JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER: IDENTITY, HOMELESSNESS, AND THE
PUBLIC LIBRARY

by

Raphael Mazzone
A Dissertation
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Committee:

_____ Director

_____

_____

_____ Department Chairperson

_____ Program Director

_____ Dean, College of Humanities
and Social Sciences

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A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at George Mason University

by

Raphael Mazzone
Master of Library Science
University of Maryland, 2006
Bachelor of Arts
Salisbury University, 2003

Director: Kevin B. Wright, Professor
Department of Communication

Spring Semester 2017
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to the information seekers and the information providers.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Those who need to know, already do.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

American Library Association .... ALA
Communication Theory of Identity .... CTI
District of Columbia Public Library System .... DCPL
Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library .... MLK
Washington, District of Columbia .... D.C.

ABSTRACT

JUDGING A BOOK BY ITS COVER: IDENTITY, HOMELESSNESS, AND THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Raphael Mazzone, Ph.D.

George Mason University, 2017

Dissertation Director: Dr. Kevin B. Wright

Background: Identity is a major component within any community, but especially so for those experiencing homelessness. With homeless statistics on the rise nationally, cities and towns are being forced to address these issues in a variety of ways. Historically, the public library has provided a refuge for marginalized groups, and as one of the few remaining public spaces, the library is in a position no other government, social, or civic institution can match. Much has been discussed, from the library perspective, on providing services to the homeless; but little has been studied to find out how the homeless library user negotiates the public space of the public library, the interactions within the library, and their everyday struggles. Methods: A two-and-a-half-year ethnographic study was conducted at the District of Columbia Public Library, covering the 25 branch locations throughout the city, but specifically focusing on the central branch, the Martin Luther King Jr Memorial Library. The MLK Library is a well-known, and well-visited, branch for many

of the city's homeless population, as it serves as a drop-off location from the local shelters. MLK was also scheduled for renovations, lasting up to three years, which would displace hundreds of homeless library users from their daily routine without any clear contingency plans from the library or the government. Participant observation was the primary tool for gathering data, including field notes from public programs, conversations with users in and out of the building, and observation of the main gathering place within MLK. This data was supported by in-depth interviews with library staff and administrative personnel. In addition, library policies and procedures were analyzed from a wide array of systems regionally and nationally. Findings: Analyzed thematically, through the lens of the Communication Theory of Identity, I identified conceptual relevance at each frame of CTI: the personal frame, the enacted frame, the relational frame, and the communal frame. In addition, a premise of the interpenetration of the frames is also presented. Conclusions: The library plays a vital role in the identity formation of homeless library users as well as the library staff. These everyday interactions build upon themselves, leading to new identities that are constantly being redefined within the public space of the public library.

CHAPTER ONE: STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

Public libraries have long held an important role in advocating for, helping, and serving lower-income individuals and families (Anderson, Simpson, & Fisher, 2012). According to the American Library Association (ALA), libraries and their staff should be prepared to identity poor people's needs and deliver relevant services (ALA, 2013b). Further, the ALA calls for the strengthening of and support for services to under-served low-income groups, particularly homeless patrons. Homeless patrons create specific challenges to the library infrastructure: special needs such as shelter and social services (Anderson et al., 2012; Collins, Howard, & Miraflor, 2009; Holt & Holt, 2010); social inclusion and support (Gehner, 2010; Hodgetts et al., 2008); legal information (Tashbook, 2009); access to the internet (Wong, 2009); and assistance with employment searches (Willett & Broadley, 2011).

In addition to these information-seeking behaviors, the homeless individuals can alter the social dynamic of the public space, as they can be disruptive to regular library operations (Lan, 2002). Specifically, activities such as sleeping in the library, using the lavatories as bathing facilities, and accessing pornography on the Internet all pose problems to the library staff, as do hygiene issues. And while these problems are not confined to the homeless library users, it is problematic that library staff associate these problems with the homeless individual's use of the library.

Incidentally, most of the literature (from the library and information sciences discipline) has focused on how to handle the "problem patron" – either directly through security measures and policy implementation; or indirectly through programs focused on improving access and providing information. There is very little is known about how the homeless individuals view the library, the library staff, or other patrons in similar situations. Even less is known about what the homeless individual gains from the library itself – other than a safe haven during extreme weather or relative peace and quiet from the everyday hassles of living on the street or in public assistance housing.

What can be seen, though, is a pattern of social inclusion/exclusion through limiting or allowing access. Access to library and information resources, services, and technologies is essential for all people, especially the economically disadvantaged, who may experience isolation, discrimination and prejudice or barriers to education, employment, and housing (ALA, n.d.b). The public library has advantages over other "semi-private" locations, specifically in relation to marginalized groups such as the homeless (e.g., shelters, civic centers). The library can facilitate interactions between groups and strives to do so through public programs, mission statements, and formal policies, but has operational inconsistencies. Each library, or library system, has a unique approach to serving the homeless, vulnerable, or marginalized members of the community. These decisions are based on institutional (i.e., financial, ethical, political) beliefs about the role of libraries in dealing with social exclusion (Hoyer, 2013).

In today's information society, information accessibility plays a key role in allowing all people to take part in a community. As information providers, libraries and

librarians find themselves in a position that no other organization can fill. The library, both as an institution and a public space, can serve as a provider of support to the homeless population. There is extensive research on how to help the homeless from the institutional perspective, as well as the types of support the homeless receive while using the available resources. But several questions remain: why do homeless individuals go into the library? How do they make sense of their interactions with other library users? How do they make sense of their interactions with other homeless library users? How do they make sense of their interactions with the library staff? What conflicts occur and with what frequency? Why does this happen in both urban and rural library settings? What are the underlying assumptions about homeless life that can be understood by knowing their daily routine and how the library impacts that routine?

In the recent decade, there have been dozens of examples across the country, throughout public library systems, where the administration has attempted to rebrand the library from that of books and reference materials to that of community and information centers. This debate has been ongoing within academia and those training the new wave of information professionals, to city budget meetings and political agendas. Regardless of the origin of the discussion, the reality is the social roles and responsibilities of libraries have expanded. Libraries are places of free public internet access and technical support, providing digital literacy and digital inclusion classes. Libraries support e-government initiatives and provide governmental services (e.g., a location for U.S. passport acceptance). Libraries help serve the emergency and first-responders community (e.g., training and classes). And ever more increasingly, libraries are involved in the provision

of social services and social services education (e.g., homework help, community health information, immigration centers, language skills, delivering food to food deserts, and providing library services to prisons). These types of activities, among many others, are vital contributions to the communities in which the library serves (Jaegar, et al., 2014).

Statement of the Problem

As a public space, public libraries attract individuals from all walks of life: the office worker passing time before a meeting; the lost tourist that needs directions; the student looking for a quiet place to study; the historian digging through documents in special collections; the out-of-town visitor that needs to use the bathroom; the person looking for a free internet connection; the unemployed seeking resume-building and job-seeking assistance; and the unprepared attempting to get protection from inclement weather. These behaviors are not excluded to the categorically limited adjectives in this paragraph. On the contrary, these behaviors and categories can overlap throughout the lifecycle of library use, which can be based on temporal aspects (e.g., time, frequency) or spatial aspects (e.g., location of library, location within the library).

What is quite fascinating, and why this particular situation is ripe for exploration, is that the most common library user within the District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) are homeless individuals. The homeless individuals' use of the public library occurs for a variety of reasons, but most simply assume it is due to a lack of daytime facilities. While this assumption is one piece of the puzzle, it does not provide the overall picture. The homeless individual can be any of the aforementioned library users, simultaneously or individually, but are often categorized differently due to their housing

status and not their need for library services. This is problematic – from an organizational, societal, and theoretical standpoint.

Other demographic measurement tools and statistics currently exist (e.g., age, race, education, and socio-economic status); but the library does not (for practical and ethical reasons) have any statistics regarding the use of the library by individuals experiencing homelessness. Yet, so much of the public library system is occupied by the homeless library user, the often "invisible" minority group in society; much of their rules are based on this group; and many of the services are geared towards this group. There is a connection between the public library and the homeless community – a connection that has yet to be studied in-depth.

As a public space, it is "one of the last outposts where a cross section of people still come together" (Wiegand, 2015, p. 258.). The use of a public library is a choice, and because people do not have to use the services provided, what people want and what they need, gives the public power over the civic institution…a power that is denied in most other forms of civic institutions. Public libraries must balance competing community needs with fulfilling their mission – and the success of these two goals is realized within the communicative actions of the people within the setting. The interactions between the library staff and patrons highlight larger issues of social space (e.g., public vs. private); of rules and power structures; of interpersonal and intercultural boundaries; of access to information and technology; and most importantly, the formation and expression of identity through communication.

Purpose of This Study

The Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) focuses on the mutual influences between identity and communication, and conceptualizes identity as communication rather than seeing identity as merely a product of communication (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005). To date, CTI has not been used to understand these two particular cultures (homeless library users; the library as an institution) that coexist independently, but also form into a co-created culture when combined. The purpose of this ethnographic study was to understand how homeless library users negotiate their interactions within a public library. An ethnography attempts to be "holistic" (Fetterman, 1989, p. 29) – in order to uncover as much as possible about particular cultures (or subcultures).

My approach was in the classical ethnographic tradition of participant observation, interviews, and textual analysis. In over a two year period, I visited libraries throughout the DCPL system on a routine basis. Through my exposure to the daily routines of the library staff and the library user, I came to understand many unwritten and unknown (except to the parties involved) existing relationships (i.e., the nearby homeless shelter providing transport to the front of the library but without any governmental arrangement; the night in which church groups provide free meals; the days when advocacy groups provide bagged lunches). This information is not on any affiliated website, in promotional brochures, nor is it known to most library users that are not experiencing homelessness.

This subculture, then, was a product of self-selection and knowledge, based on routine. These daily interactions require immersion into that routine, as close as possible, to gain a better understanding of what goes on "behind the curtain." In order to first understand the unique characteristics of this specific context, we first must discuss, albeit

briefly, the state of the homelessness epidemic in the United States and a more in-depth examination of the homelessness situation within the District of Columbia. We will also need to review an historical account of the library policies on homelessness and the poor as a user demographic.

Necessary Background Information

The following sections will cover brief, but necessary, information regarding the general homelessness crisis, including current statistics and measures used by U.S. Government agencies. It will also include D.C. specific statistics and information pertinent to understanding the situation within the research setting context. Finally, the policies and procedures implemented by the library as an institution will be covered in a brief historical synopsis.

Background Information Regarding Homelessness

Homelessness, as a demographic category, has existed throughout much of human history. In their in-depth research on homeless street people in Austin, TX, Snow and Anderson (1993) provide an examination of the differences among homeless individuals and the circumstances that lead to that homelessness. In sum, there are two leading dimensions of homelessness: residential (categorical absence of permanent housing) and support (absence of familial, social bonds, social networks, and the linkage to society).

Determining hard figures on homelessness is an inexact science rife with varying statistics. Much of the ambiguity is due to the target population – it is a special subsect with little estimation procedures (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001). The focal concerns on demographics and disabilities of the homeless, as counted by residential parameters, is

necessary to provide advocacy groups and government programs the information required

to implement policy. This trend has shifted more recently, as the body of literature is

beginning to embrace the experience-near (Geertz, 1988) constructions of homelessness.

Nevertheless, we must begin with the more formal definition, or experience-distant

categories, to gain an ecological perspective. We will define homelessness according to the

government in the next section; but here it is important to realize the chaotic nature of such

crude and rudimentary measurement tools. The definitions work, for statistical purposes,

but the conceptualization of homelessness is a catch-all term for people that are in any form

of transition. It is also a frame of mind for both those experiencing it and those attempting

to help solve it. A local governmental executive said, when asked about how their

jurisdiction handles the homeless crisis: "perceptions are used in absence of visual

communities" (personal communication, July 24, 2016).

This type of perception, which we will discuss in the review of the literature

surrounding homelessness, shapes the ways in which social services are provided and how

the general public (e.g., non-homeless) view the use of their tax resources, their law

enforcement, and their public space.

The Current State of Homelessness in the United States

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

2016 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress[1], an estimated 549,928

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[1] The Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) is a HUD report to the U.S. Congress that provides nationwide estimates of homelessness, including information about the demographic characteristics of homeless persons, service use patterns, and the capacity to house homeless persons. The report is based primarily on Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS) data about persons who experience homelessness during a 12-month period. This annual report, which began in 2007, is available digitally along with supplemental data sets.

people were experiencing homelessness on a single night. Of that total, "a majority (68 percent) was staying in emergency shelters, transitional housing programs, or safe havens, and 32 percent were in unsheltered locations" (p.1). This annual report provides "point-in-time" estimates (i.e., unduplicated 1-night estimates of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations) conducted during the last week of January of the calendar year for the report. In comparison, an estimated 1.48 million people experienced sheltered homelessness at some point during the reported year of 2015 (HUD, 2016 October).

HUD follows up the initial report with a second report, published later in the year as Part 2, by adding 1-year estimates of sheltered homelessness based on data from their Homeless Management Information Systems (HMIS). The HMIS provides detailed demographic information about people who use the nation's emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during a 12-month period.

It is important to understand the nuanced operational definitions of homelessness and the subcategories therein. Homeless is defined, by HUD, as an individual lacking fixed night-time residences or whose primary night-time residence is a public or private shelter. Sheltered homeless are individuals staying in emergency shelters (i.e., facility with the primary purpose of providing temporary shelter for homeless persons), transitional housing programs (i.e., housing combined with supportive services for up to 24 months in order to help them overcome barriers to moving into and retaining permanent housing), or safe havens (i.e., private or semi-private long-term housing for persons with severe mental illness). Unsheltered homeless are individuals staying in places not meant for human habitation, such as the streets, abandoned buildings, vehicles or parks. Finally, chronically

homeless are individuals with disabilities who have either been continuously homeless for a year or more or have experience at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years (HUD, 2015 November).

Generally speaking, there are four important factors contributing to homelessness: economic, political, social, and medical factors. Mental illness appears to be directly connected to homelessness, as there is an over-representation compared to the national average (Fischer & Breakey, 1991). While the distinctions between these categories seems tedious and fluid, the fact is estimates of homelessness revolve around the lack of a fixed night time residence, and are therefore difficult to objectively identify with an eye test. This categorization is significant as it will shed light on the types of homeless individuals that choose to use the public library system.

Addressing the contributing dynamics leading towards homeless – primarily economic marginality and a lack of affordable housing, then leads to a tenuous balance between support systems and safety nets (Wolch & Dear, 1993). These support systems (i.e., community ties such as family, friends, and social services programs) are vital when the system in place only provides short-term benefits or care. In the event of a crisis, the stressors on these ties often become overbearing, and the cycle continues. When you add in extraneous factors, such as health (physical and mental) and employment, the result for many with severed or stretched ties is getting pushed out into the street. The streets are particularly harsh in D.C.

Homelessness in the District of Columbia

The United States Census Bureau estimates the District of Columbia has 681,170 residents, as of July 2016 (USCB, n.d.). According to the AHAR report, 8,350 of those residents are estimated to be homeless, ranking it 15th out of the 54 states/territories in terms of total homeless individuals (HUD, 2016). The proportion of estimated homeless individuals to the population is 1.23%, which might not seem like a statistical outlier, but becomes more powerful when you compare it to other states. By this metric, D.C. ranks higher than every state in the country, with the next highest being Hawaii at 0.55%. California has an estimated homeless population of 118,142, the highest in the country, but proportionately speaking, it makes up 0.30% of their 39,250,017 residents.

These figures are astounding considering the square footage of D.C. and relative population density. Since 2007 (the first year of the annual report), homelessness has increased by 3,030 or 57%. In the past year (2015-2016), homelessness has increased by 1,052 persons – that 14.4% increase was the highest percentage increase in the country. In both short and long term views, D.C. has the third highest total increases in homelessness, trailing only California (2,404 or 2.1%) and Washington (1,408 or 7.3%) from 2015-2016; and trailing only New York (23,751 or 37.9%) and Massachusetts (4,481 or 29.6%) from 2007-2016.
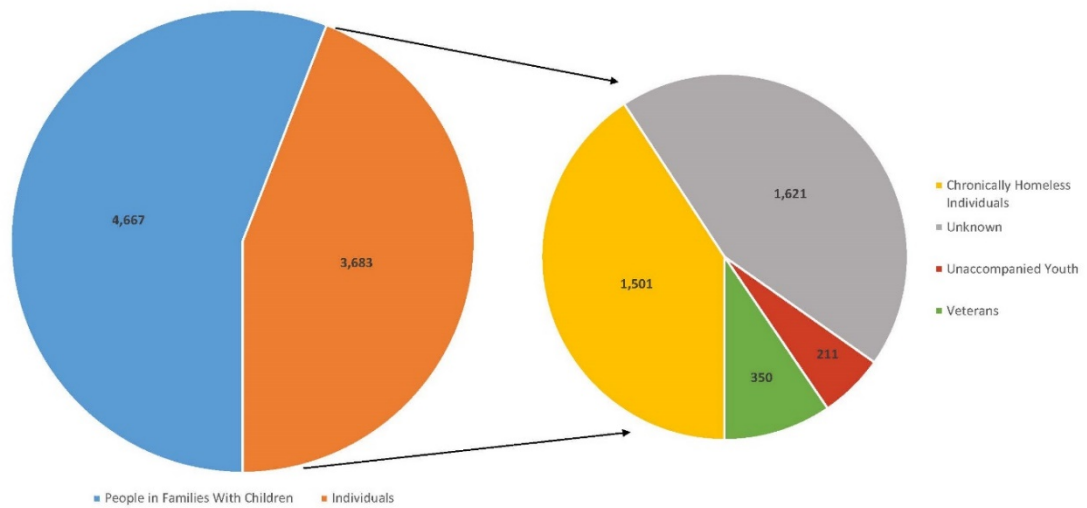
Figure 1. Estimates of Homelessness in the District of Columbia, 2016

Forty-one percent of homeless individuals in D.C. had chronic patterns of homelessness, nearly twice the national rate of 22%. With that said, the housing services within the city does an above average job in providing shelter to those individuals, as only 240 out of the 1,501 (16%) are categorized as unsheltered. With that said, only 318 out of the 8,350 are unsheltered homeless. By comparison, neighboring and much larger states account for 6,268 (VA) and 7,689 (MD) estimated homeless in the 2016 report.

Table 1. Percentage Change in Total Homelessness, Years Compared to 2016

Years	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
D.C.	57%	38.2%	34.1%	27.7%	27.6%	20.1%	21.6%	7.8%	14.4%
MD	-20.1%	-16.6%	-34.3%	-29.1%	-24.7%	-18.7%	-6.3%	-2.1%	-8.4%
VA	-35.7%	-26.0%	-29.2%	-31.0%	-28.9%	-25.6%	-17.8%	-10.7%	-10.5%

The homelessness statistics do not come from just this annual report, however. The U.S Conference of Mayors produces findings from a survey titled the "Hunger and Homelessness" report, measuring the rate of homelessness across cities nationwide. In their survey, they found that D.C. had the highest rate out of the 32 city survey, with 124.2 homeless people per 10,000 residents. From 2009-2016, the homeless rate grew 34.1 percent (Moyer, 2016; USCM, 2016).

With the pressure and evidence mounting, in both the news and on the streets, the current mayoral administration has made an effort to target homelessness behind government and private partnerships. Since 2005, there have been 12,424 articles in the Washington Post on the topic of homelessness.

The administration unveiled a plan in 2016 to replace D.C. General, a one-time hospital on the eastern part of town that now serves as the District's largest shelter for families, with scattered shelters throughout the city. D.C. General requires roughly $17 million per year to operate, covering building costs such as heating/cooling and elevators. Converting an old city hospital was never a permanent solution and was intended to provide temporary housing during colder weather, but has nevertheless served as the main family shelter. The D.C. Department of Human Services claim that on any given night, 1,000 people can be at the facility. According to the plan, the smaller planned buildings, located within seven of the eight wards, will provide those experiencing homelessness more opportunities to access the city's safety net. (Iacone, 2016).

According to the D.C. Department of Human Services, the city pays, on average, $80,000 per night on motel rooms for homeless families (Jamison & Davis, 2016). This

covers, according to the DCDHS website, 6 emergency shelters (3 for men only, 3 for women only); family temporary housing; and transitional housing for both families and single adults (D.C. DHS, n.d.). With a range of non-profit service organization advocacy groups placed throughout the city, there are available resources for those experiencing homelessness. It is, however, somewhat of a closed network. Those within the community share information with others that are coming into the community (e.g., a new person arriving at the shelter; a person at one of the programs at the library asking for assistance) on a fairly regular basis. As an outsider, and a former information professional, I will say that the information is very difficult to find without someone pointing you in the right direction (i.e., a point of contact) or without access to available resources (i.e., the internet). This is where the library plays a vital role in the dissemination of information – based both on their mission and on the patrons within library, creating a network of shared knowledge.

History of Library Policy on Homelessness

In 1990, the American Library Association (ALA) adopted Policy 61 titled "Library Services for the Poor" – developed specifically to ensure that libraries are "accessible and useful to low-income citizens and to encourage a deeper understanding of poverty's dimensions, its causes, and the ways it can be ended" (ALA, 2013b). The official policy statement, since renamed Section B.8.10, and last revised in 2013, states that:

> The American Library Association promotes equal access to information
> for all persons, and recognizes the urgent need to respond to the increasing
> number of poor children, adults, and families in America. These people are
> affected by a combination of limitations, including illiteracy, illness, social

isolation, homelessness, hunger, and discrimination, which hamper the
effectiveness of traditional library services. Therefore it is crucial that
libraries recognize their role in enabling poor people to participate fully in
a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and
strategies. Concrete programs of training and development are needed to
sensitize and prepare library staff to identify poor people's needs and deliver
relevant services. And within the American Library Association the
coordinating mechanisms of programs and activities dealing with poor
people in various divisions, offices, and units should be strengthened, and
support for low-income liaison activities should be enhanced. (p. 37).

This policy was adopted nationwide, over time, but only addresses the needs-based
approach of providing services. As we will see throughout the study, there is a very real
need for more social-oriented guidance of handling customer's wholesale – where the
homeless individual's use of the library is just one portion of the much-needed training.
Philosophically speaking, written policies are empty without the support of an
organization, or what Becker (1963) would call moral entrepreneurs. In an effort to put
resources behind their policy statement, the ALA created the Social Responsibilities Round
Table (SRRT). The SRRT believes that "libraries and librarians must recognize and help
solve social problems and inequities" (SSRT, 2009) and in 1996, formed the Hunger,
Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF). The HHPTF is charged with fostering
greater awareness of the dimensions, causes, and ways to end hunger, homelessness, and

poverty through the compilation of press articles, research, resources, and organizational information.

Beyond this statement, the policy manual outlines 15 measures to ensure implementation of the objectives listed in the policy statement (see: Appendix A). While many of the objectives involve the larger social implications of poverty and the promotion of the libraries potential role in addressing these issues, several are worth exploring in depth with respect to the interaction *within* the library between users and staff.

In more recent years, ALA has published updated guidelines targeted specifically at the homeless and the equity of access issues (ALA, n.d.a). From illiteracy and illness to hunger and discrimination, there are many barriers that can potentially inhibit library service and disallow poor and homeless people from full access to library services. People experiencing poverty or homelessness may be limited or prohibited by many issues, including: library card or access policies requiring a permanent address; prohibitive fines, fees or other penalties or the perception that services incur fees; staff who are not trained in service to people who are poor or homeless or who are made uncomfortable by prejudices against people who are poor or homeless; limited promotion at the community centers and organizations (food banks, shelters, after-school programs) which serve people experiencing poverty or homelessness; limited access to the library building by either limited means of transportation or service hours; lack of programs or resources that address people's experiences or current situations.

It is clear, both in the abundance of research and the development and revision of policy that libraries have understood the significance of the homelessness problem

throughout the country and have had to come to grips with their professional, ethical, and practical obligations to the community through outreach and services. In undertaking this research, I have made it possible to uncover some of the hidden meaning behind the relationships between the library staff and the library user: specifically that of the homeless library user, under the backdrop of the larger societal issues surrounding both topics. This identity, expressed through communicative actions, is a fundamental component to the experiences within the public library, for all parties involved. The public library, framed within the public space, provides an unseen look into the world of the homeless individual and provides meaning to the relationships with other homeless individuals, the library staff, and the library as institution. In the next chapter, we will go over the relevant communication literature, specially focusing on the Communication Theory of Identity, homelessness, and the intersection within the public space.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is an exploration of the relevant literature to the broad categories of identity, homelessness, homelessness within the public library, the discussion of public space, and communication strategies.

Identity is an important concept to understand when evaluating the relationships between the library and the homeless individual. The library has a historical precedent of providing access and services to those they deem to be poor. This works, policy wise, until the individual in question admits to their housing status. This admission by the individual changes the relationship between the user and the library, and frames the user, even with the best intentions of understanding staff, into a secondary category called a 'problem patron.' In San Francisco, for example, the mayor "was so appalled by the scene he encountered during a visit in 2014 that he demanded the establishment of a 'zero tolerance' policy (Miller, 2016). The result was an updated behavioral code of conduct, which on the surface appears to be of exclusionary nature to those that are homeless. Most libraries have similar codes of conduct, and we will analyze the language of the behavior rules of the DCPL. These codes, however, paint a very distinct route of interaction, which changes the dynamic in the space and alters the behavior. These changes, ultimately, play a role in the identity of both user and staff member.

This is slowly beginning to change, as more libraries across the country adopt social work practices, from educational materials, to on-the-job training, to even hiring case workers as part of the library staff. The library, places itself into a contradictory position: as both a refuge and a resource. The former, a byproduct of social issues outside of the libraries purview. The latter, a preferred institutional mission. Together, this dialectic of public vs. private space reinforces existing notions of identity through the use of the space, the behavior towards others, and the sense of self. Uncovering these layers of identity is a crucial step in understanding the nuanced social setting.

Identity has, for many years, been a central construct in the social and behavioral sciences (Jung & Hecht, 2004). The discussion of identity can quickly go off topic, into several subcategories, different disciplines, deeper and nuanced experiments on a multitude of variables. For the purposes of this study, the focus of identity is based on the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI). CTI is a fitting lens to examine this communication phenomena, especially the role of enactment, or what Goffman discusses as performance of identities. Prior to moving on, however, we must first briefly look at ways in which identity is used in previous literature to gain a better understanding of how it is being explored in this particular research framework.

Identity

In psychology, identity has been conceptualized as a salient aspect of the self and the self-concept. This functions as a gateway into self-image and the meaning of life (Hogg, 1993; Hogg & Reid, 2006). This also can cross over into the foundations of social identity theory and many of the ways in which the brain processes ambiguity and uncertainty in

interactions with other individuals, groups, or organizations (Giddens, 1984; Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Weick, 1979; Varela, Thompson, & Rosch, 1991). These categorizations have led to the development of Social Identity Theory (SIT), by explaining the psychological mechanisms of social categories and the relationships between groups (Tajfel, 1978; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Through this lens, researchers have been able to observe social inequalities by emphasizing the interactional, contextual, and hierarchical aspects of group relationships (Akfirat, Polat, & Yetim, 2016; Korschun, 2015).

These interactions occur within a society and so the focus of identity in sociology can be conceptualized as social roles – or put differently – how those social roles influence the sense of self (Schlenker, 1985; Stryker & Burke, 2000). Goffman (1959) understood this in his work on identity negotiation and the performance of self, combining the notion of identity with communicative actions. The relationship between a person's self-image and their social behavior is more complicated when identities are ascribed – those identities that are placed upon individuals by others (Collier, 2015).

This focus on identity, social interaction, and social relations led to further research on the study of identity by analyzing direct relationships between communication and identity. People's identities are asserted, defined, and/or changed in mutual communication activities. Through this identity negotiation process, people approach mutually desired identities. Mokros (2003) stated that identity is constituted by self-reflection of discourse and interaction; while Ting-Toomey (1999), following in the footsteps of Goffman, claimed identity was formed and negotiated in communication actions. Collier (1988, 1998, 2005, 2015; Collier & Thomas, 1988) has made a lifetime of work studying the ways

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in which identity is co-created in relationships and emerges through communication. An individual's identity is created through an internalization process and then negotiated against the identities ascribed by others. This co-created identity is avowed through communication and then adjusted by other ascriptions. As Jung and Hecht (2004) summarize, "these communicative perspectives on identity note the close association between communication and identity, especially the influence of communication on identity" (p. 266).

A useful perspective to study identity through communication is by assuming that communication is culture. According to Geertz (1973), culture is a historically transmitted system of symbols, meanings, and norms. With this in mind, the notion of identity can be culturally specific (e.g., an individualistic culture compared to a collectivistic culture). For example, in American culture, Carbaugh (1990) posits that identity tends to be situated within the individual, seen as a separated and discrete entity. Cross-cultural research has provided alternative views from the positions of feminism, social constructivism, systems theory, critical theory, deconstructionism, and Eastern philosophies (Chen, 2015).

This cultural perspective led several scholars to examine the ways in which culture is historically and socially emergent. This involves the creation of culture, the continuation of that culture through everyday practices, eventually leading towards an identity (Orbe, 1996, 1998, 2004, 2005). Individuals negotiate this identity upon interaction with others – this communication is co-created and maintained through repetition. This repetition, or culture, is a system of interdependent patterns of conduct, interpretations, and perceptions

(Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003). These patterns can be within social groups, network, or organizations – wherever behavior is normalized and patterns have become routinized.

Conquergood (1991) emphasized the temporal aspects of culture – a method that examines human conduct over time. Culture is an always changing process, thus a cultural perspective examines the structures and processes that emerge and change over time (Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003). This co-creation and maintenance of culture is a function of identity (Deetz & Kersten, 1983).

Communication Theory of Identity

Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) focuses on the mutual influences between identity and communication, and conceptualizes identity as communication rather than seeing identity as merely a product of communication (Hecht, Warren, Jung, & Krieger, 2005). CTI was born out through projects attempting to understand ethnic cultures and the inherent intra- and interethnic communication problems across boundaries: African-Americans (Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003); Jewish-Americans (Faulkner & Hecht, 2011; Golden, Niles, & Hecht, 2002; Hecht & Faulkner, 2000; Hecht et al., 2002) and Mexican-Americans (Collier, Ribeau, & Hecht, 1986; Hecht, Ribeau, & Sedano, 1990). Hecht and his colleagues attempted to understand the similarities/differences across ethnic cultures in evaluating effective communication outcomes. Through the research, they determined that identity *was* communication; communication was an enactment of identity, thus leading to higher levels of communication satisfaction. Because of these reasons, CTI was a major theoretical framework in analyzing and conceptualizing the data from this study.

Building upon the identity research from psychology, sociology, and anthropology, CTI focuses on the individual, role, social, and communal aspects of identity (Hecht, 1993). These four aspects borrow from symbolic interactionism and postmodernism, built upon the social identities observed through other disciplines, to posit various "loci of identity" (Hecht et al., 2005, p. 262). The layering of identity within these realms creates four distinct, yet interrelated frames: personal, enacted, relational, and communal. CTI is a valuable theoretical lens in that it neither fully endorses nor eschews essentialist or hyper post-modern notions of identity and instead proposes that identity is located in the four interconnected frames (Wagner, Kunkel, & Compton, 2016).

Newer research on CTI is particularly concerned with the quality of interpenetration of identities. Various types of interpenetration involve a dialectical tension to each layer – a discrepancy or a contradiction (e.g., an issue with the relational and communal layer) which Jung (2011) labeled an identity gap, can occur across the four layers with a possibility of 11 "gaps" if you include dyads and triads.

According to Hecht et al. (2005), to date, there are ten basic assumptions, or propositions,

- Identities have individual, social, and communal properties
- Identities are both enduring and changing
- Identities are affective, cognitive, behavioral, and spiritual
- Identities have both content and relationship levels of interpretation
- Identities involve both subjective and ascribed meaning

- Identities are codes that are expressed in conversations and define membership in communities

- Identities have semantic properties that are expressed in core symbols, meanings, and labels

- Identities prescribe modes of appropriate and effective communication

- Identities are a source of expectations and motivations

- Identities are emergent

The proposition for the personal layer:

- Identities are hierarchically ordered meanings attributed to self as an object in a social situation

The proposition for the enactment layer:

- Identities are enacted in social behavior and symbols

The propositions for the relational layer:

- Identities emerge in relationship to other people

- Identities are enacted in relationships

- Relationships develop identities as social entities

- Identities are meanings ascribed to the self by others in the social world

- Identities are hierarchically ordered social roles

The proposition for the communal layer:

- Identities emerge out of groups and networks.

CTI has been used as the foundational framework to analyze ethnicity studies, identity negotiation, cultural identity, identity gaps, illness identity, and technological identity (For an extensive look into this area of research, see: Hecht et al, 2005).

The use of CTI theory to address illness identity is quite intriguing, as those deemed chronically ill share several identity perspectives as those deemed chronically homeless. The overlapping factor here is physical and mental health: most previous research has made the assumption that sense-making efforts are driven by personal opinions, biases, and ideas about what constitutes health and illness (Levine, 1999). CTI theory, utilized by Kundrat and Nussbaum (2003) shows that an "invisible illness" can be constructed through social interaction (Newton, 2001). As seen in the literature on homelessness, much of their identity can be attributed to the visibility, or lack thereof, or potential hardships both internally and externally.

Homelessness Identity

The homeless individual is one of the most stigmatized in the United States (Phelen, Link, More, & Stueve, 1997). Those experiencing homelessness engage in near constant identity work and other strategies of stigma management (Cohen, 1997; Rayburn & Guittar, 2013; Roschelle & Kaufman, 2004; Snow & Anderson, 1987, 1993). Homelessness presents several challenges with respect to identity, the maintenance of a positive self-concept, and what Snow and Anderson (1987) term "salvaging the self." In her narrative analysis of homeless shelter residents, Meanwell (2013) noticed that individuals in that environment symbolically reconstruct the past from the standpoint of their present (Mead, 1932). This allows residents to strategically profane the past while

keeping the present self-separate and sacred (Goffman, 2010). The narratives, whether fiction or fact, imply specific work with respect to the temporal nature of self – meaning preserving positive past identities, devaluing current identities, and looking to future identities (Boydell, Goering, & Morell-Bellai, 2000).

Another avenue to look at homeless identity is through the lens of visibility. Due to various ordinances and laws, homelessness tends to be spatially organized. In their ethnographic study of homeless youth, Harter, Berquist, Titsworth, Novak, & Brokaw (2005) found that homeless youth stigmatization led to an "invisibility" – where the youth relied on their peer networks, "street smarts" and forms of realization to remain what the authors term "hidden homeless." There are many factors at play in the visibility of homelessness (e.g. substance abuse, urban/rural, mental illness, crime, laws, and ordinances) which ultimately lead to the reproduction of the stigma associated with homelessness. These highly visible representations have become what Takahashi (1997) argues as a caricature and dominant stereotypes and stigmas. With so many people living on the streets, in temporary housing, or in sheltered housing, cities – both urban and rural – have enacted legislation prohibiting behaviors that are common for those experiencing homelessness (Rayburn & Guittar, 2013). This arc, which Goffman refers to as the moral career, provides a progression through stages about their own identity.

Snow and Anderson (1987) take the stigma perspective of Goffman and apply it towards the homeless, identifying ways in which homeless individuals attempt to distance themselves from other homeless individuals. According to the study, this disassociation occurs at two levels – the first is from the general categorization of homelessness (e.g., role

distancing); and the second is from specific groups of homeless individuals (e.g., institutional distancing). In both cases, the justification was to provide a buffer between themselves and the stigmatized other (Anderson, Snow, & Cress, 1994; Snow & Anderson, 1993). Another study, looking at panhandlers (without specifically identifying as homeless but nevertheless displaying their housing status), also found the stigmatizing characteristics similar to the homeless individuals in the eyes of the public, which made them vulnerable to similar harassment and disgrace (Lankenau, 1999).

There is also some research regarding how those individuals requiring public assistance come to be institutionalized. Although much of this line of inquiry relates to an overarching form of identity, much of it has to be with systemic issues related to the definition of public assistance and institutional construction of troubled identities (Gubrium & Holstein, 2000). The library, as an institution, could also be viewed under this research paradigm, in addition to services such as hospital clinics, prisons, schools, and counseling centers. One type of this service industry is that of social work and more specifically, homelessness assistance. In these encounters, the clients "must describe themselves and their troubles in order to establish their eligibility for services" (Spencer, 2000, p. 158). This type of self-aware identity work, or an inability to provide such emotional detail, mirrors the type of assistance required when approaching the library for similar public assistance services.

