Institutionalized Affect in Organizations: Not an Oxymoron

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Can affective states – emotions, moods, and sentiments – become institutionalized in an organization such that they become "objective" factors that are exterior to any one person and resistant to change? We argue that the answer is *yes*, through intertwined top-down and bottom-up processes that shape an organization's (or subunit's) affective climate and affective culture, resulting in a dynamic equilibrium. The top-down processes include leadership, attraction-selection-attrition, and socialization, coupled with the physical, task, and social context, while the bottom-up process of emergence occurs via affective events, appraisal, affective sharing, and affect schemas. We also consider how identification with the organization (or subunit) enhances the likelihood of institutionalized affect. We conclude that institutionalized affect in organizations is far from an oxymoron.

Keywords: Emotion in organizations, Emotions, Groups, Institutional theory, Leadership, Organizational climate, Social construction

In the early 1990s, the field of organizational studies was largely in the thrall of cognitive and behaviorist thinking. Affect was largely seen as a disruptive force or epiphenomenon of more important matters. This dismissive stance was a byproduct of the widespread view that organizations were "intendedly rational" (March & Simon, 1958: 170) enterprises, and affect – those unruly feelings – were annoying grains of sand that threatened to mar the smoothly operating gears (Domagalski, 1999; Fineman, 1999). But it was self-evident to us that organizational life – like all of life – was saturated with emotion, with myriad implications for every corner of management.

Fast forward over 25 years since we planted our little flag in the shifting sands of organizational scholarship (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995), and research on emotions and mood in organizational settings has come a very long way (not that we're claiming any credit!). Generalized statements about emotion have given way to particularized research on specific emotions, from joy to jealousy and hope to fear (e.g., Andiappan & Dufour, 2020; Warr & Clapperton, 2010). An overarching distinction between positive and negative emotions and moods has continued to prove fruitful, although still often overlooked is the downside of the so-called positive (e.g., pride curdling into hubris) and the upside of the so-called negative (e.g., disgust motivating constructive change; Lindebaum & Jordan, 2014). More attention has been paid to the affective realms of the nonconscious in work settings, in addition to continuing research on the role of psychodynamics (e.g., Petriglieri & Petriglieri, 2020). Methodological developments continue apace. Of particular importance to the practice of management is the application of emotion and mood to many specific facets of organizational life, such as negotiation, entrepreneurship, and organizational change (e.g., Cardon, Foo, Shepherd, & Wiklund, 2012; Olekalns & Druckman, 2015).

Most important for *our* purposes here is that affect has also gone multi-level, with recognition of the role of individuals, dyads, networks, groups, organizations, and industries (Ashkanasy, 2003; Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011; Barsade, Brief, & Spataro, 2003; Knight, Menges, & Bruch, 2018; van der Löwe & Parkinson, 2014). This has culminated in research on "affective climate" and "affective culture" (defined below), which begs a very intriguing question that is the focus of our paper: given the transitory nature of emotions and moods, how do organizations (and subunits[1]) come to have a more or less stable affective climate and affective culture? How, in short, does affect become *institutionalized* in organizations?

Following Zucker (1977), institutionalization refers to affective states: (1) becoming more or less "objective" features of the workplace (i.e., there is intersubjective consensus that the states exist); (2) that are exterior to any one person (i.e., they are properties of the collective rather than of specific individuals and may persist despite individual turnover); and (3) resistant to change. It may seem very odd to think of emotions and moods as stable properties of a collective that are independent of any one individual, and yet that is exactly what we believe occurs. Indeed, Moisander, Hirsto, and Fahy (2016: 966; see also Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen, & Smith-Crowe, 2014, and Voronov & Weber, 2016) contend that "Institutions are partly defined and upheld by emotions."

However, as Menges and Kilduff (2015: 847) state:

> Because emotions are intimate ephemeral experiences, and because the mantra in organizational behavior research is that emotions become similar in groups through micro-processes involving emotion contagion, there is widespread resistance among organizational behavior scholars to the idea that emotions converge at the levels of departments, organizations, alliances, or even entire industries.

Our analysis, then, of the institutionalization of affect is meant to help address this "resistance" by developing an argument that applies to multiple levels of analysis.

Our efforts in this regard build on the considerable progress that has already been made in explicating how affective states arise and become embedded in affective climates and cultures from a confluence of top-down and bottom-up processes (e.g., Barsade & Gibson, 1998; Collins, Lawrence, Troth, & Jordan, 2013; Gamero & González-Romá, 2020; Kelly & Barsade, 2001; Menges & Kilduff, 2015; von Scheve & Ismer, 2018; Voronov & Vince, 2012). Our contribution is to offer a more integrative model (albeit not an exhaustive one, given that almost everything of consequence impacts affect) of how the institutionalization of affect occurs and of the dynamic equilibrium that results between the top-down and bottom-up forces.

