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Object Pleasures and Job Segregation: Barbers, Hairstylists, and the Material (Be)longings of Work

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Keywords	Abstract
Objects *Materiality* *Belonging* *Job Segregation*	Increasingly, organization and communication scholars are paying critical attention to the materiality work/life. In this vein, this paper explores the connections between job segregation, object relations, and the performance of work belongings. In particular, it speaks into the question: how do object relations constitute segregated job belongings? Drawing on data from a year-long, comparative ethnography of barbers and hairstylists, the analysis focuses on barbershop and hair salon mirrors and the complex relations produced by barbers' avoidance and hairstylists' engagement of this common object. Specifically, these object relations were found to not only differentiate job belongings, but also materialize erotics (pains and/or pleasures) in the constitution of job segregation. The paper closes with implications of these findings for studies of materiality, especially in terms of how object relations and pleasures summon and segregate working bodies and jobs.

Introduction

In recent years, a growing number of organization and communication researchers have critically questioned a discourse-centrism that biases our studies (e.g., Ashcraft, 2007; Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004a, b; Cloud, 2001; Orlikowski, 2007). Seduced perhaps by cultural, interpretive, or linguistic turns, our scholarship has "tended to obscure the ways in which such discourse is meaningful only within the material, political context within which it occurs" (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004b, p. 25). Indeed such vacancies chafe with our widespread, tacit understandings that work requires matter to matter: the performance of labor includes an orgy of material entanglements, such as objects or artifacts that facilitate our achievement of work or job identities. To see materiality as merely passive props or boring backgrounds obscures its active role in shaping and segregating not only how workers craft their job identities as "necessary fictions" of belonging (Weeks, 2005, p. 50), but also constituting longings, passions, or pleasures within the process of organizing.

My interests in this paper centers on material pleasures and job segregation, particularly the copulation of objects, working bodies, and job identities. As Bataille (1985) noted, "the copula of terms is no less irritating than the copulation

of bodies. And when I scream I AM THE SUN an integral erection results, because the verb to be is the vehicle of amorous frenzy" (p. 5). Through this lens, difference discourses that sort jobs into taxonomies of, for instance, men or women's work, are implicated in a messy material world marked by longings and desires. As such, this essay explores a comparative case study of barbers and hairstylists, focusing on the pleasures and pains produced by a common, everyday object—mirrors. In what follows, I engage the relevant literatures that ground this investigation before describing the larger study and its methodology. Subsequently, I analyze the commonplace object of mirrors in the work scenarios of barbering and hairstyling, focusing on how the mirror's relationality (dis)organized the embodied be-longings of workers in each job. Finally, I detail implications of this study for future organization and communication inquiry.

The Necessary Fictions of Segregated Job Be-longings

Job segregation describes the symbolic and material construction of boundaries or borders between jobs through differentiation and hierarchical ordering (Reskin, 1988). For instance, differences discourses wed unequal gendered, raced, or classed meanings and value to particular tasks or skills (Phillips & Taylor, 1980; Steinberg, 1990), and as a result, occupations "profess" gender, race, class, and so forth (Davies, 1996). In this way, difference discourses construct a myth about jobs, an artificially stable narrative about who and how one fits within a job. Yet the social construction of labor divisions does not, in and of itself, produce job segregation; rather, "the social and the material are *constitutively entangled* in everyday life" (emphasis in original, Orlikowski, 2007, p. 1437). More accurately, job segregation is constituted within the material belongings of work—a material relationality of "doing—the enactment of boundaries—that always entails constitutive exclusions and therefore requisite questions of accountability" (Barad, 2003, p. 803; Law, 1994, 2004).

In many ways, belonging affords researchers a lens through which to explore the sociomaterial fictions of segregated job identities. Belonging "begins from a position which insists that one does not simply or ontologically 'belong' to the world or to any group within it. Belonging is an achievement at several levels" (Bell, 1999, p. 3; Butler, 1990, 1991, 1993). In particular, belonging illuminates the discursive practices that facilitate a temporal realization of differentiated identities. As Barad (2003) states, "*discursive practices are specific material (re)configurings of the world through which local determinations of boundaries, properties, and meanings are differentially enacted*" (emphasis in original, pp. 820-821). Through this lens, belonging describes the material work of crafting, maintaining, and narrating an identity (Kondo, 1990) as well as the shifting, situated meanings and boundaries enacted within that performance. It is the sociomaterial performance of embodied fictions, themselves deeply historical and contingent, that conceal their constructedness through their continued becoming (Butler, 1990, 1991, 1993; Weeks, 2005).