The Library as Gatekeepers to Marginalized Groups

In 1921, librarian Arthur Bostwick stated that the public library was destined to play a pivotal role in society through an "incalculable influence in the solution of the social

problems" through the education of the masses (Dudley, 2013b). The public library fosters a community's learning capacity, by affording the opportunity for individuals and groups to gain new knowledge, create needed innovations, and forge new connections between social actors. These ideals, echoed through mission statements, position the library against the crises of urban life through economic, political, and social paradigms. As a public space, public libraries attract individuals from all walks of life, including groups of people that dominant culture views as "undesirable" (e.g., homeless, unemployed, mentally ill).

In September 2015, I had the fortunate opportunity to attend a lecture by Wayne Wiegand, often referred to as the "Dean of American library historians," on his most recent publication *Part of Our Lives: A People's History of the American Public Library* (Wiegand, 2015). After the presentation, we spoke at length on the role of homelessness in the public library and discussed his experiences during the research process. In fact, the entire historical account spanning more than 200 years serves to demonstrate the availability of source material regarding library activity in the American consciousness. Through his methodical approach to scouring the microfilm, microfiche, and archives of small and large newspapers, public libraries, county and city governments and private collections, his chronological research serves as the definitive account of the role of the library in the lives of American citizens.

Some of the earliest mention of homelessness and the library occurred in the 19th century in newspapers throughout the country. In 1877, Indianapolis police escorted "derelicts" from the public library reading room. During the 1890s, the Boston Public Library patrons named the lower hall "tramps retreat." A place where in the winter

homeless who abandoned benches on the Common "sat with their damp stockinged feet toasting at the warm radiators – their boots slyly removed when the attendances back is turned" (Wiegand, 2015, p. 74).

It may seem the prevailing public opinion about the homeless is rather limited to the negative side of the emotional spectrum, but not all have seen it that way. In 1889, a reporter in Chicago noticed that the homeless use of the reading room was an "oasis in the desert of a hard, struggling world, and the few hours they spread daily in its dreamy quiet are the only glimpse of happiness their barren lives know" (Loungers among books, 1889). In Los Angeles, a public librarian unknowingly provided guidance following generations with his poignant societal assessment:

> "A whole community is physically safer when the loafer, be he chronic or otherwise, is sitting with a book before him in an atmosphere and surroundings of wholesomeness. When the extent of this usefulness is better realized, every employment office and corner loafing-place will contain an invitation to the library; loaf at the library if need be." (Kelso, 1893).

The gatekeeper model recognizes that informal social exchange takes place more frequently than formal exchange resulting in the ability of informal contacts to provide greater opportunity for problem solving (Florio & Raschko, 1998). The relationship between library staff and homeless patrons, which occurs with great regularity comparable to other traditional sources (e.g., police, health care providers, social workers), may place staff in an ideal position to provide assistance (Anderson et al., 2012). Considering the

ALA mandate requiring libraries to assist, it makes the staff members both professionally and ethically accountable.

A recent collection of essays titled *Public Libraries and Resilient Cities* (Dudley, 2013a) positions the public library against the crises of cities and urban life through economic, political, and social lenses; demonstrating that public libraries can contribute to a city's diversity, adaptability, and learning capacity. As noted in the groundbreaking work of Duneier's *Sidewalk* (1999) "it is vital to the well-being of cities with extreme poverty that there be opportunities for those on the edge to engage in self-directed entrepreneurial activity" (p. 317). The role of the library can aid in that opportunity by providing information and service needs to those experiencing poverty or homelessness. This ability to be two things at once affords the library to transcend the traditional roles of its intended purpose and its lived-in reality. The dual nature of library use, as seen through the homeless user, is that of accomplishing personal needs that others would typically take care of at home (e.g., shelter, sleep, using the bathroom, pleasure), thus the library is a hijacked private space. Contrasting that, is the use of the library as the intended purpose, information and services needs for education and self-improvement. Or put simply, the library as a public space.

Information Needs

The first systematic examination of this relationship was undertaken as part of the public library inquiry (1947-1952) conducted by the social science research council (SSRC) at the request of the ALA. Rather than carrying out an internal and potentially biased review, the ALA sought the impartial observations of trained social scientists, in the

hope that the findings would bolster their own professional assumptions about the value of the public library and thereby provide an empirical basis for their own lobbying efforts. The inquiry concluded the public library was not, in fact, meeting the demands of the masses but rather of a more educated stratum of society (Molz & Dain, 1999). As a result, many policy makers have attempted to reconcile the mission of the library with the reality of its patrons. Typical homeless information needs, according to Hersberger (2005), include the following: finances, relationships, childcare, housing, health, employment, education, transportation, public assistance.

The topic of the information needs provided to the poor and homeless has been an on-again / off-again topic du jour for nearly a century for information science professionals and local governments. At the turn of the century, an 18-month study in the UK titled *Open to All?* attempted to shed light on the ability of the public library to assess and address social exclusion. Their findings, put simply, were that public libraries are only superficially open to all; provide passive access; and favor existing library users rather than excluded or disadvantaged communities (Muddiman et al, 2001).

It is generally understood that adults find libraries a place for lifelong learning with resources and programs useful in exploring new ideas, personal interests, and careers (Rosa, 2016). Librarians have been on the front lines for the creation of innovative programs – programs intended to meet the vast demand within communities for help finding social services, searching for employment, job-related skills, and seeking free entertainment (Jaegar et al., 2014).

Service Needs

Are public libraries to offer similar services as public shelters? According to Hughes (1984), "if two institutions draw upon the same people, either they are in competition, or else the services which they offer are somehow different" (p. 11). Tensions still exist over whether libraries should be responsible for dealing with socially excluded populations (Gehner, 2010). The Department for Culture, Media, and Sport in the United Kingdom set a precedent for welcoming marginalized groups into libraries with the publication of *Libraries for All: Inclusion in Public Libraries* in 1999, but opponents continue to voice their dissenting opinions (Hodgetts et al., 2008).

Described by Cronin (2002) as a "disruptive minority," the homeless person is seen as a harbinger of antisocial conduct and the library should not operate as a refuge for the homeless. There are several assumptions made regarding the subjective nature of ascribing homelessness to a patron based on appearance. This ascribed identity places the homeless library user into different bucket than "normal" or "legitimate" library users. In 1993, a homeless man was turned away from the central library branch, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library (MLK) of the District of Columbia Public Library (DCPL) and was told by security to "clean up." The man field a federal lawsuit challenging the 1979 rule on dress and hygiene, which gave staff members the ability bar patrons with "objectionable appearance." In 2001, Judge Emmet G. Sullivan, citing the subjective nature of interpretation and unavoidably arbitrary enforcement, ruled in favor of the homeless man (Judge nixes DCPL policy, 2001). After the ruling, library officials began to review the behavior guidelines. This revision to the rules, focused the attention on the conduct within the library rather than something subjective such as appearance.

Given the high level of physical and mental health problems in the homeless population compared with other sub-populations, homeless patrons may also be in need of health services and information on where they might locate such services (National Healthcare for the Homeless Council, 2008). Historically, the library has combined the homeless library user with the mentally ill library user in terms of practical applications for handling behavior and providing services. Efforts have been taken to differentiate the types of mental illnesses, including descriptions of the various types and best practices for confrontations (Ford, 2002). Some librarians have promoted the idea of including persons with mental illnesses under the umbrella of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), which affords a broader range of service and response policies (Hecker, 1996). The traditional models (problem patron vs. person with disabilities) provide what has appeared to be a disconcerting path for identifying the unique nature of the homeless library user.

In a widely circulated (within the library industry) op-ed piece in the *Los Angeles Times*, a librarian claimed that "virtually all the urban libraries in the nation" have become de facto daytime shelters for homeless people, going so far as to say that "the most salient characteristic of these people is that most of them are mentally ill" (Ward, 2007). As stated above, libraries have the service centers and staff devoted to those with disabilities, compliant with the ADA, providing services to the blind, the deaf, those with learning disabilities, and on occasion, the homeless. The key component to these service centers, however, is the exclusion of those deemed mentally ill. For the most part, according to surveys to libraries throughout the country, the mentally ill patron is categorized as such because of their behavior and not because of their specific request for assistance (Torrey,

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Esposito, & Geller, 2009). As a result, most librarians, specifically in urban settings, are often handlings patrons with mentally illness without the proper guidance or training required for the specialization.

In France, the first study directed towards homeless library users was conducted by sociologist Serge Paugam in 2012 at the Biblioteque Publique d'information, located within the Centre Pompidou in Paris. The findings, according to Paugam, focused on the process of social downgrading (i.e., fragility, dependency, and rupture) and their applicability within the library setting (Gaudet, 2013). The study found that the intended use of the library was based on the "stage" within their specific life orientation. For example, those in the first step used the library as a working place; the second step was seen as a daily routine; and the third step as a necessity.

In some situations, understanding the needs of homeless people and interpreting their indications of need can complicate the helping process for library staff. Serving the needs of homeless people calls for library staff to be especially responsive, resourceful and creative. Numerous policy suggestions have been dispersed throughout the library and information sciences field and most have to do with larger socio-economic issues. These issues, for the most part, are the driving force behind policy implementation. Historically speaking, the library as an institution has been very progressive in their desire to address social justice issues. Gehner (2010) outlines five actions for engaging low-income people: (1) look beyond income level to understand deprivation; (2) focus on the causes of social exclusion, not just symptoms; (3) remove barriers that alienate socially excluded groups; (4) get out of the library and get to know people; (5) understand that charity is not dignity:

dignity is inclusion. These types of job descriptions fall under a variety of social service professional duties.

The interesting contradiction in the policy discussion is the implementation of the policy. When the policies that are put in place do not meet with the reality of the front lines; when the staff that are charged with meeting goals cannot accomplish those goals because of the library user behavior; and when that behavior is not accounted for in the idealistic policy resolution; the result is inefficiency. Is it asking too much of staff who are not trained as social workers, as authority figures, as therapists, as conflict resolution professionals, or any other applicable training? Even with more efforts to provide pre- and on-the-job training, most library employees are not prepared by their education or training to handle the wide variety of behavior within the library (Redfern, 2002). We will discuss these questions in later chapters, specifically those dealing with the interactions between library staff and library, along with the discussion of professional perceptions of librarianship.

Furthermore, by developing the "Poor People Policy" outlined by the ALA, a dichotomy could exist where the homeless library user is distinct from non-homeless library user, leading to a position of "otherness" (Madden, 2003). In a less cynical world view, library staff can be a source of help for emotional and physical problems including, but not limited to, financial, physical, work, family, emotional, alcohol/drugs, confusion, relationships, depression, and anxiety. As mentioned earlier, those that choose to use the library do so for a variety of reasons and come from all walks of life. This is not just limited to the traditional use of the library; as many users violate the behavior rules and codes of conduct. The issue with the policy implementation, is the ascribed identity of "homeless"

to a library user automatically categorizes them into the labelling of "problem patron."

Why are certain users labeled "problem patrons" over others? Is it simply a matter of

physical appearance? What role does that physical appearance, or the labelling of

"homeless" play in the way in which the library staff treat and act within the library setting?

We address these issues through the discussion of enacted and relational layers of identity.

The Library as Public Space

Defined broadly by Lofland (2009), the public realm is where inhabitants, often

strangers or those with occupational or non-personal categorical relations, share space and

go about their daily lives. This transition from private to public space results in tension

through changes in inhabitant behavior – behavior that is dictated through the creation and

maintenance of that shared space. Further, the examination of the physical structures

(streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas, alleyways, buses, bars, stores, restaurants, public

restrooms) inherent to the definition of public leads towards the subjective analysis of

personal behavior and opinion (Haddington et al., 2012; Hirschauer, 2005; Hood, 1996;

Lee, 2007; Maines, 1992; Moore & Breeze, 2012; Putz, 2012; Raudenbush, 2012; Warren,

2011). This change in behavior ultimately allows for ideas such as frenetic, crowded, loud,

smelly, dangerous, indifferent, anonymous, and dirty all rise to the service when discussing

public deviance. These public spaces are filled with "hostile" strangers, "unsightly"

homeless and the "unsightly" poor (Lofland, 2009).

Traditionally, public spaces are those that are open and accessible to all, regardless

of gender, race, ethnicity, age, or socio-economic level. The recent history of the United

States has, as Lofland put it, controlled the "destitute" through the development of public

space strategies. Certain examples of this would be the site selection and creation of new public library branches through the power of eminent domain – which was originally a tool for transitioning private land into the public commons (Gibson, 2010). The "commons" (e.g., parks, town squares) has suffered with the increased privatization of public spaces (Berndston, 2013). This privatization has redefined the understanding of public space especially for those that occupy those spaces. The library is a prime example of the commons, defined as natural elements (e.g., air, water) and physical spaces (e.g., parks, sidewalks) within cities that are open to all (Dudley, 2013a). It also consists of socio-technological artifacts (e.g., airwaves, internet). The library acts as both a physical public space (i.e., a repository for information and a gathering place) and an intellectual public space (i.e., a broker of information).

It is generally accepted that the "public" library entitles universal access to all people, and that the mission of the library is to serve that public (Simmons, 1985). The public library stands in a paradoxical setting with traditions of progressive and conservative politics, equally positioned in urban centers, suburban communities, small towns, and rural outposts. As one of the few remaining public institutions, the public library is a fundamental component of the public realm. The library is one of the last outposts where a cross section of people still come together (Wiegand, 2015).

The existing notion, or romanticized view, of public space (i.e., free assembly, democratic processes, and social expression) is egalitarian: open equally to all. This is becoming increasingly more important in today's political climate, where building community and community cooperation is vital to a healthy society (Walljasper, 2011).

The reality of public space, however, is that it is a site of struggle – the struggle of social inclusion and exclusion. This struggle is realized in the public space of the public library, especially when analyzing that struggle through the lens of the homeless individual and their daily routines.

Snow and Anderson (1993) posit four distinctive sets of overlapping constraints for the homeless: organizational, political, moral, and spatial/ecological. These constraints interact with (either by facilitating or impeding) daily survival routines for the homeless living on the street. Of the four constraints, the spatial/ecological prove to be the most critical for the routines and adaptive strategies of the homeless (Snow & Mulcahy, 2001). The concept of space, and therefore the valuation of space, is rooted in the ability of an individual to use the space for its intended purposes. We see this in property ownership. We see this in commercial zoning. We see this in homeless enclaves under bridges. In *The Right to the City*, Mitchell (2003) argues through an historical analysis of laws, news, and narrative, that public space is a constant negotiation attempting to reconcile political and economic agendas. Where does the library fit?

The physical location of the library can also play a role in the dynamic within the library. Does the diversity, disorder, and disconnection of a neighborhood contribute to the actions of the individuals? The central location of MLK within the business and tourist districts would seem to require a stricter police force governing the use of the public space. In places like Seattle, the persistence of homelessness was met with pressures to clean up "downtown" areas. The resulting public policy, including banishment as a social control strategy, helped get the visible homeless out of the streets (Beckett & Herbert, 2009). The

library, almost by accident, is in a position to assist with these banishment enforcement policies by taking in the homeless individuals off of the streets. In other words, the libraries existence as a refuge is dependent on the cities policies towards enforcing such banishment strategies. If the policy in place is to keep the streets clean, the library takes on a much larger share of that responsibility. This, in essence, is where the conceptualization of "libraries as day shelters" is realized.

Acceptable Public Space Behavior

Goffman (1963) coined the concept of "civil inattention" to describe the behaviors of strangers, deemed to be proper, in society and specifically for interactions between strangers in close physical proximity to one another. Using sidewalk traffic as an example, Goffman states that civil inattention involves a degree of role differentiations regarding obligations. This is mostly achieved through visual notice and passive acknowledgement of the other person as nonthreatening and normal. The concept of civil inattention has been explored through many case studies and occurs in nearly all public locations (e.g. restaurants and bars, airports and elevators, busses and subways, hotel lobbies and hospital waiting rooms). Lofland (2009) posits that civil inattention occurs out of respect for other people's privacy and that it "makes possible co-presence without co-mingling, awareness without engrossment, courtesy without conversation" (p. 30). It is not surprising, therefore, to note that this type of activity occurs regularly within the public library. The sharing of table spaces, for example, provides a look into how civil inattention is applied in the common areas of the library; as does the idea of existing in both a private space (e.g., your work area) and a public space (e.g., a shared four-person rectangle table). Any negotiation

of the differences between perceived private space and observed public space can be examined under this guiding conceptualization.

A distinction made here, that varies from this earlier line of theorizing, is the repetitive frequency of library users leading towards the term "regular." According to Katovich & Reese (1987), regulars are generic social types that differ from strangers and their position within a social setting provides familiarity and security. That position exists both interpersonally and temporally as a community member – and in this case, a regular member of the library community. A contributing factor, as discussed earlier, is the nature of homelessness and the lack of alternatives during the day-time hours. This makes the homeless person a "user without homes" and a regular to the library staff and the other users within the space. In essence there are two types of regulars within the public library: those that are choosing to go there specifically to use resources; and those that go there because they have nowhere else to go (but who sometimes use the library's resources as a secondary goal). This nuance is important to note, as it changes the fundamental element of public space for interpersonal interactions.

Contrasting the issue of the regular, is the idea of individuals using the library as a means to an end; or put more eloquently, a place to fulfill needs meeting non-routinized goals or temporary objectives (e.g., printing documents, checking out a book, waiting out inclement weather). For these types of patrons, we look to a more refined conceptualization of civil inattention. In her ethnographic study of Greyhound busses, Kim (2012) uncovered patterns of "nonsocial transient behavior," arising from uncertainty about strangers, lack of privacy or absence of a personal space and exhaustion. This study of behaviors on the

Greyhound bus highlighted the difference between public and social spaces, and that travel falls under a nonsocial transient space, where individuals "intricately design and carefully coordinate interaction rituals by avoiding people nearby and slipping into a personal space of the self" (Kim, 2012, p. 281).

In a sense, this behavior also shapes the atmosphere of the entire social space. Individuals pretend to be busy or preoccupied in order to maintain a level of anonymity with the surrounding strangers. There is a risk perception element as well, where many shared public spaces, such as tight, crammed, transportation avenues, could be deemed potentially dangerous. As with other public spaces, nonsocial transient spaces have their own set of norms, routines, and unspoken rules of conduct. Individuals will often use their bodies, belongings, or the geometry of a shared public space to create physical boundaries. This creation of a physical boundary enables the creation of a mental boundary, and these mental boundaries create and maintain the personal space of self. Progressing from the macro-level interactions between individuals in society, it is possible to discuss the micro-level interactions within the public library.

In the library, there are a variety of presupposed role interactions that help to create these physical and mental boundaries. Whether nonsocial transient space or civil inattention, the use of an urban public library is a constant negotiation of providing privacy in a public setting. In fact, some research claims that there is a higher tolerance for this type of cooperation within urban areas, as people within cities unconsciously cooperate in maintaining their anonymity in the public space (Karp, Stone, Yoels, & Dempsey, 2015). This type of cooperation plays out in the library in three uniquely identifiable relationships:

institution v. institution/organization (e.g., the symbolic representation of the "library" or the "patron"); individuals v. individuals (e.g., library staff and users); and institution v. individual (e.g., normative library users, deviant library users or stigmatized "others").

These particular groupings represent the area(s) of interaction, or transitions across boundaries (Shumate & Fulk, 2004). These boundaries exist, as Clark (2000) points out, as lines of demarcation between domain-relevant behavior through three forms: temporal, physical, and psychological. In the library, the time of the day, the location within the building, and the perception of the other individual all play a role in this negotiated identities and interactions between individuals. As Goffman (1959) explains, defining a situation requires information about the individual, leading to a mutual expectation of behavior and roles. Citing a lack of a behavior-focused approach, Shumate and Fulk (2004) theorize a communication-based perspective on role transitions between networks. While the premise of their research was on work/family relationships, much of the theoretical underpinnings, especially the discussion of rituals and routines, are useful when conceptualizing role behaviors within the library.

The enactment of roles, requiring the enactment of situation, is rooted in several presentations of identity. It seems likely the social norms of one's peers often influence behavior (Conley, 1996). The social norms of others provide the queues necessary to interpret unwritten rules – and to a lesser degree to interpret unknown written rules. One of the more understood yet understated characteristics of the library is the relative lack of ambient noise. The library is a quiet place and any conversation, regardless of volume, is a distraction to the norm. It is logical to suggest an increase in patrons will increase the

baseline of normal volume and a decrease in patrons will decrease the baseline of normal volume. With that lower number of patrons, however, noise outside of the normal will be more widely heard. An exemplar of this peer influence is the stereotype of the ""shh!" individual enforcement of unwritten behaviors. If unwritten rules are implicitly known to a given group of individuals, the written policies are an explicit expression of these unwritten rules, at both macro and micro levels.

Potential Outcomes of Homeless Use of the Library

In studying the social worlds of the homeless, Conley (1996) found that most individuals could not afford to isolate themselves from their peers as they rely on those relationships for emotional and material support. Noted communication scholar Brant R. Burleson spent the better part of three decades studying the concepts of social support through emotional valuations, cultural differences, and gender roles (Burleson, 1994, 2003, 2008; Burleson & Kunkel, 2006; Burleson & Mortenson, 2003). What is abundantly clear in the literature is that the provider of support must be cognizant of the receiver's personal history, aware of the larger picture, and an effective and skillful communicator.

Does this occur in the library between users and staff or users and users? It is understood that informational support is abundant – but just as successful emotional support requires more than good intentions, so too does successful informational support require more than availability. The acquisition requires an intended purpose. Where do individuals go, or whom do they look to or seek out, within their networks? What are those networks? These questions all part of the identity of the library user in general, and the homeless library user more specifically.

Homelessness and Social Support

The existing literature on social support is vast. The intent of this brief literature review is not to provide an exhaustive analysis of every facet of social support and the various applications – but to focus specifically on the relation of social support within a homelessness community.

The study of homeless social support has spanned nearly three decades, through numerous lenses such as psychology, public health, and communication. As with other multidisciplinary research, the definition of social support has changed over time; refined to meet the needs of the researcher and the target population. Broadly defined, social support refers to the resources or benefits people may receive from interactions (House, Umberson, & Landis, 1988). In this vein, it is very similar to the concept of social capital (Putnam, 2000).

The consequences of social support have been examined through health maintenance behaviors, perceived control, stability, self-esteem, and psychological well-being (Langford, Bowsher, Maloney, & Lissis, 1997) As such, social support is critical for the well-being of an individual, housed or homeless alike. Social support typically allows stressed individuals a path away from the perceived threat (Zugazaga, 2008). The impact of social ties on physical and mental health outcomes is well-documented. According to LaGory, Ritchey, and Fitzpatrick (1991), characterizing the homeless as detached from social institutions and informal networks also led to observers to improperly study social ties. This contrasting isolation and integration perspective was problematic.

In an effort to correct those previously held assumptions, Bates and Toro (1999) attempted to create measures of homeless social support and the stress-buffering effect

potential networks provide to those in need. Most prior studies focused on a wide assortment of measures typically designed for a particular study. Table 2 condenses the four dimensions of social support research inquiry. While these categories are distinct measures, there are often layers of overlap in measurement. For the purposes of homelessness social support, the functional dimension appears to be the easiest to ascertain, specifically in evaluating the intentions behind the use of the library. Due to the relative difficulty in population sample – both in terms of ethical issues and complexity – quantitative studies of the homeless have taken a back seat to qualitative analysis. In an extensive two year participant observation, researchers investigated the role of social ties of the homeless visiting a downtown Atlanta park. The study, backed by interview data, found regular users of the park engaged in four types of support: tangible, advice, belonging, and esteem. Echoing the functional dimension of social support (Bates & Toro, 1999), the research also identified three categories of social networks: non-kin, family, and formal social services (Reitzes, Crimmins, Yarbrough, & Parker, 2011).

In her study of Latino and African American men, Molina (2000) described the variations of non-kin networks within the homeless. Friends, intuitively, could provide most types of support, but are most important for providing self-esteem. Associates are defined as frequent contact-exchanging instrumental resources that provide safety, tangible advice and belonging (Dachner & Tarasuk, 2002). Causal or "satellite" acquaintances refer to those in similar situations that are yet emotionally distant when providing information and advice (Molina-Jackson, 2008). Beyond the non-kin network, the homeless rely on formal social services agencies for tangible support (Morrell-Bellai, Goering, & Boydell,

2000). These outlets are perceived to be less desirable, problematic, and potentially

hazardous (Dachner & Tarasuk, 2002; Reitzes el al., 2011). General exceptions exist,

however, when trust has been established with particular staff members. In fact, Reitzes et

al. (2011) state "they key element to their day-to-day survival and sense of social well-

being was the patchwork of non-kin, family, and formal social services ties" (p. 287). This

lends credence to the need to identify not only what types of social support the homeless

receive, but what networks are preferred or available within the library system.

Table 2. Social Support Measures (Adapted from Bates & Toro, 1999).

Dimensions	Operationalization	References
Structural	Embeddedness of person within social network; connections with others.	Barrera, 1986; Hammer, 1984
Functional	Availability of support: tangible (instrumental aid); advice/appraisal (feedback); self-esteem (positive affect); emotional (acceptance); belongingness (companionship)	Cohen & Hoberman, 1983; Cohen & Wills, 1985; Leavy, 1983
Perceived	Perceptions of availability and adequacy	Shaefer, Coyne, & Lazarus, 1981
Enacted	Retrospective support evaluation	

In sum, the homeless library users, according to the existing literature, will turn to

their peers for social support. When that strategy fails, they will then turn to the library

staff. There are exceptions to this rule, however, and that is when a rapport has been built

up over time, or a trust has been achieved (i.e., a social worker in the library specifically stating their purpose and providing information through programming). Although this type of behavior is not predictable, per se, one could reasonably suggest that the homeless library user will keep a wary distance, with a preference on acquiring support from their peers, even if the library staff member wants to provide that support.

Weak / Strong Tie Networks

In the seminal work of Granovetter (1973, 1982), weak ties represent a useful conceptualization to understand how relationships occur between individuals that communication on a frequent basis. Without going into depth, the premise of advantages gained from either weak or strong tie networks is based on the perception and situation of the individuals involved in the actions. Much of the research focuses on in-person (or face-to-face) interactions, but recent scholarship has focused on the availability of technology assisted (or computer-mediated) interactions. The interactions range from emotional support to health information, organizational information, and the dissemination of information across networks (Contractor, Whitbred, Fonti, & Steglich, 2012; Haythornthwaite, 2002; Weenig & Midden, 1991; Wright & Miller, 2010; Wright & Rains, 2013; Wright, Rains, & Banas, 2010).

The identification of a preference towards one network or the other has been difficult to establish empirically. To that end, Wright & Miller (2010) devised a scale to identify the preference of weak ties or strong ties, based on underlying assumptions on that preference. Previous research found weak ties have been utilized to access different viewpoints; reduce risk; obtain objective feedback; and limit role obligations as compared

to strong ties. Relating network preference to the homeless, there is an overlap in desirability of weak ties: situational similarity; objectivity resulting from a lower emotional attachment; increased security; and lower social expectations.

Although people become homeless for many reasons, an experience that all share is the lack of the type of social support afforded by a place of residence and, with it, a recognized place in the larger community (Solarz & Bogat, 1990). As far back as 1936, the isolation of the homeless from family and other groups has been discussed (Sutherland & Locke, 1936). This isolation can be mitigated by the development of social networks and these social networks can be formed and composed of other homeless individuals (Tyler & Melander, 2011). A dated study on the homeless population found that contrary to opinion, homeless people self-identified as having regular familial contact (Toro & Wall, 1991). In a comparative study of data from 1992 and 2002, Israel, Toro, & Ouellette (2010) found that homeless populations were older, sicker, more isolated, and cut off from social networks and social support. Clearly, the literature suggests contrasting conclusions. What is evident, however, is the need to strengthen existing ties between informal and formal support providers for the homeless (Tucker et al., 2009). The library is well positioned to take on this challenge.

The existence and function of a social support system is critical for individuals, particularly those faced with stressful events. Initial investigations of social support networks within the homeless community attempted to determine basic characteristics of the network size or frequency of contact (Bates & Toro, 1999). Numerous studies have attempted to focus on ties and social support at the network level; examples include at the

community and households (Wellman & Wortley, 1990); the components of strong ties in homeless women (Mitchell, 1987) and women as head of household (Toohey, Shinn, & Weitzman, 2004); with substance abuse and mental health illness (Hawkins & Abrams, 2007); through social capital with depression (Irwin, LaGory, Ritchey, & Fitzpatrick, 2008). There are several assumptions based on the literature: homeless adults are likely to be unmarried (USCM, 2009); homeless individuals usually have small social support networks; woman have larger family networks than men; and the longer a person spends as homeless, the smaller the social network. These assumptions can be related to mental illnesses or drug addiction, as well as other unstable conditions, putting pressure on the social network. The strain on the network then makes it more likely that the individual, under a crisis situation, will be forced out onto the street (Wolch & Dear, 1993). The networks identified in the past homeless social support literature can be found in the library of neighborhood public places. While there is a nomadic perception of the homeless – due to the definition of lacking a permanent residence – the homeless person typically has a daily routine that is both physical and personal. This routine plays out in the public space of parks and streets – and for our purposes, the library.

Technology

Given the relative rise of technology in the digital age over the last quarter century, it is safe to assume the prevalence of the use of technology, even for under-privileged, low-income, and homeless populations. Walk the streets of any urban center, where pan-handlers are present, and you will notice their ownership of technology devices from cell phones to tablets to laptops. Many advocacy groups request outdated technology donations

for this very purpose. The library is no different. Either the use of their own devices (if possible) or the use of the library devices (if available), the overarching purpose is for one particular use: the internet.

The internet creates opportunities for learning, confidence, and self-empowerment (Sanyal, 2000), which is strikingly similar to the mission of the library. This opportunity allows homeless individuals access to information about jobs and housing (Eyrich-Garg, 2011), health information (Barman-Adhikari & Rice, 2011), for entertainment purposes (Kelleher, 2013; Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2014), and as a form of escapism (Muggleton & Ruthven, 2012). More importantly, however, is the ability of this accessibility to create and maintain social networks (Servon & Pinkett, 2004). Homeless youth utilize social media to maintain network ties and relationships (Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2014). Libraries serve as brokers of social capital, which is the driving force behind economic vitality and community (Walljasper, 2010).

The types of social capital have been refined since Putnam (2000) brought the term to a larger audience. Three areas of social capital warrant consideration for the homeless: maintained, bridging, and bonding. Maintained social capital (Ellison, Steinfield, & Lampe, 2007) is based on the use of online networks which allows individuals to keep in touch with a social network after physically disconnecting from it. Bridging social capital is based on the premise of difference – or across groups – where an increase in diversity leads to an increase in social capital. Bonding social capital is based on the premise of homogeneity – where network closure leads to an increase in social capital. The homeless, discussed as marginalized, others, co-cultures, or problem patron, can acquire any of the

three variations through the use of the library. What is unclear, because the questions have never been asked, is what types of social capital does the library user acquire and how does that relate to the homeless library user?

Access to technology, then, appears as a critical barrier in gaining social capital. The publically available computers within the library, along with the free access to the internet, provides a connection to a past life; a lifeline to a current support network; and the opportunity to improve or change the future (Rice & Barman-Adhikari, 2014). The library is a tremendous resource, as we have seen, in the access to information (e.g., searching for housing, employment) that could potentially change the homeless library user's situation. Access to technology can also provide recreational and therapeutic benefits, linking those without homes to a part of their past lives. Or as one community shelter manager calls it, "the mobility of technology is a portable piece of normal life" (personal communication, July 24, 2016).

Summary

The key themes in this literature review that tie into homelessness and the public library are important components when addressing the Communication Theory of Identity at each of the frames: personal, enacted, relational, and communal. The existing literature on homelessness identity provides the necessary framework to take the self-concept assumption within the personal frame of CTI and apply it to the homeless library user and the role of the library within that identity. The literature on the historical role of the library with marginalized groups helps to organize and support concepts at the enacted, relational, and communal frames of CTI – from providing information needs, service needs, or the

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role of technology in the lives of the users. The discussion of the public space and the behavior within the public space all provide background information necessary to analyze the enacted and communal identities of the library users and the staff. The potential outcomes of library use provide context to the relational and communal identities of homeless library users. These themes form the basis for the themes uncovered during data collection; through the stories of the homeless library user; through the interviews of the library staff; and through the understanding of the role of the library within the large social setting.

Rather than applying the aforementioned theories to the study, the theoretical underpinnings of the literature provided an important contextual background during the ethnography. CTI emerged as an applicable framework to organize, analyze, and present the data accumulated in the field. The numerous ways in which identity has been studied, across disciplines, only adds to the overall picture of the homeless library user; the behavior within the library; the interactions within the library; and the perceptions of the role of the library in the larger picture. These general themes allow the data to answer specific research questions regarding identity, homelessness, and the public library. How and why do homeless patrons use the library? What does the library mean to them? How is the use of the library by homeless patrons understood by the library staff? By the library administration? By official library policy? By the library as a profession? How does the institution achieve the mission of the library while also responding to and managing the homeless patron? What role does assumed and ascribed identity play in both the self-understandings of homeless people and the institutional response of the library staff? How

does the library staff negotiate their job duties and their personal beliefs of how to perform those job duties? What do the interactions between homeless patrons and library staff tell us about the use of public space, the notion of private space within a public setting, and the struggle over the public space within an urban city?

The presentation of the data through the CTI framework highlights brief glimpses of these distinctions of human interaction in this specific setting with these specific actors. It also sheds light into areas of future research, digging deeper to examine the interconnectedness of the layers. Finally, it adds to the existing literature, across a wide array of disciplines, from a new and previously unused perspective.

CHAPTER THREE: STATEMENT OF THE METHOD

As an ethnographic study, the data gathered from this study came from a variety of fieldwork sources: participant observation field notes; individual in-depth interviews with DCPL staff members; and textual analysis of documents and reports. The analysis was conducted using a thematic analysis of all data collected, through phenomenological reflection, in order to grasp the essential meaning behind the cultures presented within the library system (i.e., the library staff, the library user, the homeless library user) (Van Manen, 1990). The data analysis discovered recurring themes across various layers of interpersonal relationships. These themes fit within the context of the Communication Theory of Identity (CTI) and will be presented as such in subsequent chapters.

As a former librarian, in both education (graduate degree) and work experience (eight years), the intersecting role of information user/seeker and information provider/access is a large part of my identity. I must recognize this while attempting to answer questions regarding how a particular user segment (in this case, the homeless population) makes sense of their surroundings and how that dictates behavior within a specific context (the library). This self-perception confirms my ontological and epistemological beliefs of multiple realities and co-created and shared understanding. The personal identities of the homeless; their constructed social realities, the sense-making of

those realities and interactions, and the symbolic practices are all studied through the immersion in the social setting (Lindlof & Taylor, 2012).

In order to access this population, a more in-depth, qualitative ethnographic approach was required. According to Van Maanen (1979), ethnographers believe "that separating the facts from the fictions, the extraordinary from the common, and the general from the specific is best accomplished by lengthy, continuous, firsthand involvement in the organizational setting under study" (p. 539).

During a 36-month period from January 2014 to December 2016, I visited the library branches throughout the DCPL system, spending on average, 20 hours per week in the field. Although I gathered data from the 25 branches in the system and the central library (in addition to other regional and metropolitan libraries), most of the participant observation work was isolated to the MLK branch, specifically the Digital Commons area of the library.

When I first began my field work I was heavily interested in the conceptualizations of public space. To a certain extent, the backbone of my theoretical approach was based off the Simmelian principle of tension between individuality and collectivism within metropolitan life. This philosophy, leading towards symbolic interactionism, appears within individuals and society. I saw this tension existing within the world of the public library through the interaction of the library users and the library staff. To help contain and organize my assumptions, I looked to Blumer (1986): (1) humans act toward things on the basis of the meaning they ascribe to those meanings; (2) the meaning of such things is derived from, or arises out of, the social interaction that one has with others and the society;

and (3) these meanings are handled in, and modified through, an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the things he/she encounters.

Through the first several months in the field, I attempted to interview library users in a non-systematic fashion. As stated throughout the literature, interviews can be used to understand complex social issues (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). To me, this complex social issue of behavior within the library was only going to be uncovered through extensive interviews with the individuals that are self-selecting to enter into this interaction. To do this, I presented myself as a library user, or an unknown investigator, and began note taking ad nauseam. Simply put, I spent my time writing without appearing strange (Lofland & Lofland, 1995) – after all, this was a library. At the same time, the focus of my writing removed my observational availability. This balancing act worked itself out over time, as I refined the note taking process off site and used my attention to detail and memory to recall what I had experienced in the field for that day.

I observed thousands of individuals in their daily routine through the use of the library. Simple tasks such as picking up a requested book; printing out a document; using the restrooms; or getting out of the weather were cataloged in as much detail as nuanced behaviors and interactions between staff and users. I observed patterns of behavior based on the weather, on the time of year, on the day of the week, and planned public programming. To borrow from a well-used phrase in academia, the results of those particular categories "depends" and were "inconclusive."

