

**EMBODIED NARRATION AND THE BODY AS STORY IN PROCESSES
OF KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION**

by

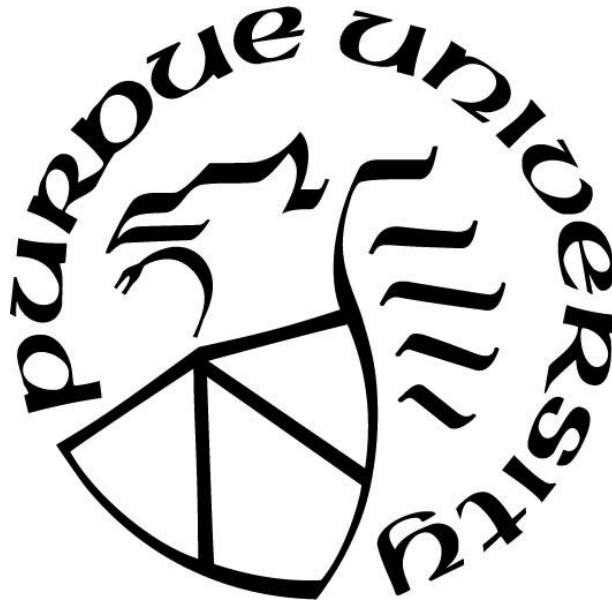
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For me, my body.

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ABSTRACT

This project proposes, develops, and tests a new theoretical concept termed *embodied narration* to understand the role of the body in processes of knowledge production. Specifically, this project draws upon postmodern organizing and narrative theorizing to argue that the body itself – not just those stories told about the body – is discursive, and thus, serves to produce, reproduce, or challenge existing organizational knowledge and power structures. Embodied narration – *the expression of the body's stories through the body without the imposition of the written or spoken word* – is conceptualized as one process through which such continued oppression or resistance occurs.

Embodied narration was examined within the organizing context of distance running, a fitting context given its operation as an ideological discipline centered on embodied practices and the salience of the gaze among organizational members. This study employed photovoice methodology to procure participant photographs meant to approximate spectatorship of embodied narration. Further, participants shared their experiences and observations of organizational knowledge and disciplinary mechanisms in semi-structured interviews. A grounded theory analysis was employed to identify emergent themes related to organizational knowledge and discipline and provided the researcher and other readers with the preunderstanding of organizational knowledge necessary for situated interpretations of photographs. Participant photographs are presented in the absence of the written or spoken word to allow the subjects depicted in them to speak for themselves, as is consistent with the assumptions of embodied narration.

Results indicate unique knowledge and disciplinary mechanisms within the organizing context of distance running which are consistent with past and ongoing research. Importantly, participant stories of spectatorship provide insight into the possibilities of embodied narration within this context, including the role of member inclusion/exclusion and body visibility/invisibility in such processes. From these stories, conclusions were drawn regarding the many possible ways by which embodied narration may be employed or enacted within other contexts. In all, this project extends postmodern organizing and narrative theorizing by rejecting the assumption that discourse is inherently linguistic, and by introducing a new process by which power/knowledge is produced.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Human bodies have long been understood as discursive in nature: at once products and producers of the very systems in which they reside (Butler, 1993; De Beauvoir, 1973; Descartes, 1637; Foucault, 1975, 1976; Sartre, 1943). Within a postmodern paradigm, bodies can be understood not only as being bound up in systems of knowledge production – constructed by and through cultural rules (Lyotard, 1979) – but also as being implicated in the production, reproduction, and destruction of mechanisms of power which serve some and oppress others (Foucault, 1975; 1976). Such systems of *biopower*, according to Foucault (1975), employ disciplinary techniques to churn out docile bodies: bodies which serve the interests of the state. Docile bodies – literally and symbolically, actively and passively – participate in the maintenance of those systems which create them. Bodies which do not serve the interests of those systems may be rendered deviant or criminal, though are not necessarily damned to a life of punishment. Rather, such bodies can and do participate in resistance – disrupting the status quo and catalyzing change toward the liberation of all bodies (Foucault, 1976).

The ways in which bodies are *produced* is well understood. Foucault himself has illustrated the ways in which social institutions – prisons, hospitals, and schools – produce docile bodies through mechanisms of surveillance and self-surveillance (1975, 1976). The idealization of some bodies (e.g., white bodies, thin bodies, straight bodies, cis-gendered bodies, and able bodies), and the continued ostracization of and stigma surrounding other bodies (e.g., non-white bodies, fat bodies, queer bodies, transgendered bodies, non-binary bodies, and disabled bodies) are further evidence of such production (e.g., Butler, 1993; Collins, 2000; Crenshaw, 1989; De Beauvoir, 1949). However, the ways in which bodies *produce* continues to be an object of scholarly scrutiny.

From a strictly theoretical standpoint, the constitution of some bodies as normative and others as deviant may reflect and therefore reproduce hegemonic systems of whiteness, patriarchy, heteronormativity, cis-normativity, and ableism, among others. From a practical standpoint, however, exactly *how* bodies act as discourse – producing, reproducing, or challenging systems of knowledge and power – remains unclear.

Contemporary scholars of the body have turned to narrative theorizing as one possible framework for examining that which remains obscured. In fact, many organizational communication theorists, guided by Fisher's (1984) narrative paradigm, have found the metaphor of narration to be helpful in elucidating the ways in which bodies participate in processes of knowledge production (e.g., Harter, 2009; Harter, 2012; Harter et al., 2020; Harter et al., 2005; Mumby, 1987). The narrative paradigm in communication holds that humans are essentially storytelling beings – *homo narrans* – who not only rely on narrative rationality to make sense of their worlds, but who embody personal and cultural narratives. In his now classic work on sick bodies, Frank (1995) argues that the stories of the body, known fittingly as *body stories*, enter back into the discursive field, producing and reproducing narratives and, therefore, knowledge and power: case closed – problem solved.

Unfortunately, Frank's (1995) theorizing comes with limitations of its own. This work, and much of the work that has followed, has relied on the premise advanced by Frank that although the body is "certainly not mute...it is inarticulate" (p. 2). For this reason, the body must be spoken for; the self *in* the body must translate the stories of the body and speak them aloud for others to hear. It becomes immediately clear that this theorizing assumes a false equivalence between what is *said* about bodies and bodies themselves. Although the body is certainly communicative – a social construction and product of its social world – it would be remiss to ignore its flesh and blood.

And although body stories may *come out of bodies*, the voice being “a physical organ of the body” (Frank, 1995, p. xx), *speaking for* the body not only reinforces modernist, Cartesian ideas of a mind–body split, but also robs the body of its own voice, ultimately reducing it to the topic of the story, or a mere bystander in the storytelling process. Frank (1995) acknowledges the limitations inherent in speaking for the body, admitting that “such speech is quickly frustrated: speech presents itself as being about the body rather than of it” (p. 2). However, he argues that “no satisfactory solution has been found to avoid reducing the body to a thing that is described” (p. 27). He, and others, have ultimately concluded that although bodies *possess* stories – stories which ache to be told – such stories can only be told through the imposition of the spoken or written word.

Using a postmodern narrative communication framework, this project proposes, develops, and tests a new theoretical concept which serves as an alternative to contemporary conceptualizations of the body’s role in processes of knowledge production: namely *embodied narration*. Embodied narration, here, is a process rather than an artifact, and refers to *the expression of body stories (and, therefore, the expression of knowledge and power) through the body without the imposition of the spoken or written word*. Put simply, embodied narration understands the body *as story*, and bodily practice *as storytelling*. Although a communication framework necessitates an understanding of human phenomena as inherently social, or even linguistic (Blumer, 1966; Gergen, 1992), this does not imply the necessary involvement of the spoken or written word. Just as silence itself can be understood as discursive (Clair, 1998; Glenn, 2004), so, too, can the body in the absence of speech. Frank (1995) himself suggests that “the communion of bodies involves a communication of recognition that transcends the verbal. Bodies commune in touch, in tone, in facial expression and gestural attitude, and in breath” (p. 49). He continues: “the body itself *is* the message: humans commune through their bodies” (p. 50). If

bodies are understood not just as *having stories* but as *being stories*, then they can be understood as capable of speaking (so to speak) for themselves.

The concept of embodied narration is guided by postmodern theories of knowledge production (i.e., Foucault, 1975, 1976; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Lyotard, 1979; Mumby, 1994), and is grounded in Fisher's (1984) narrative paradigm in communication. Further, this theorizing draws upon Ricoeur's (1984) theory of threefold mimesis, which explicates the processes by which narratives are configured, reconfigured, and interpreted. Importantly, Ricoeur's theorizing accounts for the physical and communal nature of storytelling, grounding the process in space and time, and emphasizing the essential role of the reader (or in this case, *spectator*). Given the inherently spectatorial nature of embodied narration – a process that requires *looking* rather than *reading* or *listening* – Ricoeur's theorizing provides a vocabulary with which to understand and explore this theorizing.

Given the situated nature of bodies and their stories, and the corporeal nature of embodied narration, it is important that this project investigate the phenomenon of interest within a specific, observable context. Therefore, this project examines embodied narration within the context of distance running. Apart from the more obvious fact that sport in general, and distance running specifically, centers primarily on bodily practice, distance running is a particularly fitting context in which to study this phenomenon given its conceptualization as a social world (Unruh, 1980) and its operation as an ideological discipline (e.g., Bridel et al., 2015; Cubizolles et al., 2018; Hockey, 2019; Shipway et al., 2013; Yair, 1990; Yair, 1992). Recent and ongoing research emerging from the fields of sports communication, sociology of sport, and leisure studies has illustrated the ways in which cultural knowledge and power *produces* running bodies (e.g., Abbas, 2004; Bridel & Rail, 2007; Chase, 2008; Hanold, 2010; Shilling, 2017; Shipway & Holloway,

2016; Tulle, 2007; Walton & Butryn, 2006). This project builds upon these rich literatures to examine how running bodies *produce* knowledge and power, specifically through embodied narration, toward an understanding of the ways in which bodies serve to produce, reproduce, or resist knowledge and power in the context of distance running.

Without question, an exploration of embodied narration necessitates the use of postmodern feminist methodologies which center the embodied, lived experiences of participants and reduce the hierarchy between researcher and participant. Therefore, this project employs photovoice methodology (Wang & Burris, 1994; 1997): a participatory methodology which “entrusts cameras to the hands of people to enable them to act as recorders, and potential catalysts for change in their own communities” (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 369). In this project, participants were tasked with capturing their everyday, organizational observations photographically, to provide insight not only into organizational knowledge, but specifically into organizational practice, including embodied narration. Placing cameras in the hands of organizational members provided me with access to knowledge that I may not have gained otherwise, and more importantly, centered participant voices and privileged participant knowledge above my own, ultimately democratizing the research process in a way that is consistent with postmodern feminist theory and practice (Novak, 2010).

Additionally, the lack of standard analytic procedures within photovoice research (see Wagner et al., 2016) liberated me (and participants) from patriarchal analytic practices which privilege textual knowledge over other forms of knowledge (Malherbe et al., 2016; Novak, 2010) and insist on imposing written or spoken language on the communication phenomena under study (Dougherty et al., 2018; Wang & Burris, 1997). Given the “textocentric perspective” (Novak, 2010, p. 293) which guides most social scientific research, it is no surprise that an approach which aims to privilege visual data may be rejected for being too “messy” (Malherbe et al., 2016, p. 591).

However, “it is this messiness which allows participants [and researchers] the ability to transcend the limitations of more structured verbal communication” (p. 591). Photovoice, being the “highly flexible” method that it is (Wang & Burris, 1997), gave me, the researcher, permission to adapt data collection and analysis in a way that embraced the possibilities of visual data and created space for a multiplicity of interpretations of said data.

Specifically, I utilized participant photos to approximate organizational spectatorship and elucidate the many possible ways by which distance running bodies may enact and engage in embodied narration. Certainly, a preunderstanding of the situated organizational knowledge which produced (and is produced by) such bodies is necessary for an interpretation. Thus, a detailed report of a grounded theory analysis of textual data precedes the presentation of participant photos. Nevertheless, participant photos are presented alone, free from imposing language of interpretation, so as to allow the bodies in them to speak for themselves. Such an approach provides insight into the communicative phenomena of interest without violating the assumptions of the theoretical concept of embodied narration.

If we are to take Marshall McLuhan (1964) at his word – that *the medium is the message* – it ought to follow that *the body is the story*. Although the photographs produced by participants in this study are merely an approximation of the practices and bodies they represent, they nonetheless allow that which has been photographed to speak for itself. Ultimately, this project provides novel insight into the ways in which bodies themselves – rather than the stories we tell about them – participate in ongoing processes of knowledge production.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Nobody and *no body* is untouched by power. Although there have been extensive existential, critical, feminist, and postmodern studies on the topic of the body and power (e.g., De Beauvoir, 1949; Descartes, 1637; Foucault, 1975, 1976; Sartre, 1943), some questions still remain, including questions related to the ways in which the body produces knowledge (and therefore power). Chapter 1 introduced the central goals of this project: namely to propose, develop, and test the new theoretical concept of *embodied narration*. Chapter 2 lays the theoretical groundwork for this endeavor and reviews the relevant literature. Specifically, this chapter provides an extensive review of postmodern, organizational, and narrative theorizing as they relate to knowledge production, and reviews existing and ongoing postmodern organizational, and narrative scholarship on the body and its role in processes of knowledge production. Further, this chapter reviews the relevant literature on discourse and the body within the context of distance running. This chapter concludes by introducing and explicating *embodied narration* as a new theoretical concept and advancing three guiding research questions.

Postmodern Theory: Discourse, Knowledge, Power, and the Body

The postmodern tradition in communication has been understood as being primarily concerned with “the constructed nature of people and reality, emphasizing language as a system of distinctions which are central to the construction process” (Deetz, 1996, p. 203). A postmodern approach emphasizes “the power/knowledge connection” (p. 203), and conceptualizes power and domination as “mobile, situational, not done by anyone” (p. 203). Put simply, the goals of the postmodern research tradition are to illustrate the value-laden nature of knowledge and the

dynamic (and sometimes covert) nature of power. Such an approach proves to be appropriate for the present study, as it provides a theoretical vocabulary for theorizing the body as discourse in processes of knowledge (and therefore, power) production.

This project understands postmodern research to rest on three primary assumptions: (1) rather than one objective Truth, which exists separate from human perception; (2) *knowledge* is constructed by and through *discourse*; and (3) *discourse* is not neutral – rather, it is imbued with *power*. These assumptions, though rather basic in this form, require significant explication in order to be useful as a guiding framework. Specifically, it will be important to unpack the meanings of *knowledge*, *discourse*, and *power*, as defined within the postmodern tradition. Current understandings of postmodernism generally – and knowledge, discourse, and power, specifically – owe much to the writings of philosophers Michel Foucault and Jean-François Lyotard. Both scholars focused primarily on the role and form of discourse as a product and producer of knowledge and were particularly mindful (some might say *critical*) of the ways in which power is protected and sustained through the production and reproduction of knowledge. It is important to note here that knowledge, discourse, and power are inextricably linked, bound-up in a “web of significance” (Weber, 1978 as cited in Geertz, 1973) which has proven difficult to untangle. It is impossible to isolate the meaning of any one of these concepts, given the reliance of each on the others. Nevertheless, an attempt at unpacking these terms is warranted – even necessary – in order to illustrate how postmodernism might serve as a framework for the current project, which aims to illustrate the relationships between discourse, knowledge, and the body (Table 1).

Although Foucault himself did not claim the title of postmodernist, his writings and lectures became the cornerstone of postmodern thought, providing a framework for postmodern social theory and for understanding postmodern societal conditions (Best & Kellner, 2020).

Central to Foucault's (1975, 1976) framework is the concept of discourse: "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak (p. 54). Put simply by Mumby (1997), discourse refers to any part of "a system of possibilities for the creation of knowledge" (p. 2). Discourse is understood as being at once the catalyst and product of knowledge; in other words, discourse *produces* and is *produced by* knowledge. Knowledge is that which comes to be regarded as *truth* within a system of signification. Foucault (1975) uses the term discipline, and Lyotard (1979) uses the term science, to describe such systems of signification. Disciplines and sciences, like languages, provide the grammar for behavior, interpretation, and judgement within them. Importantly, such systems are self-sufficient and self-serving. Lyotard (1979) writes: "knowledge is only worthy of that name to the extent that it reduplicates itself by citing its own statements in a second-level discourse that functions to legitimate them" (p. 38). In this way, knowledge is not only that which comes to be regarded as truth within a discipline or science, it is also that which legitimates the grammars of the system, rendering the system valuable and necessary.

These ideas are best illustrated in Lyotard's concept of *language games*. A term first introduced by Wittgenstein (1953), language games refer to the implicit or explicit rules for the deployment of communication within a particular discursive system. Lyotard (1979) writes: "each of the various categories of utterances can be defined in terms of rules specifying their properties and the uses to which they can be put – in exactly the same way as the game of chess is defined by a set of rules determining the properties of each of the pieces, in other words, the proper way to move them" (p. 10). By using language in such proper, "competent" ways, players themselves legitimize the rules of the game (p. 20). Lyotard makes three observations regarding language games:

1. “Their rules do not carry within themselves their own legitimation, but are the object of a contract, explicit or not, between players (which is not to say that the players invent the rules)” (p. 10).
2. “If there are no rules, there is no game, that even an infinitesimal modification of one rule alters the nature of the game, that a ‘move’ or utterance that does not satisfy the rules does not belong to the game they define” (p. 10).
3. “Every utterance should be thought of as a ‘move’ in a game” (p. 10).

It is clear that, from this perspective, there exists no essential Truth. Rather, what is regarded as truth is that which “conforms to the relevant criteria accepted in the social circle of the ‘knower’s’ interlocutors” (p. 19). Discourse, then, serves to produce these criteria, and is also the product of such criteria. Discourse and knowledge implicate one another in a circular fashion, reflecting and reproducing the systems of which they are a part. Lyotard (1979) understands discourse in a strictly linguistic sense – as language elements, language particles, utterances, and phrases belonging to networks or clouds of discourses. Of these clouds, he writes: “conveyed within each cloud are pragmatic valencies specific to its kind” (p. xxiv) – each cloud is situated historically and contextually, reflecting and reproducing local and cultural knowledge specific to its circumstance. Foucault (1975, 1976) spoke earlier of networks of discourse, which he referred to as *economies*. However, Foucault understands discourse in a broader sense – as linguistic, certainly, but also as material. He argues that discourses embed themselves in *things* and, importantly, in bodies. Within economies of discourse, language games – or as Foucault called them, “games of truth” (1980, p. 1) – dictate the rules by which bodies should operate, effectively establishing norms and constituting bodies and bodily behavior along a continuum of normative to deviant.

Table 1: Postmodern Theories of Knowledge Production

Theorist	General Assumptions	Specific Applications
Foucault (1975; 1976)	Power/knowledge is constructed by <i>discourses</i> which exist as part of various self-sustaining systems maintained through discipline.	Discourse is a product <i>and</i> producer of power/knowledge; Discourse becomes embedded in bodies; Bodies exist within systems of biopower, which render bodies docile and serve to maintain and reproduce power/knowledge structures.
Lyotard (1979)	Knowledge is constructed through <i>language games</i> , guided by self-legitimizing rules, which exist as part of various clouds of discourse.	Knowledge is a product <i>and</i> producer of social rules; Competence is that which aligns with the rules of a given language game; Incompetent moves are punished.
Laclau & Mouffe (1985)	Knowledge comes to be partially-fixed as truth through the privileging of certain <i>nodal points</i> , which exist as part of a discursive formation and serve to organize power and reality.	Knowledge has no natural essence; Relationships between discursive elements are inherently unfixed; Relationships can be tentatively <i>sutured</i> , but the final suture can never be placed.

It is important to note that such language games, as well as networks or economies of discourse, are not closed or *perfect* systems. Every system of discourse and/or knowledge is riddled with contradiction. In fact, Lyotard (1979) refers to “incredulity toward metanarratives” as the defining characteristic of postmodern thought (p. xxiv). A metanarrative can be defined as a master discourse or theory, which relies on “a transcendent and universal truth” (p. xxiv). In postmodernism, metanarratives are “replaced by the principle of a plurality of formal and axiomatic systems capable of arguing the truth of denotative statements” (p. 43). This means that there is no overarching explanation or set of rules guiding human interaction and social structures, and that truths compete for legitimacy and legitimation. Such competition is evident at a macro level (that is, competition *between* disciplines), at the micro level (that is, competition *within* disciplines) and at every level in-between. Further, if there exists no absolute truth, it follows that there is no mechanism for understanding what is ethical or just. Lyotard writes: “knowledge is a question of competence that goes beyond the simple determination and application of the criterion

of truth, extending to the determination and application of criteria of...justice and/or happiness (ethical wisdom), of the beauty of a sound or color (auditory and visual sensibility), etc.” (p. 18). Given that no appeal to absolute truth can be made, and further, given that each system legitimates itself, no one system can be said to be more legitimate than any other.

It is here that the concept of power becomes particularly important. From a postmodern perspective, discourse – and therefore knowledge – is not neutral, but is imbued with power. Systems of signification are organized around a power structure, which is situated historically and culturally. Those with power within the system are those who control the discourse; they make “the rules”, to use Lyotard’s (1979) language (p. 10). Foucault argues that, through discourse, knowledge is produced which reflects and serves the interests of the ruling class, reproducing existing social systems toward the continued production of such knowledge. Discourse, too, is reproduced and multiplied, creating networks or economies of discourses which serve to reify existing structures and legitimate their operation. Lyotard speaks of power in a similar way. He writes: “knowledge and power are simply two sides of the same question: who decides what knowledge is, and who knows what needs to be decided?” (p. 9). By following the rules of language games, Lyotard argues, individuals legitimate both the rules of the games *and* the authority of those who wrote them.

From a postmodern perspective, power can be difficult to locate. Foucault explains that power is not simply wielded by the King, but is rather dispersed, operating through the entire discursive mechanism. Like a decentralized bureaucratic system, this mechanism takes on power in its own right, replacing sovereign powers, despite such representations of power having not yet “cut off the head of the king” (Foucault, 1976, p. 89). Foucault refers to such mechanisms as *technologies of power*, or simply power/knowledge – they operate at all levels and within each

individual, regardless of position or status. Simply by following the rules of the language games, individuals legitimate the power structure and their place within it. In these ways, subordinated groups are implicated in the continued reproduction of existing power structures and in their own subordination. Further, because discourse is written on the body, so to speak, such subordination is inherently corporeal. In effect, adherence to the rules produce “docile bodies:” (p. 136) bodies which become useful to the ruling class in that they legitimize the rules of the game and reproduce the knowledge which constitutes them. Lyotard (1979) locates power using a concrete example which is consistent with Foucault, as well as with Gramsci’s (1971) theory of hegemony. Lyotard writes:

Devices that optimize the performance of the human body for the purpose of producing proof requires additional expenditures. No money, no proof – and that means no verification of statements and no truth. The games of scientific language become the games of the rich, in which whoever is wealthiest has the best chance of being right. An equation between wealth, efficiency, and truth is thus established. (1979, p. 45)

By equating power with money within a capitalist society, Lyotard illustrates the ways in which knowledge and power implicate and reproduce one another.

These claims raise a number of questions regarding the enforcement of rules and incentives for following them. Foucault (1975) provides answers to such questions through his discussion of *disciplining*. Specifically, Foucault argues that technologies of power *discipline* discourses (and therefore language and bodies) toward some discursively constructed norm. Lyotard (1979), similarly, suggests that “political institutions are not content to know – they legislate. That is, they formulate prescriptions that have the status of norms” (p. 31). According to Foucault (1975), such disciplining or legislating occurs specifically through surveillance. He uses the metaphor of Bentham’s Panopticon to illustrate his point. The panoptic prison was physically constructed in

such a way that all prisoners could theoretically be watched continuously and simultaneously. The result of such architectural advancement was self-surveillance – an internalization of the rules of the game, rendering unnecessary the need for oversight. Foucault writes:

He who is subjected to a field of visibility, and who knows it, assumes responsibility for the constraints of power; he makes them play spontaneously upon himself; he inscribes in himself the power relation in which he simultaneously plays both roles; he becomes the principle of his own subjection. (p. 202–203)

In other words, hegemony prevails as individuals exercise power over themselves, effectively reproducing those relations of power and further subjugating themselves. Foucault refers to this technology of power as *biopower*. Furthermore, he suggests that it is when the individual does not exercise such self-surveillance, or otherwise violates the rules of the game, that punishment is enacted. Within Lyotard's language games, power manifests as the power to exclude one from participation. Here, social and relational stakes are high. However, according to Foucault, when it comes to *body games*, the rules become those of life or death. Foucault (1976) argues that power over life in the postmodern world manifests not as the right to "take life or let live," but by the right to "foster life or disallow it to the point of death" (p. 138). Fostering life, in this case, can be taken to mean disciplining the body for optimization or utility of the state. In the absence of such docility, bodies and therefore individuals are constituted as deviant, left to expire amidst an ongoing cycle of discipline and punishment.

The works of Foucault and Lyotard provide a framework for understanding the relationships between discourse, knowledge, power, and the body. Laclau and Mouffe (1985), for example, draw on Foucault's concept of networks of discourse to propose their own framework for political action. Like Foucault, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue that "the objective world is structured in relational sequences which do not necessarily have a finalistic sense and which in

most cases, do not actually require any meaning at all” (p. 95). Discursive formations are therefore characterized by unfixed and uncertain relationships between discourse and discursive elements, each element existing only in relation to the others within an open (as opposed to closed and finite system. Further, like Foucault, these writers argue that everything in the discursive formation is an object of discourse and that discourse is material – embedding itself in things and bodies.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985) argue that society and the social cannot be predetermined or fixed as a “rationally unified totality” because it has no natural essence (p. 86). This is consistent with other theories of postmodernism. However, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) make space for truth claims through their concept of articulation. Although articulation may appear impossible, given the dispersed, fragmented, and potentially contradictory nature of discursive formations, it is in fact possible if one bears in mind the impossibility of true sedimentation. Specifically, they argue that although every possible reality is characterized by “a fault (in the geological sense) ...a fissure that [has] to be filled up” (p. 7) – such fissures can be “sutured” (p. 88) for the sake of making tentative truth claims. Although it is important to remember that “the moment of the ‘final’ suture never arrives” (p. 86), partial sutures allow for the articulation of objects and subjects within the discursive field. In terms of how such partial sutures are made, Laclau and Mouffe (1985) suggest that all articulation is contingent, and that there is “no necessary structure of the social formation” (p. 101). “Undoubtedly,” they write, “there is no essential necessity for these demands to be articulated in [one] way. But nor is there an essential necessity for them to be articulated in another way (p. 107). It becomes clear from this argument that, although “unfixity is the condition” (p. 85) for every social object/subject, tentative articulation can allow for sense-making and actionable political engagement.

Laclau and Mouffe (1985), like Foucault, wrestle with locating power. They suggest that discursive systems contain “privileged discursive points” – *nodal points* – which partially fix meaning and bring (incomplete) order to a system (p. 100). These nodal points can serve to organize power, insofar as society is conceived of not as a rationally unified totality, but as a system characterized by regularity in dispersion. In this way, discourse (and therefore language and bodies) can be articulated and constituted through an ensemble of discourse while remaining pluralistic, multiplicative, and unfixed. These ideas are not contradictory to those proposed by Foucault but are rather complementary. Laclau and Mouffe (1985) reimagine Foucault’s concepts of power/knowledge in a way that bridges chasms between postmodern thought and other paradigms – particularly feminist scholarship. For despite the radical liberation achieved through the dismantlement of modernist Truth claims, articulation (no matter how arbitrary) is key, otherwise “there would be no signification or meaning at all” (p. 98), and no way to “intervene in history in a progressive way” (p. 95).

Articulation, as described by Laclau and Mouffe (1985), serves to fill some gaps in Foucault’s scholarship related to truth claims and resistance. However, many still critique Foucault’s work (and Foucault himself) for its treatment of the *real*. Baudrillard (1977) famously called on theorists to “forget Foucault,” accusing Foucault of fraternizing with a reality which has ceased to exist. Baudrillard writes: “The real is no more than a stockpile of dead matter, dead bodies, and dead language” (p. 54). From Baudrillard’s vantage point, the death of the real means the death of power as well, rendering Foucault’s theory obsolete. He writes:

[What] if Foucault spoke so well of power to us – and let us not forget it, in real objective terms which cover manifold diffractions but nonetheless do not question the objective point of view one has about them, and of power which is pulverized but whose *reality principle* is nonetheless not questioned – only because power is dead? (p.31)

Even if power *did* exist, though particularly because it does not, according to Baudrillard, Foucault's theory is charged with being guilty of "political determinism" (p. 50): with making untenable claims regarding *real* experience. Ultimately, Baudrillard accuses Foucault's theory of being self-indulgent, even masturbatory – "a mirror of the powers it describes," a disturbing "mythic discourse...too beautiful to be true" (p. 30) – a condition which may qualify Foucault's theory as mere pseudoscience (Popper, 1982). Only a total revolution, "the absolute deterritorialization of *theory itself*" would suffice in the postmodern age and satisfy Baudrillard (Lotringer, 2007, p. 12). Despite such damning rebukes from Baudrillard, these attacks on Foucault have been called at best superfluous, and at worst grounded in a complete misreading. Halperin (1998) writes:

The chief thing about Foucault that his self-styled disciples forget is that he did not propound a theory of sexuality...Foucault's *History of Sexuality, Volume I*, is perforce theoretical, inasmuch as it undertakes a far-reaching critical intervention in the realm of theory. It is, more specifically, an effort to dislodge and to thwart the effects of established theories...To undertake such a theoretical critique...is obviously not to offer a new theory of sexuality...It is rather an effort to denaturalize, dematerialize, and derealize sexuality so as to prevent it from serving as the positive grounding for a theory of sexuality...*The History of Sexuality, Part I*, in short, does not contain an original theory of sexuality; if anything, its theoretical originality lies in its refusal of existing theory and its consistent elaboration of a critical antitheory. (p. 109–110)

Halperin (1998) makes clear that, though not without its faults, Foucault's so-called *theorizing* in fact answered Baudrillard's own calls for the extermination of theory.

Ironically, while postmodernists have suggested that Foucault's work is overly grounded in *the real*, others have critiqued his work for not adequately addressing *the real*. Feminist scholars in particular have argued that "the very foundation of his work is defective" for their purposes (Phelan, 1990, p. 421), citing his "suspicion of thought based on stable entities" as distinctly anti-feminist (p. 430). Foucault has been critiqued for his lack of engagement with issues of gender,

and for distorting, ignoring, or posing a direct threat to feminist theory and scholarship (Alcoff, 1988; Clair, 1998; Phelan, 1990; Ramazanoglu, 1993). Foucault's work, and poststructuralism generally, has been critiqued by feminists for its suggestion that all subjectivities are mere fictions – that the category of woman is nothing more than a social construction, with little to no connection to biology or to an essential, natural essence. Martin (1982), for example, argued that such nominalism runs the risk of erasing gender altogether, threatening to make “the question of women's oppression obsolete” (pp. 16–17). Alcoff (1988) agrees, asking:

What can we demand in the name of women if ‘women’ do not exist and demands in their name simply reinforce the myth that they do? How can we speak out against sexism as detrimental to the interests of women if the category is fiction? How can we demand legal abortions, adequate childcare, or wages based on comparable worth without invoking a concept of ‘woman’? (p. 420)

Some feminists have argued that Foucault's suspicion of naturally prescribed identities and essential truths does more than threaten the existence of gender: it directly threatens feminist conceptions of women's knowledge as Truth, and therefore undermines “collective political strategies for transforming gendered power relations” (Ramazanoglu, 1993, p. 9). Additionally, some have criticized Foucault for not taking his own positionality or male privilege into account or considering its meaning for the validity or authority of his work (Ramazanoglu, 1993).

Despite it not being clear whether he has “done that much to deserve it” (Soper, 1993, p. 29), some feminists have embraced Foucault as a feminist ally. Ramazanoglu (1993) suggests that feminists ought to take Foucault seriously for at least three reasons. First, “his approach to understanding power relations can offer feminists new and productive insights into women's relations with men and with one another” (p. 9). Second, his work brings to light some inherent problems in feminist theorizing. Specifically, Foucault's work challenges notions of biological essentialism and claims to objective Truth, both of which, though “not necessarily specific

weaknesses of feminism,” pose problems for feminist theorizing (p. 11). Finally, Ramazanoglu argues that, just as Foucault offers new possibilities for feminist theorizing, feminism offers new possibilities for postmodern and poststructural thought. By considering both approaches, including the inherent strengths and weaknesses of each, scholars may gain insight into those phenomena which neither approach alone can explain, including the material level of female experience and the “hidden and institutionalized power relations” between and among women (p. 14). Ultimately, Foucault’s work is “vital for the development of feminist theory, if not for every feminist issue” (Phelan, 1990, p. 421). Phelan (1990) puts it simply:

This does not mean that we must accept his authority on everything, nor dismiss him completely when he fails us; the impulse behind such reactions is one that he himself enables us to see and critique. We must see him as an ally because he ultimately provides the seeds of a democratic theory and a reconception of the values of freedom and individuality that have such a fundamental role in feminist theory and activity. (p. 421)

Foucault, contrary to what some critics have claimed, *does* leave space for resistance. Foucault understood resistance, first, as the ability to recognize the ways in which knowledge, discourse, and power implicate one another and, second, as those violations of the rules, whether passive or active, which shine light on power/knowledge mechanisms, challenge the legitimacy of the rules of the game, and/or rewrite the rules of the game altogether. He writes:

Discourses are not once and for all subservient to power or raised up against it...We must make allowance for the complex and unstable process whereby discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy. Discourse transmits and produces power; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it, renders it fragile and makes it possible to thwart. (1976, pp. 100–101)

Lyotard, too, speaks to resistance. Despite the fact that “certain institutions impose limits on the games, and thus restrict the inventiveness of the players in making their moves,” he writes that

“the limits the institution imposes on potential language ‘moves’ are never established once and for all (even if they have been formally defined)” (p. 17). He continues:

Scientists must cooperate only if they judge that the politics of the State, in other words the sum of its prescriptions, is just. If they feel that the civil society of which they are members is badly represented by the State, they may reject its prescriptions. This type of legitimation grants them the authority, as practical human beings, to refuse their scholarly support to a political power they judge to be unjust, in other words, not grounded in a real autonomy. (1979, p. 36)

Thus, although judgements themselves can be said to be in part a product of the system, they can still serve to resist the taken-for-granted truths within it.