Yet belonging also contains a built-in affective dimension such that working subjects *long*, yearn, or desire to belong within varying identity formations (Bell, 1999; Fortier, 1999; Probyn, 1996). As Probyn (1996) argues:

> Desire is productive; it is what oils the social; it produces the pleats and the folds which
> constitute the social surface we live on. It is through and with desire that we figure relations of
> proximity to others and other forms of sociality. It is what remakes the social as a dynamic
> proposition, for if we live within a grid or network of different points, we live through the
> desire to make them connect differently. (p. 13)

Seen in this light, mundane sexual features of work/life like desire, pleasure, or pain represent key processes that form and facilitate sociomaterial relations and our belongings within them. As Rudy (1999) comments, "these belongings circulate within us and produce desires which constitute who – precisely – we are" (p. 542). The performative achievement of belonging within an occupation or job, then, is an ongoing process "in constant movement" that is facilitated through longings and pleasures (Probyn, 1996, p. 19).

Men who work in female-dominated occupations offer an illustrative example of the sociomaterial work and challenges of job belonging. For instance, a common theme throughout this research is the challenges men face to their hetero-masculinity; in particular, their performance of "women's work" is frequently read as reflecting male effeminacy, homosexuality, or some other form of sexual deviancy like pedophilia (Allan, 1993; Cognard-Black, 2004; Cockburn, 1988; Lupton, 2000; Piper & Collamer, 2001; Snyder & Green, 2008; Williams, 1992). Plainly men must manage two potentially incongruous belongings: being a man while performing a "female" job. In managing these challenges, Lupton (2000) finds that men employ two general strategies: 1) reworking the job to emphasize its masculinity, such as renaming a job or reconstructing the job to emphasize its masculine tasks, or 2) reworking their masculinity to fit within a female

environment. Regarding the latter strategy, Wingfield (2009) discovers that Black male nurses embrace some feminine qualities of their jobs like care and nurturing, seeing these as means to promote racial equity and address racial health disparities. In either case, men actively construct and negotiate their longings and belongings within female-dominated jobs, whether drawing on sociomaterial resources to articulate the meanings and boundaries of a job as hetero-masculine or creatively rework hetero-gender and racial boundaries to fuse masculinity and femininity within their work practices.

As Barad (2003) states, "boundaries do not sit still" (p. 817), and because of this, job segregation is continually (re)worked and (dis)organized within the everyday sociomaterial be-longings of work. Yet a wide array of matter matters to the constitution of workers' be-longings, such as objects. In particular, object relations and their pleasures are constitutively entangled within work performances, (re)shaping the meanings and boundaries of jobs.

Object Relations

In the recent past, objects were more or less neglected by social science, perhaps best treated as mundane props or artifacts for communication or cultural performances. However, this oversight obscures the important "work" of objects:

> It ignores the degree to which the modern untying of identities has been accompanied by the expansion of object-centered environments which situate and stabilize selves, define individual identity just as much as communities and families used to do, and which promote forms of sociality (social forms of binding self and other) that feed on and supplement the human forms of sociality (Knorr-Cetina, 1997, p. 1)

Given the increasing role of objects in constituting social relations (e.g., technologies), a growing number of organization scholars have turned their attention to the important, generative role objects play in constituting organizational life (e.g., Blacker & Engeström, 2005).