In February 2016 I reached out to the DCPL Health and Human Services Coordinator, who was hired in 2014 to help meet the unique needs and challenges of D.C.'s

more vulnerable residents (e.g., people living on the streets or in prison, senior citizens, immigrants whose first language is not English). This individual, coming from the social work field, spends a major portion of working hours focusing on the users without homes. Taken from the article "Pioneering a New Approach to Serving Customers without Homes" (DCPL, 2014 October 28), here are the five main elements to support users without homes:

- Partner with human services organizations that provide meals, housing, outreach, case management and mental health services to individuals and families who are homeless - specialized services that the library does not provide.

- Create new Library programs for customers without homes, such as storytelling, reading and writing workshops, podcasts, training, etc.

- Provide training and resources to equip Library staff with information and skills to effectively serve customers without homes, including where to refer them for services.

- Engage in citywide initiatives that address homelessness, such as participating in the Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness committee on Emergency Response and Shelter Operations.

- Educate the community through open forums that explore causes and solutions to homelessness.

When this article was written, the plan was to begin the renovation of the MLK library in 2015. That date was pushed back to the spring of 2017 (official closing date March 4, 2017), and with it, a continued sense of urgency and complacency within the library community existed simultaneously. During our first of many discussions, I learned of the

Coffee and Conversation (C&C) program, designed as a "space of inclusiveness" (personal communication, February 2, 2016). In the early stages, the programs were being held twice a month at MLK and once a month at several other locations (Mt. Pleasant, Northeast, and Northwest One). By the end of my time in the field, the program had expanded to include other locations throughout the city (Benning, Shaw, Southeast, Tenley-Friendship, and West End).

The language used to describe the program is of particular interest. Here is an example from the library website for the program held at MLK:

> Join DCPL customers and staff for coffee, conversation, and sometimes even a craft on the 1st and 3rd Fridays of each month at MLK in the Great Hall. In the uniquely vibrant and dynamic space that is DCPL, Coffee & Conversation brings together customers from all walks of life in informal conversation focused on relevant and engaging topics discussed over a cup of coffee. Through this exchange of ideas Coffee & Conversation promotes the library as a place of social inclusion and focuses on what people have in common rather than their differences. Please join us!

While the DCPL Event Calendar kept the description at a more abstract level, each branch promoted their C&C programs differently and through the use of paper fliers. The Northwest One branch, for example, provided very detailed information on the program topic (i.e., neighborhood legal services), while other branches provided paper fliers echoing the website entry. Each branch took their own approach to both the way the program was

marketed and the way in which they conducted the program. For examples, here are fliers from 3 branches (Mount Pleasant, Northwest One, Southeast) and one from MLK.

Over the majority of my participant observation, I would have conversations with mostly those individuals that I sat near, or those that would start up a conversation with me. If I had to estimate how many people, in total, I spoke with during my entire time in the field, I would ballpark that number to be well over 1,000. These conversations were often cordial and small-talk in nature at first. Over time, either prolonged visits on the same day, or seeing individuals on a repeated basis, the conversations grew organically. I frequently came to know the names and backstories of various library regulars, regardless of housing status.

As an amateur, I attempted several different ways of "fitting in." There was a period in the spring of 2015 where I did not bathe for several days, wore torn and ragged clothing, and attempted to play the part of someone that was experiencing homelessness. Let's just say that was sniffed out rather quickly. It is easy to assume that when your role is to observe, the people you are observing are not paying attention. I found out that is not the case, and was called out on that fact by several people that recognized my face. Ever eager to gain some sort of acceptance, I decided to play the exact opposite role – that of a formal researcher wanting to interview the library users. I dressed in formal business attire and introduced myself as if I were on a job interview. This ruse did not work either, as I was denied conversation without hesitation. There was just little interest on the part of the library users to talk to me when I was forcing, or at least initiating the effort, to begin a conversation.

Figure 2. Examples of DCPL Coffee & Conversation Fliers

I was on an unknown and invisible trial, and I was found guilty. At this point I realized the only way to gain access was to just "be there." I increased my frequency at the MLK location and became a daily regular. In doing so, over a period of two months, I began to have more conversations with people in the library, I recognized their patterns, their habits, and their interests. A simple request of "can you watch my stuff while I use the restroom?" would, as it turns out, build trust. These types of interactions were necessary, in retrospect, to prove that I was not a threat to their personal space. So it continued, day after day, for months.

Another way I gained a deeper connection to the homeless library user, was being present at the opening and closing of the library. In the beginning of the day, prior to opening, the shelter busses drop off the residents and they would typically loiter in front of the MLK entrance, waiting for the doors to open. Here, outside, people would huddle in groups for conversation. Some folks would walk around the block and return around opening time, others would stay by the doors and chat with the library police. If I made contact with someone outside of the building, it was more likely they would acknowledge me inside of the building. At first, even after having accumulated hours' worth of conversation, most people did not want to answer any questions regarding the use of the library. This confused me, as the same individual would openly talk about their struggles outside of the building, but would not reveal any information once inside of the building. The decision to maintain the status quo within the building was quite interesting and could be a result of several different possibilities. The reasons were never given, and the question was never asked, so this is pure speculation: but there was something about the sanctity of

the library that provided a place of peace. This could be for protection of personal space, face and identity negotiation with others, or simply a "don't rock the boat" philosophy within the library. There was no real data to support any of this, but it is worth mentioning here. This observation, on the choice of when and how the library user communicated openly and freely, allowed me to reframe my approach, and after six months of this pattern of behavior I decided to alter my strategy.

One day, I noticed the library staff, who I had been keeping informed of my intention but was not involving in my observation, having a laugh with one of the homeless library users. After the conversation I approached the library staff and asked them how they were able to carry on a conversation that appeared to be of mutual respect. The staff member just shook his head and said "They are here every day and it's my job to help them when they ask." It was at this point the lightbulb flashed, and I knew I needed what I had read about – I needed a key informant. It just so happened, the informant was not the library user, but the library staff. In a true irony, the library staff were the gatekeepers to my ability to access the marginalized group of homeless library users.

It wasn't until I decided I wanted to interview library staff that a shift in my research focus occurred. It began in February 2016 with phone calls and e-mails to the Health and Human Services Coordinator. I called several offices, leaving messages, and visiting branch locations asking to speak to the branch manager.

In June 2016, I began the formal process of attempting to interview library staff in person. Prior to this date, when I was speaking with staff members during my observations, I was told that they were not allowed to speak to anyone on the record regarding library

policy or procedures. I sent brief e-mails requesting permission to interview staff to the following: Director of Strategic Planning; the Public Services Operations Manager; and the Media Relations Manager. Through several e-mail threads and chains, my request was passed around throughout the hierarchy and I eventually was required to send my IRB approval, along with my list of questions, to several higher-ups in the organization.

Originally, I had intended to obtain a master list of all DCPL employees and recruit via e-mail. In my efforts to gain this information, I was routed several times through the system. In July 2016, the Operations Manager sent notification that I had been approved to interview library staff, and that they would be selecting the individuals. I was skeptical of this, as I was not sure how the library would handle the recruitment or what types of individuals I would be able to secure for the interview. I expressed this concern to the Operations Manager and was told they were selecting individuals on a volunteer basis and were looking at those involved in activities related to my research.

After gaining the list of potential interviewees from the Operations Manager in July 2016, it was decided that the recruitment e-mail would carry more significance if coming from within the library system. The original recruitment was hand selected by the administration and sent internally. This purposeful sample was based on the shared characteristics of employees that have either been involved in the C&C process, developed programs to meet the needs of my target population (homeless library users), or were involved in various strategic planning or program planning meetings in the past. The target number of interviewees was slated at 25, across the professional spectrum within the organization (professional, para-professional, and circulation-tech). At that point, the

Operations Manager recruited the Public Service managers to recruit, and I was eventually provided with e-introductions to those who volunteered after reading my intended research questions and recruitment statements.

Based on the original list, I coordinated interview times that fit their work schedule and conducting the in-depth interviews on site. The interviews were semi-structured, with lines of questioning hoping to obtain information about the staff members work habits, their educational history, stories from their time interacting with users, and then a discussion of the behavior guidelines and any tensions within the library. I used a snowball sampling technique, asking those individuals that I interviewed to provide names of colleagues they thought would be interested in having a conversation.

From July 27, 2016 to October 4, 2016, I interviewed 24 library staff, accounting for 10 of the 26 locations, and covering the full spectrum of professional job titles in the system (Library Technician, Library Associate, Librarian, Branch Manager, and Administration). Of the 24 interviews, 5 were male and 19 were female. The interviews, lasting roughly one hour per interview, were recorded and transcribed. In addition to these semi-structured interviews, I had informal interviews with a dozen staff members throughout the process and follow-up conversations with several of those originally interviewed. I also would have continuing dialogue with the program planners for the C&C events, of which I attended 20 from March 2016 to November 2016.

I also attended several library functions and meetings, most notably the MLK Library Modernization Community Meeting on November 9, 2016. This meeting, presented by the Director of the DCPL, was an open invite to community stakeholders.

Among those present were neighborhood association members, historical society members, community activists, elected officials, library staff, and concerned users. The meeting served to provide answers on the library services plan during the MLK Library construction while giving participants the opportunity to both see visual renditions of the new building and a post-presentation Q&A session.

My primary interest in this event was what information the library was going to provide to the public regarding accommodations or services for homeless library users during MLK's construction. Throughout the staff interviews, a common theme emerged regarding what their perceived to be inadequate preparation for the homeless users that frequent the library on a daily basis. Well known within the library community, but not understood by the general public, there is a drop-off location directly in front of the entrance to the MLK library on G St. and 9th NW. This bus stop is a pickup and drop-off point for several homeless shelters on the outskirts of the city limits. There is no formal agreed upon document for this city service, but the Department of Human Services (DHS) had representatives present to discuss the bussing issue and to address the issue of displacing so many homeless individuals during the day. At that time, they had no clear answer but stated they were "working to identify a drop-off location that is near the MLK library." Additionally, the DHS representative stated the department was planning to expand services and partnerships at existing day centers when the central library closes in anticipation of increased demand. This echoed sentiments within the library regarding the outcome of the library users, from concerns over overflow to other library locations, and the continued removal of available public space (e.g., public parks) in the downtown

central business district. These themes will be explored in a later chapter. While at this event, the members of the general public outside of any agency or organization expressed their opinions on the homeless library user. In order to gain a better understanding of the public opinion regarding this topic, I decided to look into the reviews on the website Yelp for the DCPL. As of September 1, 2016, there were 332 reviews for all but three of the locations. I decided to lift the reviews and compile in a database, attempting to code thematically or on valence. These public opinion comments will be a part of the data chapter on the communal frame of CTI.

These reviews, combined with collected news stories from local newspapers (e.g., The Washington Post, Street Sense); academic listserv and newsletters (e.g., Society of American Archivists); local D.C. centric websites (e.g., PoPville); and other media outlets (e.g., Washington Business Journal, National Public Radio); provided enough data to get the pulse of the community surrounding the library, both business and residential. I also monitored the DCPL website dedicated to the MLK renovation, which included transcripts of community focus groups, forums, discussion topics, and outreach efforts. The library has claimed to be transparent in their efforts to engage the community at every stage of this process, so it was useful to read the ways in which the community responded to those efforts.

Researcher Reflexivity

Over the course of this research, I have continually questioned my role in the process, critically inspected my presence within the field, and made notes of those distinctions. In many instances, I was clearly not a part of the in-group: I was neither

homeless nor library employee; I was a mid-thirties, educated white male in a predominantly African-American homeless library user base; I was up to speed with the library policies and procedures that many regular users would not be aware of because of my role as a researcher and my previous educational training while receiving my Master of Library Science degree in 2006; and I was one of the few individuals within the library asking questions and talking to other library users. In certain branches, this violation of the acceptable behavior resulted in the intervention of the library staff, requesting that I keep conversations to a minimum. In the central library, MLK, this was understood as just another part of the environment and was accepted as typical behavior. Much of this is rooted in the fact that each branch has their own culture, similar to the neighborhood in which the library was located. The central library stands alone as a unique library and this will be discussed in detail in the following chapters.

I recognized that after a period of time within the library, the rest of the "regulars" began to accept my presence. This became clearer after I began regularly attending the program 'Coffee and Conversation,' which was held at several of the branch libraries including the central location. The act of simply conversing over coffee, whether it be with a specific agenda (i.e., housing services) or a free-form topic of the day dialogue (e.g., the Olympics), allowed access to the user population through sharing stories. I will touch on several of these occasions in later chapters, specifically focusing on the inclusive nature of these meetings and the idea behind the creation of these programs. My inclusion in the program resulted in a breakthrough – an acceptance on a level that was previously unattainable. I was then inundated with conversation from people that attended the

program. They introduced me to their friends, their friends introduced me to their friends, and so on. It was at this point the conversations changed from cordial and small-talk to deeply personal and emotional. Fortunately, my frequency at the library afforded me the opportunity to speak to hundreds of homeless library users in this manner. The conversations were always casual, never recorded, but I was able to take notes during the process. These interactions provided much needed depth to the insight of the homeless library user.

With that said, in my discussions with the library users, across the entire system, it was very apparent to those that we were not sharing a similar life experience. In my interviews with the library staff, it was apparent that I had an understanding of the library policies and the unwritten norms at a higher level than the typical library user. These distinctions changed the dynamic in the space, the flow of conversation, and the level of granularity in details.

In my interviews with the library staff, I found my knowledge of their working experience helped to allow for more casual conversation, counteracting the formality with the interview structure (e.g., one table, sitting across from each other, audio device placed in the center of the table, signed consent forms, note-taking). It is my understanding, looking back on those interviews, that I gained valuable insight that would otherwise not have been discussed if I did not exhibit a shared understanding of their experiences. On the other hand, I received several questions concerning my role in the research, what it was that I was "attempting to find out" or what "problems I was trying to correct" – and these questions were very difficult for me to answer at the time. I would share anecdotal stories

from my observations, highlighting what a typical library user would think/feel regarding certain situations (i.e., police involvement within the library for a specific incident).

I also needed to take care to remember that my role as a researcher, as a participant, and as a former professional in the field was all filtered through my role as a resident of D.C. The library was not just a field site but was a site I frequented prior to the research. In fact, my use of the library fostered the idea and the line of inquiry behind the research question. In conducting this ethnography, I never forgot that fact and made a point to remind myself of that after each day in the field. This was not just a distanced work site, of which I had no stake in the outcome. It was a very real, lived-in, daily part of my routine as a member of a community and as an individual citizen. Perhaps cliché, but the library is part of my identity at each of the frames of the Communication Theory of Identity. It is my hope that this realization has allowed me to view the data with as little bias as possible and to explain in rich and descriptive detail, the cultural and communication implications of the research.

Research Site/Field Description

On a national scale, the ALA conducts an annual "State of America's Libraries" report, and their 2012 report focused on the theme of community anchors and found that more than "two-thirds of Americans agree that libraries are important because they improve the quality of life in a community, promote literacy and reading, and provide many people with a chance to succeed" (Rosa, 2015). The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) conducts an annual "Public Libraries in the United States Survey (PLS)" and in their most recent data made available (FY2013), they reported 1.5 billion in-person

visits to public libraries across the U.S., which is the equivalent of 4.0 million visits each day (Swan et al., 2016). They also reported 96.5 million attendees at public library programs. This difference in program attendance and in-person visits provides the backdrop necessary to analyze the role of the library as a public space environment. In fact, the use of public libraries measured as visitation per capita, across all geographical areas, highlights this significance: city (4.8); suburbs (5.3); towns (4.5); and rural (4.5).

The social setting, specifically, is the District of Columbia Public Library system. The DCPL consists of 25 regional/neighborhood branches as well as the central location, Martin Luther King (MLK) Memorial Library. The MLK library is of particular interest as it was closed for renovations beginning in March 2017, with an expected duration of up to three years. According to several documents posted on the DCPL website, the renovations to the MLK library, as a flagship library, will cost $208 million and is expected to open in 2020. The interim space used during the renovations (of which will only be for library staff) will constitute a 93% reduction in overall library space (Neibauer, 2016).

At any given time, based on my observations, 100 or more individuals deemed to be in the lower-income/poor/homeless demographic will be displaced during the day-time. The location of this branch is significant, as it is situated downtown, between the Gallery Place-Chinatown and Metro Center public transportation hub. It is geographically important, as it serves all lines of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA). It also is the least "neighborhoodly" branch, prone to tourism fluctuations and the commuting workforce.

According to the DCPL, the mission of the library is to "provide environments that invite reading, learning, and community discussion and equips people to learn all their lives, to embrace diversity, and to build a thriving city" (DCPL, n.d.). As of 2014, there are 570 employees within the DCPL, of which 147 are librarians (Swan et al., 2016). At the librarian rank, all 147 librarians in the DCPL hold an ALA-MLS (ALA accredited Master of Library Science) which is uncommon compared to other state public library systems. In my conversations with library officials and staff, I was provided an organization chart of hiring rank for those working in the system below the administrative level. Circulation Technicians, Library Technicians, Library Associates, and Librarians all provide public facing outward support below the Administration level (e.g., human resources, upper management, department heads, public relations, maintenance). These educational differences and job related tasks have created some levels of tension within the ranks and how they perceive their own job duties relative to their coworkers, ultimately leading towards a different view of the library user. This issue will be explored in a later chapter.

In FY 2014, the DCPL system saw 4.2 million in-person visits (up from 2.5 million in FY 2012), which is a 6.4 per capita[2] ratio, ranking fifth nationally. Of those visitors, 285,000 people attended 14,357 public programs; 226,000 people attended 8,514 children's programs; and 16,000 people attended 1,566 young adults programs.

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[2] According to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, visitation per capita is the ratio of the total number of visits to a public library to the total number of individuals within the legal service area of the public library.

DC Public Library—Citywide Data

Total Population
619,371

Visits	4,177,240
Circulation (books/physical materials)	3,053,828
Digital Library Circulation (eBook, eAudio)	955,576
Computer Sessions	1,120,178
Total Programs Offered	16,022
Total Program Attendance	320,721
Total Community Meetings	28,414
Total Community Meeting Attendance	389,212
Database Searches	884,623
Total Hours Open Per Week	1,597
Library Square Footage	888,411

Figure 3. DCPL User Statistics, 2016.

Another interesting piece of data in this exhaustive survey is the tracking of public-use internet computers. These computers are free to the public and are often the source of many interactions within the library environment. The homeless library user has a variety options when accessing these computers. For the DCPL, there are 1,000 public-use internet computers available.

Negotiating the computer system is itself an interesting case study. Recently, the MLK library created a "Digital Commons," providing larger open space intended for technology use and services; staff led classes; and public seminars. The open area has 48 public-use internet computers; 12 express machines; and 16 Apple high-end production based computers. The express machines are computers located near the information desk, built higher at a standing level, and do not require a login credential to use the machine, but have a maximum time limit of 15 minutes. This is important for many homeless library users, as they do not have the proper identification required to obtain a library card.

Traditionally, this barrier was proof of residence. More recently, libraries have begun to accept any form of identification to allow access to the computers, including letters written by various social service organizations or homeless shelters indicating an individual's temporary status.

Interestingly enough, the use of the library by the homeless is not a demographic issue as much as a geographic issue. The placement of libraries within an urban setting will dictate the demographics. Public libraries in poorer and lower SES areas will have a different user population than libraries positioned in wealthy and higher SES areas. A comparative method between the branches, which range from the poorest to the wealthiest regions of the city, illuminated the variety of homelessness and the intersection with the larger general public.

In addition to the local DCPL setting, I felt it was necessary to look into library systems across the country to see if there was something unique about D.C. or the local environment surrounding the issue of homelessness. To do this, I first targeted known systems that have been leading the philosophical shift in servicing the homeless (which, as it turns out, were located on the west coast). Through professional contacts, I established connections at a wide variety of nationwide libraries. From the information obtained during those conversations, I decided to increase my area to a regional Mid-Atlantic/Northeast focus due to the predominantly west coast idealism that prevailed in the implementation of new and progressive library policies. This ultimately changed again, as I decided to increase my reach and target across the country. And finally, more locally, I decided to

look into the neighboring library systems around the DCPL with frequent in-person visitation.

The following libraries were visited in person, with a participant observation perspective, including conversations with library staff and users: Maryland – the Howard County Public Library System; the Montgomery County Public Library System; the Prince George's Public Library System; and the Enoch Pratt Free Library of Baltimore City; Virginia – The Arlington County Public Library System; The Fairfax County Library System. In addition to the surrounding areas, in person observations were conducted at The Boston Public Library; The Chicago Public Library; The Free Library of Philadelphia; and The New York City Public Library.

As mentioned, several colleagues from my library science background provided points of contact at libraries throughout the country that led to phone or email conversations: the Multnomah County Library (servicing the city of Portland, OR); The Sacramento Library; and the Denver Public Library. Finally, through my conversations with those in the field, I browsed and analyzed the websites for the following libraries: The Dallas Public Library; The Los Angeles Public Library; The Oak Park (IL) Public Library; The Public Library of the City of San Diego; The San Francisco Public Library; and the Seattle Public Library.

Table 3. List of DCPL Branches & Locations

Branch Name	Quad	Address
Anacostia Library	SE	1800 Good Hope Road SE Washington, D.C. 20020
Bellevue Library	SW	115 Atlantic St. SW Washington, D.C. 20032
Benning Library	NE	3935 Benning Rd. NE Washington, D.C. 20019
Capitol View Library	SE	5001 Central Ave. SE Washington, D.C. 20019
Chevy Chase Library	NW	5625 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20015
Cleveland Park Library	NW	3310 Connecticut Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20008
Deanwood Library	NE	1350 49th St. NE Washington, D.C. 20019
Francis A. Gregory Library	SE	3660 Alabama Ave. SE Washington, D.C. 20020
Georgetown Library	NW	3260 R St. NW Washington, D.C. 20007
Lamond-Riggs Library	NE	5401 South Dakota Ave. NE Washington, D.C. 20011
MLK Memorial Library	NW	901 G St. NW Washington, D.C. 20001
Mt. Pleasant Library	NW	3160 16th St. NW Washington, D.C. 20010
Northeast Library	NE	330 7th St. NE Washington, D.C. 20002
Northwest One Library	NW	155 L St. NW Washington, D.C. 20001
Palisades Library	NW	4901 V St. NW Washington, D.C. 20007
Parklands-Turner Library	SE	1547 Alabama Ave. SE Washington, D.C. 20032
Petworth Library	NW	4200 Kansas Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20011
Rosedale Library	NE	1701 Gales St. NE Washington, D.C. 20002
Shaw Library	NW	1630 7th St. NW Washington, D.C. 20001
Shepherd Park Library	NW	7420 Georgia Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20012
Southeast Library	SE	403 7th St. SE Washington, D.C. 20003
Southwest Library	SW	900 Wesley Place SW Washington, D.C. 20024
Takoma Park Library	NW	416 Cedar St. NW Washington, D.C. 20012
Tenley-Friendship Library	NW	4450 Wisconsin Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20016
West End Library	NW	2522 Virginia Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20037
Woodridge Library	NE	1790 Douglas St. NE Washington, D.C. 20018

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library

The central library is located on the corner of 9th St NW and G St NW and represents

one of the more historically volatile areas of Washington, D.C. To give a brief geographic

overview, there are 39 neighborhood clusters within the city limits, covering anywhere

from 3-5 neighborhoods per cluster. MLK is located within Cluster 8, representing Ward 6, and claiming the following neighborhoods: Downtown, Chinatown, Penn Quarters, Mount Vernon Square, and North Capitol Street.

Prior to 1997, the area was a dilapidated wasteland between the area of the National Mall to the south and the residential areas of Logan Circle to the north. Serving mostly as office space, much of the area, especially Gallery Place (named such due to the proximity to the National Gallery of Art) was a ghost town at night. In 1997, however, the newly opened MCI Center (now called Verizon Center), housing two professional sports franchises (i.e., Washington Bullets (now Wizards) of the National Basketball Association; Washington Capitals of the National Hockey League), provided a much needed boost to the economy. The venue provided the necessary anchor to lure restaurants, bars, businesses, and eventually, residential developments (Abrams, 2009; Abrams & Mazzone, 2012). The 20 years since have seen a steady increase in almost every conceivable socioeconomic statistic, none more noticeable than in population.

According to the 2010 Census, the population of the surrounding neighborhood (measured through Census Tract data) is 13,560 – up 58% from the 8,609 residents in 2000 (Tatian, 2003; USCB, 2016a). This gain in population for the area can be attributed to several factors, most notably the post-recession gentrification efforts of housing and business developers, specifically the implementation of CityCenterDC, the $950 million mixed-use development of high-end retail, office space, hotels, and luxury condominiums. Located on the former Washington Convention Center grounds, the 10.2 acre area rests between New York Ave to the north; 9th St NW to the east, H St NW to the south, and 11th

St NW to the west. Dubbed the "modern-day Rockefeller Center," the impact of this development is being felt across the entire downtown region (Pristin, 2011).

Digging deeper into the population statistics, we find a commonality that is prevalent in many areas of D.C. – a return of middle to upper class white residents into predominantly black areas. This continued a nationwide trend in the reversal of white flight. From 2000 to 2010, percentages of black residents dropped from 71% to 37%. Likewise, the percentages of white residents increased from 16% to 43%. Supporting this gentrification theme, we can find other socioeconomic indicators that have improved over the same decade. Crime (measured as per 1,000 population) has dropped within this cluster: violent crimes have dropped from 54 in 2000 to 19 in 2010; and property crimes have dropped from 312 in 2000 to 93 in 2000. The poverty rate has dropped from 33% in 2000 to 19% in 2010. Unemployment has dropped from 20% in 2000 to 7.4% in 2010. These statistics do not provide the entire story, nor do they prove anything of substance other than to point out one glaring pattern: this neighborhood group, similar to many throughout the country, is under transition. And with that transition comes the interaction of a more diverse stranger network within a shared public space.

With a core of almost exclusively commercial buildings, and the location between all major WMATA Metro lines and bus routes, the area has traditionally been a favored location for those experiencing homelessness (e.g., transportation options, foot traffic for panhandling, lack of pedestrians during the evening meaning less objections to their presence). As far back as the 1970s, the downtown area was known as a place to avoid at

night – with many homeless individuals using the exhaust grates on the streets to provide warmth from the underground rail system (Epstein, 2010).

In addition to these reasons, the area surrounding MLK also includes a number of public urban parks. The closest to MLK, Franklin Square Park, will be explored in Chapter 4 in further detail. Other than Franklin, the following parks are within the cluster: Farragut Square; Judiciary Square; Lafayette Square; McPherson Square; Mount Vernon Square, Pershing Park; Scott Circle; Thomas Circle; and Washington Circle. Each park seems to handle the homeless inhabitants in different ways. For example, the circles are traffic circles that have become part of the park system, and as such, do not allow for much safety or protection from the elements, and are not a preferred location for the homeless during the evening. Squares such as McPherson and Mount Vernon serve as locations close to public transit, are darker in the evening, have more benches, and as a result, have more homeless individuals during the overnight. Other parks, such as Lafayette and Pershing, have a higher police presence due to their proximity to the White House.

Centered in this mix of private and public space is the MLK library. Built in 1972, MLK replaced the old Carnegie-funded central library that was in operation since 1903 (located at Mt. Vernon Square), and was designed by Ludwig Mies van der Rohe. Constructed of matte black steel, brick and bronzed-tinted glass, the building cost, at the time, $18 million. It was designated a historic landmark on June 28, 2007. This designation applies to both in exterior and interior spaces, including the large mural of Martin Luther King, Jr. located in the Great Hall (National Park Service, n.d.).

To understand the library, physically speaking, it is also necessary to understand what occurs outside of the library and in the mind of the public:

> "MLK draws more homeless people than any other branch in the system. City-funded buses drop scores of them at the library each morning and pick them up at day's end to take them to shelters. Terry Lynch, executive direct of the Downtown Cluster of Congregations, which provides services to the homeless, says as a result, MLK is a "de facto drop-in homeless center." (Godfrey, 2016)

Across the street from the library is the Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Washington, a social ministry outreach organization that provides a wide array of services to all public(s). On Wednesday nights, the group provides hot meals to anyone from a food-truck, serviced by volunteers and supported through the local churches. To the east of the library, located on the corner of 10th St and G St NW, is the First Congregational United Church of Christ. Representatives from this group are often around the library providing counseling services, but the physical building is primarily a place of worship. Also across the street, towards the National Portrait Gallery, are restaurants and shops, and a condominium residential building.

During the ethnography, the library was in the midst of a transitional period, where access to specific areas of the library were in a constant state of change due to the planned renovations, being dubbed a "modernization" by the DCPL administration. This restricted access to several portions of the original layout (e.g., the fourth and fifth floors, which were primarily administrative offices). The following is an in-situ description of the library grounds and the layout within the building.

MLK Jr. Memorial Library

Total Population
5,107

Visits	687,498
Circulation	712,264
Computer Sessions	224,622
Total Programs Offered	1,756
Total Program Attendance	30,990
Total Community Meetings	3,415
Total Community Meeting Attendance	90,431
Library Square Footage	440,000
Total Hours Open Per Week	66
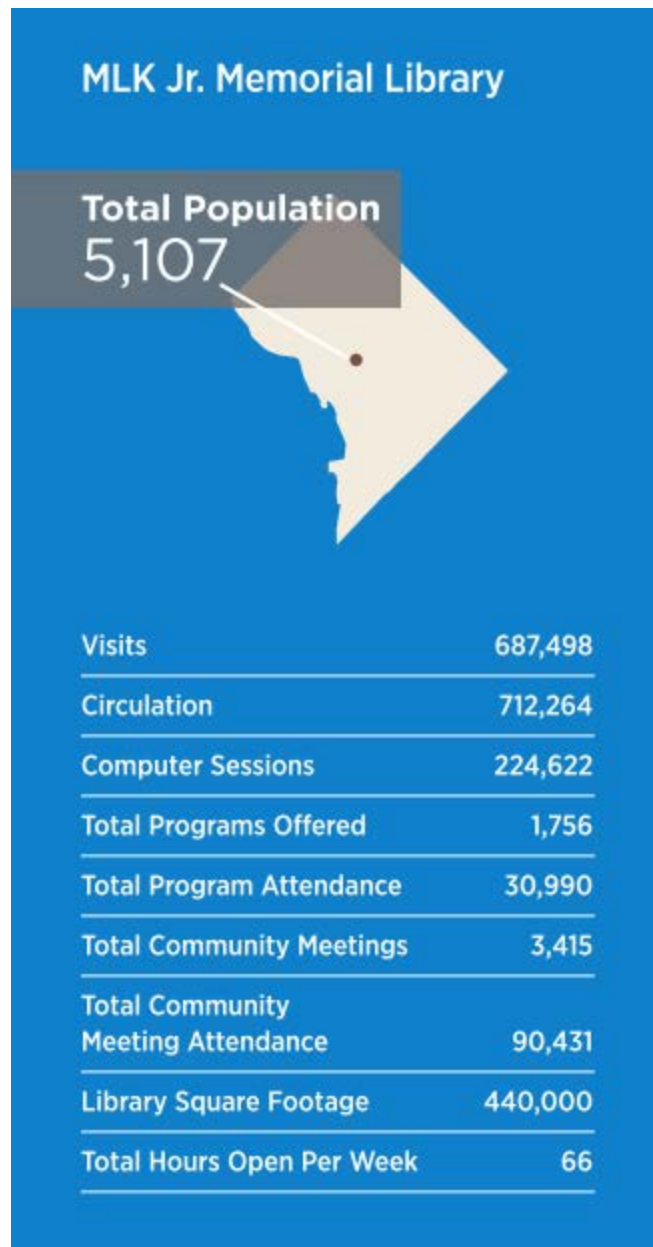
Figure 4. MLK Usage at a Glance.

Upon entry on the main level, you enter in the Great Hall, which is a large foyer-like room, used for a variety of programs, meetings, concerts, and other gatherings. It is

also the only location that a patron is allowed to eat food within the building. Immediately to the left of the entrance, facing the south side of the building, is the check-out and circulation desk which is typically staffed by two or more circulation techs. To the left of that desk is the holds area, where books are put on reserve and patrons come into the building to claim their books. The patrons that choose this option, often have very little interaction with the library other than a digital repository and physical pickup location.

To the right of the Great Hall is the Popular Library, which holds audio books, CDs & DVDs, fiction, graphic novels, and large print books. The "pop library," as it is known, is a space where patrons will find ample reading space across two dozen tables and sparsely located lounge chairs. The square tables typically can service two users in a face-to-face arrangement. These tables are frequently organized in clusters of four, increasing the table space but limiting the number of seats to four as well. This area is staffed by one person on the reference desk that rotates every two hours. It is also a quiet study area, and loud noises are discouraged.

To the left of the Great Hall is the Digital Commons. This area, created in July 2013, is the main computer access location covering 11,000 square feet, with over 48 Microsoft Windows based machines, 16 Apple based machines (with higher-end production software), and 12 express computers. The express machines are on a first come-first served basis, and do not require a library card to use. They are limited to set time sessions and are arranged around two pillars with chest high counters. There is no seating available at these machines. The rest of the room is organized around the available seating. There are long table tops with center dividers, providing a small buffer between people

sitting across from one another. These tables run parallel, and are of the same build, as the tables with the computers. Rough estimates put the seating capacity to 54 at the base configuration, with more chairs allowing more people on the counter. There are also several other square tables, similar to those in the Pop Library, that are often rotated around the room. There are several lounge style chairs and sofas closer to the entrance. In the southwest corner of the room, there is a video monitor that displays the number of the computer and the ID (e.g., the library card number) of the next user, and the estimated waiting time. This is the main information screen for those wanting to reserve a computer. In addition to the computer areas, there are two phone/video conferencing screens that provide some privacy for those requiring a more intimate setting. These are also moved around frequently, but are mostly located near the front of the building. In the back of the room, named the "Dream Lab," there are 6 meeting rooms, with 12 foot glass walls providing some noise-cancelling-effects – this area is designed to be a collaborative work space. A part of this, behind the meeting rooms, is a large area that is reserved for classes, workshops, large events, and programs. This area is empty, with the exception of a large LED monitor stored in the northwest corner. On demand, the area can be supplied with chairs and arranged in a classroom setting, or be organized with tables and formed based on the needs of the organizer. The information desk is situated immediately to the right of the entrance to the room, and is staffed on a rotating basis by at least three personnel. You will often find a rover around the room, providing ad-hoc assistance or attempting to enforce the behavior rules. The Digital Commons also offers a few advanced technologies available to the users: a 3-D printer and an Expresso Book Machine.

Access to the other floors requires the patrons to go through two large steel double doors leading to a dark and gloomy staircase. Within the stairwell are access points to other parts of the library, employee restrooms, and other technical rooms. The overall vibe of the stairwell is that of a place one does not want to spend time in. There are stories, evidenced by news articles and public opinion, about the stairwells being a place of crime and drug abuse. As a result, many patrons use the elevator to simply get to the basement or the second/third floor. Even with security cameras placed throughout, this stigma has not abated over time.

The second floor has the same template as the first, but in lieu of the Great Hall, there are several smaller spaces within the footprint. The Teen Space is an area designed to meet the academic and recreational needs of young adults, age 12-19. The space has 20 fully equipped Apple computers, flat screens, age-appropriate fiction, music, movies, language learning software and games. This model is a widely adopted form for youth learning throughout the country at various library, museums, and other information repositories. Access is for those within the age group, only. The Center for Accessibility includes offices for specialists in adaptive training and technologies to assist people with disabilities, including a collection of braille magazines, books, and newspapers. The Children's Center is the area for those under the age of 12, and has the typical kid-friendly atmosphere with a librarian on staff during normal business hours. Towards the north side, or back, of the second floor is the Studio Lab, which doubles as an audio/visual production space. The Fab Lab, or the maker space, is through the double doors and located in the stairwell with a digital display screen, camera, and access monitor. It resembles your

typical garage or "wood-shop" type of atmosphere, with everything from power tools to machine equipment. The staff often rotate into this space, providing programs or other assistance with users wanting to learn a trade or simply make something with their hands.

Directly above the Digital Commons, one section of the Adult Services library houses subjects such as history, literature, and travel/recreation, as well as classical, orchestral, and cinematic music scores and the collection of vinyl LPs of all musical genres. On the other side of the building, above the Pop Library, is the second portion of the Adult Services Library. Here, subjects such as art, business, philosophy, religion, science, technology, and world languages are stored on the stacks.

