive the expansion of the craft beer market. At times, it appears actors in this market space perceive these forms of valuation to be antagonistic. Many efforts of philal valuation are consistent with how craft beer began—by people who wanted to share their passion. This "authenticity" is part of the craft beer history. The battle cry of the "beautiful David versus grotesque Goliaths," has motivated beer enthusiasts, seeking to carve out a space for their "hobby," since the 1970s. Clear efforts to police actors and place them on one side of the line or the other can be observed. Breweries may tread carefully if they pursue both paths. Any company in this space must identify with "authenticity" and "passion" as central to their formal mission. Yet the pursuit of volume sales could be viewed as antithetical to that form of "authenticity."

Based on preliminary research, as well as the case study from Chapter 3, I expect a second tension driving the discourse of consumers who engage the spaces supported by markets actors. Craft beer consumers seem to use contrasting narratives—and rituals—to legitimate their drinking. *Tasting versus drinking* forms an apparent mutually exclusive frame for making sense

of craft beer consumption. Tasting refers to consumers' desire to taste, and then communicate

that experience.

At another local bar in Carrboro, on another occasion, I recorded the following exchange:

Today, I watched two men drinking together at the bar. Both were in their late
30s to early 40s. They were both highly masculine in their appearance: scruffy
beards, long unkempt hair, tattered T-shirts and blue jeans. One had a faded
tattoo, partially sticking out of his shirt I couldn't quite make out. They
exchanged beers, drinking a slight sip of each, and then took turns nodding
approval. They exchanged back. Their conversation continued; it appeared they
were referencing the beers. –Field Notes, December 19th, 2014

Watching people exchange and taste one another's beers was a regular occurrence in my

observations. In fact, if one is drinking a beer, and another in your company expresses some

curiosity about it, it would be rude to NOT offer them a taste. Tasting different beers, and thus

learning how to distinguish between styles, is an expected pursuit of craft beer drinkers.

On the other end of the consumer spectrum, "drinking" beer is a consumptive act that is

done for the purpose of intoxication. Here, I refer to drinking as a highly embedded social

experience. It is often done with friends. Social rituals occur for the purpose of sharing

intoxication—getting a drink after work. If the point is not to get drunk, then it is at least to

become relaxed. In the craft beer space these discourses of consumption are *imagined* as though

they are in tension. Tasting is seen as the opposite of drinking. People would often tell me, "It is

not about getting drunk." Meaning, their passion in craft beer is motivated by learning how to

taste beer, not the libidinal effects of intoxication.

Figure 1: Intersection of Dialectical Tensions by Consumers and Producers
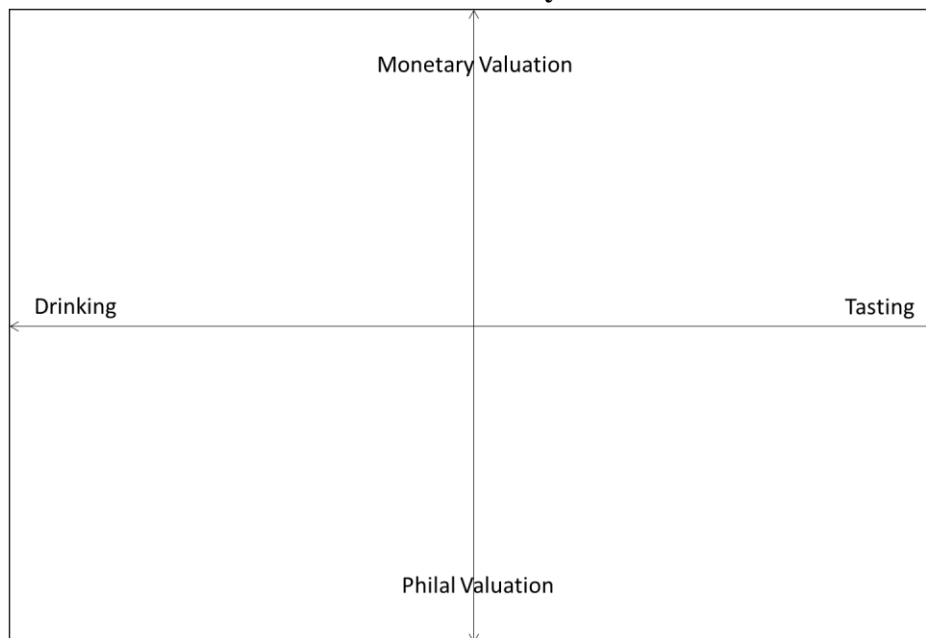
Intersecting these two continuums forms a two by two grid, shown above in Figure 1.

The intersection creates four distinct "extremes" where discursive domains may fall. My

empirical observations thus sought to demarcate differences in narratives and practices

legitimating valuation and/or consumption. I expect to find domains gravitating to each of the

four extremes, but I also expect points of overlap. This chapter seeks to identify narratives that

run throughout and across these different domains: here we may observe a coherent "craft beer"

discourse.

Findings: Characterizing the Domains of Discourse

Craft beer discourse could be grouped into six distinct domains, summarized in Table 2

below. These domains are spaces where distinct patterns in narrative and practice emerge when

market actors produce goods, services, or content for consumers. For discussion, each domain

has been hierarchically arranged according to relative size of organizations typically operating in

that domain, and the scope of consumers that are affected. It is probably not a coincidence that

the type of valuation practiced in each domain (monetary to philal) tracks accordingly, with the

largest domains focused on monetary value, and the smaller ones focues on philal valuation. The

macro-controlled level is controlled by the two largest corporations (decribed below) in the

global beer industry, but craft beer competes directly, either on a grocery store shelfs or

convenience stores. At the *quality* domain, craft beer reaches out to mainstream consumers by

fashioning itself as an advanced, sophisticated luxury good. Within the *internet media* realm, the

labyrinth of craft beer's diversity becomes digestible, and consumers can learn more and more

about tasting or creating beers. Meanwhile, the *festival* domain peacefully comingles different

kinds of market actors, with each tent pitched potentially housing a markedly different kind of

craft beer discourse. Next, the *local* domain may be described as the "heart" of the craft beer

consumer culture: finely honed beer knowledge is communicated in direct exchange with

consumers. Finally, the smallest domain is the *consumer-producer* level. Here, fans of craft

beer have created organizations producing content for other craft beer consumers.

Table 2. Six Domains of Craft Beer Discourse.

Domain	Narratives	Practices	Valuation Strategy
Macro-Controlled Beer	Crafty Beer Price drives preferences.	Distributors control tap space and shelf space Acquisitions and mergers	Monetary
Quality	Beer is Great, Beer is Good Inclusive Branding	Family and friends restaurant experience Consumer clubs	Monetarily driven for most companies, with some philal roots or persistent traces
Internet/Social Media	Tasting Beer The Fantasy Life of Beer	Professionals Reviewing Beer Consumers Rating Beers Sharing Information News Lifestyle & Trends	Philal valuation from consumers = monetary valuation for firms

Festivals	Taste and Try Have FUN!!	Tame Party Drinking and Tasting to extremes	Monetarily driven, but with pervasive philal throughout.
Local	Local, community businesses are good Macro beer vs. Craft beer Exclusive Branding Escape the Corporate World	Open Spaces Inclusive feeling Teaching beer Rotating Selections	Philal inspired, but monetary value necessary.
Consumer-Producer	Political Cause X intersects with local, independent beer Empowerment or Advocacy Taste and Try Drink!	Raising awareness, spreading information, or opinions (reviews) Small, tiny, part-time organizations Focused purpose	Philal valuation—organizations driven by personal purpose.

At the larger domains, organizations are more focused on monetary valuation. Philal valuation strategies mix into the discourse as the domains become more restricted in scale and scope. Consumer-producer organizations are intensely involved in either spreading craft beer's fandom—creating new consumers of craft beer—or they merge their passion for beer with some other passion, like prostate cancer, gender, or community awareness.

Below I describe the six domains of discourse in more detail, and where each falls on the grid in Figure 1. Circles are drawn to represent each domain as it maps onto the grid. The size of the circles does not represent the size of the domain, but rather the scope of the overall craft beer discourse that particular domain encompasses. For example, the festival domain usually includes nearly all actors in this market space. Both "tasting to try" as well drinking for fun are

practiced and celebrated in the festival domain. Within the same festival space, some booths are

selling products at extremely high mark-ups (sports memorabilia, t-shirst; for monetary

valuation) while others are conducting free demonstrations for how to brew a batch of beer

(philal valuation). Meanwhile, the macro-controlled domain operates almost exclusively on

price and sales volume. The festival domain therefore encompasses the greatest range of

variation in the narrative and practice in craft beer social spaces, while the macro-controlled

domain is quite narrow. For each sphere of the discursive domain, I describe generally the level,

how consumption occurs, how market actors attempt to organize and legitimate consumption

(through narrative and practice), as well as how consumers engage these spaces. The circles

drawn below are for visual aid, representing how each domain relates to others within the

framework of these dialectically opposed discursive tensions (i.e. tasting versus drinking; philal

versus monetary valuation.)

Domain 1: Macro-Controlled Consumption

According to the Brewers Association, "craft beer"—or independently owned brewers

who produce less than 6 million barrels per year—made $23.5 billion dollars in 2016 sales

(Brewers Association, 2018). Amazingly, this is 22% of the total beer pie in the United States

(two decades ago, this figure would be in the low single digits). Two conglomerates control the

vast majority of the remaining 78% of 2016 beer sales—AB InBev SAB Miller is one; Molson

Coors is the other. If those names sound like a mouthful of random words, it is because they

represent mergers of previously dominant brewers, orchestrated by Brazilian, Belgium, Mexican,

or Asian companies. AB InBev SAB Miller owns the Budweiser brand, and is the most recent of

these mega mergers. In a press release last year, the company proclaimed its total sales would be

$55 billion worldwide—more than double the *entire* US craft beer market. In 2016, the top 11

selling beers in the US (or almost seven billion dollars) accounted for 6% of all beer sold—equal

to nearly one-fourth of the total craft beer market. For perspective, there were probably 15,000 different beers produced in the United States last year. Either AB InBev SAB Miller or Molson Coors own all eleven best-selling beers. Of those eleven beers, eight are "light" beers, a "style" that almost no craft brewery would even make (Grocery Headquarters, 2017). The "light" version of the American Pale Lager is far away the best selling beer style in America, dominating the total beer market. The United States beer market is truly segmented. Two mega companies selling the same beer style dominate nearly eighty percent of the market. The 5,000 other breweries compete for the remaining 20 percent of the pie—but they are selling different beer in different places, to different customers.

In craft beer scenes, these mega companies are known as "macro beer"—beer that is produced on a large scale, using computer automated systems run by chemists. Because of the 3 tier system, distribution companies are critical to keeping the shelves stocked with all this beer. North Carolina has 50 distribution companies; some states only have one or two distributors. It is often the case that relationships with large, macro companies go back many decades. They predate the craft beer boom, and are not likely to change without legislation that alters their control of the distribution market. Hence, the macro companies control the organization of bar, restaurant and grocery store shelf space, indirectly by controlling the distribution companies.

The popular narrative here presumes that grocery shoppers make selections based on price, and habit. As one distribution representative described in an interview, "Some people have been buying a case of Busch beer for $12.99 their whole life. They're not gonna buy a six-pack of IPA's for $9.99." Supermarket shelves thus orderly arrange beer from highest price to lowest price. Implicit judgements of quality price into the beer. The "lower" half of any beer aisle is usually comprised of one style: the American pale lager. These variants of Budweiser

form at least one half, if not more, of the selection. Malt liquors sit at the bottom of this price selection. As one moves across the aisle, prices go up, and we begin to see "craft" beers. Some are local, others are just names which the general consumer may have been seen or heard talked about somewhere. Craft beer is not known for its television ads, but there are product placements here and there (The character known as Ross on an episode of Friends drinks a Sierra Nevada in the late 1990s). Samuel Adams usually marks the point where higher quality beer begins. Sierra Nevada and Oskar Blues will be next, indicating that, while the craft beer pie on grocery store shelves is small, it is dominated by a handful of national players.

Still, the average beer drinker has heard of craft beer, and knows where those higher quality, unique and different beers reside on the grocery store shelf. Here consumers may easily be duped into buying macro-controlled beer, even though they are looking for brands that are independent. Since the 1990's, macro beer companies have attempted to mimic the look of craft beer brands. Brewing more flavorful, higher quality-tasting beer is not really the challenge, but getting consumers to identify with the edgy, independent nature of the brand. More recently, this has been accomplished by buying out actual craft beer brands, thus bringing along their supporters, and maintaining the brand already built. Lagunitas, Goose Island, and Wicked Weed are recent examples of this strategy. They are different styles from the American Pale Lager, and often taste as good as any local fare, but only people who read and follow craft beer news would know the difference.

Except for the Boston Beer Company (maker of Sam Adams), craft beer does not advertise at this level, but regional and local brewers do find shelf space. This is particularly true in locally owned, co-op grocery stores, or those aimed at affluent professionals. In these stores, local breweries have been able to bypass distributors and large corporate grocery chains, to work

with community-minded grocers. In grocery stores, experimentation and tasting narratives

(which we will see below) are absent. Industry sales reps believe that people buy what they are

used to in grocery stores, so they tend to buy beers they know that they like. Competition is

between large macros, who compete on consumers making preference decisions based on price

point.

Figure 2. Macro-Controlled Domain
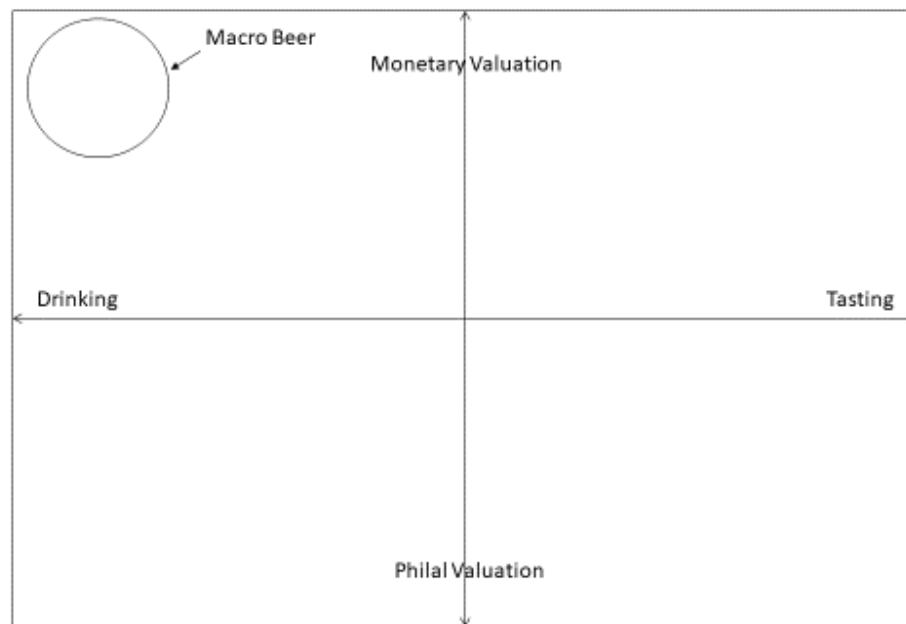
In Figure 2, the macro-controlled level maps onto the two by two grid at the extreme

corner of quadrant 1, where drinking and monetary valuation discourses most clearly dominant.

Size of circles does not indicate the size of the domain, but its dispersal across the discursive

dimensions of the market space. Macro-controlled spaces appear to be intimately related to the

production of craft beer discourse. It is the backdrop, or counterpoint, whose proliferation still

dominates the drinking habits of Americans, and forms the foil that "real" craft beer drinkers

seek to frame their own consumptive habits against.

Domain 2: Quality Consumptive Experience

As craft beer attempts to cross into mainstream, and target affluent consumers who seek luxury, quality and novelty, we observe a distinct domain of consumer discourse: the quality consumptive experience. Capital-intensive investments mean to create generous returns. Here, craft beer companies seeking to profit from the authenticity, passion, and innovation that "craft" beer represents, are caught in a dilemma. Today, general audiences have expectations regarding the "authentic" organizational identity of craft beer (Carroll & Swaminathan, 2000.) However, the concepts of "local," "hand-crafted," and "community" could potentially be delegitimated by the presence of multi-million dollar production facilities. Morever, the Fritz Maytags' strategy of emphasizing tradition and passion is now ubiquitous on the brandscape, making it difficult to use the tried and true tact of authenticity without evoking clicheic boredom in customers. Effective, focused branding becomes more critical than ever, but can corporate techniques (branding) capture the imagination of people who are drawn to the rebellious space craft beer seems to be evoking more generally?

A compromise of sorts emerges at this level, appearing to navigate this tension. The predominant narrative energizing this domain appears to celebrate beer *for its own sake*. To drink beer, try different beers, and celebrate the variety and complexity of beer are jovially signaled by consumers and advertisements alike. It may be surmised simply as "Beer is great, beer is good." "Beer!" becomes something of a battle cry, requiring no explanation or legitimation to enjoy. This may be observed in a number of ways. To begin with, owners of million-dollar breweries predominantly tout the quality and novelty of their beers as the main selling point. In an interview with a large North Carolina regional brewer, I asked why craft beer had grown so much in recent years. Rather than emphasizing the passion for brewing, or consumer's desires for locally sourced products, he said, "It is like how coffee has grown in

recent years. There used to be just one kind of coffee, and it wasn't that good. Then Starbucks came along and opened everyone's eyes to the range of quality." The narrative is that craft beer offers a superior product, because of its greater variety, and focus on quality.

The "renaissance of craft beer" is about the advancement of beer's quality as a product—rather than the "beautiful David's" that homebrewers tend to see. The owner of Foothills, Jaimie Barthalomew echoed this sentiment in a 2008 interview: "We want to celebrate the diversity of beer and strive to make each beer unique and different. The last thing we want is for customers to think that our beer tastes like everyone else's. We come up with all our own recipes and use a wide range of ingredients to differentiate our beers" (Ogletree, 2008). This narrative of celebrating beer's diversity is generic, meant to appeal to a wide range of customers, without upsetting the distributors they must rely on to sell their product in grocery stores, gas stations, and restaurants.

Consumers also share in this battle cry of "beer is great, beer is good." They will tweet pictures of their beers, badges they have earned by drinking beers via clubs or apps. Unlike more serious beer consumers, who review the beers they are drinking, these consumers are simply saying, "Look, I'm drinking beer!" Nearly every company at this level has an establishment where the experience of beer, food, games, family and friends can be consumed all in one fine, full evening. The vast majority of consumers at this level are affluent white professionals. Men and their wives and or girlfriends frequent these establishments. During most observations, the quality establishment would be packed, without a single person of color.

Three types of organizations operate at this level: regional breweries that produce for multiple states, national beer bars, and high-end brewpubs. In North Carolina, these breweries include Oskar Blues, New Belgium, Sierra Nevada, Foothills, and Highland Brewing—all

producing at least 15,000 barrels per year, and commonly found on grocery store shelves. National beer bars include places like World of Beer, Carolina Ale House and Flying Saucer, where mainstream consumers are courted by fusing the sports bar atmosphere with an overwhelming beer selection—some local, but also popular imports as well as nationally known craft beer is highly representative of the selection. Finally, the restaurant-brew pub combination offers upscale, freshly-made food choices, along with fresh beer, brewed onsite. Top of the Hill in Chapel Hill North Carolina, Rock Bottom in multiple locations, and Lynnwood Brewing Concern in Raleigh, North Carolina are examples of these establishments.

Craft breweries operating at this level may have started out as small, independent operations that became enormously large as craft beer drinkers exploded in some area (Sierra Nevada in the early 1990s, Highland and then Foothills in North Carolina grew rapidly following changes in legislation). Their emergence as multi-million dollar powerhouses, however, is a rather recent development. If one were to visit the Sierra Nevada facility near Asheville, North Carolina, the words "local" or "micro" would probably not come to mind. Foothills, founded in 2007, expanded more recently, yet—as the company's owner intimated during a tour—their facility is worth over ten million dollars. These breweries are on grocery store shelves, and have legions of die-hard followers who religiously purchase the beer.

A particular branding strategies accompanies these breweries. Solving the dilemma of "million-dollar, handcrafted authenticity" is done by using one of two narratives: generic-local or pop-culture deviance. Both allow these mega producers to echo the "traditional" craft beer narrative, while broadening its appeal to a wider range of potential customers. The following paragraphs describe each of these branding strategies in more detail.

Generic–local narratives evoke a sense of place that is still generic enough to include many, many people. For example, in North Carolina, *Foothills Brewing* in Winston Salem is a relatively new (2007) fast growing regional brewery. "Foothills" is another name for the piedmont area of North Carolina. Highland and Carolina Brewery are other examples. They aim to create a fuzzy sense of place, thus widening the range of individuals who could potentially feel included in the brands' narrative. The founder of a regional brewery, who once worked for a local place, provides an example of this logic:

> We called the beer Smithville Ale and I never understood it. I thought it was a great beer, but no one outside Smithville would buy it. *–Interview 2015, Owner of Regional Brewery*

A second branding strategy I observed may be labelled "*Pop Cultural Deviance*." Quality-aimed brewers use an "edgy" aesthetic that would not appear in Super Bowl Commercials or daytime television. For example, "Wicked Weed," an Asheville brewery that was recently bought out by InBev—signaling its aspirations as regional-minded in scope from the beginning—cleverly evokes a sense of beer's history and appears aggressive or edgy while doing so. The name *Wicked Weed* creates a direct symbolic connection to marijuana, thus clearly signaling to consumers its allegiance beyond the boundaries of mainstream, polite discourse. If consumers investigate why a brewer would claim "weed" as one of its ingredients, they would deepen their knowledge of beer and its history. Hops are a type of hemp, and thus a cousin of marijuana. At some point in the 13th century, when hops were first introduced to beer, many in Western Europe did not trust the potentially pagan origins of the plant. Thus naming it a "wicked weed," they warned people against its usage. Thankfully the name was playfully adopted, and we now have hoppy beer. "Aviator" is another example. The theme is adopted because of the founder's love of planes. Aesthetically, the brand is defined by its cartoonish-

masculinity. Beer names and their labels are colorful, decadently depicted images of demons, animals, or bikini clad females. "Unknown" Brewing, in Charlotte, is another example. Its website celebrates a call to adventure, living life on the edge, hurtling toward the "unknown."

Pop-Cultural deviance and generic-local are thus two predominant branding strategies of breweries who aim to capture "quality" beer drinkers. This generic space evoked by the branding imagery is set in contrast to cookie-cutter corporate America. Mainstream corporate America becomes a backdrop, allowing advertisers to foreground a contrasting lifestyle or local space. The logic seems to appeal to consumers eschewing corporate America, but include as many of them as possible.