Although generally engaging "the interdependency of the human and the material, the psychological and the cultural, embodied capacities and collective practices" (Engeström & Blacker, 2005, p. 310), current studies of objects share several overriding assumptions. First, objects are by no means self-evident artifacts unfettered by their surrounding socialities; rather, objects are constructed through sense making, framing, and work inter/actions (Bruni, 2005; Law & Singleton, 2005; Suchman, 2005). For instance, Suchman's (2005) research on the Xerox 8200 copier illustrates the affiliative powers of objects; in particular, her work shows how members of her research team, in transforming the copier into a scientific object of study, affiliated the copier with their differing interests and desires, such as computer science, artificial intelligence, or user interface. As a knowledge object (Knorr-Cetina, 1997), the 8200 copier offered a multiplicity of scientific subject positions as well as differing means through which to belong to those positions by becoming different objects of investigation. Plainly, "objects interpellate us" (Law, 1999, p. 24), and this "relational materialism" (Law, 1994) underscores "that reality exists in a multitude of material forms" (Bruni, 2005, p. 360). In this way, objects take on different identities based on their situated construction and relations with humans in organizing practice (Harré, 2002).

Second, objects are context-dependent social players: not only are they formed and engaged in localized practice, but also they act upon the relations they are situated within. As Engeström and Blacker (2005) state, "it would be a mistake to assume that objects are constructed arbitrarily on the spot; objects have histories and built-in affordances, they resist and 'bite back'" (p. 310). Objects "work" both within and on their constructed relations with humans, notably marked by power, domination, and desire (Knorr-Cetina, 1997). Indeed Bechky's (2003) research illustrates how two common objects in new product development and production (engineering drawings and prototype machines) actively construct job jurisdiction, status, and hierarchy between engineers, technicians, and assemblers. Because of their active participation in work relations, objects are likened to quasi-subjects (s-objects) "because (like subjects) they always stand in relation to a social world, so that 'observing' an s-object means looking at the relations of which it is part, the context in which it is located, the practices that construct it socially" (Bruni, 2005, p. 362). Therefore, objects participate actively in organizing, themselves contingent upon yet actively shaping social relations.

Given their inter/active nature in (dis)organizing work relations, their embeddedness in localized work practices, and their ability to "bite back," objects represent powerful constitutive players for jobs and work identities. Even more, Knorr-Centina (1997) argues, "objects… structure desire, or provide for [a] continuation of…wanting" (p. 13), and as such objects also produce erotics, pleasures, or longings, likely having important implications for the belongings of jobs. With this in mind, how do object relations constitute segregated job belongings? The following comparative study of barbers and hairstylists seeks to address this scholarly gap.

A Comparative Study of Barbering and Hairstyling

Barbering and hairstyling represent two historically segregated jobs that are (dis)organized through race, gender, or class differences (Bakalaki, 1984; Black, 2002, 2004; Boyd, 2002; Bristol, 2002; Gimlin, 1996; Lawson, 1999; Poole, 2005; Stevenson, 2001; Willett, 2000; Zdanty, 1993). For instance, 90% of hairstylists are women, and 77% of barbers are men (Lawson, 1999; Mittelhauser, 1997). Furthermore, barbershops and hair salons are largely homosocial gendered, raced, and classes spaces (barbershops are generally masculine environments, hair salons are typically feminine, and both are often segregated by race; see Bakalaki, 1984; Black, 2002, 2004; Bristol, 2002; Boyd, 2002; Lawson, 1999; Stevenson, 2001; Willett, 2000; Zdanty, 1993). Finally, barbering generally emphasizes hetero-masculine approaches to hair (i.e., "traditional" or "practical") whereas hairstyling emphasizes more feminine approaches (i.e., "stylish" or "aesthetic") (Black, 2004; Gimlin, 1996; Lawson, 1999).

The data presented in this paper was part of a larger research project aimed at studying how differences, especially sexuality in light of its understudied status in segregating jobs (Hewitt, 1995), (dis)organized occupations and job identities. Because of their close associations and historical segregation, a comparative ethnography of barbering and hairstyling seemed appropriate.

Participants and Methods

The ethnographic data reported in this analysis was collected over a year and conducted in two general phases. During the first phase, I conducted participant observation at a barbershop, which I call Wasatch Barbers, and a hair salon, which I call Salon Bliss. In order to capture a "thick," holistic description of these occupations (Geertz, 1973; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002), I took extensive fieldnotes at these primary sites in order to catch their mundane work practices and interactions. Based on these deep engagements in Wasatch Barbers and Salon Bliss, I engaged in a second phase of research that included in-depth interviews, a focus group, and much briefer, comparative participant-observations at other barbershops, hair salons, and barbering/cosmetology schools. My interview and focus group participants included 9 barbers and 10 hairstylists, having between 4 to 45 years of experience. With the exception of a 2-hour focus group, the interviews averaged about one hour, although ranging from 30 minutes to 3 hours depending on participants' schedules. By the time I withdrew from the field, I had amassed approximately 205 research hours while engaging about 23 occupational sites.