The third floor is the location for the special collections. The Washingtoniana is located on the western side, along with Census materials, the DC Community Archives, local genealogy, newspapers, and photographs related to District history. This area is reserved for those researchers looking for something specific – and while not officially stated as such, most of the general public does not wander into this area looking for a place to study. Also on the third floor is a small computer lab with several terminals for internet access that fall outside of the Digital Commons purview. This area is now an antiquated empty space with very little usage. On the opposite side of the building is the Adult Literacy offices, providing services to help patrons with literacy, both native English speakers and English as a second language speakers. Across from the Washingtoniana room, the other special collection area is organized under the umbrella term Black Studies, including archival material related to African-American history in D.C., and the African-American experience in the United States, also known as the African diaspora.

There are two administrative type offices on the third floor: the Passport Office and the College Information Office. Both titles are self-evident. It is not common knowledge, however, that U.S. passport assistance is found within the library. This area is staffed by the Office of Public Safety, or the Library Police.

Finally, the basement level, or Level A, serves as the libraries de facto meeting room locations, with 10 rooms of varying sizes. There are also public restrooms available on this level.

There are a few other physical items worth mentioning. Throughout the library there are remnants of old payphone corrals, now empty with exposing wiring dangling. There are public bathrooms on each floor, and each bathroom is built in a "C" – with a hard turn immediately upon entry and another hard turn to get to the urinals and the toilets. This often creates situations where many people are not willing to use the available restrooms and are deemed dangerous by the general public. Put quite simply, they are crowded, dirty, smelly, and are often being used for reasons outside of the restrooms utility.

The beginning to the library day is always quite fascinating, as every morning the homeless shelter bus will drop off the residents prior to doors opening, which creates an "institutional loitering" type of situation where there are people waiting to get inside of a building are taking up the space of the sidewalk without anywhere else to spend their time. Most commuters understand this and often avoid the side of the street altogether. For those that are unaware or indifferent, you can see a change of walking speed and a higher level of attention while the random passerby navigates through a crowd of homeless individuals with all of their worldly possessions in tow. Around 15 minutes or so before the opening

of the library, a police officer will come outside and announce the time, asking those waiting to get into the library to form a single line stretching east from the main entrance.

These types of interactions will be explored later, but it is important nevertheless to understand the setting of MLK. Now that we have established the setting, we can examine the data through the lens of the Communication Theory of Identity. We will start at the personal layer in the next chapter, moving through the enacted, relational, and communal frames in subsequent chapters.
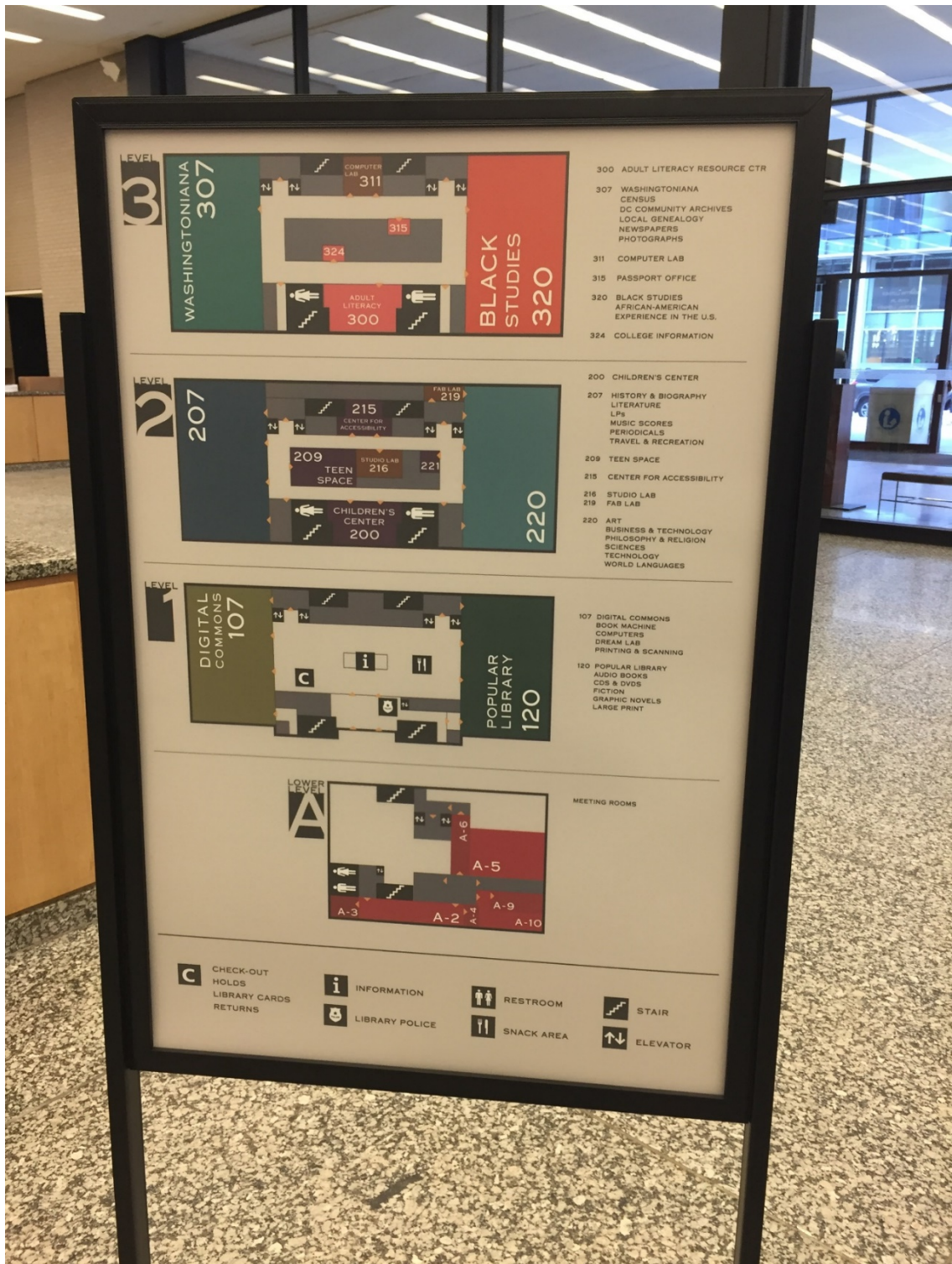
Figure 5. Schematic of MLK Library, as of Summer 2016.

CHAPTER FOUR: CTI – THE PERSONAL FRAME

At one level, what CTI calls the "personal frame" of identity, one's identity functions as a personal frame of reference for the individual, stored in memory as self-cognitions, feelings about self, and/or a spiritual sense of self-being. As a characteristic of the individual, this level of identity has been described as a "self-concept" or "self-image." The personal frame and the concept of "self-image" thus focuses our attention on how individuals define themselves in general as well as within particular situations (Hecht, Jackson, & Ribeau, 2003).

To review, CTI offers the following proposition for the personal layer:

- Identities are hierarchically ordered meanings attributed to self as an object in a social situation.

Illness identity is a useful contextualization of the personal frame, or the layer that most closely relates to psychological perspectives of self-presentation. Research into the idea of illness identity found that physical limitations led to a redefinition – a differentiation between the outside self and the inside self (Gudykunst, 2015). For example, patient's decision and explanation process of their illness to loved ones, in terms of self-presentation problems, has been related to these psychological perspectives under the personal frame (Schlenker, 2003). There are also examples of how patients embrace the identity, playing the part of the "sick role" and assume that identity upon reflection and self-presentation to

either benefit (e.g., feeling sick but looking good, leading to positive affirmation) or out of some necessity to feel included (Hamilton, Deemer, & Janata, 2003; Krahn, Li, & O'Connor, 2003).

If identifying the personal frame requires getting inside the mind of the individual to evaluate their opinions of themselves, then the only way to access those emotions are through the words in which they choose to describe their own reflections. These words form a personal narrative, an autobiography of sorts. In this chapter, we will look at three examples, or stories, provided from the individuals themselves, that highlight the personal frame proposition, exposing the hierarchically ordered meanings attributed to the self. In our examples, homeless individuals discuss their self-image, constructing a sense of themselves through the use of the library.

The Man That Sells the Papers

Film director and screenwriter Lorene Scarfaria once said that "routine is part of coping" when discussing a thematic resemblance through all of her works. Let's assume that quote is true: when coping with any hardship, falling into a routine, either a newly minted routine spring boarded from the hardship, or falling back into a routine that reminds you of a previous life before the hardship; the identity becomes the routine and the routine becomes the identity. In the case of our first story, routine is an integral part of this man's identity.

Attempting to follow the everyday comings and goings of a homeless individual is akin to being a police detective analyzing a crime scene. Like finding footsteps in the snow, you can identify the movement of the homeless individual in a variety of ways. This

comparison might sound crass, but without having an intimate knowledge of an individual, their daily routine is surrounded in mystery. There are clues, if you pay attention. Walk through any public park in the middle of the night and you will undoubtedly see people sleeping on the benches, with all of their worldly possessions tucked neatly in and around them, sometimes covered in plastic tarps or sometimes packed in trash bags. During the day, there might not be a trace of the evening activity, other than perhaps some leftover garbage or a water bottle filled with urine near the trash cans. The same bench that was used as a bed a few hours earlier is now being used by officer workers hastily eating their food truck burrito or drinking coffee. An outdoor reprieve from their indoor daily working experience.

Some trek the same beat every day, to and from certain locations. The experienced panhandlers, closer to sunrise and/or the beginning of the first wave of commuters, will abandon their sleeping area for the night and post up near their spot. There is a possession element to this behavior. Just as people have "their" spots in a parking lot; "their" seat in a classroom; or "their" location for sleeping, panhandling, and ultimately, daytime activities.

As I came to learn from my conversations with the library users within the space, and this is across all branches within the DCPL system, there are certain places that are "reserved." My first experience with this came in the winter of 2014, when I entered the Shaw library to a nearly empty reading room. Of the available 86 seats, only four were taken. I decided to sit at a table near the entrance and near the window. One of the other three patrons came up to me and said "you will want to move soon, that is Sarah's seat." I nodded, thanked the man for the input, and moved. Sure enough, within 15 minutes, Sarah

arrived and took her seat. This example played out more times than I could count, especially within the Digital Commons of MLK, although with one glaring exception: in MLK, there was not forewarning. And to be honest, because of the sheer volume of seating locations within the building, if you were sitting in someone's seat you were either asked to move by that individual, or you were given a very disapproving glare and the person sat somewhere else. And finally, if the library was packed, and I mean packed to capacity, this type of seat ownership would become more of a problem between patrons. I can recall numerous times when, at capacity, there were vocal confrontations about seating locations and computers.

This type of ownership also plays out on the streets outside of the building. Outside, you have a mix of office, residential, and commercial buildings, including several public transit waiting areas and/or entrance points. There are hot dog and half-smoke[3] vendors; solicitors for nearby restaurants passing out coupons, and people selling newspapers. Gerald, a *Street Sense*[4] vendor and currently in a long-term housing program, has been an MLK user for several years, even self-publishing a book (*Still Standing: How an Ex-Con Found Salvation in the Floodwaters of Katrina*) and doing a book talk event within the library to help promote his story. He uses the sidewalk space across the street from the entrance of MLK as his "spot." This is where he sells the newspapers in the morning and early afternoon, mostly getting foot traffic from the Gallery Place Metro exit located on the southeast corner of 9th and G Streets and the area's closer to the Verizon Center. In a *Street*

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[3] A D.C. "traditional" street food, sold primarily by cart vendors in the tourist areas.
[4] Street Sense is a biweekly street newspaper, offering economic opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. More can be found at http://streetsense.org/

Sense interview (in part to promote the book, as *Street Sense* was part publisher and part author) with a reporter in August 2015, Gerald discusses his routine:

> When I wake up it be about 3:45 in the morning. I smoke me a cigarette, wash up, and make my coffee. My clothes already be laid out. I sit on the side of my bed, say my prayers. I go to sleep sayin' prayers and I wake up sayin' prayers. Why so many prayers? That's how blessed I am to be here. Then I take the Metro and go to McDonald's. I get to Gallery Place at around 6:30 a.m. to sell my papers. I set the papers out and play my music. When I see the people comin', that's when I get into action. I motivate my customers by sayin' "Good morning, good morning," and they say they be happy to see me and hear good mornin'. It slows down at about 11. If I make enough money, I say to myself, "I'm goin' to Astro Chicken." The rest of the afternoon, I stay by the Metro. A few customers come talk to me, ask about my next chapter, what I did for the weekend. It's a great, great feeling — the network, like family, I built up. I stay for the evening rush hour until about seven, and then head home. I mingle with people on the Metro goin' home. I been tellin' them about my new book. I bring chicken home, and then I start watchin' a movie. I like all Madea movies. And I like the Teddy Bear movie. I say my prayers, lay out my clothes, take a shower, have my coffee, and go to sleep at nine. (Orlins, 2015).

During my time in the field I noticed this man fairly regularly. He always seemed to have a smile on his face and was very friendly to the public. It was not until one of my interviews with a DCPL staff member that I got a name and a backstory. I decided to seek Gerald out.

It took a while, as he had not been seen for several weeks. Throughout my discussions with library staff, library users, and community shelter personnel, it was made very clear that any routine is only routine until it's not. The services provided to this particular marginalized group can only go so far, or as one counselor stated "the umbilical cord is not too long" (personal communication, July 24, 2016).

At this point in time, I had a name, a story, an outcome, and I even had a face thanks to the internet. What I did not have was a personal connection. I will admit, as the weeks went by, I was beginning to feel an emotional response; a response rooted in concern for a complete stranger with whom I have never met; wondering what happened, if anything, to the man that sold the newspapers.

One day, while locking up my bicycle in the front of the library I heard a huge laugh. It was a cheerful laugh, the one where you only expect it from Santa Claus or at a stand-up comedy routine. I turned around and saw Gerald interacting with his customers and the people walking past his "spot" on the way to their destination. I stopped and observed. I noticed his genuine happiness, his willingness to talk to any one for any reason, and his enthusiasm. So much of the literature regarding homelessness is filled with recollections of sadness and despair. I instantly admired this man for what he was putting out to the world. I walked up towards him.

GERALD: How you doin' young man?

RAPH: Good, good. Was wondering if I could snag one of those papers and lighten your load.

GERALD Absolutely. Here you go. Bless you. Have a wonderful day!

For the next several days, I made a habit of walking past him, saying hello and making small talk; hoping he would recognize me. Days turned into a week, a week into a fortnight. Eventually I decided to walk up to him and ask him, point blank: "You are the guy that wrote the book, right?" A smile immediately came across his face. "Yes sir, I most definitely am." The next few minutes felt like an hour, as we chatted about his life, his hopes and dreams, his fears, and his perspective. During this conversation I found out that he was dealing with a few health issues, which kept him from his paper route he so desperately loves. His living situation is stable – as stable as thing's can be during these circumstances – and he is happy. The ability to engage people through selling *Street Sense* is a vital and crucial component to this man's identity. When he is selling his papers he is just Gerald the newspaper vendor. "This is so important to me. I love it. I am just so happy to have this, to get the sell the papers and talk with everybody. If I didn't have this, I would be very upset." His identity is tied into the interaction with others over the selling of newspapers, where he can talk about his experiences and appreciate his present, reflect on his past, and hope for the future.

Gerald's story is the positive success story; the one that inspires hope for those experiencing hardship and provides a blueprint to reclaim a modicum of a past life or a life never realized. In this particular case, the library served as not only a geographical anchor for Gerald's narrative, but provided assistance in completing the last main phase of his Hero's Journey[5] and his return into society. This is an important claim to identity and points

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[5] The Hero's Journey was developed by Joseph Campbell and explores the pattern of narratives appearing in drama, storytelling, myth, religious ritual, and psychological development. The three main phases are Departure, Initiation, and Return. For more information, see Campbell, 2008.

directly to the errors in assuming that homeless library users are "illegitimate" users. This homeless man used the library to write a book. In an interview in July, I was informed that Gerald had several book talks throughout the years, allowing others to hear his story in avenues they would not otherwise have exposure or access to. The library even carries a copy of his published book. With that said, given his storytelling skills, it is within reason to expect those experiencing homelessness and all the accompanying emotional strife, to be moved by an individual that looks like them, talks about a shared struggle, and provides a sense of hope.

The library, as a place and resource, helped Gerald find an alternative means of building a positive and valued self-concept. As an author, exposing his personal narrative to the outside world; as a story-teller, sharing his story with others experiencing similar circumstances; as both an author and a story-teller, using the library – even as a place to be near, rather than being in, provided a setting for his newspaper selling. This job provided him the opportunity to interact with others in positive, warm, and friendly ways. This is a very crucial and powerful positive self-concept.

While this story does inspire, it also raises the question of: so what about everyone else? What about those that have a set routine without a positive story? What is their daily struggle? What is their routine? And more importantly, how do they cope?

The Survivor

Franklin Park is located in between 12th and 13th Streets to the west and east, and Eye and K Streets to the South and North, respectively. The park has been in existence in some capacity since L'Enfant planned the District of Columbia in 1791. Most recently,

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however, the park was renovated as part of the United States Bicentennial celebration in 1976, improving and refurbishing items created by the Public Works Administration ca. 1935 (i.e., fountain, flagstone plaza, concrete pathways, new trees). In 2012, the National Parks Service, who manages the park, in conjunction with the D.C. Department of Parks and Recreation, the D.C. Office of Planning, and the National Capital Planning Commission, prepared plans for a renovation under the premise of urban renewal under their Capital Space initiative[6]. According to a news release at the time, the 4.79-acre park is "better known as a gathering place for the homeless and a diagonal cut-through between long blocks than as an oasis of green space for residents and thousands of downtown employees" (Neibauer, 2013, March 14).

Figure 6. Map of Franklin Square Park, the closest public park to MLK Library, a half of a mile away.

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[6] Capital Space, formed in 2006, is a governmental partnership with a variety of citywide urban renewal projects, such as the Yards Park, Capitol Riverfront, Center City, and McPherson Square.

This park location is significant beyond the above information. Across the street, on the northeast corner on 13th and K St, is the historic Franklin School of Alexander Graham Bell fame (the site of the first wireless message on June 3, 1880). Built in 1869, the school was the flagship building of an eight site urban public school system. It was declared a National Historic Landmark on June 19, 1996 (National Park Service, n.d.). In 2002, the building was transformed into a homeless shelter servicing a population of around 300, and was closed with much controversy on September, 26, 2008 (Harris & Stewart, 2008).

Given the history, the location, and the size of Franklin Park, it is a destination for many of the homeless library users at the end of the day. The closing of the library itself is a daily ritual worth noting. The first notification comes across the PA system around a half hour before closing: "Attention customers, the library will be closing in 30 minutes. Please take the time to gather your materials and prepare for ending your activities." I would like to say there is a formal script for this announcement, but over hundreds of closings I have yet to hear the exact same thing. I recall a conversation with a staff member I had at a closing one summer night:

RAPH: Can I ask you something?

LARRY[7]: Sure, what's up?

RAPH: When you give your announcements at the end of the night – where does the dialogue come from?

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[7] Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the library staff.

LARRY: Oh, well, we have a general policy of reminding the library customers at 30 mins and 15 mins and then at final closing. I think somewhere we have something we are supposed to read, maybe it was given to us at training or something, but no one really reads anything. We just say similar stuff. The most important thing is given the time left.

RAPH: Why is that? Why is the time important?

LARRY: Well, you know, a lot of the people in the library at this time of night are sort of just waiting out the day. They are going to stay here until the very last minute and we eventually have to kinda force them out of the door.

RAPH: You mean the homeless?

LARRY: Oh, you are the guy doing the homeless study? You know about the busses, right? Well, the larger proportion of the homeless people leave when the bus comes at the end of the day. Usually it's between 6 and 7 or so, depends on a lot of things like traffic. But anyone in the library after that, they are the ones that are on the street. At least that is what I think.

RAPH: Can you explain to me what happens at the end of the night with these people you think are living on the street?

LARRY: Most of the time we just have to walk around to remind people that time is up, and they have to leave. Some people are sleeping and we gotta wake them up. Some people pretend to sleep, even! I will say that most of the time it's fairly procedural, just going through the motions. Sometimes we have to get the cops

involved. Sometimes people are just having a rough day and they don't want to leave. You see that more when the weather is crappy outside.

Prior to this conversation I had spent many nights, at library closing, loitering around outside, observing what the apparent homeless individuals were doing when they were escorted out of the building. On Tuesday, January 26, 2016, the first day of opening just after the blizzard of 2016, more colloquially known as "Snowzilla" – a name bestowed upon the storm by the *Washington Post* (Fritz, 2016) – I decided to follow a group of library users at the end of the night. I will never, in my life, forget this night. In the throes of winter, with two-foot high piles of snow separating the sidewalk from the roadways, I followed two gentleman into the frigid evening air. They began their walk on the corner of 9th & G St, heading north and then east in a serpentine pattern. It was so cold, and the wind was howling to such an extent I could not tell you the exact path. I had my head down, hands in my pockets, shivering, and wanting to be anywhere else but where I was at that moment. During the walk, which took approximately 25 minutes, my mind started to wander. I began to devise of backstories for these men. If I was cold, with my technical and expensive outdoor gear, layered up for warmth, how were these men handling the inclement weather? Where have they been the last few days? What have they been doing to keep warm? How difficult were these tasks? I found my answer when I arrived at their destination.

Approximately 10:00 PM, Franklin Park was filled with a higher than usual population of inhabitants for the night. There was a fire going in a trash can, moved to a central location in between the mounds of snow, just to the south of the fountain. There

were large canopies of blankets, stretching from bench to bench and tree to tree. From the outside it looked like an organized bonfire after a sporting event. I kept my distance, walking along the edges of the park, looking inward. The two men I had followed walked towards the center of the fire and exchanged greetings with the others. I was standing on the southwest corner when a man, crossing the street from the McPherson Square metro station, walked behind and me and asked "what you looking at?" I will admit this startled me. I turned and said:

> RAPH: I'm just checking this out. I was wondering how people were staying warm.
> My name is Raph, by the way. Nice to meet you.
>
> STEVE[8]: Steve [extends hand to shake], well, you can see it.
>
> RAPH: Yes, yes I can. I am impressed. Are you headed that way?
>
> STEVE: Got nowhere else to go.
>
> RAPH: Can I come with? I'd like to talk to some people.
>
> STEVE: You ain't got to ask no permission from me. Do what you want.

So, I decided to walk with Steve into the heart of the park. I was immediately spotted as an outsider, someone that did not belong, a stranger. I continued to walk around, attempting to mind my own business while absolutely sticking out like a sore thumb. I was standing on the periphery, trying to capture the scene, glancing person to person in an attempt to recognize any familiar faces, as well as in self-preservation mode. It was getting to the point where my silence, my presence, and my otherness was reaching a boiling point, so to

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[8] Names of library users and homeless individuals, or both, have been changed to protect their privacy. From here to the end of this study, all names are fictional.

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speak. I knew it was time to go. Just as I was mentally taking the last snapshot I heard "hey, library dude!" Out of the corner of my eye, I saw one of the two men I followed from the library.

DOUGIE: I know you. You been 'round the library a lot. I see you talking to people. Why haven't you said anything to me?

RAPH: I suppose I was just waiting for the right moment.

DOUGIE: Shit, there ain't no right moment. You got something to say, you just say it.

RAPH: That's the truth [hoping to defuse what I perceived to be at the time as a volatile situation, not just in that moment in time but also for my continued library observations]. Do you know what I am doing?

DOUGIE: Nah, people been sayin' things.

I decided to introduce myself and begin to give the brief synopsis of my research interests. Dougie, as the man introduced himself, was a tall and thin African-American man, head and face clean shaven, with dark circles around his eyes. He was dressed in several layers of pants, at least 3, covered in an elastic waist sweat pant material, with a hooded branded sweatshirt with cursive writing on the front. His knit cap was a weathered dark gray and he spoke with a rasp in his voice. He smelled faintly of alcohol and was smoking a cigarette.

We talked for 15 minutes about the library, his use of the library, his past and where he came from. He was born across the river, in Prince George's County; went to school and dropped out; in and out of jail for a variety of crimes. It seemed like a carbon copy of so many stories you hear about but rarely hear in-person. The conversation was very

informal and I allowed Dougie to do most of the talking, nodding along or probing if something wasn't clear. The conversation changed, however, upon his comment about how he learned about the library.

> DOUGIE: A few of my boys, when I came back to town, told me the library is the place to be. It's warm, they got internet. And you can go do human business, ya feel?
>
> RAPH: Yeah, that's a good reason to go to the library. What makes you keep going back?
>
> DOUGIE: Well I ain't go nowhere else to go. It's just part of my day now.
>
> RAPH: Do you ever use any of the services or attend any of the programs?
>
> DOUGIE: Every now and then. If they have free food. I know a few guys that got jobs and stuff from working on their papers [referencing documents required to obtain identification cards] with some of the folks that work there. I seen that happen a few times. I don't do none of that.
>
> RAPH: What do you do?
>
> DOUGIE: I watch movies, listen to music. Browse around the internet. Know what I mean? It's just a place for me to be when it's nasty outside.
>
> RAPH: Like today?
>
> DOUGIE: No doubt [laughs]. They were gonna have to drag me outta that place tonight, son.
>
> RAPH: I will say I am impressed with the teamwork you all got going on here. With the fire and the protection over your heads.

DOUGIE: Listen, man. This is a community. We all know one another and we all look out for one another. That don't mean bad stuff doesn't happen from time to time, cuz it does no doubt. Just the other day this guy Freddie from down the way got his stuff stolen. So you know, people always be looking to jack your shit. But on days like these past few, ain't no one stealing nobodies stuff. We gotta survive.

RAPH: Have you been harassed by anyone about this fire and stuff?

DOUGIE: We had a few police come by cuz people be complaining. They just told us not to get used to it. I expect this be the last night of the fire with city starting to go back to work and things opening back up and whatnot.

RAPH: I notice a few people from the library. Do you know why some people go to the library and some don't?"

DOUGIE: Nah, nah. I don't really know that. All I know is that I'm gonna do what I need to do.

RAPH: Does the library help you do that?

DOUGIE: No doubt. Especially on these cold ass days. Nobody got no money to be going to the hospital and no one wants to go into the clink neither.

The conversation wound down, I expressed my thanks for chatting, and told them to take care. I remembered I had an energy bar in my pocket, so I gave it to Dougie and told him to stay warm for the night. The next day, I arrived later than usual to the library. Dougie was already there, sitting at one of the tables in the Digital Commons. I didn't go out of my way to say hello, but later when our paths crossed we made eye contact and nodded. There was Dougie, the day after, back in the library, using it to survive.

The Human Being

When you spend a lot of time on the streets, parts of your identity are taken away. There is a fundamental part of humanity that gets pushed aside in the daily struggle to maintain. This mental well-being depends on the tangible needs, such as housing and food, but it also requires the intangible – or nonmaterial needs such as respect, love, friendship, belonging, and self-esteem (Wolch & Dear, 1993). Respect, in this case, is more about the concept of recognition and visibility – the humanity side of the term rather than the admiration for accomplishments. Learning to cope with the lack of social support, as we have seen in the literature, can be a major hurdle on the road to recovery, whatever form that recovery may take.

During one of my interviews with library staff, we began talking about what the perception of the library was to the homeless user, or what potentially could come from the use of the library. There is a desire to be seen and acknowledged; and the homeless library users force the staff to acknowledge them, because so often they are treated as invisible. Some staff are aware of this desire – take this comment for example:

> Isn't it human nature to want to be part of [something], and there are customers that I assume are without homes, they make it their mission to speak to me every day here and to smile at me and for me to smile at them. So to feel part of and then feel that they are seen. That's very important. And I'm gonna think it's not just with the customers without homes, because we know that there are people maybe who are, you know, caretakers of seniors or who know that, that coming to the library, though, was a place where they are seen and affirmed. (personal communication, August 4, 2016).

It is understood within the library community that the library is a safe haven for those experiencing homelessness. This type of social understanding has been embedded in the library literature for decades. When you flip the script over to the individual, however, you get a different understanding of what the library provides. On September 2, 2016, I attended one of the DCPL Coffee & Conversations (C&C) programs at MLK. It was a Friday morning at 11am, and the main draw was free coffee. There were three long tables organized in the shape of a "C," with chairs positioned along the perimeter, both in the middle and the outside, for a max capacity of 45 seats. This particular C&C had no special topics on hand, no outside moderator, or no group activity. It was purely an act of sharing space over coffee and conversation. I made a point to put an asterisk in my notebook entry for the program, with the word "clever" scribbled next to the title.

There were two library staffers running the program, with a civilian volunteer who had decided to help out at the C&C held at MLK on a regular basis – I found out later he was the supplier of the two boxes of coffee for the biweekly meetings. The gathering started out unceremoniously; with one of the staffers providing greetings and made a note of two scheduling issues for upcoming programs. The first was the following week, on September 16, when there would be a group of local artists coming to the program to discuss politics. The second was for the program on October 7, when the local charity group Bread for the City[9] would be in charge of the meeting with a focus on providing housing information. Both of these scheduled programs drew a positive reaction from those in attendance.

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[9] Bread for the City is a nonprofit advocacy group located in Washington D.C. with two locations. The mission of Bread for the City is to provide vulnerable residents of Washington, DC with comprehensive services, including food, clothing, medical care, and legal and social services, in an atmosphere of dignity and respect. More information can be found at http://www.breadforthecity.org/

Throughout my observations, I attended over 20 C&Cs, beginning in March and ending in November of 2016. There was no set pattern, as each branch ran their version of the program a little differently. At MLK, however, with such a large homeless user presence, more often than not the programs were geared to provide information for that particular target population.

Angel, a regular at MLK and frequenter of the C&C, sat down next to me. Angel is the type of man you do not miss, in fact, you take note of him rather quickly. Tall and muscular, he dresses in a black t-shirt and black jeans, with black sneakers. His face is a miss-mash of tattoos and piercings, with hair cut high and tight. He is known amongst the staff as "the guy with the face tattoos." This is not the first time we have spoken, so when he chose to sit next to me we said hello, reacquainted ourselves, and he asked me about the recent outcome of the local professional football team. We talked about sports for a while with no particular direction. During pauses in the conversation I looked around the table and noticed small pockets of people in conversation, maybe 2-3 per group. There was no real movement, but the library staff did float around from group to group to engage each person directly.

Coming out of one of our conversation pauses, I broke the silence by asking a simple question that led to a deeply provocative answer: "Why do you come to the library, man?"

Before we get into his answer, you have to understand something about this particular individual. The backstory I had heard in our previous conversations was that of someone suffering from mental illness. Angel, in his early 20s, had commented to me on

several occasions that he had been kidnapped in Spain for 41 years; was kidnapped out of America and took a lot of paperwork to get him home; wanted to go back to 9th grade to play sports in high school after having a surgical procedure that would increase his height to 7'2" (he is roughly 6'4"); he likes to follow people to the ATM and read their receipts when they drop them; and on occasion, has violent outbursts in the library because people are getting too close to him. I am not a trained medical professional by any means, but I had the sense that something wasn't exactly clicking on all cylinders. Originally from West Virginia, Angel has been in the D.C. area since his return from overseas abduction, staying at one of the local shelters and riding the bus to the library on a regular basis.

"Why do I come to the library," he asked rhetorically. "I love the library. I am keen on lots of libraries. I like the ones nearby too, not just this one. I like the one at Mt. Pleasant but it's a little too busy if you know what I mean. I been to the Eastern Market [Southeast] one too. That one is a little too quiet. Everybody is up in everyone's business. I like this one the best though. There's lots of stuff to do around, it's bigger, and I know bunch of people cause they're here everyday."

Realizing I did not get the specific answer I was looking for, I reframed the question: "So what do you do when you are in the library?"

"I'm on the computers. I walk around. Talk to people. Come to these things so I can get this [points at his coffee cup]. You know, stuff like that."

I was about ready to rephrase the question again, but before I could say anything, Angel continued on as if someone unplugged his stream of consciousness:

ANGEL: I get to read about all this stuff. All of these adventures that people been writing about. I get to go to other places. I like reading adventure books. So when I feel like it, I can go slay a dragon or be a guy in the mob, you know. All of the stuff in here. That's what I tell my people. The library has everything. I spend a lot of time thinking about what I want to do in life. What my dreams are. How I am going to achieve them. That's where I got the idea to make me all superman with those surgeries. Go back to school and dominate all the sports and get a scholarship. I like to read about history stuff also. Those two go hand in hand I think. Adventure and history. You gotta know about the history of a place if you are gonna go be the hero [laughs]. There is so much in here to help people figure things out too. I remember one day this guy was looking up a map about something and the person at the desk [library staff] helped him find it. He was so happy. I saw his reaction and I wanted to be that happy. So I decided to do my research.

RAPH: What kind of research were you doing?

ANGEL: Research on me. This is where I find myself.

This powerful narrative of self-discovery echoes the very premise of the personal frame for CTI – in almost a spiritual sense of self-being. In his example, Angel, when he was feeling troubled, was still able to define himself, and display a desire to get a "do-over" in life, through the parameters of the library. This is another example of a homeless library user using the library for its "intended purpose." The library gave him both tangible and intangible needs and he was aware of that benefit. After that program I realized the

significance of our conversation. I saw Angel nearly every day for another 60 days. We talked about the weather, about basketball, about people and their lives.

Even though the importance of small talk in institutional interactions has been extensively demonstrated in sociolinguistic studies (e.g., organizational socialization, interpretative languages in medical settings, migrant social inclusion, and gender dyad communication), there is evidence that small talk leads to higher levels of social inclusion (Mak & Chui, 2013). Typically, small talk is conceptualized as minimal talk which carries formulaic messages and finite, conventional utterances (Holmes & Stubbe, 2003). The existing literature suggests that given a specific situation, such as a doctor's office or a board room, that small talk does break barriers and allows for the exchange of ideas, leading towards mutual understanding. It would make sense then, that this link of continued small talk provided something of value to Angel. This is the type of respect for humanity and visibility, leading to a shared experience, a sense of belonging and a community, that are vital nonmaterial things for the homeless individual.

But we never again discussed this topic, even when I probed into the use of the library. I realized how lucky I was to have that conversation in the first place; and how the forum provided the opportunity to have it. It was like I caught a glimpse of his inner-self; a lightning bolt caught in a jar.

Summary

Using the personal frame of the Communication Theory of Identity to analyze the narratives of the individuals in the examples provided insight into the power of self-image and self-concept. As we have discussed, the words that individuals choose to use to

describe their own story and experiences leads towards an identity. I am of the assumption that identity, for many, is not a conscious thought in everyday life. I know, from my time in conversations with homeless library users, that identity means something more to them. Perhaps it is this way for everyone? I do not have an answer to that question. What I do have, however, is a cataloged oral history, told by the individuals living it, fully aware of their place in the world. When we think of homelessness, we think of stigma and perceptions, we think of causes and faults, and we think of avenues for change.

Gerald, in his personal identity, represented the notion of positivity, of success, of self-reliance and of overcoming hardship. The key component to his story, other than the positive self-image, was the role of the library in helping him achieve that reality. The library provided the resources, but it also provided the space. We started this chapter discussing the concepts of redefining one's narrative and how that leads to the personal identity. Through Gerald's example, we found his identity through his redefinition.

For Steve and Dougie, and the larger community gathered at Franklin Park, their identities were understood to be a shared struggle – a community that comes together when necessary but is otherwise working through their day-to-day on their own. The role of the library here, is as a refuge. It is a personal choice to use the library, one that Dougie specifically knows the importance of in his struggle to survive. Through his admissions of the use of the library, it is clear he views the library as a means to an end, even if the ending is unclear. It is part of his routine, a necessary part of his routine, to help him get through the day. His identity, as least in the short term, is tied to the library as a place. It is this example, these types of homeless library users that will have a significant adjustment

period after the library closes and they lose part of their daily routine. Is the MLK branch part of that identity, by proxy to other services, or is there an inherent and intrinsic value on the library itself. It will be interesting to see if this group decides to use other neighborhood branches when their usual survival method has been removed. It is most definitely an area of future research. Is the identity tied to the physical location, or what that physical location provides?

The story of Angel highlights the second part of the previous question. What the library provides is more important than where the library is located. The library provided Angel the opportunity to evaluate his past, his present, and plan for his future. It gave him the tools and the resources to "find himself." This, in my opinion, is the most powerful state of personal identity I found during my observations, conversations, and interviews. The ability to disconnect from the discomforts of everyday life; to be able to scratch an intellectual itch; to be able define and redefine yourself. It could be easy, and tempting, to speculate what would happen to Angel if the library ceased to exist. I will refrain from that fruitless endeavor, choosing to focus on what the library means. For Gerald and Angel, the library offered identity outside of deprivation and homelessness. It is a place of community, of belonging, and most importantly, it provided hope.