Breweries operating at this level also tend to have cross-platform experiences for their products, much like the prescriptive branding literature advocates. For example, most of the companies at this level have some type of "club" for consumers, which may be joined by purchasing a membership. These clubs come with a card. When a customer visits one of the company's establishments, and purchases a beer, the card is given to staff, so the beers' purchase and consumption may be tracked. By drinking more beer, consumers earn points. The goal is to try as many different beers as possible. In states where it is legal, those consumers will be recognized for successfully drinking a set number of beers. For example, at World of Beer, if you drink 100 different beers, you get a placard with your name on the wall. Consumers tweet the beers they are drinking as they chart this path. These tweets simply showcase the beer. There is a picture of the beer, its name, and where it is being consumed. The breweries or organizations thus become a kind of cathedral, or shrine, anchoring the center to a particular beer cosmos. Events, tasting, restaurants, bands, and contests operate in tandem with specific companies to communicate the lifestyle. These companies practice branding strategies that are

nearly identical to large corporations. Inclusive branding narratives try to create large, generic spaces where individuals can potentially feel a personal connection—have some kind of experience—with that brand.

Aside from breweries, "craft-beer themed" restaurants or bars that are either franchised, or part of a large company, operate in a similar fashion. Representing millions in investments, these establishments introduce affluent consumers to the variety, quality and innovation that is possible in the beer market of today. For example, World of Beer in Cary boasts "over 500 in the cooler," from around the world. The aesthetic of the sports bar is often imitated—young women in skirts are the predominant servers, plasma screens line the walls, with burgers and wings on the menu. Flying Saucer would send young women in skimpy uniforms to beer festivals, handing out discounts for joining their club. Layers of management, with well-trained staff, operate to evoke a similar experience at any of the company's locations. These establishments tend to be bureaucratically organized, with a clear hierarchy and rules for operating. As a former employee at World of Beer stated, "The training was super well organized. They had these books that were this thick [holds her palms inches apart], that they used at all of their restaurants to teach us how to talk about beer."

Figure 3. The Quality Domain
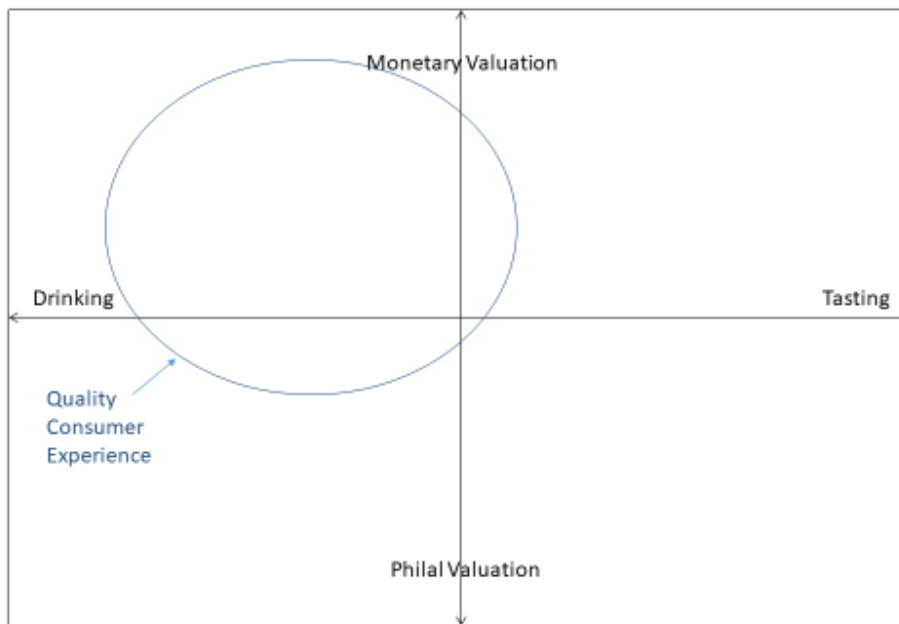
In Figure 3, the quality field level maps mostly onto the monetary valuation side of the spectrum, although it is closer to the philal end of the continuum than the macro level. Many of the people and companies that comprise this level began on the philal side, but moved onto further toward monetary valuation as the organization's size (and mission) evolved. Sierra Nevada and New Belgium are two examples of these organizations. These organizations still perform many "philal" valuation activities, such as charity events, sustainability practices, and employee ownership of stock. Their size, scope, and scale, however, make increasing profitability necessary for their own survival, and are thus placed at that end of spectrum. They overlap some with the grocery sphere, since many of these companies are also on those shelves. The market actors operating in this domain attempt to grow their consumer base as wide as possible. Active, even aggressive, marketing and economies of scale strategies will inform its business decisions. Craft beer is viewed as a "renaissance" for the consumption of beer. People

have realized that greater quality and diversity is possible: these are the organizations that are leading the way. Craft brewers operating at this level must convey the authenticity of the craft beer movement, while being multi-million dollar enterprises. The "greatness" of beer marks a compromise for doing that.

Domain 3: Internet Media Realm

The internet media realm consists of websites that promote craft beer tasting or charity events, information about beer, and lifestyle articles—for the purpose of generating a profit. Consumers here begin learning more about the beers they are drinking. The experience of ordering a "craft" beer can be a little daunting. Aside from the risk of purchasing a product that will be displeasing to the senses, there is a risk of looking foolish when trying to choose such products. A landscape of questions stands before the neophyte consumer, almost beckoning. This vast swathe of things to know creates a market for those that can offer guidance. Thus, the internet is awash in media companies willing to help consumers along—with reviews, articles, discussion forums, and resources for keeping track of beers one has tried, and whether or not they were enjoyed—in exchange for clicks, page views, and even user-generated content.

Here we may observe an interesting economic space where "philal" valuation and monetary valuation develop a method for exchange. Internet media companies generate free content for users. Users' consumption level determines the value of that content. As users share, learn and disseminate knowledge, judgements about what information is worthy and what is not are being made. Consumers create "philal" valuation through the active, participatory consumption that comprise this level—they click links, share stories, and write reviews. Media companies receive that "capital" from users, then exchange it for monetary capital via advertising space. Membership fees, donations, and other currency contributions may help

defray costs, but valuation from advertising space appear vital. Further study would be needed to establish how this particular market dynamic actually operates.

The most predominant narrative at this level regards *tasting beer*. The market actors here attempt to construct criteria for judging which beers are "good," and which ones are "bad." The vast majority of content at this level concern beer reviews. With over 6000 distinct beers produced in North Carolina, there is no lack of opportunity for demonstrating these criteria. It is recognized that taste is subjective. What one person enjoys, another may not. Hence, tasting is necessary. The narrative presumes one cannot really know what beers they enjoy or do not enjoy, until trying them. When a beer is deemed "good," there is a clear pattern: it should fit what is expected from the beer's style, while also doing something unexpected or original within the bounds of that style. What to expect from a style, whether a beer fits, and whether it has done something unique are all subject to dialogue. The production of this dialogue drives beer reviewers from professional and consumers alike.

To further explain this process, reviewers describe a beer in 4 categories: color, aroma, taste, and mouthfeel. Each style is expected to generally have certain characteristics, but particular breweries will "play" with the boundaries of style. For example, this review of Foothills' *Sexual Chocolate* on the media site *Beer Advocate* demonstrates:

> Body color seems classic black walnut and dark but with some little close
> inspection it appears to have some red in there strangely when held up to light.
> Nice looker of a stout. –*Beeradvocate.com, accessed June 13th, 2015*

While stouts are normally black, this one has some red in it. This unexpected "surprise" pleases the reviewer. If the beer had been thoroughly red, however, it would have been considered a failure, since it was claiming to *be* a stout, but not really *doing* the stout. This uncertainty—how a particular brewery will do a particular style—drives much of the dialogue

between serious beer drinkers. The same is true of the beer's flavor. Beers should hit the notes of the style, while also doing something a little original with that style.

A second narrative common at this level involves fantasizing *how* a particular beer should be consumed, and what its consumption signals about the consumer. This occurs in two ways. Once a particular beer is established as good, speculation may follow as to what kind of consumptive experience best would maximize the enjoyment of the beverage. The most common form this takes is the "seasonal" beer. For example, porters or stouts are best in the winter, while light crisp lagers are best in the summer. Many breweries only release certain beers for the corresponding season. The following exchange on a podcast called *Cheers Charlotte* demonstrates another form this fantasy life may take:

> **Host 2:** "She brought out a cantaloupe saison."
>
> **Host 3:** "I saw that but didn't get to try it."
>
> **Host 2:** "It was amazing. I only got a sip but I was blown away. It was hot, and I was sweating a bit. I got a taste of that and it was so good. You could just crush those all day by the pool."

The assumption is that a good beer has a particular role to play in a broader consumptive moment. "…*You could just crush those all day by the pool*," evokes a fantasy about how best to consume the beer. The beer's package no longer just promises a pleasing taste and intoxication, but a lifestyle experience. Similarly, there are ubiquitous efforts to pair beer with food, a practice borrowed from wine-drinking. For any review of beer, there is nearly always a reference as to how or where to consumer the beer. These dialogues help produce a fantasy, where consumers may symbolically anchor particular beers to particular kinds of experiences.

Secondly, the fantasy life of beer seems to indicate what kind of person chooses which kind of beer. For example, the following article, "What Your Beer Says About You," was published on Thrillist, Feb. 1, 2014, contained this picture:

Figure 4: The Fantasy Life of Beer

For these writers, tongue-in-cheek though it may appear, the consumption of a particular beer symbolizes a type of life experience. These articles are not uncommon, and some adopt a more serious tone. To avoid sending the wrong message, writers consider what kinds of beers to bring to certain events, like a Super Bowl Party. Thus, beer has a "fantasy life," meaning, its consumption is imagined to entail particular life experiences, of which particular beers are imagined to be part and parcel of.

Consumers in this space primarily contribute through their attention and use of the websites. Literally dozens if not hundreds of tools exist for consumers to track their beer. Ratemybeer, BeerAdvocate, and Untapped offer free accounts that allow users to describe the beers they have consumed. (These are different from the clubs described in the previous level.

The clubs cater to one establishment, while these allow consumers to track beers from any bar or brewery that one may drink.) They may add reviews. These reviews range greatly in sophistication, from "Great beer!" to a full essay on each of the different tasting dimensions.

Figure 5. Internet Media Domain
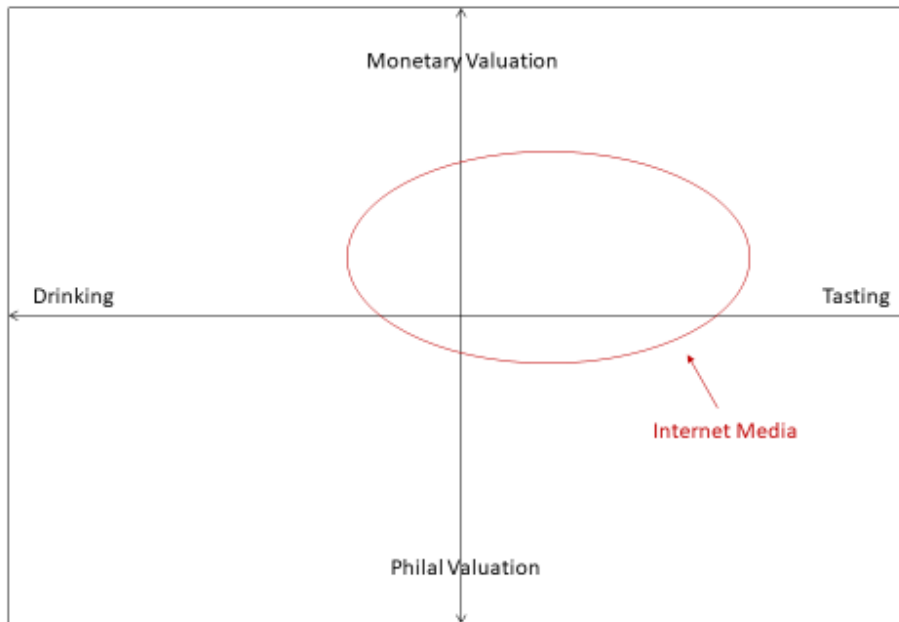
In Figure 5, the internet media field maps partially onto all four dimensions of the craft beer market system, but mostly comprising the "tasting" and "monetary" spaces. While drinking and the drinking culture are celebrated in the domains constructed by these actors, the chief engine of the discourse is tasting—spreading information and access for consumers regarding style, history, and news about breweries. Given the strong presence of internet media from the quality space—commercial clubs, apps for tracking beer, and a purpose for creating profit—the quality and media levels overlap some. The internet media realm, however, is where serious craft beer consumers are being made, and are thus pulling away from mainstream spaces where "quality" actors attempt to penetrate. Given the strong commitment to spreading knowledge and passion for learning how to taste beer—and because it is an economy of consumer's attention on

which these organizations compete—the media space occupies some portions of the phial dimension.

Domain 4: Festivals

The craft beer festival is a space where every tension in craft beer discourse comes together at once. Extreme monetary extortion of consumers can exist right next to a booth where people peddle handmade wares. Consumers are there to taste, and take that very seriously. Others are getting as drunk as their legs will allow. All paths to beer seem to co-exist in the festival space.

Craft beer festivals occur when some group organizes a number of breweries to offer samples to festival goers. They can be organized by a wide variety of market actors. Amongst the 12 observed, examples range from a *brewery* (like Beer Army's "Brew Bern,") a *city non-profit* ("Brewgaloo" is organized by Shop Local Raleigh,) a *magazine* ("The World Beer Festival," one of the oldest craft beer festivals on the east coast, is organized by Durham's All About Beer, a magazine) to a *beer club* ("Beericana" is organized by 919 Beer.) They may be large or small affairs, with the smallest I observed offering 50 beers to sample, while the largest offered nearly 300. Despite this wide array of market actors, a tried and true pattern to beer festivals can be observed. Food trucks, live music, art exhibits, home brew exhibits, and games will be offered. Hundreds or even thousands of people cram together in grassy meadows, city streets, or hotel conference rooms to sample beers, talk to brewers or brewery reps, and meet people. Catchy naming—often made up words or phrases that are variants on some terminology related to beer (Beericana, Brew Bern, Brewgaloo, and Burning Can)—beer tasting, and charity support also comprised the core elements of every festival observed

The most predominate narrative at the festival involves tasting beer. This is the ostensible reason for organizing festivals. The small, 4 to 6-ounce cup one is given with their ID

bracelet assumes sampling one beer, then quickly getting another—rather than the pint glass that is served at bars or bottleshops. 5 gallon buckets often sit in front of brewery booths, so an unwanted beer can be jettisoned, and then the cup refilled—even rinsed—by the server. When consumers wait in line, the person who pours the beer is expected to deliver informative remarks regarding what one is about to experience. The consumer's approval or disapproval is expected. While working at the festivals, I was often expected to know a great deal about the beers I was serving. When I remarked that I only worked for the festival, and not that particular brewery, consumers were not visibly upset, but the expectation was clear: the point was to try the beer, discuss, and then decide if it was something enjoyable or not. Most festivals come with mobile phone apps that allow consumers to rate the beers they are trying. Other consumers would snap photos of booths where they enjoyed the beer, so they could be sure and buy a six pack at their local bottleshop.

Inevitably, the practice of "tasting" slipped into "drinking." While many of the festival goers carefully document their tasting practices, and even wear pretzels on string necklaces to eat before tasting, many more get heavily intoxicated. As the fourth hour would near, the mass drunkenness of the crowd became evident. Loud conversations between strangers broke out randomly. Empty dance spaces became packed. Excited discussions of who had tried what beer, and of which tent had been visited the most can be heard. One interaction at Beericana—as I poured beers for different breweries—perfectly captured this transition:

> There was one man, I saw repeatedly. He would get his beer, take a quick pull on it, and then chew on it in his mouth while he eye-balled me sideways. I felt as though he was letting his face show what he thought of my product. Then he would laugh and finish his beer. By the tenth time I saw him, he could barely stand. His routine never wavered, even though he was swaying back and forth while drinking the beer. —Field Notes, September 27th, 2014.

During our first few encounters, this consumer wanted me, the ostensible representative of the brewery's tent at which I poured, to experience some anxiety as he tasted the product. By our last encounter, his heavily intoxicated movements and speech were apparent, but he still managed to put on a show of tasting the beer.

Another narrative predominant at festivals is the expectation that one is having fun. The existence of fun is in fact packaged and sold to other consumers, apparently so that festivals can be deemed successful. This was evident at the author's first festival attended:

> As we are riding in the bus toward Beer Camp, the tour guide tells us, "There will be lots of press there taking pictures so be sure and smile and have a great time!"
> — *field notes August 17, 2014*

Another example comes from the last festival I attended. An internet media group called "Beer Buzz" was at the festival with a professional camera crew. One of the crewman approached a group a five to six women who were standing and talking, then requested them to "party for the camera." As they obliged, breaking into whoops and cheers, he swooped around them, capturing close-ups of their "fun." Both examples exemplify a persistent observation that presumes people are—or should be—enjoying themselves. People approached one another with laughter and smiles. The festival itself was thus imagined—by consumers and organizers alike—as a particular consumptive experience; one that is fun.

The name "festival," implies merriment, and festivals—for the consumers—certainly live up to that. People came dressed like they were ready to party. This was particularly true of female festival-goers, who sometimes wore skimpy, revealing clothing, as if they were heading to a night club. At the end of a Raleigh festival, a person—likely intoxicated— ran across the tops of port-a-potties. A random woman approached someone I was with, and began kissing him heartily. However, despite the mass intoxication that occurs, the festivals remained relatively

tame parties. I never observed fights or property destruction. At three different festivals, I asked city police or security how they liked working these events (having to deal with so many drunk people). They all said that beer festivals were the easiest events to work. One officer put it like this, "The crowds are better. When you got people paying 60 or 80 dollars for a ticket, you get an easier crowd to deal with." As the conversation progressed, the implication was that the class of people was better, since they are able to pay such prices.

Successful festivals can make tens of thousands of dollars. General admission tickets usually cost at least 50$, with VIP or special event tickets—usually educational events on beer tasting or brewing— potentially doubling the prices. Of the festivals observed, attendance was between one and three thousand people. Festival admission is strictly controlled, with devices for scanning tickets, colored wrist bands denoting the consumer's level of access, private event security, along with county or municipal law enforcement. Movement through a festival can be controlled as well. "VIP" prices may allow early access, or tents that may include extra beer tasting information sessions, with cheese or meats. Usually a single festival will hold 2 sessions, an afternoon and evening session. A single ticket only grants access during one session. This allows festivals to increase the returns on their space, and keep the crowd sizes manageable.

While festivals are indeed organized for their money making potential, there is also a tremendous amount of philal valuation occurring as well. At every festival I worked, there were dozens of people working for free. For example, at Beericana 2014, I spoke with a man who frequented the White Rabbit Brewpub so much, he decided to start volunteering. Now, he was at the festival to help the owner pour beer and spread the word about "their" brewery. Every festival also organizes volunteers from the local area to help facilitate the event. Often, these volunteers come from a partner organization, such as a church holding a food drive in

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conjunction with the festival. Other people who volunteer are there to enjoy the festival from a

different perspective; they volunteer with a husband or friend. In any case, the volunteer work

was not necessarily easy, and it can be a long day—10 to 12 hours. Yet, people stay and push

through, working without monetary compensation.

Figure 5. Festival Domain
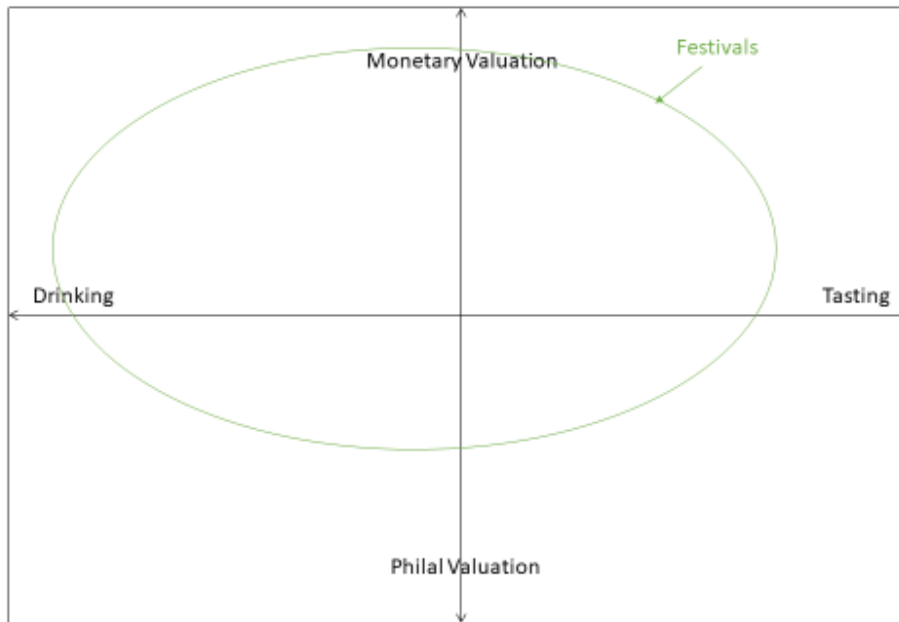
Illustrated in Figure 6, the festival level diffusely spreads throughout all dimensions of

the craft beer system, only leaving the grocery sphere outside its domain. Even those touch,

since distribution companies are also heavily involved in festivals. The macro companies do

have booths or tents in festivals—I have seen these in pictures or read about them—but this

study observed none in the North Carolina festival scene. The festival scene both brings in new

consumers while giving old one's places to renew connections, and of course, try something

new.

Domain 5: Local

At the local level, beer consumption was primarily legitimated through interaction. Consumers came face to face with servers, retailers, brewers and sales representatives to learn beer, share knowledge and stories about beer—or gossip about people in the industry, and thus developed personal connections. Breweries do brand themselves and many creatively sell some story about their beer—either how the brewer/owner came to love craft beer, or by selling a story about the area. For example, "Hi-wire" in Asheville brands itself after a circus, featuring a hi-wire act that would play in the city in the early 20th century. Pictures of the act adorned the walls of their brewpub. However, branding was uneven at the local space. While the words "local," and "community" are the predominant words used in the branding narratives of these companies, 30% of the companies analyzed offered little to no theme in their brand identity. Rather than a particular kind of lifestyle aesthetic being sold (edgy, competitive, smart) a simple sphere of openness and belonging was offered.

The "local" sphere of the craft beer market system included establishments or organizations that serve beer primarily in the neighborhood or town of their location, with few, if any, efforts to become regional producers. Distribution, if it occurred, was done through personal connections, and on a very small scale. Small scale microbreweries or brewpubs— brewing less than 6000 barrels per year—fit this description. Bottleshops and independent craft beer bars also fit on this level. While there were differences between these types of establishments (the most obvious being that bottleshops and craft beer bars do not brew their own beer) there are many similarities, especially from the perspective of the consumer, which I focus on here.

Like festivals, the most predominate practice at the local level involved talking about and tasting beer. It occurred under a very different setting, since there are fewer options (usually

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only 10 to 20) but one has more time to sit with the server or other drinkers in a relaxed setting to discuss the beer. Beer was also a potential topic of conversation, which may be broached with any stranger, by four simple words: "What are you drinking?" This is usually followed with, "Do you like it?"

At the local level, bartenders and brewers tend to get very excited about beer, and they want to freely share that excitement with anyone who will listen—especially with customers. On the preponderance of interactions I have made with bartenders, if I begin a conversation about beer, the bartender will engage, and begin suggesting and offering samples to me.