The resulting fieldnotes, interview and focus group transcripts, and occupational "texts" (e.g., cosmetology and barber textbooks, documentaries, or marketing materials) were analyzed using two common forms of qualitative data analysis: grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Miles & Huberman, 1994) and constant comparative method (Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995). Given the general two-stage design and comparative nature of my project, my earlier analytic endeavors (occupational texts and primary sites fieldnotes) were deeply informed by grounded theory, but my later analyses (interview and focus group transcripts and comparative site fieldnotes) were constantly compared to existing codes, patterns, and emerging themes. The systematic analysis of my fieldnotes employed common grounded theory conventions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994), and during this analysis, I frequently used analytic memos to theorize and refine relationships between codes and begin to flesh out and conceptualize emergent patterns and loose, tentative themes (Glaser, 1978; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The grounded analysis of my primary sites fieldnotes gave me both an analytic framework and tentative propositions that I brought into conversation with my second phase of data collection. For instance, my fieldwork at other barbershops and hair salons as well as my inductively generated interview questions allowed me to perform a form of negative case analysis (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002); as new data was collected and analyzed, I was able to confirm or disconfirm my initial claims. Also, the second phase of fieldwork allowed me to triangulate earlier patterns and themes (Jick, 1979) in order to strengthen my interpretive "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Mirror Relations Across Barbering and Hairstyling

With the purpose of "help[ing] clients look and feel their best" (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2007, ¶ 1), both barbers and hairstylists' work was at once aesthetic and affective; however, these aims were performed quite differently, particularly in light of reigning gender, race, class, and sexuality norms and their situated object relations. The following analysis focuses on mirrors and how this common object (dis)organized the be-longings of both jobs. Although other object pleasures impacted barbering and hairstyling[i], the sociomaterial relations produced with mirrors generated situated fields of affect, particularly masochistic pains and pleasures in hairstyling. These material entanglements with working/consuming bodies illuminate the "necessary fictions" of segregated job be-longings.

Mirror Relations, Masochistic Pains and Pleasures

Across my fieldwork, a curious material pattern emerged: although mirrors were an obligatory staple of barbershops and hair salons, each engaged and utilized this common object very differently. With few, minor variations, barbers often performed their appearance services with their clients (and themselves) *faced away* from (and their backs to) barbershop mirrors; furthermore, clients' engagement with a mirror was frequently restricted to a brief moment allowing the client to assess his haircut. Comparatively, hairstylists and their clients frequently *faced* a mirror throughout their time at the salon. Although seemingly trivial, the avoidance/engagement of mirrors dramatically shaped the aesthetics of barbering and hairstyling (defining the haircut as practical/functional and the hairstyle as aesthetic and vanity-driven) as well as barbers and hairstylists' embodied relations and identity management.

The avoidance/engagement of barbershop and salon mirrors represented a sociomaterial navigation of this object's "bite," particularly its ability to create a reflection of one's body and image and open this up for objectification and consumption. According to Dani, facing barbershop clients away from mirrors served both an instrumental and protective function:

> The barbers have the customer's back to the mirror because we work in the mirror, and we can
> see what the back of the haircut looks like. And you know, if you look in the mirror, you can see
> all of the imperfections; that's why we have their backs to the mirror.

Furthermore, some men that patronized hair salons also performed a form of mirror avoidance when facing a mirror by 1) looking down to the floor, 2) gazing upon their stylist or their work, or 3) focusing their gaze on specific objects or persons in the mirror's reflection. Through these avoidance maneuvers, hetero-masculine, working class clients were either shielded from or avoided potentially feminizing (and homosexualizing) dangers produced by gazing into a mirror, namely objectification and vanity pleasures (see Bordo, 1999; Culbertson, 1998).