Human thought, behavior, and experiences are at least partially based in narratives, and much of our everyday conversation can be considered a version of storytelling (McAdams, 1993). Because of this, while listening to the library users communicate their stories, whether impersonal on topics such as the weather or the outcome of a sports team; or personal on topics such as their housing status, their families, their work history, or other

life experiences; the words they choose to use and how they choose to communicate provides a personal narrative. This narrative, this breach between ideal and real, between self and society, compliments the basic assumption of the personal frame of the Communication Theory of Identity (Riessman, 2004).

The next chapter will focus on the next frame within CTI, the enacted frame. Each frame can be studied independently of the others, but without an understanding of the personal identity, how can we understand the way in which identities are enacted in social behavior and symbols? Rather than allowing the personal narrative to define the identity, next we will focus on what occurs outside the mind, and how individuals choose to express identity through their actions.

CHAPTER FIVE: CTI – THE ENACTED FRAME

Identities are enacted in social interaction through communication (Hecht, 1993). This frame focuses on the messages, both verbal and nonverbal, that express identity. Not all messages are about identity, but identity is part of all messages. Thus, identity may be expressed as part of a message or may be the central feature of the message, and messages may express more than identity (i.e., they tell us about the task, relationship, and so on) while still conveying information about identities (both those attributed to others and those claimed for ourselves). Within a single speaking turn, one may provide an identity-rich message along with those that are less expressive of identity and more expressive of some other communicative function (Jung & Hecht, 2004).

Enacted identity can also be seen as performance. In other communication frameworks, this performance of identity is face-saving, face-negotiation, or identity respect (Ting-Toomey, 2005). While identity negotiation is undertaken across all layers of CTI, especially so with respect to the interpenetration of the layers (which we will focus on in Chapter 8), it is important to analyze the enacted identities because it illustrates the selection by the individual, their choice to provide or withhold information, and ultimately taking action on their personal identity through interactions.

To review, CTI offers the following proposition for the enactment layer:

- Identities are enacted in social behavior and symbols.

Sticking with the illness identity example used for the personal frame, enacting identity may take various forms. A clear example of this would be an AIDS patient discussing one's sexual health history with a partner. The act of discussing that information is the identity in this frame. It is obvious the disclosure of the information will change the relationship, and that will be covered in Chapter 6 in the relational frame. Here, however, the enacted identity is the choice to disclose that information and the act of disclosing that information. Another concrete example would be how mentally ill patients, specifically those that have been institutionalized, transitioned back into the community. Put simply, the mere act of attempting to re-engage the community, post mental illness treatment, allows the individual to enact a self-concept (e.g., personal frame) that separates from the label of mentally ill (Newton, 2001).

The enacted identity is very difficult to obtain, even more difficult to understand. This is where participant observation was an important data collection tool, but a knowledge of the individual also helps with thematic analysis of the interview data. In the library setting, dealing with the homeless library user, can be seen through their interactions with other users and with library staff; the choices they make for how to use the space; and the way in which they behave within the space. These independent identities are seen through the actions and social behavior in the library. There is much information to process prior to analyzing the enacted identity of homeless library users.

First, we will discuss the DCPL "Rules of Behavior" (also called the "behavior rules," the "code of conduct," or simply "the rules") and analyze the provenance, intention, and enforcement of certain rules. Second, we will discuss the concept of rule breaking and

how that ties into the enacted layer of CTI, including a focus on the "problem patron" identity and how that affects the enforcement and breaking of rules. Finally, we will provide three examples, all from the library staff interviews, of stories where a library user was violating one of the rules. In the discussion of their behavior, we will be able to identify the enacted identity, as the assumption is that enacted identity is seen through social behavior and symbols. When people break the rules, they are both enacting identity through their behavior and allowing others to attribute a particular identity to them.

The DCPL Rules of Behavior

Posted next to the main entrance of each library, facing outward, is a condensed version of the DCPL code of conduct (see Appendix B for the full policy). The posted signage provides a brief synopsis of the DCPL mission and 11 bulleted rules (i.e., Figure 7, right image). The official policy, however, provides much more content. There are four infraction levels covering 32 distinct rules. The infraction levels are organized by penalty or severity of infraction, depending on your perspective. The penalty for category one infractions is a loss of library privileges from one to five years, including the involvement of local law enforcement. These infractions, of course, mirror standard social order rules and conventions. Examples include "committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any Federal or District criminal statute or ordinance" (Behavior Rules Governing the Use of the District of Columbia Public Library, 2014). These are fairly normal expectations. The remaining three infraction levels are a mix of social order and library operation rules.

If the depth of the official policy clarifies the connection between behavior, rules, violations, and penalty – the condensed version posted creates a vague understanding of the rules. The 11 bullets that appear in Figure 7 (i.e., right image) represent all four infraction levels without a clear penalty and several of the rules could be categorized into multiple infractions. In fact, the posting states "persons who violate the rules may be removed from the premises and excluded (barred) from all library premises for a period of time by authority of the DCPL" ("Rules of Behavior," n.d.).
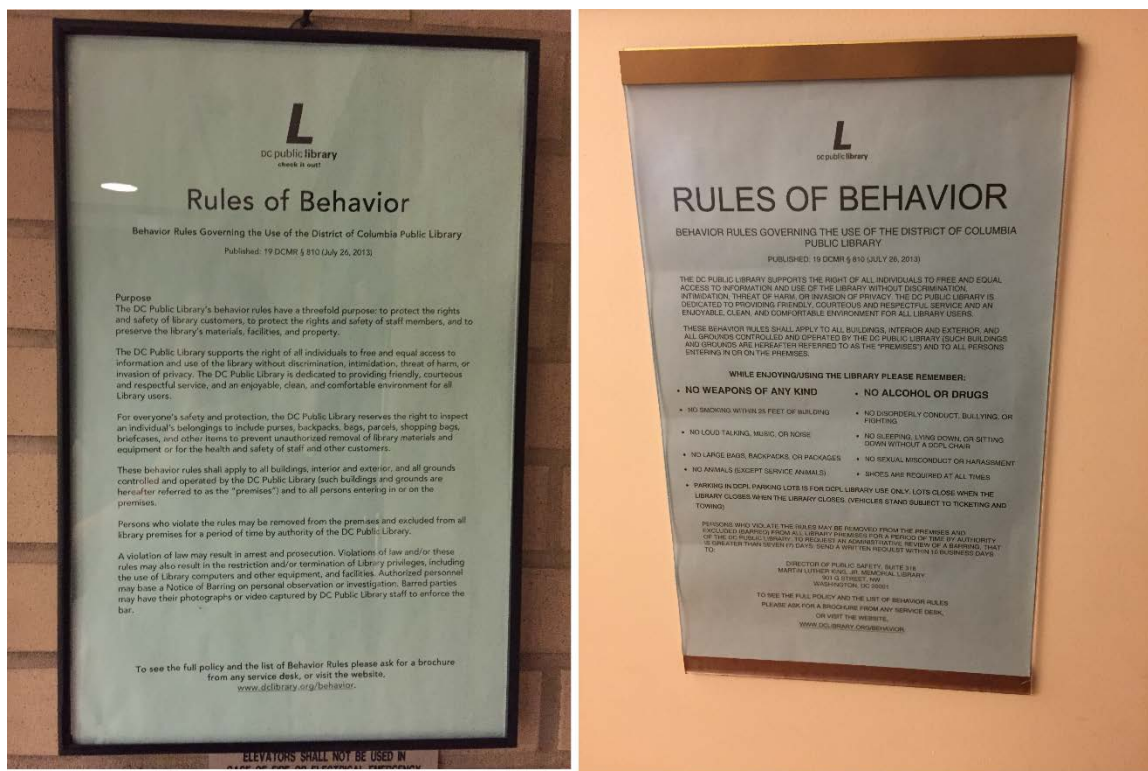

Figure 7. DCPL Rules of Behavior, posted at two locations within the MLK library.

At MLK, there is an additional notification of the rules, and this mirrors information provided on the website, including the official DC code notification and the general purpose of the rules (i.e., Figure 7, left image). It appears to be more of an informative justification of the rules rather than a clear posting of what is not allowed. It also provides information related to violations and how the rules are enforced in very legal-esque terminology. For example, the fifth paragraph states that "persons who violate the rules may be removed from the premises and excluded from all library premises for a period of time by authority of the DC Public Library." It is interesting to note the subtle changes in the statement as compared to the right image. The language is changed from "barring" to "removed from the premises and excluded from all library premises." This distinction will come up later, when we discuss the ability of the library staff to actually enforce a "barring," as it shows inconsistencies in the application of the policy. This posting does not provide what these rules are, nor does it provide concrete examples of the consequences of a rule violation.

The behavior rules are not the only rules. There are policies dictating the proper protocol for using the library collections, services, spaces, and technology. Each policy is available upon request in paper or digital form. There are 14 policy categories, as shown in Table 4, covering all aspects of the library.

In the enforcement of these social norm rules – rules that govern the majority of society and protect the public safety – there are acceptable levels of conduct. The written rules outline subjective categorical infractions and put the onus on the library staff to enforce both social norms and institutional beliefs for conduct within the library. Library

staff are tasked with enforcing any number of rules in addition to providing job specific

duties such as reference, access, or technology assistance. A thorough understanding of the

rules leads to nuances between the use and access of the library, and sheds light on the

interactions between patrons and staff members.

Table 4. DCPL Official Policies

Policy Category	Effective Date
MLK Memorial Library - Renovation Principles	Approved May 28, 2014
Mixed-Use Real Estate Projects Policy	Approved May 28, 2014
3-D Printing and 3-D Scanning Policy	Amended Feb. 20, 2014
Bullying Prevention Policy	Feb. 20, 2014
Espresso Book Machine Printing Policy	Effective Feb. 20, 2014
Computer Use Guidelines	Approved Sept. 9, 2013
Meeting Room Use Policy	Approved Sept. 9, 2013
Unattended Children Policy	Approved Sept. 9, 2013
Rules of Behavior	Approved February 7, 2014
Co-Working Space/Dream Lab Policy	Approved July 17, 2013
Internet and Wireless Use Policy	June 2013
Library Naming Policy	Approved May 27, 2009
Photography Policy	Approved Nov. 19, 2008
Policy on Privacy and Confidentiality	Approved May 28, 2008

It does not require a leap of faith to understand the implementation of these larger

society based rules. The library, as an institution, does not want to provide an arena for the

socially excluded to not only loiter, but dominate the landscape. It is debated within the

sociology field, but some consider collective behavior to be contagious (Blumer, 1986;

Lofland & Lofland, 1995; McPhail, 2006). Each library has its' own approach to serving

the socially excluded, or marginalized members of the community. It is in this arena where

the policy of the library as a profession and the implementation of policy vary greatly. As

an institution, the library states outwardly, to the public, there is no place for social exclusion within the confines of the public library. The reality, however, is that not all libraries act on this stated institutional belief (Hoyer, 2013).

Historically speaking, the variance between institutional policy and library application has followed a clear linear path; each year coming closer to universal acceptance. Now, more than ever, the library as a profession appears to be in agreement with how to handle the socially excluded. This was not always the case, and it was not that long ago issues arose regarding these types of social questions. In 1991, a federal judge in New Jersey ruled the Morristown Public Library had no right to bar a local homeless man from its facilities: "if we wish to shield our eyes and noses from the homeless, we should revoke their condition, not their library cards" (Hanley, 1991).

The nature of subjectivity aside, category four infractions appear to be targeted towards those deemed to have "objectionable appearance" without specifically stating such. Rule #31 states "entering the library buildings with bare feet or a bare chest" will result in the exclusion from the premises until the problem is corrected. This is a fairly straightforward rule, even if targeted to a certain demographic. Rule #32, however, provides more enforcement range, stating "any person creating or emanating an odor that can be detected by a reasonable person, from six (6) feet away and/or constitutes a public nuisance for other customers, will be asked to leave the library until the situation can be corrected." In my field work, this rule was only enforced, which is supported by interviews and conversations with library staff, when there was an overwhelming stench of urine or feces. From what I have been told, that is the only time the library staff member will act

on that particular rule. Any other strong smells, whether from clothing or grooming and self-maintenance products, are ignored unless another library user complains about it. In that case, rather than being removed, according to the letter of the law, the staff will have a rational conversation with the person and, if possible, suggest moving to another location within the library.

Another interesting parameter of exclusion is Rule #22, which states personal items occupying floor space larger than 9"x 14" x 22" are prohibited. The widely known stereotype of "bag lady" seems to play a role in this exclusionary rule. As not to be misconstrued, the rule further states that bedrolls, blankets, external frame bags, duffel bags, and plastic bags are also prohibited. This rule is clearly aimed at homeless individuals. There is no mention of this in the official policy, but the size dimensions outlined match the "carry-on" size restrictions typically utilized in American operated commercial airlines. Is it a coincidence that the size parameters outlined match with the Transportation Security Administration's (TSA) guidance? It would be problematic to not deny entry to business travelers. Violations of this rule are category three infractions resulting in immediate removal and exclusion from library facilities for seven days. While interesting to speculate, I have never seen this infraction enforced let alone a bag larger than the outlined dimensions. The rule is in place for a reason, and it appears to be preventative in nature.

This type of exclusionary rule is not limited to perceptions of physical space. Rule #24 discusses the improper use of restrooms: "improperly using library restrooms, including, but not limited to, bathing, shaving, washing hair and changing clothes" results

in a category three infraction. Again, this rule does not require much thought to rationalize the implementation. This is another rule that is clearly aimed at the homeless community. And with the previous rule, this has not been observed in practice. It does speak to a larger exclusionary effort, however, on the restriction of public space – in other words, limiting the ability for people to use the public space for private behavior (e.g., behavior that occurs in the home). Providing action-items for staff to control the "problem patron" has been the modus operandi of library policy makers for decades. In order to handle the problem, it must first be defined. Discussions of the problem patron are compounded by the lack of this definition. Would all disheveled persons be subjected to the exclusionary practices based solely on appearance? I would hope not. Just as I would expect those causing a disruption to the library would be removed regardless of their social standing or physical appearance.

This type of systemic classism exists within the policy, but is managed through the boundary between private and public space. Take for example, this quote from a library staff member when discussing the value of the rules vis-a-vis the homeless library user and the intentions during the creation of the rules:

I don't think it's perfect in terms of the consequences that are assigned to all of them. The way that our public safety team fits into it, our library police force, I think needs a lot of improvement. But, yeah, I mean, I wouldn't have it that there was no set of behavior guidelines. I'm good with having that to use as a reference point for talking with people. There are things in that document that are specifically addressed at the fact that the library is used as a day shelter by homeless people.

That's true, it's trite, again, I think there's people…when those were written, and I think a lot of those are…my sense is that there are similar sets of guidelines at a lot of public libraries, you know, that gets played out in a lot of different ways. I think there are people who, for political reasons, but also for actual, like, good values, for just reasons, tried to formulate those guidelines in a way that wasn't actually, like, were trying to keep homeless people out. I do actually think it tried to deal with the problematic aspects of homeless people spending a lot of time in the library. Which we have to be careful that doesn't end up being exclusive to homeless people. But, I don't mince words or make any kind of a pretense that that's not what those rules are about. (personal communication, September 20, 2016).

These comments are coming from an educated librarian with over a decade of experience in a variety of library settings, as well as one of the programming volunteers for the Coffee & Conversation programs. With all of that understanding of the homeless library user, a firm understanding of the rules and code of conduct, this individual expressed similar concerns we have been addressing throughout the research process. These types of comments reaffirm the use of CTI to analyze the identity of homeless users within the public library. While some of the data and representations appear to be abstract, the reality is that those within the field have an understanding of the way in which the rules impact the use of the library, and how the homeless users enact their identity (even if they are unaware of the theoretical underpinnings of their daily work). It is here, in the analysis of roles and behavior, we can address other areas of communication research that support the larger thematic discussion.

As noted earlier, a great deal of the existing literature on the issues within the library focus on the ideas of the "problem patron" and the establishment, or refining, of written policies and procedures (Redfern, 2002). It is in this spirit that we will explore the enacted frame of CTI.

The Problem Patron

"Library staff and other patrons encounter patrons who are one or a combination of the following: mentally ill/disturbed, homeless, street persons, angry, aggressive, unreasonable, rude. Commonly referred to as "problem patrons," they appear in any type of library" (Chattoo, 2002, p. 11). If you ask the staff to identify the problem patron, you will find varying answers on the objective: the appearance, the behavior, the cause. The only consensus in the answer is the fact that someone is causing a disturbance.

More specifically, when asked to define what a "bad library user" was, library staff stayed fairly close to that evaluation. The common theme was overwhelmingly disruptive behavior.

During my interviews with DCPL staff, the question of what a "bad library user is" would inevitably lead to discussions of rule violations – from the minor infractions to the horror stories where police would need to be involved. When the severity reaches a critical level, it leads to more public awareness through local news and social media. More often, incidents are only documented in-house as incident reports. These incident reports, of which many library staff deemed a daily part of their work duties, were born out of necessity. Originally, incident reports were only filed when the "library police" were called into action. Over time, in order to uphold the behavior guidelines and rules within the

library, the staff were advised to write up incident reports on basically anything that occurred within the space, with or without an interaction.

The Office of Public Safety, more commonly known as the Library Police, has full arrest rights within the jurisdiction (26 public library locations) for a wide array of typical laws including the DCPL Behavior Guidelines and the DC Criminal Code. The DC Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) does have jurisdiction within the library but, according to the Chief Officer, will only get involved once the behavior escalates to a certain level (e.g., sexual assault) that would warrant extra resources or more strict law enforcement (personal communication, November 3, 2016).

Perusing any historical newspapers database provides a more than adequate account of library rule violations and inappropriate behavior. An article in *The Washington Post* in 1989 detailed some of the challenges facing the library system as a whole. Within the one article, the following incidents were mentioned in passing like the daily log of a police precinct: nine youths armed with knives in a drug-related brawl; one homeless person assaulted a teenager; librarians found drug dealers on their steps; a man carrying a shotgun outside; teenagers threatened staff members; two homeless people fought in a bathroom; a man and a woman were found having sex in a bathroom; a child found a woman with a needle hanging from her arm (Spolar, 1989).

One of the issues with the conceptualization of public library behavior is that it mirrors public behavior. The same general rules apply inside and outside of the building. But the perception of that activity is an entirely different situation. "When I tell people

these things are happening here, they always say, 'In the library? How can that be?' As if this is some sacred ground" (Spolar, 1986).

Table 5. Examples of Responses to "Bad Library Users" Question During Interviews With DCPL Staff

- "A bad library user would be someone who willfully defies our rules."
- "Honestly a bad library user is somebody who bothers other patrons."
- "The people that frustrate me are just people who, I would say, somehow do something that doesn't respect the public space."
- "Yeah altercations or a confrontational behavior. That kind of thing."
- "A lot of times, it's maintaining order so that everyone can enjoy the library."
- "I don't care what they do or how they use it, I'm use agnostic. I just don't want them disrupting the public space."
- "The dregs, if someone was being negative. That is that the library is a place where that is and that's a problem to their, and it impedes their use of the library. And I mean, that kind of gets back to my original thing about everybody has to feel safe. This is a public space it's not for one type of person over the other. But then, you can get sticky sometimes and negotiate those two things and like what the definition of safe is - is it like I just feel uncomfortable and that makes me feel unsafe? Or is it actually like this is threatening to me?"
- "We have people that drop their garbage, you know leave their garbage, people that talk loudly, and we have people talk on the phone. So anything that bothers other people. I think we are pretty laissez-faire as long as you are doing your own thing, I don't care what you are doing as long as you are not bothering others."
- "People are homeless. So I guess in an unspoken way we just kinda ask that you keep your stuff together. And this patron has had her stuff everywhere, and we asked her probably for like a week and a half to like not, and um, I came over and I asked her like "hey, I know we have been talking about this but like, the next time, I'm going to have to ask you to go." And she like flipped out. And I don't do well with that. I'm more so like, once it gets to that point I'm not going to even step over there. We are just going to have to call whoever we got to call. And I don't like doing that. because I feel like it just creates a bigger issue"
- "The biggest issue I feel like that comes up more frequently for people that I deal with is...shoes. Shoes in the library. I've seen that escalate to an explosive level. I'm not sure why that's the thing that just puts people over, but I've seen it happen more than a few times."

What occurs in the library generally depends on the types of people that frequent the location. The symbolism of personal possession plays a role in this behavior, as does the more nuanced social roles within those networks. Looking back at the answers in the French survey discussed earlier, Gaudet (2013) noticed that "every day, the same group of

patrons gathers in this area, more or less claiming it as its territory. This small community has its leaders and its own rules, sometimes a bit different from the library rules" (p. 44).

This can be seen through the social behavior of the library users, but can also be seen in the behavior of the library staff. In March of 2016, the DCPL was under scrutiny for an incident involving one of their officers and a patron at a neighborhood branch, where a woman in a hijab was asked to leave the premises. Witnesses said a Muslim woman visiting the library was first asked to remove her headscarf by the officer, who then provided the ultimatum to either leave peaceably or in handcuffs (Basch, 2016, Zauzmer, 2016).

There are no explicit rules on the books regarding headwear, like you would see proper attire policies on the storefront of businesses. We have all been exposed to the "no shirt, no shoes, no service" mantra that is prevalent in the food industry. But in a library, where they openly encourage and invite all people, these types of interactions run counter to the ethos of the library as an institution. Here we see the definition of a "problem patron" change from role to role, from person to person, and from situation to situation.

Taking a step back, and looking at the rules that are in place and examples in which they have been violated, is a necessary step in moving towards an analysis of social behavior and symbols.

Rules and Rule-Breaking
An institution, according to Hughes (1984), is the recognition of a set of conventions, beyond dispute, explaining the parameters within a public. These parameters, or acceptable behaviors, are then placed within the institution to influence the clientele.

The use of the library is an exercise in obedience. There are rules – defined within the library as a set of explicit or understood regulations or principles governing conduct within a particular activity or sphere—covering all aspects of the library. There are other rules, however, dealing with the communicative practices that occur between individuals situated within a particular setting. Carbaugh (1990) provides depth to the definition by looking at both the source model (e.g., generative agreements that guide coordinated communication conduct) and the analytical model (e.g., the flow of communication processes, of proper enactments, that mold social action around common goals). Conceptualizing the communication rules of Carbaugh within the confines of the more broadly defined institutional rules of the library provides a rich point and counterpoint to the ways in which identity is enacted (Carbaugh, 2005, 2007).

To identify the symbolic component, one must identity and describe a communication action, and as Carbaugh (1996) highlights, a communication action that has cultural significance so "one can interpret the particular forms, symbols, and meanings of identification that comprise it" (p. 33). A patron tacitly agrees to these rules upon entering the building or the premises, prior to using equipment, and during interactions with other library users and staff. Some of these rules, such as "no weapons of any kind," are based on maintaining consistency with the outside social world. These human conduct rules are to be expected, especially within a shared public space.

Other rules, however, govern the accessibility and use of the library property. In these rules, something else occurs unrelated to standard social behavior. The lines between public and private space are defined by accessibility of both users and technology, built

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upon reactionary foundations. The library assumes the position of a public space institution through private space ideology. Or put more bluntly, the library is a public space that has historically, and sometimes currently, acted out their preference for privatized space through the implementation of policies and procedures on the rules of behavior. On one hand, they develop policies to enforce a specific set of behaviors to keep certain people out of the building. On the other, they admit to the mission of free and open access to all citizens. It is a very fascinating institutional battle for the conscious: a cherished public space that struggles with the very nature of what that represents.

This division of public and private is not limited to a physical boundary, nor is it limited to an intellectual boundary. The relationship between public and private is a complex representation of dialectics: a space structured by law, convention, and culture that is enacted through multifaceted, mutual, and dynamic relationships. Before we get into the relationships, we must examine the enacted frame. Now that we have an understanding of the rules, we can see how the homeless library user chooses to enact their identity, and how it is related to the personal identity from the previous chapter.

The stories, all told from the library staff interviews, will move from small to large in terms of the severity of the rule violation.

The Keyboard Lady

In this story, there is a woman, who is a regular at one of the branch libraries and comes in daily to use the publically available computers. Prior to this part of the interview, we both noticed this woman and her behavior. The library staff member, Hope, mentioned to me the people in the branch refer to her as "the keyboard lady." During the interview I

asked Hope to explain this particular library user and her habits, trying to uncover any justification or reasons behind her social behavior within this setting.

> HOPE: We have one patron that comes in here every day, and she thinks the keyboard is always dirty so she tips it and bangs it on the table. And we talked to her about it and she started to do it kinda quieter. There was a whole hullabaloo – she got called downtown and there was a mess. Yeah, so that was a mess. So we continue to let her bang the keyboard and she does it every time and it doesn't seem like it's quite like a compulsion but it kind of is.
>
> RAPH: Have you suggested, or just given her aerosol spray?
>
> HOPE: Yes, we have tried that. We've tried wipes, we tried an aerosol spray, and we've tried a variety of solutions. So right now the solution is quiet banging and we just sort of look the other way.

This "hullabaloo" in the story was in reference to this library user being a repeat offender of several rules. As the code of conduct states, any individual may appeal certain consequences, such as a bar from the library, through an administrative review request. According to the code, the request must be made in writing, submitted to the Director of Public Safety (aka, the chief of the library police). Hope provided the back story that the keyboard lady was "called downtown" to have a meeting. This meeting, essentially, was due to the repeated incident reports filed by the library staff and their continued requests for assistance from the public safety office. The result was an intervention of sorts, where the keyboard lady was not physically barred from the library, but there was a meeting with

the people that enforce the penalties for rule violations.[10] Apparently, the meeting had little impact on the keyboard lady's behavior in question or any other rule violations, of which I was told were written up in the incident reports to help support the staff's case.

There is an official policy regarding proper use of the computer equipment, but clearly her actions were not destructive in nature – they were just noisy in a relatively quiet environment. The library staff determined that enforcing any particular rules in this case is not worth the confrontation. The "hullabaloo" in question was when this library user was interviewed by the Office of Public Safety and also had conversations with library administration regarding her preferences. It was not explicitly stated, but the impression was that unless the situation escalated to a destruction of property, or her quest to clean began harming others, to let this indiscretion slide.

This is a very simple story. You have a woman that does not like the cleanliness of the shared public computers keyboards. She acted in the way anyone would act in the private setting with their own technology. Here, in the public space, you had two potential violations: the first was causing a disturbance, and the second was damaging library property. The enacted identity rests in way in which the banging of the keyboard represented the woman's personal preference. Was she making a grand statement on the overall cleanliness of the public library system? Doubtful. But she was making a statement on her particular dissatisfaction of sharing a public space with others. And this pattern of behavior supports that statement.

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[10] I did request copies of incident reports from the Public Safety office. But due to the nature of the request, this required a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) submission. At the time of this writing, I have yet to receive a response.

This example shows how a minor nuisance can cause a disturbance to the other users within the library. In this particular story, the woman that is causing the disruption has been allowed to continue that disruption. In my observations after the interview with the staff member, I can say that it appears to be a compulsion or routine, similar to routines that we all have to begin our day or how we engage whatever work we are doing at a given time.

Here, the library user is enacting her identity through the behavior and use of the publically available computers, the identity that could be explored further using the personal frame. Perhaps she was neurotic, perhaps she was a "clean-freak," perhaps she was germophobic, or perhaps she was just frustrated with using shared technology. This is where understanding the enacted identity almost requires an understanding of the personal identity. Regardless, to the library staff her identity is the keyboard lady, the one that causes a disruption.

The Instigator & The Lady That Won't Leave
This next story is twofold: one where a library user was violating rules that caused a disturbance, the staff intervened, and then it dovetailed into something much larger, pulling others into the confrontation. This story is taken from an interview with a library staff member, told from her perspective.

The one that comes to mind, who probably had some mental health problems and probably was homeless too, just because he had luggage with him - oh I could tell you two stories because they overlap. He was here for only three or four days but he was here for those three or four days all day, every day. He was a middle-aged

white guy. And I came into work one day and he was standing downstairs and I walked by him to get to the workroom. I haven't even put my stuff down yet, I still have my bag and my coat and everything. He was eating and I said to him: 'Oh I'm sorry, there's no eating in the library can you put that away?' And he was like 'Okay, but let me ask you a question?' And he stands up and he has a tape recorder and he's like, 'Can I talk to you on the record?' He was talking about the Russian Embassy and the Chinese Embassy, like he was a political prisoner of the United States, but like they were helping him and he wanted to talk to me about these things and interview me. I said 'No, I'm sorry I can't do that. I just need you to put the food away.' And we kind of went back and forth a few times.

So later that day it was another patron that was also kind of new, probably been here about a week, and she's also homeless and had two bags with her - like rolling bags and she came up and complained to me about this other man was looking at her. And I said, "Well there's not really anything I can do to keep him from looking at you but here let me move you to a different space, we can put you over here." And she was very distraught and English was her second language so we were having problems communicating. And then he came over and complained to me about her and then there was this big thing and he started yelling at me, and actually I wasn't even the person on the desk - my coworker had called me up to help with this situation. I had to ask him to step back several times because he was yelling in my face and kept getting closer and was kind of behind the desk, so I no

longer had like the desk between him and me. And, I told him 'Sir, I'm sorry if you can't settle down I'm going to have to ask you leave.'

And he was, at some point, 'cause he was just making, it was nonsense, it was not that anything that was understandable and he said 'Ok, well I'm going.' And so he went to go get his stuff out of the reading room and I stood there with my coworker waiting for him to do that, and then he starting going, and it looked like he was going to leave but he went to the elevator. And I said, 'Sir, I'm sorry you have to, you have to go.' And he said, 'Well, I'm going to go use the bathroom.' And I said 'Sir, you have to go. And if you don't leave I'm going to call the police.'

And then, we called the library police and then we called MPD and he went down to use the bathroom and was down there for a long time and we were still waiting for the police and he came back up and continue to yell at me some more. I was at the circulation desk by this point, and leaning over the desk and shaking his finger in my face. At that point I pulled the panic button - we have panic buttons underneath most of the desks - and so I pulled that and the police didn't come and he left. And they eventually, 10 or 15 minutes later got here, and he was barred from the library for at least a year, I can't remember exactly how long he was barred for. But we don't know his name, he wasn't here, we have pictures on our cameras of him and we would all recognize him because he was pretty distinctive looking, too. But, you know, he didn't have a library card, he didn't use the computers he didn't...There is really no way to track him.

No there isn't. So we did all our due diligence with our paperwork and stuff. And had the photo printed out of him and things, but the lady that was complaining about him was also barred later on, I think the next day [chuckles]. We call her, or at least I call her, I think maybe other people call her this too, she is the "lady who won't leave." Because the first day she was here, we closed at 9 p.m. and she at that point started to pack up her stuff and she had two rolling bags. And she had stuff in plastic bags within plastic bags within plastic bags, so she was putting this all away and she had it all spread out over the table. Which we had throughout the day tried to contain, and we would remind her that other people need to use the table because there's space for like four people to sit at the table.

But she was just starting to pack up at 9 and so it was like 9:10 and we're supposed to leave at 9:15, and at 9:10 she's still there. That first night she was here until 9:30. We just kept telling her she had to leave and she was like 'oh, I'm packing,' and she just slowly left the building.

The next night I think we got her out at like 9:15. And then the third night I think we actually got her out in time, because we went over and had her start packing before we closed. But eventually, she was using one of our express computers - well she was upset because she had to use one of the express computers because that doesn't require a library card but she didn't have what she needed to get a library card. It's just a picture ID and something that has your current address on it. And it can be a letter from the shelter or something like that but she wasn't staying

anywhere. And so she didn't have that. And she wanted, the express computer gives you 15 minutes, she wanted 17 minutes. And I was not able to give that to her so we had an argument about that.

And then she would leave her stuff some of her stuff next to the express computers and then go back into the reading-room, which one of our behavior guidelines is you can't leave your stuff unattended and that's something that we often sort of look the other way on. People will just drop their stuff off at a table and then go use the bathroom and come back. But this was in people's way, she wasn't within eyesight of it. It was obvious she was not coming back. She was just leaving it there. So I explained it to her that she needed to keep her stuff with her. So she came and got it to the reading room and then she left and then the reading room and came back to the express computers.

And I said, 'Ma'am, you really have to get your stuff.' And then we had a back and forth about that. And she refused to keep her stuff with her, so she was barred for seven days. And then she came back the next day to argue about the bar and we explained to her there's a process by which you can appeal a bar, but you don't do that here you do it downtown with the library police. Then she wouldn't leave again so then she was gone for a month and then she came back a third time to argue about her bar some more. And she was barred - I think she was barred for a year at this point. For something that was really little and small, and should have been, but we at that point had started to, when we have an incident like her staying later - we

had written that up. And then wrote it up other times we had some negative interaction with her. So at that point, that was kind of like the final straw. So...but those were within two days of each other and the branch manager was out of town [laughs]. So it was like, yay.

Here, the symbolic meaning of the library user, whom the library staff deemed to be homeless, is the central meaning behind the interaction. By framing the distraction under the umbrella of a homeless person, the staff member is enforcing a boundary, a boundary that could be perceived as a personal divide between normal and deviant (Toft, 2014). As we have noted, most library staff consider the deviant, or bad library user, to be one that disrupts others. This behavior is not inherently wrong in private, but is unacceptable in public, as it results in harming the ability of others to use the space of the library and the resources held within.

In the story detailed above, the staff member took action to enforce a rule on their own accord as well as when the violation of a rule was brought to their attention. The message expressed was that of an authoritarian figure, of a rule enforcer, and of a threat to the "problem patron." Likewise, the messages expressed from the library users formed an enacted identity – but not one with clear motives. The unveiling of the users' identity could be that of defiance or simply a measure of control; or it could be something that is not consciously active. Again, more could be understood after examining these individuals through the personal frame.

In their study of those on the street, Snow and Anderson (1987) discuss three distinct ways in which the homeless individual salvage the self: distancing, embracement,

and fictive storytelling. In the example above, and in countless others I have observed, these types of direct rule breaking is a patterned behavior that does not fall within three identity negotiations (or their subcategories). Instead, it appears to be its own form of identity formation – a blending of the loci (internal and external) of control. An example of both influence events and outcomes while simultaneously blaming outside forces for said outcomes.

There is no centralized database than monitors individuals or their punishment (i.e., bans or bars), especially those that do not have authorized use of the public computers. In the next story, we will see the problems of attempting to enforce the rules without the necessary support from the institution that created the rules.

The Masturbator

Below is dialogue from a conversation with a staff member recalling an incident where the repeated bad behavior reached actionable levels, and the fallout from the policies in place that led to misunderstanding and ultimately a circumnavigation of the rules to achieve a specific outcome.

> DAVE: There's this one particular guy, who we call the masturbator, it's such a pain in my ass, because he's a 50 year old man. So my elder. But he would come in here every day and do the same bad behaviors, which are eating food at the computers, falling asleep, and occasionally, well, one time he masturbated. And, you know, something like that, a sexual harassment level thing, it's so bad. You're doing that... red line…you can't do that in public, like that's freaking everybody out.

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And, what's so notable about him, is he did all of these like, the eating and sleeping, you know, quality of life things.

And every day we'd [library staff] be like, "hey, like I told you yesterday, you can't eat in here. You have to eat just on the other side of the door. In the tiled part."

And he would be like "ok, ok, I'm sorry." And then he would go back to eating an hour later. Or, he later told us he had a drug problem and he was coming high all of the time. He'd fall asleep, and he'd be drooling or whatever. It was just an everyday occurrence. And no matter what you would say to him, he would do the same thing the next day.

And that was, you would just like start getting angry at him. Like why are you making me enforce these stupid rules? I don't like being in a position where I have to tell you what to do. I feel like you are forcing my hand, like you are doing it in front of me again and again. Then the day that he was jerking off, we were like 'got you motherfucker.' That is so over the line and you are so outta here."

RAPH: Was that something that you notice or did other patrons bring it to your attention?

DAVE: We noticed it because the express computers are right next to us and he was doing it there.

RAPH: Standing up?

DAVE: Standing up. And, the kicker is that several of my coworkers left because of this. We couldn't bar him. We told the library police; we kicked him out; we wrote up the incident report and everything. We did the paperwork for them and they refused to kick him out because no one had actually seen his penis. It's like, we saw him. We saw it! But we didn't like, *see* [emphasis added] it. And it's just such a bizarre thing to be told. It's like it doesn't count if you don't see his penis?

RAPH: Ok. And so he wasn't barred at all?

DAVE: Nope.

RAPH: So, his penalty was leaving for the day?

DAVE: I eventually barred him from ceaselessly documenting the eating and sleeping thing. In one week I told him three times, and I wrote three incident reports, and I had to kick it up to my boss, who had to kick it up to library administration to get library police to enforce the bar.