For example, upon visiting a craft beer bar in Carrboro, I began making conversation with the bartender. I told her I was curious as to the difference between American and English IPAs. She poured one of the latter, and began to explain:

> You should get an "earthier" flavor, almost like a brown ale. It is going to be a little more bitter as well in the finish. *–Field Notes, 2015*

After tasting the beer, I am expected to describe my own experience of the flavor. Perhaps it is exactly like the bartender described. Perhaps I tasted some other notes. My pallet may not have been "clean," and the beer mixed with some other flavors. As one owner/brewer explained to me: "Well, the flavor of the beer changes as you swallow, since the temperature of your mouth affects the notes you are getting." One taste of each and some conversation will lead to another set of samples. Unless there are events going on, which are usually weekly, these places can be less crowded. There is more time to try something and discuss. This occurs at the Quality level as well, but it is more often scripted—part of good customer service training. There is more of an informal routine in local establishments; strangers are more apt to join in the conversation as well. These communications of the experience of tasting form much of the interaction between craft beer drinkers.

While the Quality restaurants, such as Tyler's, Carolina Ale House, and World of Beer, will focus on having a tremendous draught selection—60 to 200—these establishments carry tend to carry 10 to 20. Most will have chalkboards with their offerings listed. The selections will contain a wealth of information along with them, including at least the style, the name of the brewer, and the alcohol content. More complete information will include the IBU as well—a measure of the bitterness. If they are not on a chalkboard, they will be printed digitally on a plasma screen.

Although servers and bartendars are usually pleased to let customers taste beers until something enjoyable is discovered, the "flight" allows the consumer to enjoy a variety of mini-beers, without committing their intake to a single pint. They are small pours, of about 4 or 5 oz. (more than a beer festival). Usually, this is 4 beers, but I have seen the number go as high as six. A flight has 4 elements. 1) There is some kind of special tray for holding the different glasses. 2) A method for recording the beers chosen, and how they appear on the flight. Usually, this is paper with the establishments name appearing on the top, and enumerated slots corresponding to the order of the flight. Other times, places will have plastic trays for flights, and write the names of the beers on the tray. 3) Small glasses that fit into the flight tray. 4) A selection of beer. The care and deliberation that is placed on sampling a variety of beers is evident. The bartender will either write down the beers you want on the paper, or give the paper to you and allow you to write down the names of the beers. Depending on how busy the bartender is, there will be some follow up conversation following the consumption of the flight. The novice beer drinker will rank the beers from least to most favorite. Flights are informally scripted interactions that help create a defined experience of consumption. It is ritualistic, but openly designed so consumers

can customize the experience. The beer itself is not just consumed, but a practice of expressing that consumption through language is also consumed.

While not exclusive to the local level, every establishment here has a flight system of some kind. The "Quality" (Level 2) establishments will include this practice as well. I include it here because, it is not too surprising that capital-intensive, corporate invested establishments will mimic each other's business practices. It is more surprising when such practices diffuse through a collection of independently-owned, disconnected establishments that attempt to be idiosyncratic in some way. The flight is a corner-stone practice of craft beer consumption, from the local level to corporate chains. Craft beer aficionados will expect the option of flights when they walk into an establishment.

Changing the offerings was a persistent feature of all these establishments. Bottleshops will diversify their selection by carrying bottles and cans. These numbers can range from 600 to 1200 different beers at one time. There will also be a selection of 10 to 20 beers on draught. Brewpubs will not carry that many bottles, maybe a few. Brewpubs will have a selection of their own beer on tap, and then a selection from several "guest" taps—other local breweries in the area. This occurs often as microbreweries will exchange kegs, and thus widen their exposure. Diversity and novelty will thrive even more at this level. Bottleshops will rarely have a regular feature, while the craft beer bars will have some for its regular crowd. Even some brewpubs can be hit or miss. This contrasts with the Quality level, where the diversity is more controlled—a stead mix of products that people choose, along with a section that changes. At the local level, however, keeping up with what is on tap where can be more of a challenge. In fact, craft beer fans come to expect the diversity; they want something different each time they walk in. One brewer explained it like this:

We got a call back from the bar, and they were like, 'man everybody loved that beer. We floated that keg in 3 days!' I said, 'Great, we'll send you another one.' He said, 'No, don't do that. People are going to want something else. Maybe we can have it back on next month?" *–Interview, 2015*

More so than the Quality domains, the local space therefore thrives on diversity. Some brewpubs will lack diversity, selling only their own beer for a steady, regular crowd of locals. Even those will have guest taps from other local breweries. While a diverse selection of craft beer is a constant feature, offerings from Macro Beer, and even Pabst and Yuengling, are conspicuously absent. They cannot be purchased at these breweries or bottleshops. Even at the craft beer bar, there might be bottles for these in a cooler, but they will not be on draught. The same is not always true for the Quality (Level 3) establishments, but usually.

Discourse at the local level tends to reject the macro-production of beer specifically, and the "corporate world" more generally. An analysis of the branding conveyed on local breweries websites reveals some telling trends. The organizations at this level overwhelmingly employ "local" narratives in their branding. Over 80% used the word "local" in their narratives, with 75% using community. A fantasy life is invoked using the language of branding—that of the community, its history, and its specific place. In the market space, this focus on the local seems to attract people from the community, who often become regulars, as well as beer tourists who want to sample across states. It gives these breweries an identifiable location when traveling to festivals or tastings at other establishments. However, its appeal is also restricted at higher levels of market aggregation. Locally focused brands, for example, do not tend to penetrate the grocery shelves. A few will have brewpubs that venture into the quality realm—like Lynnwood Brewing Concern, which features a million dollar/year restaurant, but is named after a street in Raleigh (albeit one in the strip mall of an upper class, white suburban area, where street names tend to be generic anyway). Generally speaking, however, the branding language excludes vast portions of

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potential consumers, if—like the macro breweries do—we imagine the potential consumer-space

to be comprised of all beer drinkers.

Other breweries failed to significantly brand their beer at all. 30% of the local brewery

brands analyzed had little or no branding attempt. This means the name and logo do not attempt

to convey an identifiable theme. (Breweries who used local themes, but no identifiable brand,

only presented the name of the town in their company, and had no narrative or text about the

brand.) No particular personality of the brewery is put forth. For example, "Brewery 99"

conveys no theme. Anderson Brewery has some 1950s sex appeal—featuring a cartoonish

woman, but does not flesh out what that means. The name of a community may be attached to

the beer, but no effort is made to explain that community, or the aesthetic it evokes. This is in

stark contrast to regional producers who attempt to convey some personality through their brand,

and their websites consistently convey a particular theme.

Aside from simply using "local" or "community" in their branding, the effort to escape

the corporate world is the most predominant narrative evoked. Twenty-five percent of the

micro-breweries' branding narratives describe the founder's passion for brewing, which has led

to the culmination of this business. For example, Blue Blaze Brewing says this on their website:

> Blue Blaze Brewing is the result of a collaboration between friends Craig Nunn
> and Sven Giersmann. What started off as a love for homebrewing between
> neighbors quickly escalated into a mission to leave the rat race and share their
> creations with the world, under the expert guidance of Master Brewer Steve
> Turner. *–from www.blueblazebrewing.com, accessed June 5th, 2017.*

These founding narratives emphasize the local level's sense of refuge from the corporate

world. A theme of escaping through their passion pervades the "about us" sections of local

breweries' websites.

Relatedly, the local level also features narratives that strictly evoke an "us versus" them attitude in regards to macro beer. Particular events or themes of conversation will make these lines salient. For example, during the summer of 2017, news broke that Wicked Weed, a nationally known Asheville brewery, had sold controlling shares to AB InBev SAB Miller (Andrews, 2017). During that week, I visited three bottleshops. It was THE topic of conversation. If the conversations were not active during observation, I could simply mention the name to proprietors, and they would shake their heads in disbelief. Those who worked for distributors (whose clients include the macro beers) would side with Wicked Weed. One in particular said, "That's capitalism. It's the free market." When I pointed out that the market was not exactly free, since macro beer uses its size and clout to influence legislation, and control tap spaces in bars, he changed tact to "If you build your brand, and someone offers you $10 million, wouldn't you sell out?" Meanwhile, several bottleshops promised (one, to me in person; others, to the internet) to stop carrying Wicked Weed's beer, while craft beer enthusiasts posted and retweeted angry declarations at Wicked Weed for selling out.

The event forced people to pick sides. One was either angry at Wicked Weed, or felt it was fine. People who expressed ambivalence angered those who felt Wicked Weed had "betrayed" the craft beer community. One brewer posted to Instagram to summarize his thoughts, saying that Big Beer would continue to choke out small, independent breweries. The feeling in the craft beer community was that Wicked Weed had essentially changed sides in a war. That people who drank and followed craft beer had such strong opinions demonstrates a shared, collective belief regarding the event. Independent brewers and passionate consumers felt betrayed by the sell-out.

While most consumers at the local level are happy to join in discussions of beer, or they are regulars that have more personal conversations, some take tasting to an extreme. Certain groups thrive on performances of esoteric knowledge of differences between styles, flavors and breweries. Labelled "beer snobs," either derisively or proudly, depending on the context (there are T-Shirts, of course), these groups implicitly reject much of the shared discourse (of teaching beer) that drives the local, festival, media and quality expansion into new consumers. Those seeking to *teach beer* give beer knowledge in digestible, bite-sized chunks (chalkboards listing the information, for example; or mobile phone apps for rating the beers you have tasted.) Individuals are encouraged to find things they like, branch out, and maybe do a little reading at some point. For "beer snobs," however, knowledge seems to be held in secrecy, and performed for the sake of "one up-man ship." These groups were sometimes regulars at bottleshops, where private "bottleshares" may be arranged. This occurs when each individual attendee brings some unique or interesting beer for others to try. Fields notes from a bottle share demonstrates the first author's difficulty in penetrating the social context:

> As we walk in, everyone turns to see who just came in. Then they all turn back. No one says anything. I introduce myself to someone. I say that I'm a friend of Greg's and this is my first bottle share. The guy tells me "you just missed him." He then explains how it works.
>
> "You open something up and put it on the counter. Then you try something else. It's pretty simple. That's all there is to it."
>
> Turned out there was a lot more to it. I introduced myself to another person named James. He was a UNC student. He proceeded to chat with a friend he was with. The conversation was about the beer, but I couldn't follow what they were saying. Something like: "XYZ beer is basically just a ABC beer." And then they shared a laugh. To my ears, the conversation and the humor were nonsensical, and no effort was made to explain away my puzzled, silent face. —*Field Notes, April 12th, 2015.*

Unlike the vast majority of beer-talking encounters, be they other consumers or workers at a festival or bar, or a bartender, the concern with how I perceived the consumption of the beer was non-existent at this particular event. Unlike other levels of beer consumption, it is not enough to say, "I like this."

Beer snobs have "ascended" through the beer tasting levels of consumption, becoming the sort who will drink any flavor or style, and attempt to perform some credible communication of the beer's character. For the beer snobs I observed, beers were hunted, collected and displayed (on social media) for their rarity. The communication of the taste, look, smell and flavor of these rare, hard to find beers were shared on social media sites. "Beer mules" is a practice where a consumer will travel and camp at a bottle release, buy the maximum allowable amount (controlled by the brewery), and then sell or trade those bottles on the internet—either in private networks, or on particular websites, like Beer Advocate.com. Disdain for beer snobs was expressed by servers and brewers alike in my interviews. Servers explained how they loved talking beer with customers, unless they were beer snobs—where conversations would suddenly switch from learning and sharing to "I know something you do not." Beer snobs push monetization of tasting to its extreme, creating status for certain beers. Rare beers may be purchased for as much as 60$ for a single bottle of beer (20 times the cost of a Budweiser at a bar).

While tasting can be taken to extremes in the local level, less common are people who actively celebrate drinking for its own sake. The bold, naked celebration of drinking seen at the Quality and Festival levels was simply not observed. Not to say people do not become heavily intoxicated but that the act of drinking, and making a party out of the experience, was not observed.

Figure 7. Local Domain
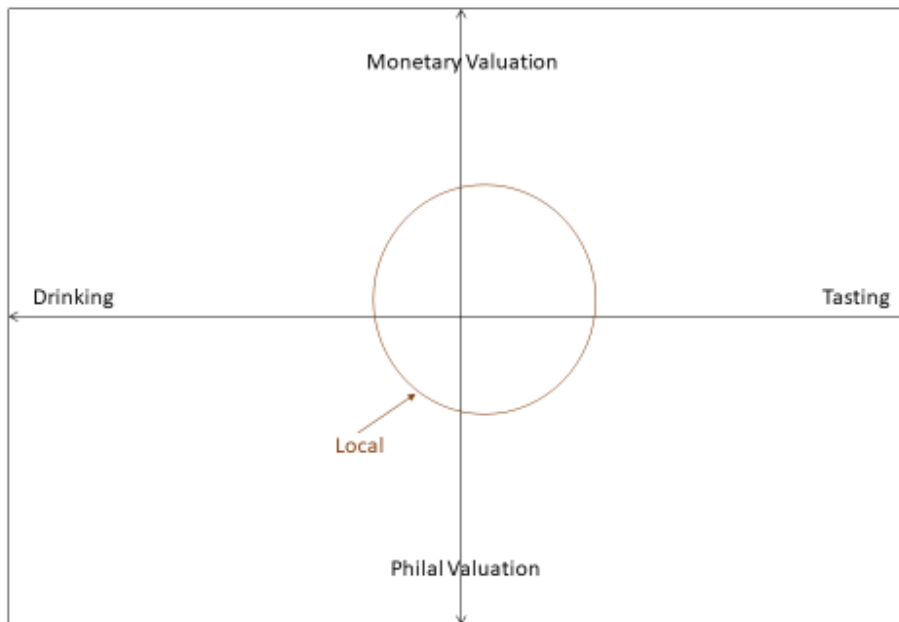
Shown in Figure 6, the local level fits nearly evenly at the center of the craft beer market system. While they are businesses that must remain profitability, the commitment to neighborhoods and local community businesses are also evident. The narrative of "doing what you love to escape the corporate world" is evident throughout their branding language, but also the small, narrow scope of their business venture. This balancing act comes out in favor of monetary valuation, placing more of the sphere on that side of the spectrum. The narratives of tasting versus drinking are nearly evenly distributed. The constant rotating selections of bars and bottleshops place them closer to the tasting end, where tasting and learning beer become necessary for profitability. The local sphere would almost be a subset of the media sphere, completely nested within it, but the "regulars" comprise a committed aspect of the "drinking" crowd. The sociable, embedded relationships that form through drinking distinguishes these consumers from those concerned with tasting and expanding their beer pallet.

At the local level, philal valuation occurs in two ways. One, it occurs through personal networks. The activity of the market space creates many opportunities for enduring personal connections. Distributors and sales reps visit brewpubs, bottleshops, and bars, and form intimate partnerships involving inventory, and what kinds of things are selling, or might sell in the future. Everyone knows the brewers, or at least knows who they are. These are embedded exchange relations, forming out of monetary valuation strategies. They may often lead to forms of philal valuation at the micro, interpersonal level. Brewers seem to share kegs, and people help each other at festivals, or by coordinating for events. Sales reps form friendships, and these lead may lead to jobs changes. Secondly, many people working the local level are following a dream or passion, and trying to make that into a sustainable occupation. (These work histories are examined in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6.) Thus, monetary and philal valuation strategies may be so entangled—more so as it ensnares with personal relationships of similar people—that they are often indistinguishable.

Domain 6: Consumer-Producers

The smallest domain of the craft beer market system may be described as "consumer-producers." This includes people who blog their reviews and craft beer travels, various writers on trends in the craft beer scene, homebrewers, advocates of some political cause, and also people who promote craft beer by creating clubs or organizations. A distinct discursive strategy emerges when consumers begin to produce content, events, or organizations to facilitate the consumption of craft beer. Here, the diversity of discourse legitimating craft beer's consumption *appears* to implode with distinction. Save for the promoters and reviewers of craft beers, each individual actor creating content in this space brings some unique perspective, and discursive space, for consuming beer. However, a common theme may be discerned: Beer becomes a platform for progressive social or political action—used to shape communities, and their future.

Straddling the drinking versus tasting tensions somewhat evenly, consumer-producers are primarily driven by philal valuation. These groups or organizations are differentiated from the commercial organizations listed above in three ways: 1) They tend to be composed of a handful of people, or just one person. These people are amateurs who pursue the goals of the organization in their spare time. They do it for their passion and extreme personal identification with the mission. 2) A specifically focused mission or purpose is used to describe the organization, and 3) little to no advertising fills the websites. Instead, there are cross-promotional events or spaces, coordinated with organizations at the local level, or the consumer-producer level. Primarily gathered through internet or twitter searches, observations yielded several types of consumer-producer groups.

Homebrewers seem to form the bulk of actors in this space. They produce beer for others to try: friends, family, neighbors, private events, or at homebrew clubs. There are hundreds of Twitter users in North Carolina who call themselves "homebrewers." The American Homebrewers Association lists fifty-nine different homebrew clubs in the state of North Carolina (accessed March 22nd, 2017), but those are only the ones registered, with dues paid. As we will see in the next chapter, the homebrew community seems to form the primary pathway for individuals to become professional brewers. The act of homebrewing seems to hold a kind of reverence—even for successful, veteran professionals. While pursuing this study, nearly a dozen people asked me, "Have you homebrewed yet?" One respondent assumed I could diagram the process (and quickly emailed me educational materials when he found I could not.) Another professional brewer said, "That is the only form of pure brewing," referring to the process of experimentation and innovation that thrives at the homebrew stage. (Even small scale commercial brewers at the local level must deal with the economics of ingredient costs, and

supplying a consistent product to customers—two factors that mitigate experimentation.) Hence, the presumption was: if I am studying beer, then I must learn to homebrew. (Incidentally, I did make a couple of attempts. Given the effort required and the results achieved, these pursuits were abandoned.) Thus, the passion for homebrewing that inspired the market rebels to push into commercial beer spaces was alive and thriving in the North Carolina market.

The next most common group operating here include people seeking to focus consumers on beer in some location. Groups like "919 Beer," "Raleigh Beer Week," "Cheers Charlotte," "Raleigh Beer Guys," "NC Beer Guys," and "Wilmington Ale Trail," have formed to highlight breweries, bottleshops and bars in particular geographic areas. As one 919 Beer club member explained, "Everybody talking North Carolina beer wants to talk about Asheville. We think the Triangle has some great beer too. We want to push that beer." (Interview, 919 Beer member, 2014). These groups will do podcasts where participants attend a festival, and discuss the beers that were served, or they discuss the politics of beer in the region, or they debate trends. For example, "Will sour beer replace IPA as the most popular style?" was a topic discussed often between 2015 and 2016. The most prevalent content produced in podcasts or blogs involves reviewing beers, and discuss tasting notes. The moral underpinnings of "good" content should educate other consumers on how to enjoy beer, while building a distinctive "scene" for the designated area.

A third type of consumer-producer aims to focus attention on laws that hamper the growth of craft beer. "Craft Freedom," "Beer Law Center," and "Free Beer NC" spread information, news and awareness related to regulation on beer generally, and craft beer specifically. These groups Tweet articles or blogs in particular areas where alcohol sales on Sunday morning might be changed. They have been vocal in advocating for the abolishment of

the three tier system. In North Carolina, brewers can choose to self-distribute if they brew under 25,000 barrels per year. Once they get over that mark, they must sing with a distributor. The laws regarding this contract heavily favor the distributors, who are greatly influenced by "macro-beer" companies. These groups see craft beer's struggle against big beer in terms of a legal battle, where changing laws that favor corporate control of the market would enable craft beer to grow. Spreading awareness and knowledge are these groups purpose.

Finally, the last type of group observed concerned itself with using beer to spread awareness, or even raise money, for some personal political cause. For example, "Pints for Prostate" describes its mission thusly:

> Pints for Prostates is a grassroots campaign that uses the universal language of beer to reach men with an important health message. Founded in 2008 by beer writer and prostate cancer survivor Rick Lyke, the campaign raises awareness among men about the importance of regular health screenings and early detection…—*www.pintsforprostate.org; accessed November 22nd, 2016*

The "universal language of beer," appears to summarize adequately how actors in this space see beer: a method for connecting people, and using that connection for some purpose. "Girl Pint Out," for example, is a national organization with 100 chapters in 40 states, including a Triad Girls Pint Out in North Carolina (girlspinout.org, 2016). Their purpose is to use beer to create a community of women—who love contributing to craft beer. This group has paired with the Pink Boots Society (an association of women brewers) to spread the message that women can talk beer, brew beer, and drink beer just like anyone else.

The presumption that beer can make political statements is widespread in the craft beer space more generally. This could be directly linked to the passionate spaces consumer-producers create. When North Carolina experienced it "H2B2 Controversy," several brewers did collaborative beers in support. According to an article appearing in the Huffington Post, Mystery

Brewing and Ponysaurus Brewing collaborated to create *Don't Be Mean to People*, and thirty

other North Carolina brewers committed money and ingredients to brew and release the beer,

with proceeds going to LGBT organizations (Nichols, 2016). When White Nationalists

sentiments began fomenting violence in 2017, brewers took to Twitter to communicate with fans

regarding potential collaborations, and their potential names, to speak out against racism or

fascism. What style best communicates openness to homosexuality? What flavors communicate

a message of love in the face of fascism? What ingredients can help us achieve that product?

These are the kinds of alchemical questions brewers face when they attempt to transcend the

medium of a cold brew to create a political message.

Figure 8. Consumer-Producer Domain
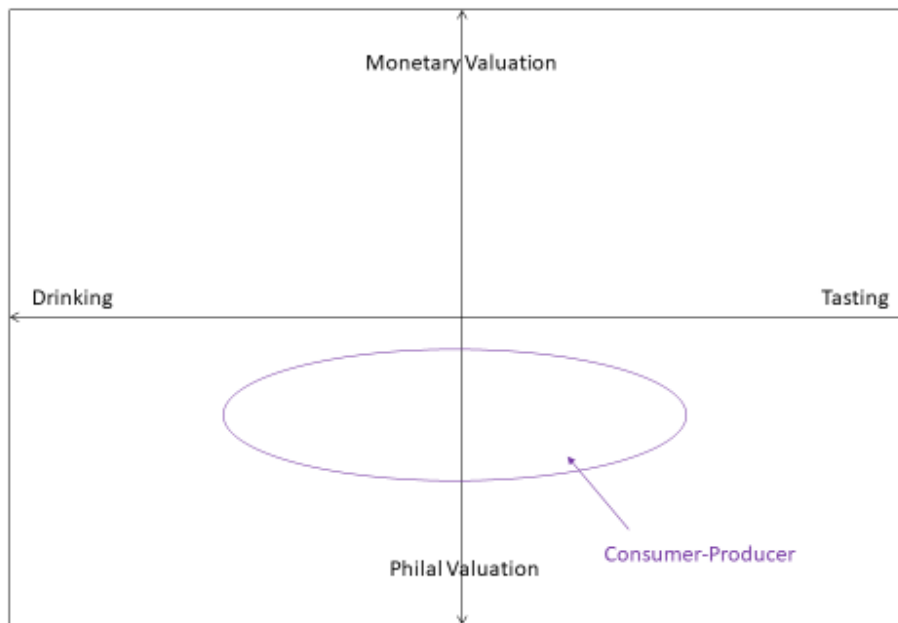
The consumer-producer level spreads across the philal dimension, encompassing both

tasting and drinking discursive spaces. On the drinking side, many of the consumer blogs share

the adventure of traveling to drink and try new beers, without being too heavy on the tasting

aspects. Moreover, many of the political organizations that form use beer to network for some

cause external to beer—prostate cancer, feminism, local economies—and are thus not concerned with expanding people's pallets. The sociability aspects of drinking are used to get people together. On the other hand, no aspect of the consumer-producer level spread into monetary valuation. The goals of these groups are almost always personal, being pursued out of passion rather than monetary valuation. This is evident by the complete lack of advertising on their websites, fees associated with any membership with the organization, or the offering of any goods or services.