After defining our key constructs – affective states, affective climate, and affective culture – we discuss how the institutionalization of affect unfolds. We first focus on selected top-down processes, specifically, the intertwined roles of leadership, attraction-selection-attrition, socialization, physical context, and task and social context. We then turn to the bottom-up processes, focusing on the process of emergence via affective events, appraisal, affective sharing, and affect schemas. We then discuss how these top-down and bottom-up processes result in a dynamic equilibrium. Finally, we consider how identification with the organization (or subunit) facilitates institutionalized affect. Given space constraints, we will only touch on individual differences related to these processes, specifically trait affectivity. Our major model is summarized in Figure 1.

Insert Figure 1 about here

Affective States, Affective Climate, and Affective Culture

Given that "[d]efinitional struggles have long characterized emotion research" (Menges & Kilduff, 2015: 849), let's clarify our key constructs. Affective states include not only emotions and moods, but also sentiments (Ekman & Davidson, 1994). Emotions are specific feelings, such as joy and anger, that arise in reaction to specific stimuli, such as a promotion or customer insult. By definition, emotions are inherently transitory, although, as we will argue, they may become regularized in affective climate. Moods, defined as more diffuse or generalized feeling states that range from positive to negative, are not as directly associated with specific stimuli and are not conventionally thought to be long-lasting, although they too may become regularized in affective climate. Sentiments are "valenced appraisals of an object" (Kelly & Barsade, 2001: 105) such as job satisfaction, trust, and group cohesion. Much of the organizational research on affective states in the 20th Century focused on sentiments (particularly job satisfaction), until the "affective revolution" (Barsade et al., 2003: 3).

Affective climate refers to "the dominant affective tones, if any, of the organization or a given subunit" (Ashforth & Saks, 2002: 354), where affective tone is "consistent positive and negative feelings [and sentiments] held in common" (Knight et al., 2018: 191; see also Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017; Collins et al., 2013; Gamero, González-Romá, & Peiró, 2008; George, 1996). Affective climate typically includes regularized emotions, moods, and sentiments. First, recurring stimuli foster recurring emotions, which come to be expected by individuals. For example, the ongoing behaviors of abusive supervisors may foster fear and anger. Thus, the organization (or subunits) may come to be described by members as a generally fearful and angry place to work (Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011). Second, moods are more indirect than emotions and can follow as an affective residue (Morris, 1989), giving rise to an

affective tone that – following the circumplex model of affect (Ashkanasy & Härtel, 2014; Yik, Russell, & Steiger, 2011) – varies in valence (positive to negative) and intensity (e.g., George, 1990). For example, a workplace where happy events frequently occur is likely to foster an affective tone of relatively intense positivity. Third, socially constructed evaluations of common workplace practices and experiences foster abiding sentiments. Suggestive evidence is provided by Schneider, Hanges, Smith, and Salvaggio (2003), who aggregated job satisfaction ratings to the organizational level and found significant between-organization differences.

Affective culture refers to "the dominant values, beliefs, assumptions, and norms of the organization or a given subunit regarding affective issues, together with the symbolic vehicles for conveying these attributes" (Ashforth & Saks, 2002: 353; see also Ashkanasy & Härtel, 2014; Barsade & O'Neill, 2016). For instance, organizational members may generally hold that experiencing and expressing positive emotions, moods, and sentiments is good (value), that positive affective states serve the organization's mission of customer service (belief), that all members are capable of experiencing and expressing positive affective states (assumption), and that members should therefore do so (norm). Following Ashforth and Saks (2002), affective cultures include four kinds of norms for the experience and expression of affect: (1) framing rules that guide sensemaking by "ascrib[ing] definitions or meanings to situations" (Hochschild, 1979: 566); (2) feeling rules that "specify the range, intensity, duration, and object of emotions that should be experienced in a given situation" (Ashforth & Saks, 2002: 355; see Hochschild, 1979, 1983); (3) display rules that guide the expression of affect (Ekman, 1973; Hochschild, 1983); and (4) interaction rules that guide the use of affective expression to fulfill strategic, task, and relational goals (cf. Waldron, 1994). Ashforth and Saks (2002: 355) argue that framing rules tend to shape the other three, and offer an example that illustrates all four rules in practice:

Hafferty (1991) describes how medical students are implicitly taught that emotions are a sign of weakness because they compromise objectivity (framing rule). Thus, students learn to mask feelings such as anxiety or disgust (display rule) or to suppress them altogether (feeling rule) and to approach patients with some detachment (interaction rule).