In this situation, the man in question was a repeat offender of many of the behavioral guidelines and the staff treated him as a nuisance. The daily actions of violating rules, whether eating or sleeping, led to continued interactions between this particular individual and the library staff. This is important. As you can see from the comments from the staff, there is resentment about having to assume the identity of the "enforcer." This type of behavior echoes what we have seen so far. The narrative changes, however, when the user attempted to identify himself as a "drug user." The discussion of drugs and alcohol is closely affiliated with any research involving homelessness, analysis of causes, and language used in news reports. When behavior is labeled as deviant (e.g., drug use), there

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are several avenues of response both positive and negative. The negative response, such as "it's your own fault"; "you reap what you sow"; "you have weak character"; etc…reinforces the stigmatization and otherness. The positive response, that falls in line with more of the social work characteristics of providing assistance while possessing a forgiving and understanding nature, allow for certain levels of slack within society. In other words, addiction is something that affects people from all backgrounds, all strata of society. Those with higher socioeconomic status, or the wealthy, have more resources to hide the problem from friends and family as well as concealing the illegal nature of the behavior from the authorities. This, for a time, allows the drug abuser to minimize the effects within the safety net of social support, work, and home lives. By contrast, the drug abuser on the street has nowhere to hide, and abuses the drugs quite openly.

Library staff have mentioned the open air drug market that occurs on the sidewalk in front of MLK, and it is very clear to anyone paying attention what is happening on the street. Dave is particularly aware of these interactions, mentioning them several times during his interview. So it was no surprise that he provided this story, while his colleagues had the opportunity to disclose this story but chose not to. Only after probing did they admit to knowledge of this story. This leads me to believe that, for Dave, being forced to enact an identity of an authority figure was against his beliefs personally and professionally. He wanted to be a librarian and not a police officer. The resulting enactment of that identity altered the perception of Dave to the library user, the man in the story. Conversely, the man in the story is seen only as a deviant and a problem patron due to his repeated rule breaking behaviors – behaviors that he enacted in the social setting. In this instance, it could be stated

that this man was attempting to manipulate the interaction for his benefit. Or he was simply implementing a form of strategic communication to provide justification for his actions.

Summary

We have talked about the stigmatization of the homeless throughout history, and the lasting impressions of these socially shared stereotypes frames the interactions. In these stories, told by the staff members, about the social behavior of the homeless library user, is an issue of subjectivity. As Foucault (1980) states, "each society has its regime of truth" (p. 131); where we identify the process of obtaining truth(s) and provide the status necessary for those people to proclaim what is truth.

Are the rules about public behavior (in the library) based on the assumption of what the ideal library user would be? In my interviews, I also asked that question. And just like the question of a bad library user, the good library user elicited very similar responses. The most common theme was that of "someone that just uses the space." While there may be idealized notions of the intellectual pursuit of knowledge in the vast stacks, all staff members working on the front lines just want people in the building using it for whatever reason the user defines as justification. This assumption, however, allows the library staff member to be an information resource, not a rule enforcer. There is clearly discomfort in the notion of enforcing rules that comes up with the perception of job responsibilities. We will get into this in Chapter 6 when we discuss the relational frame.

Is the enforcement of rules evenly applied across all social boundaries and stereotypes? I can tell you first hand that it is not. I can also tell you that the library staff view their roles differently based on their own personal beliefs and perceptions. Certain

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staff look the other way if someone is violating a rule (i.e., the no-food rule, the no-sleeping rule) if they have a positive relationship with the library user. If there is a negative relationship, resulting in repeated authoritarian types of exchanges, there is little acceptance of rule violations. This is common sense and human behavior. Many of the perceptions of homelessness are seen through this "problem patron" symbolism. This language is reminiscent of the discussion of deviants in Becker's *Outsiders* (1963), "where the enforcement of a rule is an enterprising act," and that "enforcement occurs when those who want the rule enforced publicly bring the infraction to the attention of others" (p. 122).

What is acceptable at home is not acceptable in the library. These disruptive behaviors are private behaviors conducted in the public setting. No one will yell at you if you wanted to play music loudly on your speakers (well, perhaps your neighbor). In the library, this is a major disruption. I wipe down my desk with antibacterial sanitizer every morning and there is nothing wrong with this. Obsessively cleaning your keyboard in public is a disruption. Even the glances of others is a public activity. Clearly, this would not occur in the privacy of your own home, and if it did, you would probably want to contact someone other than the library police.

These behaviors, along with a variety of others, are labelled as problems because and they occur in the public setting of the public library. When you add the identity of the homeless library user, where there is no alternative to conduct private affairs due to their housing status, they are forced to expose their private nature in the public setting. This violates the rules. Not just of the library, but of society in general. And, for what it is worth, this luxury is taken for granted ubiquitously. There is just not a psychological reason to

think about these questions when you have a home and have always had a home. That is a blunt, honest, reality. There is no reason to alter that information processing until there is a reason to do so (i.e., experiencing trauma, displacement, housing uncertainty, job insecurity). By the very nature of these facts, the homeless library user is labeled as a problem user, where the problem IS the user.

Turning back to Foucault (1977), we see another conceptualization of power in the measure of discipline, referring to the elements of social relations that control, govern, and normalize both individual and collective behaviors. The library, and their behavioral guidelines, give off the impression of a concertive organization, in which "the explicit written rules and regulations are largely replaced by the common understanding of values, objectives, and means of achievement, along with a deep appreciation for the organization's mission" (Tompkins & Cheney, 1987, p. 184).

When defining the problem patron, or the homeless library user, or the deviant, we must recognize that the individual making the call to categorize is working for an institution. Their choice on how to engage with a rule violator is enacted identity, as is the resulting communication action. There is no smoking gun, no supporting evidence, and no final solution. The enacted identity is the act of enactment. And at the end of the day, my observations based in the library setting can be summarized by the following quote from communication scholar Brenda Allen (2011): "a common strategy is to use a rhetoric of identification, the extent to which an individual, when faced with a decision, will be likely to do what aligns with the organizations objectives rather than with their own preferences (p. 29).

With the enacted frame examined, we can now move into the next phase of the Communication Theory of Identity, the relational frame, which is built upon the enactment of identity to create and maintain new identities through relationships. Relationships are a key cog in the library machine – staff provide resources to those in need; those seeking information come into the library requiring assistance. It is a symbiotic relationship and it is a repetitive one. The relational identity is much more about the people involved, distancing itself from the symbolic and abstract construct of an enacted identity.

CHAPTER SIX: CTI – THE RELATIONAL FRAME

Because communication has both content and relationship dimensions (Watzlawick et al., 1967), it is impossible to consider identity as enactment without also considering identity as relationship. Identities are mutually constructed in social interactions. A specific parties social behavior merges with another's in a relational perspective that defines identity as a mutual property. It is mutual because it is jointly negotiated and because it is a property of the relationship. Thus, identity is relational in four ways. First, identity is relational because people define themselves in terms of others and shape their enactments to their interactional partners. Simply put, the person I am with one individual is not the same person I am with another individual. Second, identity is relational because people define themselves in terms of their relationships. People gain identity through relationships with others such as martial partners, occupations, and friendships. Third, identity is relational because relationships, themselves, take on identities, and the dyad becomes an entity. A dating couple establishes an identity as a couple, which aligns it within the larger group. This property seems consistent with the notion of relationships as cultures (Montgomery, 1992; Wood, 1982). Finally, identities exist in relationship to other identities. This applies within the individual (e.g., one of your identities in relationship to another of your identities) or between people (e.g., leaders require followers; teachers require students). Thus, identity is jointly constructed for participants, emerges out of social

interaction, and is a property of the relationship (i.e., relational identity). Identities also exist in relationship to each other. Identity as relationship shares the assumptions of identity as enactment, although this time the focus is on the mutual or relational aspects.

To review, CTI offers the following propositions for the relational layer:

- Identities emerge in relationship to other people.

- Identities are enacted in relationships.

- Relationships develop identities as social entities.

Defining identity at the relational frame is very prevalent in the existing literature as it is easier to observe and obtain data from how people interact with one another and how they discuss those interactions. As early as Goffman and his discussion of relations in public, we can see a theoretical fascination with the concepts of identity and relationships. These can been explored through cultural identities: such as the role of barbershops within a community as a cultural forum (Shabazz, 2016); on the disclosure of Jewish heritage and how that alters the relationship with another individual – a positive bond is formed if the other person is of similar heritage (Hecht & Faulkner, 2000); Korean immigrants and their perceptions of racial hierarchy in their surrounding neighborhoods (Jung & Hecht, 2008); and the identity of first-generation college students (Orbe, 2004). These types of identities can be analyzed through the communal frame, but they can also be analyzed at the relationship level, and how the three propositions are created and maintained within a larger group setting.

Much of my interest on this topic focuses on the notion of "the regular" and how that identity bridges a gap between what has occurred, what people understand as having

occurred, and what will ultimately occur in the future. But this is an assumption based on one individual's willingness and opportunity to express their own identity. For example, echoing back to the illness identity highlighted in the personal frame, we can see how illness identity is comparable to homelessness identity. Consider the context of invisible illness, referring to information that is not easily detectable by appearances only (e.g., cardiovascular disease, cancer, HIV, learning disabilities) and the role that plays in shaping relationships (Kundrat & Nussbaum, 2003). These relationships, therefore, carry different roles and responsibilities for an individual. Acquaintances, friends, and perhaps even family members could be unaware of an illness unless the individual discloses this medical information; which will undoubtedly change the existing relationship with that disclosure (Gudykunst, 2015).

In order to dive deeper into the relational frame, we will explore several types of relationships: library user to library user; library staff to library user; and library staff to library staff. This type of framework allows this layer to reinforce relationships at variable levels. As such, when we discuss each section we will be discussing it from the aspect in a directional perspective (e.g., from the library staff TO the library user), gradually moving towards the more social entity as relationship proposition. Drummond and Orbe (2009) found that racial groups talked openly about the comfort they felt while interacting with others of similar racial profiles. Can these assumptions be applied to the library and the people within the library?

Different from the enacted layer, the relational layer takes into consideration some sort of mutual understanding. During my observations it became clear there was a sense of

regularity that dictated the relationships within the public library setting. What does it mean to be a regular? When describing broad-based cultural identification, including subcultural patterns of expression, researchers often assume that identity is anchored to space. In the library this means visiting the same branch. It is possible to be a library (read: library as an institution) regular, but not a branch (read: specific location) regular. For the purposes of this research, the idea of the regular is rooted in the latter form: those visiting the same branch with some form of time and frequency that ultimately leads to a routinized action (enacted behavior), leading towards a relationship of other regulars within the shared space.

Katovich and Reese (1987) used the study of neighborhood bars to define groups based on the temporal aspect of action: regulars, irregular regulars, regular irregulars, neutrals, and non-regulars.

> Whereas it is common to bind conceptions of authentic regulars to explicit spaces (e.g., bars, restaurants, dance halls) and conceptualize such regulars as part of an overt and anchored culture, we link regular statuses to ongoing activities that emerge in an interactional foreground against more peripheral temporal and spatial backgrounds. (p.4).

While not a cultural forum as embedded within one particular community (i.e., a barbershop in the African-American community), the library still plays a vital role in a similar experience: a brick and mortar establishment that allows for the passage of time through conversation with people in similar social networks. And these social networks are all about the ways in which these identities emerge, how they are enacted in relationships, and how those relationships develop into their own identity.

Relationship #1: User to User – The Keymaster

Straight out of central casting for a western film, Juan is a middle-aged African American male, short and stocky, and with "mad-scientist" hair and tough Wild West outlaw beard. His beard and hair are graying in the same proportion outward, from the dark black roots. I noticed Juan very early in my observations. He was there, every day, at the same spot, at the same time, wearing the same sweatpants and sneakers, with a solid color t-shirt tucked into his pants. These types of superficial observations could be said about anyone that frequents the library on a regular basis, especially the homeless individuals. What was different about Juan was his interactions with other users. He carried two backpacks with him. The first, and primary, was a collection of his personal belongings. The second one, which he used more frequently, was filled with books and technology devices. After several weeks I realized that Juan was carrying on him at least a dozen cell phones and sim cards; at least five computer-like devices (e.g., tablets, laptops); and several charging cords for each type of device.

Juan was a magnetic force for other users in the library. It did not take long, it was clear after a few days, to realize that he was a part of the group that was bussed to the front of the library from a nearby homeless shelter. What wasn't clear was the purpose he was servicing to his fellow library users and/or homeless individuals. During the spring months, teenagers and young adults would sit near him in the Digital Commons, on some of the shared-space tables. I didn't think much of it, and figured he was acting in some sort of mentor role to younger men – and they were all young African American men – that chose to befriend him and interact with him in the library. In one particular afternoon, an interaction caught my eye, as Juan and a young man had a brief exchange, and then Juan

reached into his bag and provided the young man a cell phone. From my vantage point I could not make out the conversation, but I heard the young man say "thanks" and then he went outside. At that moment I was torn between following the young man or staying put. I decided to stay put and noted the time. It was just after 11am. Juan resumed his computer activities. An hour went by, and then two, and finally, around 2:00 PM the young man returned. Juan had not moved from his spot, not even for a drink of water, to stretch, or to use the restroom.

> "Here you go," the young man said to Juan, offering the cell phone back to him.

> "Did you get everything square?"

> "Yessir. Appreciate it."

> "No doubt."

At that point, the young man left the library. In that moment, I thought back to many of the stories you hear about the behavior in the public library, what goes on outside of the public library, and the perceptions of the general public on the types of individuals that frequent the library. Is this a clear case of a Good Samaritan providing assistance to another, or was there something else afoot? I thought back to an interview I had with several staff members regarding the behavior in the Digital Commons:

> Like the first week or first day I started working, I saw…it was like somebody was selling sex. And I saw the interaction happening, like, before it happened and after it happened. So there's-- I've seen sex workers work here. I've-- there's, like, this guy who comes in a lot and I think he's a drug dealer or doing something, and he's

super obvious and really lame about it. I'm just like, "Really? I could tell you from day one." (personal communication, August 9, 2016).

I decided to put that stereotype aside for the time being, and over the course of the next few months, during my interviews with other staff, discussions with the library users, and general observations, I just paid attention any time that Juan interacted with other users. He was a gamer. He had several laptops setup at all times and attracted a crowd of similar interest individuals. Because of this gaming concept, these types of interactions where daily occurrences through the spring months, and well into the summer. In fact, the frequency of his relationships with other library users increased as the weather warmed up. At first I wanted to attribute it to the public school cycle, with more young men out of school there were more young men in the library. This initial idea didn't carry weight, as the types of individuals did not change with the weather. One man, who I had noticed in the library as early as December 2014, an elderly man of unknown ethnic origin, but darker skin and scruffy facial hair, came up to Juan in August of 2016. This man, whom I had little interaction with other than the casual banter found in sharing a public space, was known to me as "the man in the trench coat." He wore a tan trench coat at all times and would sit in the far southwest corner of the Digital Commons, pounding away on his computer on a daily basis. I was fortunate enough on this day to be within earshot. The man came up to Juan and asked him if he had a charger, as he said his computer wasn't working. Juan rummaged through his bag but did not find the appropriate cord – he did, however, have an extra battery. So he gave the man the battery for an outdated laptop, and the man in the trench coat returned to his corner and resumed activities on his computer until the end of

the day, when he returned the battery and both men packed up their belongings and began to lineup outside of the entrance to wait for their bus arrival at 6p.

The battery interaction was far more thought provoking than the cell phone interaction, and the dozens of other technological requests I had observed over a six month period. In my notes, I called this man "Juan, The Keymaster." He seemingly had every key to every technological door that was needed. Eventually, I decided to ask him about it.

RAPH: Do you mind if I ask you a question?

JUAN: Sure, what do you need?

RAPH: I've seen you around, and you always seem to have a lot of technology that you share with others in the library. What's up with that?

JUAN: I've just collected a lot of this stuff over the years, so I decided to keep it. Nothing much to it.

RAPH: Do you do it for money?

JUAN: Nah, not really. It's more of a favor.

RAPH: So like future favors?

JUAN: If you wanna put it like that.

RAPH: Well it does seem to help people out quite a bit.

JUAN: That's part of it. You see, we don't have a lot of these gadgets and stuff gets stolen all of the time.

At that moment I realized there was something going on here that was outside of my observations. I thanked him for the information and asked if I could talk with him another time. It reminded me of the way television and movies depict the barter system in prisons.

I decided I wanted to dig into the literature a little bit so I could ask questions without coming off as insensitive or naïve. Juan never offered up his personal housing status, and I did not want to ask, so over the next few days I made it a habit to say goodbye to him as I was leaving, unlocking my bike out in front of the building where all of the homeless individuals would be waiting for the bus to take them back to the shelter. I spoke with the library staff about him, and they all knew him. He had been coming to the library well before any of the staff that operate within the Digital Commons were hired.[11]

Once again, I approached him during one of his down moments – where he was not actively engaged in conversation or involved with the computer along with headphones.

RAPH: Hey Juan, how you doing today?

JUAN: Not bad, the usual. Internet is good today so we can get rolling.

RAPH: What do you mean?

It turns out that Juan, and some of his friends in the library, are gamers. They plug in directly to the internet with an Ethernet cable, bypassing the free Wi-Fi, sitting around two four top tables, all playing video games. It also turns out the group of men come from the shelter – where internet is unreliable at best. The library is the lifeblood for their pleasure, a gatekeeper to part of their identity that would otherwise be lost as a result of their housing status.

During our subsequent conversations, topics such as how individuals receive their technology (e.g., advocacy groups and donations); how and why he decided to collect all

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[11] Juan was actually interviewed by dozens of people the three days leading to the closure of the library on March 4, 2017. By local blogs, local broadcast television, and local radio. He was the point of contact when the journalists asked if they could speak to someone about the closing of the library because of his prolonged and frequent use.

of the unwanted items (e.g., "he hates seeing things go to waste"); what types of games they play (e.g., Minecraft, World of Warcraft, various EA Sports titles); and questions about the library and it's future; all come up naturally and without probing. As with most, he was acutely aware of the impending closing due to the renovations but had yet to develop a plan for his continued free internet access.

Tying this story back into the relational frame, let's examine the way in which the assumptions are realized. The first assumption is that identities emerge in relation to other people. This is clearly true in this example. His personal identity (that of being a gamer and techie first, housing status second) allowed him to choose to build relationships through his associations with other people with similar goals. These identities are enacted in the relationship through the playing of the games (e.g., sometimes together, sometimes played in solo modes, and sometimes two completely different games are being played at the shared table) and also through the loaning of the technology to others that are in need and not part of the gaming group.

Thus, the third assumption, that of relationships developing identities as social entities, can been seen here in two separate identities. There is the bartering of technology for future goods and services relationship with other shelter residents, of which I could not get any admittance of what those goods and services were. My mind wanders to the film *Shawshank Redemption*, where the character "Red" played by Morgan Freeman was the man you wanted to know if you wanted to acquire something you didn't have. To other people in the shelter, Juan was the guy you went to when you needed something you didn't have. A way to make a phone call, a way to charge your devices, and a way to access the

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internet. But to his inner circle, those closer to him, he was something else entirely. He was their friend and fellow gamer. In this case, the relationship is based on the mutual understanding of both parties, but also evaluated through and enacted in certain circles in completely different ways.

The role of the library was secondary to the construction of these relational identities (as gamer and tech-provider), but was an integral component as it allowed those relationships to exist and grow. Without the services provided by the library, these individuals could have been displaced throughout the city, trying to find internet services at coffee shops or other public locations in the downtown area. The library, as a part of the relationship, provided the space and the time, and the relationships were built out of that regularity. This is where the regular's shared past comes in line with their practice of projecting a shared future, which Katovich and Reese (1987) state are "necessary elements in the process of negotiating identities and realities" (p. 318). Taking a macro level approach, it can be concluded that access to the public space matters. Without this access, open to all, these relationships and relational identities would not be created or sustained.

Relationship #2: Staff to User – The Tense Space

While the library is filled with user to user interactions, another interaction worth examining through the relational frame is that of the library staff with the library user. While seeming to only evaluate a one-way type of communication exchange, the reality of the situation is that many library users have a variety of relationships with the staff. Certain members are known for being enforcers, as we discussed in the previous chapter. Other staff are considered to be newbies, inexperienced, or lenient, and behavior will change as

a result of this. Either way you want to conceptualize this interaction, it comes back repeatedly told through conversations with the library users and the library staff that the environment within the library is a tense space. Using quotes from the library staff, supplemented with observational notes and discussions with users, in this section we will focus on the origins of this theme and how it prevails as an unspoken yet understood figure within the relationship.

This theme of tension all begins with the concept of regularity. The more frequent, and routine, the interactions become, especially when involving any form of rule violations and behavior norms, the more likely these interactions will lead to tensions. From the perspective of administrators, this type of burnout has been noticed and steps have been implemented to help improve the "kind of task and the kind of emotional challenges that they have down in Digital Commons, and we do try, absolutely, to mitigate that by – they have much – they have shorter desk times" (personal communication, August 4, 2016). These shorter desk shifts, typically around 2 hours in length, then allow the staff members to go on to pursue other avenues of their librarianship. For many, this includes developing programs, working in various "labs" (i.e., the FAB Lab is a shop studio, or a "maker space" with advanced equipment and technology; the dream lab is a collaborative work space), or providing services in other areas of the library (i.e., adult services, children's services, the teen space). These types of shifts are intended to provide a creative outlet for the staff members, breaking up the routine and monotony of working the main desk in the Digital Commons, ultimately leading to a form of gratification otherwise not found in their day-to-day responsibilities.

The idea of tension and regulars, based on the data, only really shows up at the MLK main branch. Out in the neighborhood libraries, the issue of regulars are that which provide positive reactions from the library staff. The regulars out in the branches tend to use the space in the very same way as the regulars at MLK, but for whatever reason, and much of it is attributed to the different organizational cultures in the branches, is perceived differently by the staff and the user. The staff in the branches, especially, tend to know more personal information about their regulars. Quotes like the following examples support this idea:

"I often will greet our regulars that I know by name" (personal communication, July 27, 2016).

"A majority of the regulars are because they live close by" (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

"We have had regulars here forever. It's like we know when people pass away, we know when somebody is sick. It's like, they are so regular that it's really an extended living room" (personal communication, July 29, 2016).

"I know a lot of people's names that come in here. Yeah, the regulars for sure" (personal communication, September 8, 2016).

"I live very close to here and I see some of our homeless patrons all the time. There's one young man who was one of the few that we had to bar - for, he just, he got very loud and aggressive. I think he'd sort of lost control of himself for

a minute or whatever, and it got, he was kind of slapping things around; he threw a keyboard off the table or something like that. And so he was barred for a little while. And I see him. He knows where I live. Like I see him all the time and we know we say hi; check in with him; see what's up. It can be uncomfortable sometimes, a little bit, to see people, not anyone really from this public space that you're working and you present a very specific kind of front to out in the world. You know, there are non-homeless patrons who see me and I feel, that could be sometimes weird too." (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

When you contrast that with the idea of the regular in the Digital Commons, you find a different perception of what that means, especially when it comes from an individual that has moved around within the system and worked at various libraries.

I think it has to do with the…although there are regulars, there's also a larger turnover. I think a lot of the volume of turnover is larger than it is in the branch and more than any branch that I was in [in reference to the Digital Commons]. Like the regulars were the same regulars day in and day out, year after year after year after year. (personal communication, August 4, 2016).

And there was this weird tension, like, you know, it depends on the branch. You know, I know this branch is a little more neighborhoodly [*sic*] and has a different feel. But at MLK, they can't do whatever part of their other job duties are, they get sort of this level of resentment. I don't want to say the feeling is "I'm better than this," but you can feel that there's that weird tension. (personal communication, August 9, 2016).

For those that work exclusively in the Digital Commons, the regulars take on a new role within the relationship.

> Look, I spend more time with the regulars than I do with my friends [laughter], like a partner or whatever. (personal communication, August 10, 2016).

> Some of the library police has really amazing relationships with some of our, like, regulars. (personal communication, August 10, 2016).

> It's more or less the same people every day. I have noticed it, it and it is a transient population too, so we do get people who become regulars and they're here for several months and then disappear and we don't really see them necessarily again for a while. But there's anywhere from 10 to 15 people who are recognized as regulars to a degree and maybe 5 to 10 stalwarts who we can expect to see on a daily basis. (personal communication, August 9, 2016).

> So I think there's tension. But because it is an inherent, like, tense space. It's a really difficult part of town. It's really rich and really poor at the same time. And, like, that's what's happening in gentrification, those-- that kind of combination of those two. And here it combines really a lot. I mean, people [meaning homeless], get their food across the street, but then there's all these new high rises and office buildings. (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

> There is always this tension. (personal communication, July 26, 2016).

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The negotiation of identities within this specific context parallels the progression through the frames discussed up to this point, and mirrors the assumptions proposed within this relational frame. Does the enforcement of the rules, seen in the enacted frame, lead towards this perception of a tense relationship? Does that enacted identity of rules and authoritarian figures create, and build, the foundation within the relationship? The answer to that question is dependent on two factors: the first is the location of the library, and the second is the perception of the staff member by the library user.

It is clear throughout the interviews with the staff at the branch locations view the regular library user, including the homeless library user, as a member and a part of their community. Even if there are rule violations, these staff members have a different way of expressing their concerns and enforcing the behavior codes. One particular staff member told of a story of a woman that smelled so badly, she would vomit if she would go near her. Eventually, she convinced the woman to make her way to a social services facility and get cleaned up, and now the staff member welcomes her back every time she returns to the library. This homeless woman in the story has never had a repeat of her situation, according to the staff member, but she still does, from time to time, exhibit annoying or disruptive behavior. And the library staff will politely remind her to calm down or to maintain a quieter working space, and the issue is resolved rather quickly. There is a unique relationship in the branches, at each branch, resulting in unique identities between staff and user. The branches are extensions of the surrounding neighborhoods, and typically, those living in the neighborhoods will cross paths in other avenues of life (e.g., the bank, the grocery store, religious places of worship). This forms a community bond, a relational

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identity that is supported because of their surrounding environments. In a sense, because each branch is an extension of the community, the branches take on the role or vibe of any particular neighborhood. This is the uniqueness, defined here as branch library as identity. It almost pushes the boundary of a relational frame and into the communal frame, but the identity of the relationships are because of the third proposition: relationships as social entities.

By contrast, these issues at the MLK branch have their own specific set of boundaries and relationship histories. These stories play more out of the "good cop, bad cop" type of interrogation policy within detective television shows. As expressed through the interviews, the environment within MLK creates a unique situation. Perhaps it is the volume and user turnover; perhaps it is the location; perhaps it is the higher percentage of homeless library users; perhaps it is the surrounding neighborhood; whatever the reason(s), the central location has its own specific culture. And with that, comes very specific relationships and identities.

I believe, based off of this evidence, there is an expectation of a particular type of library user at the MLK branch. That expectation then filters all interactions within the space, leading towards the relationships. For those staff members working only at MLK, you can hear a different tone in their voice and feel a different perception of the *regular* library user (read: non-homeless library user) than those working in the branches. Here, the relational identity is that between the staff and the regular. But there is also a different perception of the central location as an entity, as discussed here as a realized tension, which plays a role in the relationships within the building. MLK's size and location allows it to

be a perfect venue for many events, big and small, that many of the regulars do not participate in. When asked if many of the regulars in the Digital Commons participate in the dozens of programs and events held at MLK, one staff member replied with: "Not in my observation, no. It kind of seems like those big events happen and they just kind of seem, for a regular I mean, it seems almost like it's inflicted on them" (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

There can also be a tension based primarily on the increased security presence. Being the headquarters for the "library police" – MLK has more on staff and on-duty officers than the branches. With more people comes more security. Or as one administrative personnel stated "that is a constant tension between public services and public safety. Public safety feels, you know, they carry guns. They feel their job is not to wake up people who are sleeping. So yeah, there is a bit of tension" (personal communication, August 4, 2016). The Digital Commons has a higher concentration of people, it is large, and it is loud. There is a palpable tension you can feel in the space, or as one staff member said, "everyone feeds off of that so you can feel that tension or the sort of, you know, exponential" (personal communication, August 4, 2016).

Tension is a significant reality in the Digital Commons, more so than other locations within MLK, such as the Adult and Popular Library areas, where there are a decent amount of people but the atmosphere is quieter. The area just outside of the Digital Commons, the Great Hall, provides a space for a variety of activities: loud conversation; eating; check-out and an area for book holds; programs and group meetings. The Great Hall is also just that – a large area that echoes sound, while also serving as the only

entrance/exit atrium to the building. There is a bleed-over effect from the Great Hall into the Digital Commons, as the two double-door entrances are always propped open. The other locations, meanwhile, have doors typically closed. This changes the dynamics of the physical space with or without any activity. When you factor all of these components, the Digital Commons feels more like a large public forum and not a library resource center. The tension, by proxy, is elevated by the design of the space in addition to the people inhabiting that space.

Other staff members, on the topic of the police and the resulting tension, provided support to this crowd and authority figure mentality:

Yeah, this has the most police. So there's like, at any given time, maybe half a dozen library cops somewhere in the building, which totally changes the way you deal with disruption. In a branch, if you don't have a library cop, like you are the library cop, or if like, shit actually goes down and you have to call MPD. And that really colors the way you interact with people, right? People here are maybe a little more brave to get in somebody's face back, because they know the cops are here and will back them up. Or the flip side of that is, they are just hands off on everything, and be like, that's a library cop problem. (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

You know which customers you can approach, and you know which customers not to approach. But in a building like this, where the volume is large, it seems that the library police are more, um, apt to know what to do. (personal communication, August 4, 2016).

And another day, we had a patron who had a dog. The dog was not being watched by him. It was sitting in a chair behind him. And he got removed because he was not watching his service animal – it had a service animal vest. I mean, there's all, you know-- you could ask-- you can't really-- if it's maybe anything, you can't really ask that many questions. So two of us who were working on the floor that day when that happened, we were just like, we didn't care that that dog was sitting in the chair, to be honest. It's sitting on one of the chairs, and we hear the guy was using an express computer. And a patron went to complain to library police and said the dog's running everywhere, and that it's not being watched, and the library police removed that patron. Which for us, we kind of thought, well, I understand, we understand later down the line, that, yes, you should be like, with your service animal if you have a service animal. But it was, it seemed a little rough [laughter] for us. The folks who were working on the desk, we didn't really appreciate that interaction the police had with the patron that day. (personal communication, August 17, 2016).

There is a common thread throughout the library staff that the library police are a necessary precaution. At the same time, when the topic of the police came up during interviews, most staff did not express an interest in involving them for any interactions. There are relational identities between staff and users based on the staff members willingness to whistle-blow, or inform the authorities, of any wrong doing in the Digital Commons. A portion of this tension results from the frequency and timing of police involvement, at the request of the library staff. It is known within the library user community which staff are more

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comfortable in contacting the library police. This plays a very large role in the relational identity between the staff and the user.

As we have seen in the enacted frame, there are times when the rule violations are so severe the staff requests police intervention. I must note here, however, the impressions of the staff is that action is the point of no return, the last ditch effort. This is especially true for the library users that are regulars, as the staff are keenly aware of how involving the police will change the relationship in the future. In sum, the regular's presence, if they are a habitual rule breaker, changes the identity of the library staff at the personal and enacted layers, thus resulting in a newly realized relational identity. This habitual rule-breaking leads to a gap in the staff identity that can be seen at the personal at the enacted layers: the staff is no longer a library personnel – they become an "enforcer" of rules that must engage in non-librarian duties and actions (i.e., kicking people out). It is a complex situation for the staff to handle, and as a result, there is a tension surrounding the entire space.

It is worth explaining the concept of tension in the library itself – as it only came up when referring to the Digital Commons. I did not experience tension in the branches, the staff in the branches did not mention a tension in the branches (when they did, it was based on isolated incidents that were short term tensions), and the users in the branches did not express a concern over their use of the public space. It appears the volume of people, combined with the police presence, and the higher number of known homeless library users creates this natural tension. I will be honest in my assessment – there is a tension. It was there when I first walked in the door; it was brought up naturally by both staff and user;

and it changes things. Some people call it the energy of a crowd, but for those there on a regular basis, it most definitely is a relational and social entity of its own accord.

No matter the origin of the tension, the tension exists through the identities that are enacted through the relationships, leading to its own social entity. It is there, somewhere between the nexus of crowd control and civil obedience, that a relationship of tension exists between library staff and library user.

Relationship #3: Staff to Staff – The Disgruntled

In the course of interviewing staff, there was an unexpected yet important theme that emerged from the conversations: job dissatisfaction. This type of relationship is focused on the interactions between staff members at the same library, at different libraries, across job duties and titles, and perceived responsibilities. The irony in this relationship is that the way to discuss the job dissatisfaction is by talking about servicing the library user. As one staff member stated: "my first boss told me we are all things to all people" (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

To get at the key elements of the identities in these relationships, you have to first examine the role that education plays in the calm before the storm. Within the library science community, the public library is considered to be the lowest rung on the career ladder. Of the interviews with library staff, there was a clear educational difference between job title and previous education. Those on the lower end (i.e., circulation techs, library associates) did not require a graduate degree in the library science field, as would a "librarian" or a "branch manager." Those trained in the library sciences at the graduate level expressed widely different experiences with their course work when it came to public

libraries and customer services. Each university has their own curriculum and there is no public library concentration. Examples of concentrations include, but are not limited to, archives and records management, digital technology, academic librarianship, children and school library, and media specialists. In fact, those librarians educated at the graduate level, that are involved with public programming efforts to help the homeless library user, suggest most of their professional development is on the job training. As several staff member noted when reflecting back on their Master's degree programs:

> I think there is still some disconnect. When I think about what did I learn in school about helping homeless patrons, all I can think about is my introduction to public libraries class we talked about it in that class in the context of ethics. And what is a library's ethical obligation to homeless patrons and to policies around homeless patrons. But we didn't really talk about - like I didn't receive any training really on more customer service type stuff. Like what are the skills to interact with patrons across things like race and class and economics and housing situation. (personal communication, July 27, 2016).

> No. There really weren't, I don't know if there were any courses that were public library, strictly speaking. There would be ones focused on doing community needs assessments and things like that. But there were different people there who intended to work in public libraries, but I wouldn't say that there was a course of study. (personal communication, September 20, 2016).

Well in my graduate school we didn't have a public librarian course. So that's actually part of the issue. And I don't know if universities have that now. If that's a track or anything like that. There's school librarian. There's children's librarian. And then there's sort of librarian. And then there's archives and preservation. But there's not, like a public libraries. And honestly, probably a lot of people that go through Library school end up in public libraries. Whether by choice or not. And maybe not by choice. (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

With that said, many of the staff members come from other disciplines entirely, from forest ecology to communication, and from political science to conflict resolution. The individuals at the library associate level, without the graduate degree in library science, cannot move up in the system. The library associates outnumber the librarians in both quantity within the entire DCPL system, but also when it comes to frequency on the main information desk dealing with the general public. The system as a whole, "sees our staff as customer service providers" (personal communication, August 4, 2016). Even though the job titles indicate different education, it does not change the fact that everyone will get a shift on the front desk, which therefore creates an opportunity to build relationships with the users.

There are some discrepancies though, between the preferred and the actual relationships within the space and the way that space is managed by the staff.

This is a really rigid hierarchy. It's like, clearly defined what your roles are but in terms of interactions with the patrons, it's *supposed* [emphasis added] to be all the same. But that's not really true. Circulation Techs, who are the lowest on the totem

> pole, tend to not have the power to tell a misbehaving patron what to do. Administration doesn't trust them to make the judgement call. (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

The idea that only certain job titles can carry out certain tasks is not an indictment on the organizational failures of the library, or any other business. It does provide the backdrop to peel back a layer of comments made by staff members across title lines to see the underlying issues involving their relationships with other staff because of their relationships with the users – especially when it comes to expectations of job duties and the resulting opinion of their own work.

When asked how/why certain library staff are dissatisfied with their job duties, one staff member pondered my question with a set of questions, as if they have been attempting to come to their own conclusion about why an employee would not enjoy their position:

> Not the expectation, not the expectation of the staff person, but what has been their experiences with libraries before they started working here? What had been their experience with public spaces before they started working here? So sort of what was their expectation" (personal communication, August 4, 2016).

There was also a facet of staff that worked in libraries prior to obtaining their graduate degree, so they were aware of the setting, the user base, the dynamics of the public library and what types of responsibilities and job duties were required of the position:

> You hear that a lot from Librarians and a lot from public librarians. you won't hear it from me, simply because I started working in public libraries before I got my MLS - and I already knew everything, you know, everything that was kind of

about. And then decided, yes this is what I want to do. I actually want to be a social worker and a therapist and a babysitter, and you know, a mentor. And I find this rewarding. So, that's the reason I decided to pursue my MLS. But you certainly hear a lot from people that start in public libraries, after they get their MLS and they're shocked. Or bitter. This is not what they envisioned doing with their time. And I mean, I've heard people say you know, 'I'm too good for this'; 'this is a waste of my skills.' I'm not going to lie, there's certainly days when I'm just like yeah you know, I didn't go get a graduate degree to be like scraping sunflower seeds off the floor." (personal communication, July 28, 2016).