Figure 9. Discursive Domains within the Craft Beer Market System
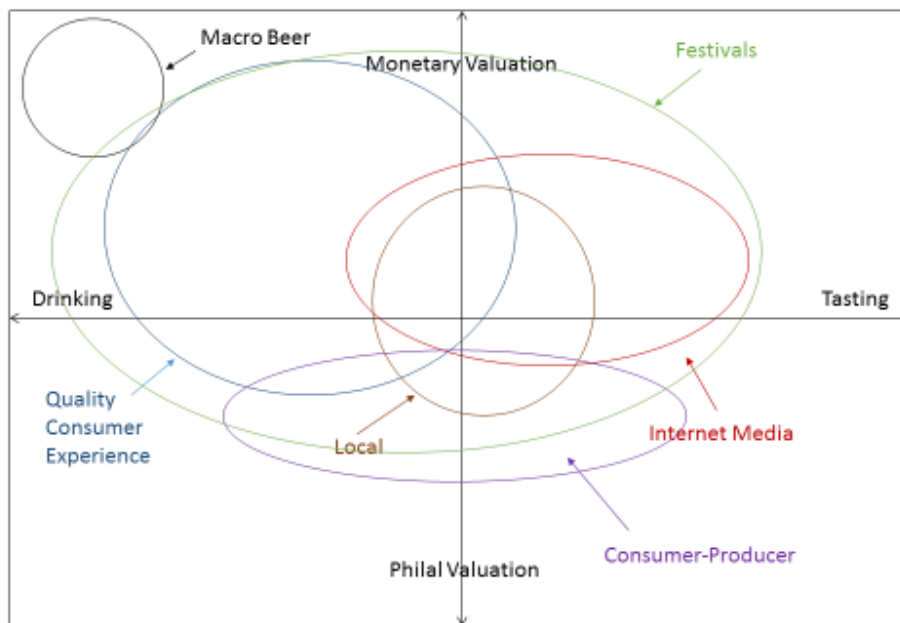
Points of Overlap

While the descriptions above focused on what made each level distinct—and thus worth describing as different domains—it is clear that there is also a great deal of overlap in the craft beer's discursive domains as well. This section briefly addresses that coherence.

Celebrity. Throughout levels three (internet media), four (festivals) and five (local), there is an informal hierarchy of *celebrity*. These are principally occupied by certain beers, but also

brewers, and their breweries become subject to adulation and hype. Celebrity can become

marketable, or not. In the case of Foothills "Sexual Chocolate," a blatantly masculine and racist

beer label, for example, it is only released for a couple of months per year, close to winter time.

Foothills has shrewdly capitalized on the buzz surrounding this beer, and made its annual release

into an event. Lines form the night before to drink the first tapped keg of the season, an event for

which the brewery prepares for (Foothills Brewing, 2017.) This is not unusual in the US, or

North Carolina. In more informal ways, brewers gain local celebrity. Throughout the study

period, I have documented 5 random encounters with people who begin to tell me just how

amazing their friend X of local brewery Y *really* is. More subtlety, I have observed employees

and regular customers adore owners or breweries; they are spoken of with apparent deference

and sometimes even passion. These surprising observations began on my initial day of field

study in the craft beer scene, and continued throughout.

Figure 10: Caption: Craft beer enthusiasts waiting for Sexual Chocolate to be released. – Source: Foothills Brewing Website

Beer Talk. Even more diffuse throughout the craft beer system—yet perhaps even more central to its manifestation—is the discourse of *sharing knowledge*, or *learning about beer*. Excepting the grocery store level, all levels of craft beer discourse practice the sharing of beer knowledge. Knowing how beer is made, how styles originated, and the particular histories of beers' origins are regular features of conversation or internet sharing. This practice is marketed at the quality level, through clubs and the general experience these establishments try to brand— novelty, and distinctive variety.

The moral underpinnings of "beer talk" became evident from the researcher's first attempts at becoming a craft beer consumer. One is instantly confronted with the tremendous diversity and breadth of beer's manifestation. From types of beer, to how breweries do those types of beer, to different events and rituals for consuming beer, the craft beer scene was awash in *things to know and do*. It can be information overload for the neophyte consumer.

Of the 215+ breweries that operate in North Carolina, 79 of them make more than 20 different beers. 16 of them make more than 60 different beers, with Wicked Weed (before being bought out by InBev) leading the state with 231 different beers. (Information compiled from BeerAdvocate.com, leaving off 2 breweries that are national, brewing in more than one state.) Almost all of the breweries make at least 10 different beers. All told, there are more than 6000 distinct beers—each with its own look, flavor, and story—brewed in the state of North Carolina each year. This does not consider imports, beers from other states, or beer "homebrewed" by avid enthusiasts—where they may be offered through private beer parties, club events, or festivals. It could be 10,000 distinct beers offered to consumers each year in the state of North Carolina.

How is so much distinction possible? It seems that as the knowledge of the brewing process has grown, and brewers have gained more control over it, the boundaries of style have been pushed, manipulated, or completely reinvented. As discussed in Chapter 3, "style" can be objectively divided into only two—lager or ale, based on the kind of yeast used—but its distinctions meld into the realm of performance after that. They can be defined based on the look, aroma, flavor, alcohol content, tradition, or technique used to brew the beer. A particular style, for example the American IPA, is expected to be golden to amber in color, with a floral or fruity scent, a high hoppy smell and flavor, and be brewed between 5 and 7 % ABV (Brewers' Association Style Guide, 2016.) A "good" American IPA is thus one that meets those criteria.

The boundaries between styles, however, are policed differently by different groups of commentators in the craft beer landscape. Wikipedia lists styles in five categories, side by side, according to how writers and festival judges have articulated them. Michael Jackson, a late writer who had been highly influential in developing the practice of tasting beer, referred to one particular style as "steam beer," while the Beer Judge Certification Program refers to the same beer as "California common."   Moreover, styles can vary according to the medium for which those designations must be developed. While the Brewers Association 68-page style guide lists 98 styles, with many containing 2 or 3 subcategories, that can be entered into competition, the website "NC Beer Guys" list 126 different styles of beer available from North Carolina Craft Breweries, which those two people have been able to review on their website. Boundaries of style thus form a fuzzy realm where consumers and producers can discuss. While the vast majority of beer drinkers only partake of one style—the American Pale Lager—the craft beer drinker is expected to know the difference between an "altbier," and "oktoberfest," or an

"American IPA," and a "British IPA." Beers "do," or perform a particular beer style for the consumer.

Style diversity further implodes when it intersects with branding. Each brewery organization is expected to put their "stamp" on that style—and, hopefully, that stamp is consistent with the branding aesthetic suggested by the brewery. Fullsteam, for example, considers its mission one of recreating a distinct style of southern beer. So, it plays with traditional styles by adding ingredients indigenous to the United States south, like persimmons.

To further compound the list of things to know, not all of these beer styles are available year-round. Some are "seasonal," meaning a particular beer is brewed in conjunction with the upcoming season, much like Wal-Mart keeps its displays rotating based on upcoming holidays. Others are annually brewed for particular events. Different beers are released according to trends, events (a brewery's founding, an annual festival, etc.) or even the season. Thus, keeping up with the diversity of beer style creates a kind of "rabbit hole," where some consumers become intensely passionate. Rare beer release events will attract lines of people—to pitch tents and sleep outside the brewery the night before. There are dozens of ways to track the beers one has consumed by mobile phone application, and thus make a collector's game of learning different beers.

The moral underpinnings suggest that a good brewery should be able to produce different beers—should have some distinction, but also some range—that taste, to someone at least, amazing. Consumers should know the differences between stouts and porters, ales and lagers— and they should enjoy their beer. In order to grow and spread beer, new customers should be brought in, and older ones should spread their knowledge. It is a collective project aimed at disrupting the market of "big beer."

Discussion

The findings above attempted to conceptually map the North Carolina craft beer market system along the intersection of two discursive tensions: one observed from market actors, and one observed from consumers. Intersecting these tensions created four discursive dimensions where craft beer markets could exist: monetary valuation by drinking, monetary valuation by tasting, philal valuation by drinking, and philal valuation by tasting. The empirical descriptions of each discursive domain I observed filled out each dimension of this intersection, showing points of overlap and distinction within the market space. Being able to articulate market actors along these four dimensions suggests there is some internal coherence to the empirical and conceptual "match." In other words, these two tensions seem to accurately characterize the dynamics of craft beer markets' valuation.

The knowledge discourse in the craft beer market system appeared central to the cohesion I was able to observe. This discourse was driven by two very different kinds of market actors, in correspondingly different ways. At the micro level, there is a strong, passionate base of participatory consumers. To keep these more serious consumers engaged, there is a network of local bars, brewpubs, and bottleshops that seem to autonomously seek one another out, and thus keep a consistent stream of choice available for consumers. Community discourse is often invoked in these narratives. Many small organizations work together to create diversity and quality for consumers. On the other hand, Quality establishments do it through distribution companies connected to macro companies. There is tremendous diversity of selection possible in different ways. One through distribution companies, and one through a combination of distributors and local networks.

This chapter has attempted to emphasize throughout where craft beer attempts to fashion itself as distinct from "Big Beer." However, people who straddle the Big Beer/Craft Beer divide,

such as distributors, or consumers focused only on quality of the product, see no need to demonize Big Beer. Many become annoyed or defensive at arguments against "evil corporations." They defend capitalism more generally, invoking "free market" language. Others would argue that Big Beer and Craft Beer need to be focused on the wine and liquor market shares. More generally, drinking alcohol, at different times, has been associated with crime and saloons. Hence, there *are* discursive realms, external to beer's consumption, where the distinctions between craft beer and big beer become irrelevant.

From within that bubble, however, we may describe a coherent "craft beer consumer culture." Here discourse assumes macro beer—and, implicitly, much of the practices associated with McDonaldization—are *wrong*. They should not exist. A shared assumption devalues corporate practice in favor of local, independent practice. It celebrates the concept of community, and tries to invoke its business practices as part of some community. Moreover, it views other organizations as allies against Big Beer. A discourse of "Us Versus Them" seems to inform sharing, learning, and pushing the boundaries of beer knowledge to its limits. To beat Big Beer, beer knowledge should be free, open and shared. Each brewery, brewer, and beer master is thus expected to put their own individual stamp on their productive efforts, while passing along information, techniques, and even resources to help bring new consumers into the overall craft beer space. This philal valuation is the strongest discursive current linking the festival, local, and consumer-producer levels together.

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to examine the content of craft beer's consumer discourse. On the presumption that some degree of coherence is necessary for workplaces to be affected by discursive regimes external to those organizations, I have sought to articulate the nature of discourse in the "craft beer" market system, to the extent that such a system can be said to exist.

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In Chapter 1 of this study, I argued that in order for workplace identity to be shaped by fields external to the organization, we should first observe the relationship between market actors and consumers in shaping the discourse of the market system. To do so, I have observed the market from the perspective of a new consumer seeking to understand "craft beer."

From the consumer's perspective, the consumer culture's production of such vast diversity, occurring differently at differently levels of scale and specificity, creates a kind of "sandbox" lifestyle. People may be introduced to craft beer by a variety of routes, including via those bought at the grocery store. Once crossing over from macro-controlled spaces of consumption, a trajectory may ensue of increasing commitment to learning about beer. However, the individual consumer makes the choice: for whatever level of "beer knowledge" one seeks to achieve (or not) there is a discursive domain shaping legitimacy for craft beer's consumption. One may just learn different beers for one style, or only drink a particular quality-level craft beer. Whether market actors evoke philal or monetary valuation, and whether consumers are enchanted by drinking or tasting, the discourse of *knowing beer's diversity* was constant. This was more pervasive than the discourse of "community" and "local," which are only dominant at certain levels of aggregation in the market system.

CHAPTER 5: PATHWAYS INTO CRAFT BEER

Why would people want to work in beer? We may as well ask why *not*? As I found through my research, many people look askance when asked why they enjoy beer. To have a job where one's tasks include making, tasting, sharing, or selling may seem like a no brainer. The actual reasons that people ended up in a craft beer position are likely to vary considerably. Some may have been home brew hobbyists, enticed by the prospect of doing what they love full time. Others may have just answered a "help wanted" advertisement. However, career pathways should be our initial entry point for observing potential mechanisms where the consumer culture affects workplace identity.

If a substantial number of those pathways began in the consumer culture—as one is converted into a craft beer lifestyle—that pattern may illustrate how discourses blend in craft beer workplaces. Following the enterprising-self logics explained in Chapter 1, people are expected to explain their labor market choices as part of a rational career plan. Moreover, these plans are expected to be motivated by the desire to find meaningful work where one's true passions may be embraced with authenticity. The job-seeking self-help industry, analyzed Steven Peter Vallas and Emily Cummins (2015), often centers on teaching people to figure out what their passions are, so those can be made into employable assets. Since the craft beer lifestyle offers consumers a coherent set of symbolic material for making the lifestyle meaningful (described in the previous chapter), we could expect many people to perceive "work" in that industry potentially offering equally meaningful careers. For these people, work could be

viewed as an extension of the lifestyle activities, rituals, and institutions of consumption that the individual already positively identifies with.

Respondents could present these synergies as part of a planned career path. What percent of my sample fits these pathways? And for those that do, what discursive frames do they draw upon to legitimate their choices? Answers to these questions could suggest mechanisms where culture external to the workplace (the consumer market) becomes part of the internal symbolic environment of workplace culture, and hence, worker's identification.

Indeed, non-fiction accounts of craft breweries' history suggests these businesses are begun by people who have a passion for making beer, and want a lifestyle that enables them to share that passion with others (Hindy, 2014; Myers & Ficke, 2016). These literatures often celebrate the accounts of homebrew enthusiasts looking to turn their hobby into a real profession, rather than being motivated solely by the chance to earn a lucrative profit in a trendy industry. While we would expect owners and brewers to be motivated by their passion for beer, other jobs should contain more heterogeneity in pathways. The many "auxiliary" roles necessary to package, ship, sell and pour beer have gone less examined, yet these vastly outnumber brewing jobs. According to Bart Watson of the Brewer's Association, craft breweries accounted for 456,000 jobs in 2016 (Watson, 2017). The vast majority of the 5,000 plus breweries likely employ one brewer and two or three assistants. Still, even if we gave each brewery ten jobs for making beer, that leaves more than 400,000 auxiliary jobs. In addition, these might be considered "generic" jobs, where the skills are more easily transferrable between industries, compared to those of brewers and owners (who are very often the same person).

In other words, a bartender, server or sales representative could work any number of hospitality jobs. If some pattern exists sorting these kinds of workers into craft beer work, that

could be a mechanism for blending consumptive and productive discourses. Do frames in the consumer sphere overlap with labor market frames in their narratives of career choices? If the consumer lifestyle is systematically driving people to jobs in craft beer, how does it seem to unfold in these respondents' accounts? The next section systematically develops these questions by describing particular "steps" a career-minded fan of craft beer might follow.

Five Steps from Consumer Enchantment to Career

Enchantment refers to the hook or pull that consumers experience as market actors seek to legitimate consumption (Ritzer, 2010). For George Ritzer, enchantment begins with the Cathedrals of Consumption—massive, capital-intensive spectacles that overwhelm and awe the consumer. Disneyland is given as the ultimate example. While Ritzer's conception of enchantment lacks agency for the consumer, it does call our attention to the efforts of market actors to create a positive affinity for the consumptive *experience*. Enchanted people are those that "buy into" the craft beer lifestyle as articulated in the previous chapter: the moral impetus to learn, share, and discuss beer.

It follows that many of these enchanted consumers would seek work (especially if they are brewing beer) in the industry. Thus, in my sample, many respondents are likely to be consumers who were once "enchanted" by craft beer. Figure 9 depicts five potential steps in the pathway of enchantment to full time career.

The first step is "macro drinker." This is a designation for people who drink "industrial beer," or "mass-produced beer," which is one particular style: the American pale lager. During this step, the individual may have no inkling that beer's color, aroma, mouthfeel and flavor can diverge vastly from that style. Contributing to the $85 billon dollar industrial beer market (drinking a beer produced by either SABMiller, AB InBev, or Heineken) in the United States, this pool of people represents potential craft beer drinkers. Entering the second stage,

individuals developed some passion for craft beer. Perhaps after trying a craft beer at the hands of a friend, or at a party, they found this new world of beer drinking enticing, and sought to learn more. They then "buy into" the lifestyle, becoming enchanted by craft beer consumption. So, the first two stages are about the potential conversion from American modal beer drinker to self-identifying as someone who drinks "craft" beers, probably exclusively.

Figure 11: Ideal Pathway from Consumer to Producer
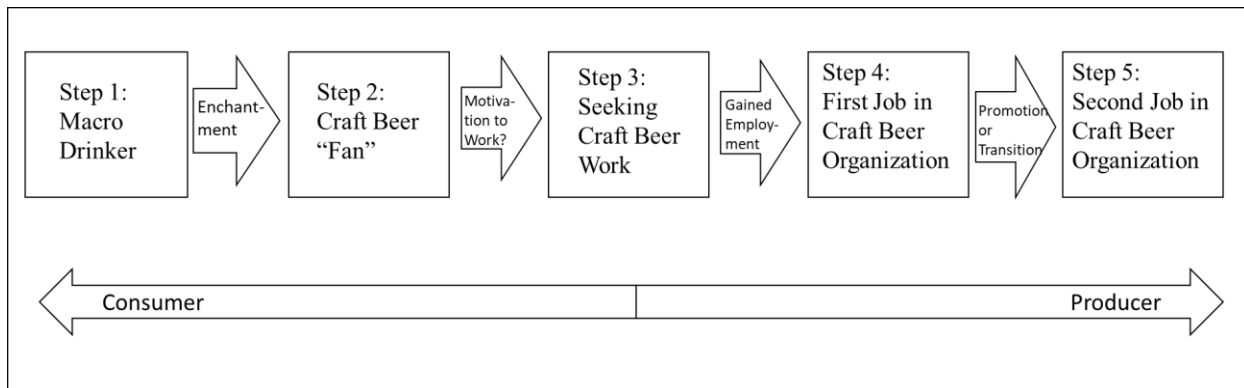
Regardless of how they came to love craft beer, the third step demarcates people who have made the conscious decision to seek work in craft beer, *because they love to consume it*. Seeking to turn that passion into a stable occupation, they sought an avenue for long term employment. The third step is most critical, since it is here that people have decided to turn their consumer identities into some related occupational identity. To find work in a particular field, requires some research, intent, and self-authoring (resumes, interviews) for successful job searching. They may have responded to advertisements, cold called with resumes, or taken longer roads, by seeking internships, volunteering, and networking with craft beer industry figures, to one-day gain employment, and thus enter the fourth stage—their first craft beer job. Now, we should find some group of people in the fourth stage, occupying that first craft beer job, for reasons entirely unrelated to craft beer consumption. Maybe they just responded to a "help

wanted" sign, and the job happened to be serving craft beer somewhere. Their exposure to "craft" beer would be part of on the job training. In a fifth possible stage, the respondent had moved on from the first entry level or stepping stone job, and then perhaps several more times, to eventually arrive at the current job. This transition could be internal, by gaining a promotion in the organization. It could also be a transition to another company. It represents people who are now entrenched—investing their time, skill and experience—in some craft beer career trajectory.

This chapter seeks to analyze which people in the sample occupied what steps on this potential trajectory from "macro" beer consumer to bona fide craft beer professional. It addresses three questions relative to those steps. 1) How many people traversed stages from 1-4/5. On this "ideal pathway," we should observe individuals who became so enchanted by the craft beer lifestyle, they sought to somehow turn that into a job. 2) For workers that did not traverse this path of 1-4/5, what was the reason? What is the extent of deviation from the "ideal" consumer-to-producer blend? And finally, 3) What motivated people to choose craft beer work? Specifically, in the transition from steps two to three, what was it about the consumptive lifestyle that motivated people to seek employment in craft beer companies? Our theoretical expectation is that workers draw upon the consumer discourse—beer talk—for legitimating their choices to work in the industry, and for why they moved from one stage to the next. Thus, the discourses that people draw upon to legitimate their consumption of craft beer, may also be used to make sense of why they chose the work.

Not everyone will follow this neat path. I do expect some portion, having sacrificed much time and effort, to land the perfect craft beer job. They are living their dreams. Some may have become fans of craft beer, only after the work began. Others may not be fans of beer at all.

The analysis should yield observations regarding how consumer discourse blends with worker discourse.

Types of Pathways

Coding the interviewee's career trajectories according to which of the "five steps" each respondent occupied yielded nine distinct combinations—or nine unique pathways from consuming beer to working with beer. The distribution of these pathways is depicted in Figure 10. They may be sorted into three broader categories. First, fourteen of the forty-nine respondents occupied all five steps on the theorized pathway. Eight went from steps one through four, meaning they are essentially on the same trajectory as the "all five" group. They either lucked into a great job right off the bat, or they are planning to use their current job as a springboard into craft beer. Taken together, twenty-two people, or nearly half the sample, were macro drinkers enchanted by craft beer, who then sought to work in the craft beer field. This group of respondents constitute *the ideal pathway*, theorized above. A second group of pathways can be described as the *never macros*; they were craft beer fans before ever drinking macro beer. Usually, they had family that drank imported or craft beer, and thus cared about beer quality. Ten people fit this designation. Finally, the remaining seventeen respondents I have called the *not fans prior*. They chose craft beer work for more "traditional" reasons—such as the need for stable employment in an apparently growing industry, or because they personally knew a manager or owner when a job became available.

Respondents on the *ideal pathway* and the *never macros* have one thing in common: They all specifically sought work in the craft beer field because they were fans of the craft beer lifestyle. Comprising sixty-five percent of the sample, these are people who at least moved through steps two, three and four. Their interests in craft beer specifically drove them to find work in the craft beer field. Consuming craft beer thus appears to be a significant force pushing

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people to want a career in the field. The next several sections provide more detail on each of these pathways.