Unlike their counterparts, engaging mirrors was a day-to-day feature of salon life, implicating hairstylists' embodied be-longings within a job defined by aestheticism. Given their situatedness within the beauty and fashion industry, Debra Gimlin (1996) observed that "the hairstylist, in essence, bridges the gap between those who pursue beauty and those who define what beauty is; she [sic] becomes the route to those standards and the embodiment of them in everyday life" (p. 505; see also Attwood, 1981; Black, 2004). As such, hairstylists commonly described occupational pressures on their bodies to "look good," describing two-fold aesthetic demands of knowledgability (being informed of current hair and fashion trends) and representation (embodying a beautiful, fashionable, and attractive body/image). As Alex described, clients "…are there for you to make them look good, so they're there based on the assumption that you know what looks good… You have to be a little up with fashion, at least as it pertains to hairstyles…celebrity hairdos." However, aesthetic knowledgeability was only part of the equation; many hairstylists commented that looking good was a beautiful burden displayed by their working bodies. Regarding this need to embody beauty, Patricia said, "There's a lot of weight placed on your appearance, your dress, and it felt like to me, like a performance in the sense that I'm on display, that I have to dress a certain way to get clients." Sarah summed up this beautiful body norm by saying, "You're a hairdresser, you're supposed to look good for your client who you're telling to look good."

Although similar to the embodied demands of other female-dominated, service jobs, hairstylists described their routine engagement with mirrors as amplifying appearance awareness and pressures. In particular, their mundane engagement with mirrors produced a disciplinary relationality, a constant reminder that they must maintain a beautiful body/image. Jess, for instance, said, "I think it [the mirror] made me more aware of my physical appearance," and although Jess has retired her scissors, she remembered, "It is hard to be in front of a mirror all day and to see, to look at yourself all day, and you're right there and it sucks if you're having a bad hair day or a bad whatever." In engaging mirrors, hairstylists' reflections produced an ongoing invitation to gaze upon and objectify their bodies, a constant reminder that "you need to be on top of your game. You're expected to look at certain way" (Jess).

Although many hairstylists described their sensuous engagement with salon mirrors as "hard" or "difficult," Sarah described these relations as "a nightmare," an inescapable, painful/pleasurable self-surveillance:

> It's a nightmare….If you're a little bloated, a little bags under your eyes, you cannot escape
> yourself, physically, all day. You can't hide from your own ugliness all day, you know.
> Conversely, if you happen to look good that day, it's a really fun day (laughs). "Wow! I still got
> it!" Or, "I'm gonna have to kill myself," you know, "I'm gonna have to go under the needle or

the laser," or you start thinking about those things because you're in that mirror. You just see it.
It's emphasized. It's hard. It is hard.

Through this lens, the ongoing engagement of salon mirrors (re)produced masochistic be-longings within hairstyling. For instance, materially engaging mirrors produced painful self-surveillance, or as Sarah commented, "You can't hide from your ugliness all day." Indeed her bad days were framed within suicidal imagery or talk of cosmetic surgery to medically correct her lack of beauty. Comparatively, the mirror's relationality also generated pleasurable moments, such that, when Sarah looked good, the mirror's reflection was gratifying and enjoyable—a "really fun day." As such, the mirror (re)produced masochistic pains and pleasures that informed desires to belonging or "fit in" the aesthetic norms of hairstyling. In particular, sentiments of "Wow! I've still got it!" reflect how longing and pleasure actively shape (or reward) appropriate material embodiments of labor (Bell, 1999; Burrell, 1992; Gherardi, 1995; Pringle, 1989a, b; Probyn, 1996) as well as the role of objects in materializing these relationalities.