Feminist contributions to resistance studies elaborated and expanded beyond these contributions, particularly by challenging the belief that only patriarchal conceptions of resistance could be called such and arguing that aesthetic and everyday forms of resistance are equally efficacious (Aptheker, 1989; Clair, 1998). Aptheker (1989), for example, proposes that there exists a form of resistance outside of masculinist social theory and traditional social movements, one which is grounded in and shaped by the “dailiness of women’s lives” (p. 172). Although resistance is traditionally understood as requiring “oppositional politics and a struggle for power against those responsible for maintaining social injustices,” daily resistance serves to improve the quality of daily life for women and their families in ways that are not necessarily oppositional or contesting for power (p. 170). This conceptualization of resistance allows for an understanding of available resistance strategies that is relative to the daily lives of women, and an evaluation of resistance strategies successes or failures “on their own terms” (p. 14). Aptheker writes:

The strategies women employ in their daily lives are relative to their conditions. They are relative to the tools and resources women have available, including the internalized fears of being and acting themselves. By and large, women have been marginalized in or excluded from the centers of power like trade unions, political parties, social movements, and the armed forces, from which men have waged their resistance. Women’s strategies have pivoted from different centers and engaged

different priorities. Often the choices women make about how to resist and in what ways are made outside the rules and outside the boundaries of conventional politics. They cannot be judged, or their effectiveness critically assessed by the designations employed in conventional social theories about the relations of power in the society. (p. 180)

Such an approach makes room for the contradictions and paradoxes inherent in women's resistance inside a patriarchal society, and centers women's standpoints to illustrate that resistance must be "framed within the context of women's practical, material, personal, and psychological resources" (p. 218).

Importantly, this form of resistance grounded in the dailiness of women's lives does not imply "that only women have or express these ideas and values" or "that all women have these ideas or practice them" (p. 247). It is important here to distinguish between female and *feminine*. This form of resistance stands in contrast to masculine forms of resistance: "spinning theories, waging protests, conducting research, exposing and condemning, beseeching authorities for funds and legislation and relief" (p. 128). As Aptheker writes, "the point is that these ideas about life and about how to sustain it...are generated by the nature of women's labors, and these labors, and the conditions under which they are enacted, inscribe a particular form of consciousness." (p. 247). In this way, art and craft, imagination and storytelling, the "forging of cultural heritage" (p. 228), and even coping and other survival strategies may all be understood as resistance. For example, Aptheker (1989) proposed that, when Japanese Americans were interned in America during WWII, Japanese women demonstrated resistance by attempting to "make life bearable:" erecting gardens and keeping up with fashion trends as "part of a struggle to provision their families and protect their children from the worse and most degrading features of internment" (p. 193).

Clair (1994, 1998) provides additional examples of mundane resistance in her theoretical work on the postmodern dialectic: the simultaneous and self-contained opposition of resistance

and oppression which she terms resistance/oppression. Like Aptheker (1989), Clair (1998) illustrates daily forms of resistance; however, she also illustrates the ways in which these forms of resistance may simultaneously oppress. This dialectic may be best exemplified in her analysis of one man's experiences of sexual harassment and the resistance strategies he employs (Clair, 1994). Clair's (1994) analysis, guided by the premise that discursive acts may at once oppress and resist, reveals the ways in which oppressed individuals (here, female nurses) participate in their own domination (contribute to the patriarchal social structure) through their own resistance strategies. Further, this analysis suggests that resistance strategies (here, the sexual harassment of a male nurse) not only contribute to one's own oppression but are also oppressive in their own right. Clair writes: "thus, oppression and resistance exist simultaneously, touching each other in tension, articulating a hegemonic moment" (p. 246). Considered in another way, the postmodern dialectic reveals the ways in which everyday forms of resistance (or oppression) may also serve to oppress (or resist).

Clair (1998) uses the frame of the postmodern dialectic to argue that silence (not just language or symbolic practice) can be understood as simultaneously oppressive and resistant. Mirroring the structure of resistance/oppression, Clair introduces the concept of silence/language to clarify this point. She argues that silences – despite being traditionally theorized as oppressive at worst, neutral or meaningless at best – may be employed or co-opted as resistance. She provides the examples of *la perruque* – “the worker's own work disguised as work for the employer” (De Certeau, 1984, p. 25) – and *bricolage* – the silent, often mischievous resisting of workplace control using the limited resources one has at her disposal – to illustrate the liberating possibilities of silences. Although silences can certainly be used to oppress – specifically the silencing of marginalized voices or the silence of those in power regarding injustice and violence – silences

can also be understood as a feminine form of resistance, or as simultaneously oppressive and resistant. In short, Clair's work allowed resistance and oppression to exist in a postmodern mien, whereas earlier postmodernists separated the two, reducing them to stable, singular terms rather than dynamic interplays of power.

Radical humanist organizational communication scholars also speak to the relationships between power, organizational knowledge, and organizational practice (Table 2). From a radical humanist perspective, organizations are defined as "social practices ordered across time and space" (Giddens, 1984, p. 2), characterized by oppressive power structures which are "reified through organizational ideology, symbolic expressions of power, and enacted realities of social domination" (Putnam, 1982, p. 203). Giddens's (1984) structuration theory in particular holds "that human action is a process of producing and reproducing various social systems through ordinary practice" (p. 275). Human action is understood as discursive in nature, shaping and being shaped by organizational structures. Further, human actors are understood as having agency; however, human action also results in *unintended consequences*, including the reproduction of those structures which shape future action. Giddens (1984) defines *structures* as "properties allowing the 'binding' of time-space in social systems, the properties which make it possible for discernibly similar social practices to exist across varying spans of time and space and which lend them to 'systemic' form" (p. 17). He suggests that "social systems do not *have structures* but rather exhibit *structural properties*" (p. 17). This distinction is important, as it demonstrates the propensity of organizations to be structured without violating the assumption that such structuring is dynamic and fluid, rather than functionalist or deterministic.

According to Giddens (1984), human action is characterized by various *dualisms*, including a *duality of structure* and a *dialectic of control*. The duality of structure refers to the process by

which “structures provide individuals with rules that guide their actions, but their actions in turn create new rules and reproduce old ones” (Littlejohn & Foss, 2010, p. 275). Put another way, “the rules and resources drawn upon in the production and reproduction of social action are at the same time the means of system reproduction” (Giddens, 1984, p. 19). This is quite compatible with postmodern theories of knowledge production, including Foucault’s knowledge/power regime and Lyotard’s language games. Although Giddens is hesitant to use the word *rule*, as not to imply deterministic structures or unified codified systems, he suggests that “awareness of social rules, expressed first and foremost in practical consciousness, is the very core of that knowledgeability which specifically characterizes human agents” (p. 21). Like Lyotard, Giddens refers to such awareness, and one’s ability to enact behavior which ascribes to social rules as *competence*. Competence guides one’s own social action, and frames interpretations and judgements of action within an organization. Importantly, the duality of structure suggests that structures are at once enabling and constraining, leaving space for resistance and change.

The dialectic of control introduces agency and power into the equation. Giddens (1984) argues that although “it has frequently been supposed that human agency can be defined only in terms of intentions...most acts do not have this characteristic” (p. 8). Agency refers “not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capacity of doing those things in the first place” (Giddens, 1984, p. 9). He provides a linguistic example: “one of the regular consequences of my speaking or writing English in a correct way is to contribute to the reproduction of the English language as a whole. My speaking English correctly is intentional; the contribution I make to the reproduction of the language is not” (p. 8). Action, then, can be understood as the mobilization of resources or knowledge. This in itself is an exercise of power. As Giddens puts it, “To be an agent is to be able to deploy (chronically, in the flow of daily life) a range of causal powers, including

that of influencing those deployed by others” (p. 14). In this way, agency is inherently tied to power. However, it is structural power which determines one’s agency – one’s capacity to mobilize, and therefore one’s own power. The dialectic of control suggests that there are two faces of power: “the capacity of actors to enact decisions which they favour on the one hand, and the mobilization of bias that is built into institutions on the other” (p. 15). Importantly, however, just as the duality of structure is at once enabling and constraining, so too is the dialectic of control. Giddens writes:

Power within social systems which enjoy some continuity over time and space presumes regularized relations of autonomy and dependence between actors or collectives in contexts of social interaction. But all forms of dependence offer some resources whereby those who are subordinate can influence the activities of their superiors. (p. 16)

In this way, neither power nor agency are absolute, but rather are engaged in a constant push and pull.

In order to understand the role of the organizational member as both an agentic actor and a vehicle for structural reproduction, Giddens introduces the stratification model of the acting self. The acting self, according to Giddens’ (1984), is composed of processes including *reflexivity*, *rationalization*, and *motivation*. Here, reflexivity refers not only to “self-consciousness, but as the monitored character of the ongoing flow of social life” (p. 3). Giddens suggests that actors “monitor continuously the flow of their activities and expect others to do the same for their own; they also routinely monitor aspects, social and physical, of the contexts in which they move” (p. 5). Through such reflexivity, actors come to acquire and maintain a “theoretical understanding of the grounds of their activity,” and understanding which guides *rationalization* (p. 5). In Giddens’ words: “the rationalization of action, within the diversity of circumstances of interaction, is the principal basis upon which the generalized ‘competence’ of actors is evaluated by others” (p. 4). Importantly, however, Giddens argues that *motivation* “is not as directly bound up with the

continuity of action as are its reflexive monitoring or rationalization” (p. 6). Rather, Giddens argues that most motivation is unconscious, having “a direct purchase on action only in relatively unusual circumstances” (p. 7). Motivations largely “supply overall plans or programmes within which a range of conduct is enacted” (p. 6). Much of the knowledge within such programs is “not directly accessible to the consciousness of actors” but is rather “practical in character...it is inherent in the capability to ‘go on’ within the routines of social life” (p. 4). This idea of practical consciousness is central to structuration theory.

To summarize, through constant monitoring of one’s world, a social actor acquires an awareness of social rules which, though largely unconscious, guides the rationalization of their own actions and evaluation and interpretation of the actions of others. Giddens writes: “awareness of social rules, expressed first and foremost in practical consciousness, is the very core of that ‘knowledgeability’ which specifically characterizes human agents. As social actors, all human beings are highly ‘learned’ in respect of knowledge which they possess and apply in the production and reproduction of day-to-day social encounters” (p. 21-22). The stratification model of the acting self treats reflexivity, rationality, and motivation as “embedded sets of processes,” each of which are discursive in nature (p. 4). In other words, reflexivity, rationality, and motivation mutually constitute – and are the discursive products of – one another. Just as social structures and the acting agents within them “enter into the constitution of the other” (p. 36), so too do the processes involved in the constitution of the acting self. The constitution of the acting self is not unidirectional or linear, but is rather dynamic, characterized by dualisms and, sometimes, contradictions. Further, Giddens’ (1984) model emphasizes the materiality of the acting self and the centrality of time-space in the constitution of action. According to the stratification model of the acting self, action is constituted through lived experience in time and space and cannot be

“discussed in separation from the body” (p. 3). Rather, “the body is the locus of the acting self,” and is therefore implicated in the constitution of the self and in the production and reproduction of social rules.

Table 2: Organizational Theories of Knowledge Production

Theorist	General Assumptions	Specific Applications
Giddens (1984)	Knowledge produces and is produced by structural properties which are characterized by a <i>duality of structure</i> and a <i>dialectic of control</i> .	Human action shapes and is shaped by structural properties which enable and constrain human action <i>and</i> reproduce or resist knowledge and therefore power.
Mumby (1994)	Ideology produces and is produced by organizational practice, specifically organizational communication which reflects and reproduces deep structures of oppression.	Organizational structures shape and are shaped by organizational practice and communication, which are inherently imbued with power.
Clair (1994; 1998)	Knowledge produces and is produced by organizational practices which are characterized by the postmodern dialectic of oppression/resistance.	Oppression and resistance are self-contained opposites, meaning that there is space for both within an organizing context, and that some practices may simultaneously oppress <i>and</i> resist.

Like that of Giddens, Mumby’s (1994) work takes a cultural purist approach, understanding organizations *as* cultures in and of themselves. He writes: “by treating organizations as cultures, organizational researchers attempt to explicate the system of rules, beliefs, values, and so forth, that individuals generally take for granted as members of a particular organization” (Mumby, 1994, p. 9). However, while Giddens’ theory of structuration is a general theory of social action, Mumby’s work centers the communicative and “aims to address the way we organize ourselves, our enterprises, and our institutions as a result of the way we communicate with one another” (Mumby, 1994, p. xii). Such an approach “moves beyond the surface issue of sense-making to examine the means by which certain meaning structures come to be more pervasive and widely accepted (i.e., more legitimate) than others,” making Mumby’s work particularly useful for the current project (Mumby, 1994, p. 35).

Mumby (1987, 1994, 1997), building directly on the work of postmodern theorists including Foucault (1975, 1976) is one of many scholars engaging with postmodern theorizing in the field of organizational communication. Mumby's early work was inherently critical and later work distinctly postmodern, as he calls for a discourse of suspicion and vulnerability as a framework for understanding the deep structures of domination and power within organizations, and the ways in which the body is implicated in the production and reproduction of these structures. Like those who came before him, Mumby (1994) aimed to "address the way we organize ourselves, our enterprises, and our institutions" (p. xii). Unlike Foucault (1975, 1976), however, Mumby (1994) centers the communicative and suggests that such organization is a direct result of "the way we communicate with one another" (Mumby, 1994, p. xii).

Mumby (1994) understands discourse and organizational structure to be mutually constitutive. From this perspective, discourse does more than simply transmit information – it is at once the product of, and reproduces, organizational structure. Importantly, because Mumby (1994) understands discourse to be primarily communicative or interactional in character, organizations can be understood as "made up of an interconnected system of language communities that exist within other, larger language communities" (p. 97). These systems of language communities are similar to Foucault's discursive networks and Lyotard's language clouds. Such language communities, according to organizational and strategic communication scholar Evered (1980), have "no objective reality (in a positivistic sense), but rather are created daily by the linguistic enactments of its members in the course of their everyday communications between each other; that is, by the way in which members talk, hold discourse, [and/or] share meanings" (p. 126). Further, organizations constitute cultural norms and rules, around which members orient their embodied behavior.

Mumby (1994) goes beyond simple interpretation, however, to illustrate the ways that discourse, power, and ideology operate within organizations. According to Mumby (1994), “discourse is not politically neutral...but functions as a means by which certain power structures in an organization are produced, maintained, and reproduced” (p. 125). Power is understood as residing in discourse which “structures certain group interest into organizational activity” and symbolism (p. xiv). Ideology, according to Mumby (1994), refers to those group interests that are served through discourse. Ideologies, like Foucault’s concept of knowledge and Lyotard’s sciences, operate “in discursive chains, in clusters, in semantic fields, [and] in discursive formations” (Hall, 1985, p. 104). These clusters of discourse embed ideology into organizational structures – into the very norms and rules which guide behavior among organization members – which in turn reproduce and legitimate discourse and power. These norms and rules, like all forms and products of discourse, are inherently linked to ideology – there is no possibility for ideology-free discourse. Mumby’s (1994) theory of discourse, power, and ideology is similar to Foucault’s mechanism of power/knowledge. Put simply, discourse, power, and ideology are mutually constitutive, ultimately producing, reproducing, and maintaining existing power structures (Figure 1).

Others in organizational communication have built upon Mumby’s (1987, 1994, 1997) theorizing to further extrapolate the ways in which subjects and their bodies are implicated in the production, reproduction, and resistance of knowledge and power (e.g., Clair, 1993, 1996, 1998; Clair et al., 1996; Harter, 2009; Harter, 2012; Harter et al., 2020; Harter et al., 2005; Mumby, 1987). Much of this work has taken a narrative perspective to understanding embodied organizational practice and the narrative construction of subjects and bodies; in fact, Mumby himself (1987, 1994, 2003) wrote much about the political power of narratives as discourse in organizing contexts, particularly in his later work. This work demonstrates the theoretical fit

between questions of knowledge production and the metaphor of narration. A review of narrative theorizing and narrative scholarship within the field of communication is therefore warranted.

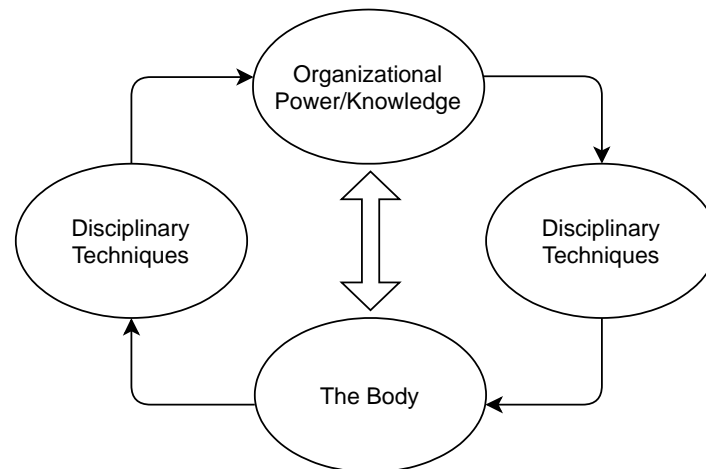


Figure 1: Co-Constitution of Power/Knowledge and The Body

Note: This figure represents a postmodern organizing understanding of the co-constitution of power/knowledge and the body by way of discipline (Foucault, 1975; 1976; Giddens, 1984; Lyotard, 1979; Mumby, 1994).

Narratives and The Body

The narrative tradition may at first appear to be an unlikely place to turn when considering the role of the physical body in the production of knowledge. Yet, philosophers have long understood personal and cultural narrative to be closely tied to the body, and many organizational communication scholars understand narrative as important in sense-making processes and the production and reproduction of social structures. Further, because narrative “permits ambiguity and enjoys paradoxes” (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1995, p. 15), it lends itself well to postmodern inquiry. For the purposes of this project, it will be important to review contemporary narrative scholarship and explicate the ways in which narrative allows for a more complete understanding of the role of narrative, the body, and the relationships between them in the production, reproduction, and resistance of knowledge and power (Table 3).

Although narrative inquiry can be traced to antiquity (see Clair et al., 2014 for a review), the narrative turn in the social sciences in the 1970s sparked new interest in narrative knowledge. This narrative turn came as a response to modernism and challenged modernism's assumption that *scientific knowledge* is the only legitimate form of knowledge (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1995; Fisher, 1984). Narrative researchers, drawing heavily on postmodernist scholars, called for the reinstatement of narrative knowledge as legitimate and worthy of study and theoretical consideration (e.g., Bruner, 1985, 1991; Fisher, 1984, 1985; Polkinghorne, 1995). Bruner (1985, 1991), for example, made clear distinctions between narrative cognition and what he called paradigmatic cognition, which were later reviewed in depth by Polkinghorne (1995). Paradigmatic cognition refers to "the traditional logical-scientific mode of knowing" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 9): "that which has been promoted by the Western scientific tradition" (p. 8). The primary operation of such cognition is to classify events: "the power of paradigmatic thought is to bring order to experience by seeing individual things as belonging to a category" (p. 10). Paradigmatic cognition is inherently modernist, as it relies on formal logic, rationality, and empiricism as means of validity testing, and "has been held as the exclusive cognitive mode for the generation of trustworthy and valid knowledge" (p. 9). However, Bruner (1985, 1991) and Polkinghorne (1995), among others, recognize narrative cognition as equally legitimate, though quite different from such scientific modes of knowledge. Unlike paradigmatic knowledge, which is concerned with similarities between actions for the purposes of categorization, narrative knowledge "focuses on the particular and special characteristics of each action" for the purposes of emplotment (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 11). In other words, narrative cognition involves collecting individual elements related to an action or event and organizing them in such a way that provides a causal link or explanation between and among them. Polkinghorne (1995) writes: "narrative cognition gives us explanatory knowledge of

why a person acted as he or she did; it makes another's action, as well as our own, understandable" (p. 11).

Also responding to calls for narrative research was Fisher (1984), who famously introduced the narrative paradigm within the field of communication. Fisher's narrative paradigm in communication "holds that symbols are created and communicated ultimately as stories meant to give order to human experience and to induce others to dwell in them to establish ways of living in common, in communities in which there is sanction for the story that constitutes one's life" (p. 6). In this way, communication researchers working within this paradigm can analyze human experience through the lens of a *narrative world paradigm* and can understand human stories as sense-making tools. It is important to note that Fisher (1984) does not suggest that all communication is storytelling – rather, this paradigm holds that all communication is *storied* and *storying*, in that it at once influences and is influenced by narratives. In other words, he accepts the scientific discourse as distinct and yet also as storied. Further, Fisher (1984) introduced an idea of *narrative rationality* which he called a *logic of good reasons*. This type of reasoning diverges from modernist types of rationality in that it does not rely on formal logic, but rather on *narrative fidelity* – whether the story rings true – and *narrative probability* – whether the story is coherent. This allows the lay person to engage the scientific expert discourse from a narrative point of view. Fisher's (1984) narrative paradigm has guided, and continues to guide, organizational narrative research in the field of communication.

In order to fully understand the concepts of narrative cognition and narrative rationality, it will be important to review the narrative theorizing which pre-dated the narrative turn: specifically, that of Paul Ricoeur (1984), who provides an extensive analysis of human experience as narrative, grounded in time and space. First and foremost, Ricoeur understood that, although all human

experience occurs in time, time as a concept is difficult to pin down. In fact, despite the pervasiveness of time, no philosopher has offered a convincing model for measuring and accounting for time and its aporias. In an attempt to “remedy a fatal deficiency in any purely phenomenological approach to time,” (Wood, 1991, p. 1), Ricoeur offers narrative. First, Ricoeur develops the concept of *narrative understanding*. Narrative understanding, for Ricoeur, is a type of phronetic understanding, different from the theoretical use of reason. Such understanding, as described above, takes up emplotment (*muthos*) as a method of organizing events into a cohesive whole – a story. However, emplotment is only one small part of Ricoeur’s model of temporal, spatial, and ultimately *narrative* existence.

Table 3: Narrative Theories of Knowledge Production

Theorist	General Assumptions	Specific Applications
Fisher (1984)	Humans are inherently storytelling beings, and make sense of the world using narrative knowledge and narrative rationality.	Narratives produce and are produced by cultural knowledge; humans make sense of the world through the evaluation of <i>narrative fidelity</i> and <i>narrative probability</i> .
Ricoeur (1984)	Narratives can be understood as both epistemological <i>and</i> ontological, operating simultaneously as artifacts and ways of being.	Narratives produce and are produced by cultural knowledge through a process of <i>threefold mimesis</i> .
Frank (1995)	Bodies are inherently narrative in an epistemological and ontological sense, operating simultaneously as artifacts and as living stories.	Bodies produce and are produced by cultural narratives; bodies <i>have</i> stories, but are inarticulate.
Mumby (1987)	Organizational narratives produce and are produced by organizational knowledge, and reflect and reproduce deep structures of oppression.	Organizational narratives produce and are produced by organizational knowledge, and guide organizational practice.
Clair (1993; 1994)	Organizational narratives produce and are produced by organizational knowledge, and reveal the postmodern dialectic of oppression/resistance.	Organizational narratives produce and are produced by organizational knowledge, and may simultaneously oppress <i>and</i> resist.

To demonstrate the role of narrative in human experience, Ricoeur (1984), drawing on Augustine and Aristotle, develops a theory of three-fold mimesis. Mimesis, here, is understood as a combination of Aristotlean *mimesis* (“the active process of imitating or representing something”) and *muthos* (“the organization of events;” or “to compose”) (p. 33). Ricoeur’s theory holds that emplotment mediates experience and interpretation by representing lived events in time as a narrative. Mimesis requires three phases (preunderstanding, configuration, and reading/refiguration) which can be situated in time (past, present, future). The first phase is preunderstanding, which Ricoeur terms *mimesis*₁. Preunderstanding involves the recognition of events and symbols within a cultural system. Ricoeur takes an anthropological approach to preunderstanding, referring to cultures as symbolic systems made up of intersignified elements. Here, a culture operates as a conceptual network. Ricoeur writes: “to understand a ritual act is to situate it within a ritual, set within a cultic system, and by degrees within the whole set of conventions, beliefs, and institutions that make up the symbolic framework of a culture” (p. 58). In other words, systems allow for members of the culture to *read*, or understand and place value on action.

The second phase of threefold mimesis is configuration, which Ricoeur terms *mimesis*₂. Configuration here refers to emplotment, which mediates temporal experience and interpretation. Ricoeur writes that emplotment is mediating in at least three ways: first, it configures individual events into a cohesive (if not entirely concordant) story; second, it “brings together factors as heterogeneous as agents, goals, means, interactions, circumstances, and unexpected results” (p. 65); and finally, it brings in temporality by placing events in a sequence and providing closure with an ending. He writes: “temporality is brought to language to the extent that language configures and refigures temporal existence” (p. 54). The third, and arguably most important phase

of Ricoeur's theory is reading/refiguration, which Ricoeur terms *mimesis*₃. Referring back to the Aristotelian *mimesis*, Ricoeur writes: "the mimetic activity does not reach its intended term through the dynamism of the poetic text alone. It also requires a spectator or reader" (p. 46). It is the *reading* of the narrative that actualizes the story (and therefore the events), allows for refiguration, and connects plot to experience. Further, it is the act of reading or spectating the narrative that further constructs and reconstructs that cultural knowledge which allows for preunderstanding and the ability to interpret events. This does not mean that *mimesis* is a vicious cycle of redundancy – rather, it can be taken as "an endless spiral that would carry meditation past the same point a number of times, but at different altitudes" (p. 72). This spiral allows for rereading and reinterpretation toward the configuration of new narratives to be read by future readers (Figure 2).

To summarize, Ricoeur's theory of threefold *mimesis* suggests that emplotment is the means by which temporal events are organized, interpreted, reorganized, and reinterpreted. In his own words: "Narrative is meaningful to the extent that it portrays the features of temporal experience" (p. 3). In this way, human experience can be understood as inherently narrative.

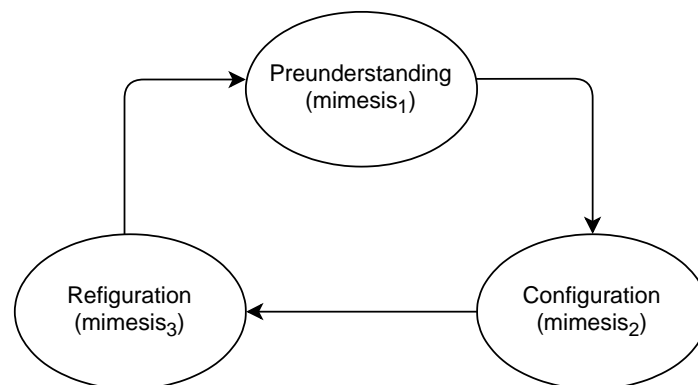


Figure 2: Three-Fold Mimesis

Note: This figure represents Ricoeur's (1984) theory of three-fold *mimesis*. Here, three-fold *mimesis* is visualized as a circular process. However, Ricoeur understands three-fold *mimesis* to be a spiraling process.

Importantly, Ricoeur does not claim that narratives resolve the aporias of time; he does not suggest that narrators are capable of organizing *all elements* – including contradictory or paradoxical elements – into concordant explanatory accounts. Rather, he suggests that, through narrative, discordance can be “purged,” providing *an* (as opposed to *the*) account of causation (p. 44). He offers the writing of history as an example: “history aims at knowledge, an organized vision, established upon chains of causal or teleological relations, on the basis of meanings and values” (p. 99); however, history is not merely the absolute “knowledge of the actions of past human beings” (p. 96), but, rather, an interpretation stemming “from judgement rather than from deduction” (p. 125). Historians are tasked with making causal claims based not on explanatory laws (given that no such laws exist regarding human behavior), but rather through the use of strong evidence, critical examination of alternatives, and convincing argumentation. Historical interpretations can convincingly illustrate causation, but only through the critical appraisal of events and proposal of causal possibilities. Ricoeur terms such tentative accounts of causation “necessary causal necessity” (p. 203). They are “necessary” because they provide partial closure to the system: closure which is required for interpretation within the system. Ricoeur, like Laclau and Mouffe (1985), recognizes the need for sedimentation if individuals are to participate or intervene in history in any meaningful way.

Further, Ricoeur does not suggest that all narratives within a culture are consistent. Rather, there exists a multiplicity of accounts which offer tentative, sometimes contradictory, explanatory accounts of human experience and behavior. He again uses written history as an example. He writes: “it is unlikely that we shall find any logical features according to which all historical explanations can be grasped together as historical” (p. 122). Importantly, Ricoeur understands this plurality of history as a strength rather than a weakness. By making room for discordance, he

argues, historians acknowledge the unfixed and undetermined nature of human experience and interpretation and avoid making sweeping generalizations and/or sedimenting laws. This is a particularly postmodern approach to narrative and causality, as it remains suspicious of metanarratives and theories of closed explanatory systems. “Alleged generalities,” he writes, “may simply be pseudo-laws, borrowed from popular wisdom or unscientific psychology, when they are not obvious prejudices” (p. 114). It is clear that, while a single history would be undoubtedly imbued with power, a multiplicity of histories allows for critical analysis of causal possibilities. It is by retaining discordance and plurality in the writing of history that “ordinary people, often denied the right to speak by the dominant form of discourse...regain their voice” (p. 110).

In short, narratives are both a product and producer of cultural knowledge; narrators draw on cultural knowledge (preunderstanding) in order to plot events into a coherent story (configuration), which is read, disciplined (refiguration), and then enters back into the pool of cultural knowledge (preunderstanding). This circular or spiraling conceptualization of knowledge production is consistent with the theorizing of postmodernists and organizational communication scholars. Because discourse is imbued with power, narratives are inherently *normative*, disciplining interpretation and narration. However, there remains space for resistance through the telling of counter-narratives, which can multiply in their own right toward normative change.

Importantly for the current project, processes of knowledge production not only determine what stories are told, but also what stories are *lived*. Certainly, Ricoeur (1991) makes it very clear that stories are told, and lives are lived. This distinction between narratives as artifacts (stories) and lived narrative experiences will continue to be important for the purposes of this project. Nevertheless, in the same way that stories belong to genres, which constrain and enable character action and interpretation, human actions belong to cultural plots which serve not only to discipline

interpretation, but also to constrain and enable action. Cultural plots are normative, in that they provide the guidelines for what action is appropriate and for how events are linked, shaping both interpretation of action and action itself. This does not mean that human action is determined by culture narratives – after all, discordance exists within and between cultural stories, as described above. Nor does it mean that there is no room for resistance in the form of counter–stories or non–normative action. However, given the ideological nature of discourse, dominant cultural narratives (being discursive in nature) reflect, produce, and reproduce existing knowledge sets about which lived experiences are normative and which are deviant.

Arthur Frank (1995), too, emphasizes the narrative nature of lived experience, and adds to Ricoeur’s theorizing by centering the body as an important vector in the process of narrative knowledge production. Now regarded as a formative theoretical work in the area of body studies, Frank (1995) advances an ethics of the body aimed at demonstrating the ways in which illness stories are told, retold, and reclaimed in the postmodern era. Central to his argument is the idea that postmodern medicine is characterized by a centering of patients’ stories as legitimate forms of knowledge. Importantly, illness stories are not simply told *about* the body, but rather are told by and “through” the body (p. 2). In this way, stories about bodies and bodies themselves become discursive – reaching out and touching other bodies, (re)producing knowledge about what it means to live in or live *as* a body (p. 33).

To illustrate the ways in which bodies and body stories are discursive, Frank (1995) provides a framework for understanding the body as a “reflexive project” (p. 75), involving ethical choices which are at once enabled and constrained by power structures. Frank (1995) also draws on Waitzkin (1991), who specifically speaks to the ways in which medical patients are discursively constructed within health care institutions. Frank (1995) writes: “Waitzkin characterizes medicine

as an ideological system that ‘calls’ the patient to be an identity that medicine maintains for him” (p. 66). He continues: “the ideological work of medicine is to get the patient to accept this diagnostic identity as appropriate and moral. When the patient accepts this identity, he aligns himself as subordinate in a power relation” (p. 66). This example of the discursive construction of the patient illustrates the ways in which the body is implicated in the production of knowledge and provides a framework for understanding how bodies may be enabled or constrained in other body-centric organizations.

These ideas are consistent with Foucault’s (1975) concepts of biopower and biopolitics, which emphasize the centrality of the body in processes of knowledge production. The power/knowledge mechanism can be understood as being “concerned with the ‘body politic’, as a set of material elements and techniques that serve as weapons, relays, communication routes and supports for the power and knowledge relations that invest human bodies and subjugate them by turning them into objects of knowledge” (Foucault, 1975, p. 28). In this way, knowledge and power are written upon the body and expressed through the body. Importantly, however, Frank (1995) leaves space for resistance, suggesting, as Clair (1993, 1994) and others do, that oppression and resistance are self-contained opposites. Using the example, again, of the medical patient: “Ill people surrender their bodies to medicine, but increasingly they try to hold onto their own stories. Refusing narrative surrender becomes one specific activity of reflexive monitoring and thus an exercise of responsibility” and resistance (p. 16).

Narrative organizational communication scholars have contributed to a rich literature on the narrative nature of lived experience and the role of narratives and narrative experience in the production of knowledge. According to Czarniawska-Joerges (1995), “narrative enters organizational studies in at least three forms: organizational research that is written in a story-like

way; organizational research which collects organizational stories; and organizational research which conceptualizes organizational life as story-making and organizational theory as story-reading” (p. 16). The first of these three – *narrating organizations* – often takes the form of tales from the field. She provides the example of Leidner’s (1993) exploration of “the routinization of service work,” in which Leidner provides multiple narrative accounts, which each offer a tentative causal explanation of the phenomena. Importantly, “paradoxes are never resolved into a single correct version of events” (p. 17).