Given the galvanizing power of values, norms, and beliefs, "affect culture would represent the 'why' regarding affect behaviors – beliefs about why employees should engage in specific affect behaviors – whereas affect climate would represent the 'what'" (Parke & Seo, 2017: 336). Or, as Menges and Kilduff (2015) put it, if affective culture is *prescriptive*, affective climate is *descriptive*. For example, whereas an affective culture may prescribe that organizational members experience and express positive affective states, the affective climate would reflect if they actually did so such that a prevailing tone could be said to exist. As we will argue, affective climate and culture tend to be mutually reinforcing, as the culture sets the context and "ground rules" for the experience and expression of affect, which tend to crystallize into a climate, which in turn tends to reinforce or modify the culture (Ashforth & Saks, 2002). That said, Ashkanasy and Härtel (2014; see also Ashkanasy & Dorris, 2017; Chatman & O'Reilly, 2016) argue that affective cultures tend to be more stable than affective climates precisely because they are rooted in values and beliefs.

Affective Climate and Culture from the Top Down

"Top down" implies deliberate attempts by organizational representatives – typically management – to instill organizationally-desired affective states along with an overarching affective climate and culture. But what is intended may not be what is received and, indeed, may provoke a backlash (Gabriel, 1998; Kunda, 2006). Further, organizations vary widely in how

deliberate they are (Barsade & O'Neill, 2016), with many affective states, climates, and cultures emerging in organic and quite unintended ways. We focus in this section on the more or less deliberate processes associated with leadership, attraction-selection-attrition, socialization, physical context, and task and social context, and we focus in the next section on the more reactive and organic bottom-up processes.

Leadership

Leaders influence their followers through both close and distant pathways (Waldman & Yammarino, 1999). The former involves direct interpersonal interactions with followers, whereas the latter involves speeches, vision statements, etc. Through these pathways, leadership can "cascade" across hierarchical levels, conveying the values, norms, and so on that constitute the emergent or aspirational affective culture, along with the affective states that may crystallize into an affective climate. This cascade of influence and affect is likely to be particularly powerful in new, small, and family organizations, often "imprinting" the affective climate and culture beyond the tenure of the leader (Stanley, 2010). Other contingency factors, such as state ownership of the organization, may also influence the degree to which leaders can exert influence on the organizational culture (Tsui, Zhang, Wang, Xin, & Wu, 2006; see also Schein, 1985).

Leaders guide followers' emotions by their framing and interpretation of events, by their statements of managerial and leadership principles, by creating norms that guide behavior, and by role-modeling the appropriate emotional displays. As Berson, Oreg, and Dvir's (2008) results demonstrate, CEO values (self-direction, security, and benevolence) can have an important influence on organizational culture (innovation, bureaucratic, and supportive), which in turn can influence organizational outcomes (sales growth, efficiency, and employee satisfaction).

Through role-modeling, leaders guide their followers as they perform a wide variety of emotionally intense roles, such as carrying out performance evaluations (Menges & Kilduff, 2015; Waldman & Yammarino, 1999). For example, a top leader who expresses a "get tough" attitude may inspire his or her managers to express tough emotions when doing performance evaluations (e.g., see the leader profile of Jack Welch in Humphrey, 2013), whereas leaders who model kindness may inspire their followers to show caring and compassion to subordinates with problems (e.g., see "It Pays to be Nice," about Linda Kaplan Thaler and Robin Koval, in Humphrey, 2013).

***Charisma and emotional contagion*.** How more precisely do leaders communicate their interpretation of events, express norms, and act as role models? The early research on charisma – an element of transformational leadership – emphasized the emotional aspects of charismatic communication (e.g., Weber, 1947; see also Conger, 1991, 1999). Rhetorical devices such as stories, metaphors, and emotionally arousing language inspire followers such that emotionally engaging communications are often more influential than dry statistics (Bass & Riggio, 2006/2007; Conger, 1991). For example, a study of the inaugural addresses of US presidents found that those deemed charismatic used almost twice as many metaphors as did the non-charismatic ones, and their speeches were rated as more inspiring (Mio, Riggio, Levin, & Reese, 2005). Studies indicate that these emotionally arousing displays impact the affective states of followers and group members (Bono & Ilies, 2006; Naidoo & Lord, 2008; Sy, Choi, & Johnson, 2013).