Formed within these masochistic relations were a variety of navigational, appearance management strategies that hairstylists employed both outside and at work. Outside of the salon, many stylists performed several forms of body work, devoting "time, effort and resources to maintaining a particular state of embodiment" (Hancock & Tyler, 2000, p. 85; Shilling, 1993). Frequently, hairstylists used body work to navigate beautiful body/image pressures through 1) regular, physical exercise (weight training, running, or aerobics/Pilates), 2) maintaining and embodying a "sense of style" (including staying up to date on pop culture, fashion trends and shopping for clothing and accessories that represented current fashions); and perhaps above all, 3) maintaining a beautiful appearance (including having one's hair cut, colored, or styled regularly and employing appearance enhancing procedures like teeth whitening, facial or eye creams, tanning, and so forth). At the salon, hairstylists also worked on their bodies, resulting in a common theme of "touching up" one's body/image. Importantly, this pattern of touching up was facilitated by hairstylists' daily engagement with mirrors, illuminating their longing to maintain, throughout the workday, an attractive appearance.

Shawn spoke into this pattern, saying, "You'll find stylists that do it [look into the mirror] all day long…They're always picking or doing something or chang[ing], you know, their hair through[out] the day." Touching up included a variety of physical appearance adjustments, such as touching up one's make-up (applying more blush, eye shadow, lipstick, or lip liner) or monitoring and addressing appearance shortcomings (picking at facial blemishes or using hairspray to stop static electricity in a blouse). Additionally, hairstylists frequently touched up their hair, which varied from minor yet very frequent episodes of restyling their hair to more rare, time and energy consuming performances of hair applications. Regarding these more extreme touch up's at Salon Bliss, Amy, a part-time hairstylist assistant, engaged in a four-hour long hair application and style. Amy's touch up, being the most extreme, included her applying a conditioning treatment to her hair, washing it out, blow drying her hair, affixing 8 round brushes into her hair for approximately 30 minutes (meant to give hair more body), a repeated session of blow drying while removing these round brushes, and the use of several hair products, including volumizing tonic and hairspray, to style her hair. Importantly, hairstylists' body work and touching up illuminated not only the work aimed at achieving a lean or athletic, youthful, fashionable, and attractive appearance (Holiday & Thompson, 2001; Longhurst, 2001; Trethewey, 1999), but also the sociomateriality of longing to belong within a job (Hancock & Tyler, 2000; Shilling, 1993).

As this theme illustrates, common, everyday objects like mirrors were active participants in the material constitution of desires, here specifically masochism. On the one hand, barbers avoided these relations by turning themselves and their clients away from barbershop mirrors, and in doing so, protected hetero-masculine, working-class clients from the mirror's painful and pleasurable "bit." On the other hand, hairstylists' engagement with mirrors created a masochistic field of desire that fueled workers' longings to belong within aesthetic, hetero-feminine, middle class norms of their job, reflected in their body work and touching up their appearance. As such, the pleasures produced within object relations (dis)organized the inclusions and exclusions of a job.

Object Pleasures, Segregated Job Be-longings

This essay proposed a critical investigation of the complex material relations among job segregation, objects, and belongings. My central aim was to further organization and communication studies of materiality, first, by drawing critical attention to the "work" of objects in constituting job segregation, and second, by illuminating the embodied be-longings of jobs. In closing, I consider how my analysis of mirror relations across barbering and hairstyling generates segregated jobs, bodies, and work identities.

First, the above analysis illustrates how objects, rather than mere tools or supports for work practices, are active political players in the (dis)organization of jobs. Drawing on the work of Winner (1986), Suchman (2005) echoes, "Artifacts have politics, enacted not on the grand scale but in the micro politics of everyday organizational life" (p. 394). Indeed the pattern of avoiding/engaging mirrors illustrates the political work of object relations. Although difference discourses frame barbering and hairstyling as respectively masculine or feminine jobs (Black, 2002, 2004; Gimlin, 1996; Lawson, 1999; Stevenson, 2001), the relationalities of barbers, hairstylists, and mirrors constituted the everyday "doings" of differences, jobs, and work identities (Kondo, 1990; West & Fenstermaker, 1995; West & Zimmerman, 1987), especially in differentiating appearance norms and job embodiment. The relationality of avoiding or engaging mirrors differentiated both occupation's situated management of aesthetic and affect work, but also the embodied performance of each job as different. Objects then actively constitute and materialize the everyday belongings of job segregation.