Figure 12: Distribution of Respondents Actual Pathways
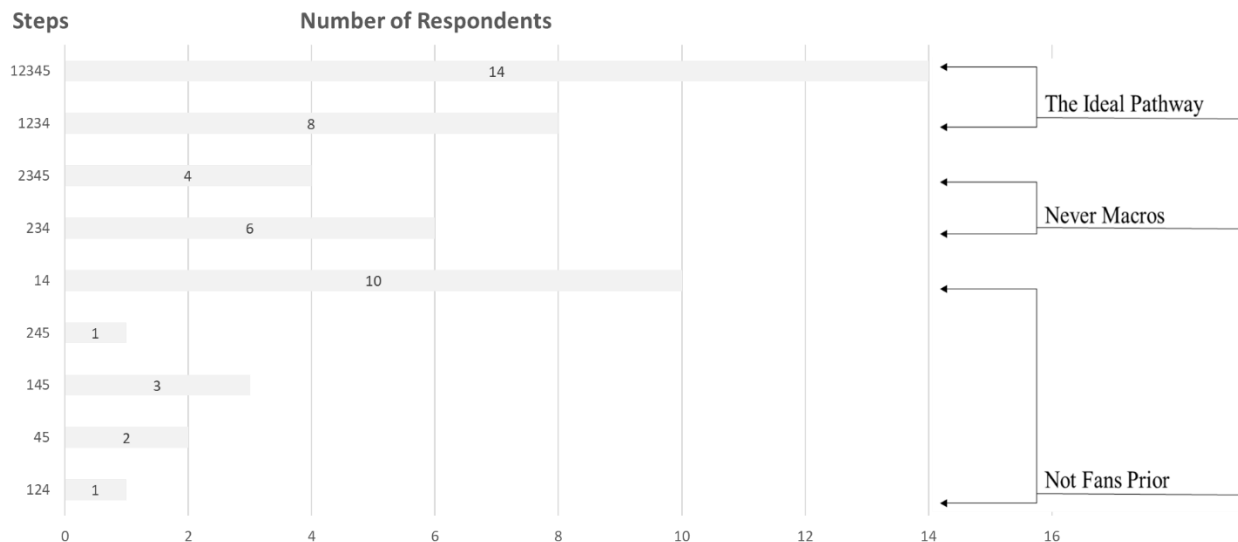
The Ideal Pathway

People enchanted by craft beer's consumer lifestyle—either by brewing at home or by the desire to taste and try different beers—who then make a protracted effort to turn those passions into a primary income, comprise the *ideal pathway*. First, these people described drinking "crappy" beer because they were in college, young and underage, or because it was the cheapest option:

> You know early college it was case races with Busch Light and Coors Light and things like that. But once I graduated, I started going on vacation and trying different breweries' beers. One of the first ones I remember, I wrote a note on my phone of, I wrote I went to Wilmington and I went to Front Street. I started to notice that I like hoppy beers. I am a hop head. I had never had a beer so flavorful and I loved it. I also liked the fact that it was higher ABV. I could drink three or four and feel just as I could off 12 Busch Light or Bud Light that had no flavor. So at that moment I am totally converted and it was going to the store and getting mixed 12 packs, trying different samplers and trying different styles and stuff like that. *–Head Brewer, Local Brewery, age 29*

Three points in this quote illustrate three predominant trends in the conversion from macro to micro drinker, or how persons get enchanted by the craft beer lifestyle. Number one, it tends to be viewed as "maturation." College drinking or "case races" is child's play; training wheels for the adult alcohol drinker. The mature drinker is one who tries different styles of beer, explores, and learns to expand their pallet. Eleven people in the sample were enchanted initially to the craft beer lifestyle because they were intrigued by the diversity of beer. Exploring and learning beer is thus a major draw for people into craft beer consumptive identities.

Secondly, we see the socio-economic status in the person's background that enabled them to discover, refine and control a more sophisticated level of beer consumption—vacation exploration, and then choosing beers more purposively, yet still achieving the goal of intoxication. Overwhelmingly then, people who are motivated to choose craft beer work probably had material means allowing for that initial purchasing of a luxury item. A Bud Light at the bar is usually three dollars, whereas a craft beer is five to seven dollars. Although, interestingly enough, the respondent did hedge against the notion that craft beer consumption might be viewed solely as a luxury purchase. The same level of intoxication is achieved for the same price. This is consistent with the first point: Craft beer is a smarter, more learned way to drink. However the respondent frames it, craft beer consumption is somewhat exclusive. It appears a certain class of people—educated, well-off, usually white—become craft beer consumers, and workers may be selected out of that pool of individuals.

Finally, beer tasting is considered to be a process of self-discovery. You do not know which beers are "you" until you taste them. He found he was a hop-head. Craft beer thus offers a context for making meaningful one's preferences—for discovering and knowing the self. Like the respondent above, 45 percent of the sample could remember their first experience of drinking

craft beer, *and the name of the beer*. It is described as something like an epiphany: a moment where his or her eyes suddenly opened to a new world. Overall, respondents in the sample thus positively identified with their conversion to the craft beer lifestyle as a kind of maturation, a pursuit in self-discovery that is probably costly and limited to wealthier segments of the population.

Despite the ease with which craft beers might be purchased, for many on the ideal pathway, the job does not materialize without time, effort and sacrifice. 6 of the 13 people who moved all five steps were doing unpaid work for their first job—either an internship, or a protracted period of volunteering. This suggests a deep commitment to achieve a position in craft beer. A head brewer at a growing regional brewery recounts his time following college. After obtaining a degree in political science, he was unable to secure admission to graduate school, and decided he would try to become a brewer:

> So I told them and I was willing to work for free. I had quit the Pet Smart job because I just couldn't do it anymore. I was still working landscaping to pay bills. I told them I can be there for whatever schedule … every other hour that I've got available I want to be here willing to do anything. And I just want to get into the industry. Most were pretty nice about it. They just didn't have an interest in taking me on, but there were at least a couple of the 20 breweries that were kind of rude about it. They pretty much acted like why would you assume? –*Head Brewer, Regional Brewery*

The difficulty of "breaking in" the industry was often recounted in these interviews (especially by people who were trying to work in a brewery, but were settling for work as a bartender or server at craft beer specialty bars). Despite offering free labor, this person was turned down multiple times. His persistence eventually paid off. The regularity of people walking into a brewery and asking to volunteer was recounted often by owners and brewers during this field research. People want to work in breweries. This respondent happened to walk into a small brewery, and found the head brewer scrubbing a filter. The head brewer was happy

to hand the task off. He would then go on to commute one hour and fifteen minutes, several days per week, working eight to ten hour shifts—without pay—for nearly a year and a half. Finally, the brewery expanded and he was offered a full time job, and was able to quit landscaping for good. This success story of "breaking-in" was not unusual. Another 5-step respondent, after graduating college and working as a personal trainer, found his initial career-plan unsatisfying. He used his life savings to put himself through brewing school. The rigorous and expensive training program—that had him spending six months in Germany—still left him unemployed, however. It took him another two years to find work as a brewer. Again, it was the luck of timing. A head brewer had just quit, and someone working at that brew pub told him now was the time to walk in and ask for the position. He had been there six years at the time of the interview.

Like many people on this pathway, there was no easy or obvious route for working in a brewery. One person, after being laid off from his first job at a library, and having just completed five years of college to get a Master's in library science, had no other employment prospects. He decided to drive to every brewery in North Carolina. At one stop, pretending he was part of a brewery tour, he lied his way into meeting with a marketing executive, and would not leave until he was offered a position. This level of persistence was surprisingly common in the sample.

Forty-five percent of respondents walked the "ideal pathway," either in all five steps, or on the first four. The main difference between them is that those using all five steps often had an unpaid internship or volunteer period as their first job. The four-step persons were lucky enough to be hired into a paying position, and it was in that stage that the interview took place. The

common theme throughout was a deep passion for either brewing or learning about beer, and the desire to make that into a career, even at personal cost.

Never Macros

The second significant group in the sample comprises fans of craft beer who never drank macro beers. These ten people may have drunk macro beers—especially when underage, one merely drinks what can be had. However, craft beer never had to enchant them away from the macro side. They had been raised to be fans of craft beers; or at least, see them as normal.

Most "never macros" had parents or family who introduced them to craft beer. Sometimes it was because parents lived overseas, or because they were home brewing. In other cases, the person grew up in an area known for craft beer, like Asheville, North Carolina. Often, the never macros were drinking craft beers before anyone else in their peer groups. One described the experience:

> I was the one who in college, you know how everyone has a friend who's a beer snob? Well I was that guy. I mean it was fun, but when I moved back here there was a bottle shop. There wasn't anything like that when I went to high school here. And it would be really cool if I could get a job there, doing that instead of this barista job that I don't like. –*Sales Clerk, Bottleshop*

In other words, the rising popularity of the craft beer scene overall enabled these "legacy drinkers" to have employment opportunities not imagined before. In the spirit of rising-tides-lifts-all-boats, people raised on craft beer found themselves well-positioned to capitalize on the emerging industry. Some of these individuals only chose a craft beer career path after college or other options failed to materialize—however, they did at some point make the decision to seek craft beer employment.

Not Fans Prior

Seventeen people in the sample were *not fans* of craft beer before trying to find craft beer work. Some were macro drinkers; some were wine drinkers. Some intentionally chose craft

beer work, but not because they were fans. For example, one sales representative recounted his pathway as follows:

> I was a history major and I loved that, but I didn't want to be a teacher. So I got a job at a country club. I was a bartender. So I googled recession proof industries. Sounds crazy but that is literally what I googled. The top 5 came up. The first one was accounting. And the last one was alcohol-beverage industry. The line was "If the economy is good, people drink. If the economy is bad, people drink." – *Sales Representative. Regional Brewery*

He used his college degree to land an entry level job with a distribution company, on the "wine side" of the business. He transitioned to craft beer as he slowly learned more about the coherence of the craft beer lifestyle as part of his job: going to festivals, beverage conferences, etc. He began meeting people in the craft beer business. Through these connections, he found out about an opening coming soon in a sales representative position with a successful regional brewery, and was able to land the job. Another respondent had a fledgling career in photography, but had to keep finding new jobs because the companies were closing. She decided to go back to community college to retrain, and by this time, Asheville, North Carolina (her hometown) had been booming from the craft beer business. Researching the industry, she found ample opportunity for employment, and thus found a brewing program at her local college. While completing that program, she worked for a craft beer bottle shop and wrote a column about women brewers. Through these connections, she was able to get a job as assistant brewer with a small, local brewery. Others in this group were simply looking for work, and they happened to have a close personal relationship with an owner or manager.

Regardless, most of these people wanted to stay in craft beer for their careers, and in fact became craft beer fans because they found the work so stimulating. One respondent, who at the time of interview was working as a waitress at a small brewpub while finishing an undergraduate degree—with the hopes on one day becoming a "beer lawyer"—described her first experience:

Honestly I had just lost my job the week before. One of my friends was like hey there's this new bar; it's really cool. They need hot girls to work there. Go try and work there. I was like well I drink Blue Moon and Yuengling. I guess I know a lot about beer. And I couldn't have been more wrong. I knew nothing about craft beer…when the manager asked me what my favorite beer was and I said Blue Moon she just kind of chuckled and said we'll check back with you later.— *Server, Local Brew Pub*

Her work in the craft beer industry had transformed her into a fan. The respondent recounts the story here with amusement because of her ignorance—Yuengling and Blue Moon are *not* considered craft beers. She described the intensity of "beer school," or the training program her large, franchised corporate employer provided, and the immense satisfaction of learning beer styles. She was on her third position as craft beer server. During much of the interview, however, she described the experimentation and exploration of beer styles that she and her family had begun. She enjoyed making dessert shakes with beer, while her aunt and father had gotten into home brewing. Among the "not fans prior," this story is common. People who knew nothing of craft beer before their first job were drawn "retroactively" into the craft beer lifestyle.

A surprising subset of this group comprises people who sought craft beer work because it fit their political beliefs, even though they were *not* craft beer consumers prior. These individuals viewed craft beer's local, small, and hands-on business model as consistent with their values. In other words, the chance to work in craft beer offered them the opportunity to work in a place that aligned with their personal political ideology. Only five people in the sample fit this criteria, but their presence provides insight into the kind of economic space that craft beer could represent. For example, this respondent described his motivations:

So after college I got involved in sustainable agriculture. And I worked in that for six years at a nonprofit in Raleigh. On a 6 acre farm. It was a teaching farm through that community….also using ingredients from the farm in beer. I went to Natty Greens in Raleigh to pick up their spent grains...So it [craft beer] was

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around my peripherals. But … I decided to start looking for new employment. And found these guys on craigslist. Applied for the job. And they liked me. And gave me the opportunity to work here.—*Manager, Local Brew Pub*

The respondent went on to explain that he only wanted to work for a small company that could contribute to his beliefs in sustainability—something small and local, that would also be involved in community outreach programs, like soup kitchens or fund raisers. People in this group found working with breweries attractive because of their connection to the community, or because they identified with the artisanal nature of the work. We know that people seek work for political reasons: volunteering with non-profits, NGOs, the ACLU and so forth. For some, it appears craft beer organizations, even though they are capitalistic, for-profit enterprises, fall into this category.

The Motivation to Craft Beer

Regardless of how they became craft beer fans, sixty-five percent of the sample sought out craft beer work because of their commitment to a craft beer lifestyle, or moved through *at least* steps two, three and four. What was it about craft beer that drew them to the work? One answer to this probe was generic: "it seemed fun." However, three distinct patterns emerged. First, nine of the respondents were allured by the challenge of brewing—mastering an ancient yet still-evolving craft. One owner of a brewery said "…Technically I like the science of it. I can probably actually go without ever drinking another beer in my life. Which sounds bad from a person who owns a brewery. But I like the science of it. I like tasting different things." These respondents would often describe beer as "art and science," containing dual aspects where one needs to manipulate fermentation processes to achieve a particular subjective experience—a look, aroma and flavor that matches the vision of the brewer. All of these workers were either owners or on the production side. Craft beer, for them, represented a technical challenge.

The second motivation observed concerns the service side, or what was driving people who ended up in "auxiliary" jobs. While all of the brewers were drawn by the intrinsic pleasure of successfully brewing a beverage that others enjoyed, most of the consumer-facing roles were drawn because they enjoyed tasting beers, and wanted a context where they could teach others how. As consumers who enjoyed learning to explore beers, they were, in many ways, already doing the work. For example, they may have tried "converting" their friends and acquaintances into craft beer drinkers. One sales clerk said, "I figured out that helping people choose beer was my superpower." Craft beer work potentially gave them the chance to keep doing what they were already doing as consumers.

Some of these transitions occurred because their activity as consumers overlapped or filtered into their roles in parallel types of markets. For instance, one person transformed his regular convenience store job—slowly, overtime—into a job selling craft beer. He was working at a convenience store in 2005, right after Pop the Cap. Craft beer in North Carolina had not taken off (only twenty breweries state wide.) The store mainly sold American pale lagers, but this person—a craft beer fan since his college days in the late 1990's—convinced the owner to start carrying more craft beers because of the higher mark-up. As he was able to sell those, talking beer with patrons, the owner began to expand their lineup. His identity as consumer of craft beer thus directly helped him transform his convenience store clerk role into a craft beer sales position. Several others went from consumer to producer because of familiarity with the establishment:

> All of the bartenders were very friendly…it was kind of my own little "Cheers."
> Everybody knows my name and everybody's else's name…And after going there
> a little while, I got to know the bartenders and they got to know me, and at the
> time I wasn't working I was actually going to school full-time and while I was in
> grad school I decided I needed some extra cash. And so I asked them if they were

> hiring. I went on a study abroad and when I came back they said hey apply for this. *–Bottleshop Manager*

This respondent had been frequenting a craft beer specialty bar for some time, until it became his own "Cheers" (the 1990's American sitcom where, in one establishment, bartenders and their regular patrons behave like one tight group of friends). Eventually, his familiarity with the atmosphere, where he enjoyed tasting different beers as the draught selection rotated, afforded him the opportunity to switch roles, going from one side of the bar to the other. So, while craft beer consumer culture is driven by the hands-on crafting of beer—the product at the center of this universe—there are only a few of those positions (at most) available at breweries. The numerous peripheral sales and serving jobs pull the bulk of people into the labor market. While they are not producing beer—an activity that is presumably directly transferrable between home brewing and commercial brewing—the jobs for selling beer have a parallel skill that *is* transferrable. Those on the consumer-facing, serving roles in craft beer viewed that work as an extension of their activity as consumers.

Finally, across these motivations, whether it was the allure of brewing or selling beer, an interesting and specific theme emerges: craft beer offered a context where their labor has an immediate and direct connection with people consuming the product. Some respondents were very explicit about the desire to sell, serve or make products, while having a direct relationship with people who found the products useful. For example:

> Because you are showing people where what they're consuming is coming from… Being able to show that to somebody. It is not just a can on a shelf. So it does give you that sense of value and I feel passionate about that. Because they are passionate about it. *–Bartendar, Local Brewery*

This respondent, who was more so drawn to craft beer because of the desire to be part of local, artisanal organizations, described the tangible process of making beer—being able to show

consumers where and how it is made—as being a central to her interest in the work. For other

respondents, this tangibility was made salient because they had been working the craft beer job

as a "side job," alongside a career they had trained or educated for. Eventually, the opportunities

in craft beer appeared more rewarding, and the respondent decided to pursue them full time. One

brewer got his start volunteering, during three years of college, at a local brewpub. After

completing a degree in archaeology, he continued working his unpaid side job as brew-volunteer

until that brewery closed. He then found work as head brewer in a North Carolina brewery, and

described the decision by referencing the work he had trained in college for:

> …Archaeology was fun. Not very fulfilling. As far as a life goal. We work. It is a
> kind of gypsy lifestyle. Living out of hotels. Go where the work is. Work with a
> team of eight. Or less. And you really don't have interaction with anyone else. So
> you're in bed about 7:30 because you've been digging holes from dawn to dusk.
> Go eat some food and then pass out. Because the time sunrise comes you are out
> in the field digging holes again….Me and many of my brewers spend time talking
> to the customers at the end of the day. Just having interactions. You know
> people…they'll tell us if they like the beer or not. Whatever it is. It is much more
> satisfying. Than being a loner out in the woods.—*Brewer of Regional Brewery*

In the above excerpt, the respondent did not consider working closely with a group of

people as "interaction," but rather considered that to be a "loner in the woods." It was not the

collective process of labor that apparently drew the respondent's interest, but rather, it was the

connection of that labor with those who find it useful—the interaction between producer and

consumer gives the work a special, significant kind of meaning. Like many people in the

sample, the work was attractive because the connection with consumers was tangible.

One person was working two jobs: one as a sales representative for a new brewery, and

another marketing job at a radio station (part of his college program.) He said the enthusiasm of

craft beer consumers made his work feel like it was part of a community context, whereas

"…going to a dance club and seeing a radio guy handing out coasters…That doesn't even make

sense at all." Rather, he felt a genuine interest from the consumers, and that made the craft beer

work more interesting to pursue. Likewise, many consumers are drawn to that connection as

well—knowing where and who makes the product seems to keep people coming back for craft

beer. It also creates a context where people seem drawn to the work.

In other interviews, this sentiment of making products that mattered to consumers

manifested in a tirade against products or advertising that potentially took advantage of

consumers. One respondent described her experiences of getting a marketing degree, and the

feelings she got when designing advertisements for popular national products:

> Enough of these cereal sugary breakfast cereals. I knew of kids who were obese
> as a result of this product. There's this really cool car. You can buy one but you
> can't afford to own it…tires, repairs, insurance they don't tell you about. Oh,
> here's a lease that you can barely afford but then in four years you own nothing.
> And look how cool smoking is. My uncle died of lung cancer. I'm like, I could
> find something better to do with my talent.—*Serving Manager, Local Brewery*

In other words, the respondent felt morally repulsed when designing advertisements for

these products. She went on to describe craft beer selling as "authentic," and "true to itself."

One did not have to manipulate people to get them to buy beer; just help them find the best beer

to suit their tastes. For her, that was prime reason for choosing the work.

In summation, people in the sample rarely discussed the opportunity for money, or other

designations of material success when deciding to pursue work in craft beer. In fact, people who

did discuss money talked about how much *more* their talents or experience would be worth in

other industries, working for large companies. Instead, respondents saw the work in craft beer as

meaningful, either because of the intrinsic tasks of making beer, the chance to continue doing

what they had been doing as consumers, or because it offered a tangible context where the fruits

of their labors would be enjoyed.

Conclusion

Relative to the questions posed at the outset of this chapter, three observations are suggestive. Number one, a substantial number of people—sixty-five percent—did begin their careers as enchanted consumers of beer, who then sought to turn that passion into their careers. This is consistent with the notion of the "enterprising self." These workers believed their calling, their passion, was somehow related to the craft beer industry, and set down that path. Forty-three percent of all respondents left a successful career in another field, sometimes at loss of pay or at least future earnings, to pursue a career in craft beer. Consumer-borne passion thus appears to animate labor market choices in this sample.

Secondly, amongst those motivated to choose auxiliary, or service roles, the ethos of sharing and learning beer appeared consistently in their narratives. Eleven people were enchanted to beer because its variety—there was so much to explore and learn that it stimulated their desire to become a fan of craft beer. The opportunity to share that feeling with others appeared to motivate them to choose the work. In other words, a specific discourse (beer talk) legitimating the consumption of craft beer also appears in the rationale of career choices. While brewers loved the challenge of mastering the craft, the intrinsic pleasures of artisanal occupations has been well documented generally (Hodson, 2001; Sennett, 2008) and with craft beer specifically (Thurnell-Read, 2014). That auxiliary (mostly service) jobs are driven by a parallel facet of the consumer culture—learning and teaching beer—appears in the observations described above.

CHAPTER 6: THE IDENTITY WORK OF CRAFT WORKERS

What kind of discursive materials do craft beer workers draw upon to perform their workplace identity? If the content of that material closely matches the content of discourse found in the consumer culture, then we could be observing social structures where the boundaries of consumer discourse overlap with the boundaries of workplace discourse. Most of the workers probably draw upon the consumer discourse to account for why they do their jobs. How they identify with those jobs should vary, however, by the role that workers perform, as well as the amount of autonomy they enjoy in their jobs. Research in the sociology of work suggests that the more autonomy workers have, the more likely they positively identify with their job roles. Moreover, organizational sociology suggests a difference between "internally" and "externally" focused workers. Do these factors affect the way workers identify with their jobs? Answering that question may provide observations of how consumptive and productive structures blend. Therefore, this chapter considers the identity work that people employed when describing their jobs, relative to the nature of that job.

The rest of the chapter is ordered as follows. First, I discuss three expectations for how workers will identify with their work. Then, the analysis of interview and workplace observations suggests distinct patterns in how production-facing versus consumer-facing, and high versus low autonomy workers identified with their work. The brewing side, or technical core, had a "love-hate" relationship with the consumer culture. Meanwhile consumer-facing workers of both low (servers and bartendars) and high autonomy (managers and sales representatives) found ways to positively adopt specific facets of the consumer culture, even

though they experienced that consumer environment very differently. These distinctions suggest

mechanisms whereby the consumptive discourse blends with the productive discourse.

Drawing on Consumer Culture to Identify with Work

As discussed in Chapter 1, identity may be defined as a conception of self. Different

academic disciplines see different implications in that seemingly simple definition.