Czarniawska-Joerges (1995) refers to the second type of narrative work simply as *collecting stories*. Such research involves the solicitation of stories for a variety of purposes, including categorization and thematic analysis. Importantly, such an approach is rather modernist. Czarniawska-Joerges (1995) writes: “many well-known studies from the 1980s conceived organizational narratives as artifacts forever petrified in the organizational reality, ‘out there,’ waiting to ‘be collected’ (p. 18). The third type of narrative organizational research, and that which is most relevant to the present study, is *organizing as narration*. This type of research “accentuates the process of story-telling as the never-ending construction of meaning in organizations” (p. 18) and understands narrative to be the fundamental metaphor for human experience and communication. This type of research is consistent with Bruner’s (1985, 1991) assumptions regarding narrative cognition, and Ricoeur’s theory of narrative experience. Further, this tradition encapsulates Fisher’s narrative paradigm in communication, Mumby’s work on organizational narratives, and Clair’s work on narratives and the postmodern dialectic.

In his foundational work on narrative, Mumby (1987) extends organizational research on the role of organizational members’ social activity in the construction of organizational reality. Specifically, Mumby argues that organizational members participate in the legitimation and

sedimentation of such realities through storytelling. Organizational narratives, according to Mumby (1987), “can be conceived as much more than simply a vehicle for diffusing information in an organization” (p. 118). Rather, such narratives are “material social practices by means of which ideological meaning formations are produced, maintained, and reproduced” (p. 118). This assertion relies on the basic assumptions about discourse, knowledge, and power described earlier in this chapter. Specifically, Mumby’s work on narratives assumes that knowledge is constituted by and through discourse which serves some interests over others. Narratives, according to Mumby (1987), can be understood as discursive, as they are at once products and producers of organizational reality and power structures. Narratives in organizations serve to both legitimate dominant forms of organizational reality and to facilitate *discursive closure*, similar to Laclau and Mouffe’s (1985) concept of *suturing*: “in the sense of restricting the interpretations and meanings that can be attached to organizational activity” (Mumby, 1987, p. 113). In these ways, members’ social activity is constrained, and their agency is limited.

Mumby’s (1987) analysis was not unlike existing organizational research at the time (Conrad, 1983; Giddens, 1984), which held that organizational structure and organizational member interaction are inseparable. Mumby’s (1987) work was novel, however, in that it extended the repertoire of ideological practices within organizations to include storytelling. Dominant narratives, like other forms of dominant discourses, serve to produce and reproduce power structures within organizations; however, narratives are unique in that they are salient and accessible forms of social activity to most, if not all, members of the organizations. Two important implications arise from this assertion. First, despite the general accessibility of storytelling among organization members, agency remains constrained. In other words, although organization members have access to storytelling as a social action, there exists a limited number of available

narratives to share. In this way, organization members may unintentionally exercise power and reproduce power structures through their storytelling, given that available narratives may reflect taken-for-granted truths about organizational reality. Second, however, this accessibility also opens the possibility for resistance among organization members. While “narratives ‘address’ readers/listeners by creating a ‘fit’ between the narrative and the individual's world—as-experienced...such a fit is by no means perfect” (p. 114). Mumby (1987) writes: “this margin of difference between narrative and the reader/listener translates into a tension between what is highlighted (present) and what is hidden (absent)” (p. 114). The gap between told narratives and lived-experience provides space for the telling of counter-narratives, which have the power to influence interpretations of organizational reality and discourse and serve as a means by which organizational power structures may be disrupted.

Clair (1993, 1994, Clair et al., 1996, Clair et al., 2014, Clair et al., 2016) has extended Mumby's and Fisher's work on narrative. Like Mumby, Clair understands that deep meaning is embedded in organizational narratives, and that narratives, as part of organizational “meaning systems,” often “create and perpetuate dominant interests” and, therefore, serve a hegemonic function (Clair, 1993, p. 114). Specifically, her work has examined hegemony and the patriarchy, and has considered the role of narratives – personal, public, private, and hidden – in the hegemonic reproduction of knowledge about sexual harassment. Clair (1993) examines the roles of both sequestered stories themselves, those “that are set apart from the mainstream” (p. 114), and specific sequestering strategies used by individuals, in the (re)production of hegemonic structures. Her analysis reveals the complex and deeply ideological nature of sexual harassment and its negotiation, and the ways in which subjugated groups may participate in their own oppression.

Clair (1994) extends these conclusions in her theorizing of the postmodern dialectic and resistance/oppression. This is a distinctly postmodern frame for understanding the perpetuation of power structures in organizations and society, given that it conceptualizes resistance and oppression as self-contained opposites rather than bifurcated concepts. Although narratives may serve to perpetuate dominant interests, as illustrated by Clair (1993, 1994), they may also serve to challenge existing knowledge or resist hegemonic oppression. Clair suggests that narratives serve not only “to organize our life experience” (1996, p. 242) or “to provide organizational members with a sense of ‘reality’” (1993, p. 131) but also “to teach” (1996, p. 242). Clair (1996) specifically invokes feminist pedagogy – a pedagogical style which “encourages people to speak out and learn from one another in an open and non-patriarchal environment” (p. 244) – to illustrate how narratives may offer applied solutions for challenging patriarchal behavior, in this case “reducing sexual harassment” (p. 241). She argues that personal narratives, case studies, and collective stories “may speak and teach in concert” with one another as acts of resistance (p. 248).

Fisher, Mumby, and Clair have contributed to a rich literature on the role of narratives as discourse in the production of knowledge and reproduction of ideological social structures. Postmodern theory inherently speaks to the ways in which the body is implicated in these processes; however, neither Fisher, Mumby, nor Clair centers the body as the primary phenomenon of interest in their work. There does exist a vast literature on embodiment and embodied knowledge within the field of organizational communication. Specifically, Ellingson (e.g., Ellingson, 2006; 2009a; 2009b) and Harter (e.g., Harter, 2009, 2019; Harter et al., 2005; Harter et al., 2020;) have explored the nature of embodied lived experiences and have engaged closely with narrative theory and methodology. Such work has demonstrated the ways in which community and organization members experience their bodies as discursive constructions, and further, how folks come to accept

or challenge the structures which have constructed them in such a way. Although this scholarship centers the body as its primary phenomenon of study and considers the narrative qualities of embodied experience, and often problematizes such experience as being the product of discursive construction, it has yet to fully examine the ways in which the body produces organizational knowledge and power.

To summarize, narrative organizational scholars have argued for and illustrated the discursive and material power of narratives, bodies, and body stories in the process of knowledge production. Further, from a postmodern organizational standpoint, embodied experience and sensemaking has been understood as narrative in nature, as it occurs in time and space, and involves engagement with memory (past), attention (present), and expectation (future). It is understood that bodies are “written upon” by stories (Keen, 1993, p. 28), and that bodies are *written into* stories. Bodies as discursive entities are at once products and producers of cultural knowledge and power; they are *storied* and *storying*. Importantly, however, the work reviewed here, and the emerging and ongoing scholarship on narratives and embodiment in organizational communication, has not yet fully demonstrated the ways in which the body is implicated in the production of knowledge and power. Further, the scholarship reviewed here largely relies on Frank’s (1995) theoretical assumption that the body “must” be spoken for (p. 2). Specifically, Frank (1995) suggests that although the body “is certainly not mute... it is inarticulate” (p. 2). He argues that, in order for body stories to be told, people must impose language on the body. This imposition presents a problem for postmodern theory, as treating the body as a *thing* inevitably invokes modernist ideas of a Cartesian split between mind and body: “the body becomes an object...another cultural artifact to be described” (p. 27). In this way, although it is understood how bodies are *products* of organizational stories, it remains unclear how bodies *produce*

organizational stories, and therefore knowledge and power. Put simply, it remains unclear how bodies themselves *speak*.

Frank recognizes this problem, clarifying that “the mind does not rest above the body but is diffused throughout it” (p. 2). Frank’s proposed solution to this problem is that people must listen for the body in those stories told about it: they must “hear the body speaking in them” (p. 27). Frank (1995) suggests that the body’s stories, despite being transposed through the mind’s language, come out of a physical body and therefore contain the voice of the body. He writes: “the voice speaks the mind and expresses the spirit, but it is also a physical organ of the body” (p. xx). In this way, Frank (1995) suggests that the use of the body (here, the vocal cords and speech organs) to tell the stories of the body allows the body itself to be heard, if recipients attend to listening for it. Certainly, this is an important point, and one which has established Frank’s (1995) work as foundational in the study of bodies. However, it does rely on the assumption that “voices” – not bodies – “tell stories” (p. 7). Frank (1995) himself admits that the communication of the body “transcends the verbal...The communion of bodies involves a communication of recognition...Bodies commune in touch, in tone, in facial expression and gestural attitude, and in breath” (p. 49). However, he insists that “no satisfactory solution has been found to avoid” reducing the body to a thing that is described (p. 27).

This project introduces the concept of *embodied narration*, which understands the body as the medium of its own story. Embodied narration refers to the expression of the body’s stories through the body itself, rather than through language imposed on it. To invoke McLuhan (1964), who famously contended that “the medium is the message,” this project argues that *the body is the story*. The alternative to Frank’s (1995) *speaking for the body* can be found in embodied narration: in allowing the body to speak for itself through embodied action and practice. In this way, bodies

themselves can be understood as participants in the production, reproduction, and resistance of knowledge and power. The remainder of this chapter will be dedicated to further explicating embodied narration from a theoretical standpoint, situating embodied narration within a specific context, and proposing the guiding research questions for the present study.¹

Embodied Narration: From Theory to Practice

The main contribution of the present study is the theoretical development and critical examination of a new concept: *embodied narration*. Embodied narration refers to *the expression of the body's stories (and, therefore, the expression of knowledge and power) through the body without the imposition of the spoken or written word*. Put simply, embodied narration understands the body *as story*, and bodily practice *as storytelling*. Embodied narration is a daily organizational

¹ Importantly, alternative theoretical approaches may have been applied to study embodied narration. For example, in addition to the postmodern narrative framework introduced, developed, and presented here, this study may have alternatively employed new materialism, phenomenology, affect theory, rhetorical theories, and/or performance-based theories. The postmodern narrative framework proved to be the best fit, given that postmodernism provides the language with which to conceptualize the body as power/knowledge manifest, and to understand the possibilities for resistance within oppressive power/knowledge organizations. Although other scholars have used phenomenology to address questions related to the essence of distance running experience (e.g., Allen-Collinson, 2013a; 2013b; Allen-Collinson & Hockey, 2009; 2011; 2015; Hockey & Allen-Collinson, 2016), this study was not primarily concerned with understanding the specific sensory and/or affective experiences of distance running; therefore, phenomenology was not the best fit for this project. Further, although other scholars have employed rhetorical or performance-based theories to address questions related to the intentional use of the body to attend to rhetorical situations and other persuasive goals in sport and beyond (e.g., Chávez, 2018; Cramer, 2019; Davis et al., 2018; Kurtz, 2019), this study understands the body to produce knowledge even in the absence of conscious or inherently persuasive intent; therefore, rhetorical and performance theories were not the best fit for this project.

New materialism may appear to be a particularly appropriate theoretical framework for studying embodied narration and the role of the body in processes of knowledge production: first, because this framework is critical of the privilege given to discourse over material actors in processes of knowledge production; and second, because it suggests that human and non-human actors alike participate in such processes (Sencindiver, 2019). However, the postmodern narrative framework remains the best fit for at least one reason. This project understands discourse – including material forms – to be inherently communicative and socially constructed (Blumer, 1966), if not necessarily linguistic. New materialism, on the other hand, assumes that discourse *is* inherently linguistic, and therefore material or somatic realities *are not discourse*, but something else (Sencindiver, 2019). Although new materialism offers great possibilities for understanding the ways by which material entities – human and/or non-human – exist as both products and producers of situated knowledge, the dichotomy between discourse and material realities assumed by new materialism is inconsistent with the assumptions of embodied narration, and thus, makes new materialism an insufficient fit for the present study.

practice that is discursive and narrative in nature: at once a *product* and *producer* of organizational knowledge and power, situated culturally and historically, grounded in the material reality of time and space, and consistent with narrative forms of knowledge and reasoning. This practice may be active (e.g., intentional use of one's body for a desired organizational purpose) or passive (e.g., unconscious or unintentional organizational embodiment); it may be employed to tell a specific story (or specific stories) which reflect(s), reproduce(s) or resist(s) organizational knowledge or power structures, or it may operate outside of organizational awareness. In either case, embodied narration may be enacted by docile bodies and may produce and reproduce additional docile bodies (Foucault, 1975). This is not to say that all embodied narration is clandestine or insidious – rather, such bodily practice may simply be so embedded in organizational reality that it becomes taken for granted as *truth* or *the way of things*. It is important to note, too, that, despite Mumby's (1994) assertion that there is no possibility for ideology-free discourse or practice, not all bodies are docile bodies. Therefore, embodied narration – whether passive or active – may run counter to taken-for-granted organizational truths and may serve to resist organizational power structures.

It is very important to note that the outcome of embodied narration relies on how it is received. In order for embodied narration to participate in processes of knowledge production, it must be consumed, interpreted through the lens of existing organizational knowledge, and reconfigured, so as to enter back into the discursive field and make any difference at all. To return to Ricoeur (1984), “the process of composition, of configuration, is not completed in the text but in the reader and, under this condition, makes possible the reconfiguration of life by narrative” (p. 26). Certainly, cultural preunderstanding (Ricoeur, 1984) may allow for an interpretation which aligns with existing organizational knowledge. However, even in the presence of preunderstanding, there is always the possibility of misinterpretation, misrepresentation, or misuse of the body's

stories. Further, bodies may be unreliable (or uncoordinated) narrators, poorly executing active embodied narration, or passively stumbling through disjointed organizational practices which do not meet the basic requirements of narrative rationality (i.e., narrative fidelity and narrative probability) (Fisher, 1984). Importantly, however, the intentions of the embodied narrator matter very little in processes of knowledge production. As Ricoeur notes, “it is the reader, almost abandoned by the work, who carries the burden of emplotment” (1984, p. 77)

Reader, here, is a bit of a misnomer, given that embodied narration occurs in the absence of the written word. *Listener*, too, implies the use of spoken language, and is therefore not an appropriate label. Instead, this project will employ the term *spectator* to refer to those organizational members who consume acts of embodied narration – a term used by Ricoeur himself (1984, pp. 46, 48). A full conceptualization of spectatorship and explication of this process is beyond the scope of this project. After all, the purpose of this project is to examine *how the story is told* rather than *how the story is consumed*. Nevertheless, such an examination necessitates an understanding of who the reader is, as well as her situated interpretation of the embodied narration of her peers. Given that the central premise of this theory of embodied narration is that the storyteller – the *embodied narrator* – does not articulate her story with language and given the spectator’s essential role in the configuration and reconfiguration of the storyteller’s narrative, it is through the spectator’s eyes that embodied narration must be examined. However, not just anyone can be a spectator to embodied narration. Because embodied narration is an organizational practice, it can only be interpreted through the lens of its specific and situated cultural reality. It takes much more than a simple looking to be a spectator – the spectator must be an organization member or cultural insider. Only someone who has access to the cultural preunderstanding in

which the embodied narrative itself is grounded has the ability to configure and reconfigure its plot, and ultimately reproduce or challenge existing knowledge and power (Figure 3).

In order to move from theory to practice, this project will need to examine embodied narration within a specific, meaningful context. This project will examine embodied narration within the context of distance running. Distance running is an appropriate context in which to study these phenomena for several reasons. Arguably the most relevant reason to examine these phenomena within distance running is that the sport itself can be understood as an organization. Sports sociologists and sports studies scholars in particular have long understood distance running to be a social world (Unruh, 1980), and have used a social world perspective (Strauss, 1978) to identify and explore unique organizational practice within it (e.g., Bridel et al., 2015; Cubizolles et al., 2018; Shipway et al., 2013; Yair, 1990; 1992). In these ways, distance running can be understood as an organizing context: one in which practices are “ordered across time and space” (Giddens, 1984, p. 2) and reflect and reify power/knowledge.

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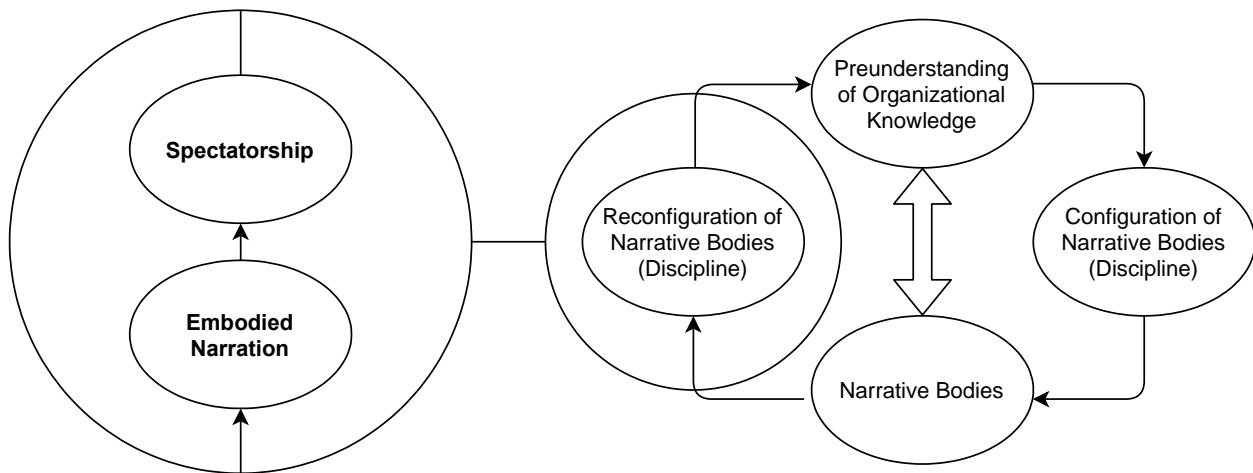


Figure 3: Embodied Narration in Processes of Knowledge Production

Note: This figure integrates postmodern organizing understandings of the co-constitution of power/knowledge and the body (Foucault, 1975; 1976; Giddens, 1984; Lyotard, 1979; Mumby, 1994) with Ricoeur’s (1984) theory of three-fold mimesis to illustrate the role of embodied narration and spectatorship in processes of knowledge production.

Importantly, extensive critical and postmodern research emerging from sports sociology and sports studies has revealed the existence of salient hegemonic discourses within the organizing context of distance running at the micro– and macro–level, including those related to gender and sexuality (e.g., Bridel, 2006; Bridel & Rail, 2007; Hanold, 2010), race (e.g., Smith–Tran, 2020; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Walton & Butryn, 2006), class (e.g., Abbas, 2004), age (e.g., Dionigi, 2006; Ronkainen & Ryba, 2012; Tulle, 2007) and body type/size (e.g., Chase, 2008) among others. Narrative research in this context has also identified salient narratives within the context of distance running which serve a discursive function. For example, the *performance narrative*, defined by Douglas and Carless (2006) as “a dominant narrative that says success in sport depends on single minded dedication and focus” (p. 14), has been found to be present among

both male and female distance runners (e.g., Busanich et al., 2012, 2014). This research provides support for the ways in which such oppressive discourses become embedded in bodies – in other words, the ways in which power/knowledge *produce* bodies. This study builds upon such work to consider the ways in which bodies *produce* power/knowledge.

Finally, distance running – like other organizations – involves embodied practice and, importantly, the surveillance and spectatorship of such practice. To return to Foucault's (1975) conceptualization of power/knowledge and Mumby's (1987) work on organizational practice, organizational knowledge is constructed, and power is produced and reproduced through the disciplinary mechanism of surveillance. The sports studies literature suggests that, within the organizing context of distance running, this gaze is turned upon distance runners, and upon oneself, resulting in the production of docile bodies and organizational knowledge about bodies, docile or otherwise (e.g., Bridel & Rail, 2017; Denison, 2010; Denison & Mills, 2014; Denison et al., 2015; Markula, 2003; 2004; Markula-Denison & Pringle, 2007). Further, to return to Ricoeur's (1984) theorizing of narrative experience, the reading or *spectating* of narratives is understood to be an important component of narrative knowledge production. Here, it is in the *spectating* of the narrative (body) that, to use Ricoeur's language, "the traversal of mimesis reaches its fulfilment" (p. 71). In other words, "the mimetic activity does not reach its intended term through the dynamism of the poetic text alone. It also requires a spectator" (p. 46). Although past research has not fully explored the role of such spectatorship in processes of knowledge production, the literature provides evidence that such spectatorship is prevalent (e.g., Godoy-Pressland, 2016; Mwaniki, 2017; Wright et al., 2006), making this an appropriate organizational context in which to examine embodied narration.

Two prominent bodies of work emerging from the interdisciplinary field of sports studies may provide insight into the ways that distance running bodies are bound up in processes of knowledge production, and importantly, the impact of existing power/knowledge structures on distance running bodies. First, the literature suggests there exists a salient narrative within the organizing context of distance running known as the *performance narrative*. The performance narrative has been described as “a story of single-minded dedication to sport performance to the exclusion of other areas of life and self,” and suggests that athletic achievement is the ultimate measure of self-worth for an athlete (Douglas & Carless, 2009, p. 215). This narrative manifests through explicit communication (Busanich et al., 2012; 2014) as well as through explicit and implicit monitoring, surveillance, and other disciplinary mechanisms which place pressure on athletes to prioritize athletic performance over physical, psychological, and relational well-being (Arthur-Cameselle & Baltzell, 2012; Beckner & Record, 2016; Engel et al., 2003). Troublingly, the performance narrative has been found to be linked to unhealthy behaviors among distance runners, including disordered eating (Busanich et al., 2014; Douglas & Carless, 2006). From a postmodern narrative theoretical perspective, the performance narrative can be understood as reflecting existing power/knowledge and producing bodies in this context. What remains unclear, however, are the ways by which bodies themselves reproduce or reject the performance narrative.

Second, the literature suggests that there exists a salient metaphor within the organizing context of sport generally, and distance running specifically, known as the *machine body metaphor* (e.g., Gleyse, 2013; Segrave, 1997). As an ontological metaphor – one which “projects an entity or substance status on something that does not have that status inherently” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 196), this metaphor understands bodies *as* machines and reflects and reproduces an understanding of bodies as running on fuel, being capable of mechanical failure, and, importantly,

being composed of reproducible or replaceable parts. The metaphor manifests in the language of sport – “boy, the wheels are turning now!”; “I’m a little rusty today”; “We’ve been working on this problem all day, and now we’re running out of steam” (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 197) – as well as in art (Mackenzie, 2005) and in the very theoretical approaches within fields like exercise physiology, which understand the body as an “energy producer and transformer” (e.g., Gleyse, 2013, p. 759). Interestingly, some have applied cyborg theories (Haraway, 1990) to examine the ways by which new technologies continually reflect and reproduce this metaphor, ultimately rendering bodies as cyborgs – neither fully human nor fully machine at the micro-level (e.g., Butryn, 2002; 2003; Fouché, 2012; Howe, 2011). Others have applied macro-level theories to examine the ways by which distance running as an organization operates as a machine, powered by individual, replaceable, bodies as mere cogs or widgets (Conor, 2009). Whether at the micro- or macro- level, conceptualizing bodies in terms of their efficiency not only reproduces oppressive knowledge about the primary value of the body, but also produces conditions for exploitation. Again, from a postmodern perspective, this metaphor in all its manifestations can be understood as reflecting existing power/knowledge and producing bodies in the context of distance running. However, it remains unclear how bodies themselves reproduce or resist the machine body metaphor.

From this work, it is fair to conclude that bodies are implicated in the production and reproduction of knowledge and power in the context of distance running. While this work provides great insight into the ways in which bodies are *produced* by systems of knowledge and power, much is still unknown about the ways in which those bodies in turn *produce*, *reproduce*, or *challenge* such systems. Certainly, history reminds us of the grand, rhetorical gestures some athletes have taken as forms of protest: from Tommie Smith and John Carlos raising their fists in

solidarity with the human rights movement on the podium at the 1968 Olympics, to Colin Kaepernick kneeling in protest of police brutality in 2016. By rising to the rhetorical situation and performing resistance on a public stage through iconic emblemization, these athletes defied organizational expectations, denounced organizational power, and leveraged their greatest organizational asset – their bodies – to resist. Each of these examples also illustrate the potential consequences of such resistance: after all, Smith and Carlos were expelled from the Games, and Kaepernick was released by the San Francisco 49ers after being condemned by public officials and NFL leadership (only to be embraced by the NFL years later, after stripping him of his bodily capital). However, the embodied narration conceptualized here is much more akin to the daily resistance of Aptheker's (1989) interned women than to such public gestures. Although these cases (Smith and Carlos or Kaepernick) could provide a compelling case study, I believe an understanding of the ways in which bodies produce, reproduce, or challenge existing structures of knowledge and power requires exploring the daily lived experiences of athletes from a discursive, rather than rhetorical or performance perspective.

This project asserts that distance runners, as organization members, engage in daily forms of organizational practice which reflect, reproduce, and resist organizational power/knowledge. Again, this project defines an organization as “social practices ordered across time and space” (Giddens, 1983, p. 2). This definition is interpretive in nature, as it understands organizational reality to be “socially constructed through words, symbols, and actions” (Putnam, 1982, p. 200), and specifically centers communication as the core process of organizing (Weick, 1979). Importantly, given the critical postmodern perspective taken in this project, organizations can be understood as being characterized by oppressive power structures (Giddens, 1984) which are “reified through organizational ideology, symbolic expressions of power, and enacted realities of

social domination” (Putnam, 1982, p. 203). In this way, organizations can be understood as disciplines (Mumby, 1996; Foucault, 1975, 1976; Lyotard, 1979), in which communication and communicative practice serve the functions of reproduction or resistance. At practice, in the locker room, on the track or in the field, distance runners – as members within the organizing context of distance running – produce, reproduce, and resist organizational norms, expectations, and possibilities. Further, although distance runners certainly use their voices as members of this organization, they also engage in *embodied narration* – the expression of organizational knowledge through the body without the imposition of the written or spoken word. In this context, embodied narration may participate in the production of knowledge about the role of the body in distance running, what it means to be/have a distance running body, and/or organizational expectations related to bodily behavior and decision-making. Further, embodied narration may produce, reproduce, or resist existing discourses or narratives (like the performance narrative and machine body metaphor), further sedimenting existing organizational power structures or laying the groundwork for radical shifts. These possibilities, among others, will be explored in this study.

Given the theoretical assumptions of postmodernism – including those related to bodies as the site of the exercise of knowledge and power – and the theoretical assumptions of narrative and organizational communication theory – including those related to the narrative nature of the body and the role of narration in the reification of organizational realities – this project proposes the following research questions:

- RQ1: What organizational knowledge exists within the organizing context of distance running?
- RQ2: How are bodies *disciplined* within the organizing context of distance running?
- RQ3: How do bodies *discipline* through embodied narration within the organization context of distance running?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The previous chapter established a postmodern narrative theoretical framework for the current project, reviewed the state of the literature on narratives and the body in the field of organizational communication, and proposed an argument for the discursive role of embodied narration in the production, reproduction, and resistance of knowledge and power, particularly within the context of distance running. The present chapter will review the methodological approach employed to elucidate: (1) existing knowledge within the organizing context of distance running; (2) existing disciplinary mechanisms at play in this context; and ultimately (3) the examples of and possibilities for embodied narration in processes of knowledge production in this context and beyond. Specifically, this project employs photovoice methodology and a grounded theory analytic approach. The sections that follow will review photovoice methodology and describe the specific methodological and analytical procedures taken in this study.

Methodological Approach

This study was primarily concerned with testing the new theoretical concept of *embodied narration* and the postmodern narrative model of knowledge production developed here. Developing a methodological approach to study embodied narration proved to be challenging for two primary reasons. First, given that embodied narration, as theorized here, occurs in the absence of the written and spoken word, this project demanded a methodological approach that did not impose language upon bodies, thus violating the very assumptions of the theory under study. Second, this study was conducted at a time when COVID-19 social-distancing guidelines restricted interaction between researchers and participants, making immersive participant observation and

ethnographic methods – which may have been best suited for this project – an impossibility. Nevertheless, the methodology developed and implemented in this study were appropriate and successful in addressing the research questions of interest, without violating the assumptions of the theory.

Specifically, this project employed photovoice methodology – a participatory research methodology which places cameras in the hands of community members to “enable them to act as recorders” in their own communities (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 369). Developed and first implemented by Wang and Burris (1994, 1997), photovoice “uses the immediacy of the visual image to furnish evidence and promote an effective, participatory means of sharing expertise and knowledge” (p. 369). Despite being originally conceptualized and employed as a method for conducting needs-assessment and evaluation, photovoice is “highly flexible and can be adapted to specific participatory goals, different groups and communities, and distinct public health issues” (p. 370). In fact, photovoice has been employed by a variety of communication researchers exploring a wide range of topics including food insecurity (e.g., Dougherty et al., 2018; Dutta et al., 2013), minority experiences (e.g., Mark, 2019; Van Oss et al., 2014) and illness (e.g., Scârnci-Domnișoru, 2017).

Photovoice methodology is grounded in documentary photography and feminist theorizing. Certainly, documentary photography has long been understood as a “robust form of communication” (Wang & Burris, 1997), which may be used to shine a light on community conditions and the lives of community members. The sustained and continuing power of the Farm Security Administration photographs commissioned by the United States government during the Great Depression - photographs like Dorothea Lange’s *Migrant Mother* - is evidence enough of the value Western society places on such modes of documentation. Nevertheless, the use of traditional

forms of documentary photography in social scientific research has been critiqued for often reflecting “the interests of the researchers rather than the interests of the participants” (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 371). Such methods not only prioritize the voices of those already in power (typically wealthy, white, male voices), but also sustain patriarchal hierarchies between researcher and participant, perpetuating modernist assumptions that the researcher - not the community member - is the expert (Wang & Burris, 1997).

Photovoice as a feminist photographic method seeks to flip the script by challenging the patriarchal and masculinist assumptions inherent in traditional documentary photography and conceptualizing research subjects as active participants in the creation of visual imagery, rather than simply subjects depicted in a photo. Feminist theorizing, put simply, assumes that community members themselves are best equipped to understand their communities and identify community knowledge and needs (Wang & Burris, 1997). Feminist researchers, particularly of the postmodern variety, are committed to seeking out and amplifying those voices which have historically been silenced, so as not to produce or reproduce hegemonic knowledge and or existing power structures. Feminist researchers also challenge patriarchal assumptions about the relationships between researchers and participants by actively working to reduce the hierarchy between them (Behar, 1997; Harding, 1987). Photovoice methodologies, when employed with care, meet and exceed these feminist expectations by placing cameras in the hands of female and feminized community members and empowering these participants to see themselves as experts on their own lives. Further, “because virtually anyone can learn to use a camera, photovoice may be particularly powerful not only for women but also for workers” and those who have been historically and continue to be marginalized, disenfranchised, or exploited (Wang & Burris, 1997, p. 370). By entrusting community members with the task of representing their communities visually, and by

looking to participants to contextualize and assign meaning to their photographs, photovoice relinquishes researcher power in favor of community voices (Peterson et al., 2010; Ruby, 1991; Yamasaki, 2010).

Despite being a fairly new addition to the repertoire of qualitative research methods in this field, researchers have suggested that “photovoice holds great potential in the communication discipline to see a variety of issues and contexts from a new perspective” (Novak, 2010, p. 292).

Novak (2010) writes:

Photovoice can provide a new methodological twist on virtually any communication context. Ultimately, photovoice can reinvigorate qualitative communication research because it shifts further away from a research structure dominated by the researcher. By involving participants in the research process, photovoice increases participation in the research process with the potential of revealing experiences and situations that can extend disciplinary knowledge. (p. 292)

In addition to democratizing the research process, photovoice offers new possibilities for the collection and analysis of visual data. Because “social science is a discipline traditionally concerned with linguistic text, visual images are ordinarily reduced to illustrative devices, seldom forming any kind of analytical site” (Malherbe et al., 2016, p. 590). However, such a reduction ignores the power of visual knowledge and meaning-making, sacrificing such processes at the altar of...academic communities and their journals (Novak, 2010, p. 293). Malherbe, Suffla, and Seedat (2016) explain:

It is...crucial that visual text is understood as an independent mode of meaning-making. Indeed, if language is an organised set of signs and symbols which fulfil particular, contextually bound functions, images, with their underlying organisation, make use of a number of semiotic resources to convey meaning. In this regard, images contain a visual language which can be read, or analysed. Visuals do not convey more or less knowledge than the written word. Rather, they are able to convey different knowledge, and it is this different knowledge which is largely ignored – and therefore lost – within social science research. (p. 590)

Photovoice methodology offers a remedy to this ongoing conundrum by “[transcending] the (false) binary between visual and verbal communication as images and words work in tandem to tell participants’ stories” (Novak, 2010, p. 308). Given the inherent viscosity of embodied narration, photovoice methodology provides an appropriate and exciting means of data conceptualization, collection, and analysis toward a robust understanding of this communicative phenomenon.

Procedurally, photovoice involves training participants in the photovoice method, facilitating discussion around participant photographs, and analyzing the photographs. The specific content of the participant training will vary widely depending on the population being trained, including their familiarity with and comfort using a camera and taking photographs within their communities (Novak, 2010). However, such training generally involves: (1) describing the goals and timeframe of the study; (2) providing guidance on what to photograph; (3) explaining informed consent and providing guidance on how to obtain it; and (4) providing guidance on how to use the camera, when necessary. Experts in photovoice methodologies encourage researchers new to the method to keep directions broad and simple during these trainings (Novak, 2010), and to withhold judgement stemming from personal bias and aesthetic preferences (Wang & Burris, 1997). The emphasis need not be on quality or style of photographs, but rather on empowering participants to interpret their task in any way they see fit.