Emotional displays work in part by creating emotional contagion between leaders and followers (Barsade, 2002; Sy, Côté, & Saavedra, 2005). As Menges and Kilduff (2015: 866) put it, "leaders are potentially powerful sources of large-scale emotion contagion, as leaders'

expressions and interpretations of events can affect followers even in the absence of direct interaction." Because the workplace can be filled with frustrating, emotionally-challenging events, Humphrey and his colleagues argued that leaders often use emotional contagion to help followers change negative feelings into more productive affective states (Humphrey, 2002, 2008; Humphrey, Pollack, & Hawver, 2008). For example, McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) found that transformational leaders improved their followers' performance by increasing their feelings of optimism and reducing their feelings of frustration. Likewise, Pirola-Merlo, Härtel, Mann, and Hirst (2002) found that effective leaders improved R&D teams' performance by helping members cope with the negative moods that occurred with everyday work problems, and that their improved team affective climate was responsible for their higher levels of performance. Conversely, Chiang, Chen, Liu, Akutsu, and Wang (2021) found that authoritarian leadership was associated with a team affective climate of suppression (particularly when the leaders themselves suppressed emotion), which in turn was associated with team emotional exhaustion and low performance, and Menges and Kilduff (2015) argue that leaders who suppress the expression of negative affect may foster an affective climate of fear, anger, and mistrust.

Emotional contagion processes work best when leaders create interactive empathic bonds with followers, and these bonds can help team members emerge as leaders (Kellett, Humphrey, & Sleeth, 2002, 2006). Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2004) refer to this process as *resonance*. Leaders enact resonance when they "are attuned to people's feelings" and make followers feel that they "are on the same wavelength emotionally"; this synchronization allows leaders to move "people in a positive emotional direction" (Goleman et al., 2004: 19-20). For instance, Toegel, Kilduff, and Anand (2013) found that empathic managers in a recruiting agency were able to guide their subordinates' appraisal patterns to be consistent with group norms.

Leader-member exchange models of leadership. Leader-member exchange (LMX) models also give particular importance to the nature of the emotional bond between leaders and followers. According to LMX theory, leaders have unique, one-on-one relationships with each member of their team (Graen, Novak, & Sommerkamp, 1982). With one member, a leader may have a friendly and informal relationship, whereas with another member the relationship may be more formal and purely task-oriented. According to this perspective, leaders reward high performing members by granting them in-group status and a more friendly relationship, along with a variety of perks. This is why it is called an exchange model. Although early models of LMX focused on task- and instrumentally-related exchanges, the LMX scale developed by Liden and Maslyn (1998) explicitly included "affect," measured as the degree of liking and friendship, as one of the four LMX subscales. The other three dimensions are "contribution" (i.e., task performance), "loyalty," and "professional respect." In addition to expressing positive emotions that indicate warmth and friendship, leaders can also use emotional displays (even negative ones, such as irritation at poor performance) to support task-oriented behaviors and to express task leadership (Humphrey et al., 2008; Kellett et al., 2006). Thus, leader emotional displays may be important to all four dimensions of LMX. Loyalty and professional respect may be especially sensitive to emotional displays because these are usually conveyed through body language, facial expressions, vocal tones, and other forms of emotional displays.

LMX theorists postulate that the development of LMX relations is an emergent process that depends on the evolving behavior of both leaders and followers. Thus, while there are top-down aspects of LMX, it is also highly relevant to our discussion of bottom-up processes (Herman, Troth, Ashkanasy, & Collins, 2018; Tse, Troth & Ashkanasy, 2016), as we note in a later section.

Authenticity and authentic leadership. Although leaders' emotional displays may be most effective when they are authentic, Gardner, Fischer, and Hunt (2009) theorized that this depends on whether their authentic displays are consistent with social and organizational norms. For example, a director was criticized by his CEO for having a poor performing team, putting him in a foul mood and ready to "pick a fight" (Burch, Humphrey, & Batchelor, 2013). The director called in his business development officer with the worst performance. Although the director had planned to have a calm and reasoned discussion, he instead displayed inappropriate anger and created a "chain reaction of collateral damage" among his subordinates (Burch et al., 2013: 121; Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008). In contrast, another leader responded to a crisis with emotional displays of confidence and optimism. This CEO received a phone call about a lawsuit that had the potential to ruin the company. In response, he "walked back outside where his vice presidents were gathered, relayed the details of the phone call, lifted a glass, and toasted the moment 'that would define the organization'" (Burch et al., 2013: 121). A desire to rise to the challenge spread throughout the organization. Because leaders often experience the same confidence-threatening reactions to bad news as do their followers, leaders may use emotional labor tactics, particularly deep acting, to summon the appropriate emotions to convey to their followers (Humphrey, 2013; Humphrey et al., 2008).

Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2005) theorized that followers respond to authentic leaders by feeling high positive affect and low negative affect. In a study of organizational change, authentic leadership was found to promote trust and positive emotions (Agote, Aramburu, & Lines, 2016). Moreover, authentic leadership reduced negative emotions through its influence on trust. Thus, authentic leaders may have an advantage in institutionalizing their changes because it is likely that followers are more likely to maintain them when they feel positive emotions and

trust that the changes are beneficial.