Psychologically inclined disciplines tend to see it as a property of the individual: a core identity

exists inside the individual's mind, which manifests contingent upon circumstance. A core,

stable identity is assumed to travel with its owner. Sociology, especially symbolic

interactionists, view identity as performance. Individuals have capacities and skills which they

carry into different kinds of social settings. When interacting in these settings, individuals must

define the situation, then deploy their skills to perform *a kind of person* deemed appropriate for

that setting, or interaction (Goffman, 1982). Habit, routine, and consistency of setting create the

semblance of a stable identity. This chapter employs a conception of identity as performance.

Identity performances provide observations of the social structures that supply individuals with

symbolic (or discursive) material.

Over and over again, researchers have found that workers autonomously seek to make

their tasks meaningful—and thus find ways to positively identify with work—despite the

structural circumstance. These insights began piling up in the 1950s, when Chicago school

researchers like Alvin Gouldner (1954), Eli Chinoy (1992), and Donald Roy (1954) argued that

workers were not the "puppets" that early management theorists hoped for, or that early

sociological theories presumed. Workers find ways to make work into potential sources of pride.

In Donald Roy's (1959) famous *"*Banana Time" research article, workers actually developed

their own informal interaction rituals—from coke time, to banana time, to quitting time—

creating their own sense of control over the monotony. In Alvin Gouldner's (1954) Gypsum

Mine study, workers spoke of their ability to keep heavy machinery oiled and well-maintained, running smoothly. Recent examples demonstrate Wal-Mart employees who take pride in setting up displays for sale products (Reich & Bearman, 2018). The historic and current record is thus replete with examples of creative ways that workers infuse their tasks with a sense of purpose. In other words, workers are agentic in creating their identities.

A weakness of the symbolic interactionist perspective is that is does not theorize systematically how social structures may positively or negatively affect the performance of identity. What kinds of social structures do workers gravitate towards? What kind do they reject? In the symbolic interactionist literature, these questions are usually considered on a cases by case basis only, and hence an array of concepts and variables can create either positive or negative identification.

For example, in "Dancing with Identity," Ronai and Cross (1998) describe "discursive constraints" and "narrative resistance." Discursive constraints are categories that, when a person occupies the role that category describes, create expectations for behavior—or at least imputes motives about that person's behavior. "Stripper" or "sex worker" is one such category, and thus entails a stigma that one must be morally depraved to "do this kind of work." Ronai and Cross wonder how workers negotiate these roles. They find the workers create "deviance exemplars." These are strippers that really enjoy being sexually deviant, and will cross any moral boundary to titillate the audience. In interviews, the strippers portrayed other people in their business as being the real deviants—in other words, the stigma of sex workers was true, it just applied to "those people," and by implication, not part of their own conception of self. Narrative resistance suggest workers negatively identify with discursive constraints. The limitation with this concept is that it falls on the link between the individual and the macro, global environment of "society."

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It does not incorporate theories for mid-ranged conceptions of market or workplace structures. It provides rich insights into how workers create purpose in their jobs, but struggles to look across those structural conditions. Therefore, questions regarding how the structure of the workplace context interacts with workers' agency is only examined on a case by case basis.

Literatures have considered the effect external structures have on the workers' experiences by systematically conceptualizing and measuring those structures. Prominent research from the institutionalist perspective of the workplace, such as Arne Kalleberg (2011) Francis Green (2006) and many others have developed accounts of state, market, and organizational conditions affecting individual worker outcomes. These studies attempt to objectively assess worker's well-being, quality of working life, and how overall organizational and institutional environments affects these outcomes (for example see Kalleberg et. al 1996). Consistently, this research finds that the level of *autonomy* correlates with the level of job satisfaction, engagement, or job quality in the workplace (Breaugh 1998). "Autonomy" refers to the latitude workers have to make decisions about their tasks—it is a characteristic of the job, and hence a part of the workplace structure.

If workers have more autonomy, they have more control over how work is organized— the order, timing, and methods of evaluating the quality of tasks. Autonomy is an effective predictor of worker's *engagement*, or how likely they are to be psychologically invested in performing the workplace task ((Christian et al., 2011). Often, the mechanism explaining the association between these measures is meaning (Hackman and Lawler 1971). Work becomes more intrinsically meaningful as the natural capacity for workers to make meaning is given free reign (Hodson 2001). The reverse is also true: the more controlled workers become, the more they must search for meaning at the margins of their tasks, and thus dis-identify with their work.

For example, William Thompson (1983) documented assembly line controlled workers in a slaughter house. They could only find meaning by making slight alterations to the final cuts of meat. They instead legitimated their work through a "financial trap." They financed expensive sport vehicles or vacations to justify the job in the short term, but ended up stuck (in the job) paying back loans. Low autonomy jobs could thus offer many challenges for workers' positive identity performances.

Autonomy measures a characteristic of workplace structure that suggests how likely workers can make their tasks meaningful, and thus positively identify with their jobs. While— consistent with Donald Roy—workers in a routine, low-skilled job may engage in gamesmanship to pass the time, they would not consider the work an extension of their self. They would not identify with that work. Our first expectation is *people with higher autonomy will more consistently positively identify with their job, while people with lower autonomy struggle.*

Poor management can also cause workers to reject their roles. Randy Hodson's (2001) analysis of 75 years worth of ethnographic research demonstrates that if the organization violates workplace norms, it can create situations where workers resist. He argues that workers have a normative order that expects management to: 1) maintain production by keeping equipment, schedules, and tasks running smoothly, and 2) offer respect to the workers, or at least refrain from abuse. Workers' resistance behaviors increase when managers cross these lines (Hodson 2002). We would expect some level of negative identification to occur then, based on the potential for variation in quality of management at the organizational (or workplace) level.

Our second expectation regards the nature of the task. Based on the observations of the workplaces so far, and the studies done in Chapters 4 and 5, we can surmise a basic distinction

with regard to the job roles in the craft beer market system. Some jobs focus on serving consumers, and other focus on making products that are meant to be served.

As described in Chapter 4, the craft beer market is partially consumer-driven, by people interested in ranking, comparing, tasting, and discussing difference in beers. Brands are critical, since they communicate what is distinct about how the company performs particular styles of beer. Mystery Brewing, for example, names itself "mystery," coming from—as the owner described during field study—the old English meaning of the word, which is "art," in the sense of a trade or craft. Their beers such as "Annabel," "Eurydice," and "Rapunzel," are inspired by famous literature characters or events. The flavors strive to be rich, opulent, with layers of texture and changes to savor. It is somewhat of a Victorian-inspired theme. They are not beers meant to be guzzled by the pool, or crushed one after another at the barbeque. Now, communicating that idea of the brand, across different kinds of beer, in different kinds of marketing contexts—festivals, tap take overs, easter egg prizes—becomes the job of the sales team.

These "external-facing" roles communicate the craft beer lifestyle to consumers, but recall that consumers themselves are quite engaged in creating the craft beer market as well. Untapped rankings are a perfect example of "prosumer labor" (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010b), where empowered, emboldened consumers are actively creating content for the lifestyle. The "sovereign consumer" feared by Paul du Gay (1996) thus takes a very particular form: the craft beer consumer. Workers in customer service may identify more with these consumers, since they were often craft beer fans.

Opposed to those who must sway consumers are those who must create a product worth swaying for. These jobs should be more focused on the actual "crafting." These artisanal jobs

should offer much in the way of intrinsic rewards, a chance to practice skills, and freedom from authority (Hodson, 2001; Sennett, 2008). They will probably draw less upon the consumer discourse to make meaning from their tasks. Rather, these workers will refer to technical challenges of mastering their position. Following Chapter 4, we know that brewers most often became interested in these jobs because they loved to homebrew. Their "consumer" lifestyle likely prepared them for the jobs they would doing. The jobs now give them a chance to continue mastering the craft. Therefore, our second expectation is that *brewers probably identify with the intrinsic rewards of the craft more so than being part of the consumer culture.* In other words, the "trappings of the lifestyle," described by "beer talk" in Chapter 4, are less often referred to by those on the production side of the organization.

On the other hand, consumer-facing roles in management should enjoy high autonomy, and the chance to develop professional, knowledge-based skills, similar to craft, of their own. However, those roles with low autonomy would be most exposed to the controls of consumer discourse. Following the discussion in Chapter 1 of this study, service roles have become predicated on understanding—and serving—the lifestyle legitimating the consumption of the product. When this becomes work, it means putting one's lifestyle in the service of producing value for the organization. These workers with low autonomy could be burdened with having to authentically blend the specific craft beer consumer context with their job roles. The "sovereign consumer" in these cases might be the beer snob, or worse, a drunkard.

Yet, we have also seen that these workers are often drawn from the consumptive side of this market context—as patrons and purveyors of craft beer spaces (Chapter 5). We already know that many of them plan to stay in the industry. Thus we can expect them to use that same discourse of consumption to positively identify with their tasks. However, the difficulties of

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their job roles should create a pattern of negative identification that differs from other categories

of work in the study. Our third expectation is that *consumer-facing jobs with low autonomy*

(servers and bartenders) will be most likely to reject or negatively identify with the consumer

culture.

That consumer culture might become part of the symbolic material workers draw upon

for making work meaningful is expected by the theoretical discussion in Chapter 1. We have

already seen, in Chapter 5, that workers often import the consumer discourse in through their

motivations. People get extremely passionate about craft beer. Even though the recent

encroachment of the consumer market potentially adds a new layer of complexity to this puzzle,

the reality is that the conditions of the job—management quality, level of autonomy or skill

required, as well as whether the work role is "internal" or "external" to the organization—should

affect how people draw upon consumer discourse to positively identify with their work.

Autonomy was observed by coding the discussion of the worker's job. I asked the

workers to describe a typical day or typical week. They took me through their routines. I probed

for questions about their level of decision-making authority, as well as their relative position in

the organization's hierarchy. Without direct observation of how the workplace task was

designed and what workers were actually doing, making fine grained determinations of

autonomy was difficult. Therefore, I coded workers' autonomy relative to three points: high,

some and low. Because of restrictions on travel and time, I was not able to find many people

with low autonomy, especially on the production side of job roles. For the purpose of this

analysis, the "low" and "some" categories have been lumped together, creating only two broad

distinctions: "restricted" and "unrestricted." Unrestricted persons have high autonomy—

practically no managers above them, or they are managed on a weekly or quarterly basis. High

autonomy persons have complete control over daily task decisions. "Restricted" persons have some or low autonomy. They have some manager or customer needs that structures their daily routines. Some or low autonomy persons do not manage anyone else.

Table 3. Job Categories of Craft Beer Workers (Excluding Owners)

	Production-Facing	Consumer-Facing
Unrestricted Autonomy	5 Head Brewers Positive Identity Claims: 28 Negative Identity Claims: 10 Percent Positive: 73%	12 Sales Representatives 9 Managers (Service/Sales) Positive Identity Claims: 126 Negative Identity Claims: 48 Percent Positive: 72%
Restricted Autonomy	6 Assistant Brewers Positive Identity Claims: 36 Negative Identity Claims: 15 Percent Positive: 70%	10 Servers, Bartenders, and Bottleshop Clerks Positive Identity Claims: 53 Negative Identity Claims: 22 Percent Positive: 70.6%

The job roles were coded based on categories as they developed within the data collection process. These roles developed relative to my observations of the workplace as well. I was not able to observe all workplaces. However, I did spend enough time in the field, both as consumer and by doing interview and observation work, to understand the types of organizational forms that existed in the market system. I classified workers according to these roles. For the analysis in this chapter, I lumped them into these two broad categories of "production-facing," or "consumption-facing." Brewers, assistant brewers and quality control persons are production-facing. They are concerned with the manufacturing of consistent, quality, exciting, innovative

beer. Sales reps, servers and bottleshop clerks are consumption-facing. They are focused on the marketing aspects of securing consumers for the product.

"Job role by autonomy" creates a 2 x 2 grid, or four categories of work, where each respondent may be made exclusively designated. Interview transcripts were coded for positive or negative identity claims. These were claims where the worker was either taking pride in some aspect of the work, or they expressed frustrations or distanced themselves from it. Positive claims were easier to identify. These were claims where clearly workers took pride in something they had done, or were a part of. For example:

> I think a lot of it again goes back to interacting with the customers. It is very rewarding when there is someone who may be doesn't know beer that well and says I don't even know what I like. And you work through that with them and let them try a couple of things and all the sudden they found a new favorite beer; their new favorite style. Things like that.—*Barback, Regional Brewery.*

Examples of negative claims include descriptions of situations or circumstances that the respondent found difficult to deal with. For example:

> Professionally, just getting our brewery into Wake county as much as possible. You just have to stick with it. I mean you get discouraged. There are weeks where it's like why aren't people buying this beer? And the next week you sell 40 kegs. It's just you know. …there are stresses at the end of the day. You want to move beer. You have goals at about that. Sometimes we meet them, sometimes we don't. That's frustrating.—*Sales Rep, Regional Brewery.*

However, some negative claims were directed at socials spheres or factors in the work environment that made it hard for workers to do the job they wanted to do. This would be consistent with Hodson's view that workers have expectations for being able to be productive. In this case workers identified strongly with the organizational goals of selling more beer and being successful enough to maintain a secure market position. In these cases, workers actually strongly identified positively with the work structure but negatively with logistical or financial constraints. In other words, positive versus negative identity claims, in terms of numbers, or

how many, is not a valid measure of "how much" workers positively identified with their jobs.

Rather, these claims were sorted into the four categories of work, and then considered

holistically to determine patterns in discursive themes used to legitimate their choice to do the

work.

Table 4. Respondent's Pathways into Job Category

	Production-Facing Roles		Consumer-Facing Roles	
Unrestricted Autonomy	3 Ideal 1 Never Macro 1 Not Fans Prior	N=5	8 Ideal 2 Never Macro 11 Not Fans Prior	N=21
Restricted Autonomy	1 Ideal 4 Never Macro 1 Not Fans Prior	N=6	4 Ideal 2 Never Macro 4 Not Fans Prior	N=10

Table 3 indicates that the amount of positive identification is about 70% for each of the

four cells. This is somewhat surprising, but if the sample were expanded, we would likely see

more variation in these cells. Table 4 depicts the distribution by which various "pathways"

(described in the previous chapter) lead to positions in these cells. Only one of the five brewers

was not a fan of craft beer prior. Most of the assistant brewers were "never macros," or walked

the ideal pathway. All told, only 2 of 11 respondents were "not fans prior" on the production

side, suggesting that, if one is going into beer for work on the production side, they were likely

fans of the lifestyle prior to gaining employment. On the high-autonomy, consumer-facing cell,

11 of 21 respondents were "not fans prior," as well as 4 of the 10 low-autonomy, consumer-

facing respondents. This suggests that more people who came to work in craft beer in the

traditional mode, end up in consumer-facing roles.   However, the fact that 16 of the 31

respondents in consumer-facing roles also walked either the "never macro," or "ideal pathway,"

suggests that people who end up selling or serving craft beer were also motivated by their

identity as consumers to find work in the craft beer industry. Below, we consider distinctions in

how these job categories draw upon the consumer discourse for describing their work roles.

Findings

On the whole, craft beer workers were overwhelmingly happy and enthusiastic with their

jobs, and indicated overall strong positive identification with either the tasks, the work

environment, or the craft beer consumptive lifestyle. Three points of evidence indicate the

overall level of positive identity. One, the average job satisfaction, on a scale of 1-10, was

reported as an 8.3. Now, job satisfaction is not intended to measure "identity." People consider

a range of distinct factors, relative to their aspirations, when calculating a "job satisfaction" (A.

L. Kalleberg & Vaisey, 2005). Still, in the course of this interview, the job satisfaction question

comes after I have asked workers to weigh the strengths and weaknesses of their current job. It

seems possible that if people were feeling stuck or trapped in their roles, or were beginning feel

disdain for being associated with the craft beer consumer lifestyle, asking them to reconcile those

strengths and weaknesses with a job satisfaction score would have produced some low or

unsatisfied ratings. Afterall, when compared with the General Social Survey levels of job

satisfaction from 2016, 11 percent of people marked 5 or less, indicating a rejection of their job.

Those people were clearly signaling that they would prefer to be in another job. In this study,

however, zero craft beer workers rated their job satisfaction at 5 or less. A good portion of this

difference is probably because of snowball and convenience sampling techniques used in the

data collection (whereas the General Social Survey uses random sampling.)

In the exploratory phase, there appeared to be some people who were angry about their

jobs, but I could not secure interviews with those people once I started taping and transcribing.

Exclusively, these three people were stuck in production jobs in larger brewers—canning or

cleaning equipment, and little else. This suggests the sample is probably over representing the

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amount of positive identity, or job satisfaction, and thus the enthusiasm that exists in the population (of North Carolina craft beer workers). However, that should not affect the research question: Do workers, grouped by these four job categories, differ regarding how they identify with their work? The findings below describe the distinct patterns of identification relative to each of the four categories of work roles.

Both productive and consumptive jobs referenced internal and external (i.e. the consumer culture) identification structures relative to their role, but did so in distinct ways. There was identification with intrinsically-focused tasks, as well as ambiguity regarding how they—or the results of their work tasks—are perceived in uncertain, external environments. Brewers, as expected, were more focused on the intrinsic challenges of producing the beer. Consumer-facing roles were more focused on maintaining some certainty—or market stability—by building relationships, both with outside people and other organizations (who are often in the same role, but conceptually distinct). Both, however, did deal with the opposite side of that coin. For brewers, it meant anxiety over how their beer was perceived by audiences for whom they cared. For consumer-facing roles, it meant time management and dealing with rejection (in sales), or staving off boredom (in server roles). For owners it depended; they could occupy either or both roles. This section describes how each group identified with their tasks.

Owners

Owners could theoretically occupy both consumer and production facing positions. This is especially true of homebrewers who started their own brewery. However, most ownerships are teams where one person will focus on the technical aspect and one person will focus on the external or advertising aspect. Some owners try to occupy both roles. The owner of Haw River Ales was famously recounted on multiple informal occasions as being that rare person who can brew beer, and sell it. Most only find the time or inclination to do one role. One owner had

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hired a head brewer so he could focus on marketing. He quickly found selling was not suited to

his tastes, so—after his head brewer went on to greener pastures at another brewery—he hired

someone to do marketing instead, and went back to brewing. Another owner did not know how

to make beer, and so exclusively focused on building the brand. Still, there are two

organizationally-defined positions that each craft brewery must fill in order to be successful and

exist. "No matter how good the beer is, it has to be sold," as one former-hopeful-homebrew-

entrepreneur (who then became an investor) told me. He realized that he had no interest in trying

to learn how to sell beer, so, to be a part of the process of making beer, he found a small

company with a brand-concept he liked, and invested his money there. At the time of the study,

two owners were production facing and the other five were consumption facing, based on a

description of their job duties. However, for the categories of workers considered below, owners

were excluded.

Brewers: Intrinsic Craft Identification

Both brewers and assistant brewers identified with the intrinsic challenges of mastering

their craft. Ironically, it was brewers whose consumptive activity—homebrewing—had prepared

them the least for actually brewing beer in a production brewery. Brewing beer commercially is

about maintaining a process. One must get the right equipment, learn to use that equipment,

scale recipes cost effectively, and finally: clean, sanitize, clean, sanitize and then clean again.

> I think one of the big surprises of home brewers that try to go professional….I
> never thought through with what the day-to-day would be. Even going through
> brew school I don't think I realized…that it's mainly cleaning. I would say 80%
> of the job is cleaning."—*Brewer, Local Brewpub*

The commercial brewers' first task is to learn the equipment, and how to keep it clean,

before any experimentation or artistic representation that a homebrewer embarks upon freely can

occur. It would appear then, that brewers might have the most regular routine of the workers

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interviewed, but this is not so. Brewers often had a difficult time putting an explanation of their job into the frame of a daily or weekly routine. This was somewhat surprising. Most often, when I asked brewers this question, they would stammer and struggle to answer. One brewpub brewer, after he described all of the different tasks that might come up in a regular week, involving boiling, transferring, and checking the temperatures or yeast's activity in various tankards, said, "It's a weird version of routine. It's a routine with random things that pop up, I guess. Routine but unpredictable." Finally, another brewer was describing his own difficulty with learning a daily routine, until he realized:

> …There are sort of these natural rhythms. That tank gets filled. That beer gets moved. Clean that tank; then you carbonate the beer if it is moved. It goes into a package from there. You rotate packages. So there are rhythms but I wouldn't say there is a set flow to how the week always goes. I don't always keg on Monday. I don't always keg on Tuesday. *Brewer, Local Brewpub*

In other words, the beer structures the routines of the production side. Beer is made when yeast eats the wort, and then excretes both carbon dioxide and alcohol. Brewers thus depend greatly on yeast to do *their* jobs. Yeast are microscopic organisms; living things. When they are "happy," they can eat, excrete, and multiply, like any good colony of organisms. However, if the temperature of the tank is wrong (which depends on the kind of yeast one has deployed), of if some competing bacteria has contaminated the tank, or if the yeast for some reason do not like the wort as much as expected, any one of those things can slow down the process. If the process gets slowed for one batch, that can have a domino effect on the production system. This is because fermenting tanks are often used alternately for storing product ready for consumption (where they become "bright tanks"). Tanks are the most capital-intensive investment in the brewer's system, and are thus used for different facets of the brewing-to-selling process. This means the brew system can quickly become a game of musical chairs. Once a three-thousand

gallon tank has been filled, the brewer is beholden to whatever process is going on inside that tank, and much of their efforts are geared toward understanding what that is. While a Budweiser can pay for a mass-spectrometer to examine each molecular compound in a batch of beer, the craft brewers here must rely on their sense of taste for catching "off-flavors," or temperature and gravity readings—matched with records of past, successful batches—to determine if a tankard's contents are on a successful journey. An assistant brewer explained: "This is the deal we make with the beer." Brewers saw themselves as stewards of a process, one shepherding a product that might, to many of them, be considered "alive."

Producing beer in a commercial environment means controlling those variables that could alter the tasting experience upon consumption. Alterations may not affect the quality of the beer, but any change to its look, aroma, flavor, or any other characteristic for which the beer is known must be minimized. As many workers described, their consumers—the fans of their beer—come to have a relationship with it. "It's like getting together with an old friend," as one bartender put it. Another brewer said, "that beer should taste exactly like they remember it each and every time."

Consistency of taste is, in the craft beer world, an artifact of the intersection of branding logic—which is now ubiquitous and emergent in the capitalist landscape (i.e. all consumers and thus potential entrepreneurs presume the need for a good brand)—with the impetus to make distinctions in beer flavor and profile, which is specific to the lifestyle espoused by craft beer. With craft beer, branding becomes even more nuanced, since each beer itself is potentially some branded experience. With all the effort to figure out which beers are "you"—one inevitably develops some "go to" beers. Alternatively, one may champion favorite beers to others: "Drink

this you will love it!" If, however, a customer received a beer tasting different—that threatens the credibility of the brand.

The experience of taste was branded by the beer's name and label. This was why Yesteryears, known for its flagship beer, "WHYBO" (Will Hop Your Brains Out,) encountered a problem when it first opened. The first beer batch produced on that system—the test batch— came out with far less of a "hop-forward" aroma and flavor. These are the beer's defining characteristics. Therefore, as part of its grand opening, it released the failed WHYBO batch under the moniker "Son of WHYBO." They did not package or advertise the beer, just changed the name on the chalkboard and sold it until the proper batch could be produced. The brand communicated to consumers what they should experience each time they crack a bottle and take a sip.