After the designated time for creating photographs has passed, the researcher must then facilitate discussion around participant photographs. Depending on the goals of the study, researchers may choose to conduct large or small group discussions, or facilitate in-depth interviews with individual participants (Novak, 2010). Certainly, there are advantages and disadvantages of each approach. For example, although group discussions may spark dialogue and debate among and between community members, community power dynamics may also surface

in a group setting, amplifying the voices of some and silencing others: a widely-recognized limitation of focus group research (e.g., Morgan, 1996). On the other hand, while in-depth interviews may empower participants to share their thoughts more candidly than they would in a group setting, participants in one-on-one discussions do not have the opportunity to share and co-construct meaning with other community members (Wang & Burris, 1997). It falls on the researcher to determine the most appropriate method for facilitating discussion based on the specific goals of the study.

Analysis of photovoice data typically involves three steps: selecting, contextualizing, and codifying. The first step - selecting - refers to the selection of photographs to be analyzed. Given that photovoice is a participatory method, responsibility for photograph selection falls on the participants. As described by Wang and Burris (1997), “so that people can lead the way in discussion, it is they who choose the photographs...they consider most significant” (p. 380). Although the researcher provides basic training to participants during the initial training session, it is up to participants to make critical decisions regarding which photographs to submit and discuss. Importantly, it is up to the researcher to relinquish this control and look to participants as capable and empowered participants during this step (Wagner et al., 2017). The second step - contextualizing - draws on the co-constructed knowledge discussed during the organized group or dyadic discussions. As previously described, the researcher serves as the facilitator during these discussions, but defers to participants to guide the conversation. During this time, researchers create space for participants to provide their insight into the community under study and draw connections between the photographs presented and this community knowledge. The final stage - codifying - involves the identification of themes which emerge from these stories and from other community knowledge shared through discussion and through participant photographs.

The final stage of photovoice analysis is one which necessitates careful consideration. As described previously, photovoice diverges from textocentric methods in that it understands the collection and analysis of visual data not only as legitimate, but as a means of “[giving] voice to participants...in a manner which transcends some of the developmental and linguistic barriers that are often encountered when participants are instructed to make use of linguistic discourse” (Malherbe et al., 2016, p. 594). Nevertheless, photographs produced by participants must be understood as “intersectional discursive sites” (p. 591), as they are tied up in webs of signification that are unique and specific to the context in which they were produced (Malherbe et al., 2016). For this reason, photovoice analysis often begins with a textual analysis of data gathered during group and individual discussions of the culture under study and the photographs produced by participants (examples within the field of communication include Mark, 2019; Peterson et al., 2012). Themes which emerge from such analyses provide the contextual information necessary for a meaningful interpretation of photographs.

This methodological approach proved to be appropriate for the present study because it allowed for the examination of embodied narration without imposing language on bodies and violating the assumptions of embodied narration. Participants were not asked to tell the stories of their own bodies; nor were they asked to tell the stories of the bodies they spectated. Rather, participants as were situated as spectators and tasked with capturing their observations in their photography. These photographs allowed me, the researcher, as well as you, the reader, to spectate remotely and approximate participant observation. Further, these photographs – paired with the knowledge shared during interviews – allowed for a situated interpretation of photographs and the bodies in them. In other words, the knowledge acquired from participant interviews helped me – and will help readers – establish the pre-understanding (Ricouer, 1984) necessary for identifying

the various possible ways by which the bodies captured in photographs engage in embodied narration, reproducing or resisting existing knowledge and power structures.

Study Procedures

Study Participants and Recruitment

Fifteen long distance runners were recruited from within a local running club, a university-sponsored student organization. This organization is open to all students at the university and aims to “foster an open and inclusive environment for runners in the community of all abilities and backgrounds” (organization website). This organization was chosen for two reasons. First, this organization is made up of athletes with unique insight into the context of distance running. As described in Chapter 2, distance running provides an appropriate context in which to study embodied narration, given its operation as an organization (e.g., Bridel et al., 2015; Cubizolles et al., 2018; Shipway et al., 2013; Yair, 1990; 1992) and ideological discipline (e.g., Abbas, 2004; Bridel, 2006; Bridel & Rail, 2007; Chase, 2008; Dionigi, 2006; Hanold, 2010; Ronkainen & Ryba, 2012; Smith–Tran, 2020; Tulle, 2007; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Walton & Butryn, 2006), as well as the surveillance and spectatorship which characterizes it (e.g., Bridel & Rail, 2017; Denison, 2010; Denison & Mills, 2014; Denison et al., 2015; Markula, 2003; 2004; Markula-Denison & Pringle, 2007). Second, this organization provides an accessible, convenient sample, as it is being collected at the local university. Convenience sampling certainly has its limitations, one of which being that “because the subject matter or population being studied is likely to be quite familiar, the researcher might be tempted to generalize beyond this narrow population” (Koerber & McMichael, 2008, p. 463). However, this familiarity also “grants the researcher a level of access to and familiarity with the sample that guarantees a richness of data that could not be

attained if the sample were less familiar, and therefore less convenient to the researcher” (p. 463). Further, the familiarity may actually enhance the embodied portion of the study.

It is important to disclose that my familiarity with the subject matter goes far beyond my experiences as a researcher. In fact, I have been a runner for much of my life. I began running competitively as a high school student athlete and went on to compete as an NCAA track and field athlete as an undergraduate student at Ohio University. Having been a part of an elite team of runners, I have intimate insight into the culture and the language of the sport. Although I am not a member of the organization being studied here, my experience with the sport and my familiarity with the culture and language will reduce the hierarchy between me and study participants. Our shared experience, knowledge, and language will help to facilitate a researcher-participant partnership characterized by mutual understanding and respect: an important goal of postmodern feminist scholarship (e.g., Fontana, 2001). Further, I have experience being a part of an organization in which my body, and the bodies around me, existed as both a product and producer of organizational discourse. I have watched bodies become dangerously small and run brutally fast. I have laid my disciplinary gaze upon the bodies of others and have felt the weight of their gaze upon my own. I am intimately, sometimes painfully, aware of the importance and centrality of the body in such organizational and personal experiences. It will be important to be diligent in my reflexivity, as not to allow my own experiences to color those experiences of my participants. However, I believe my knowledge, experience, and familiarity with an organization of this kind to be an advantage, rather than a hindrance, to data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

To recruit within this organization, I first contacted organization leadership, who kindly provided me access to the organization’s GroupMe - a group text-messaging platform. After familiarizing myself with the platform and the organizational norms around its use, I was granted

permission by organization leadership to post a recruitment announcement in the GroupMe (Appendix A). This announcement provided a description of study goals, participation expectations, my contact information, eligibility requirements, and participant compensation. In order to be eligible to participate, organization members needed only to identify as a current or former competitive distance runner, and be between the ages of 18-25. Organization members who were eligible and interested in participating were encouraged to contact me via email, at which point I provided additional study information (Appendix B), the informed consent form to review and sign (Appendix C), a personalized link to a private DropBox folder, accessible only to me, the primary investigator, and the participant, and a list of available appointment times from which to choose to schedule their initial virtual interview via Zoom. Nineteen organization members responded to the initial recruitment announcement, 15 of whom continued on as participants.

Data Collection

Data collection occurred in two phases: first, as is typical in photovoice projects, participants participated in a virtual semi-structured interview via Zoom. Typically, initial interviews in photovoice projects serve to provide space for: (1) dialogue between community members and researchers regarding the social and cultural context; and (2) photographic training, when necessary (Wang & Burris, 1997). In this project, initial interviews were structured so as to prompt participants to describe the organization of distance running with regard to bodily practice, to provide participants with insight into the communicative phenomena under study, and to provide examples of the types of phenomena participants might choose to photograph (as recommended by Wagner et al., 2016). Given the ubiquity of smartphone cameras among these participants, specific training with regard to operating a camera was unnecessary. It is important that such interviews occur prior to the photography phase of the photovoice project, as they allow the

researcher and the participants to co-construct loose boundaries around the specific phenomena of interest, which ultimately guide participants' approach to their photography, and later, the researcher's follow-up discussion and data analysis.

Table 4: Research Questions and Associated Research Methods

	Research Question	Data Collection Method	Analytic Method
1	What organizational knowledge exists within the organizing context of distance running?	Semi-structured interviews	Grounded theory analysis
2	How are bodies disciplined within the organizing context of distance running?	Semi-structured interviews	Grounded theory analysis
3	How do bodies discipline through embodied narration within the organizing context of distance running?	Semi-structured interviews and photovoice methodology	Grounded theory analysis Presentation of representative participant photographs

Following each initial interview, participants were tasked with taking photographs which they felt represented their organizational realities with regard to bodily practice. Participants were given one month to produce these photographs and submit them to the researcher. After one month, participants participated in a final interview. Typically, final interviews in photovoice projects serve to provide space for: (1) continued dialogue between community members and researchers regarding the social and cultural context; and (2) specific explanations of photographs (Wang & Burris, 1997). In this project, final interviews were structured so as to accomplish both of these goals.

Phase 1: Initial Semi-Structured Interviews

I conducted 15 initial interviews over the course of approximately three months. Before beginning each initial interview, participants were first briefed on the study goals, namely *to*

understand the role of the body in distance running culture and to understand how the body participates in recreating or challenging distance running culture. Participants were then provided with an opportunity to ask any questions about their participation before providing their informed consent by signing the informed consent form. Participants were reminded that their participation was completely voluntary, and that their identity and responses would remain anonymous. I described to participants the steps I would take to ensure their privacy, including the transcription of audio files and the de-identification of the data. Participants were told that they may end the interview at any time, and that they may choose to review and/or revoke any information shared at any point during the interview and still receive compensation. Those who chose to move forward then provided their informed consent and the interview commenced.

Each semi-structured interview was guided by an IRB-approved interview protocol (Appendix D); however, participants were encouraged to discuss anything that came to mind. Participants were first asked to describe the first things that came to mind for them when considering the role of the body in the culture of distance running. Appropriate probes included questions related to how they think about their own distance running body, what they notice about other distance running bodies, and general expectations about distance running bodies. Follow-up questions prompted participants to expand on these initial perceptions, with a focus on *looking* and *seeing*. Examples of such questions include: “What did you observe?”; “What did you learn by watching?”; and “How did it feel to be watched?” Topics discussed by interviewees included but were not limited to: (1) food, fueling, and hydration; (2) body weight, size, and shape; (3) running form and posture; (4) injury, recovery, and cross training; (5) running clothes and accessories; (6) social and mass media engagement; and (7) personality and identity (listed here in no particular order). During each interview, I took copious field notes, which were immediately elaborated into

asides – “brief, reflective bits of analytic writing that succinctly clarify, explain, interpret, or raise questions about some specific happenings or process described in a fieldnote” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 101) – and commentary – “a more elaborate reflection on some specific event or issue” (p. 102) – when appropriate.

Given that the primary phenomenon of interest for this study, namely embodied narration, supposes that organization members need not impose written or spoken language upon their bodies, interviews may appear at first to be an inappropriate method for answering the research questions advanced in Chapter 2. However, as described previously, interviews were appropriate for revealing the locally-produced knowledge which embeds itself in bodies and ultimately guides interpretation of bodies and their practices.

Phase 2: Photovoice

At the conclusion of each interview, I extended an invitation to the participant to participate in phase two of the study. As is consistent with photovoice methodology, I provided a brief participant training, tailored to the specific goals of this study (Novak, 2010). During this time, I reiterated the goals of the study, namely *to understand the role of the body in distance running culture* and *to understand how the body participates in recreating or challenging distance running culture*, and described the photovoice process, including: (1) what to photograph; (2) how to approach photographing subjects of interest; (3) requesting and documenting informed consent of human subjects; and (4) how to submit photographs.

Participants were instructed to photographically capture distance running culture, and specifically, the role of the body in that culture over the course of one month. They were encouraged to capture this culture literally, symbolically, or creatively, taking as many photographs as they felt were appropriate to provide a full picture of distance running culture and

the role of the body within it. Participants were told that they were welcome to take photographs of their own body, or the bodies of others. If they chose to take photographs of others, they were instructed to obtain written consent from their subjects using an IRB-approved photo-release form (Appendix F). Participants were instructed to submit their photographs via their personal and private DropBox folder. Participants were reminded that they may voluntarily discontinue their participation at any time, and that if they chose not to continue, they would receive partial compensation for completing phase one of the study. After one month, I contacted participants via email to check on their progress and schedule an exit interview (Appendix E).

All 15 participants participated in an exit interview approximately one month after their respective initial interview. During each exit interview, as is consistent with photovoice methodology, I facilitated a discussion which allowed participants to reflect on the images they produced (Wang & Burris, 1997). Participants were asked to describe their photovoice experience, with an emphasis on what they chose to photograph, what they felt they were able to capture, and what they felt they were unable to capture. Participants were encouraged to discuss specific photographs and describe the thought process behind these images. After discussing their photographs, participants had the opportunity to share any additional thoughts that had occurred to them over the course of the month, and to ask any final questions they had. Finally, participants were compensated for their time, at which point their participation reached its conclusion.

Data Analysis

Before analysis began, data, signed consent forms, and signed photo release forms were stored securely using the Purdue University Research Repository (PURR), a secure, cloud-based server, and backed-up on a personal, external hard drive which was stored in a locked office accessible only to me. I created a key code which housed participant information including names,

contact information, and participant ID code for re-identification and contact purposes, when appropriate. Next, I transcribed all audio interview recordings verbatim and subsequently destroyed all audio files to protect participant identities. I deidentified textual data by removing all identifiable information (e.g., names, references to specific locations), and I de-identified visual data by blurring identifiable characteristics of individuals in the photos (e.g., faces, identifiable body markings, tattoos). Once all data was de-identified, analysis could begin.

For this project, I employed a grounded theory approach (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). I employed the constant comparative method of grounded theory, which is “concerned with generating and plausibly suggesting (but not provisionally testing) many categories [or] properties about [a] general problem” (p. 101). Glaser and Strauss (1967) argue that this approach can be applied to “any kind of qualitative information;” thus, I used the constant comparative method in my analysis of both textual data (including interview transcripts, asides, and commentary) and photographic data (Table 4). This analytic approach has been used by other scholars employing photovoice in the field of communication, including Mark (2019) and Peterson and colleagues (2012), making it an appropriate approach for the present study.

The constant comparative method is characterized by four stages: (1) comparing incidents applicable to each category; (2) integrating categories and their properties; (3) delimiting the theory; and (4) writing the theory (p. 105). The first stage involves “coding each incident...into as many categories of analysis as possible, as categories emerge or as data emerge that fit an existing category” (p. 105). Importantly, the analyst must compare each incident “with the previous incidents in the same and different groups coded in the same category” (p. 106) – hence the name *constant comparison*. Glaser and Strauss explain:

This constant comparison of the incidents very soon starts to generate theoretical properties of the category. The analyst starts thinking in terms of the full range of types of continua of the category, its dimensions, the conditions under which it is pronounced or minimized, its major consequences, its relation to other categories, and its other properties. (p. 106)

The second stage of the constant comparison method involves “integrating categories and their properties” (p. 108). During this stage, “the constant comparative units change from comparison of incident with incident to comparison of incident with properties of the category that resulted from initial comparisons of incidents” (p. 108). In this way, “the accumulated knowledge pertaining to a property of the category...[starts] to become integrated; that is, related in many different ways, resulting in a unified whole” (p. 109). Put simply, the whole “story” (p. 109) of the data becomes clearer.

The third stage of the constant comparative method involves “delimiting the theory” (p.109). In this stage, “major modifications become fewer and fewer” (p. 110), and analysts are left to “clarify the logic, [take] out non-relevant properties, [integrate] elaborating details,” (p. 110), merge themes when appropriate, and otherwise reduce the data. Put simply, the analyst’s “commitment now allows [her] to cut down the original list of categories for collecting and coding data, according to the present boundaries of [her] theory” (p. 111). At this stage, according to Glaser and Strauss, the analyst becomes aware of the “parsimony of variables” and the “scope in the applicability of the theory” (p. 111). Once the categories become theoretically saturated, the analyst can enter the fourth and final stage: “writing theory” (p. 113), which simply involves reporting on major themes.

In this study, I began by immersing myself in the whole of my data, including textual data (i.e., interview transcripts, asides, and commentary) and photographic data produced by participants. An initial round of coding produced multiple categories at various levels of analysis,

which I organized thematically in preparation for a second round of coding. The second round of coding further clarified the relationships between categories, as relationships between codes and research questions were rendered into sharper relief. Specifically, themes highlighted salient knowledge and disciplinary techniques within the organization of interest and provided insight into the ways in which bodies participate in the reproduction of – or resistance to – existing knowledge/power structures. Identification of these themes allowed me to move toward data reduction and thematic elaboration, ultimately resulting in a final theoretical framework for answering the research questions one, two, and three. Upon completion of the grounded theory analysis, I organized participant photographs by orientation (i.e., landscape or portrait) and general category of photographic content. I then reduced the data by drawing out clear representative images for each general category. One hundred eighty-eight (188) total photographs were reduced to 46 final representative images. These images are presented in Chapter 5, in no particular order and in the absence of the written or spoken word and serve to address research question three, providing specific examples of how bodies might enact embodied narration within the organizing context of distance running.

Conclusion

This chapter details the methodological and analytic strategies undertaken in the present study. Chapters 4 and 5 will provide a detailed report on the results. Specifically, Chapter 4 provides a detailed description of the results of the grounded theory analysis, including the final themes which emerged from this analysis. Chapter 5 will present participant photographs, which will serve to accompany results from Chapter 4. A full discussion of results will follow in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

Chapter 3 introduced the specific methodologies undertaken in this project. The present chapter will report on the results of the grounded theory analysis. Specifically, this chapter presents answers to research questions one, two, and three. To review, the guiding research questions for this study are as follows:

- RQ1: What organizational knowledge exists within the organizing context of distance running?
- RQ2: How are bodies *disciplined* within the organizing context of distance running?
- RQ3: How do bodies *discipline* through embodied narration within the organization context of distance running?

Put simply, this chapter provides a detailed account of organizational knowledge and disciplinary techniques in the context of distance running, including its postmodern characteristics, as well as a discussion of spectatorship and embodied narration in this context.

A few important notes must be made on the presentation of results and conclusions drawn regarding embodied narration. First, to reiterate, it was vitally important that I, the researcher, developed a methodological approach that did not impose language upon bodies, as this would violate the very assumptions of embodied narration. I achieved this by situating my participants as spectators, rather than as embodied narrators themselves. At no point did participants impose language upon their own bodies or upon the bodies of others; rather, participants described – and captured photographically – their observations as spectators within the organizing context of distance running.

It was equally important that I developed a writing and reporting approach that similarly did not impose language upon bodies. The written report of organizational knowledge and

disciplinary techniques employed within the organizing context of distance running presented in this chapter achieves this goal, as it does not report on the body stories of embodied narrators, but rather on the experiences of spectators, including their observations within this context. Again, at no point did participants tell the stories of their own bodies or the bodies of those they spectate. Rather, their descriptions serve only to establish a pre-understanding of organizational knowledge among readers. From a theoretical standpoint, this pre-understanding is a pre-requisite for meaningful spectatorship. Further, participant photographs presented in Chapter 5 are presented in the absence of the written or spoken word, so as to allow the photographs and the bodies depicted in them to speak for themselves. With the pre-understanding achieved by familiarizing oneself with the knowledge presented in this chapter, readers can serve as informed spectators – drawing conclusions about the possibilities of embodied narration in this context.

However, the present chapter also includes a written report on spectatorship *and* a discussion of what this spectatorship says about embodied narration in this context. In fact, a written report on specific examples of embodied narration follows. Importantly, this written report *does not* violate the assumptions of embodied narration for at least two reasons. First, speaking about the process of embodied narration *does not* imply that the process of embodied narration involves speaking (or writing, for that matter). Just as one can speak about the discursive function of silence (e.g., Clair, 1998; Glenn, 2004), so, too, can one speak about the discursive function of silent bodies. Second, this report makes no claims regarding the intent of embodied narrators, or their own understanding of their body's stories and/or engagement with embodied narration. In fact, this report does not tell *any* body stories. Rather, this report seeks to: (1) identify some examples of bodily practice which may operate as embodied narration, producing, reproducing, or resisting organizational power/knowledge; and (2) consider the outcomes or consequences of such

embodied narration. The list of examples presented here is by no means exhaustive and does not represent all (or necessarily *any*) specific experiences of embodied narration. Rather, it is simply meant to ground the present theorizing in concrete examples, if only for the sake of consideration and future study. Further, other spectators or theorists may draw differing conclusions than those drawn here. From a postmodern perspective, however, this multiplicity of possibilities is not a weakness of the theory or of this study, but rather reflect the postmodern nature of human experience.

Organizational Knowledge in Distance Running

Research question one asks: what organizational knowledge exists within the organizing context of distance running? Knowledge within this context can be understood as those taken-for-granted truths which serve to constitute membership criteria, practice, and bodies within the organization of distance running. In many ways, membership criteria, practice, and bodies can be understood as knowledge manifest. For this reason, the present discussion of knowledge will reflect on membership criteria, practice, and bodies in turn (Table 5). Given the inherent relationships between knowledge and power, as well as the postmodern dialectic oppression/resistance, of a discussion of power, oppression, and resistance will follow.

Membership Criteria

Membership criteria in the organization of distance running is primarily characterized by a dedication to organizational goals. This research revealed that there are at least three organizational goals in distance running: (1) to have fun; (2) to be a member of a community; and/or (3) to achieve athletic performance goals. These goals are not mutually exclusive, but rather overlap and compound in a variety of ways.

Table 5: Knowledge and Disciplinary Techniques in Distance Running

Knowledge	Example
Membership Criteria	
<i>Real</i> membership is characterized by <i>good</i> organizational practices and <i>good</i> organizational bodies, as well as dedication to achieving these things.	“There was a lot less of the, ‘oh, I’m only here to do this for,’ say, ‘another sport’...there was a lot more of, ‘I care more about the actual running and my performance,’ and ‘I’m here to be good at this.’”
Practice	
<i>Real</i> practices include those which reflect an emphasis on efficiency, performance over health, and/or on achieving an idealized distance running body.	“The people who, like, claim they’re distance runners, and they are kind of, like, weekend warrior type people where they go and they run maybe, like, every couple of days...I don’t know if it counts.”
Bodies	
<i>Good</i> bodies include those which are efficient, wear clothing/accessories which aid in efficiency, and/or conform to an idealized distance running body	“The idea of the perfect running body aesthetically is very small...there’s that idea of, like, the smaller you are, the less you have to carry around...like, on a mechanical level, theoretically, like, you want to be kind of small.”
Disciplinary Technique	Example
Explicit talk	
Distance running practices and bodies are disciplined through the explicit talk around topics including but not limited to weight, fueling, specific organizational practices, clothing, etc.	“Their coach would tell them, oh, like, ‘you need to be doing this exactly’ and, like, ‘you need to be eating this’...like, ‘you need to eat less’ or ‘you need to control more.’”
Surveillance	
Distance running practices and bodies are disciplined through overt and/or covert surveillance techniques including but not limited to monitoring fueling practices, running practices, weight, etc.	“I had a lot of pressure on me...my coach just always, like, looked to me, made sure I was going what I was supposed to be doing, so I don’t think there was ever a day where I wimped out or didn’t do something. I would have probably practiced as hard as I could until I passed out.”
Self-surveillance	
Distance running practices and bodies are disciplined through self-surveillance, in which individuals turn their gaze inward to monitoring fueling practices, running practices, weight, etc.	“We all really, really, really wanted to do well. So I feel like, effort wise, we were hitting it hard whether coach was there or not...We wanted to be good, so whether coach was there or not, it didn’t matter to us.”

Note: These results reflect experiences of distance runners whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement.

First, many distance runners join this organization simply to have fun and/or relieve stress. This might be surprising, as distance running specifically, and endurance training generally, can be mentally and physically grueling. However, the difficulty of the practices involved appears to be part of the appeal of being a member of this organization. In fact, pain is generally expected. One participant said: “No matter how fast you get, it’s going to hurt when you race. No matter how fast you get, it’s going to hurt when you work out. Races, working out, stuff like that, it’s supposed to hurt.” Another participant explained:

“It’s the same reason that people sign up to do, like, tough mudders and spartan races, you know? Like, you’re going to be hurting. You’re going to be cold. You’re going to be hungry. And you’re going to be doing these long distance races, but for some reason you want to do it. You want the challenge, you know?”

For some, the difficulty of the organizational practice is fun in and of itself. For example, one participant explained:

“You know, we meet at 5:30 in the morning. And that sounds crazy, like, so many people would be like, no way. But for some reason, that just...just having the motivation, like, ‘wake up, do work.’ You get...you know, you accomplish things. So yeah, it’s work. But at the same time, you feel good afterwards. You enjoy it. I think so.”

Further, these practices appear to provide even greater satisfaction and additional rewards when completed with other distance runners. First, completing organizational practices alongside another distance runner may distract from the difficulty of the task at hand. One participant explained: “It’s a little bit easier to work hard [when] you’re working with a team and a coach pushing you.” Additionally, completing organizational practices together facilitates the development of community and close relationships. These relationships, according to one participant, are built primarily on the “mutual understanding of the pain and growth that comes with running”. One participant put it this way: “Running with other people forms a pretty good

bond because you're both kind of struggling in something together and trying to challenge and push each other. So that helps form friendships and stuff." Another participant shared a similar sentiment: "The people you run with end up being your friend...like, those guys are my brothers to some extent. They'd do anything for me, and I'd do anything for them. They have my back, I have their backs, and I know I can depend on them." Clearly, those whose organizational goals are related to having fun often also reap the rewards of community.

Further, for those whose primary goals are specifically related to being a member of a community, such camaraderie which is typical of this organization aids in the achievement of that goal. For these members, the organizational practices themselves may not be inherently enjoyable, but such practice is a means to an end. Put another way, while it is clear that organizational practices facilitate the development of relationships, these relationships in turn facilitate organizational practices. One participant explained:

"There have been times where I've fallen out of love with running, but I think what brings me back every time is the people. Like, all of my friends are mainly runners, and if I have friends that aren't runners, I'm always like, you should try running! Just because, like, there is that camaraderie, and there's something about it that...I don't know, I've never really found people that I don't necessarily like that are runners. I feel like people that are running, it's like a good breed of people."

It is clear that, even among those who do not find joy in the organizational practice itself, being a member of this organization is rewarding to members.

To summarize thus far, among those whose primary goals are related to having fun or being a part of the community, membership criteria is constituted in such a way that is fairly inclusive. For these members, the focus is on having fun and building relationships, with very little focus on athletic performance or achievement. One participant explained: "You can run whatever distance,

whatever speed, and if you're a runner, you're in the culture. You're in the community and we're all kind of really supportive."

While some join this organization simply to have fun or be a part of a community, others have the additional goal of achieving some sort of athletic performance-related goal. These members, like those mentioned above, tend to enjoy the organizational practices associated with membership, and find community among other distance runners. These organizational members also find satisfaction in racing and achieving new things. Sometimes, satisfaction is found in individual success. One participant put it this way:

"I really like shocking myself with what I can do...I never would have thought I would run the marathon, and then I ran the marathon. And I was like, okay, it's going to be a one and done type of thing, just to say I did it. And now I'm like, okay, I want to do it again. I want to do it faster...or I want to go try something else where it's, you know, a hilly terrain, you're by yourself, you're in the desert or something. I want to just find different ways where I'm like, yeah I know I can do it, but it's like...wow, I did that."

Another participant explained:

"When you're finished, I feel like that's just as satisfying. To be able to say I did this today. And I think that's, like, part of my motivation and stuff, is to be like, I did this, and I can say I did it. That kind of makes me, like, push harder and stuff and do, like, crazier things. It's all at the end of the day, it's just to brag about it. It's not like you brag to normal people about it, it's just so that you have the personal satisfaction of knowing, like, oh, I did that."

In addition to individual success, some distance runners find satisfaction in team-level success.

One participant said:

"One important part is...that team aspect, where you're really looking to interact with people and get those close relationships that we all need because, I mean, we're humans, we're social beings, and if you're working with a team to meet some big goal like a state championship or something, it's really special."

It is clear that, in addition to that satisfaction obtained through the practices and community itself, these members also find satisfaction in achieving individual and team-level performance goals.

Although membership is fairly inclusive among those whose goals are unrelated to athletic performance, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic performance or achievement, membership is sometimes constituted in a way that is more exclusive. Certainly, there are those who do not draw distinctions between membership and goals. For example, one participant explained:

“Some people just go there to make friends, that social aspect. They’re not looking to compete at nationals in a competitive spot or anything, but then there’s other people who really want to dedicate themselves, maybe try to get on the Division 1 team or whatever division school they’re going to, and that’s great too, you know. It’s just a different perspective.”

However, there are others who make distinctions between those who are constituted as *real* distance runners, and those who are not, as defined by their goals and their practice. Participants used the terms hobby jogger and weekend warrior to describe those who may not be considered to be real members of the organization and explained that “there are a lot of people that will look down on a casual runner that’s...just kind of out there to enjoy themselves”. One participant said:

“There’s kind of, maybe a bit of an air of superiority around those kinds of people that will look down on someone that doesn’t care as much. I feel like there’s a lot of people that I’d say, like, expect anyone who runs to kind of be, like, all in on running...and don’t necessarily consider people who just run for fun every once in a while as, like, a *runner*.”

One participant who appeared to hold this belief shared:

“The people who, like, claim they’re distance runners, and they are kind of, like, weekend warrior type people where they go and they run maybe, like, every couple days or something...I don’t know...Like, I don’t know if it counts. It technically is, like, distance running, but it’s like an offset of what I described. I just think that’s a different type of experience.”

Among those whose goals are related to athletic achievement, this exclusivity is understood as simultaneously good *and* bad. One participant explained the benefits, saying: “it’s good because it allows people that really care about running to kind of get a deeper kind of connection to it. Really keeps it tight-knit, and in a community.” However, this participant went on to describe the possible detriments of exclusivity:

“When those same people complain about how people don’t care about track and field and people only care about watching during the Olympics and nobody cares about the fact that the US Olympic trials are on, well, you wonder why. It’s because...there’s no real effort to really expand that audience, that group, because then it’s letting in a bunch of people that don’t care as much, and it kind of dilutes it for the people that care a lot.”

Interestingly, the camaraderie that is generally understood as a benefit to organizational members may also play a role in exclusion. One participant said: “we were so tight knit, and everybody was best friends with everybody else on the team, and there wasn’t really a way to, like, get into our group unless you were a runner.” Another put it this way: “I’d say there is a bit of an intimidation gatekeeping factor to people who are kind of new to it that don’t necessarily understand that...there are a lot of people that will look down on, say, a casual runner that’s not exactly looking to break their mile PR in a month.” It is clear that this exclusivity is not revered among all members; nevertheless, the distinction between *real* and *unreal* distance runners plays an important role in the production of knowledge within this organizing context.

Among those who make this distinction, *real* membership is characterized not just by the completion of organizational practices, but a *choice* to do so. One participant put it this way:

“There was a lot less of the, ‘oh, I’m only here to do this for’, say, ‘another sport’; ‘I’m only here to sprint so I can say that I’m on the track team and get recruited for football,’ and there was a lot more of, ‘I care more about the actual running and my performance,’ and ‘I’m here to be good at this,’ not ‘I’m here to pass a couple of hours after school everyday.’”

This emphasis on *choice* to participate reveals a tension with regard to membership. Because participation is understood as voluntary, but *real* membership demands a commitment to organizational practices even when they are unenjoyable, member agency is constrained once the initial choice is made. In other words, once individuals commit to being a *real* member of this organization, participation in organizational practices becomes non-negotiable if they are to continue as *real* members of the organization. One participant said this:

“There was kind of an expectation of you’re on this team because you want to be here and you want to compete and you care about your performance, so you’re going to listen to what the coach says, unless you’re injured, in which case you’re going to talk to the coach.”

It is clear that, among those who make distinctions between *real* and *unreal* members, choice not only characterizes membership, but constrains participants’ agency.

Additionally, among those who make this distinction, *real* membership is characterized by placing value on performance, and centering performance-related goals in their lives. One participant explained: “If you’re a cross country runner, you’re first and foremost a cross country runner.” As with the emphasis on choice, as described above, this emphasis on performance further constrains agency, as *real* members of the organization are expected to complete organizational practices *even when* those practices are detrimental to other aspects of their life. In fact, some participants cited a “need” to run, which reflects such constraints. One participant said: “Mentally, I can’t take that long off. Like no. I need to run. I absolutely can’t.” Another put it this way: “I know that like, for myself, I rarely would even take any off season...I think even after the marathon I only took a week off...I would be like, okay, I need to just go do one mile. Like, I can’t not do this.” A third said this: “Between seasons, there is, like, a week or two where the coach has you take a lot of time off...I hate those weeks so much. I just have this burning fire in my heart, I’m

like, oh my gosh, I need to run. I'm so excited for this, like, let's just do this." Put simply, given that *real* members *chose* to commit themselves to the goal of athletic performance, the priority of performance and the completion of organizational practices in the name of performance are non-negotiable, particularly if they are to continue as *real* members of the organization. In this way, organizational practices are constructed as optional *and* not optional.

Practice.

Organizational practices which members engage in to achieve organizational goals include: (1) running workouts; (2) cross-training or supplemental workouts; (3) fueling; and (4) rest and recovery. When it comes to cross-training or supplemental workouts, practices may involve: (1) warming up or cooling down before or after a running workout; (2) weight or strength training; or (3) low-impact exercise like biking or swimming. Fueling may involve: (1) eating; (2) hydrating; or (3) taking supplements. Rest and recovery may involve: (1) stretching; (2) using ice baths or hot tubs; (3) getting enough sleep; and (4) seeing a medical professional. These categories of practices are not mutually exclusive but do provide a general sense of the bodily practices undertaken in this organizing context.