A job this interactive, you know, like working with this many different kinds of people, wears you out, and if you don't have a system and a leadership that attends to that, people are gonna leave. They're gonna burn out or do something else. (personal communication, September 20, 2016).

As with the previous example, there is a distinct difference between the branches and MLK. For the purposes of the rest of this discussion, I will note that most of the staff members I spoke with that were library associates worked at the MLK central location. Of those interviewed, the librarians and branch managers worked out in the branches. The librarians that expressed job dissatisfaction and highlighted their educational reflections were all located in the branches. Part of this anomaly was the interview sample and the professional progression within the job ranks. Many librarians pay their dues elsewhere, and move about the system quite frequently. Each staff member at the higher job rank worked in at least one other branch library and most have worked in several. The lower ranked staff,

especially those at MLK, have only worked in the Digital Commons. Organizationally, there is no upward mobility for those without a graduate degree in library science. As a result, the more career library types, have more experience in the system and more education. The staff in the Digital Commons, by comparison, has higher rates of turnover as it is more of an entry-level position. Staff tend to leave if/when they decide to pursue an advanced degree or move on to other jobs. Ironically, but not surprisingly, the lower ranked staff at MLK all expressed little to zero interest in pursuing a graduate degree in library science, citing either a lack of continuing that work (i.e., "I do not want to become a librarian and distance myself from this environment") or an incongruence with what the education would provide (i.e., "I am learning everything I need to know here.")

For the remainder of this section, we will focus on the relationships for those working in the Digital Commons area of the MLK library.

It's kinda odd place to be. And I think a lot of my coworkers and myself struggle with this sort of like holding the keys to the kingdom sort of thing that happens here. Because I don't-- I don't want to be the person that is restricting at somebody's access. I don't want to be the person that's like asking someone to change their behavior because I'm very aware of the dynamics of that. (personal communication, July 29, 2016).

For many staff members working directly with the public, there seems to be two distinct sets of interaction. The maintenance and rule enforcement side of a relationship, and the information provider and helper side of a relationship. The success stories are few and far between and stand out because of the rarity.

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I actually helped a guy get hired. He came back then and he was like, "You helped

me make my resume and I just got a job." And then he came in another time,

probably a month after that and he was like, "I still have my job [laughter]." That's

awesome. (personal communication, August 10, 2016).

So being able to be in an environment where I'm working with people every day

makes me happier, whether or not there's sort of stress in this particular space and

in this particular library, and urban cities in general that you might not deal with

the way you do on the library branch. But the fact of the matter is, I get to work

with people, and that's something I've set up to do when I applied to work in a

library system. (personal communication, August 17, 2016).

From the outside looking in, it appears that most staff genuinely do enjoy engaging and

helping the public. As we have noted, the idea of a librarian in the eyes of the system is to

be all things to all people. In order to achieve that, it requires a different approach. This

requires more from the staff than just occupational aptitude – it requires an entirely

different skill set of interpersonal communication, grounded in social work and conflict

resolution, with a specialization in business, finance, and management. The library

associates working in the Digital Commons come from all backgrounds and walks of life,

but have chosen to work with the public. That is not a small distinction when it comes to

job dissatisfaction and the resulting identities formed in relationships with their peers and

the people they service on a daily basis.

From the user perspective, it is much simpler. We have seen how library users,

particularly homeless library users, have negotiated their own identity through the use of

the library and their relationships with others within the library. The library user knows which staff member to go to for certain needs, and this information is shared within their network. Which, if you think about it, is another unique relationship identity.

Summary

In examining the various relationships in the public library through the relational frame of CTI, we have been able to discover a rich area of deeply personal and constantly reaffirmed identities. Individuals use their own personal frame of identity to shape the relationships about them, which then leads to new identities within the relationship. This particular frame for CTI research is difficult to unpack, as individuals have multiple identities which have multiple relationships all existing simultaneously.

What we have seen, is that the result, or the identity as a relationship, matters. In the case of Juan, "the keymaster" – his relationships with other gamers was entirely different than his relationship with other homeless users. The fact that the gamers were also homeless, just adds depth to the relationship. As a result, the loaning and bartering of technology is an enacted relationship that redefines the pre-existing relationship, creating something new entirely. While this is happening, he is also maintaining and creating new relationships with other users and library staff.

Examining the theme of tensions provided a different take on the relational frame. In this specific context, the tension of the physical space was based on the existing relationships across a wide variety of smaller relationships. Whether staff to user, staff to authority, user to authority, or user to user, the tension of a space was a power identity that was apparent as a social entity. This shared tension is what ultimately defined the

relationships, which are constantly negotiated throughout the space. This type of theme is of particular note, as it sheds light on the next frame of CTI, the communal identity.

Finally, the organizational and professional relationships were born out of a mix of identities: those pursuing employment because of education and training have vastly different relationships with the library user and the institution. It can be argued that this relationship goes beyond the institution, and takes a deep route through the personal frame of identity and how their self-image compares to their perception of the profession. Conversely, those that seem to have better working relationships with the volatile user base within MLK seek out and want to form the relationships with the user base. It appeared those with MLS degrees did not enjoy working the desk and dealing with the public in the Digital Commons. While not rooted in the personal identity as those mentioned above, the personal identity of acceptance and a willingness to foster the relationships emerges as a power relational identity, especially when looking at the homeless user specifically. These perspectives of job satisfaction are connected to the people involved within their daily routines, the bonds that are formed or broken, and the resulting relationships that exist as a result of the interactions. It truly is a constantly and continuously evolving game of interpersonal communication.

In the next chapter, we will take a larger, holistic look at the last frame of the Communication Theory of Identity, the communal, or group identity. Again, as stated previously, it is not necessary to examine each frame individually or linearly, but the progression from the self to the group, or from the small to the large, provides in my

opinion, the best representations of common themes and previously unstudied

conceptualizations of identity.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CTI – THE COMMUNAL FRAME

The last frame to be discussed is the communal frame of identity, which is held in the collective or public memory of a group that, in turn, bonds the group together (Middleton & Edwards, 1990; Philipsen, 1992). The group is the locus of identity (i.e., the group has the identity), not the individual, the conversation, or the relationship. Communities define a repertoire of identities that are jointly held/remembered and taught to new members. The characteristics of identity as personal frame may be transposed to identity as communal frame. For example, a community will have a hierarchy of identities, with some identities more central to its notion of membership than others. This can be easily summarized when discussing more collectivistic cultural societies, as it is more embedded in their daily activities, and can therefore be easier to identify.

We should note that this frame is often difficult to grasp for people with individualistic ontological views. For example, those who view the world through a social psychological lens often translate this into how individuals define their communities – a translation that can be explored and defined as the interpenetration of the individual and communal frames. As we have noted in previous chapters, reflections of identities can be built on individualistic expressions, and the communal identity is no different. However, the communal identity transcends the individual and is most likely to be presented (at least outwardly to the public) through the presentation of group products (i.e., cultural artifacts,

television shows, neighborhoods, community organizations) and communal actions (e.g., rituals, norms, practices). Members of a group establish these identities as the basis of common characteristics and history (Gudykunst, 2015).

To review, CTI offers the following proposition for the communal layer:

1. Identities emerge out of groups and networks.

Many cultural groups can be studied through this particular frame, as long as the community possesses a group identity that represents a shared identity of all of its members. Think of the classic ethnographies studying gang relations and membership or distant "exotic" cultural groups such as the Balinese cockfighters. The important point in distinguishing this group identity from other social communication theories is that the individual perceives affiliation with the group that has a collective identity.

As with previous chapters, a useful conceptualization of establishing a communal homeless identity is to look at existing literature on illness identity. Onken and Slaten (2000) describe paths to positive disability identity formation not as being part of a group, but of not belonging to a group. This meant boycotting the "ableist society" – as well as an increased frequency of interaction with similarly disabled in order to counteract feelings of isolation and alienation. This can also been seen in support groups for patients suffering similar illness and disease, and through organizations such as Alcoholics Anonymous, where the collectivist ideology is a part of the shared identity.

For our purposes in this study, there are several groups that we need to acknowledge right from the very beginning that will play some role in our discussion: the library staff; the library user; the library administration; the DCPL system; the city of D.C.; the region

of the DMV (District, Maryland, Virginia); the library science profession; the homeless advocacy groups; and of course, the homeless library user. These groups will not be explored in full detail in this section. Rather, they will be used as the backdrop setting, and sometimes interwoven into the narrative, in the discussion of the use of the public library as a public space by homeless library users within the DCPL system.

The Private Public Space

As a bookend, no pun intended, to the "Banned Books Week," the DC Public Library Foundation (DCPLF) organized a fundraiser titled "UNCENSORED" held at the MLK library on Friday, September 30, 2016. The premise of the theme was to highlight a change in cultural philosophy towards books previously banned in the history of the United States. The official website says the event was to "celebrate the freedom to read, create, and express" and provided "provocative art, live music, and exclusive cocktails" (DCPL, 2016). All profits were to go to the DCPLF[12], which acts as an extension of the financial arm for the library outside of the government regulations. These "Friends of the Library" (FOL) groups are very popular throughout this system at the branches, including the central location. Officially, the website for the FOL provides information on membership, locations of the branches with active groups, contact information, and provides this brief synopsis of the group's mission:

> Friends are D.C. residents who are advocates for the library. They also contribute
> to the library by offering support for equipment or programs not normally provided
> by public funding. Friends provide financial support through membership fees,

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[12] More information can be found here: http://www.dclibrary.org/friends

donations, book sales and special events. Friends also volunteer in the library. There are Friends groups for neighborhood libraries and the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library.

It is worth mentioning that certain neighborhood branches have very active and concerned groups, while others have indifferent and sporadic groups. This is similar to the discussion of the varying branch cultures mentioned earlier.

I decided to attend this event in person and to observe the transition from the closing of the library at 5:30 PM and the reopening for the event at 7:00 PM. It was a rainy Friday afternoon and the closing of the library was more challenging than normal weather days. The local homeless shelter bus arrives shortly after the library closes, but with such a heavy downpour, even the large awning over the sidewalk could not provide much shelter for those waiting for their transportation. Throughout my observations, days with inclement weather always provided the staff with a tad more difficulty in clearing out the building. It required more communication, changes in tone from passive to aggressive, and sometimes involved the library police to act as ushers. On this chilly afternoon, I was reminded of a scene from the film *Forrest Gump,* where the main character discusses rain storms during the Vietnam War and how it felt like the rain was moving sideways. There was just very little that could be done to stay dry.

As the shelter bus arrived, residents boarded, and the bus departed, several people in the line were not able to get on the bus. I asked one of the men what happened and he replied with "sometimes there just isn't enough room." The other man that did not board the bus also chimed in with "and sometimes they send more than one bus." I wished the

men well in the attempts to stay dry and decided to go home to change and clean up for the event later that evening. I could not help but notice the symbolism of my leaving a wet and rainy open area to go back to my home in order to change clothes to come back to the library to attend an event that was exclusionary by default. While open to the public, the ticket prices and more formal dress attire, it attracted a different clientele than a typical evening in the public library.

Upon my return to the library around 8:30 PM, these same men were outside, still waiting for a transport that may or may not return. I attempted to say hello, but they either did not recognize me or chose not to care. It was still raining, and still cold, and after the sunset a very deep chill was in the air. It was a gloomy night, indeed. The library, by contrast, was lit up like a fish tank. The large panel windows stretching from the ground to the second floor opened the inside of the library to the outside world; exposing the event to anyone within eye sight. You could see the light pouring out from several blocks away, and you could hear the music several more. For the remainder of the evening, I was inside of the library, enjoying the event with friends, observing the interactions within the space. I saw many familiar faces, those of library staff I had come to recognize over my time in the field, even some of whom I interviewed. I also attempted to recognize any library users, as I had been training myself to recognize faces that used the library at different locations. Unfortunately, other than the employees of the library, and the people in my social circle, I did not recognize a single person.

The event lasted until well after midnight. People left in stages throughout the night. You could tell, for example, that for those leaving early that event was the first event before

their other social obligations. As time went on, the people that remained were the ones that had committed their entire evening to this event only. Many of this last group were the employees and friends of the library. I stayed as long as I could, just trying to observe as much as possible. It was during this late night that I realized there were library police on duty, residing in the vestibule that connects the outside doors to the inside "Great Hall," also doubling as a security area with metal detectors and desks. I had not noticed their presence before this, or upon entry, so it was interesting to see them act in the same way I had seen earlier, ushering the stragglers out into the cold. Because of the weather, many people were left standing outside under the awning, trying to stay dry and waiting for their transportation by taxi or some car service.

Standing outside, two distinct and significant memories stick out. The first was a couple dressed in formal wear (e.g., tuxedo for the man, evening gown for the woman), without overcoat or umbrella, standing together in a shared shiver hug. The man from earlier, the first man I spoke to about missing the bus, came up to ask them for assistance in a classic panhandler's move. I did not get a chance to hear the exact words, but the couple ignored the man anyway, until he moved on to the next group of people that were standing nearby. The second memory was another interaction, but this was a little different. This time, there was a man laying down on the sidewalk, with newspaper underneath to act as a barrier from the wet and cold concrete and newspaper overtop to act as a blanket. I recognized this man as the second man from my interaction earlier, the one that was holding out hope for a second transport. Facing south, his head was against the building and his legs outstretched, extending out into the sidewalk, just to the left of the revolving doors

entrance to the building. I did not notice him at first, as I moved to the right upon exit, but after I noticed him lying there, I watched as more than a dozen people leaving the event stepped over him to continue in their direction. The reaction did not surprise me, per se. What did surprise me was the action of stepping over another human being, when there was an option to walk around if you just took a few extra steps. My mind started to pass judgement. Were these people so cold that they just did not want to walk around? Did they not even see this man until the last second? Why did the ignoring of the guy sleeping on the sidewalk offend me more than those ignoring the man asking for money?

I realized it was not my place to answer those rhetorical questions, those ethical questions. I either already knew the answer or did not want to know it. I decided to walk back towards the panhandler, and start up a conversation:

RAPH: Hey man, how are you doing tonight?

MAN #1: What are you doing back here kid?

RAPH: Ha. I just came to this event. I guess the other bus didn't come back?

MAN #1: Nope. We could have walked to another pickup spot, but once we saw all the stuff that was going on inside, we decided to stick around and see what all the fuss was about.

RAPH: What did you see?

MAN #1: It looked pretty nice in there. I was really liking that one band. They were tearing it up. I don't know what the idea was behind this whole thing, but it looked like fun.

RAPH: Did you stand out here the whole time?

MAN #1: Yeah. We tried to get in a few times but weren't allowed.

RAPH: Not even to get out of the cold?

MAN #1: Nah. They said we needed to have a ticket. I asked him how much it costs. He told me it was definitely more than we had. I laughed. So then we came back out here and started just waiting around. Fred [the guy laying down] just gave up and said he might as well nap now while there was some security around. He figured as long as there were people inside, no one would try to take his stuff. Me, I just started talking to people.

RAPH: Any luck?

MAN #1: No more than usual.

RAPH: So what's your plan now?

MAN #1: Just ride out the rest of the night. Also as usual. We will be back here tomorrow. Another day.

I thanked the man (I never did get his name) for talking and for the second time in the same day wished him well. As for the second time in the same day, I left a wet and dark area to head to the comforts of home.

I never got a chance to speak to those men again, I did not see them around much before I left the field. But this one evening, more than anything else I had witnessed in two years' worth of just sitting around and talking to people, provided me with the clearest example of what it meant to be a part a group. I just had names for it this time. It was the library user group, represented on this night by two African-American men experiencing homelessness, using the library as a public space on a daily basis for their private space

affairs. And then there was the library supporters group, represented by the hundreds of new faces that I had never seen step foot in the library before this night, using the private space of the library as a special event to support the right to a public space.

The Public Private Space

The notion of space is not a new area of research interest when it comes to the study of the homelessness epidemic in the United States. Many scholars, including those focusing on the sociospatial dynamics of homelessness (Snow & Anderson, 1993; Snow & Mulchahy, 2001; Wolch & Dear, 1993; Wright, 1997), highlight the struggle in the daily lives of the homeless and their constant negotiations with local laws, ordinances, social services, social networks, and public spaces. Regulars, as discussed in Chapter 6, play a key role in the relationships within the library. Beyond that frame, however, they also play a key role in the personal frame. As one library staff member stated:

> "Particularly those regulars that I know who use it every day, I made the assumption that are homeless, they seem like that's likely, I think that study room space is another way for them to have a private space that they wouldn't have anywhere else in their life." (personal communication, July 27, 2016).

This ability to achieve a private space within a public space is not as common as one might expect. The library, as discussed in the literature review, is one of the last truly public spaces (if not *the* last, depending on whom you ask); meaning public spaces that provide all of the benefits on an "inside" space, that exists. During one interview, a library staff brought up a very accurate point regarding the position of the public library in the world of the public space:

"And you do also realize that we are the only location, we are the only public space that you can enter with no ID and no bag check? But also, on the other side, we are the only public space that people come too voluntarily. Always come too voluntarily." (personal communication, August 9, 2016).

It's this dynamic of self-selection and open doors that creates a unique group identity for the library users. They choose to come to the library and by doing so, they feel they are a part of the library user community. Even with shelter bus drop offs, organized public programming, and homeless advocacy groups promoting the library, the individuals themselves must choose to come into the building. Each person has a choice in that – and those that choose to use the library on a regular basis are joining a community, a group and network of individuals that exists. One day in the spring of 2015, prior to my interviews with library staff and my repeated discussions with regulars, I was speaking to a stranger in library reading room. Initially, I asked the man if he minded if I sat next to him, which he had no issue with. The free-flowing conversation led to a discussion of what the public library meant to him, and I pulled this out from my field notes to highlight the significance of that self-selection:

"Yeah, that's a community. And I feel strongly on that point because this is the last public space. This is the last place you can come hang out where you're not paying anyone to be here, you don't have to buy something. This is just, it belongs to us. This is like, the last people's hangout. And I love occupying public space. I love other people occupying public space. Oh yeah, I do wonder. It's an interesting thing to think about." (field notes, April 13, 2015).

It is this type of group identity that has been impossible to ignore throughout my observations and my discussions with the library users. There is clearly a group philosophy and identity – a definition of what it means to be a library user. Even if the people in the building do not interact, they realize they are part of something larger than themselves. The shared meanings, values, and ideas of what it means to be a library user among other library users. It echoes much of the literature on group and community identity. For their part, the library has attempted to provide smaller group identities through the promotion of their Coffee & Conversation programs – which is an inclusive, open to all program, but was originally designed to provide information for the homeless library users. After attending more than 20 of these programs, I can say more than 90% of those in attendance are homeless, based on the information they shared during the programs and the topics covered (e.g., information on how to find public housing, social services, hot meals). This identification issue, however, is very problematic. Homelessness, as we have discussed, is not a visible name tag. It does not come with a glowing sign pointing to an individual's housing status. As an observer, it is very tricky to identify this fact.

Library staff, for their part, make no reservations about assuming the housing status of many of the regulars. Based on their interactions alone, as we have seen in the personal, enacted, and relational frames, the library staff are in a very unique position to evaluate a person based on their behavior, their habits, their social networks, the interactions and conversations, and quite frankly, their personal appearance. Most of the time this information is obtained through programs like the C&C's, or because the library staff have had to enforce rules, or because of policies and procedures on the use of the equipment.

From a participant observer point of view, without that insider knowledge, there are a few ways this type of information can become more concrete. The following example, adapted from my field notes, illustrates that minor distinction.

At any moment throughout the day, you will find library users circling around the express computer stations, moving to the next after their time has expired, in a computer version of musical chairs. In fact, some library staff refer to this behavior as "playing musical chairs" – as they have come, over time, to identify which users will exhibit this behavior as they do not have the credentials necessary to use the other computers, which come with seats and have a maximum time limit of 70 minutes. However, according to the "Computer Use Guidelines" (DCPL, 2013 September 9), each customer is allowed only two sessions per day throughout the entire DCPL system. For individuals that are using the first come, first served computers, a time limit is enforced only when there is another individual waiting for that particular machine. When the user registers for a computer session, they are provided a number on a large flat screen monitor displayed prominently in the front of the room by the exit and the information desk. When registering for a session, the user must display their own library card and cannot use another person's card for that purpose. In my interviews, staff have recalled stories about how individuals without cards get around this limitation, namely by typing random numbers and hoping the numbers are an active account. Each library card has a 14 digit number on the back, equating to an account number, so the savvy user can piggyback upon another individuals account to access the computers, as most of the registration process is at an automatic terminal. As this is a significant topic when it comes to interactions within the space, and many of the

behavior guidelines and code of conduct rules deal with computer use, the negotiation of access to free services provided by the public library becomes more of a negotiation of restriction and barriers to that access.

This leads into the very long standing discussion of the role of the library in the lives of the homeless. For many, the ideology of the library, historically, stands against the rising current wave of social services offered by the library to the homeless throughout the country. Within the branches of the DCPL, the staff tend to want to provide more services targeted to their user base. If that user base happens to be more homeless individuals, so be it. For example at the Mt. Pleasant branch, the user base is predominantly men of Hispanic origins, with, according to one staff member, an "overwhelming amount of alcoholism" (personal communication, August 2, 2016). Within walking distance to that branch, there are social services, including a women's temporary homeless shelter, a church that provides food and clothes, and several homelessness advocacy groups. Due to the proximity to these services, many of the library staff at that branch have reached out and developed relationships with the organizations to better serve their clientele. In other areas of the city, say for instance Tenley-Friendship, the proximity to a different neighborhood consisting of college students and wealthier families changes the types of behavior and actions of the library staff. While they get their own fair share of homeless library users, it has not resulted in an effort change on the part of the staff. It just changes the way in which they enforce the rules, discussed in the enacted frame chapter.

The C&C events are clearly supportive of the homeless library user, and that is reflected by the opinions of the staff that choose to help out with that program, regardless

of location; even if their peers do not agree with their professional opinion on the role of libraries in the larger social services community. These programs are on a volunteer basis, and during my time in the field the number of branches that held the C&C's grew from two (2) to seven (7). During that time, staffers from other branches would attend the program at MLK to get an idea of how to conduct their own version that meets the specific user base in the branches. If you recall the discussion of the program in Chapter 3, the fliers presented a much different take on the program – and as a result, changed the way the library staff viewed their responsibilities and obligations towards the homeless library user.

The intent here is not to rehash the way in which the staff play a role in the group identity of the homeless library user, but to explore what it means more broadly within the public perception of what the library should do with the homeless community. I will admit, the topic of homeless library users – which fundamentally is the discussion of private behavior in a public setting – is large enough to warrant its own ethnographic study. My first reaction to the occupation of the public library by the homeless was to label it "institutional loitering." Not only was that a crude assessment, but it was inherently false. There is much more going on that simply occupying space. And even with my training in the library sciences, my training as a communication scholar, and my political beliefs, this was the first thing I imagined when I thought how the homeless library user is portrayed to society.

In their work on the homeless, Snow and Mulcahy (2001) provided an interesting verdict of a U.S. district judge decision to prevent the demolishing of an Arizona homeless shantytown: "homeless people have no constitutional right to occupy public lands in

contravention of the governmental body owning said lands" (p. 156). Further, they go on to state that marginalized groups, such as the homeless, are not only on the outskirts without residential status, but they lack the legal right to use private or public space to attend to the essential needs of all citizens. This often puts the homeless into conflict situations with government or local businesses. What is missing from their analysis, is the role of the library as a "back-door" to those essential needs. While the library as a public space is a well-known fact, the public perception of that varies just as wildly as the laws and ordinances throughout the country.

In order to gain a better understanding of the public opinion regarding this topic, I decided to look into the reviews on the website Yelp for the DCPL. As of September 1, 2016, there were 332 reviews for all but three of the locations. I decided to lift the reviews and compile in a database, attempting to code thematically or on valence. To my surprise, only 39 of the 332 mentioned themes related to homeless (i.e., keywords such as homeless, bums, poor).

Here are some selected quotes that highlight the public opinion of the libraries in the DCPL:

- The MLK library serves as a library and a homeless shelter.

- There's always lots of Homeless People hanging out in there so it's kind of scary and dirty.

- It's very loud. Its a lot of homeless folks that come here and just talk very loud. I think the staff is scared to tell them to be quiet or something.

- Between 9th and 10th Streets NW on G Street, the immediate outside smells like urine and every 10 feet is a homeless person, a loiterer, or both.

- This library is a mix between a daycare and homeless shelter.

- However, it's a good place to study. It's not crowded or filled with homeless like some other D.C. libraries.

- Don't let the homeless people loitering outside deter you either.

- And there are the usual hallmarks of urban libraries such as homeless people, thinly-veiled drug deals, etc.

This is an important reflection point, as the public perceptions of libraries are often associated with these types of users. At the same time, there is some positivity surrounding the public opinion.

- The homeless thing every major public library is going to deal with, so whatever, it's fine, and I'm glad they have somewhere to cool off or warm up during the day.

- The biggest problem about this library, however, is that it's basically a homeless shelter. No exaggeration, with the exception of the staff, about 90% of the people I've encountered here are clearly homeless and use the library as a sanctuary from the outdoors. I am conflicted about whether or not I think this is a problem, as they probably would not congregate here were the city better equipped to manage their needs, and also I do think that it's a good thing for the underemployed to be gathering where there is free learning at their fingertips.

- Just like any other free establishments in Washington DC, this place has been a get-away or small heaven for DC's very large homeless population. Of course, I don't

have any problem with them in general considering that most of them are harmless, but when it comes to library, yes, I have. They are unhygienic and smelly and take space that could be used by others who in need for library services. They are loud and sometimes don't like if someone else shares their tables. They always put their personal items with bad odor, such us backpacks and bags stuffed with who knows what, on tables. Sometimes study rooms smell awful. My advice to you wash your hands thoroughly or at least carry germ killer before you leave the library. One time I saw how one of them with extremely runny nose flipping pages while his mucus was dropping on almost every single page! Finally, one lady who was sitting next to me had to call a security officer that escorted him outside. Nevertheless, I still felt bad for him who couldn't get care, which is another issue. The DC government wastes millions, but can't afford to house these poor people who have no choices but use libraries and museums in DC as their bed and breakfast.

While the reviews of users on a platform such as Yelp do not speak for the general population statistically, they do echo the very same sentiments you hear about in daily conversations with residents of the community. The proposition of CTI states that identities emerge out of groups and networks. For those voicing their displeasure with the DCPL, the identity of disapproval, of deciding which behaviors are appropriate within the public library, provides a group identity linking the issues of private behavior in a public space. At the root of all of this it comes back down to the struggle between private actions in a public space.

The Library, The Homeless, and The Citizen

In the previous section we looked at the philosophical perceptions of the library use by the homeless individuals. In this section we will unpack this concept further – to a point where the access to the library changes and defines the group identity. In the first section we discussed the two homeless library users and their negotiations of simultaneously being a part of two groups. During the business hours of the library, these homeless library users are a part of the library community. As evidenced by the quote stating the library is a place for "all of us" and that it is open to "everyone." What happens, then, when the library closes the doors and the homeless library user is back out on the street? At that point, their identity transitions back to the homeless community. That is a clear delineation between in and out group mentalities. The identities shift, not just over time, but across space. And the barrier, portal, or access point to the shift in that group identity is a physical representation: the door to the library. Crossing the threshold of the door entailed a communal identity shift from library user to "homeless community," hence the exclusion and invisibility examined after the library event.

Noted sociologist and philosopher Henri Lefebvre (1991) argues in his work, *The Production of Space*, that space is not just a physical production, but is a representation of dialectics: mental and physical; historical and current; philosophical and reality; arts and the sciences; and finally, of private and public. The production of space is then reduced to the production of social relations within a space. As he states, "any determinate and hence demarcated space necessarily embraces some things and excludes others; what it rejects may be relegated to nostalgia or it may be simply forbidden. Such a space asserts, negates, and denies" (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 99). Within his text, he presents a conceptualization of

space as constructed in the system of an urban city: The GMP scheme. Whereas "G" represents the global, the level of the system which has the broadest extension (e.g., public level of temples, palaces, political, and administrative buildings); the "P" represents the private spaces of residence (e.g., entrances, thresholds, reception areas, and family-living spaces); and the "M" represents the intermediate spaces (e.g., arteries, transitional areas, places of business, avenues, and squares). At each level of this scheme, the larger sections can be further separated out into smaller representations of the "gmp" – a subdivision of interior spaces open to the public, closed off to the public, or accessed only by notable individuals. This dialectic of open or closed, of high or low, or symmetrical or asymmetrical, is an important concept for the discussion of the library as public space in relation to the homeless library user.

Using this perspective outlined, we can see where the library can be a global place that exists beyond the reach of the general public – it is the theoretical "library as institution." This institution based on ideal notions of free and open access to all, in the pursuit of knowledge. It is a public space in the truest sense of the term. It is also a representation of the intermediate spaces, defined above as transitional areas, or of business, or of public outdoor areas of parks and streets. We can agree on these two practical applications of this scheme. The final piece, the private space, is where the use of the library by the homeless user is more significant than the use of the library by a non-homeless user. The non-homeless user has a private space and does not require the library to provide those spaces. For the homeless library user, the library might be the only private space available – discounting any short-term housing or shelter use, and even those spaces

could be argued as not truly a private space but more of a transitional space – and because of this importance placed on the library as a private space, you have a natural inclusion and exclusion dialectic.

At the communal layer, the group identity is very important to understanding the identity of the individual. In the second discussion above, we highlighted the perception of the library from the staff, both those that choose to help the homeless users specifically, and those that choose to avoid that role; and through the examination of public opinion regarding the library as an institution. We can also analyze that discussion through the words of Lefebvre: "every social space is the outcome of a process with many aspects and many contributing currents, signifying and non-signifying, perceived and directly experienced, practical and theoretical." (1991, p. 110). Here the distinction between perceived and directly experienced is placed on the group identity of the homeless library user. It is not clear, through my research, that the homeless library user is aware of the public opinion regarding their presence in the library or how that effects the usage habits of the public holding those opinions. Here, the homeless library user is ascribed an identity outside of their own perspective, that of the deviant, of the bum, of the "other." While this is occurring the homeless library user ascribes their own group identity as a library user. There is a value placed on this identity; and as a citizen the individual has a right to be in the library on par with any other users. By asserting the right to the space, the homeless library user is also asserting the identity of an equal, despite his group identity *outside* of the library; despite poverty, housing status, or physical appearance. This transcends the

aforementioned identities of "library user" and "homeless," moving into a "citizen" communal group identity.

Summary

The concepts of group identity can be seen in the way in which an individual chooses to provide that information. The proposition for the communal frame states that identities emerge out of groups and networks. These identities reflect the personal beliefs and opinions of the individuals but also reflect the beliefs and opinions of others. The examples above provide evidence that cross this spectrum of self and other, leading towards the group identity. The story from the library gala demonstrates how individuals can be a part of multiple group identities of their own volition: the men were a part of the library user community, the homeless community, and the homeless library community simultaneously. The shift in identity to the outsider, or the observer, is noticed when the individuals in question literally transition from the inside of a building to the outside of a building. The surrounding circumstances reflect the change from public to private, and from private to public.

When the library closes, the identity of the library user, or of an equal citizen, disappears. There are now barriers preventing access, whether social (i.e., the cost of the ticket) or authoritarian (i.e., the police preventing re-entry). The identity of the library user firmly belongs to those within the building; while the homeless library user, formerly a part of the library user community, returns to their homeless community group identity. From the vantage point of the library users, these individuals are now part of a different group –

panhandlers, homeless, or other marginalized categories that are very distant from the concepts of equal worth and citizenship.

To assess the ascribed group identities, we look to the people making those evaluations, right or wrong, upon the homeless individuals. Library staff see the homeless individual as both a library user and as a homeless library user. The distinction is not a minor one – as that reflects the way in which people interact, how they choose to behave, and ultimately, their opinion of each other as a person. This leads to a justification of access, a label, a grouping similar to what occurred immediately after the library closed its doors to the public and opened them to a new set of individuals. Reviewing the public opinion, seen here through the Yelp reviews of the library, show this interpretation. The negative comments represent the illegitimacy of the homeless library users claim to equal access. They are not "real users" in the idealistic sense of the term – they are there to "use" the library for their own personal needs (i.e., shelter, restrooms, and privacy) rather than the "intended use" of knowledge acquisition and personal betterment.

The positive comments, on the other hand, indicate an acceptance of this division between the ideal use of the library (e.g., the correct use of the public space to access information) and the reality of the library usage (e.g., the incorrect use of the public space as a private space for personal needs). These comments show some level of compassion and empathy towards the homeless library user, and why their personal opinion on the issue justifies this "illegitimate" use of the library.

Taking a broader perspective on the ideas of space, both public and private, illustrates the challenge when attempting to categorize group identities. The data analyzed

in this chapter do not take into account the significance of the social networks role in defining a group. I would have predicted that social networks, based on the existing literature, play a large role in this group definition; but the data provided does not support this claim explicitly. There is, however, evidence that the group identity could be supported by understanding the social networks. In the examples above, the social networks could be other homeless shelter residents, the library staff not involved in the research, or the unknown public that does not provide their opinions of the library role within society.

If we are going to acknowledge the lack of a social network presence in the data, we must acknowledge the significance of a brick-and-mortar establishment as an actor in this communal frame. The physical act of transitioning from the building to the street, allows "the door" to become an actor in this saga. It is an enabler and a disabler; it is physical and mental; it is philosophical and reality; and most important, it represents a divide between the concept of private and public. While on the topic of tangible items that have metaphysical representations – the concept of space is the overarching key in the communal frame, and how this ties back into the Communication Theory of Identity. As Lefebvre stated, "space is also felt to have this deadly character: as the locus of communication by means of signs" (1991, p. 135). Nowhere does this play out more than the definition of the public space within the public library, and how that is carried out in the everyday lives of the homeless library users.

CHAPTER EIGHT: DISCUSSION, FUTURE RESEARCH, CONCLUSION

The existing research on the Communication Theory of Identity extends the studies of identity from psychology, sociology, and anthropology into the discipline of communication through the integration of communicative actions. Identity is formed, maintained, and modified on a continual basis and is acted out and exchanged in communication. As a result, communication externalizes identity (Hecht, 1993). Communication also internalizes identity by the creation and exchange of symbolic meanings and social interaction (Hecht et al., 2005). The four layers of identity provide a blueprint to examine both the internalization and externalization of identity. The personal, enacted, relational, and communal frames are theoretical guides to analyzing these representations of identity.

This research has attempted to focus on each layer independently of the others, while acknowledging there is indeed an overlap between each layer. This is what many CTI scholars term the *interpenetration* among the four layers; meaning identity (or identities) are not separate from each other. The layers can be analyzed as a functional independent identity, but at the same time they work in conjunction with the others, allowing for a deeper and richer description of the various aspects of identity in various situations. To address this issue, the following example from my field research highlights this interpenetration.

The Interpenetration of the Frames

While unorthodox at first glance, discussing the interpenetration of the four frames of CTI after exploring each frame at a much deeper level provides an intriguing twist on the findings. In this one, singular story, each frame can be identified in an isolated theme while also exhibiting an interconnectedness at a much larger thematic level.

Robert Frost once said that "home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in" (1969, p. 38). The poet might have been talking about the perceived betrayal and familial obligations regarding death, but the major theme of home resonates as the moral compass of the characters. The entire purpose of this ethnography has been to analyze the identity of the homeless individual and their interaction with public space, specifically the public library, and how they negotiate their identity of "unhoused" while defining their "home" space. Even if the library is not clearly compartmentalized as a home, for the homeless library user, it embodies the representation of a home. We have seen this through the use of the public space as a means to conduct private behavior. We have seen this through the reactions of library staff and the general public, with such comments as the library is a "de facto homeless shelter." What is a shelter if not a home? What is the place that an individual spends most of their time, on a daily basis, if not a home?

In this story, we will meet a man that provides enough details within a 15 minute conversation to highlight the ways in which the four frames of CTI can be adapted, combined, and analyzed through the interpenetration of the frames.

The Street Sweeper

It is a very hot and humid July day in Reston, Virginia. On this day I scheduled to meet with the Reston Regional Library Branch Manager of the Fairfax County Public Library system. I had been in touch with the branch manager before, as her interests aligned with my research questions and we had scheduled a full day of meetings with various local stakeholders (i.e., the nearby Emory Rucker Community Shelter; the Regional County Supervisor's office) in addition to the library itself. The manager's interests were to build relationships with the local authorities, the various government offices, and the community outreach organizations to help with the homeless population through library services. As discussed, this is a primary outreach goal of most public libraries, whether in an urban or rural setting.