How was consistency of taste, aroma and color maintained? One might think rationalizing the process here would make a great deal of sense. Brewing beer commercially— especially in the craft beer space—involves manipulating the transformation of living entities so that they taste a certain way. Like other "fictitious commodities" (Polanyi, 1944) living entities—grains, yeast, hops, and water—resist standardization. Brewers must therefore learn how to recognize possible variations that might occur, and make corrections. A certain malted barley may have arrived with a more intense color than usual. The brewer would know to use less of that barley in the recipe. An owner-brewer described the problem:

> The recipes have all changed. They are my original creation but the reality is to keep beers consistent you have to end up changing the recipe. That doesn't make sense…but... the ingredients change. If the ingredients change…there are all kinds of adjustments that you make…that frankly any brewer is constantly making. It is always behind the scenes. We always laugh when people are like, "What I love about your beer is that it is the same every time I drink it." And that couldn't be further from the truth.—*Owner-Brewer, Regional Brewery.*

Commercial brewing was a task of maintaining that taste-credibility that the brand is meant to represent. This marketing axiom was consistent from Budweiser to Sierra Nevada to Gizmo Brewing. Ken Grossman famously dumped thousands of barrels of beer in his new North Carolina brewery, as he struggled to get the recipe altered so that the taste of Seirra Nevada's Pale Ale was the same as his Southern California brewery, where the water's flavor is completely different.

Despite these differences between homebrewing—where brewers were free to let their imaginations run wild—and commercial brewing, people strongly identified with the actual work required. This can be demonstrated in two ways. One, the production side workers' initial response to the question, "What do you like about your job?" eight out of thirteen workers referred to the *variety of challenges*—and the rewards for solving them. Several talked about the pleasure of not having a "desk job," but instead being able to move about, and manually engage many different tasks. As one assistant brewer described it:

> There's a lot of things that deal with engineering and problem solving that I find to be more stimulating and things I'd rather do. Like we spent a couple of hours making sure the labels would go on our cans. On the one hand it sort of sucks to keep making a hundred little adjustments to it, but that is a satisfying day to me, rather than sitting at a computer typing. –*Assistant Brewer, Local Brewpub*

The worker identified with the tangible completion of the task, and the skill or critical thinking required to overcome challenges. Others referenced the pleasure in constantly tinkering with equipment, cobbling together parts of a machine to make it do something for which it was not necessarily designed. These intrinsically-focused identifications suggest the meaning from the work was made by actually doing the task, rather than the consumer market system in which those tasks were embedded.

Secondly, brewers discussed the intrinsic rewards of completing a batch of beer. Like many who were attracted to working in craft beer (described in Chapter 5), the tangibility of working to create and share a finished product appeared often in brewer's job descriptions. An assistant brewer said:

> …I can actually literally look at what I have helped make. Like taste and enjoy it. I can see other people doing it. –*Assistant Brewer, Regional Brewery.*

The respondent referenced the concrete experience of seeing that labor coming to fruition, and being in the same space where it is consumed: "actually literally," "taste," "see other people." While the enjoyment of beer overlaps quite strongly with the consumer culture—where the impetus to know, learn and share beer was predominant—the tangible completion of the process suggests social structures that are much more immediate to the brewer, and more specific to the labor process. These would be associated with the technical core of the organizational form. One brewer described the satisfaction of making a black IPA batch that perfectly matched the criteria of the Great American Beer Festival's Style Guide. Another described the satisfaction of seeing a clean brewery at the end of the day, when three hours earlier it would have been strewn with hoses, buckets, tools, and anything else. The work space for brewers and assistant brewers seemed socially *contained,* almost insulated from the rest of the brewpub. There was a collective process of prepping tanks, washing them, scrubbing them, mashing and the boiling the wort, bringing down the temperature, transferring, etc. In most of the breweries, three to ten people coordinated to get the beer through these various stages. There was a collective focus on getting the beer done right. When it came out tasty at the other end, there was a sense of accomplishment that these workers strongly identified with. As one assistant brewer described it:

It's funny because I am not a clean freak in my daily life. But actually do enjoy the process of cleaning here. I think it's sort of starts off by being excited about the prospect of making good beer. If I think that I'm going to make something really delicious that a lot of people are going to enjoy…That would make me very happy and very proud.

So everything that I do regardless of whether or not I enjoy that particular task it is part of achieving that goal. Which is sort of like, if you are making dinner you may not enjoy chopping up an onion, but the person you make dinner for says this is so good. It doesn't really matter that you hated chopping the onion. But I do love chopping onions as it turns out. –*Assistant Brewer, Local Brewpub*

"Chopping onions" here becomes a metaphor for enduring unpleasant tasks, so that a satisfying ultimate objective might be completed. Craft brewers strongly identified with situations where they see those objectives completed. Brewers did speak negatively regarding the monotony of cleaning, or if equipment failed, leading to a variety of problems. Any problem or negativity they presented, however, was often framed as an obstacle they had overcome.

Since both are based on the prospect of quality beer, the production-facing workers and the consumer culture discourses strongly overlap. By this, both were concerned with gaining knowledge about beer. However, brewers did seek to set themselves apart in their identity work, from the larger spaces of the craft beer consumer lifestyle. It was a complex "love-hate" relationship with these consumers. Seeing a batch beer come to completion, and then watching people drink that beer while socializing with friends, is one thing. I have suggested here it is part of the "internal" identification with the social spaces of the technical core. Seeing one's work consumed is a reward in itself. However, when that beer enters the craft beer market space, that is another social sphere all together. For example:

I spend a lot of time on social media. I try to be as engaged as possible with people on social media. I sometimes find that I am too close to the product, and I have a hard time to honest reactions to the product, good or bad. Because I just have a hard time being rational about it. It is like someone criticizing your work when you're very passionate about it. So I try not to read online reviews or anything like that. I would much rather sit down and have a conversation with

somebody. There is nothing I like more than sitting at a bar where my beer is on tap, and listening to people talk about it. –*Brewer, Local Brewpub*

The brewer above describes a common situation for these workers. They actively follow the social media reaction to their beers. Here, his creation, the beer, has become branded, and thus part of the broader consumer discourse: it became profiled on Untapped, NC Beer Guys, or one of another hundred organizations producing content for craft beer consumers. That beer may have entered a contest. Gone to a festival. Landed a tasting event at a bottle shop. Now, consumers would write reviews, talk about the beer, and decide where it ranks among other beers that might be considered similar. Brewers were beholden to verdicts delivered by these external audiences, although they have little control over them. Rather, they viewed those spaces with anxiety. Yet, brewers still check; and they often must roll their eyes at what people are saying, and maybe getting wrong, about their beers.

However, when asked if they read about news, trends, or styles in the craft beer market, brewers would often respond, "no." Thus, they paid attention to how their beer was received, but did not fully engage the "taste, try, discuss!" themes that dominate the craft beer consumer discourse. Rather, brewers tended to engage their audiences more directly. For example,

> I get up every morning excited to go to work. Every day we are constantly doing new beers, trying new things, doing collaborations stuff like that…And talk to people about our beer. And ask them questions. And we get a lot of homebrewers and they come in and I will get a direct message on Twitter and they will ask me, hey I am trying to do your golden ale and I am wondering what yeast you use in this beer. I tell them what we use: this and this and this. It is the interaction with people. The whole industry is very tight knit in that. –*Head brewer, Local Brewpub.*

In this quote, the brewer was directly adopting some main tenants of the craft beer consumer discourse. They discussed beer, they shared—interacted with people on social media by giving them information on their recipes—and he portrayed the "tight knit" expectation that

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seemed to exist more generally in the craft beer space. The impetus to teach and share beer knowledge was used to make the work meaningful and "exciting." So, while brewers were working behind the scenes to change recipes that consumers believe are constant, and they perceived those same "ignorant" consumers as potential sources of negativity for their work, they also used some core tenets of craft beer consumption to identify with their roles, and engage consumers.

Workers on production side of low autonomy were not sampled in the interview, but were observed during field study and informal interviews. These occurred while doing brewery tours, or doing interviews with owners and brewers. These facilities were unfortunately outside the targeted area for interviews. Without facilities of substantial size, over 10,000 barrels of production per year, these jobs probably do not occur often, and thus probably represent the smallest portion of workers that could appear in the four cells of the job categories.

Consumer-Facing Jobs

Consumer-facing jobs required engaging the uncertainty of consumer markets to secure the organization's position. This included everything from serving consumers who come to the brewpub to planning a regional sales strategy, to setting up events, or taking orders from bartenders and sales clerk so beer can be delivered. These roles were geared toward stabilizing the organization's position in ambiguous, dynamic market environments. Customers must be served in a friendly manner, to retain their patronage and hopefully even make them regulars or fans of the brewery. Potential fans must be converted. New craft beer drinkers must be tempted to pursue the lifestyle. People must look out at that sea of craft beer choice and somehow pick your beer again and again. In short, consumer audiences must be engaged, and retained. It was an inherently uncertain endeavor. The work environment involved navigating market actors who were external to the organization.

In consumer-facing jobs, workers identified with their roles just as strongly as did workers on the production side, but in a different way. Sales and management jobs (high autonomy, consumer-facing) had the highest rates of negative identity claims. While restricted autonomy jobs identified differently with their work, they did complain about their lack of autonomy. Both high and low autonomy still drew up on the consumer discourse to identify with their roles.

High autonomy consumer-facing jobs tended to have the most ambiguous, disconnected and scattered work environments. These workers had so much freedom, it bordered on becoming directionless. There was no brewing process that must be monitored. There was no short term goal of making a batch of beer successfully, bringing a tangible sense of order, and accomplishment to their work schedules. For workers in sales especially, and sales management, there was a persistent complaint of time management or organizational skills. For example,

> So really an average day would start around 8:30…Your days don't get over until around 7. And that is just like market time. And a lot of times if you have a sales software that is very data-driven like a client soft, you are talking about your sales notes. That's 2 to 4 hours computer time a day sometimes. And a lot of times you are doing that stuff in the car and bars. You are doing it in coffee shops, public settings. Because you are on the go.—*Sales Rep, Regional Brewery*

Each week was an open book of trying to make sales calls, visiting locations, keeping tabs on places one has been, as well as trying to find new shops to make a sales call. The task of focusing one's time and schedule was a source of concern and worry for these workers. The high autonomy for these workers was necessary to navigate uncertain environments. However, the burden of autonomy, having to be self-directed, appeared as their most significant challenge.

Lack of communication was another persistent complaint among sales workers. They would sometimes be the only person from the company to work an area. Sales people were given a territory. That "territory," was their turf; their responsibility. Any bottleshop, grocery

store, convenience store, bar, festival, or event that was going on in that territory is thus a potential client for the sales rep to secure. For some companies, entire states served as a territory. This mean sales workers may spend several days to a week on the road.

Even those that work near the brewery often described not going to the actual brewery as part of the daily routine. Most of their days began and ended at home. Sometimes sales workers might feel somewhat disconnected or isolated, or outside the loop.

> There is a lot of camaraderie up north…they are close enough that they will have their office day there…we didn't have anyone to report to. We had to report to the other territory sales manager. She didn't really have any authority to implement changes… So really that's kind of a struggle... the company needs to work a lot on an engaging the people to make us feel like we're part of the team down here. –*Sales Rep, Regional Brewery*

How did consuming-facing workers navigate these uncertainties? The phrase that came up over and over again in these interviews was "building relationships."

> I'm still new at it honestly. But just building of the confidence and what made that happen is…I just keep going back to places and just talking to the owners. Like, "Hey, how's it going this week?" About anything. Not even about beer half the time. But building those relationships is what made me confident in the job. Because it's building a trust…then they trust your opinion. –*Sales Rep, Regional Brewery*

The respondent above references success in "building those relationships" as equivalent to success in her job. A successful relationship with a bar owner gave her the confidence that she could do the job. "Building relationships" was a specific phrase referenced by eight out of the nine sales workers in the sample. Relationship building was an active, ongoing process that was viewed as an essential tool in their work.

The sudden influx of brands in the North Carolina craft beer market appears to make building relationships even more necessary. In 2016, there were 6000 distinct beers made in North Carolina alone. The market of craft beer consumer discourse was partially driven by

innovation and experimentation. People liked to taste and try. This meaned even good beers

have trouble staying on tap, since bartenders like to rotate beers that are available on draft. For

example,

> You go to an account and they don't like you, this is the thing because there's so
> much of it now. They don't have to rely on one person to satisfy all their craft
> needs. So let's say the people who called me. They don't have to go to any craft
> brands we distribute. They got so many brands they can choose from. You have to
> have the ability to form genuine relationships—*Sales Rep, Distributor*

The ability to build relationships was again cited as important for success, this time

specifically to mitigate against the constant influx of choice and experimentation. Recall from

Chapter 4, a sales rep explained that a bartender would not re-order a quick-selling, great tasting

beer, since her customers would want something new the following week. The pressure for

bottleshops and craft beer bars was to keep rotating the selection, and there were literally

thousands of beers to choose from.

Field work observations yielded some insight into how some of these relationships were

maintained. They seemed centered around tasting, sharing, discussing, and especially drinking

beer. For example,

> Our interview was interrupted when a woman with a leather-bound binder walked
> in and came straight to the bar. She was wearing a button up shirt and dark pants,
> like business-casual. They began talking without introduction. She was a sales
> rep from a distribution company. She had a few things for him to sample. He
> tried a couple of them, and they poured me some samples. They talked about the
> flavor. He said he would pass. She took orders for other things that he needed.
> She hung out for a little bit…Drinking and working on a laptop while he went to
> serve a customer. Then she left.—*Field Notes, February 2015*

Sales reps came in at fairly regular times during the week. They get to know the

bartenders and servers pretty well. They get to know what drinks were popular in certain regions,

and what was not. "Beer talk" seemed to be the grist for much of their discussion, and much of

what these relationships were built on. However, many of these relationships may also veer

away from tasting toward the other end of craft beer consumption: drinking.

Breweries will sometimes sponsor tastings or events that are for sales people only. These

invitation-only events are quite entertaining if you can get into one. One of my interviews was

scheduled to occur at a brewery hosting one such event. I recorded the following observations

(edited for clarity) of the brewery before and after that interview:

> As I arrived, the event was ending. I had to pull my interviewee away from a
> group of people who were talking and laughing…Each of the five women were
> from a different organization…We completed the interview at the brewery, then
> decided to meet at the brewpub for a follow up drink. We found that group of
> people had gone there as well, still drinking, talking and laughing. We joined
> them.—*Field Notes, April 2016*

The people in this group were from different companies—3 different breweries and 1

distribution company—and had formed a tight group friendship. These friendly, catch-up

drinking sessions occurred once or twice a month. Tasting and drinking thus both form a basis

for the relationship-building, and consumer-facing workers identified strongly with that aspect of

their work. One night after observing a tasting event at a bottleshop, I noted that the sales rep

met up with her counterpart in a distribution company. The two had a business relationship that

had eventually become personal. The woman at the distribution company was a bridesmaid at

the sales rep's upcoming wedding. They drank and laughed, telling stories as if they had been

friends best friends for years.

Relationship-building and success in the market went hand-in-hand for high autonomy,

consumer-facing workers. The foundation for those relationships often seemed to revolve

around beer: tasting, discussing, planning what is ahead. All these require a great deal of

knowledge about beer. If one did not know, they would eventually learn, being so immersed in

the context on a regular basis. Sales workers thus strongly identified with the consumer

discourse because it formed a coherent context, and a set of tools, for building these relationships. Success in the craft beer market required these workers to also be good craft beer consumers. These activities appeared to be synonymous for the high autonomy sales workers.

For example, several of these sales workers also strongly identified with their company's beer, and seemed genuinely enthusiastic about the work, viewing it almost like a calling:

> So I like to uphold relationships like that where hey I'm not just doing this for a quick buck. I'm not doing this to make the brewery money, I'm doing this because it's *good beer and people should have it*. And try it out and that's why I went into the store. It has nothing to do with making money for me…I mean the job means a lot to me. The beer means a lot to me. When I'm somewhere and I see our sticker I'm like, "oh my God!" It's awesome.—*Sales Rep, Regional Brewery*

The above worker strongly identified with the success of the beer, but wanted people to believe her success was not just motivated by money. Another person who had worked at a large, national brewery said there were two kinds of workers: volume-jollies and relationship-builders. The volume-jollies got "their rocks off" by selling beer in large numbers. He, on the other hand, cared about maintaining friendships. He made distinctions between "authentic" and "surface" relationships, and believed craft beer sales relationships should be based on something mutual and shared.

In fact, the meaning that people drew from their jobs in this context could hinge on how the organization is perceived. If workers or consumers believed the organization/brewery does not have an "authentic passion" for beer—if it is only for money—that could be a basis for rejection. It was the same for workers. The following worker described her experience of discovering her employers were not authentic:

> But then I saw that they had won a gold medal for their lager. Vienna lager is not my favorite style. But ours is the example of what it should be. So I figure that any brewery that brews the beer right has to be great. I never expected the

founders of the company didn't have a love for beer. I never expected that the brew master didn't start as a homebrewer." *Sales Rep, Regional Brewery*

This person gave one of the two lowest job satisfaction ratings in the sample. She had a prominent sales position with a large corporation, and had left that job to join an up-and-coming craft beer brewery. She did research on the company before joining by examining their beers. Were they good? Could she get excited about them? She decided she could, but over time, came to realize the brewer and owner were not "beer nerds." They did not have an extensive background or passion for beer, but had chosen the occupation and investment for traditional, utilitarian purposes only: stable work in a trending industry. She came to regret working for them, and hoped to one day start her own brewery, with her husband being the brew master (two years after the interview, she had completed that goal.)

High autonomy consumer-facing workers thus identified strongly with the craft beer consumer culture. They drew upon the discourses of craft beer consumption—its rituals and institutions—to provide context and coherence to their task of "building relationships." They rejected organizations that could be misrepresenting an "authentic" or "real" passion for beer.

Restricted-Autonomy, Consumer-Facing Jobs: Servers and Bartenders

Restricted autonomy, consumer-facing workers occupied a different workplace. They were less encumbered with the demands of a large external environment of networks. They have only to manage the physical spaces where customers enter. "Regulars" often helped foster or establish a real sense of community in these establishments—where workers would also reference the relationships that make their job meaningful—and bartenders and servers therefore have a more routine, ordered work space to engage.

Restricted autonomy workers were most likely to complain about boredom, or doing dirty, physical work that can get tiring or repetitious. For example:

And on the pro side I know that there is room to grow and that could potentially happen down the line. Finding like new roles in the business. But it's repetitive and it gets tiring. It has nothing to do with the beer or the business. You get tired of mopping floors and pouring the same beer. And I do find that like if I'm not talking about it with people and I am just doing the action. That fulfillment piece isn't happening. So you get bored with that too.—*Bartendar, Local Brewpub*

For these workers, "that fulfillment piece" came from engaging with the consumers about beer. When asked what they liked about their jobs, these workers most often described talking with others about craft beer. For example,

I would say customers too…it never bothers me to walk out with less than what I would like I don't know if I walked out with less than $40 or something I literally would not care. I mean I have another job to help support me. I don't feel like it's time wasted. I feel like I've talked to people that I really enjoyed talking to. It is hard to believe it is even work."—*Server, Local Brewpub*

This worker positively identified with the customer interaction about beer. When pressed about how they engaged customers, it became clear that craft beer workers most often preferred finding new, exploring or curious drinkers, and teaching them about beer. They enjoyed pulling back the curtain, so to speak, on what most Americans think of as beer.

I usually put a few options in front of them. Things I think they would like. Some tasters…part of my draw to this world is I like introducing people to new things…. And if I can get one person who drinks nothing but Bud-Miller-Coors to try craft beer and say hey that is really good…just kind of opening up their own world a little bit bro, opening up their horizons.. …There is so much better product out there, that is made with a lot more care, a lot more attention, a lot better ingredients and it's better for you—*Bartender, Craft Beer Bar*

This worker identified with the overall mission of the craft beer consumer culture: to share and learn beer, thereby breaking down the control that "big beer" has over American consumers. He drew upon popular discourses in the consumer culture (beautiful Davids versus grotesque Goliaths) to explain what makes the actual task of interacting with customers meaningful for him. While there was "snobbery" in craft beer circles, those groups were small and generally frowned upon. Beer was supposed to be a casual, every person, all-inclusive experience.

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Encouraging neophytes to taste and try until they find the right beer was taken by some as equivalent to their evangelical calling. Most do not take it so far, but the experience of creating a new fan keeps people in the hunt, so to speak. For many of these workers, they feel that their life had been enriched by learning to explore craft beer. They wanted others to have similar experiences. It gave them a thrill to be that guide.

> …I would love to be that person that someone says, she just really drew out this passion about beer for me. –*Server, local brew pub*.

So, while the tasks themselves did not offer much to the low autonomy workers, it appeared the chance to participate in the discourses of craft beer consumption gave meaning to these jobs. This kind of pursuit may become a salient choice to workers, even those who were not craft beer fans prior to the job, since the intrinsic tasks of mopping and sweeping offer so little. Since workers seek to make their jobs meaningful, and since this "dirty work" occurs embedded in a consumptive context that was designed to provide coherence and importance to each and every beer that was poured, these jobs become likely to adopt that context for meaning.

Conclusion

Recall from Chapter 4, the predominant theme, or the language that legitimated consumption across its different spheres in the craft beer space, is called "beer talk." Beer talk is the moral impetus that knowing, learning, and sharing knowledge about beer ought to be done. It is a communicative mandate. Information should be shared. How, what, and why to drink should be collectively discussed. This central idea manifested in different ways for the different categories of work described above.

As expected, brewers identified more strongly with the intrinsic challenges of brewing a good beer. Consumer-facing jobs more exclusively adopted the discourses driving the consumption of craft beer. This is not to say brewers rejected or did not engage the consumer

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culture of craft beer, or draw on it for making meaning of their work. Brewers also needed consumer-audiences to validate their productive efforts. Rather, it seems brewer have a unique position relative to the craft beer work system.

Making beer is a facet of the consumer culture, as discussed in Chapter 4. The legitimacy of hand-crafted gave craft beer its authenticity, but the main drive of the consumer culture was learning to taste, share, and make distinctions in beer. The commercial brewers were the center of that craft beer cosmos. They were the ones who authentically labored, with duct-tape rigged systems (in some cases, literally) to produce handcrafted, local, and unique beverage drinking experiences. They were also its sacrificial lambs. To produce a poor quality drink, fail at event after event, or simply to make only the fifth best IPA in the state, puts a target on the brand for consumers to discuss, even vilify. If brewers are only in it for the money, that could quickly sour their legitimacy—with consumers and workers alike. Brewers gave the consumers the garden from which to pluck and choose and make those distinctions. They were thus more focused on their beer, and mastering that, while consumers were focused on placing their favorite beers in some constellation of beers they have tried.