Importantly, distance runners understand that these organizational practices are inherently challenging and, at times, painful. One participant put it this way:

"As runners, I feel like we are really, really hard on our bodies...I know we're not necessarily getting beat up like football players or anything like that, but you know, if you're going out and doing 10, 12-mile long runs, your knees and your hips hurt afterwards...our feet, too. At least mine are trashed."

Another put it simply: "You're not there for fun. You're there to better yourself."

Further, distance runners understand that these organizational practices are time consuming, and that achievement of athletic goals in particular necessitates mindfulness and commitment to time management. One participant put it this way:

“You have to be so in tune with who you are, and you have to manage your time because your day kind of revolves around, when do I want to go on my run? And not a lot of people have to think about that. And like, what are you eating, because when are you going on your run? And how much are you drinking, because when are you going on your run?...It makes you be, like, more conscious about yourself and how you’re spending your day.”

Unsurprisingly from a postmodern organizational perspective, there exist a number of tensions within this organization which guide organizational practice. Among those whose primary goals are related to achieving athletic performance goals, there exists a tension between performance and health. Specifically, organizational members must navigate their organizational tasks in such a way that allows them to perform optimally. One participant put it simply: “My high school coach used to say if you’re a part time runner, you’re full-time injured.”

With regard to the tension between health and performance, many spoke to the challenges of avoiding injury while chasing performance-related goals. One participant said: “New runners, they don’t really know how much to push themselves, and so I think a lot of people struggle with pushing themselves too hard and then getting injured.” Another shared this sentiment:

“There’s a very fine line between being super over-cautious and not risking an injury and being a little greedy and trying to get too much out of a sore leg. I feel like I’ve done a better job managing that and realizing, okay, I should maybe throw in an off day here where I just take a day off and rest for a little bit before I get back into running.”

Importantly, however, given the value placed on performance, particularly among those whose goals are related to athletic achievement, agency is constrained. In particular, distance runners may feel pressure to prioritize performance over health. One participant said: “It’s all about listening to

your body. It's not always easy, right? My interest isn't always how my body feels, it's about getting medals and running fast and having a good season." Another put it simply: "Treat your body as a temple, so that you can run fast."

Managing this tension, and in particular avoiding injury, is understood as a personal responsibility. One participant explained: "I think that's, like, a personal responsibility to, like, know when to stop yourself and be like, guys, eight miles is too much for me today, I'm going to do six. And like, it's not chickening out if you're trying to be smart with it." Another said this:

"In distance running in general, a lot of people get hurt, and I think that's because they don't take proper care of their bodies. Whether it's, like, stretching or eating right...I think a lot of people's downfall with the sport comes down to, like, a lack of discipline to...like, prevent injury."

Importantly, however, the ways in which member agency is constrained complicates the ways in which runners manage this tension. Certainly, as one participant put it, "there's a fine line between, like, you're wimping out and, like, you didn't run that day because you just kind of hurt." However, given the value placed on performance, it recovery and injury prevention may be confused with a lack of dedication to performance-related goals. One participant said: "If someone if like, I don't feel like doing the long run today...I'm just going to cut, like, three miles off of it, and they've been running with me the entire time, I'd probably be like, yeah, you're kind of just like, quitting to some extent." Even though such recovery and injury prevention are seen as important and as a personal responsibility, the membership of those who engage in such practice may be called into question.

Such constraints shape beliefs about the value of recovery and injury prevention in such a way that creates a double-bind. Although recovery and injury prevention are understood as necessary and as a personal responsibility, they may also be understood as *wimping out*, *chickening*

out, or quitting. One participant put it this way “Recovery is a very hard thing for me personally to, like, allow myself to do, because I’m like, oh, I can just push through it. It’s fine. And it’s not.” Such a double-bind places athletes at risk of injury. In particular, such beliefs constrain agency in such a way that distance runners feel pressure to push through pain. One participant explained: “Sometimes, when I’m like two races away from the end of the season, and my shins are hurting so much, and I really think I should get some rest, I still think, okay, no. I’m going to chase the bag first, and then I’ll relax.” Another put it this way: “It’s pretty hard [to listen to your body when it’s telling you to stop]. I just think part of the training is to push through whatever you’re feeling. And that is a good thing sometimes, but sometimes it can lead to more injuries.”

The ways in which distance runners’ agency is constrained is complicated by their relationship with pain. For some, the pain of organizational practices is not merely something to endure but is a source of pleasure in itself. One participant put it this way:

“Lungs on fire...just every step I took, my entire legs would be cramping just because I’d been working so hard. And going home and just feeling so sore...walking felt terrible, all you wanted to do was just lie on the ground and groan...and feeling the lactic acid everywhere in your body, even up to your arms somehow...but I loved it.”

Among those who derive pleasure from this pain, it appears that pushing the body as hard as possible increases the pleasure of the experience. One participant said: “I love running, and I think anyone who does is, like, okay, the harder I go, the better it feels, as a general trend, anyways.” Others shared this sentiment: “No matter what day it was, I would try to just go as hard as I could. Coach would say, okay, you have a three or four mile tempo or whatever, and I’m like, okay, how fast can I run three or four miles?” One joked: “My friends will be like, what do you like about running? And it’s like, running. And then they’re like, what do you not like about running? And it’s like, running!” For others, this pain may not be a source of pleasure, but is nevertheless

understood as normal within this organizing context. One participant put it plainly: “I feel like a lot of runners just disregard a lot of injuries because you’re like, well, something usually hurts.”

In some cases, this double-bind also places pressure on distance runners to push through injury. One participant shared this story:

“I had a stress fracture in both shins. And I remember probably starting to feel the pain in February, if I’m really admitting that. And I went on, like, my second half marathon run every and it was really great, but toward the end I was like, oh, I’m not sure, this doesn’t feel so good...The week that we were supposed to go to track nationals...that week it got really bad. Like, I couldn’t even walk down the stairs...But I was like, oh, I’m not going to make it worse at this point, I’m still going to go to nationals. Which was a horrible decision! But, like, I had already paid for it, I wanted to go and be with my friends, so I went and ran the 5k and the 1500...So then I went home and...got x-rays and they were like, yeah, on a scale of 0-5, you’re at a 4, 5 being all the way through the bone.”

Additionally, this double-bind puts pressure on distance runners to conceal their injuries. One participant explained: “If something were to interfere with [running fast], like a stress fracture or pain, then you hide it because that’s going to keep you from running fast. So it’s like, treat your body as a temple, but maybe not all the time because we want to run fast.” Another shared this story:

“I would even hide my teammates injuries...I wouldn’t say anything. [Coach] wasn’t necessarily always checking up on us, either. I mean, if I was limping around she might be like, ‘What’s going on?’ But I would just tie my shoes a little tighter and would wear compression socks and move on with it.”

Finally, this double-bind also places pressure on distance runners to achieve or maintain a low body weight. Like was the case with training through pain or injury, many participants shared experiences related to this pressure. One participant put it simply:

“To a point, it’s better because the lighter you are the faster you are. And I know people say not to say that, but to a point there’s truth to it. But I definitely think there is a line between being healthy and just being small and being unhealthy and

being too little. And that's definitely something that distance runners especially struggle with."

As value is placed on performance over health, and low-body weight is associated with higher performance in this context, some distance runners may engage in disordered or restrictive eating behaviors. One participant put it simply:

"I think runners kind of attach themselves to simple truths of, like, oh, lower calorie is better, lighter weight equates to faster. And there are definitely pressures within the running community...hitting those marks is really important and I think a simple solution could be like, oh, eating less will help me hit my mark."

To reiterate, these pressures are particularly salient among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement. In such cases, pressure to train through or conceal pain or injury and/or pressure to maintain or achieve a lower body weight is heightened by the competitive nature of this organizing context. One participant explained:

"As much as running is, like, a team-building, friendship thing, I think it's also, like, everybody's trying to beat each other, like, subtly. And it's never super outright, and no one will ever admit it to each other. I think it's always, like, you want to beat the next guy, and if you see that they ran, like, four miles today, you might want to go do, like, four miles but faster. It's always like you're trying to move up the ladder."

Importantly, among those whose goals are not related to athletic achievement, these pressures appear to be less-prevalent. One participant put it this way:

"Now I'm probably a little too over-cautious...I'll just kind of stop running if I'm sore. I think a lot of that is just because I don't really have anything that I need to train for, or anything that I'm expecting to run for. It's all just for fun and if I don't get to it in a given day, I'm not going to be upset or anything."

Even when such pressures are salient, some are able to enact agency and prioritize health. One participant said:

“There have been meets where I’m like, yeah, I don’t feel super good. I’m just not going to run. And then, in my head, I’m looking back and I’m like, maybe I should have just done it. But then I was like, I was having fun on the sidelines and talking to everybody and cheering people on, so it was okay because I still had a good time. And I probably would have, like, suffered if I’d actually tried...In high school I would have totally been just like, fuck it, I’m going to run it. But I didn’t feel the need to do that to myself when there’s not that much reward.”

Interestingly however, it appears that the membership of those who enact agency by attending to recovery and injury prevention may be called into question even if they are high performing. One participant said:

“Everybody was very supportive of each other overall, but there was definitely a lot of inner-competitiveness on the team...people would just be like, bad talking each other a little bit. Not as in, like, oh I hate this person, but as in, like, she doesn’t deserve to be that good because she didn’t do this.”

In this way, it appears that *real* membership in this organizing context may be understood as necessarily involving a priority on performance, and specifically involve pushing through pain, pushing through injury, concealing injury, and/or engaging in restrictive eating behaviors.

Bodies

Distance running bodies are primarily characterized by their practices and, in particular, by how they look while engaged in these practices. In particular, distance runners make note of: (1) body shape and size; (2) running form; (3) pace or speed; (4) clothing; and (4) changes, or the lack thereof, in any of the above. Value is assigned to each of these characteristics of the body and of bodily practice with regard to how *real* membership, *real* practice, and *real* distance running bodies are constituted, often times grounded in a perception of efficiency and optimal athletic performance.

Certainly, distance running bodies come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and ability levels. Particularly among those whose goals are related to having fun, relieving stress, or being a member of a community, a variety of bodies are welcome. One participant explained:

“You don’t have to be any certain body shape or type...I’ve seen super fast, any shape, size, like...you can look at someone, but you don’t know how fast or what they’re going to be able to do because there is not really one fastest distance runner. I really think that...you really can’t judge a book by its cover, because anyone can turn out to be insanely fast or even just a runner in general.”

In fact, among those whose goals are unrelated to athletic performance, this diversity of body types and ability levels is understood to be a strength of the organization. One participant put it this way: “It’s so beautiful to see that literally anyone can run. So I think that’s the mindset that I have toward it and body image overall, which I’m thankful for.”

However, among those whose goals are related to athletic achievement, an idealized body exists. Participants consistently described the ideal distance running body as *skinny*, *thin*, *lanky*, *toned*, and *not bulky*. One participant had this to say:

“Most likely they will be pretty thin...like, you can see really defined muscle...there’s probably going to be a little bit of ribs showing, which is normal. Really shredded abdomen just because there’s very little body fat. Probably a thigh gap. I think bigger legs than arms, like, the arms will not be too strong...bony shoulders, bony elbows...”

Among those whose primary goals are related to athletic performance, this idealized body type appears to be related to real or perceived efficiency. One participant explained:

“We’re all itty bitty, wispy things and I think some of that is just because, if you’re born that way, you’re good at running fast. And the other thing is that if you’re running all the time, you’re burning calories and you end up being really little.”

Another shared this sentiment:

“The idea of the perfect running body aesthetically is very small. Like, I’m considered very bulky for a runner...there’s that idea of, like, the smaller you are, the less you have to carry around...especially in things like marathons, like on a mechanical level, theoretically, like, you want to be kind of small.”

It is clear that value is placed on smaller, thinner bodies within this organizing context: a value that is directly related to the double binds created by an emphasis on performance over health described previously.

In terms of running form, *good* form refers to that which is perceived to be efficient, including *maintaining an upright posture, looking up and forward, staying light on one’s feet,* and/or *maintaining strong knee drive*. Importantly, good form *looks effortless*. One participant explained that good form looks “very smooth when [they’re] running. It looks like no effort.” Another participant described what they look for in good form:

“Are they getting their arms moving? Are they keeping their chest forward? Head up? Like, shoulders back? Like, can you tell they are, like, actually able to breathe and, like, have that core control to not just start swinging back and forth? Are they kind of, like, moving efficiently and confidently?”

Bad form, on the other hand, refers to that which is perceived to be inefficient, including *slouching, looking down, heavy footfall,* and/or *arms swinging across the body*. As opposed to good form looking effortless, bad form looks effortful. One participant explained how they looked when using bad form: “I am slouched...I’m, like, not focused on my breathing, kind of looking down just, like, at my feet, just shuffling. And, you know, I’m not picking up my knees.”

Understandably, among those whose goals are related to performance, *good* form is valued higher than *bad* form, as it implies efficiency, and also because it implies an understanding of what it means to be or have a *distance running body*. Form may indicate *real* or *unreal* membership within this organizing context or, at the very least, how long a distance runner has been a member.

One participant explained: “I definitely look at form. I feel like there’s a difference between someone who’s been doing this for a long time and someone who is just out hobby jogging.”

Another put it this way:

“When [someone with bad form] runs, they, like, kick out the back of their heels and stuff, and they’re usually, like, hunched over and you usually hear them slamming their feet on the ground. It doesn’t look that elegant. It kind of looks stiff and I think that is because they probably just don’t stretch and whatnot. I mean, props to them for running, it just doesn’t look that great...[they’re] clearly, like, not the same type of runner I am.”

It is clear that *good* form is valued over *bad* form.

Similarly, among those whose goals are related to athletic achievement, fast paces are generally valued higher than slow paces during both training and competition. This is unsurprising, given the value of performance over health in this context. Participants consistently used language which indicated that walking in particular during a workout or race is understood as something to avoid or something to be ashamed of. One participant explained that they did not want to *get caught walking*, while another explained that other organizational members may actually *be mad at* them for walking. Even among those who were not as concerned with such rejection, this pressure to push the pace was salient. One participant explained:

“Especially for the marathon, like, I was like, okay, I’m not going to walk. I don’t want them to see me walking. And it’s not like I think that they would feel like, oh...she can’t do this or she failed...I didn’t think that they would necessarily look down on me if I were walking, but just so that they would have thought even more like, oh, she really accomplished something.”

It is clear that, as is the case with *good* form, fast paces are valued higher than slow paces.

In terms of clothing, some clothes are understood as *real* or *appropriate* running clothes, whereas other clothes are understood as *inappropriate*. *Real* or *appropriate* running clothes

include *short shorts, sports bras, spandex and/or tights, running- and/or workout-specific shoes, a running watch, and weather-appropriate accessories* such as hats, gloves, sunglasses, and layers. *Inappropriate* running clothes include *casual shoes, baggy clothes, random and/or sale items, and/or weather-inappropriate accessories*. One participant described the differences between *appropriate* and *inappropriate* running clothes:

“[A runner] definitely [wears] tights. Like, some sort of, like, ‘real’ running shoe. Not, like, a worn out Nike something...Like, when it’s cold, [a runner will] layer up instead of just putting on, like, a crop sweatshirt...[A runner will wear] a hat and sunglasses...Hair back in a ponytail, just out of their face. I know some girls like to run with it down, I think that’s so strange. The camelback for, like, the people who are marathon training, stuff like that.”

During warmer parts of the year, *appropriate* clothing within this organizing context often covers very little of the body. One participant explained: “[runners wear] shorts that are probably too short in the eyes of the average person...maybe a shirt, maybe not.” Another shared this sentiment: “[runners wear] usually not very many clothes.” During colder parts of the year, *appropriate* clothing may depend upon weather-specific needs. One participant explained: “I wear, like, a hat and gloves and whatnot, and it kind of looks, like, a little silly once in a while, because it will be, like, on the border of, like, needing to wear all the stuff, but...you want to be prepared for going out and running for an hour in the cold.” No matter the weather, *appropriate* or *real* running clothes appear to be those that enable efficient movement and enable high performance and the achievement of performance-related goals. One participant said this about wearing short shorts: “There’s the technical aspect. There’s less drag. It’s lighter.” Another said this about those who wear *casual* shoes while running: “wearing a pair of Nike shoes just because they think it looks good...[that] probably is half the reason why they have shin splints and stuff. Like, they’re not adequately prepared to go out and do what they’re doing...it’s not optimal.”

Unsurprisingly, clothing may indicate how long a distance runner has been a member. One participant explained: “Maybe they’re just getting started and they just look up ‘running shorts’ or, like, went to a store, found shorts that they thought looked comfortable and threw them on. Maybe they’re just getting started, maybe they’re just getting back into it.” Another shared this sentiment:

“Always, at the start of the season, there’s guys that come run that are just there for the first time, and they don’t really know what’s going on. And then you’ll see them running in Air Jordans and things like that...If you saw a guy wearing that in a race, you’d probably be like, yeah, maybe these guys are pretty new to the sport. Maybe they’re not super experienced yet.”

Additionally, and in particular among those whose goals are related to athletic achievement, clothing may indicate *real* or *unreal* membership within this organizing context. One participant posed this question: “Is this somebody who’s, you know, out here in cutesy, you know...like, oh I’m just out here to be fit, or is this somebody who has got, like, the camelback on, and the cliff bar. And they’re like, no, I’m out here really trying to burn this run?” Another participant had this to say:

“You’ll see a guy running shirtless, but he’ll have shorts below the knees. And maybe he’s working hard, maybe he’s super fast, but I’ll be like, yeah, that guy probably doesn’t know what he’s doing...usually that’s the way it goes. It’s like, the faster you get the shorter your shorts get, and that’s just a given.”

It is clear that value is placed on *real* running clothes, over *inappropriate* running clothes.

Finally, changes (or the lack thereof) to the body or to bodily practice in terms of body size or shape, running form, pace or speed, or clothing may be understood as *physical evidence* of *real* organizational membership or practice. Some understand this *physical evidence* as a reward for completing organizational practices. For example, one participant explained: “You’ll get benefits like thinner legs, more toned muscles. Things like that. Being able to eat a lot and not gain that much weight.” Others understand *physical evidence* as proof to oneself and to others that one is

engaged in organizational practice and is therefore a member of the organization. One participant explained:

“I would always want my body to have physical evidence that I’m running, otherwise I wouldn’t really feel like I was doing anything. Like, I noticed when I started running that I had more leg muscles obviously, like more toned muscles in my legs. And I was like, oh, that’s so cool, that’s so new and everyone that I knew that had started running with me also noticed that.”

Another shared a similar sentiment:

“If you’re hardcore set on distance running, if you start shaping your body like those traditional distance runners that most people envision, if you start seeing those changes within yourself, then it will kind of motivate you. Like, I’m doing something right because my body is changing. I think that’s very important. When people compliment you, the way you look, that definitely helps a lot. So it helps to have good outward displays of that. You know, people see what you’ve been working on.”

Importantly, others understand *physical evidence* not simply as proof that one is a member, but specifically that one is progressing toward their organizational goals. One participant spoke of this idea with regard to increased speed: “Even if you’re never going to get to that elite level, you just have that, like, visual proof that you’re getting better. With running you have that. Like, I put in this much work, and now here is physical, time proof of, like, oh, I’m improving, and, like, I can get better.” Another participant had this to say about weight loss: “I liked that I was smaller and I remember thinking, like, both my increase in training and my control of my food was moving me in this direction that I liked...and I liked that I was seeing results from my behavior. I’m very much, like, an input-output person.”

Unfortunately, some forms of *physical evidence* may threaten distance runners’ health and ability to engage in the very organizational practices that lead to it. In this study, the most prevalent example of this is menstrual dysfunction or loss of a menstrual period altogether. Some participants

reported understanding their own menstrual dysfunction as *physical evidence*. For example, one participant said: “[Losing my period] shows me that my behavior is doing something. That I’m making quote-unquote progress...just seeing result...it shows me that my control over the situation is working”. Some participants speculated that knowing about the consequences of menstrual dysfunction may change attitudes about it. For example, one said this: “Part of the problem is that people don’t know that if you lose your period because you’re running too much that’s bad for you. And I feel like if people knew that, and that was normalized, then it might be different.” Importantly, however, it appears that distance runners may feel this way even if they know loss of menstruation can be an indication of much larger health concerns. One participant shared this:

“Losing your period is common and normalized, but it is not physiologically normal. But if folks recognize that it’s not healthy, that does not necessarily change behavior. It’s almost like a source of pride of, like, I’m training hard enough to – or I’m restricting enough – that my period goes away...it’s almost like a sign of hard work and can be praised, I think...either directly or indirectly.”

It is clear that *physical evidence* of organizational practice may be valued over health, particularly as it indicates engagement with organizational practice and, in particular, a focus on performance.

Interestingly, what appears to be as important as body size or shape, form, pace, clothing, and/or physical evidence is *confidence*. Several participants described the ideal running body as one that *looks confident*. One participant spoke to how confidence manifests in the body as form: “You can tell that I’m comfortable with knowing where my foot is going to land. I’m comfortable, like, putting the power into that.” Another spoke to facial expression: “They stand up straighter, their pace will be quicker, they’ll smile, you know?” Another yet spoke to how this *confidence* manifests in clothing choice: “Like, if you’re confident wearing short shorts, it’s like, they kind of are more invested. They know the image they want to display.” This *confidence* also manifests in organizational practice. One participant explained: “They hold themselves confidently, they’re not

really afraid of doing a task, always take on challenges.” It is clear that *looking confident* appears to be valued highly, particularly among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement, and that those who *look confident* may be understood as *real* members of this organization.

Power

This research reveals that *real* membership within the organization – particularly among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement – requires: (1) the attainment or maintenance of an ideal body shape or size; (2) the use of *real* or *appropriate* running clothes and accessories; (3) engagement in *real* organizational practice; and (4) relatively high athletic capacity or achievement. These requirements are, in essence, forms of hegemonic gatekeeping which dictate who is included and excluded from this organization. Those bodies which are understood to be *real* distance running bodies are included and reified within the organization; whereas those bodies which are understood to be *not real* distance running bodies are punished or ultimately excluded from the organization.

Importantly, however, other power mechanisms also play a role in member inclusion and exclusion. Therefore, it is time to turn to an explicit discussion of power within this organizing context. No organization is an island; thus, this discussion must address the power structures which characterize the organization of distance running itself, as well as those larger oppressive systems in which distance running is situated. Specifically, within a capitalist, patriarchal, white supremacist system, issues of race, class, and gender must be considered.

Hierarchical Power

First and foremost, considerations must be made for the hierarchical power structure of a distance running organization. In particular, coaches and other members of authority are generally in higher positions of power than distance runners themselves. For this reason, distance runners may blindly trust members of authority, and distance runners may come to understand oppressive knowledge and power as truth. One participant said this about being “allowed” to run through injury: “I just had to wear a boot when I wasn’t running. So I guess I didn’t really put much thought...I wasn’t as frustrated with my body at that time. It’s irritating because it hurts, but it wasn’t really that mentally trying...because I was still able to compete.” Put simply, if allowed to train and compete through injury, distance runners may assume that such practice is normal or even necessary if they are to be a *real* member of this organization. Such blind trust in authority figures may also lead to the explicit spread and acceptance of misinformation. One participant shared this story:

“One of the coaches...he was like, ‘yeah, factually if you go three days without working out, that can set you all the way back to square one.’ And that stuck with me for so many years. Like, I never wanted to take more than three days off. Even to this day...I don’t go three full days without some kind of light jog or long walk, and I feel like it was literally because of that comment.”

It is clear that coaches play a role in producing knowledge which may ultimately reproduce power structures or even pose threats to athletes’ health, therefore enabling or constraining athletes’ abilities to complete organizational practices, thus rendering athletes *real* or *unreal*. Further, given that coaches play a gate-keeping role, distance runners may feel pressure to listen to such members of authority, even if they disagree with their direction. One participant shared this example:

“I remember one of the sprinting coaches was telling me to keep up with this group that was a little bit ahead of me. Like, it wasn’t my group. I wasn’t even supposed to be there. But he just kept telling me to do it and I’m like, ‘okay, like, it’s a coach,

I have to do it,' even though that wouldn't exactly be ideal for me peaking at the right time."

Another shared this story:

"My coach and I were not on good terms because I was bringing things to her attention about team culture that I didn't like. I was team captain...but I was never received well which was frustrating. So I just kind of had to back off. As a high schooler, I never felt right going to my coach and saying 'What you're doing is wrong.'"

It is clear that the very hierarchical power structures within the organization itself play a role in reproducing knowledge and power, and ultimately, constituting membership.

Class

Additionally, class plays a role. The attainment of *real* membership to the organization of distance running is an issue of financial access. For example, the attainment of an ideal body size, body shape, and athletic capacity or achievement all require access to resources such as weight rooms, athletic training and physical therapy, and nutritious food, which of course cost money and are more accessible to those with greater financial resources. One participant explained:

"The distance running culture is more prominent around more affluent areas...we have so many luxuries compared to my friends who are in [less affluent areas]...We of course have access to better food, we have better training facilities...my school, we had really good trainers...and we had these, like, Normatec devices and ice baths every day. And we had a great facility that worked to make us better runners."

Another participant shared a similar example, which speaks to the opposite experience: "We didn't do a lot of weights with the distance team...which was partially because we didn't really have a place for weightlifting for a team our size at the time, because we were a really small school." Clearly, access to training facilities, technology, and expertise is an issue of class: one which

constrains or enables distance runners' ability to complete the organizational practices or attain the body necessary to be considered a *real* member of the organization.

Such resources not only aid distance runners in achieving their athletic capacity, but also in preventing injury: a primary concern of distance runners, particularly those whose goals are related to athletic achievement. Quality running shoes can also aid in injury prevention; however, running shoes are also a financial investment, and must be replaced often to be effective. One participant explained: "I was doing 50 miles a week, so we were running through a pair of shoes, like, every few months. Because shoes only last, like, 400 or 500 miles." Further, in order to be a *real* distance runner, one may feel pressure to invest in *real* running shoes, which may cost more than *casual* running shoes. One participant said: "Everything I own is Nike." It is easy to see that injury prevention is inherently an issue of class.

So, too, is access to medical and rehabilitation resources in the event of an injury. One participant had this to say: "When I got injured a second time, I was like, okay, I need to get to PT ASAP. Like, we've got to fix this. I want to figure out what this is. I never want this to happen again. I don't care how much it costs...but, like, my parents did care [laughs]!"

In these ways, it becomes clear that oppressive organizational knowledge may be reproduced through class-based inequities, ultimately rendering some distance runners *real* or *unreal*.

Gender

In the organizing context of distance running, gender also plays an enormous role in inclusion and exclusion. Given the patriarchal system in which this organization exists, it is no surprise that boys and men generally hold more power and have access to more resources than girls and women within this organization. Among the female distance runners who participated in

this study, many spoke directly to the ways in which boys' running is prioritized over girls' running.

One participant shared this story:

"The guys coach was technically the head coach, but, like, he didn't do anything with us...he was very misogynistic, I would say...He would kind of, like, sabotage us...Like, little things. Like, we got new uniforms every year for the state meet. So, like, he's in charge of everything, and he's the only one who can order those with the school money. But he only ordered them for the guys. And then he was like, well, if you wanted them you should have told me."

Others spoke to the ways that team rules differed between girls' and boys' teams. For example, one said: "In high school, they didn't let the girls run without their shirts. The guys could, but the girls couldn't." These differences reflect and reproduce the existing power structures which value boys' and men's distance running over that of girls and women.

The gendered nature of some organizational topics further complicates the role of gender in processes of knowledge production. For example, weight loss, disordered eating, and clinical eating disorders were discussed primarily by female participants in this study and were largely framed as a female issue. These female distance runners described the ways that the gendered nature of these topics created discomfort. One participant shared this story:

"I have male coaches, and I think for them especially...they feel like they can't talk to us about our weight. I remember...we had a teammate that was getting really, really thin, and the coach came up to me and asked me to say something to her, because he felt that, as a male coach, he should not be commenting on his athletes' weight."

Another participant shared this sentiment: "You never want to talk to a girl about how much she weighs."

Such silence around topics of weight and disordered eating may be understood as resistance to oppressive knowledge about ideal bodies in sport. However, because discipline does not always take the form of explicit talk, this silence may also be understood as oppressive itself given the

prevalence of disordered eating among female distance runners. One participant said: “I know so many girls in the running community have eating disorders or demons that you don’t even know...it’s easy to compare when you’re all standing there, like, with your short shorts and, like, all of that.” Another echoed this perception: “I never would have believed how common it was until I started talking to people about it...I would say upwards of 75% of girls struggle with [disordered eating].” In this way, silences around topics of weight and disordered eating may reproduce oppressive knowledge and power, thus rendering some female distance runners *real* and others *not real*.

Few male participants discussed feeling pressure to attain or maintain a specific body size or shape, and instead generally framed small body size or low body weight as merely one piece of physical evidence of organizational practice. Some male participants appeared not to be concerned with body weight or shape at all. One male participant had this to say: “My body, to me, is not really something I think about all that much. I mean, I don’t, like, check my weight very often. I don’t even think we have a scale in our house...I just don’t really care one way or the other.” Another shared this example:

“Everyone I know, at least, would gain a little bit of weight [in the off-season] because you’re just not running...but then, there’s this one special case. My buddy...he would purposefully try to eat as much as he could. He would try to gain weight. I definitely wouldn’t say that [gaining weight] is a concern for anyone.”

Certainly, these are anecdotes that may not represent every male distance runner’s experience. Importantly, the tendency among male distance running not to discuss such topics may also be the result of oppressive knowledge and power. One participant explained this complex experience:

“I feel like, in general, a lot more women have been opening up about, like, the pressures of society of being fit and thin, and that’s not something that guys, in general, talk about. But, I mean, when you look at runner boys, they’re the skinniest twigs in the world...and I have known guys who have had issues with eating, and

who are still having issues with eating. But it's not something anybody brings up...it's sort of, like, female to talk about it, so maybe they're in their heads, like, well, why would I talk about this because this is an issue that girls have."

It is clear that the gendered nature of such topics is complex, and that discussions or around such topics may participate in the reproduction of oppressive knowledge and power, and impact runner membership.

Additionally, physical safety while training was discussed exclusively by female participants in this study. The female distance runners who participated in this study reported experiences of fear with regard to the possibility of being assaulted, kidnapped, or otherwise harmed while participating in organizational practice – particularly during training. One participant spoke generally about this experience:

"I think that in the back of my head, all the time, I feel like it's a possibility. Even if it is safe, like, the second I step off campus, I'm kind of like, well, no one's around me, so if something happens...I mean, I live in a safe neighborhood, but if a car just drives a little bit slowly, I'm like, is this the moment I'm going to have to go back to my sprinting roots?"

Another participant shared a similar experience:

"Running, it's like, you're so vulnerable. It's like, just leave me alone! I don't know you! I feel like, because you've got nothing on you, typically I don't even run with my phone. So it's just me. Anything could happen. And my mom was always worried about, like, someone could stop and grab you...You're not on a bike where you could, like, speed off as quickly. If you're tired, you can't go sprint off necessarily, unless maybe you get, like, an adrenaline kick."

Many participants reported having experienced harassment while training, specifically being catcalled and followed. One participant described the frequency of such harassment:

“It’s like every single run, I feel like somebody honks, or somebody is looking at you or making a face, like, oh my gosh, because you’re a female runner and you’re out on a run and you’re in your sports bra...I grew up in a city, it was like constant. It wasn’t just once a run.”

Another shared this story: “One time in high school, we did end up getting followed. But we ended up cutting through yards and got rid of them.”

These concerns constrain female distance runner agency and ultimately create barriers to the completion of organizational practices. First and foremost, experiences of harassment, and concerns about the possibility of harassment, frighten female distance runners. One participant explained: “Of course, you have your obvious cat-calling or honking or stuff like that. That scares me a lot more than anything else. I don’t really get mad or anything, just scared.” Given the threat of danger and the fear associated with the very real possibility of harassment, female distance runners often have to change their behavior to protect their safety. Some participants described opting to carry a communication device or self-defense object while training. One participant explained:

“When I run by myself, I run with my phone because I am scared that someone’s going to steal me. I’d really rather not have to hold my phone on a run, but I do. And I guess, in a sense, that gives me comfort, because I’m like, hopefully I can do something or call someone, or someone can track my location.”

Another participant said: “I always run with pepper spray. There’s been, like, once or twice I’ve taken the pepper spray out and just held it, like, just in case, when I felt very threatened.”

Other participants described opting to complete organizational practices in groups. One had this to say about an experience of harassment: “I felt pretty safe at that point because I was in a group of about ten girls.” Unfortunately, the buddy method does not appear to always deter harassers. One participant shared this story:

“Just the other day...a guy from a truck rolled down his window and he had sunglasses on...he waved or honked or said something, and we were like, what was the point of that? And it actually happened to us twice on that run. We ran into [town]...and a guy...he called us beautiful...and then he said, ‘now just keep exercising’ and like, he was like, ‘you guys are fine.’ And I’m like, why? What was the point of talking to us? We were on the other side of the street, not looking at you, it’s kind of absurd. But it happens both in a group and whenever I’m by myself.”

It is clear that female distance runners must split their attention between organizational practices and protecting themselves.

In addition to running with a communication device or self-defense object, or running in a group, participants provided examples of other steps they take to protect their safety. One participant said: “If a truck passes me, and they honk or do something like that, I definitely take note of the truck, and I feel like I’m on high alert for the next mile or two, like, are they circling around again? Are they going to pass me again?” Another said this: “Whenever I run alone, I’ll run with music or a podcast, so just one AirPods because I need to be able to hear if someone is coming. Which is a terribly annoying and sad concern.” Put simply, female distance runners must make many more considerations than their male counterparts when it comes to completing organizational tasks and, ultimately, achieving the status of a *real* distance runner.