Effective organizational change depends upon employees using their creativity to support the change. In contrast to authentic leaders, abusive leaders tend to reduce the creativity of their employees (because they suffer sleep deprivation and emotional exhaustion; Han, Harms, & Bai, 2017). These findings are supported by reviews that have consistently shown that abusive leadership contributes to lower performance, psychological distress, and lower well-being, including sleep deprivation (Martinko, Harvey, Brees, & Mackey, 2013).

Institutionalization of the affective aspects of leadership. Although Weber (1947) discussed the "routinization" or institutionalization of charisma in organizations, Conger (1999) observed that almost no research has been done since Weber's time. For our purposes, charisma and the emotional aspects of leadership are institutionalized when the leader's affect-related mission, values, and displays are incorporated into the affective climate and culture of the organization or subunit. This is powerfully demonstrated when the affective climate and culture survive the transfer of leadership. Conger reviewed a case study by Trice and Beyer (1986) on two social movement organizations. In Alcoholics Anonymous, the founder's charisma was routinized, whereas in the National Council on Alcoholism, it was not and the affective culture changed when leadership passed to her successor. In Alcoholics Anonymous, the routinization was abetted by traditional managerial functions, such as the establishment of an administrative bureaucracy separate from the founder. Perhaps the most important elements concerned the transmission of the founder's mission and values using emotionally engaging stories and value statements that were repeated and incorporated into the fabric of the organization. This was aided by the publication of the founder's biography, which also gave his 12-step plan in an inspiring and emotionally engaging manner. His followers could relate their own personal struggles with

alcoholism to the founder's life story, and thus identify with his redemption. Moreover, the founder had created rituals and ceremonies that allowed members to express their emotions and tell their life stories, and thus the emotional aspects of the organization became institutionalized into the organization's core operating procedures. In comparison, in the National Council of Alcoholism, these shared emotional rituals were lacking, and the founder did not have a written biography or life story that could be used to perpetuate her mission, values, and memory.

It might seem that the above processes apply best to non-profits, social movements, and similar organizations. However, Beyer and Browning (1999) applied Trice and Beyer's (1986) elements of institutionalization to the charismatic leadership of an outstanding corporate leader, Bob Noyce. Noyce was co-inventor of the integrated circuit and had co-founded and headed two corporations – Fairchild Semiconductor and Intel – and also led the semiconductor industry association, SEMATECH. Noyce was able to institutionalize the affective elements of his charismatic leadership style so that the affective culture that he created survived his death. He transferred charisma to his followers by using democratic, participative leadership techniques, and he created an egalitarian environment that empowered others to continue the mission.

Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA)

Schneider's (1987) attraction-selection-attrition (ASA) model holds that organizations gravitate toward greater homogeneity among their members by attracting and selecting similar people via recruitment processes, and losing those who differ via voluntary and involuntary attrition processes. These human resource management practices apply readily to organizationally-desired affective dispositions (individual differences) and affective experiences (Collins et al., 2013; Ellis & Bauer, 2020; Knight et al., 2018). Regarding affective dispositions, George (1990), drawing on ASA and socialization theories, found that department members in a

large department store had similar levels of trait positive affectivity and negative affectivity. Further, these levels were associated with departmental positive and negative affective tone, respectively. To paraphrase Schneider (1987), the people appeared to make the affective climate.

Regarding affective experiences, Voronov and Weber (2016) note that life experiences, gender, parents' occupations, social class, and even ethnic and religious background foster certain affective competencies (e.g., Illouz, 2007).[2] It seems likely that these competencies in turn predispose individuals to compatible affective climates and cultures. For example, Cahill (1999, quoted by Schweingruber & Berns, 2005: 680) found that mortuary students who had "lived, played, and/or worked in and around funeral homes" developed a familiarity and interest in the profession and, presumably, its distinctive affective culture. Intriguingly, Reger (2004) notes that affective experiences may motivate individuals to join social movement organizations in order to *channel* the associated affect. Reger found that anger and alienation often motivated women to join the National Organization for Women and mobilize for societal change.

Organizations may thus proactively recruit individuals, via attraction-selection, with desired affective dispositions and experiences/competencies. For example, during job interviews, prospective social workers might be asked to provide behavioral examples of their empathy, would-be animal control officers may be required to witness a euthanasia to gauge if they can handle the practice, and would-be project managers may be assessed on their emotional intelligence (e.g., Ashforth, Kreiner, Clark, & Fugate, 2017). Ultimately, via attrition, individuals who do not resonate with the affective culture and climate may leave. For instance, a salesperson who often displays irritation toward customers may be fired, while a bill collector who is unwilling to express the prescribed level of irritation toward debtors may resign (e.g., Sutton, 1991). The upshot of ASA practices that are at least implicitly oriented to certain affective

dispositions and experiences is that the likelihood of institutionalizing an affective climate and culture (if only at the subunit level) is greatly increased.