Reston, a Northern Virginia suburban neighborhood in Fairfax County, consists of a population of 58,404 (USCB, 2016b). As a planned community, or "new town," it was founded in 1964 and now revolves around the Reston Town Center – a place of commercial, residential, and governmental mixed-use properties. The Reston Regional Library is located in the heart of Reston, and according to their website is "vital to a community that lives, works, and plays in Reston" (Fairfax County Government, n.d.). This branch is one of the busiest in the county and circulates more than a million items per year; provides services to children, English as a Second Language (ESL) periodicals including foreign magazines and Spanish books, and community group areas.

Throughout the day I inquired about the type of typical library user in the area. I chatted with staff on the circulation desk and the reference desk, and talked to people upon entry into the building. I would not say I was milling around, but to an outsider, it would

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appear that I was soliciting something. I recognized this issue and changed my location and behavior, moving towards a more inclusive style of communication. I decided to sign up for a public use computer, which was more problematic as I did not have a Fairfax County residence or library card. The staff were very accommodating, as I had my DCPL card and there is some reciprocity between the neighboring systems. I did, however, get a more in-depth look at the signup process for computers, which we have discussed earlier as a barrier for some homeless library users.

I noticed a man on one of the publicly available computers – a tall, thin, Caucasian male with long matted hair, khaki cargo shorts, a graphic t-shirt, and sandals. At first glance, he seemed to fit the stereotype of a typical 'beach bum' – complete with a fishing logo on his baseball cap. It looked as if he was either watching a video or playing some interactive website. I asked the branch manager about this man and her response was informative:

> Oh, that is Randall[13]. He is here all of the time. He has some interesting stories. You should definitely talk to him. He is a very nice person and says hello and goodbye to me every day. He lives on the streets, you know, around town. Sleeping in the park until that became a problem; sleeping in the bus shelters; moving around if he can find a friend for a night. But he always comes back in the next day. One day, when we were receiving complaints from the neighborhood about the unsightly nature of the homeless people waiting – and to put it in their terms, loitering – outside of the entrance. You know, lots of mother's with their children

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[13] Names have been changed to protect the privacy of the library users and staff.

were getting nervous about these rough looking men outside. And since this is a heavy family use library, we had to listen. The men who use the library in the morning, whether they get kicked out of their night time facility or just want to come inside to get out of the heat, they all wait by the entrance. Many of the men smoke. So the smell, the ambiance, and the overall picture was something a lot of people were complaining about. (personal communication, July 24, 2016).

I followed up asking several questions about the nature of the complaints, hoping to gain some insight as to the dynamic between the library users bringing children into the space and the users deemed to be a nuisance.

RAPH: So in addition to some of the ideas you briefly touched on, what else were they complaining about?

STAFF: Primarily the smell.

RAPH: Of the people?

STAFF: Yes, and that of the entrance way. Many of the men smoke so it was problematic. Kinda like waking through a tobacco cloud prior to entrance and that was offending them. Even though we have the rules about smoking a certain distance away from the building. So I had to be the bad person to tell these men to try to help with the issue, because if it was bad enough we would have to ask them to leave the premises.[14]

RAPH: So what happened then?

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[14] In the Fairfax County Public Library System Code of Conduct, there is an entry about a smoking violation but that is within the buildings. There is no mention of a formal rule on the grounds surrounding the library, including parking lots or grassy areas.

STAFF: Well, when I was talking to the men about it they were very understanding of it and said they would help. The next morning when I came in I saw Randall outside with a push broom sweeping up all of the cigarette butts and other trash. "Good morning," he said as I walked by and went right back to his sweeping. Later that day I asked him why he was doing it and he said that he wanted to make sure he was going to be allowed to be in the space during the day time so he was helping out. You should talk to him about it.

Later in the day, after the round of meetings at the shelter and the county office, I came back into the library. Randall was on the computer and I did not want to interrupt. I asked the branch manager if she could arrange an introduction, and without hesitation she went up to him and asked if he would be willing to speak with me. He agreed, and we sat and chatted for an hour so, about any topic under the sun. I initially asked questions about his frequency of library use and what he does in the library, and that conversation slowly shifted to his particular struggles in life and how he ended up in the Reston area.

Originally from the nearby suburb of Warrenton, Randall has been moving around for a few decades; job to job, location to location. Eventually, his circumstances led him back to the area, and he has been in the cycle of temporary housing and job instability so many others experiencing homelessness fall into. I asked him what he was playing on the computer, and a brightness appeared in his eyes. It was an online golfing video game.

RAPH: Golf?

RANDALL: Yeah, I love golf. I want to be a professional golfer. Always have. I went and tried for a while but the cost was too much and the lifestyle of always on

the go caused some problems. So now I want to get back into it when things get settled. The library helps me keep my edge on that world, so to speak.

Figuring it was a good time to probe about the cleaning story, I asked him about it.

RAPH: So, I've heard that you help keep the front entrance of the building clean. Can you tell me about that?

RANDALL: Yeah, sure. Well, I really like and need the library man. It's peaceful and relaxing. You can get out of the weather. I didn't want anything to screw that up. So after they talked to us about it I just decided that I was going to make sure I did what I had to do to keep coming here. I talked to some of the other guys about it, and they try to keep it clean. I'll keep doing it even if they don't help out.

This conversation supports what much of the literature claims to be a driving force behind a major condition of homelessness: spatial constraints. As Snow and Mulcahy (2001) claim, the condition of homelessness "forces individuals, whose claims to community citizenship or membership are routinely contested, to continuously negotiate and survive in spatial domains of community that were neither designed nor intended for residence or basic subsidence practices" (p. 154).

This ownership, described by Randall, highlights the interpenetration through the four frames of CTI. The homeless contingent outside of the library had their identity stigmatized by the library users, Randall took ownership of his "otherness," or the meaning ascribed to the self by others in the social world, and accepts that identity while meeting the expectations and motivations to continue to gain access to the library. In looking out

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for his own wellbeing, he accepted (either knowingly or unknowingly) the identity ascribed to him by the social world.

Goffman (1963) characterizes the attribute of stigma as "deeply discrediting" (p. 3), which then leads to an incongruence of inward and outward identity while disqualifying an individual from full social acceptance. In fact, stigma involves negative perceptions and social rejection (Phelen, Link, Moore, & Stueve, 1997). Harking back to the personal frame, the self-concept of Randall was that of a homeless man outside of the library; and a library user while inside of the library. The significance of the library to his identity is evident in his actions to continue to gain access. This segue into the enacted frame, or the performance of social behavior, is established by the cleaning up of the outside space surrounding the library. He is enacting his identity as both a homeless individual and a library user through this behavior and his desire to continue using the space.

The interpenetration concept does not require overlap across all four frames, so the analyzing could be just a presentation of both the personal and enacted layers. The efforts to clean the area, however, were based on the relationship with the branch manager and their mutually formed and pre-existing identity. Recall the propositions of the relational frame: where identities emerge in relationship to others; identities are enacted in relationships; and relationships develop identities as social entities. For Randall, relationships exist with the branch manager, his fellow homeless acquaintances, and with the library as an institution. It is worth noting that not all of the "disturbance" was attributed to homeless library users – in fact, many of the people that attracted the ire of the complainers were residents of the shelter next door and did not actively use the library on

a regular basis. There is also a progression of the relational identity, as Randall achieved a new relationship as a result of his actions, creating a new identity with the library personnel beyond the branch manager. His efforts were noticed by all staff, which in turn created a new identity as a social entity.

This social entity leads to the communal layer, and vice versa. As a self-identified native of the Northern Virginia region, Randall provides that group identity as a baseline for his physical location, but it also provides justification for his relationships and his personal image. Having historical ties to the area afforded him the opportunity to return "home" after various life events, some good and some bad, and provided a group identity and a social network. This identity provided knowledge of the area and the available resources, of particular ways to circumvent the laws and policies (i.e., which bus shelters to sleep in; which patches of woods are appropriate for pitching a tent). He is also a part of the homeless community in the area through his relationships with others at the shelter, and the shelter itself. And most importantly, the value he placed on the significance of the library in his daily life shows that he identities as a library user, regardless of his housing status.

After spending time unpacking the four layers of CTI in-depth, this concept of interpenetration is more apparent. It seems clear that each identity impacts the others and that the interconnectedness of the identities merits investigation.

Areas and Opportunities for Future Research

Theoretically speaking, is it clear that further research could be conducted on this topic of homelessness and the public library through analyzing the way in which the four frames overlap and are integrated into a holistic conceptualization of identity. Jung (2011) provides a different take on the interpenetration by highlighting *identity gaps* – which are defined as discrepancies or contradictions between and among the different layers of identity. These identity gaps can occur between two layers (e.g., the personal-relational) for a total of six (6) gaps. This number increases to an additional five (5) when you compare three and four layer gaps. For example, the personal-relational gap refers to discrepancies between an individual's self-image and the perception of how others view that individual. A personal-enacted gap reflects the differences in how an individual chooses to interact, or communicate, in contrast to their self-concepts. (Hecht et al., 2005).

The study of identity gaps also provides an opportunity to link CTI with other communication theories, such as cultural contract theory, identity negotiation, boundary-management, self-verification theory, and control theory, as well as emotionally related concepts of loneliness, pride, and insecurity. Such work is already underway and much has been written on the topics (Hecht, et al., 2005; Jung, 2011, 2013; Jung & Hecht, 2004, 2008; Kam & Hecht, 2009; Lindsley, 1999). For this specific context, identity gaps could provide an insightful avenue to analyze the ways in which the library staff choose (or choose not to) build relationships with the homeless library user. It could also lead to a deeper understanding of the unique cultures of the branch libraries within the DCPL in comparison to the central location. The inclusion of other communication theories can allow these issues presented in this research to become more developed, making more

headway into previously unstudied communicative phenomena in this particular setting involving these actors.

On a larger scale, future research can be conducted at other libraries across the country, as the homeless epidemic is not unique to the Washington, D.C. region. Cities, nationwide, differ on their policies regarding homelessness, and the local governments are polarized due to budgetary constraints, politics, and the residents of the community. These issues bleed over into the public library systems, and many libraries have made efforts to collaborate with local community agencies and social services to serve the homeless population (Bolt, 2015; Gehner & Freeman, 2005).

Oldernberg (1989), among others, has studied the relevance of places within the heart of a community. Locations such as bars, coffee shops, barbershops and bookstores, more private than public, still serve as a backbone of many communities, and the library belongs in that discussion with one glaring caveat: it is a public space. Future research could generalize the notions of homelessness identity to other places, or put more appropriately, other versions of public spaces, what little remain. The relationship between place and communication is a rich vein of analysis, and further research could be conducted to expand the literature, especially within the urban communication setting.

The Closing of MLK

On Saturday, March 4, 2017, at 5:30pm, the Martin Luther King, Jr., Memorial Library closed its doors to the general public for a scheduled three year renovation. The library was packed that day, with people there to witness the historic event; reporters interviewing patrons to provide stories for local broadcast and print media outlets; library

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users going about their normal routine; and of course, the large contingent of homeless library users. For many, MLK had been a part of their daily life for years. Remember Juan, "The Keymaster"? He mentioned to me that he has been going to MLK for nearly 15 years. How can you put into words what it means to an individual, without a home, that the next day the place they spend their 9 to 5 (or longer) will no longer be an accessible space?

The DCPL, in conjunction with the DC DHS, in the days prior to the closing provided informational brochures to the homeless library users, detailing a new plan regarding the bus services. The brochure, titled "Downtown Transportation & Services Plan," highlighted the new plan, effective March 6, 2017, for "residents experiencing homelessness to have a safe place to be indoors during the day, and access services the library has provided such as: help with employment, case management, and access to restrooms." This is the first public acknowledgement that I have witnessed from the DC government that highlights the services the library provides to the homeless community. Prior to this, there was an understanding between the two institutions but never anything representing a formal arrangement. According to the DCPL administration, the closing of MLK and the relocation of the homeless was an issue that had been on the table for several years, causing much anxiety and uncertainty, staff and user alike, but no plans were put into place until there was a firm closing date. Staff mentioned to me that this new services plan was created within a week of the closing, so approximately sometime in late February. The brochure provided information on the new locations where these services are available, a brief synopsis of the new shuttle and bus routes, and other pertinent information regarding facilities that provide assistance to the homeless. It appears there was little priority in

providing these services, as evidenced until the last minute distribution. In addition to the timing, as you can see from Figure 8, the new plan reveals a heavy reliance on churches and private organizations to fill the holes left by the closing on MLK.

Towards the end of the day, a small group of protestors organized outside of the entrance, with signs calling out the library for its irresponsible handling of the homeless (i.e., one sign read "homeless are people"), others vilifying the DCPL director by name, and others providing more comments on the social issues of homelessness without any clear direction of blame. The group was a mix of homeless and non-homeless, chanting "[h]ey man, what's the plan, the homeless matter!" It was interesting to see some of the more well-off protestors (by my subjective estimate), especially considering they were individuals that I have never seen in the library over the course of 36 months, including the several town-hall type meetings the library conducted throughout the system in the fall of 2016 to discuss all things MLK renovation.

DOWNTOWN TRANSPORTATION & SERVICES PLAN
EFFECTIVE MARCH 6, 2017

The Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library (MLK) will be closed for renovation on March 4, 2017. The Department of Human Services (DHS) will implement the following plan for residents experiencing homelessness to have a safe place to be indoors during the day, and access services the library has provided such as: help with employment, case management, and access to restrooms.

Transportation will be provided from 6:30 am - 8:00 pm, Monday - Saturday, on a loop beginning at 801 East Men's Shelter (2700 Martin Luther King Avenue, SE) and stopping at the following locations each day:

Adams Place Day Center - 2210 Adams Place, NE. Individuals can access case management services, laundry facilities, showers and computers, as well as eat breakfast and lunch on-site. The Day Center also offers connections to employment services and help with housing.

Minnesota Avenue & Benning Road, NE
Individuals can take advantage of employment services at the Department of Employment Services, access computers and other reading materials at the Dorothy Height/Benning Road Library and health care at the Unity Health Care Clinic.

Church of the Epiphany - 1317 G Street, NW. The Church of the Epiphany will operate as a transit point for downtown destinations. Individuals can access bathrooms and water at the church and wait in their courtyard. The Church is also home to Street Sense. Individuals who want to be in the downtown area during the day can use this stop.

DHS will also expand the operating hours and capacity at Adams Place Day Center to 7:00 AM - 6:30 PM, Monday – Friday, and add computers and other services that have been offered at MLK Library.

The following churches are open in the downtown area and will continue to provide support to individuals during their normal business hours:

New York Avenue Presbyterian Church
1313 New York Avenue, NW
Bathrooms and water: **Monday – Friday 8:00 AM - 4:30 PM**

Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church
1518 M Street, NW
Bathrooms: **Monday – Friday 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM**

National City Christian Church
5 Thomas Circle, NW
Bathrooms: **Open to the public daily**

Foundry United Methodist Church
1500 16th Street, NW
Bathrooms: **Monday – Friday 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM**

Catholic Charities
924 G Street NW
Homeless services: **Monday – Friday 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM**
Meals: Wednesday evenings

SOME (So Others Might Eat)
71 O Street NW
Meals: **Monday – Friday Breakfast 7:00 AM – 8:30 AM; Lunch 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM**

Church of the Epiphany
1317 G Street NW
Bathroom and water: **Monday – Friday 10:30 AM – 4:30 PM**

For up-to-date information contact the Shelter Hotline at:

202.399.7093 or 311

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA
MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR

Figure 8. Informational Brochure distributed by MLK, days leading up to closing.

At the end of the day, I expected to see some sort of emotion on the part of the homeless library users, the people that I have come to know personally during my time in the field. To my surprise, there was not much emotion on display from the many people that used MLK on a daily basis. As the library closed, I reached out to those that I knew, we said our goodbyes, and we parted ways. The next day, Sunday, there were a few people outside of the library in the morning, either unaware that it was closed that day, or simply without another alternative as the new shelter bus route did not take effect until the following day. The next day, a Monday, I found myself at the Northeast branch in the early evening. This is a smaller library, as you would expect from a branch, but it was filled to capacity. Every computer was in use, every table top and chair accounted for, every study room reserved. I asked the staff member working the information desk about the uptick in users and was told quite frankly, "it's because of MLK." The library did anticipate this consequence of the library, increasing hours at the branches and rotating staffers into the branches from the main library. To see it happen the next business day was enlightening. If noticing the higher volume of users was enlightening, what happened when I left the library was surreal.

As I was leaving, I held the door open for someone entering the library. During this, a man exited the library and stood outside, putting on his coat and arranging his belongings. I did not get a chance to see his face, but he apparently saw mine. "Hey man," he said, with a smile. I turned around and noticed it was James, a regular from MLK.

RAPH: What's up dude? What are you doing over here?

JAMES: Did you know this library was here?

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RAPH: Yessir, I have visited it numerous times.

JAMES: Well, I will tell you what, man. I had no idea this library was here. I walk around and take the bus on this street all the time. If you weren't looking for it, you wouldn't see it.

RAPH: Did anyone tell you about it?

JAMES: Nope, just randomly found it.

RAPH: So are you going to come here now?

JAMES: Yeah, probably. It is really nice in here. *A lot* [emphasis added] different than MLK though.

RAPH: Yeah it is. It was recently renovated so it's nicer than some of the other branches.

JAMES: Well, I hope the other one is as nice as this one when they are done with it. I had a buddy tell me there is no way it is done by 2020. He was saying five years.

RAPH: What do you think?

JAMES: If they say it will be done in three, I will believe it. They have to stick to the schedule. Too many people need it…Are you going to be coming here now?

RAPH: Yeah, I will be around. Probably not as much, but some.

JAMES: Good, it will be good to see some familiar faces.

RAPH: I hope to see you then. I gotta roll, but I am glad you found this one.

JAMES: You take care. I'll be seein' ya.

It was odd to see someone I knew from MLK in one of the branches. Not odd in the traditional sense of the word, but just surprising. It took me off guard. Walking towards my car, I wondered how many other homeless library users found another library, another place to go, another place to call home.

Conclusion

Homelessness presents difficulties in the maintenance of positive self-concept (Meanwell, 2013). The issues of identity work and stigmatization have been explored throughout the social world across many different subcultures. For the homeless, stigmatization is a part of their lived experience, and as a result, they must engage in strategies of identity work and stigma management to "salvage the self" (Phelan et al., 1997; Rayburn & Guittar, 2013; Schneider & Remillard, 2013; Snow & Anderson, 1997). It is through the practice of library use where we can highlight the negotiations of the identity of homelessness.

There is some awareness among the homeless of prejudicial attitudes towards the "homeless person" within the library (Muggleton, 2013). This reflects a changing paradigm within the library culture, but as we have seen, it is not a new topic. Historical accounts, mostly negative, dating back to the 1890s provide insight into this ongoing discussion of the role of the library in the lives of the homeless individual. Just as there are many stories about vagrancy, drugs, and violence, there are also positive tales. A *Washington Post Magazine* article from 2005 discussed the impact of a homeless man on the patrons of a branch in one of the poorest neighborhoods of D.C. He would visit the library daily, setting up a chess board, providing advice and guidance to all within the library, including young

children. Outside of the library, this man's identity was that of a homeless individual, a member of the homeless community. But inside the library, "they call him Mr. Conrad" (Wee, 2005). This positive self-image reflects the positive image bestowed upon him by the other users. This is a powerful depiction of the importance of the library for the homeless community – it has the ability to transcend the depiction of a public space and provide sense of belonging to an individual.

Stories aside, the libraries role within the homeless community cannot be understated, but it is often overlooked or ignored altogether. The lead-up to the closing of the MLK branch represented an opportunity to study this significance first hand, and how this particular library system was handling the issue of homelessness. The DCPL is not alone in this effort. In fact, many libraries are bearing the burden of the increasing homelessness crisis as a result of a lack of available resources in local communities. This places a burden on the institution of libraries as a whole, not just on one staff member or on one progressive system. Across the country, libraries have developed helpful strategies for serving the homeless population (Fraga, 2016; Gunderman & Stevens, 2015). The DCPL has implemented public programs, staff training, and educational material geared specifically to their homeless user base. They have partnered with local advocacy groups such as Pathways to Housing DC, StandUp for Kids, US Vets, HopeOne Source DC, Washington Home and Hospice, Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, Friendship Place, and Community Connections. They have partnered with governmental agencies such as the DC Inter-Agency Council on Homelessness, including membership on the

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Emergency Response and Shelter Operations Committee, and with the DC Department of Human Services (personal communication, May 20, 2016).

This research informs the use of CTI in the cultures of the public library system. By no means is it exhaustive. More detail-oriented and experimental research has been conducted on the basis of communication and identity with regard to homelessness. To date, there has been little research focusing on the identity of the homeless individual utilizing the CTI framework, and to my knowledge, no research on the identity of the homeless library user. There is a uniqueness to this space, to the public library, that makes communication possible. The library is a container that shapes the communication within the space, and the interactions help to create, define, and enforce identities. What is most interesting is the idea, mentioned repeatedly from staff and user, that all other preconceived notions of culture and identity are cast aside upon entering the library. While the reality is that it would be impossible, in a vacuum, to ignore the cultures of those individuals prior to their library use, the acceptance into the library attempts to wipe the slate clean, or keep people on the same playing level. This argument can be made for the staff as well. There is a community of library users that exists within the building. But as we have seen, these identities can change rapidly outside of the library.

Homelessness is an unfortunate part of our society, and the act of being homeless plays out for all the world to see in the public space. Because of this private behavior in the public space, homeless individuals are marginalized by default: "although homeless people are nearly always in public, they are rarely counted as part of *the* public" (Mitchell, 2003, p.135). What we have learned in this ethnography is that the library provides more

to the identity of the homeless individual than society at-large realizes. Through analyzing the personal, enacted, relational, and communal frames of the Communication Theory of Identity, we have captured a slice of everyday life that can only occur within the library. These identities cannot play out in public parks, museums, cafes, civic centers, or community anchors. The role of the public library, as a public space, allowing varying levels of private behavior, is the only location where the notion of a public still exists inside of a building without barriers to entry. With that said, the library has a dialectical relationship with that very premise. Michel de Certeau stated in his work *The Practice of Everyday Life,* "space is a practiced place" (1984, p. 117). He also claims that if a society does not offer a symbolic outlet and expectation of space, where there is no alternative to abiding by disciplinary rules or illegally drifting away, the result is social delinquency.

The public library provides this space, and the actors within the space practice a portion of everyday life, unseen and unheard outside of that space. As a society, we expect the institution of a library to be an open, available resource for all citizens. The more open the space, the more variety of use will occur. The homeless library user, acting out private behaviors in the public space of the public library, has an opportunity to create a "gentrification of the user" over time – a more polite, more responsible, more empathic library user.

There are differences between strategies (i.e., high level planning, privileged individuals utilizing resources to predetermine use) and tactics (i.e., actions of the less powerful, those finding loopholes, carving out their own personal space of self). The identities formed by the homeless library users employ tactics necessary for their survival.

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The strategies employed by the library and the library staff help to define the identities within the building and institution. Identity, as a construct, is not isolated to a singular action or a singular user. It is an interwoven component, formed from communicative actions, based on self-image, and reinforced through relationships to others and to groups.

The result of this study shed light on a previously unstudied aspect of society, an aspect that is as ubiquitous as society itself. Duneier posits that any society with "high levels of economic inequality, racism, illiteracy, and drug dependency, and with inadequate transitions from mental hospitals and prisons to work and home, will have vast numbers of people who cannot conform to the requirements of its formal institutions" (1999, p. 317). I counter this assertion, and state that the public library is a unique institution that allows those without adequate transitions, such as homeless individuals, the possibility to conform within the confines of the public space. The public library has an opportunity, if the institution or society chooses, to provide the homeless community with services in conjunction with advocacy and governmental organizations, strengthening community bonds, and helping to accelerate the transition back into a more stable, and hopefully more permanent, housing situation. The institution can achieve these goals because it is a public space, and as a truly public space it can elevate the people, in moral terms, because we are all equal within the public library. The public library is the people's library.

APPENDIX A

ALA Policy Manual Section B: Positions and Public Policy Statements
B.8.10 Library Services to the Poor (Old Number 61)

The American Library Association promotes equal access to information for all persons, and recognizes the urgent need to respond to the increasing number of poor children, adults, and families in America. These people are affected by a combination of limitations, including illiteracy, illness, social isolation, homelessness, hunger, and discrimination, which hamper the effectiveness of traditional library services. Therefore it is crucial that libraries recognize their role in enabling poor people to participate fully in a democratic society, by utilizing a wide variety of available resources and strategies. Concrete programs of training and development are needed to sensitize and prepare library staff to identify poor people's needs and deliver relevant services. And within the American Library Association the coordinating mechanisms of programs and activities dealing with poor people in various divisions, offices, and units should be strengthened, and support for low-income liaison activities should be enhanced.

B.8.10.1 Policy Objectives (Old Number 61.1)
The American Library Association shall implement these objectives by:
1. Promoting the removal of all barriers to library and information services, particularly fees and overdue charges.
2. Promoting the publication, production, purchase, and ready accessibility of print and non-print materials that honestly address the issues of poverty and homelessness, that deal with poor people in a respectful way, and that are of practical use to lowincome patrons.
3. Promoting full, stable, and ongoing funding for existing legislative programs in support to flow income services and for pro-active library programs that reach beyond traditional service-sites to poor children, adults, and families.
4. Promoting training opportunities for librarians, in order to teach effective techniques for generating public funding to upgrade library services to poor people.
5. Promoting the incorporation of low-income programs and services into regular library budgets in all types of libraries, rather than the tendency to support these projects solely with "soft money" like private or federal grants.
6. Promoting equity in funding adequate library services for poor people in terms of materials, facilities, and equipment.

7. Promoting supplemental support for library resources for and about low-income populations by urging local, state, and federal governments, and the private sector, to provide adequate funding.
8. Promoting increased public awareness through programs, displays, bibliographies, and publicity of the importance of poverty related library resources and services in all segments of society.
9. Promoting the determination of output measures through the encouragement of community needs assessments, giving special emphasis to assessing the need so low-income people and involving both anti-poverty advocates and poor people themselves in such assessments.
10. Promoting direct representation of poor people and anti-poverty advocates through appointment to local boards and creation of local advisory committees on service to low-income people, such appointments to include library paid transportation and stipends.
11. Promoting training to sensitize library staff to issues affecting poor people and to attitudinal and other barriers that hinder poor people's use of libraries.
12. Promoting networking and cooperation between libraries and other agencies, organizations, and advocacy groups in order to develop programs and services that effectively reach poor people.
13. Promoting the implementation of an expanded federal low-income housing program, national health insurance, full-employment policy, living minimum wage and welfare payments, affordable daycare, and programs likely to reduce, if not eliminate, poverty itself.
14. Promoting among library staff the collection of food and clothing donations, volunteering personal time to antipoverty activities and contributing money to direct-aid organizations.
15. Promoting related efforts concerning minorities and women, since these groups are disproportionately represented among poor people.

DCPL Rules of Behavior
Published on District of Columbia Public Library (http://www.dclibrary.org)
Behavior Rules Governing the Use of the District of Columbia Public Library
Published: 19 DCMR § 810 (July 26, 2013)

Introduction
The DC Public Library's behavior rules have a threefold purpose: to protect the rights and safety of library customers, to protect the rights and safety of staff members and to preserve the library's materials, facilities and property. The DC Public Library supports the right of all individuals to free and equal access to information and use of the library without discrimination, intimidation, threat of harm or invasion of privacy. The DC Public Library is dedicated to providing friendly, courteous and respectful service, and an enjoyable, clean and comfortable environment for all Library users. For everyone's safety and protection, the DC Public Library reserves the right to inspect an individual's belongings including purses, backpacks, bags, parcels, shopping bags, briefcases and other items to prevent unauthorized removal of library materials and equipment or for the health and safety of staff and other customers.

Definitions and Scope
These behavior rules shall apply to all buildings, interior and exterior, and all grounds controlled and operated by the DC Public Library (such buildings and grounds are hereafter referred to as the "premises") and to all persons entering in or on the premises.
Listed below are the library's behavior rules. Persons who violate these rules may be removed from the premises and excluded from all library premises for the period of time listed below, by authority of the DC Public Library.

Enforcement
1. Authorized library staff, Library Police, security guards and/or the Metropolitan Police Department officers may intervene to stop prohibited activities and behaviors. Failure to comply with these rules may result in: Withdrawal of a person's permission to remain on Library premises; and/or

2. Issuance of a Notice of Barring from Library property for a period of one day to five (5) years, as provided in policies and procedures issued by the Chief Librarian.

A violation of law may also result in arrest and prosecution. Violations of law and/or these rules may also result in the restriction and/or termination of Library privileges, including the use of Library computers and other equipment, and facilities. Authorized personnel may base a Notice of Barring on personal observation or investigation. Barred parties may have their photographs or video captured by DC Public Library staff to enforce the bar.

Administrative Review of Notices of Barring
An individual who receives a Notice of Barring may request an administrative review of a barring that is greater than seven (7) days. This request must be made within ten (10) business days of the date on the barring notice. A request for review should be submitted in writing to:

> Director of Public Safety
> Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Library
> 901 G Street NW
> Washington, DC 20001

Behavior Rules
For the safety and comfort of the public and staff, and to create an environment conducive for library business the following activities are prohibited on library property and facilities:

a) Category One Infractions:

Any person(s) who violates rules 1-5 while in or on library premises will be immediately removed and excluded from all DC Public Library premises. Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges from one (1) to five (5) years and the incident will be reported to the appropriate law enforcement agency.

1. Committing or attempting to commit any activity that would constitute a violation of any Federal or District criminal statue or ordinance.
2. Directing a specific threat of physical harm against an individual, group of individuals or property.
3. Engaging in sexual conduct/activity, including, but not limited to, the physical manipulation or touching of a person's sex organs through a person's clothing in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification.
4. Being under the influence of any controlled substance or intoxicating liquor or beverage.
5. Possessing, selling, distributing, or consuming any alcoholic beverage, except as allowed at a library approved event.

b) Category Two Infractions:

Any person(s) who violates rules 6-13 while in or on library premises may first be given a warning at the discretion of library staff. Subsequent offenses by that person will result in that person's immediate removal and exclusion from all DC Public Library premises. Any

person so excluded shall lose all library privileges from six (6) months to one (1) year. Repeated violations of category two infractions may lead to category one barring periods (1 year to 5 years).

6. Engaging in conduct that disrupts or interferes with the normal operation of the library, or disturbs library staff or customers, including but not limited to, conduct that involves the use of abusive or threatening language or gestures, conduct that creates unreasonable noise, or conduct that consists of loud or boisterous physical behavior or talking.
7. Engaging in conduct that can be considered bullying as defined by the Youth Bullying Prevention Act of 2012 [4], effective September 14, 2012 (D.C. Law 19-167; 59 DCR 7820).
8. Using library material, equipment, furniture, fixtures, or buildings in a manner inconsistent with the customary use thereof; or in a destructive, abusive or potentially damaging manner; or in a manner likely to cause personal injury to themselves or others.
9. Failure to comply with the reasonable direction of a library staff member.
10. Soliciting, petitioning, or distributing written materials or canvassing for political, charitable or religious purposes inside a library building, including the entrances or grounds in a manner on the library premises that unreasonably interferes with or impedes access to the library.
11. Smoking or other use of tobacco in the library or within 25 feet of any library building (including electronic cigarettes).
12. Violating the library's rules for Acceptable Use of the Internet and Library Public Computers [5].
13. Entering or attempting to enter a Library building while barred (i.e., trespassing). Any customer who trespasses is prohibited from use of all DC Public Library facilities and services. Customers or persons returning to a DC Public Library facility during a period of barring may be arrested and prosecuted for unlawful entry pursuant to DC Official Code § 22-3302 [6] (2001 ed. & 2012 Supp.).

c) Category Three Infractions:

Any person(s) who violates rules 14-30 while in or on library premises may be given a warning at the discretion of library staff. Offenses by that person will result in that person's immediate removal and exclusion from all DC Public Library premises. Any person so excluded shall lose all library privileges for seven (7) days. Repeated violations of category three infractions may lead to category two barring periods (6 months to 1 year).

14. Interfering with the free passage of library staff or customers in or on library premises, including, but not limited to, placing objects such as bicycles, skateboards, backpacks or other items in a manner that interferes with free passage.

15. Placing personal belongings on or against buildings, furniture, equipment or fixtures in a manner that interferes with library staff or customer use of the library facility, or leaving personal belongings unattended.
16. Bringing bicycles or other similar devices inside library buildings, including, but not limited to, vestibules or covered doorways if no bicycle rack is provided within that area.
17. Operating roller skates, skateboards or other similar devices in or on library premises.
18. Parking vehicles on library premises for purposes other than library use. Vehicles parked in violation of this rule may be towed at the owner's expense.
19. Consuming food or drink that creates a nuisance or disrupts library use because of odor, garbage or spills. Non-alcoholic beverages in covered containers and food are only allowed in designated areas.
20. Bringing animals inside library buildings (with the exception of service animals), except as allowed at a library-approved event, or leaving an animal tethered and unattended on library premises.
21. Taking library materials into restrooms if the materials have not been checked out.
22. Bringing in items excluding personal items (purse, laptop, and briefcase) that occupy floor space in excess of 9" L x 14" W x 22" H. Items are measured in totality and must fit easily into a measuring box of the above dimensions. Bedrolls, blankets (except for use by babies and infants), and frame backpacks are prohibited. Bringing large duffel bags and plastic bags measuring over 12" x 36" and bringing infested personal items into the library.22. Bringing in items excluding personal items (purse, laptop, and briefcase) that occupy floor space in excess of 9" L x 14" W x 22" H. Items are measured in totality and must fit easily into a measuring box of the above dimensions. Bedrolls, blankets (except for use by babies and infants), and frame backpacks are prohibited. Bringing large duffel bags and plastic bags measuring over 12" x 36" and bringing infested personal items into the library.
23. Lying down or sleeping, to include the appearance of sleeping in the restrooms or on any floor, couch, table, or seat in the Library and on the premises, and by blocking aisles, exits, or entrances by sitting or lying down in them.
24. Improperly using library restrooms, including, but not limited to, bathing, shaving, washing hair and changing clothes.
25. Using personal electronic equipment at a volume that disturbs others, including, but not limited to, pagers, stereos, televisions, cellular telephones, computers and tablets.
26. Leaving one or more children eight (8) years old or under, who reasonably appear to be unsupervised or unattended, anywhere in or on library premises. [Please see Unattended Children Policy [7]]
27. Adults and teens are prohibited from using the children's area, unless accompanying a child twelve (12) years old or younger.
28. Adults and children are prohibited from using the teen area unless accompanying a teen age thirteen (13) – nineteen (19).

29. Adults and teens are prohibited from using any restroom designated for children. Children's restrooms are for the sole use of children twelve (12) years old or younger, and their caregivers.
30. Children and teens eighteen (18) and younger who are not accompanied by an adult during regular school hours are considered truant. Students must provide written proof from school authorities excusing the students from school in order to enter the library or be on library premises on school days between 9 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

d) Category Four Infractions

Any person(s) who violates rules 31 and 32 while in or on library premises will be excluded from the premises until the problem is corrected. Repeated violations of category four infractions may lead to category two barring periods (6 months to 1 year).

31. Entering library buildings with bare feet or a bare chest.
32. Any person creating or emanating an odor that can be detected by a reasonable person, from six (6) feet away and/or constitutes a public nuisance for other customers, will be asked to leave the library until the situation can be corrected.

Library customers who wish to request a reasonable modification of these Guidelines because of a disability or health problem may contact Library staff or may call the ADA Coordinator at 202-727-1101.

Links
[1]   http://www.dclibrary.org/javascript%3A%3B
[2]   http://app.readspeaker.com/cgi-bin/rsent?customerid=5660&lang=en_us&readid=readspeaker-content
[3]   http://www.dclibrary.org/print/print/208
[4]   http://ohr.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ohr/page_content/attachments/Youth BullyingPreventionAct_Final.pdf
[5]   http://dclibrary.org/node/827

[6]   http://dccode.org/simple/sections/22-3302.html
[7]   http://dclibrary.org/node/207

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BIOGRAPHY

Raphael Mazzone graduated from Bishop Walsh High School, Cumberland, Maryland, in 1999. He received his Bachelor of Arts from Salisbury University in 2003, and his Master of Library Science from the University of Maryland in 2006. Prior to attending George Mason University, he held positions as a Broadcast Archivist for the Associated Press and as an Electronic Records Archivist for the National Archives and Records Administration.