Race

In addition to class and gender, race plays a role in inclusion and exclusion. Some participants spoke to their experiences as minorities in this organizing context. One participant shared their experience: “I was the only minority on my team of like 50 people. It was a pretty white team.” Another participant spoke to racial diversity and the lack thereof in their discussion of spectating body types in the organization of distance running:

“I have a very different experience coming from the Bay Area than someone in the Midwest, because back home, no one looked the same. It was just a lot more diverse, and so people’s bodies were naturally more different, physically...I was used to not looking like the people around me...versus when I came to [the Midwest], and it was just, like, a lot of white people which is like...there’s nothing wrong with that, they just have very similar body types and very similar body shapes. And I remember, like, my freshman year, I was like, wait, I don’t look like that. And I did feel this weird pressure, like, oh, should I look like that? I definitely think that...where someone is from...could have a huge effect on their relationship with their body and the pressure that they feel.”

It is clear that the absence of racially diverse distance runners may play a role in the reproduction of oppressive knowledge and power and, in turn, may constitute some distance runners as *real* members while others remain *not real* members.

Resistance

Importantly, from a postmodern perspective, there is space for resistance within even the most oppressive systems. In other words, although oppressive power/knowledge mechanisms certainly constrain agency, individuals have the power to resist discipline. Certainly, such resistance may face further discipline or punishment. Nevertheless, it is important to consider the ways in which individuals enact agency and resist being constructed as mere docile bodies. Participants in this study spoke specifically to resistance which took the form of explicit talk.

As is the case with discipline, resistance often comes in the form of explicit talk within the organizing context of distance running. Participants spoke to the power of rejecting oppressive knowledge and power regarding (1) ideal body types; (2) restrictive or disordered eating behavior; and (3) valuing performance over health. Such resistance may be enacted by everyday organizational members, or by members of authority or those in positions of power.

First, participants described resistance to the ideal body type and the eating behaviors that have come to be associated with it, in the form of explicit talk. One participant had this to say:

“[There is] a very recent movement of a lot of female runners, like, speaking up...about how they were judged on their bodies and how they were told they should eat or to be smaller...’to be faster you need to be smaller.’ And I feel like a lot of, especially, like, professional runners, but even just normal runners have come out with stories about, like, coaches they’ve had in the past and stuff.”

Another participant explained:

“Talking about how you eat is a big thing, too, because there’s, like, a stigma...which is being broken, which is really cool to see. Like, professional athletes come out and just talk about, like, ‘I used to think I had to starve myself’ or ‘I wouldn’t eat before a big race,’ and now there’s just a lot more emphasis on fueling yourself with nutrition.”

A third gave a specific example of a professional runner who has spoken out in this way: “It’s kind of nice when you have people like Emma Abrahamson, who definitely doesn’t fit that body type, speaking out about that a lot.”

Importantly, some participants reflected on the value of such explicit talk from a trusted mentor. One participant had this to say about a mentor who expressed concern for their health:

“At 21 years old, I was in, like, a really dangerous place in terms of my bone density...I think I had heard of other distance runners losing their periods before, and I was just like, yeah, yeah, that happens, but with the bone loss...I had, you know, a fantastic mentor who really taught me a lot about it, and made sure that I understood the severity of it long term. And so I think I was just growing and learning and it hit me different. Someone who I really respected, you know, shared with me how concerned they were about it.”

Additionally, some distance runners felt empowered to resist through explicit talk themselves. One participant shared this:

“I did actually organize a meeting last fall...talking about how important period tracking can be for distance runners. So that was one thing we tried to do, and I was actually, like, really interested in taking it further and having, like, runners go talk to, like, high school girls in the area.”

While it is important to recognize the constraints placed on organizational members which may prevent them from speaking out in this way, it is clear that explicit talk can be a powerful tool for resistance.

Postmodern Characteristics

An analysis of knowledge within the organizing context of distance running revealed the distinctly postmodern nature of this organization (Table 6). In particular, distance running appears to be characterized by two primary tensions: (1) tension between health and performance; and (2) tension between pain and pleasure. These tensions do not merely guide organizational practice; rather, they are bound up in systems of ideology which enable and constrain member agency and, thus, play a role in processes of knowledge production in this context.

First, as described above, there exists a tension between health and performance (Health \leftrightarrow Performance), particularly among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement. Distance runners are faced with the challenge of balancing attention their short- and long-term health with attention to their performance-related goals. This may manifest as a balance between proper fueling and maintaining an efficient body size, a balance between injury prevention and maintaining fitness or practice, and/or a balance between rest and recovery and maintaining fitness or practice. Importantly, however, there exists an oppressive value which constrains runner agency: a value on performance over health (Health $<$ Performance). In this way, runner agency is constrained in such a way that they may feel pressure to prioritize maintaining an

efficient body size *over* proper fueling, maintaining fitness or practice *over* injury prevention and treatment, or maintaining fitness or practice *over* rest and recovery. To further complicate knowledge related to health and performance, runners are expected to *simultaneously* attend to balancing health and performance *and* prioritize performance over health [(Health \leftrightarrow Performance) & (Health < Performance)]. This creates a paradox which is inescapable under oppressive power/knowledge structures.

Table 6: Postmodern Characteristics of Distance Running

Tensions	Manifestations
Health \leftrightarrow Performance	Proper fueling \leftrightarrow Maintaining efficient body size Injury prevention \leftrightarrow Maintaining fitness/practice Recovery \leftrightarrow Maintaining fitness/practice
Pleasure or Pain Avoidance \leftrightarrow Pain	Pleasure of practices \leftrightarrow Pain of practices Pain avoidance \leftrightarrow Pain <i>Good</i> pain \leftrightarrow <i>Bad</i> pain
Oppressive Values	Manifestations
Health < Performance	Proper fueling < Maintaining efficient body size Injury prevention < Maintaining fitness/practice Recovery < Maintaining fitness/practice
Pleasure or Pain Avoidance < Performance	Pleasure of practices < Performing well (painful) Pain avoidance < Performing well (painful)
Paradoxes	Manifestations
(Health \leftrightarrow Performance) & (Health < Performance)	<i>Good</i> or <i>real</i> distance runners are those who <i>simultaneously</i> balance health and performance <i>and</i> prioritize performance over health.
(Pleasure or Pain Avoidance \leftrightarrow Pleasure) & (Pleasure or Pain Avoidance < Performance)	<i>Good</i> or <i>real</i> distance runners are those who <i>simultaneously</i> balance pain and pleasure <i>and</i> prioritize performance (painful) over pleasure.

Note. These results reflect experiences of distance runners whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement.

Second, there exists a tension between pleasure (or pain avoidance) and pain (Pleasure or Pain Avoidance \leftrightarrow Pain). Runners are faced with the challenge of balancing the pleasure of practices or the pleasure of achieving one's goals with the inevitable or even welcome pain of practices, or with balancing *good pain* – that which does not necessarily threaten the health of an athlete or their ability to complete organizational practices – with *bad pain* – that which may threaten the health of an athlete or their ability to complete organizational practices. This tension is particularly complex, as some derive a sense of pleasure from the *good pain* of organizational practices. Importantly, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement, there exists an oppressive value which constrains runner agency: a value on performance (which is understood as being inherently painful) *over* pleasure (Pleasure or Pain Avoidance < Performance). In this way, runners may feel pressure to prioritize performance over the pleasure of practices, *good pain*, or goal achievement.

This oppressive value also does not distinguish between *good* and *bad* pain, erasing the nuance of experiences of pain, and constituting all pain as merely inevitable. To further complicate this knowledge, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement, runners are understood as having *chosen* – or even *needing* – membership in this organization, thus having consented to the inevitable pain of practice. When the categories of *good* and *bad* pain are collapsed into a single category of inevitable but *chosen* pain, and *real* runners are understood to have consented to it, pain avoidance is constituted as *bad* practice and runner agency is constrained. Runners are placed in a double-bind, in which they must choose between maintaining their *real* membership and attending to pain avoidance and management. To complicate things one step further, runners are expected to *simultaneously* balance pleasure or pain avoidance and pain *and* prioritize performance *over* pleasure or pain avoidance [(Pleasure or Pain Avoidance \leftrightarrow

Pleasure) & (Pleasure or Pain Avoidance < Performance)]. This creates a paradox which is inescapable under oppressive power/knowledge structures. Importantly, navigating this paradox – as well as that resulting from the performance value – are understood to be a matter of personal responsibility, rather than one of a structural nature.

To summarize, research question one asks: what organizational knowledge exists within the organizing context of distance running? Knowledge manifests as membership expectations, organizational practices, and bodies within the organizational of distance running. This analysis revealed a number of ways in which membership, practice, and bodies are conceptualized. In particular, this analysis revealed a tension between performance and health among those whose primary goals are related to athletic performance. Further, this analysis revealed how knowledge – and therefore member agency – is constrained by oppressive values and the paradoxes which result from them.

Disciplining Bodies in Distance Running

Research question two asks: how are bodies *disciplined* within the organizing context of distance running? Discipline, in this context, refers to those mechanisms through which oppressive knowledge and power are expressed and reproduced, specifically through the production of docile bodies. This research reveals that bodies are disciplined through three primary disciplinary techniques in the organizing context of distance running: (1) explicit talk; (2) surveillance; and (3) self-surveillance. Each disciplinary technique will be discussed in turn.

Explicit Talk

First, knowledge is expressed – and bodies are disciplined – through explicit talk. Many participants shared their experiences of explicit talk from a coach as a disciplinary mechanism.

Specifically, some participants shared stories of coaches explicitly describing *appropriate* eating habits in such a way that reproduced oppressive knowledge and constrained member agency. One explained:

“I know for some people, it’s from their coaches...their coach would tell them, oh, like, ‘you need to be doing this exactly’ and, like, ‘you need to be eating this’...And if they were performing really good, like, oh, ‘what’s your diet?’ Rather than being like, ‘oh you didn’t eat enough,’ or oh, like, ‘this is something you can do to be healthier,’ [they’d] be like, ‘you need to eat less’ or ‘you need to control more.’”

Another shared a similar story:

“I have heard examples of coaches who have been telling kids, like...taking away their cookies at lunch and stuff. Telling them, like, oh, are you really eating that at lunch?...When I hear about how other coaches treated, especially females for some reason, but males too, it does kind of affect...obviously it affects them.”

A third had this to say:

“I remember the first time I ever heard it from our coach...our coach was saying something about how girls, like, in their later years of high school will put on a lot of weight, and so they have to be more intentional with their actions to stay in shape and have a good season. And I was like, oh, I didn’t realize I was going to have to be really intentional about, you know, how I see food. And I think he specifically even mentioned, like, consuming less because...our weight is going to fluctuate in our junior and senior year, so we just have to make sure we’re consuming less to, like, mediate those changes.”

It is clear that some discipline takes the form of explicit talk.

Surveillance

Surveillance, here, refers to that of bodies and bodily practices by authority figures (i.e., coaches, medical personnel), in-group members (i.e., teammates, other distance runners), or out-group members (i.e., fans, strangers). Organizational members described the various times at which they may be surveilled, including during workouts, during meals, and during other

organizational meetings. One participant described: “Sometimes [the coach] would bike with us...they’d check in on us every once in a while. So if we were doing a certain run...she’d be at, like, points along the way, too, just kind of checking.” Another explained that coaches might “monitor what [runners] ate at lunch and that kind of thing.”

Knowing that they are under the gaze, organizational members reported being aware of their bodies, and in some cases, changing their behavior to conform to organizational knowledge and expectations. Many participants reported changing their form or pace when they know they are being watched. One participant said:

“I’m definitely, like, looking around to see if people are watching. Even though I’m just running for me, I definitely...if I’m being honest, you know...right when you go by a group of people, you kind of straighten your back up. You kind of, like, power your stride a little bit. Because maybe, even if people don’t say anything, you get that satisfaction of them thinking, like, dang, this guy’s out running.”

Another put it this way: “If I pass somebody, I’m like, oh...they’re looking, I want to look good. So I, like, recheck my form, and I see if I’m, like, staying firm and, like, I don’t know...sometimes I’ll even speed up a little bit just to look a little bit better.”

Another example illustrates the pressure to engage in maximum effort when under surveillance:

“In workouts, our coach would always give us a range. He would be like, okay, you can do, like, five to nine 400s... again no one would say it, but you knew everyone was judging you if you stopped early. So I would always do the nine...He would give us, like, you can do this workout, or you can do this workout. And someone would be like, oh, well, that one’s harder, so I’m going to do that one, and then everyone would just end up doing that one.”

Interestingly, one may also change their form to indicate maximum effort, even when performance is low. One participant shared this interesting story:

“Whenever my coach was watching, of course I would, like, speed up. Try to make myself look better. Sometimes...there were a lot of times, if I’m doing bad in a race, I would, like, make a weird face and make it, like, obvious that I’m hurting, you know what I mean? So he’s not questioning, why is this guy so slow today? I would purposefully make it look like I’m hurting even more.”

Organizational members may also change their fueling practices when they know they are being watched. One participant explained:

“Eating out...that was so awkward...Again, no one says, like, oh, I’m going to eat less. But, like...people would get, like, smaller portions. It’s one of those where no one’s saying anything, but everyone does feel this internal pressure to, like, you know, restrict themselves. Like it should be normal, or it should be second nature that you’re restricting yourself. Like, you shouldn’t be indulging. Like, I don’t think I’ve ever gone to a dinner with them and, like, indulged. You feel like other people are judging what you’re eating.”

Finally, organizational members may change the way they dress when they are under surveillance, to either reveal an ideal body type or conceal a body type that does not fall into this category. One participant explained:

“I never run in a sports bra and spandex...like, [people] are not going to outwardly say anything, but you feel like they might be watching...If I’m by myself on a route where I know no one is going to be there, then I would [run without a shirt], but definitely not within the running community. It just created that awkward tension that I like to avoid.”

Another participant shared this sentiment:

“We were a very sports bra and spandex type of team...but for me, I never...I think I took my shirt off once. I never felt comfortable with it really...all those girls...they’re all really fast, they all have that body type, they’re all very similar...and then, like, here I am.”

Those who are leaders or role models within the organization may experience additional pressures.

One participant explained:

“In high school especially, I had a lot of pressure on me. I was, like, the fastest person for cross country, and so my coach just always, like, looked to me, made sure I was doing what I was supposed to be doing, so I don’t think there was ever a day where I wimped out or didn’t do something. I would have probably practiced as hard as I could until I passed out because other people were looking up at me, and he was looking at me to be that model for other people. So definitely that pressure was always there.”

Another put it this way:

“My coach actually pulled me aside and said, ‘you need to be setting an example for the other runners.’ He was like, ‘when you choose the lower rep, they choose the lower rep.’ And so, I definitely feel like coaches do not approve when you try to put yourself first. Like, they always want you to be putting the team first.”

Additionally, pressure to change behavior is heightened by the competitive nature of this organizing context. One participant had this to say:

“During long runs, my teammates know exactly where I am. We’re all going to be in a pack, and if someone drops off, you know, because they’re obviously just not there anymore. And that’s really valuable because you know just how mentally tough everyone is or isn’t, and about where they’re going to stop putting forth that effort.”

Another shared a similar story:

“Every few weeks or couple of runs or something, there will be a time where somebody wants to drop everyone else, or like, we’re just trying to drop one kid or something...It’s kind of, like, a mind game you play, like, who is going to break first?...With workouts, too, it’s like, you know you can stick on the pace and stuff even if it’s hard, but, like, if you just, like, drop off, then your teammate is going to beat you, and then he’s going to know that he beat you, so during the race he will be more confident.”

A third had this to say: “[With regard to] the inner-competitiveness on the team, with so many girls so close to each other, I knew normally, at regionals, we’d still be fighting for the state meet spots. We didn’t have a designated top seven because it kept changing.”

Interestingly, surveillance may occur in face-to-face or digital spaces. One participant, for example, described sharing one's workout on social media: "In the winter, a lot of people will...add a 'manual activity' and they say 'I ran blah blah blah distance,' and then they upload a picture of what their treadmill has so that people believe them."

It is clear that surveillance – whether face to face or in a digital space – plays a role in disciplining distance running bodies and, in particular, producing docile bodies within this organizing context.

Self-Surveillance

Members of this organization also employ self-surveillance. Self-surveillance operates as an internal gaze which replicates the disciplinary power of the external gaze, and manifests in many of the same settings, including during workouts, during meals, and during other organizational meetings. One participant explained:

"In high school, the coach would always run with us, and I was on Varsity, so, like, kind of at the front, so a lot of the times I would be, like, running right on his tail because he would be leading...When I left, and I was trying to get used to not having the exact same environment, and I was doing workouts on my own...I would imagine, like, running right on his tail."

Others described using electronic accessories to self-surveil. One participant said:

"My friends and I will look at the recovery it tells you to take... it's always pretty interesting to see...So, like, on Sunday – that's my easy day where I don't go that far or fast and stuff – I try to, like, keep my heart rate down under, like, 140 or something, but, like, I notice that when I start really trying it gets up to like 170."

This internal gaze operates similarly to the gaze of others in that it may create conditions under which participants feel pressure to change their behavior. Some expressed feeling this pressure during their time as a member of the organization. One participant said: "I don't think people watch

me that much...but while I'm running I do imagine that people are watching me. And sometimes it motivates me, like, oh, I wonder if this person will think I'm slow if I stop right now." Another shared this example: "I'm too attached to my watch, now. Like, when it says, alright, you've been unproductive."

Others expressed feeling this pressure after their departure from the organization. One participant had this to say: "I know of some friends who feel the pressure after they have run cross country to continue looking really fit, and that can be hard...it's hard to let go of that idea of yourself being that fit." Another shared this sentiment:

"I have to let go of the idea that I have to work out every day, because I know normal people don't do that...I just feel like...it's been really hard for me to let go of the idea of...working out so hard that you're super sore for the rest of the week, which is, like, what I would do in cross country."

Interestingly, though maybe unsurprising, many participants understood such self-surveillance as a personal choice: one which spoke to their choice (or need) to dedicate themselves to challenging organizational practice. One participant explained:

"I feel like, at least for the varsity girls that I was running with, we all really, really, really wanted to do well. So I feel like, effort wise, we were hitting it hard whether coach was there or not. When coach is there telling out times for you...it's more motivating. But effort-wise, we wanted to be good, so whether coach was there or not, it didn't matter to us."

Another put it plainly: "I'm not afraid to lose, I'm afraid I'm going to run bad for myself." Regardless of a member's own perception of the value of such behavior, it is clear that self-surveillance plays a disciplinary role.

Embodied Narration in Distance Running

The insights gained by answering research questions one and two were essential, as they provided me – the researcher – with the preunderstanding necessary to consider not only the ways by which knowledge disciplines bodies, but also the possible means by which *bodies discipline knowledge*. Specifically, the answers to research questions one and two informed my approach to answering research question three. Research question three asks: how do bodies *discipline* through embodied narration within the organization context of distance running? In other words, how does embodied narration *produce, reproduce, or resist* oppressive knowledge in this context?

As previously described, participants in this study were conceptualized as spectators, rather than as embodied narrators themselves, so as not to violate the assumptions of embodied narration. Participants reflected on their organizational observations and shared their experiences of spectatorship. The grounded theory analysis revealed not only the salience of spectatorship, but also the ways by which such spectatorship leads to the reproduction of oppressive and resistant knowledge. Therefore, the sections that follow will review experiences of oppressive and resistant spectatorship in the organizing context of distance running, followed by a theoretically grounded discussion of what these results reveal about experiences of embodied narration in this context.

Spectatorship

Members of this organization spectate other bodies and disciplinary and punishment techniques. Spectatorship, here, refers to inter-organizational observation, and differs from surveillance in terms of who is doing the looking. Distance runners who are under surveillance are under the gaze themselves, either from other organizational members or from themselves. Distance runners who engage in spectatorship, however, direct their own gaze at others to see and understand organizational knowledge and disciplinary techniques. Spectatorship in this organizing

context primarily takes the form of: (1) spectating the bodies of other members; (2) spectating the bodily organizational practice of other members; and (3) spectating the disciplinary techniques enacted upon those bodies and practices (Table 7).

First, participants reported spectating the idealized running body, and described how such spectatorship shaped their knowledge about the value of some bodies and what it means to be or have a *good* distance running body. One participant put it plainly:

“I know for a lot of people, it’s just like maybe more that, like, social stigma from other runners. Like, oh, why do you like that? Or seeing other runners and being like, oh, why don’t I look like that?...You see and hear it from other people. Like, oh, in order to fit in, you need to fit this ideal. In order to succeed, you need to fit this ideal. Whether or not people are saying that in explicit terms, it’s still something you’ll see.”

Specifically, participants reported spectating the bodies of their peers, their mentors and role models, and even professional athletes, and explained what they gleaned from such spectatorship. One participant said this about spectating their peers with an idealized body type: “I think for me, [I learned by] just kind of looking at the really fast girls on my team. That’s the body type they always had, so I was kind of like, oh, I don’t fit in here if I want to be that fast. Like, I need to look like them.” Another said this:

“I’m training and I’m participating in these distance races, and then I’m exposed to others who either look like me or don’t look like me, and are performing like me or not performing like me. And at my lowest weight, I performed the absolute best that I ever did in a distance race. And the folks who were, you know, finishing that race with me looked like me. So, at that point, I felt like it was more of a reinforcement of, this is the culture, this is how you perform well, being this size.”

Others reflected on spectating mentors and role models. One participant reflected on this experience, in terms of spectating body shape and size: “If I see the D1 team, I feel more self-conscious about myself. And that’s the only time I think that I do compare my physical body,

because they all do look very much...they're all built the same...they all match the stereotype, essentially." Another shared this sentiment: "We were around [the University's] team a lot. When we'd go to [the University's] meets, we'd be by them and again, they were all kind of the same. Shorter and slimmer...When you see successful runners, that's more the body type that they have."

Others still reported spectating the bodies of professional athletes. One participant explained, with regard to spectating professional runners' form: "I see, like, professional runners running in that way, or really successful runners running with this, like, smooth, you know, upright, not flailing around type of run. And so in order to look like I know what I'm doing, I adopt those postures." Another explained, with regard to professional runners' body types:

"Professional running had a lot of those individuals that fit that kind of stereotype, and even just like, I know with...that kind of narrative of, like, you need to be smaller...I feel like a lot of people really embrace that, and, like, they kind of believe that, and then their beliefs are confirmed by seeing those professional runners. Like, oh, they just broke a world record and fit my idea of what they should look like, so that must be true then."

A third said this: "I know that a lot of Nike runners had this 120 pound weight that they were supposed to be around for female runners our age...and so you think, like, oh, that's the standard elite athletes are held at, that's what I should aim for."

In addition to spectating other bodies, participants described spectating others' organizational practices. Sometimes, this spectatorship took the form of observing the practice of other runners, whereas other times, this spectatorship took the form of observing the practices of those in power. Again, with regard to spectating the practice of other runners, participants reflected on watching their peers, their mentors, and professional runners. One participant had this to say about spectating their peers using maximum effort in their practice: "There are a couple of girls

who are super fast, and they always go run off with the boys and never do I see them slow down for a run with some of us more average-paced people.” Another said this:

“After any big meet, you always see the really good kids, they always go out for a cooldown. And the cooldown is, like, the one thing that I don’t think anybody wants to actually do. And so that’s the thing...I know the JV kids on my team, they would just, like, they said ‘cool down’ and they’d go walk to McDonalds or something.”

A third shared a similar sentiment: “The good kids always did their stretches and did their cooldowns and whatnot. And that kind of distinguishes them from the rest of the team because they, like, don’t cut corners.”

Others spoke to spectating their peers’ fueling practices, and learning from such spectatorship. One had this to say: “Definitely in high school, and maybe early college, I learned a lot [about what to eat] from other runners, but then I kind of realized that was a little toxic. Because most people are just like, low calories.” Another shared a similar experience: “I remember freshman year...I was starting to eat with the same two people all the time in the dining courts, and I started to notice, like, how they were always eating the same type of salad. And, like, I was starting to get concerned for them at that point in time.” In addition to spectating peers, distance runners may also spectate the practices of professional runners. One participant shared this story with regard to spectating professional runners’ organizational practice:

“The next time I went to the pool, I swam for a whole hour because I was like, I can do this. And part of it was that I saw a professional runner who had posted her swim workouts. And I was like, I don’t care how slow it is, I’m going to do it all the way through...If she can do it...then I can do it.”

It is clear that spectatorship of other bodies and their practices is a common occurrence, and that it plays a teaching (read *disciplinary*) role within the organizing context of distance running.

Distance runners also engage in spectatorship of disciplinary mechanisms themselves. In particular, participants reflected on spectating coach behavior, and reported the ways by which they learned through this spectatorship. One participant shared this story, with regard to coach behavior around the idealized distance running body type:

“Our coach ordered new leggings, and she ordered one pair of mediums and rest were smalls. But then, I didn’t get those mediums. They went to a different girl because she was taller than me...I ended up getting a pair of smalls and they literally did not fit. Things like that were definitely very hard for me. Like, I always felt like...I knew I was a medium, and I was comfortable in a medium...but I definitely wish I had a different body type.”

Another participant reflected on spectating coach behavior around fueling habits:

“I do remember, like, after workouts, our coach would give us, like, chocolate milk and Nature Valley bars. And I do remember this kid asked for two granola bars, and our coach was like, no. And he had, like, a whole bin of them, and there was like, maybe twenty of us...And I also remember...the chocolate milk he gave us was literally in the tiniest cup ever, those tiny Dixie cups. You maybe got a couple sips. I was like, okay this is like...they wouldn’t say they were going to restrict us, but they would show it.”

A third participant shared this story about coach behavior around the value of performance generally:

“When I first started, we had a coach who was in his 40th year of coaching there. We had 136 girls on the team, and it was a very big sisterhood thing. It was like, we don’t care how fast you go, we don’t care...My junior year, is when the new coach took over...she was more like, okay, speed. We gotta win. And I think, by the time I graduated, we had about 70 girls left on the team, just because...the people who weren’t really fast were kind of, like, well, I don’t have a point on this team anymore.”

Another participant shared a similar story:

“In distance culture, we tend to respect people that are really, really fast...We respect the hustle, we respect the grind. And there were kids on the team who were absolute assholes, but because they were so fast, we gave them all the

respect...even coach. He didn't like the way they acted, he didn't like their attitudes. But because they were fast, coach didn't really care."

These examples clearly illustrate the ways in which spectating coach behavior in particular serves a disciplinary function.

Importantly, each form of spectatorship reviewed here may occur in face-to-face settings, or in digital spaces. Participants described the use of one running-specific social media platform called Strava, and explained how it played a role in spectatorship:

"[Strava] just uploads a map of your run and then it does the pace, and I'm pretty sure you can, like, find out pace per mile and heart rate and stuff. And then people can like your run and it's called 'giving kudos,' and then you can, like, comment on people's runs too, but not many people do that. And then you can upload pictures for the run. Like, I know that sometimes one of my friends here likes taking a picture before the run, and he will upload that with it. So you can see us running at, like, sunrise or something."

Another participant also reflected on their use of Strava:

"I use [Strava] to track my runs, and then I basically use it to scroll through other people's posts and see where they're running. Usually, if it's a good distance, like a good seven miles, I'll be like, oh, okay, like, where did they run this?...There are some people who post who they run with, like, every time they run...Some people will post food that they had...and I know some other people who will post the dinner that they had after their run."

Others shared their experiences spectating on in other digital spaces. For example, one participant said: "Someone like Emma Coburn or Gwen Jorgensen...I see them most...on YouTube, or just watching their races. Gwen has a YouTube, so I've seen quite a bit of Bowerman [Track Club] through her."

Given the functions of such social media platforms, it is clear that spectatorship in these digital spaces may operate similarly to that in face-to-face settings. It follows, then, that

spectatorship on social media platforms may play a teaching or disciplinary role. One participant shared this story related to spectating athlete body types:

“I feel like, if you follow any professional runners on Instagram or anything, which I do...I can’t think of any one of them that are, like, necessarily bigger than the others. They all have this body type that I can see why it would be easy to be like, okay, I need that body type if I want to go to the Olympics...If you’re nothing like that, then how could you ever get to that?”

Whether in face-to-face settings or in digital spaces, it is clear that spectatorship is common, and that it plays a teaching or disciplinary role in this organizing context. Importantly, however, such spectatorship – particularly of bodies and practices which run counter to oppressive knowledge – may introduce new knowledge to distance runners and, in this way, play a resistance rather than disciplinary role.

For example, some participants reported spectating the choice by members to resist the expectation to engage maximum effort and, instead, engage an effort that illustrates and enacts more inclusive membership. One participant explained:

“Especially in a club where we invite people who have never run before, like, we offer it to anybody who want to join. And so...somebody shows up on the first day, and they have never really run before but they want to get into running more regularly...obviously, they’re not going to be at a pace of people who have been running for years. It’s fun to see the people who are, like, stepping up, and they’ll go and they’ll stay with them no matter what pace they’re going.”

Another participant described a similar experience:

“Sometimes you see, like, a divide between the girls and the guys, but I always appreciate when there are guys who are like, okay, I don’t care, I’m going to run this girls’ pace because...you don’t always have to go at your super fast boy pace...I do have friends who are like, if you’re running with me today, you know you’re going slow, and [I’m] like, that’s totally fine.”

Another spoke to spectating the eating habits of their fellow runners which resist expectations about restricting caloric intake:

“I didn’t see or hear people talking about food in a negative way. Like, as a team, we would get Chick-Fil-A all the time together, which isn’t healthy, but also, I think it suggests that we all had a decent relationship with food...like, we ate what we wanted to. I’m grateful that... we were all very close and also that [we] had a healthy relationship with the sport and our bodies and ourselves.”

Others yet spoke to spectating other practices which resisted the value of performance over health. One participant, also quoted above, spoke to the power of spectating mere presence at an organizational meeting about menstruation: “We actually had a couple of guys show up just, like, because they were curious, and so I thought that was really cool...I never would have expected that.” This example demonstrates how spectating the mere presence of members may resist not only the value of performance over health, but also the organizational expectation that such topics are off-limits to male members or are somehow only a *female issue*.

Finally, participants reported spectating the organizational practice and disciplinary action (or the lack thereof) of authority figures. In particular, participants described spectating coach behavior which resisted oppressive knowledge regarding expectations related to effort-level and its relation to membership. One participant explained:

“[Coach] would spend a lot of time with us, and he was, like, marathon training. So...we had this proof that he kind of knew what he was doing. And then he would run with us a lot. Like, even, like, people that were obviously way slower than him. Like, he’s come and run with them on some runs. He’s really just, like...he’d actually get to know us, and you could tell he cared about each of us personally.”

Others described spectating coach behavior which resisted oppressive knowledge about restrictive or disordered eating: “On the way back from meets, [the coaches] would pick us all up pizza. Like, between two girls, a full pizza. And they ordered for everyone...They weren’t, like, pressuring us to have a bad relationship with food, or trying to change it.”

Another shared a similar experience:

“I had a really great environment in high school and, like, even our assistant coach was like...he would buy us donuts. Like, ‘you need to eat double the calories, I don’t want anyone losing weight,’ and he was like, ‘why aren’t you eating the donuts?’ We’re like, ‘we’re still running! Wait until we’re done! [laughs].”

Of course, spectating organizational practice and disciplinary techniques which conform to organizational knowledge can be oppressive; however, these examples illustrate the power of spectating practice which resists oppressive organizational knowledge.

Table 7: Oppressive and Resistant Possibilities of Spectatorship in Distance Running

Spectated	Oppressive Possibilities	Resistant Possibilities
Bodies	Spectating idealized bodies leads to the reproduction of the very oppressive power/knowledge which idealizes them.	Spectating non-idealized bodies leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges taken-for-granted truths about distance running bodies and creates space for the inclusion and acceptance of diverse bodies.
Practices	Spectating idealized practices leads to the reproduction of the very oppressive power/knowledge which idealizes them.	Spectating non-idealized practices leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges taken-for-granted truths about distance running practices and creates space for the inclusion and acceptance of diverse practices.
Discipline	Spectating the discipline of non-idealized bodies and practices leads to the reproduction of the very oppressive power/knowledge which legitimizes and necessitates the discipline.	<p>Spectating <i>the absence of</i> discipline of non-idealized bodies and practices leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges the legitimacy and necessity of the discipline.</p> <p>Spectating the discipline of idealized bodies and practices leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges the taken-for-granted truths about distance running bodies and practices.</p>

Note. These results reflect experiences of distance runners whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement. Additionally, spectatorship necessitates *visibility*, which is enabled and constrained by power/knowledge structures.

Embodied Narration

The above results with regard to spectatorship within the organizing context of distance running provides insight into the ways by which embodied narration may manifest and participate in processes of knowledge production in this context. Certainly, the process of embodied narration

(including spectatorship) does not involve the written or spoken word. However, it will be important to discuss this process and articulate possible examples of embodied narration to fully understand the relationships between power, knowledge, and the body, and to make meaningful change toward a more inclusive, accessible, and just organization. Importantly, the following considerations *do not* violate the assumptions of embodied narration, as it is possible to speak about the process of embodied narration without implying that the process itself involves speaking. Nevertheless, it is also important to note that the following discussion merely considers some possibilities of embodied narration, grounded in the theoretical model of postmodern narrative knowledge production developed in chapter 2 as well as in the results of the present analysis regarding research questions one and two. The following discussion does not intend to provide an exhaustive list of possible manifestations or enactments of embodied narration; nor does it imply that these results reflect a singular, final interpretation of embodied narration in the organizing context of distance running. Rather, it intends to illustrate possibilities for embodied narration in this context and make clear possibilities for embodied narration in other contexts.

Before turning to specific examples of embodied narration (Table 9), it will be important to return to some assumptions advanced earlier about this process. First, embodied narration refers to *the expression of the body's stories (and, therefore, the expression of knowledge and power) through the body without the imposition of the spoken or written word*. The model of postmodern narrative knowledge production developed here understands the body *as story* – as both medium and message – to be read through spectatorship. In this way, the body itself is discursive: at once a product and producer of organizational power/knowledge. Embodied narration is the daily, narrative, bodily practice which reproduces or resists oppressive power/knowledge in the absence of interpretive or explanatory language. This practice may be active or passive, occurring in the

absence or presence of conscious intent, and may involve nothing more than *being* or *being visible*. The process of embodied narration is completed by the spectator, who views and interprets the practice, resisting or reproducing it, thus, resisting or reproducing oppressive power/knowledge. Interpretation may be guided by spectator knowledge or values, and may be evaluated using *narrative rationality*, including *narrative fidelity* – whether the story rings true – and *narrative probability* – whether the story is coherent. It may be the case that those bodies which are deemed *fideli*ous or *probable* may be understood to be *good* or *real* organizational bodies, reflecting organizational reality, whereas those which are deemed *infideli*ous or *nonprobable* may be understood to be *bad* or *not real* organizational bodies, not reflecting organizational reality.