Socialization

Ashforth and Saks (2002: 342) distinguish between "socialization *via* emotion [affect]" and "socialization *of* emotion [affect]." The former refers to learning through the appraisal of specific events that arouse affect, and will be pursued later under "Affective Climate and Culture from the Bottom Up." The latter refers to learning about and adapting to an organization's (or subunit's) affective climate and culture through more formalized socialization practices, and is our focus here. The intent of socialization *of* affect is to develop one's affective competencies vis-à-vis the affective climate and culture.

Socialization may entail learning (if only implicitly; Choi, 2018) how to utilize: (1) the framing rules by making sense of given situations – including one's own and others' affect – in certain preferred ways (cf. "organizational emotion [affect] scripts"; Gibson, 2008: 277); (2) the feeling and display rules by engaging in emotional labor (i.e., deep acting and surface acting; Grandey & Melloy, 2017; Hochschild, 1983) or, more generally, emotional regulation (Troth, Lawrence, Jordan, & Ashkanasy, 2018; Wharton, 2014); and (3) the interaction rules through "control moves" (cf. Goffman, 1969) that attempt to steer interactions to realize task goals. The stronger the affective climate and, especially, the affective culture, and the greater the interaction with customers and more powerful organizational members, the more intense and explicit the socialization of affect is likely to be.

The two primary means of socialization are formal practices and more informal on-the-job training. Formal practices reflect "institutionalized socialization," where newcomers are grouped together for training purposes, segregated from other organizational members for a

defined period, trained by veterans, follow a fixed sequence of steps and timelines, and are encouraged to adopt an organizationally-preferred sense of self (Choi, 2018; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Schweingruber and Berns (2005: 681) describe a week-long "emotional training" program (the company's term) for door-to-door book salespeople. Through instruction, sharing uplifting stories and personal narratives (to ignite "emotional purposes" [p. 690], the company's term), and engaging in role plays and positive self-talk, newcomers are taught to view everything as controllable and thus not be discouraged by rejections and other negative experiences (framing rule), are told of the importance of "controlling emotions" (p. 689; feeling rule) and projecting positive emotions (display rule), and learn how to interact with potential customers (interaction rules). Indeed, "managers have developed a set of practices for translating anything salespersons feel strongly about into reasons for selling books" (p. 701). It should be added that in the professions, such as law and nursing, institutionalized socialization is often conducted in professional schools and focuses on *occupational* affective climate and culture – which tends to generalize to the employing organizations, such as law firms and hospitals.

On-the-job training entails the social learning processes of observation, instruction, imitation, trial and error, feedback, and contingent rewards and punishments (Ashforth & Saks, 2002; Bandura, 1977). For example, a chain of English pubs eschewed the formal socialization of its service staff in favor of having them informally observe and emulate how their coworkers read customers' emotional cues and then interact accordingly (Seymour & Sandiford, 2005). Other practices included mentoring, trial and error, sharing stories and best practices (e.g., handling an unpleasant customer "with polite words and a 'wooden smile,'" p. 556), and providing social validation for employees' enactment of feeling and display rules. Interestingly, customers themselves also served as socialization agents.

The ASA processes discussed earlier are central to the effectiveness of socialization by recruiting and retaining individuals who are predisposed to the organization's affective messaging. The door-to-door book sales company is a good example: for every recruit who is galvanized by the heavy-handed indoctrination, it's a good bet that many non-recruits would be repelled by it. And indeed, socialization programs that attempt to manipulate affective states – a highly personal aspect of the self – have been found to polarize recruits (e.g., Peccei & Rosenthal, 2000).

Physical Context

Whereas leadership, ASA, and socialization are processes through which affective climate and culture are formed and maintained, physical context and task and social context refer to more or less chronic components of the workplace. The physical context has massive sensory effects on individuals' affective states (e.g., Spreitzer, Bacevice, & Garrett, 2019; Wasserman, Rafaeli, & Kluger, 2000; Zhong & House, 2012). When individuals enter a work setting, sight, sound, smell, and touch (but seldom taste) register myriad impressions (e.g., pleasing decorations, too noisy, cold temperature) that help inform a relatively holistic sense of the setting's ambience (e.g., Ashkanasy, Ayoko, & Jehn, 2014; Elsbach & Pratt, 2007; Spreitzer et al., 2019). The circumplex model of affect captures this holistic ambience in that it varies along both valence and intensity dimensions (Ashkanasy & Härtel, 2014; Yik et al., 2011). For example, a very pleasant work setting might have an aesthetically pleasing décor, comfortable furniture, air conditioning, greenery, personal space, music, and windows that overlook something appealing. Conversely, a very unpleasant setting might have a drab décor, rickety furniture, harsh lighting, intrusive noises, foul odors, dirty floors and equipment, and a hot and humid atmosphere. More distal elements of the physical context, such as the architecture,

geographical location, and accessibility of other amenities (e.g., a gym) are likely to exert a significant but weaker impact.