As active yet contingent participants in power relations (Knorr-Cetina, 1997), barbershop and salon mirrors were not necessarily friendly s-objects; quite to the contrary, mirrors "bit[e] back" at barbers and hairstylists (Engeström & Blacker, 2005, p. 310), particularly in their generation of erotic relations (Gherardi, 1995; Pringle, 1989a, b). In particular, barbers and hairstylists' avoidance/engagement with mirrors spoke to underlying sexual dynamics generated by mirrors. On the one hand, barbers' avoidance of mirrors, especially opportunities to gaze upon one's reflected body/image, illustrated a complicated navigation of potentially feminizing processes like objectification or vanity. Compared to hairstyling's aesthetic approach to hair, mirror avoidance materially framed barbers' work as more so "practical" or "functional," namely in its creation of body/image detachment as well as limiting its visual consumption to only one, brief engagement with a mirror. On the other hand, hairstylists' engagement with mirrors encouraged those sexual dynamics that barbering sought to avoid; given its emphasis on aestheticism (Black, 2002, 2004; Gimlin, 1996; Lawson, 1999), bodily objectification or vanity cut directly to the pleasurable experience of receiving a hairstyle. Put differently, the mirror's "biting back" participated in a broader organization of pleasure created in hairstyling as a commodity (i.e., the consumption of hairstyle as a beautiful body/image transformation).

Even still, the "biting back" of mirrors was particularly evident in how engaging mirrors impacted hairstylists' working bodies. In particular, stylists' engagement with mirrors produced affective embodied engagements marked by pain and/or pleasure. Precipitated by occupational pressures to represent aestheticism, hairstylists' working bodies were more so aesthetic objects labored on both outside of work, namely through body work practices (Hancock & Tyler, 2000; Shilling, 1993), and at work, particularly mundane practices of "touching up" their appearance. Importantly, hairstylists' relations with mirrors, marked either by a painful lack of beauty or its pleasurable achievement, constituted situated moments of longing to belong; indeed the mirror's relationality precipitated, in part, a constant (self-)disciplinary reminder that to belong to this job one needs to represent aestheticism and attractiveness. In these ways, the mirror's "bite" facilitated not only embodied efforts to belong to the job of hairstyling, but also materialized erotics that propel longings to belong.

These findings offer important contributions to organization and communication studies of materiality, particularly to the (re)production of job segregation. If as Gherardi (1995) states, "sexuality [is] that dynamic of organizing which is left unsaid" (p. 42), then ignoring the important role of material pleasures or erotics is a damaging scholarly shortcoming. Although difference discourses clearly segregate jobs by constructing artificially stable myths about their belonging, the materiality of work, particularly its object relations and pleasures, also constitute the differencing of jobs, especially in shaping workers' longings to belong. Seen in this light, the process of segregation is deeply material—it cuts directly to workers' embodied be-longings to a job, not dis-embodied sets of identification, and the matters also constituted within the labor's performance. Importantly, the sexual dimensions of labor, such as mirror's generation of pleasure or pain, are productive to segregating work be-longings. Put differently, the pleasures or pains of work, generated in part by objects, summon differently gendered, race, or classed bodies to jobs by virtue of the gratifications they afford in work practices (Acker, 1998; Hacker, 1989). This contribution is particularly relevant to efforts to diversify occupations (Reskin, 1988; Roos & Reskin, 1992; Wright & Jacobs, 1994). Efforts to desegregate occupations must not only attend to their discursive construction, but also deeply engage the material conditions of that job. Indeed even something as banal as facing away or toward a mirror generates erotics that can summon or avert workers to a job.

In the end, this essay demonstrated the important role of objects in materially constituting and segregating jobs and work be-longings. Based on a comparative study of barbering and hairstyling, everyday objects, such as mirrors, "worked" with and on organizational members, particularly in segregating jobs and work identities. In the wake our emphasis on

discourse, scholars should not overlook the important material dimensions of organization and communication, especially objects and their pleasures. We may find that such oversights, as we gaze and reflect upon them, will bite back at us.

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[i] Space restrictions prohibit me from developing two related themes, but briefly these included the situated production of intimacies by mirror relations as well as homoerotic desires generated by the barbers' electric massager. Both themes support the role of object pleasures in segregating belongings as well as pointing to the queerness of objects in disrupting segregated jobs.