In the context of distance running, as deduced from the results above, embodied narration may manifest in bodily practices and/or appearances (Table 8). First, in terms of practice, embodied narration may manifest during running workouts or cross- or supplemental training, and/or as fueling, rest, or recovery practices. Whether the embodied narration reproduces or resists oppressive power/knowledge depends upon the extent to which the practice aligns with that knowledge. For example, the running practice of a runner who completes running or cross-training workouts even when in pain, injured, or exhausted can be understood as an oppressive manifestation of embodied narration, as spectators may read this practice as a reflection of oppressive power/knowledge structures. If a spectator accepts and reproduces this practice, oppressive power/knowledge is reproduced. If this spectator rejects this practice and fails to reproduce it, oppressive power/knowledge is not reproduced. Further, if this spectator rejects this practice and in turn reproduces alternative practices, resistant power/knowledge may be produced. On the other hand, the running practice of a runner who does not complete running or cross-training workouts when in pain, injured, or exhausted can be understood as a resistant

manifestation of embodied narration, as spectators may read this practice as a rejection of oppressive power/knowledge structures. If this spectator accepts and reproduces this practice, resistant power/knowledge is reproduced. If this spectator rejects this practice and fails to reproduce it, resistant power/knowledge is not reproduced. Further, if this spectator rejects this practice and in turn produces alternative practices, oppressive power/knowledge may be produced.

Embodied narration may also manifest in bodily appearances, including body shape/size, running form, running pace or speed, clothing, or changes to any of the above. For example, the bodily appearance of a runner who is/has an idealized body size or type can be understood as oppressive embodied narration, as spectators may read this appearance as a reflection of oppressive power/knowledge structures. If a spectator accepts and reproduces this appearance, oppressive power/knowledge is reproduced. If this spectator rejects this appearance and fails to reproduce it, oppressive power/knowledge is not reproduced. Further, if this spectator rejects this appearance and in turn reproduces alternative practices, resistant power/knowledge may be produced. On the other hand, the bodily appearance of a runner who is not/does not have an idealized body size or type can be understood as a resistant manifestation of embodied narration, as spectators may read this appearance as a rejection of oppressive power/knowledge structures. If this spectator accepts and reproduces this appearance, resistant power/knowledge is reproduced. Further, if this spectator rejects this appearance and in turn produces alternative practices, oppressive power/knowledge may be produced.

Here it becomes clear the importance of intentionality and consciousness. It is fair to assume that most bodily practices involve some level of intent and conscious enactment. Some elements of bodily appearance – including running form and speed, clothing, and bodily changes,

may also involve some level of intent and conscious enactment. However, other elements of bodily appearance, including body size or shape, skin color, bodily functions, and sexual characteristics which indicate biological sex, simply are. Certainly, there are exceptions. For example, distance runners may intentionally engage in particular practices to gain or lose weight, or to change their physical appearance in some other way. However, most elements of bodily appearance discussed here exist in the absence of intent or consciousness. Nevertheless, when such bodily appearances are visible for spectatorship, they participate in processes of knowledge production. Therefore, a discussion of visibility is warranted.

As described above, visibility is important in processes of embodied narration, as spectatorship necessarily involves *looking* and *seeing*. Those practices and bodies which are visible to be spectated participate in oppressive and resistant processes of knowledge production, whereas those practices and bodies which are invisible to potential spectators do not. In some cases, visibility is within the control of the individual. For example, wearing clothing which reveals one's body, practicing in view of others, or sharing organizational practices, photographs, or biometric data in a digital space can all be understood as intentional acts which render the body and its practices visible. Further, wearing clothing which conceals one's body, practicing out of view of others, or abstaining from sharing organizational practices, photographs, or biometric data in a digital space can all be understood as intentional acts which render the body and its practices invisible. This does not mean that distance runners necessarily enact visibility/invisibility for the purpose of knowledge production – however, it does mean that these organizational members have some semblance of control over their visibility.

Table 8: Manifestations of Embodied Narration in Distance Running

Category	General Manifestation	Oppressive Manifestation	Resistant Manifestation
Practices	Running workouts	Completing running workouts even when in pain, injured, or exhausted.	Not completing running workouts when in pain, injured, or exhausted.
	Cross-/supplemental training	Running instead of cross-training when in pain, injured, or exhausted.	Cross-training instead of running when in pain, injured, or exhausted.
		Cross-training as much as possible, even when it causes or exacerbates pain, injury, or exhaustion.	Not cross-training when it causes or exacerbates pain, injury, or exhaustion.
	Fueling	Restricting or otherwise improperly fueling to attain an idealized body, even when it causes or exacerbates pain, injury, or exhaustion.	Not restricting or otherwise fueling improperly; Fueling properly.
	Rest/recovery	Not taking rest or recovery, even when in pain, injured, or exhausted.	Taking proper rest or recovery.
Bodies	Body shape/size	Having/revealing a small, efficient, or idealized body shape/size; Not having/revealing a non-idealized body shape/size.	Not having/revealing a small, efficient, or idealized body shape/size; Having/revealing a non-idealized body shape/size.
	Running form	Having/revealing efficient or idealized form; Not having/revealing non-idealized form.	Not having/revealing efficient or idealized form; Having/revealing non-idealized form.
	Pace/speed	Having/revealing fast or idealized pace/speed; Not having/revealing idealized pace/speed.	Not having/revealing fast or idealized pace/speed; Having/revealing non-idealized pace/speed.
	Clothing	Having/revealing efficiency-focused or idealized clothing/accessories; Not having/revealing non-idealized clothing/accessories.	Not having/revealing efficiency-focused or idealized clothing/accessories; Having/revealing non-idealized clothing/accessories.
	Body changes	Acquiring/revealing changes which move <i>toward</i> their idealized forms; Not acquiring/revealing changes which move <i>away</i> from their idealized forms.	Not acquiring/revealing changes which move <i>toward</i> their idealized forms; Acquiring/revealing changes which move <i>away</i> from their idealized forms.

In other cases, however, visibility is outside of the control of the individual. As described above, visibility depends in part upon membership, which is discursively produced and disciplined through a variety of power/knowledge structures including those unique to the organizing context of distance running (i.e., the performance value; the efficiency value) and those external to this organization (i.e., class, gender, and race). Importantly for the present discussion, those practices and bodily appearances which reflect dominant power/knowledge structures within and outside the organization are understood to be more *good* or *real* – characterized by narrative probability – and are thus rendered more visible than those which do not.

Conclusion

This chapter has detailed the results of a grounded-theory analysis of textual and photographic data. This analysis addressed research questions one, two, and three, specifically revealing the unique organizational knowledge within the organizing context of distance running, the disciplinary mechanisms within this context which serve to produce docile bodies and reproduce existing knowledge and power structures, and some ways through which bodies may participate in knowledge production, reproduction, and resistance through embodied narration. Although I have provided a tentative account of some of the possible embodied narration processes within the organizing context of distance running, it is important, from a postmodern narrative theoretical perspective to recognize that the explanation posed above is but one of many possible interpretations. In order to create space for alternative – or even contradictory – interpretations, I present a collection of participant photographs in Chapter 5. Importantly, photographs are presented in the absence of the written or spoken word, as to allow the bodies and practices within the photographs to speak for themselves. Further, the selection of photographs is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather provides brief insight into the ways in which the body itself may

discipline knowledge, either toward the reproduction of oppressive knowledge and power *or* toward the production of new knowledge and more equitable power structures.

Table 9: Examples of Embodied Narration in Distance Running

Oppressive Enactment Examples	Resistant Enactment Examples
Runner wears revealing clothing, making visible their idealized body shape/size.	Runner wears revealing clothing, making visible their non-idealized body shape/size.
Runner wears concealing clothing, making invisible their non-idealized body shape/size.	Runner wears concealing clothing, making invisible their idealized body shape/size.
Runner practices at top speed, making visible their commitment to this idealized practice.	Runner does not practice at top speed, making visible their lack of commitment to this idealized practice.
Runner wears efficiency-focused clothing, making visible their commitment to this clothing ideal.	Runner does not wear efficiency-focused clothing, making visible their lack of commitment to this clothing ideal.
Runner does not wear inefficient or non-idealized clothing, making visible their commitment to this clothing ideal.	Runner wears inefficient or non-idealized clothing, making visible their lack of commitment to this clothing ideal.
Runner practices with a group, making visible their idealized body shape/size, form, speed, clothing, body changes, and organizational practices.	Runner practices with a group, making visible their non-idealized body shape/size, form, speed, clothing, body changes, and organizational practices.
Runner practices alone, making invisible their non-idealized body shape/size, form, speed, clothing, body changes, and organizational practices.	Runner practices alone, making invisible their idealized body shape/size, form, speed, clothing, body changes, and organizational practices.

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of possible enactments of embodied narration in this context.

Applying the knowledge acquired by reading the results presented in the present chapter, readers – as spectators themselves – may draw conclusions that differ from my own. From a postmodern perspective, however, this multiplicity of narrative possibilities is merely characteristic of the narrative experience, and ought not be considered a weakness. Rather, such multiplicities provide insight into the various ways that bodies participate in processes of knowledge production and offer support for the complex nature of the postmodern experience.

Again, I encourage readers to familiarize themselves with the knowledge presented in Chapter 4 before ultimately taking on a spectator role, immersing themselves in participant photographs, and drawing conclusions about the many ways through which bodies themselves speak.

CHAPTER 5: PARTICIPANT PHOTOGRAPHS







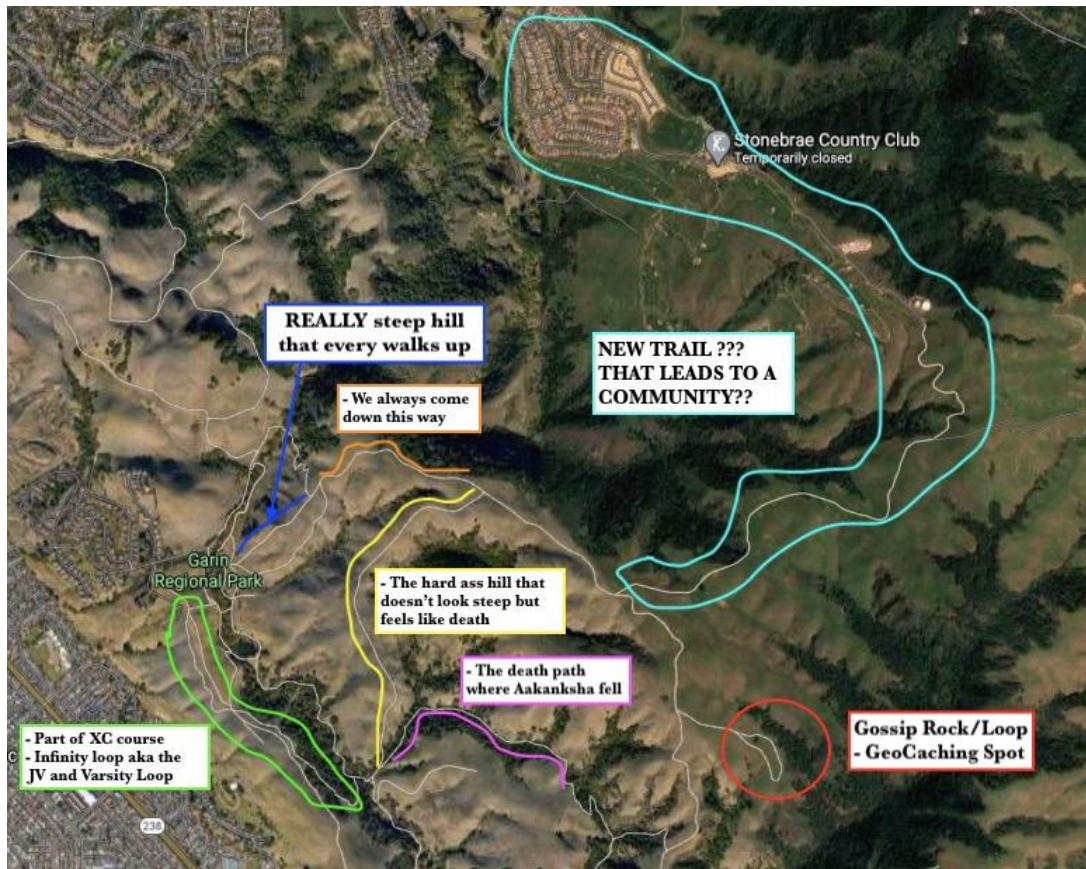




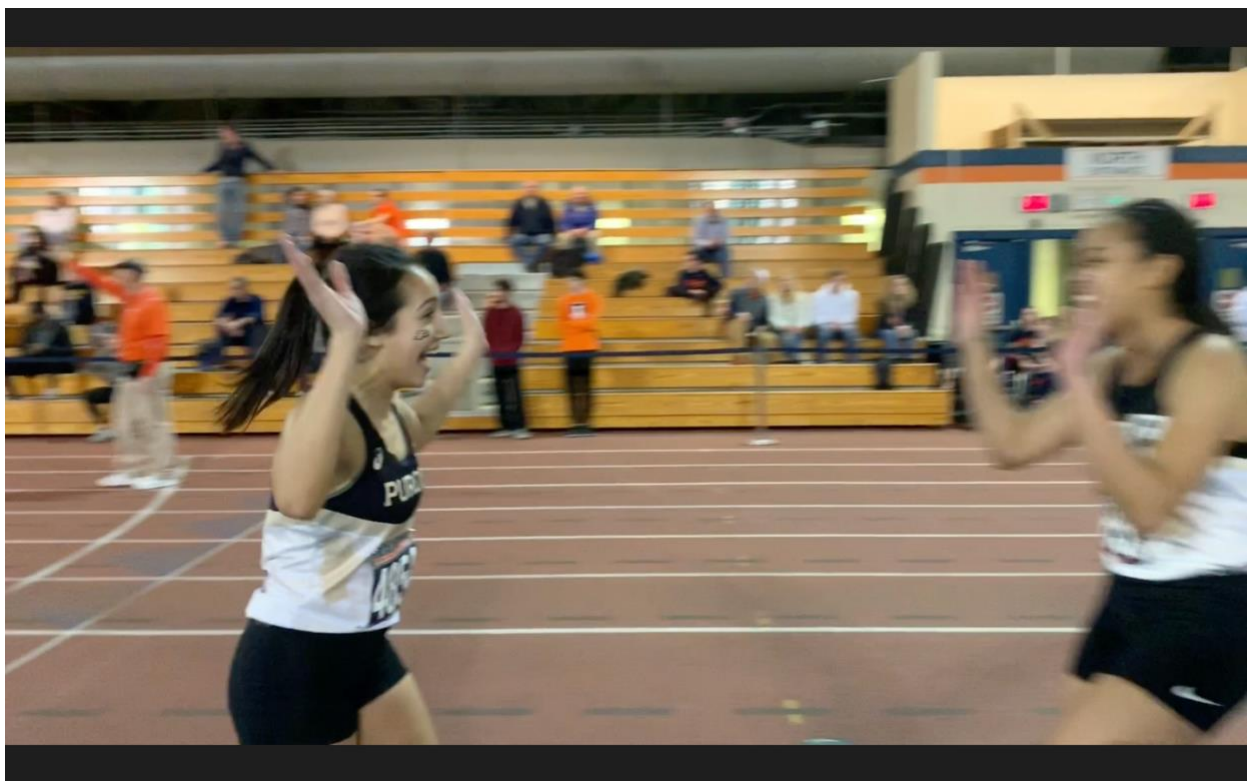
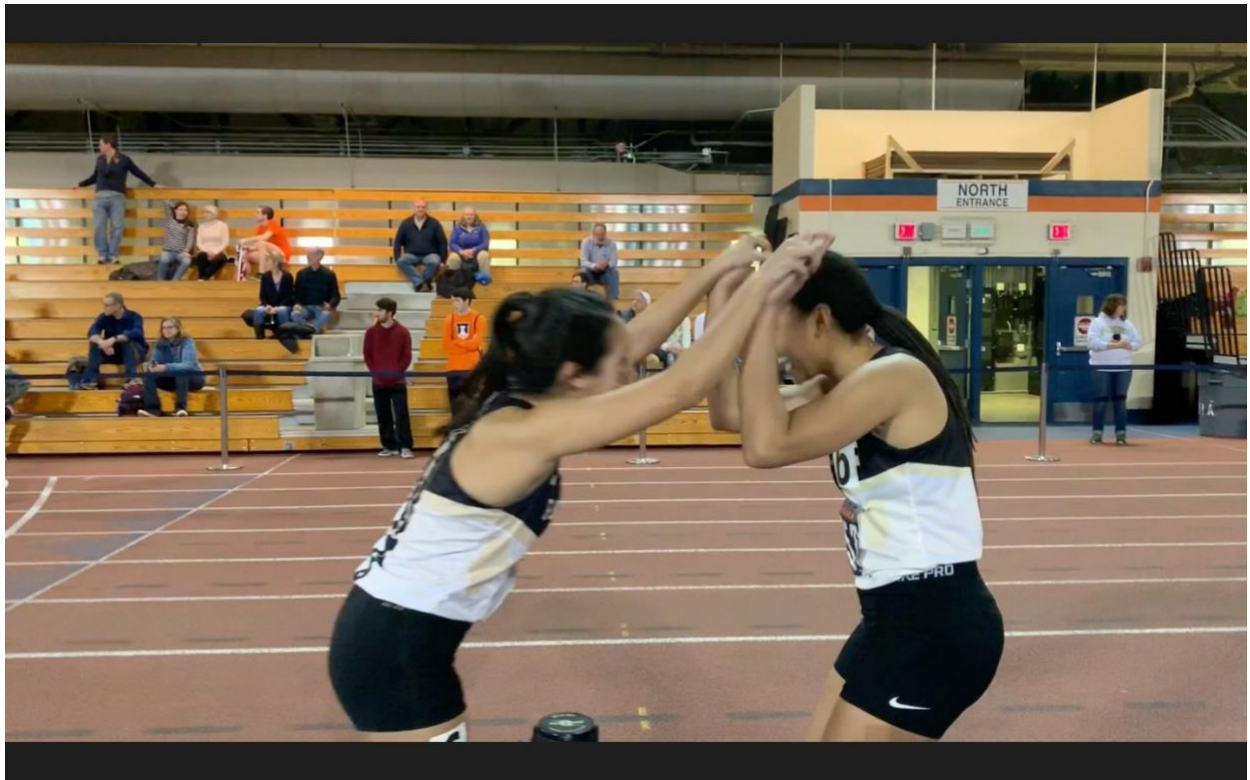














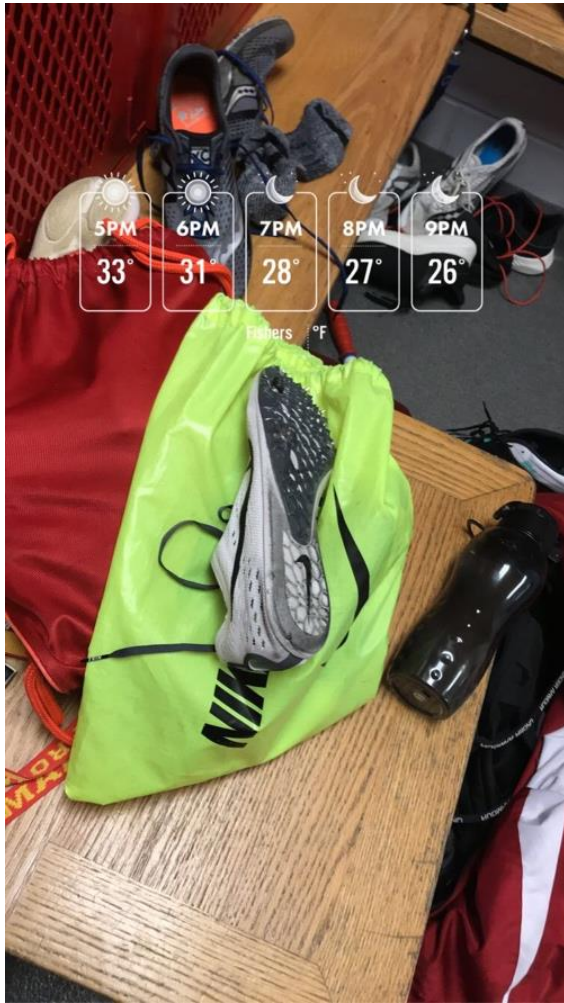












CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

Introduction

This study explored the role of the body in processes of knowledge production. Specifically, this study examined a new theoretical concept – *embodied narration* – and its role in the production, reproduction, or resistance of oppressive knowledge and power in the organizing context of distance running. Chapter 1 introduced the goals of the project. Chapter 2 introduced the postmodern narration theoretical framework which guided this project, and reviewed the relevant literature related to knowledge production and narratives in the field of organizational communication, as well as that related to bodies and narratives in the context of distance running. Chapter 3 described the photovoice methodology and specific data collection methods employed, and Chapter 4 presented the results of the grounded theory analytical approach taken. Chapter 5 presented a collection of participant photographs, which serve not only to supplement the results presented in Chapter 4, but also to include readers as spectators of embodied narration processes.

This chapter serves to provide a detailed discussion of findings, unpack the implications of these findings, consider the strengths and limitations of this study, and ultimately provide a call to action to researchers studying processes of knowledge production, the discursive power of the body as story, and/or the organizing context of distance running.

Key Findings

Knowledge

This study conceptualized embodied narration as one part of a much larger narrative process of knowledge production. Specifically, embodied narration is understood to reproduce or

resist the unique organizational power/knowledge of the organization in which it occurs. For this reason, it was vital that this study identify the specific knowledge which exists within the organizing context of distance running. From a postmodern perspective, knowledge can be understood as those taken-for-granted truths and ideologies within an organization. Further, knowledge can be understood as being embedded in organizational structures, bodies, and other material and immaterial things (Giddens, 1984; Foucault, 1975; 1976). In this study, a grounded theory analysis revealed that knowledge manifested primarily as *membership*, *bodies*, and *practices*.

Because a wide range of ideologies exist within the organizing context of distance running, membership criteria, practices, and bodies are constituted in a multitude of ways, as is consistent with a postmodern understanding of articulation (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). This analysis revealed two distinct ideologies among distance runners, each oriented around member goals. Some participate in this organization simply to have fun, relieve stress, or be a part of a community. Others, however, participate in this organization primarily to accomplish some performance-related goal. Depending on the ideology one ascribes to, knowledge will manifest as membership criteria, practices, and bodies in such a way that is consistent with the goals of the individual.

Among those whose primary goals are related to having fun, relieving stress, or being part of a community, membership criteria, bodies, and practices are constituted in a fairly inclusive way. Specifically, membership is open to individuals of all shapes, sizes, backgrounds, and ability levels. Although members may participate in many of the same organizational practices as those with performance-related goals, including running workouts, cross-training, fueling, and rest and recovery, these practices are undertaken in such a way that allows for the achievement of their primary goals: having fun, relieving stress, or being a part of a community. In this way, all bodies

and practices are acceptable, and all those who engage in organizational practices are understood to be *real* members of the organization. Alternatively, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement or performance, membership criteria, bodies, and practices are constituted in a much less inclusive way. Specifically, bodies and practices are constituted as *good* or *bad* – more *real* or less *real* – depending on their real or perceived relationship to the goal of athletic achievement.

This finding is consistent with postmodern understandings of disciplinary knowledge, including the postmodern concept of *competence*. Lyotard (1979) uses the term *competence* to describe knowledge and practice which plays by the rules of *language games*, and ultimately serve to reproduce and justify the existence and validity of very rules which dictate them. Giddens (1984) similarly uses the term *competence* to refer to the “awareness of social rules” (p. 21) and the ability to enact behavior which ascribes to them. To apply this concept to the present study, *good* or *more real* practices and bodies can be understood as *competent*, whereas *bad* or *less real* practices and bodies can be understood as *incompetent*. Further, this finding is consistent with Fisher’s (1984) concept of *narrative rationality*. Narrative rationality relies on *narrative fidelity* – whether a story rings true – and *narrative probability* – whether the story is coherent. Given that this project understands bodies as inherently narrative and, further, bodies themselves *as stories*, the concept of narrative rationality can be applied to bodies and bodily practices. In fact, those bodies and practices which are understood to be *good*, *more real*, or *competent* can be understood as being narratively *rational*, whereas those which are understood to be *bad*, *less real*, or *incompetent* can be understood as being narratively *irrational*.

This study identified a variety of practices in which distance runners engage and revealed the ways by which such practices are constituted as *good* or *bad*. Distance runners, regardless of

goals, engage in practices including, but not limited to, running workouts, cross- or supplemental training, fueling, and rest and recovery. Among those whose primary goals are related to having fun or being part of a community, these practices are generally constituted in inclusive ways, with all approaches to these practices being constituted as *good*. However, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement, practices are constituted in more exclusive, sometimes oppressive ways. Specifically, practices which are understood to improve the changes that one will achieve their performance goals are understood to be *good*, whereas those which are understood to hamper one's ability to achieve these goals are understood to be *bad*.

Similarly, distance running bodies (and, in particular, the way they look) are constituted as *good* or *bad*. Among those whose primary goals are related to having fun or being part of a community, bodies – like practices – are generally constituted in inclusive ways, with all bodies being constituted as *good*. However, among those whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement, bodies are constituted in more exclusive ways. Specifically, those which are understood to be more efficient and, thus, more capable of achieving performance goals are understood to be *good*, whereas those which are understood to be less efficient and, thus, less capable of achieving these goals are understood to be *bad*. This finding is consistent with past research revealing the salience of a machine body metaphor in sport, which understands the body in terms of input and output (e.g., Gleyse, 2013; Segrave, 1997). Specifically, those bodies which carry less weight, move in efficient ways, and/or are adorned with efficiency-minded apparel are constituted as *good*, whereas those which carry more weight, move in inefficient ways, and/or are adorned with inefficient clothing or accessories are constituted as *bad*.

Although the constitution of practices and bodies may appear rather straight forward, it is in fact quite complicated, as there exist a variety of tensions, oppressive values, and paradoxes

within the organizing context of distance running. This study revealed two primary tensions. Distance runners are faced with the challenges of balancing health with performance – specifically managing one’s health and performing well – and balancing pain with pleasure – specifically balancing the pain of practices with the pleasure of practices, or at the very least, the pleasure of accomplishing one’s goals. Distance runners must, for example, balance proper fueling with maintaining an efficient body size, balance injury prevention with maintaining fitness, and balance rest and recovery with maintaining other vital practices like running.

In the absence of oppressive values, distance runners may enact agency to accomplish these balancing acts. However, there exist two primary oppressive values which constrain distance runner agency and create inescapable paradoxes. First, there exists a value on performance over health. This performance value is consistent with past research in sport, specifically the *performance narrative* – “a story of single-minded dedication to sport performance to the exclusion of other areas of life and self” (Douglas & Carless, 2009, p. 215) – which has been found to be salient among athletes (Busanich et al., 2012; 2014; Douglas & Carless, 2006; 2009). The performance narrative constrains distance runners’ agency, as they face pressure to work toward athletic achievement at any cost if they are to be understood and accepted as *good, real, or competent* members of this organization. In this way, distance runners may feel pressure to prioritize maintaining an efficient body size *over* proper fueling, maintaining fitness *over* preventing, treating, or disclosing injury, and/or maintaining running practices *over* taking rest or recovery. Each of these practices is constituted as being *beneficial* to one’s chances of achieving performance-related goals; unfortunately, they may actually increase one’s chances of short- or long-term injury or burnout, outcomes which would be *detrimental* to one’s chances of achieving these goals. It should come as no surprise that the prevalence of eating disorders is higher in

athletes than in the general population, and that elite athletes (presumably those whose primary goals are related to performance) are at higher risk than casual runners (Sundgot-Borgen & Torstveit, 2004; Torstveit et al., 2008). In fact, upwards of 58% of female college athletes – and 38% of male college athletes – are at risk for bulimia nervosa, and 35% of female athletes – and 10% of male college athletes – are at risk for anorexia nervosa (NEDA, 2018). Importantly to this discussion, disordered eating and clinical eating disorders pose a significant threat not only to the general health and wellbeing of distance runners, but specifically to bone health, which is vital for engaging in organizational practices toward performance-related goals (e.g., Joy, Kussman, & Nattic, 2016; Sanborn et al., 2000).

In addition to the performance value, there exists a value on performance over pleasure. This is particularly complex, as the organizational practices involved in distance running are understood as inherently painful, and members are understood as having consented to the experience of that pain. In this way, once members have *chosen* to commit to their goal of athletic achievement, agency around pain is constrained in such a way that practice, even when painful, is understood to be non-negotiable. To complicate things further, some understand their commitment to organizational practices not as a *choice* but as a *need*. The practice of those who understand their practice as *necessary* is inherently constrained, and places distance runners in a position where they may feel pressure to ignore, conceal, or train through the pain which characterizes that practice. Again, ignoring, concealing, or training through pain is understood as being *beneficial* to one's chances at achieving performance-related goals; however, they may actually increase the possibility of short- and/or long-term injury and burnout, outcomes which would be *detrimental* to one's chances of achieving these goals.

Ultimately, the discontinuity between expectations related to balancing health and performance *and* prioritizing performance over health – as well as that between expectations related to balancing pain and pleasure *and* prioritizing performance (though painful) over pleasure – creates a paradox. In order to be understood as *good*, *real*, or *competent*, a distance runner must *simultaneously* balance health and performance *and* prioritize performance over health and must *simultaneously* balance pain and pleasure *and* prioritize performance over pleasure: impossibilities which complicate the experiences and knowledge of distance runners. Practices like proper and improper fueling, proper and improper injury prevention and treatment, and proper and improper rest and recovery are each constituted as *simultaneously* good *and* bad, *real* and *not real*, *competent* and *incompetent*, leading to inconsistent and sometimes contradictory understandings of membership criteria. Such experiences of tension and paradox are consistent with past research on postmodern organizations (e.g., Buzzanell, 2018; Mitra & Buzzanell, 2017; Putnam et al., 2016; Stoltzfus et al., 2011).

Discipline

In order to fully understand how such expectations are learned and enforced, it is important to consider the unique disciplinary techniques employed within the organizing context of distance running. Importantly, these techniques are used primarily to discipline those athletes whose primary goals are related to athletic achievement and performance. Because membership criteria, practices, and bodies are constituted in a fairly inclusive way among those whose primary goals are unrelated to achievement and performance, there appear to be few disciplinary techniques employed among these runners. Therefore, the following discussion of discipline applies primarily to those whose goals are performance-related, particularly to those who value – or are expected to value – performance over other aspects of their lives.

This study revealed three primary mechanisms through which practices and bodies are disciplined: explicit talk, surveillance, and self-surveillance. In addition to being explicitly told how to behave and how they should look, distance runners find themselves under the gaze of their coaches, their peers, out-group members, and themselves. These findings are consistent with past research in sports studies (e.g., Cosh et al., 2012; Denison & Mills, 2014; Godoy-Pressland, 2016; Johns & Johns, 2000; McMahon & Penney, 2013) and postmodern theorizing (Foucault, 1975; Lyotard, 1979). Some distance runners may become *docile bodies* – enacting *good* practices (e.g., pushing through pain), acquiring and reveal *good* bodies (e.g., acquiring an idealized body), or concealing *bad* practices or bodies. These practices and bodies reflect and reproduce oppressive power/knowledge structures. However, there is also room for resistance within this organizing context. Some distance runners may instead enact *bad* practices (e.g., taking appropriate rest and recovery), acquire and reveal *bad* bodies (e.g., resisting the acquisition of an idealized body), or concealing *good* practices or bodies. Again, these findings are consistent with existing and ongoing scholarship in the context of sport (e.g., Bridel, 2006; Bridel & Rail, 2007).

Interestingly, explicit talk, surveillance, and self-surveillance are present in face-to-face, as well as digital spaces. While these forms of discipline certainly occur at practice, during competition, and at other organizational meetings including shared meals, they are also present on social media platforms. Participants in this study described, for example, posting running workouts, photos, and other biomechanical data to Strava: a social media platform for runners, swimmers, and cyclists. This is particularly fascinating, as it reveals one way by which bodies and their practices are projecting into digital spaces. In this way, peers (and even coaches) can surveil runners, even when those doing the surveillance are not physically present.

Embodied Narration

The primary phenomenon of study in this project is *embodied narration* – the expression of organizational knowledge through the body without the imposition of the written or spoken word. In this study, it was vitally important that I did not impose language upon the bodies of my participants or of their photographic subjects, as this would violate the very assumptions of the theoretical concept of embodied narration. I achieved this by situating participants as spectators, rather than embodied narrators, in processes of knowledge production. Participants did not use language to tell the stories of their own bodies or the stories of others' bodies. Rather, participants described their experiences as spectators, reporting on what they observed, and what they learned from these observations. Further, participants captured their observations photographically to allow readers (including me) to be spectators themselves.

An initial analysis of experiences of spectatorship – the visual observation of embodied narratives – provided insight into the process of embodied narration and laid the groundwork for considerations for embodied narration in this context. Participants reported spectating *good* and *bad* practices and bodies. By simply spectating these practices and bodies, distance runners gain knowledge about what it means to be a *good* or *bad* member of this organization. For example, this study revealed that spectating idealized bodies and practices leads to the reproduction of the very oppressive power/knowledge which idealizes them. However, spectating non-idealized practices and bodies leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges taken-for-granted truths about distance running bodies, and creates space for the inclusion and acceptance of diverse practices and bodies. Further, and importantly, participants also reported spectating the discipline of *good* and *bad* practices and bodies. While spectating the discipline of non-idealized practices and bodies leads to the reproduction of oppressive power/knowledge, spectating the *absence of* discipline of non-idealized practices and bodies leads to the production

of resistant power/knowledge which challenges the legitimacy and necessity of the discipline. Further, spectating the discipline of idealized practices bodies toward more inclusive and liberating understandings of each leads to the production of resistant power/knowledge which challenges the taken-for-granted truths about distance running practices and bodies.