While our next section discusses job-based aspects of the task and social context, the physical context also has certain task and social implications that directly influence affect. These include busyness, spatial density and crowding, openness (e.g., private vs public workplaces), an organization-based workplace versus home or other workplace (e.g., client site, coffee shop), and differentiation (e.g., a front stage where interactions with customers occur and a backstage such as a breakroom where employees can relax) (e.g., Anderson, Kaplan, & Vega, 2015; Ashkanasy et al., 2014; Elfenbein, 2007; Rafaeli & Sutton, 1990). That said, individuals vary in how busy, dense, and open they prefer their workplaces – although there are limits to all three – and whether they prefer an organization-based workplace.

Assuming that aspects of the physical context are more or less chronic or at least recurring (e.g., high temperatures during the afternoon), then the emotions, moods, and sentiments that arise are likely to jell into an affective climate. That said, two factors are likely to strongly moderate the impact of the physical context on affect (cf. Ashkanasy et al. 2014). First, the more individuals can personalize their workplace – "display and arrange…artifacts and objects according to personal choices and desires" (Elsbach & Pratt, 2007: 198) – the more likely they are to perceive that it reflects not only their tastes but who they are (e.g., personal signifiers, group membership, preferred status; Byron & Laurence, 2015; Elsbach & Pratt, 2007). Elsbach (2003), for instance, described the creative lengths that employees went to in a nonterritorial setting (i.e., no permanently "owned" workspaces) to display their distinctiveness (e.g., displaying portable artifacts like family pictures, reconstructing a group territory). Second, the more individuals identify with the work being done, the more tolerant they are likely to be of

unpleasant aspects of the context that are thought to be integral to that work. For example, in the American TV show "Dirty Jobs," an obviously dedicated pig farmer described the food waste from the Las Vegas strip that he was sorting to slop his pigs: "It's beautiful to me" (Dirty jobs, 2020).

Task and Social Context

One of the most well-established findings in organizational studies is that the task and social context influence affective states. Regarding the task context, on the input side of the ledger we have job design and job crafting perspectives, job demands-resources theory, challenge and hindrance stressors, and person-job fit, among other contributors. On the throughput and output side (depending on whether an affective state is characterized as a mediator or outcome), we have intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, work engagement, meaningfulness and thriving, well-being, strain and burnout, and job satisfaction and organizational commitment, among other affective states. Not surprisingly, the key takeaway is that a task context that allows a personally desired level of complexity and challenge, which is not undone by hindrance stressors and insufficient resources, is associated with positive affective states (e.g., Alarcon, 2011; Cameron & Spreitzer, 2012; Gagné, 2014; Gonzalez-Mulé, Kim, & Ryu, 2020; Humphrey, 1985, 2000; Oldham & Fried, 2016; Podsakoff, LePine, & LePine, 2007; Tims, Derks, & Baake, 2016). Because the task context sets the parameters for what one does each day, it's hard to overstate its importance in shaping affect.

The social context refers to "the interpersonal interactions and relationships that are embedded in and influenced by the jobs, roles, and tasks that employees perform and enact" (Grant & Parker, 2009: 322). Given a near-universal need for belonging (Baumeister, 2012), the necessity for social interaction to accomplish interdependent tasks and teamwork, the relational

resources (e.g., social support, feedback) afforded by healthy workplace dyadic and group relationships (Grant & Parker, 2009), and the pain and suffering induced by toxic relationships (Frost, 2003), the social context is also vitally important to affective states. Moreover, as argued by social information processing theory, the perceived valence of the task context is at least somewhat socially constructed (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). For example, Pollock, Whitbread, and Contractor (2000) found that individuals' job satisfaction was predicted by both objective job characteristics and the job satisfaction of the coworkers with whom they interacted. Finally, social emotions, ranging from empathy and pride to shame and envy (e.g., Creed et al., 2014; Ganegoda & Bordia, 2019), and social sentiments ranging from confidence and trust to loyalty and group cohesion (Ma, Schaubroeck, & LeBlanc, 2019; Severt & Estrada, 2015), can only be experienced in social contexts. An asocial worklife is an impoverished worklife. Given the more or less chronic nature of both the task and social context, the affective states that ensue often become institutionalized as affective climate and culture.

In sum, the processes of leadership, ASA, and socialization, coupled with the physical, task, and social contexts, create a scaffolding for affective climate and culture. The fleshing out – and often the modification – of that scaffolding is the domain of bottom-up processes.