The boundary between those who make beer for commercial distinction, and those who just "taste and try," marks the clearest distinction between producer and consumer in this market system. The brewers' behind the scenes alterations (trickery) to keep beer the same helped create that boundary. They attempted to influence consumer culture, but their position and status within the craft beer space was uncertain, and set them apart in how they adopted the perspectives of the larger craft beer consumer environment. Brewers and assistant brewers were alike in this position. Workers with low autonomy on production-side seemed more likely to reject these roles, but none were sampled in the data collection process.

Discourses employed by consumer-facing roles were more clearly divided between the high autonomy jobs involved in the management and sales, on one hand, and bartending and serving jobs on the other. The level of autonomy clearly played a factor in how these workers identified with their work. High autonomy consumer-facing jobs may have had too much autonomy as they engaged the external environment of the crowded market, and claimed "relationship-building" helped mitigate that uncertainty. The social spaces facilitating the craft beer consumer culture became the context for developing these relationships. For low autonomy roles, boredom could be a problem, but the craft beer context offered many opportunities to make the work more interesting and meaningful. Many of the people working in this category hoped to move up to either brewery, production-side roles, or sales rep.

It is probable that if the sample were expanded using a survey, without the encumbrance of an interview interaction, we would find more evidence of role rejection, or negative identification. However, it also appears that, regardless of their role, people identified strongly with the overall mission of the craft beer consumer culture. Hence a particular job, within a particular organization may be viewed just as a temporary stepping stone into a more secure position somewhere else. The overall project of craft beer consumption was driven by making, tasting, sharing and discussing beer. Jobs and organizations may be just tools for enabling that project.

CHAPTER 7: MAKING SENSE OF BLURRED BOUNDARIES

This dissertation began with the question, "Can consumer culture affect workplace identity?" In Chapter 1, I suggested that the literatures dealing with these questions tend to presume consumptive discourses afford organizations a new means to manipulate workers' identification with their tasks. The enterprising-self literature, referenced in Chapter 1, argues workers develop their identity by seeking to know what the consumer desires. Workers seek to understand the market, and portray themselves as positively authentic with respect to those market needs. Moreover, management and organizational scholars see ways to use this logic of embracing the consumer, to also give coherence and meaning to organizational culture. Branding is a type of technology, for shaping and amplifying symbols. These communicate to consumers specific lifestyles, and then select workers who also engage in that lifestyle. For these scholars, branding should be honed to better shape the identity of workers. As Hardt and Negri (2001) suggest, capitalism becomes even more entrenched in the lives of workers, and thus a new way of "hooking" the conception of the self for the purpose of monetary valuation emerges. When behavior in consumptive spheres becomes bent to producing value, as the social factory literature suggests, organizations and management potentially have a greater degree of control over workers.

However, Chapter 1 argued that research stemming from these literatures has a blind spot. That specific consumer cultures may provide context for how workers engage their tasks is under theorized. Using "craft" beer as the case for how the consumer culture may discursively shape the work environment, this dissertation has found workers enthusiastically identifying with

what could be called the "craft beer project." Workers frame their engagement with the labor

process in terms of that project's vernacular. The discursive spheres of production and

consumption appear blended in the identity work observed in this sample. These positive

contextual resources for identity work could dilute the efficacy of current, accepted measures for

understanding how workers engage their jobs, such as autonomy.

Workers in this study did use the enterprising-self discourse to identify with craft beer

work. They described beer as their passion, as their calling. They identified with the intrinsic

joys of making beer. They identified with the joys of tasting beer, with the thrill of creating new

consumers for craft beer, by teaching them to taste beer. Many of them were consumers of the

lifestyle before they begin doing the work. Many more came to see themselves as part of this

lifestyle, after working in craft beer. Rather than seeing that passion for their work as motivated

by some abstract need to serve the consumer, that passion was animated by a specific collective

mission: to spread knowledge and joy of drinking beer. Moreover, having skill and knowledge

to practice the consumer culture seemed empowering for workers—giving them a sense of

ownership over the work. While the social factory literature seems to view consumer discourses

as primarily a new tool for managerial control, and thus part of the terrain of contestation

between management and worker, the employees interviewed here had a much different

orientation to the consumer discourse. They seemed to view those discourse as enabling them to

pursue the larger project of the craft beer.

Were brands a form of control for workers? Workers were asked to explain the

company's brand during interviews. Most of the time they would shrug their shoulders before

answering. Workers in the same organization would have different descriptions of the brand.

Owners would sometimes have a more passionate stance; the brand was after all a vision of their

direct creation. In this sample, the microbrewery and brewpub workers did not put much thought into the brand's meaning. The brand was simply a way to communicate who they were, to differentiate themselves in the craft beer space, with their "take" on how to make or consume beer. Communicating taste experience, communicating stories about beer, communicating expectations about what someone was experiencing when they drank the beer—branding a was language for navigating these distinctions.

However, a few cases suggest company size could "switch" the usage of brand from communication to control. In the sample, three workers were employed by two of the largest craft beer breweries in the nation (they were sales reps for the North Carolina area, and thus fit the sample selection criteria). Their answers to those questions were vastly different from those that worked in the small, local breweries. Having a more stock, scripted, and passionate answer, they were trying to sell me on their brand through much of the discussion. When asked to what extent they paid attention to the larger craft beer scene, these workers all responded in the negative. Two of them, working for two different companies, said the exact same thing. "We are focusing on ourselves," meaning expanding the brand to more and more consumers. He said he paid more attention to Coca-Cola or other big companies for ideas on getting consumers to engage the brand, or get that "share of mind"—that piece of the customers' memory.

For these companies it may be that the meaning or intensity of the brand has to become magnified due to the company size. A kind of idolatry has to occur. The brand has to be worshiped. Consistent with the prescriptive branding literature in marketing or management journals, this could help create some internal consistency. For organizations of such a large size, with many specialized departments, the brand became an umbrella, or a "glue." The company hoped to bring as many consumers into their tent as possible. For the microbreweries, the

meaning of the brand, the message of the brand, did not resonate with the same intensity for workers. Survey data would be needed to test the relationship between organizational size and brand commitment. Numerical correlation between those variables is likely not linear. By a certain size, the brand's usage switches from "language" to control.

So, rather than experienced as control, brands and enterprising discourses appeared to be resources, to be drawn from and used in the course of the larger craft beer project. Workers intrinsic passion and interest for beer gave them knowledge, skills, and a specific "cultural capital," for operating in this environment. This gave them enhanced capacity for doing their job. This study aimed to demonstrate that these discourses did indeed overlap. The more difficult questions are: "Why are these discourses blending?" and "What does that mean for research in the workplace?" The rest of the chapter deals with each of these in turn.

How Productive Discourses Blend with Consumptive Discourses

Based on the findings in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, three distinct mechanisms appeared to connect these discursive spheres. The first mechanism was *direct importation*. Fans of craft beer brought their knowledge of beer processes, styles, and histories into the workplace; this skill and experience became part of the labor process. The thrill of learning beer attracted people to the lifestyle, and that knowledge was part of the work. People would figure out that "helping people choose beer was [their] superpower," because they were already doing that as serious fans of the beer lifestyle. They found ways to get paid to do those same activities. Or, the respondent enjoyed making beer, and found ways to turn that into their work. Thus, whether they were selling it or making it, beer knowledge attracted them as consumers, and was central to their desire to make a career.

Direct importation suggests that the productive work of craft beer markets was similar to the activities, rituals, and symbolic language for discussing beer that was required to be a

consumer of craft beer. In other words, the consumers were doing work, and the work of the actual occupations was similar. Like the phenomena described by writers of the "social factory" (Gill & Pratt, 2008) and "pro-sumption" (Ritzer & Jurgenson, 2010b) craft beer consumers were doing labor. They were teaching, sharing, and converting beer drinkers into fans of craft beer. The knowledge base, experience with drinking, and thrill of getting someone *else* to fall in love with beer—that could all be learned and practiced as consumers. That skill, experience, and knowledge was immediately transferrable into roles as craft beer workers. This mechanism appeared to be a substantial factor connecting the consumer discourse to the productive discourse. Direct importation suggests that consumers were doing work, the nature of which was similar to the required tasks of the occupation.

The second mechanism was the *tangible consumption of labor*. The fact that people who were never craft beer fans, and people who were, cite a similar process of *connecting with consumers,* suggested something about the nature of the workspace itself, that was also blending consumptive with producer discourse. The actual product (beer) was produced in the same social space where it was consumed. Brewers spoke about their enjoyment in hearing people talk about their products, either by checking online reviews (some admit, obsessively) or by hanging out in the brewpub. How beer was crafted mattered to consumers, and how beer was consumed mattered to the producers. The meaning of beer—its symbolic, discursive content— thus became a collective process, taking both producers and consumers into a tangible interaction to enact.

The third mechanism involved the larger craft beer space—the consumer movement that helped open this market to begin with. It functioned much like a knowledge community.

Workers and consumers alike engaged in a *collective project for defining the boundaries of beer*—what makes beer good, what makes it unique—and spreading those boundaries.

During the field study, from 2014 to 2016, American brewing in general, and North Carolina in particular, was perceived to be at the forefront for pushing the boundaries of what beer can taste like. One person in the sample identified strongly with this notion that American "craft" brewing has become known world-wide for quality beer, that can also innovate. It was also highlighted at festivals, where booths described the "brewmerang effect." American craft beer began by trying to imitate the traditional styles of old European beer (recall from Chapter 3) but, as its developed, its since become so innovative, creating new styles, Belgian breweries and German breweries are trying to imitate the American West Coast IPA, or some of the styles that have originated here. Many European traditions, such as the German purity laws, are being challenged as a result.

Regardless of America's extent in changing beer worldwide, the notion that such pursuits should define American craft beer was ubiquitous. This notion had material consequences on the product; how it was made, and how it was consumed. Innovation and experimentation push the boundaries of what beer meant in a literal sense. What ingredients should or should not be used? What characteristics make this a Vienna Lager? This a Chocolate Stout? It was a collective process, expanding the range of the product's expression, through the discourses of the consumer culture. At festivals, experts in the industry, taste makers, and influential Internet media would give thoughts ideas on styles and trends. Brewers read social media reviews. This might cause them to try something different, or phase out a beer that was no longer popular. Brewers learned from other brewers. One brewery would try something new, and release a batch that generates some buzz. Another brewery would try to imitate that. First, they might call to ask how they did

it—what process and ingredients. What were the tricks to learn regarding when to add which hops? They might take some piece of that and use it in something else they were doing.

For example, recipe development was sacred to many homebrewers, and commercial craft brewers took it very seriously as well. One brewer said, "it's not hard to make beer. You put these ingredients together in this order. But to make amazing beer. That takes real skill." What is amazing beer? Something that meets the vision that the brewer has in mind. That vision, however, appeared to be shaped by conversation, reading, and drinking other beers. It was a moving target. "Amazing beer" was not an end point in a perfect process, but it *was* the process. Amazing beer was a finished product that communicated some experience to audiences who can understand what the artisan had intended. (This is analogous to making distinction in any field system where the knowledge needed to make such distinctions has been institutionalized; one must possess the "capital" pertinent to that system, to be able to act and move comfortably within it.) A passion for sharing knowledge about beer drives the expansion of craft beer for both consumers and producers. There was a collective desire to push the boundaries of what beer is.

These three mechanisms—direct importation, tangible consumption of labor, and the knowledge project—operate in tandem. They enable the creation of a field system that gives shared purpose and coherence to the work activity—one that was beyond the boundaries of the firm, but more specific than "The State," or "The Market." This space contextualized, and enabled people to *embed* the dynamic of production and consumption—the tasks necessary to reproduce and facilitate the product's usage—in face-to-face social networks. People gravitated toward these spaces because of their interest in "good" beer, but it seemed that they stayed because of the networks they built while learning it. People worked together to make beer, and

they knew who drank it. The people who sold beer try to build relationships to stabilize that work. They consumed the products they were selling. Workers identified with the consumer lifestyle, because they were also consuming that lifestyle. A coherent ethos seemed to drive that consumer culture forward.

The productive-consumptive dynamic therefore becomes embedded in face-to-face networks. However, it was not only that workers and consumers collectively produced beer—it was also the *idea that one could be part of such dynamics*. In other words, embedding the productive-consumptive dynamic operated like a collective logic. The aim or the point of "craft beer" was to bring consumer and producer together in the same social space. This can be demonstrated by considering the multiple ways the word community was used in the craft beer space.

When brewers used the word community, they referred to an actual community of other brewers. They called each other to ask questions. When Gizmo Brewing hired a young man with little brewing experience, other brewers from the Triangle area called to offer support. They even loaned each other ingredients. When bartenders or servers used the word community, they referred to their regulars. They referred to the local businesses in the area. When sales reps used the word community, they talked about the network of people they knew, who put on events, distributed beer, and organized festivals throughout the region. 80% of the workers in the sample used the word community at some point in their interview. In the advertising spaces, the word community appeared in 34 of the 40 brands analyzed. For them it was an idea of community. The brewery was a touchstone that brought in friends and family according to some idea of place.

"Craft" beer was thus imagined by all actors involved as a practice for bringing together people who want to make a product with those who want to drink it. One's exact role in this equation could change over time. This suggests that the narrative of community and the practice of community complemented one another in the space. There was an idea of a tangible and real community that was substantiated and practiced.

Connecting production to consumption, in the community, for the purpose of political empowerment, was a logic people used to make sense of this space. The "reality," or the degree to which the consumptive dynamic was *actually* embedded in the productive dynamic is subject to variation for each organizational actor creating value in the market space. However, people did believe that connecting consumption to production was empowering, and they saw the mission of craft beer in terms of that purpose. The myth of "beautiful Davids versus grotesque Goliaths," –first echoed in 1974 by Charlie Pappazin, the homebrewer who created a national brewers' association in order to teach people how to brew, and thus create "craft" breweries— could still be heard in every sneer or derisive comment aimed at "big beer" during field study or interview. Brewers and owners saw their mission as collective, as growing the concept of craft beer, and eating away at the idea that beer should be cheap, flavorless pale lager. The sharing of knowledge enabled others to embed the productive-consumptive dynamic, to take on the bullies.

These three mechanisms operating in tandem, occurred at different levels of aggregation in the field system. Direct importation involved the past logic and schemas of the individual actors as they moved from consumer to producer. These were nested within the individual. The tangible shared consumption of labor was nested in the dynamics of the workplace. Whether producers were sharing their beer with drinkers, bartenders were helping a consumer choose a

beer, or sales people were networking to make stronger relationships, much of the work of making and selling beer occurred in face to face interaction.

Finally, the knowledge project of craft beer occurred in a more diffuse, imagined space at the macro level, that was facilitated by Internet and social media. In the past this knowledge project was facilitated by books and face-to-face interaction, such as when Fritz Maytag founded Anchor Steam and hopeful brewers would travel from all over the United States to visit his brewery, and learn how to make beer; or, how to fight legal battles in their own regions. An overall national infrastructure had developed. These national level institutions include the Brewers Association, the North Carolina Brewers Guild, and other actors that were attempting to legitimate and fight legal battles for craft beer. It also included the knowledge that was institutionalized and growing: how to make beer, how to drink beer, how to taste beer, etcetera. The knowledge community created a coherent identity and ethos for craft beer consumption. This could help legitimate and facilitate the selection of new craft beer drinkers. In the world of sandbox consumption, one may engage craft beer as little or as deeply as one desired. There was something there for everyone. This helped broaden the pool or the selection of consumers into the craft beer lifestyle. The fact that actually making and drinking beer can occur in face-to-face networks made this imagined community into a tangible experience of work. These criteria were likely critical. It might not be enough for there to be an imagined community of craft, there must be actual work that was made tangible or meaningful by some shared consumption of that labor.

However, the overall composition of the market was uneven with respect to which organizations enabled the embedding of the productive-consumptive dynamic, and those seeking to "disembed" that dynamic. This occurred when organizations grew their productive capacities in order to reach more consumers. Production must become more specialized; economies of

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scale began to drive production and marketing decisions. Reaching more consumers meant expanding the distribution range—getting into grocery stores and bottleshops across the state. The productive-consumptive dynamic begins to occur beyond the face-to-face network of where and who makes the beer. This has the tendency of disembedding the link between production and consumption.

When this occurs, the embeddedness of the workplace could be disrupted. The concept or idea of "craft" may not be enough; it requires face-to-face interaction to be sustained in the sense described in this study. This is perhaps why jobs on production lines for one large, regional brewery experienced such high turnover—the low autonomy production jobs that appear in capital intensive facilities do not offer workers a tangible, concrete interaction for enacting the craft beer discourse. As described above, when larger companies use brands for control, rather than communication, this suggests the productive-consumptive dynamic has become disembedded. Other forces operating to disembed craft beer were more obvious: big beer. The corporate goliaths were buying up regional, well-known breweries whenever possible. They kept these buyouts as quiet as possible.

A subtler example, however, suggests how fragile maintaining the productive-consumptive dynamic in face-to-face relations could be: a craft beer bar in Durham opened just after the data collective period had concluded. It allowed drinkers to purchase a wrist band, with a magnetic strip inside. The consumer then helped themselves to the glasses: they were located along that wall. The sheer silver wall was lined with some twenty to thirty beer taps, with framed pictures above each one, describing the beer it dispensed. Consumers were expected to retrieve their own glass, wave their wrists in front of the tap, and then pour as much as they wanted. Taste, and then try another.

The place got the basic discursive component of "taste and try" correct but missed a crucial element: the interaction with the bartender, which allowed the labor process to become shared with customers—which anchored the meaning of work in a concrete social context. Recall from Chapter 6 that most bartenders and servers in this study said their number one joy was interacting with customers—helping them choose a beer. These investors likely sought to automate that exchange to give the consumer maximum freedom of choice. Based on the findings here, I would expect the workers there to reject these job roles. Upon my observation, the place was crowded, doing well enough, but the workers spent most of their time scrolling on smart phones. The low autonomy of the job role would thus correctly predict the lack of engagement, since in that case, the workers' roles were not integrated with the consumer culture. The appropriation of craft beer concepts for maximizing profit is thus likely. Consumers will probably also be fractured along these new concepts. "Craft" beer was a coherent discourse, but it may need to be enacted in face-to-face interaction for these "blurred boundaries" to be experienced as meaningful and empowering.

Why Blurred Boundaries Matter

This dissertation has sought to examine the meanings legitimating consumption, and the extent to which employees draw upon those meaning in their own identity work. While discourses of consumption are often imagined as new forms of control for management to better control workers, the findings here suggest that employees may sometimes hold organizations accountable to the discourses legitimating consumption. Organizations were embedded in a discursive context, wherein workers and consumers may deem them "inauthentic" with respect to the values of the consumer project.

The organizational forms and workplace conditions, however, were not systematically examined in the course of this project. The data relied on accounts of workers, as they sought to

legitimate their job and career choices. It should be expected that these accounts are mostly positive. Some evidence observed during field study suggests workers did experience greater control from management as a result of the consumer discourse. One person, during a brewery tour, said, "This industry is just as cutthroat an any other. I screw up and I'm gone. But I'm not just a can in your fridge." Another, dully filling and capping bottles, had a degree in economics, had been a homebrewer, and was lured into craft beer work by a friend's father at a party. He regretted his decision, had quit homebrewing, and said the job was just like any other. He wanted out. A third person, working his first craft beer job as a sales rep, mentioned the paltry pay to his boss, asking for a raise. The boss said, "Having the privilege to work here is part of your salary," meaning, the status of having a job in a cool, trendy brewpub was part of compensation, in the eyes of that owner. These interactions occurred during informal settings, outside the interview where "identity work" was the principle concept to be observed. During study design, it was expected that more of these stories would appear during interviews, but they did not.

Instead, the methods deployed in this study provided a somewhat thin, surface view of how workers felt. Not enough workers were sampled in enough organizations where negative feelings could have fomented. Moreover, the methods were not immersive enough in one particular context to capture the difficulties, struggles and frustrations that workers may experience as they attempt to fulfill consumer's expectations, while surviving the vagaries of market fluctuations. For companies that want to stay small, serve their communities and their regulars, financial hardship is likely ever present. A failed heating element on a boiling batch of wort could spell doom for a month's supply of beer. Companies that want to grow, become secure, and provide stable incomes for their workers and their families, they must scale up—and

risk becoming "inauthentic." How owners and workers deal with these difficulties should be explored further, as the analysis here has not effectively captured it.

The data have revealed the common discursive threads that chart between consumptive discourses and workplace identity. The craft beer market system was a space that imagined and then tried to put into practice the logic that production should be embedded in consumption. The logic suggested that people should consume what was produced in their community, with people they know. However, the craft beer case also offered examples of organizations seeking to disembed that productive-consumptive dynamic. Work inside these organizations was likely not integrated with the consumer culture, and may become burdensome. The discourses of consumption may not translate for workers in these organizations, if they were not actively engaged with consumers who cared about the products that were being made.

It appeared that the extent to which discourses of consumption, then, can become sources of control—or positive sources of meaning—depends on the organization. This "some do, some don't" argument is similar to the problems critiqued in Chapter 1. What does the analysis if the consumer culture offer, if the final verdict of control (versus empowerment for workers) still falls on organizational-level variables? We have learned that in some market systems, the consumer culture *can* be empowering, but not that it will be. The presence of a strong consumer culture appears to be a necessary but not sufficient condition for transforming meaningless jobs into meaningful ones. In other words, craft beer may offer a coherent legitimation for its consumption, but for workers to experience that discourse as meaningfully part of their job, face-to-face interaction with consumers is necessary.

More generally, we have learned that the effort to embed the consumptive-productive dynamic within coherent social systems is widespread in the contemporary moment. In *Sharing: Crimes Against Capitalism*, Matthew David (2017) describes different ways that different industries have been challenged by the new technologies. Capitalism is built on the privacy of production—it seeks to disembed the productive-consumptive dynamic by focusing primarily on production. Sharing threatens that control, empowering individuals with the ability to control production, and therefore their consumption—the productive-consumptive dynamic becomes embedded in these sharing communities. In *Masters of Craft*, Richard Ocejo (2017) describes the turn towards artisanal work, where deep relations with those consumers who were using that product may develop.

The craft beer case fits this larger pattern of entrepreneurs attempting to disrupt monopolistic, concentrated control of an industry producing homogenized products. Organizations will increasingly need to be smaller and local to fit the quirky demands of ever demanding, more knowledgeable, more engaged, and more empowered consumers. However, the craft beer case also presents a warning to those who think decentralized technology and knowledge will automatically unravel the control of entrenched, embattled organizations. Vast consolidations have absorbed many of the regional players into the conglomerates. In recent years, craft beers growth has slowed. Meanwhile big beer has concentrated on the global stage.

It should be noted, however, that embedded productive-consumptive dynamics characterize most of human history. The disembedding strategies of the industrial and corporate age were shaped somewhat by the conditions of their emergence (i.e. developing specialized technologies for production.) As technology becomes more decentralized, and knowledge becomes more decentralized, the power to reproduce the productive-consumptive dynamic in

personal and interpersonal networks will continue to thrive. This could erode the notion of mass

markets, and therefore reduce the potential for a handful of corporations to control those massive

spaces. As the impetus to embed the productive-consumptive dynamic filters into established

industries, or brings about the creation of new ones, the prevailing notion of how the pursuit of

economic value should organize markets, and work, could continue to deteriorate.

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