From these results, it is possible to consider some possibilities of embodied narration in the organizing context of distance running. Importantly, such consideration *does not* violate the assumption of embodied narration, as speaking about the process *does not* imply that the process itself involves speaking. Just as it is possible to speak about the discursive functions of silence, so too is it possible to speak about the discursive functions of the silent body. However, this study also leaves space for additional, alternative, or even contradictory interpretations of embodied narration in this context by presenting participant photographs in the absence of the written or spoken word. Employed with the pre-understanding necessary to draw meaningful conclusions, readers may identify other possibilities for spectatorship and embodied narration upon viewing these photographs. Such a multiplicity of interpretations is characteristic of postmodern experience and is an inherent strength of this project.

This study revealed that embodied narration may manifest in practice and in bodies. Whether the embodied narration reproduces or resists oppressive power/knowledge depends upon the extent to which it aligns with such knowledge. In terms of practices, oppressive manifestations include, but are not limited to: completing running workouts even when in pain, injured, or exhausted, restricting or otherwise improperly fueling to attain an idealized body, even when it causes pain, injury, or exhaustion, and not taking rest or recovery, even when in pain, injured, or exhausted. Resistant manifestations include but are not limited to: not completing running workouts when in pain, injured, or exhausted, fueling properly, and taking proper rest or recovery.

In terms of bodies, oppressive manifestations include, but are not limited to having/revealing a small, efficient, or otherwise idealized body, having/revealing efficient or otherwise idealized running form, or having/revealing efficiency-focused clothing or accessories. Importantly, just because some practices and bodies may manifest as embodied narration, this does not imply that there is conscious intent. Certainly, embodied narration may be employed strategically; however, it may also manifest free from consciousness or intentionality.

Given the importance of visual observation in spectatorship (in face-to-face or digital spaces), it is important to consider which bodies are visible, which are invisible, and how they are rendered such. It is no surprise that those bodies and practices which are understood to reflect *good*, *more real*, or *competent* membership are rendered more visible, whereas those which are understood to reflect *bad*, *less real*, or *incompetent* membership are rendered less visible. This occurs through the very disciplinary techniques described above. However, other power variables, including hierarchical power, class, gender, and race, also play a role in constituting visibility. This study revealed that those bodies which are most privileged in terms of organizational hierarchy (i.e., coaches), class (i.e., upper-class), gender (i.e., cisgender men), and race (i.e., white) generally have greater access to those resources which make possible the achievement of *good* organizational practices and bodies, and therefore have greater access to *real* membership and are more likely to be visible to spectators. Although it may be the case that distance runners engage in selective exposure to some extent, this study revealed that, in general, those bodies and practices which are understood to be *good* are in turn constituted as having *real* membership and are therefore more visible.

Importantly, those bodies which are more visible are more likely to participate in processes of knowledge production through embodied narration. Unfortunately, this means that those

practices and bodies which align with oppressive power/knowledge (and are therefore rendered visible through their *real* organizational membership) may be most likely to be spectated. Although resistant practices and bodies are those which may hold the most power in terms of their ability to make meaningful change, these practices and bodies are less visible, and therefore less likely to be spectated. This finding not only illustrates one mechanism by which oppressive power/knowledge endures, but also shines a light on the power of resistant embodied narration among those with power. From a resistance standpoint, it is up to those who are visible – or have the power to make visible the invisible – to enact or make possible the enactment and spectatorship of resistant embodied narration.

Implications for Theory

As this project is first and foremost focused on theory extension and the theoretical development of embodied narration, a discussion of implications for theory is essential to this discussion. Specifically, the results of this study provide support for the model proposed here, which posits that bodies themselves participate in processes of knowledge production, even in the absence of the written or spoken word. This model drew upon postmodern and organizational theories of knowledge production (i.e., Foucault, 1975; 1976; Giddens, 1984; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Lyotard, 1979; Mumby, 1994), as well as narrative theories, primarily those which position the body as narrative (i.e., Bruner, 1991; Clair, 1993; Fisher, 1984; Frank, 1995; Harter et al., 2005; Polkinghorne, 1995; Ricoeur, 1984). Implications for each theoretical tradition will be discussed in turn.

The postmodern tradition in communication largely holds that knowledge is constructed by and through discourse, which is imbued with power (Foucault, 1975; 1976; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Lyotard, 1979). In this way, knowledge is not neutral, but rather serves and reflects the

interests of the powerful, leading to the liberation of some and the oppression of others. Importantly to this study, postmodern theory holds that power/knowledge in systems of biopower embeds itself into bodies, rendering some bodies normative and others deviant (Foucault, 1975; 1976). Deviant bodies are disciplined and punished in such a way as to make them docile, or useful for the reproduction of power/knowledge. Although such mechanisms are oppressive, postmodernism holds that such systems leave space for resistance, ultimately making possible the production of new power and the destruction of oppressive power/knowledge structures. This project took up postmodern theory as its primary guiding theoretical framework. Specifically, this project aimed to understand the role of bodies – docile or otherwise – in the production, reproduction, and resistance of oppressive power/knowledge structures. As is consistent with postmodern organizational communication theory (Giddens, 1984; Mumby, 1994), this project understood bodies as inherently communicative: the product *and* producer of organizational communication.

In order to fully explicate the ways by which organizational discourses embed themselves in, and express themselves through, bodies, this project turned to narrative theory as its secondary theoretical framework. Narrative theory largely holds that humans are essentially story-telling beings who construct and make sense of their worlds through *narrative rationality* (Bruner, 1991; Fisher, 1984; Polkinghorne, 1995; Ricoeur, 1984). Importantly, from a narrative perspective, narratives can be understood as epistemological artifacts or ontological ways of being. In fact, this study understands human experience to be narrative in character, occurring in and over time and space (Ricoeur, 1984). Narratives and narration – whether in the form of artifacts or ways of being – are understood as discursive, as they construct and are constructed by organizational power/knowledge (Clair, 1993; Fisher, 1984; Mumby, 1987). Given these assumptions, the

compatibility between postmodern theory and narrative theory are apparent. Narrative theory provides a specific example of one medium through which discourse (and therefore knowledge and power) are disseminated and, importantly to this study, how discourse becomes embedded in bodies: through stories and storied experiences. Many have taken up these theoretical assumptions, suggesting that bodies themselves are inherently narrative, as they construct and are constructed by organizational power/knowledge (Frank, 1995; Harter et al., 2005; Ricoeur, 1984).

Existing scholarship in organizational communication takes up the postmodern and narrative theorizing reviewed here to illustrate the ways by which bodies are constituted and *disciplined by knowledge*, sometimes in the form of narratives and narration. However, the literature falls short of demonstrating the ways by which knowledge is constituted and *disciplined by bodies*. This project sought to fill this gap by integrating postmodern theories of knowledge production with narrative theory: specifically, with Ricoeur's (1984) theory of three-fold mimesis, which holds that humans draw upon a preunderstanding of organizational knowledge in order to organize events into a coherent plot which allows them to make sense of their worlds and reproduce or resist such knowledge. Importantly to this study, Ricoeur (1984) suggests that it is not in the narrator but in the reader or *spectator* that this emplotment process is complete, as it is the interpretation and reconfiguration of the story that ultimately determines if the narrative reproduces or resists organizational knowledge or enters back into the discursive field at all.

The postmodern narrative framework employed here was best suited for this project given that this project is primarily concerned with the role of the body in processes of knowledge production. Postmodernism as employed here provides an extensive theoretical vocabulary for understanding the relationships between power, knowledge, discourse, and the body, and served to guide the development of a theoretical model which positions the body as *discursive* – existing

as “any part of a system of possibilities for the creation of knowledge” (Mumby, 1997, p. 2) – rather than as rhetorical or performative – intentionally responding to some rhetorical situation and inherently persuasive (Bitzer, 1992). Certainly, while some discourse is rhetorical, and all rhetoric is discursive, not all discourse is rhetoric. Postmodernism allows for an understanding of everyday practices as having discursive power, without necessarily implying persuasive intent, making it a good fit for the present study. The addition of narrative theory was also imperative, as it provided the language with which to understand one specific process through which bodies as narrative entities *produce* knowledge – namely through three-fold mimesis (Ricoeur, 1984). Such an application grounded the process of knowledge production in a real, embodied communicative phenomena, one which could be articulated and empirically observed.

This study supports postmodern and organizational theories of knowledge production by providing support for the theoretical assumption that bodies are not only products but also producers of organizational knowledge and power (Foucault, 1975; 1976; Mumby; 1994; Giddens, 1984), and the theoretical assumption that organizations are characterized by tensions and paradoxes (e.g., Buzzanell, 2018; Mitra & Buzzanell, 2017; Putnam et al., 2016; Stoltzfus et al., 2011). This project extends postmodern organizational theory by providing support for one mechanism through which this happens: embodied narration. Further, this project extends postmodern theorizing by complicating the concept of visibility. Although postmodern theorizing understands visibility primarily as an oppressive mechanism, as it enables the disciplinary techniques of surveillance and self-surveillance (e.g., Foucault, 1975; 1976), this study proposes that visibility can also serve as a resistant mechanism, creating space for the spectatorship of resistant embodied narration. This study supports narrative theorizing by providing support for the theoretical assumption that narratives are products and producers of knowledge and power

(Mumby, 1987; Clair, 1993), and for the theoretical assumption that bodies themselves are narrative, as they produce and are produced by cultural narratives (Frank, 1995; Harter et al., 2005). Further, this study extends narrative theorizing by rejecting the assumption that bodies cannot speak for themselves but rather must be spoken for and developing and providing support for embodied narration as one example of how bodies themselves participate in processes of knowledge production without the imposition of the spoken or written word.

Finally, this study provides insight into possible general manifestations of embodied narration which are not specific to any given context. The specific examples of embodied narration which manifest in the organizing context of distance running illustrate the power of conscious or intentional practices and bodily appearances, including but not limited to revealing/concealing the body, manipulating the body through weight gain/loss or clothing, accessories, or other bodily markings, being absent/present in particular spaces, and/or engaging in particular organizational practices and not others. Results also illustrate the power of unconscious or unintentional practices and bodily appearances, including but not limited to simply *having* or *not having* an idealized body. Each of these examples, when situated within a unique organization characterized by unique power/knowledge and disciplinary techniques, may participate in processes of knowledge production as embodied narration, with organization-specific implications for oppression and resistance.

These conclusions provide insight not only into the ways by which power/knowledge may be reproduced or resisted through the body, but also into the ways by which organizational members may strategically take up embodied narration or spectatorship to make meaningful change within oppressive systems. Certainly, it is not the responsibility of the oppressed to take on the labor of resistance. Nevertheless, embodied narrators have a unique opportunity to express

resistant narratives which challenge oppressive power/knowledge and produce new power/knowledge structures which are more equitable and inclusive. Embodied narrators may seek out spaces in which they are most visible to enact embodied narration in this way. However, this research reminds us that resistant bodies are often disciplined out of visibility. For this reason, it is largely up to powerful embodied narrators, spectators, or both to create space for embodied narrators with resistant stories to be seen or seek out less visible embodied narrators themselves.

Implications for Practice

This study examined the role of the body in processes of knowledge production in the organizing context of distance running. Distance running has long been understood as a distinct social world (Unruh, 1980) characterized by unique organizational practices (e.g., Bridel et al., 2015; Cubizolles et al., 2018; Shipway et al., 2013; Yair, 1990; Yair, 1992). In this way, distance running itself can be understood as an ideological organization, making it an ideal context in which to study processes of knowledge production. Further, distance running necessarily involves the body as the primary medium through which practices are enacted, and as the primary focus of surveillance and spectatorship, making this organization uniquely suited for illustrating the phenomenon of embodied narration.

Much research has illustrated the salience of oppressive knowledge and ubiquity of oppressive discourses related to gender and gender expression (e.g., Bridel, 2006; Hanold, 2010) sexuality (e.g., Bridel & Rail, 2007), race (e.g., Smith–Tran, 2020; van Sterkenburg & Knoppers, 2004; Walton & Butryn, 2006), class (e.g., Abbas, 2004), age (e.g., Dionigi, 2006; Ronkainen & Ryba, 2012; Tulle, 2007), and body type/size (e.g., Chase, 2008). Further, narrative research in this context has illustrated the salience of the *performance narrative*: “a dominant narrative that says success in sport depends on single minded dedication and focus” (Douglas & Carless, 2006,

p. 14), and the ways by which such narratives reproduce oppressive power/knowledge by embedding themselves in distance running bodies and embodied practices (e.g., Busanich et al., 2012, 2014). The present study adds to this literature by illustrating that distance running bodies and their practices may, in turn, produce, reproduce, or resist such discourses toward the transformation of power/knowledge in this organizing context through embodied narration. Although this project was primarily concerned with the explication of this communicative phenomenon, results of this study reveal several important considerations for distance runners and other members of this organization.

This study provides tentative answers to important questions which persist within the field of sports studies: specifically, why rates of disordered eating and injury nondisclosure remain high within the organizing context of distance running, and what strategies might be employed to lower them. Previous studies have revealed the various risk factors associated with these behaviors, which are supported in by study. Specifically, past studies have identified coach communication team and organizational norms as particularly influential regarding the likelihood that a distance runner will engage in disordered eating behaviors or conceal an injury (e.g., Arthur-Cameselle & Baltzell, 2012; Beckner & Record, 2016; Busanich et al., 2012; Engel et al., 2003). Unsurprisingly, coach communication and organizational norms that emphasize health over performance have been shown to predict lower rates of disordered eating and injury nondisclosure, whereas those that emphasize performance over health have been shown to predict higher rates of each (e.g., Busanich et al., 2014; Douglas & Carless, 2006). The present study supports such findings, as the present findings, too, illustrate the influence that knowledge and communicative behavior – spoken or otherwise – have in constructing distance running bodies and practices. The present study also adds to these findings by introducing the postmodern possibility of paradox and considering the

ways by which such paradox simultaneously constrains and enables distance running bodies. The paradoxical ways by which organizational membership is constituted – as illustrated in the present study – complicate distance running practice as well as those approaches aimed at addressing high rates of disordered eating and injury nondisclosure in this context. An understanding of paradoxical knowledge and experience may provide insight into alternative approaches to addressing these concerns, among others.

Further, this study adds to the literature by introducing embodied narration and illustrating the power of embodied narration to reproduce or resist oppressive power/knowledge in the organizing context of distance running and beyond. Past research on power/knowledge in this organizing context have identified some practices by which distance runners reproduce or resist oppressive power/knowledge (e.g., Bridel, 2006; Bridel & Rail, 2007; Cosh et al., 2012; Denison & Mills, 2014; Godoy-Pressland, 2016; Johns & Johns, 2000; McMahon & Penney, 2013). The present study adds embodied narration to the list of reproductive and resistant practices and illustrates how it differs from other practices. Specifically, embodied narration transcends language by reproducing and/or resisting power/knowledge through the body itself, without the imposition of the written or spoken word. Certainly, other post-lingual practices have been identified as operating in this way. Silence, for example, has long been understood to be a tool of oppression and resistance (e.g., Clair, 1998; Glenn, 2004). Embodied narration, though occurring in silence, moves beyond silence in that it is not only the mere absence or presence of bodies but also the practice *within* the silence which is powerful.

As previously mentioned, by identifying the possible means by which embodied narration may operate within a particular context, organizational members may be able to strategically harness this process toward meaningful change. In the organizing context of distance running,

embodied narrators may reveal non-normative bodies, reject weight-loss practices, engage in practices which prioritize health and well-being, or make themselves present or visible in particular spaces to resist the unique power/knowledge of the organization. However, given that such resistant bodies may be disciplined out of visibility, it is up to powerful embodied narrators and/or spectators within this context to make resistant bodies visible and seek out less-visible bodies. In particular, coaches and other authority figures can work to include bodies with a variety of stories. Further, media outlets can work to cover a variety of bodies and body stories, so as to render such bodies and stories more visible. Finally, governing bodies within the organizing context of distance running can work to eliminate those policies which uphold oppressive power/knowledge, and advocate for policies which strive for inclusion, equity, and justice for all runners.

Limitations

This study is not without its limitations. First, this study employed photovoice methodology to approximate spectatorship of organizational practice within the context of distance running. Photovoice methodology was appropriate for this study, as it aligns with the guiding critical theoretical framework. Specifically, photovoice methodology is feminist, in that it reduces the hierarchy between researcher and participant and empowers participants to be active members of the research process. However, it cannot be denied that photography is distinct from observation, in that it is less discrete and technologically mediated. Those being photographed were made aware of their position as subject, and such knowledge may have led to changes in behavior or knowledge. Additionally, those doing the photographing were tasked with capturing their observations with the use of a camera, which may be more or less effective for accurately representing the specific observation of interest. Future studies may employ other methodological strategies, including but

limited to participant observation, auto-ethnography, or other ethnographic or culture-centered approaches when studying embodied narration.

Second, the sample obtained in this study was fairly homogenous. Specifically, this study gained little insight into the experiences of transgender and disabled runners and runners of racial minorities. This is significant, as transgender, disabled, and non-white distance runners may be particularly vulnerable to bodily discipline, punishment, or exclusion in an oppressive power/knowledge organization such as distance running. Including transgender, disabled, and non-white participants in such research is imperative, not only because they are particularly vulnerable, but also because they have unique insight into the many ways by which such bodies are disciplined, punished, or excluded in practice, grounded in lived experience. It is not the responsibility of the oppressed to dismantle the very systems which oppress them. Therefore, scholars doing research in this area ought to seek heterogeneous samples which include transgender, disabled, and nonwhite individuals in order to gain insight into this unique knowledge and, in particular, to amplify the voices of those who may otherwise be silenced.

Future Directions

This study lays the groundwork for future studies on embodied narration, the role of the body in processes of knowledge production, and knowledge production specifically within the organizing context of distance running. First, future studies on embodied narration may employ alternative methodological strategies. Specifically, ethnographic, autoethnographic, or other immersive methodologies involving participant observation may be particularly well-suited to examine embodied narration given their commitment to observing locally produced knowledge and its manifestations and may extend the understandings of embodied narration in exciting ways.

Further, future studies on embodied narration may employ alternative theoretical frameworks for extending the possibilities of embodied narration. Certainly, embodied narration as it is theorized here is understood to be distinctly postmodern, as it relies on the assumptions that knowledge and power are inextricably linked, that power/knowledge embeds itself in bodies, and that all forms of discourse are at once products and producers of power/knowledge. However, there are existing and emerging theoretical frameworks which may extend understandings of embodied narration without necessarily violating these theoretical assumptions. Specifically, new materialism – which largely holds that human and non-human material entities produce knowledge – may be well-suited to extend embodied narration. Although the present study was primarily interested in the role of the body in producing knowledge, the addition of new materialism raises interesting questions, including but not limited to: (1) is the body essentially *human, non-human, or both?*; and (2) what is the role of the interaction between the body and other non-human entities (including new technologies and the environment) in processes of embodied narration? These questions, among others, may be explored using a new materialist framework, provided that such application does not violate the assumptions of embodied narration as theorized here.

Further, results of the present study, though providing insight into the research questions of interest, raised additional questions which may be explored through alternative methodological and theoretical approaches. At least three additional questions remain: (1) what are the possibilities of embodied narration in online or otherwise digital spaces?; (2) how do minority bodies (i.e., female, non-white, lgbtqa+, disabled, etc.) enact and engage with embodied narration and knowledge production?; and (3) how exactly does spectatorship lead to body stories entering back into the discursive field? The answers to these questions, among others, may deepen and broaden

understandings of embodied narration and other processes through which the body participates in processes of knowledge production.

For those studying distance running and the unique experiences of distance runners, the theoretical model developed here, and the results of the present analysis, may provide insight into existing and emerging questions in this and other contexts. First, these results may illuminate new approaches to addressing high rates of disordered eating among distance runners (NEDA, 2018) which attend to the contradictions and paradoxes experienced by these athletes. Second, these results may provide insight into important contemporary issues in the context of distance running, including but not limited to: (1) the oppression and exclusion of trans runners – specifically trans women; and/or (2) the organizational and performance-related advantages granted to those with greater access to new technologies, including new shoe innovations. Accepting that embodied narration plays a role in knowledge production around these topics and that these topics may be inherently characterized by tensions and contradictions may illuminate new approaches to making positive change toward inclusion and equity within this organizing context. Future studies may also employ the theoretical construct of embodied narration and the results found here to examine this process in other organizational contexts, including but not limited to: (1) other sporting contexts, like football, which is characterized by high rates of concussion non-disclosure; (2) media contexts, which play a role in representation and, thus, visibility; and/or (3) community or political organizing.

Finally, future studies may consider the relationships between the theoretical concept of embodied narration and other communication constructs. For example, given that embodied narration involves the expression of organizational knowledge in the absence of the spoken or written word, future studies may examine the relationships between the construct and other forms

of nonverbal communication, including the use of space (proxemics), time (chronemics), haptics (touch), and/or smell (olfactics). Although embodied narration, and in particular spectatorship as theorized here, involves visuality, it is possible that such visuality may operate as a metaphor which also includes other sensory experiences such as touch, smell, or perceptions of time and space in the absence of the written or spoken word. As nonverbal communication is primarily studied from a post-positivistic, interpersonal perspective, any explorations of the relationships between embodied narration and nonverbal communication must grapple with the meta-theoretical distinctions between post-positivism and postmodernism, including differences between understandings of the nature of reality. Nevertheless, given recent calls for critical empirical interpersonal communication scholarship (e.g., Moore, 2017) there is precedent for such explorations.

Conclusions

To conclude, this study revealed the role of the body in processes of knowledge production, specifically through the enactment of embodied narration. By examining spectatorship within the organizing context of distance running, as well as situated, participant-produced photographs, this study provides support for this theoretical concept and the model of which it is a part. Further, this study provides examples of instances of embodied narration specific to the organizing context of distance running. Results of this study not only extend postmodern organizational and narrative theorizing, but also add to the vast literature of research exploring the unique disciplinary and resistance experiences of distance runners.

Although I have been privy to the organizational power/knowledge structures and discourses as a member of this organization myself, the participatory methodology employed in this study – and in particular the great attention and care taken by participants – allowed for the

creation of knowledge that would have been unattainable alone. This knowledge provides opportunities for future research, further examining the role of embodied narration in sporting contexts and beyond. Specifically, future research in this area may employ the theoretical model developed here within other organizing contexts to identify and illustrate other instances of embodied narration and explore the ways in which such instances of embodied narration interact with the specific disciplinary mechanisms unique to those contexts. Alternatively, future research may employ alternative theoretical and methodological approaches to extend understandings of embodied narration, and address remaining questions, including but not limited to: (1) is the body essentially human, non-human, or both?; (2) what is the role of the interaction between the body and other non-human entities in processes of knowledge production?; (3) what are the possibilities of embodied narration in online or otherwise digital spaces?; (4) how do minority bodies enact and engage with embodied narration and knowledge production; (5) how exactly does spectatorship lead to body stories entering back into the discursive field?; and (6) what are the relationships between embodied narration and other communication concepts, including nonverbal communication? The answers to these questions may provide a deeper and broader understanding of the role of embodied narration in processes of knowledge production.

Though not without its limitations, this study provides a fresh perspective on the paradoxical and inherently postmodern nature of distance runners' experiences, and shines light on how distance running bodies and practices participate in the reification or transformation of the very power/knowledge structures of which they are a part. Further, results of this study have practical implications for members of the organizing context of distance running. Results may inform efforts to lower rates of disordered eating among distance runners and efforts to create a more equitable sport in general. Specifically, understandings of the ways by which oppression and

resistance operate through embodied narration in this context may render apparent individual- and structural-level approaches to resistance which may be employed toward a more inclusive, equitable, and healthy organization for all.

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APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT ANNOUNCEMENT

You are invited to participate in a study on the culture of distance running (IRB-2020-1624). Specifically, this study will examine the role of distance runners' bodies in the creation of this culture in the Purdue Run Club. Your participation would involve approximately four hours of your time over the course of one month. Specifically, you would participate in two virtual interviews (via Zoom), lasting approximately one hour each, and you would take and submit photographs related to your experiences as a distance runner. You need not be an artist – just by being a distance runner, you are qualified to participate!

If you choose to participate, you will be compensated \$40 for your time, effort, and insight.

If you are interested in participating, or if you have any questions at all, please contact researcher Karissa Conrad at conrad49@purdue.edu.

APPENDIX B: EMAIL SCRIPT

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study (IRB-2020-1624)! My name is Karissa Conrad, and I am conducting my dissertation work on the culture of distance running. Specifically, I am interested in understanding how bodies communicate cultural knowledge and norms in the context of distance running.

As previously mentioned, participation in this study would entail approximately four hours of your time over the course of one month, and you would be compensated \$40 for your participation. We would begin with an initial interview over zoom. During this interview, we will discuss your experiences and impressions as a member of this culture. Then, you will be asked to take photos of anything you feel reflects those experiences and impressions. We will conclude with a final interview, during which you will describe your experiences and anything you learned from this exercise.

If you feel that this research is something you'd like to participate in, please indicate a day/time to conduct your initial interview. I have also attached an informed consent form. If you intend to participate, please read over the consent form, attach your electronic signature, and submit the form via DropBox at the link below:

PERSONALIZED LINK HERE

I look forward to working with you and learning more about your experiences as a distance runner!

Karissa Conrad, M.A.

Doctoral Candidate

Brian Lamb School of Communication

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

RESEARCH PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Embodied Narration: Body as Story in Processes of Knowledge Production

IRB-2020-1624

Dr. Stacey Connaughton

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Purdue University

Key Information

Please take time to review this information carefully. This is a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary which means that you may choose not to participate at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may ask questions to the researchers about the study whenever you would like. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this form, be sure you understand what you will do and any possible risks or benefits.

This study will examine the ways that organizational knowledge is expressed through the bodies of organization members. Specifically, I will be studying the ways that distance runners use their bodies to maintain or challenge the status quo in distance running culture. Your participation will involve approximately four hours of your time, including 2 hour-long interviews and approximately 2 hours of your own time over the course of 1 month. You will be compensated \$40 for your participation in this study. Additional explanations may be more detailed in the sections below.

What is the purpose of this study?

This study aims to understand how distance runners express cultural knowledge through their bodies, without the use of the written or spoken word. You are being asked to participate in this study because you are a member of the Purdue Run Club, and therefore have insight into the

culture of distance running and the phenomena of interest. We would like to enroll 30 people in this study.

What will I do if I choose to participate in this study?

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in two hour-long interviews via Zoom and to take photographs of your experiences with and impressions of the phenomena of interest as part of this photovoice project. Prior to the first interview, you will have the opportunity to ask questions and provide informed consent. During the first interview, you will be asked questions about your experiences as a distance runner. Then, the researcher will explain the photovoice procedures.

Photovoice is a method used to gain insight into cultural phenomena through the eyes of members of the culture of interest. You will be tasked with taking photos which represent, literally or symbolically, your experiences of embodied narration. *Embodied narration* refers to the ways that members of a culture express cultural knowledge through their bodies and learn cultural knowledge by looking at other bodies. Over the course of one month, you will be asked to take photographs that you feel capture this experience. There are no right or wrong ways to take these photographs, and there are no right or wrong interpretations of this phenomenon. You will share your photographs to a secure digital folder, which will only be accessible to the researcher and research advisor. You are welcome to use your own personal camera or smart phone. If you do not have access to a camera, one will be provided for you. If the camera provided is lost or damaged, you will not be responsible for repair or replacement.

After one month, you will be asked to participate in a follow-up interview to debrief your experiences, ask questions, and/or discuss photographs.

How long will I be in this study?

Total time commitment for participation in this study is approximately four hours over the course of 1 month. Each interview (of which there will be two) will last approximately one hour, and

you will be expected to spend approximately 2 hours of your own time taking photographs over the course of 1 month.

What are the possible risks or discomforts?

Breach of confidentiality is always a risk with data, but we will take precautions to minimize this risk as described in the confidentiality section. Another potential risk is that of psychological discomfort as a result of looking at or thinking about one's own body. Some may feel uncomfortable or may become overly critical of their bodies or themselves. If you experience this kind of discomfort and would like to discontinue your participation at any time, you may do so. We are prepared to offer psychological health resources to anyone who may need them.

Are there any potential benefits?

Although there are no anticipated direct benefits to participants, there may be benefits to general knowledge or to society. This study will provide insight into the ways in which power is upheld or challenged within the context of distance running and may provide insight into the ways in which athletes may participate in or challenge the status quo. This status quo has implications for many behaviors in this context, including those related to the body and health (i.e., disordered eating behavior, concussion reporting, etc.).

Will I receive payment or other incentive?

Participants in this study will receive \$40 in compensation. Payments will be pro-rated, and participants who choose to withdraw from the study before study completion will receive partial payment of \$20. According to the rules of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), payments that are made to you are a result of your participation in a study may be considered taxable income.

Are there costs to me for participation?

There are no anticipated costs to participate in this research.

Will information about me and my participation be kept confidential?

The project's research records may be reviewed by the study sponsor and/or by departments at Purdue University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Confidentiality of identifiable information will be maintained. You will choose a pseudonym to represent your identity, and your name and contact information will be stored securely. All data will be de-identified and re-identified with your pseudonym. A code-key for re-identification purposes will be stored securely, as will all data. Data will be stored for up to five years following study completion, at which point it will be destroyed. This data will be used for the present research project, results of which may be published and/or otherwise distributed publicly.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

You do not have to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate, you may withdraw your participation at any time without penalty. If you choose to withdraw from the study, or withdraw data already collected, you will simply contact the researcher. If you choose to withdraw from the study after initial participation, but before the conclusion of the study, you will still receive partial compensation of \$20.

Who can I contact if I have questions about the study?

If you have questions, comments or concerns about this research project, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact Primary Investigator Dr. Stacey Connaughton (sconnaug@purdue.edu) or co-investigator Karissa Conrad (conrad49@purdue.edu). To report anonymously via Purdue's hotline see www.purdue.edu/hotline.

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032
155 S. Grant St.
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had the opportunity to read this consent form and have the research study explained. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the research study, and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. I will be offered a copy of this consent form after I sign it.

Participant's Signature

Date

Participant's Name

Researcher's Signature

Date

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: INITIAL INTERVIEW

Sample Interview Questions

1. What makes a runner's body a runner's body?
 - a. How would you know someone is a runner just by looking at them?
2. What do you notice about other runners' bodies?
 - a. What do you learn by watching other runners' bodies?
 - b. Do your observations influence how you think about your own body?
 - c. Do you ever compare your body to other bodies?
3. Tell me about the role of your body in running.
 - a. How is your body important to your running?
 - b. How is your body important to your membership in the running community?
 - c. What are some general expectations about bodies that exist in this community?
4. How does the running body itself *speak*? (I will provide examples if prompted).

Explanation of Photovoice Methodology and Participant Responsibilities

The second phase of this study uses a method called Photovoice. Photovoice involves the use of photography to capture the everyday experiences of members of a culture, and specific phenomena that happens within that culture. In this study, I am interested in capturing a specific phenomenon in the culture of distance running called *embodied narration*.

Embodied narration is the experience of expressing cultural knowledge through the body. In the context of distance running, I am interested in understanding how long-distance runners communicate their knowledge, values, beliefs, or attitudes through their bodies and bodily behavior. Over the next month, I will ask you to take photographs that you feel represent this experience, either literally, symbolically, or creatively. You do not have to be an artist. There are no right or wrong answers, and there are no right or wrong ways to interpret your experiences. You are the expert on your culture, and therefore you are the most qualified to capture these experiences.

You are welcome to take photographs of anything you feel represents this experience. You may take photographs of yourself or others. Keep in mind that, although I will take steps to maintain your confidentiality, photographs that you share have the potential to be identifiable. If you

choose to take photographs of others, please ask their permission. You may choose to take photographs that omit identifiable characteristics of your subjects if this is a concern.

As you take your photographs, you will upload them to a secure Dropbox folder, which will only be accessible to me and my advisor. You can use a smartphone, or any other camera that you have. If you do not have a camera, I will provide you with one. After one month, we will meet one final time to discuss your experience, clarify what we discussed in our first interview, and/or answer any final questions you or I have for each other. What questions do you have?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: EXIT INTERVIEW

Sample Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your Photovoice experience.
 - a. What was challenging? What came easy to you?
2. Did this experience change how you thought about your own body or the bodies of others?
 - a. If so, please explain.
3. How did you experience embodied narration over the course of this study?
4. What final questions do you have for me?

APPENDIX F: PHOTO RELEASE FORM

PHOTO RELEASE FORM

Embodied Narration: Body as Story in Processes of Knowledge Production

IRB-2020-1624

Dr. Stacey Connaughton

Brian Lamb School of Communication

Purdue University

This study (IRB-2020-1624) utilizes participant photography to gain insight into the experiences of distance runners. These photos will be used to draw conclusions about how the body participates in knowledge production within the context of distance running. Photos may be published in academic journal articles or via other digital media outlets.

By signing below, I hereby grant permission to _____ (photographer's name) to use my photographic likeness in all forms and mediums for the purpose of research study IRB-2020-1624.

If you have questions, comments or concerns about this research project, you can talk to one of the researchers. Please contact Primary Investigator Dr. Stacey Connaughton (sconnaug@purdue.edu) or co-investigator Karissa Conrad (conrad49@purdue.edu). To report anonymously via Purdue's hotline see www.purdue.edu/hotline.

If you have questions about your rights while taking part in the study or have concerns about the treatment of research participants, please call the Human Research Protection Program at (765) 494-5942, email (irb@purdue.edu) or write to:

Human Research Protection Program - Purdue University
Ernest C. Young Hall, Room 1032
155 S. Grant St.
West Lafayette, IN 47907-2114

Model's Signature

Date