Affective Climate and Culture from the Bottom Up

As important as the organization is for creating the context and events that spur affective responses, "the overall organizational level may be too abstract to affect individual workers. Instead, emotion [affective] climate within workgroups should be the highest level of concern, for that is the highest level where a shared climate is likely to exist" (Lu, 2019: 109). That said, given the top-down processes discussed above, some evidence does indicate that affective convergence can occur in even large organizations (e.g., Knight et al., 2018; Menges, Walter,

Vogel, & Bruch, 2011). But bottom-up processes, focusing on dyads and smaller collectives, provide a very potent complement and, possibly, a counterweight.

Why? It's because individuals experience their organizational lives *locally*, amidst their coworkers, managers, and customers, typically in a certain physical setting (Ashforth & Rogers, 2012). And given the functional, structural, historical, and personnel diversity of subunits and teams in organizations of a reasonable size, a "generic" organizational affective climate and culture are likely to be instantiated in diverse ways across the organization (cf. Ashkanasy & Nicholson, 2003; Tiedens, Sutton, & Fong, 2004). For example, Martin, Knopoff, and Beckman (1998) describe how, in the face of the strong affective culture of relatively open emotional expression at The Body Shop, the marketing division nonetheless opted for a more traditional culture of affective self-control. Fineman (1999: 302) refers to "emotionalized zones" that "'permit' different types of emotional expression. These are not randomly distributed but exist in relation to each other, sometimes counterbalancing, sometimes complementing." Beyond local variations in leadership, ASA, and socialization processes, and physical, task, and social contexts, how does local instantiation occur?

Events as Triggers of Affect

Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) argues persuasively that workplace events give rise, via *appraisal*, to affective experiences. (See also Elfenbein's [2007] "integrated intrapersonal process framework" and Maitlis, Vogus, and Lawrence's [2013] discussion of affective sensemaking.) It appears that affective events have five major sources. First, they ensue from relatively chronic or ongoing attributes and practices, such as the physical context and task and social context mentioned earlier (e.g., Ashkanasy et al., 2014). Scholars have catalogued a variety of everyday events that catalyze emotion, such as receiving praise and being questioned

(e.g., Basch & Fisher, 2000; Fiebig & Kramer, 1998; Mignonac & Herrbach, 2004; see Ohly & Venz, 2021, for a review). Second, affective events stem from "time-out…episodes [that are] closely associated with work but placed outside the everyday working context" (Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989: 48). They can range from the simple and informal, such as Roy's (1959-60) classic study of ritualistic "banana time" in a manufacturing plant, to the complex and formal, such as a company-wide party or a high school pep rally. Third, affective events are associated with cyclical or periodic practices, often tied to task cycles, projects, and seasonal demands that are in turn entrained in organizational cycles (Ancona & Chong, 1996). Examples include the sense of urgency experienced by tax preparers as the tax deadline looms, and the sense of task engagement or flow experienced by athletes during a game (Jackson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Fourth, affective events ensue from relatively unique and often unpredictable circumstances, such as a major innovation or downsizing (e.g., Paterson & Cary, 2002). Finally, affective events can be self-generated, as when an individual proactively seeks a challenging assignment and, when granted, subsequently experiences exhilarations and frustrations from fulfilling that assignment. Further, Weiss and Beal (2005) note that a neglected feature of affective events theory is the notion of an emotion episode, where "a single event of affective significance [e.g., a corporate scandal] leads to the unfolding of a series of subevents, each with affective significance" leading to enduring affective arousal (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996: 41). As Ashkanasy (2003: 21) notes, "An employee who experiences a series of setbacks may ultimately end up seeing the episode in a positive light if the episode has a positive conclusion."

As the above examples suggest, affective events range from having a small – although possibly cumulative – impact on affect to a major impact. Event-driven affective experiences may in turn foster affect comparison processes (to make sense of one's own arousal; Bartel &

Saavedra, 2000) and affect-driven behaviors (e.g., gratefully thanking a coworker for her praise), and provide grist for longer-term sentiments (e.g., increased job satisfaction) and their associated behaviors. For example, Ashkanasy et al. (2014) describe the affective events likely to occur in open-plan offices, such as disruptions and territorial invasions, and their subsequent impact on attitudes and behaviors, such as interpersonal conflict and poor person-environment fit.

Appraisals aside, the experience of affect may foster *affective sharing*. When individuals experience strong emotions, they are inclined to share the experience with others, particularly their coworkers and network (e.g., Hadley, 2014). Following Rimé's (2009) review of affective sharing, individuals want to savor their positive emotions and make sense of and glean emotional support for their negative emotions. An affective culture typically provides a vocabulary and grammar for describing affective experiences, which in turn shape the social construction of those experiences, usually reinforcing the culture (Harré, 1986). For instance, Coupland, Brown, Daniels, and Humphreys (2008: 336) describe how college managers and administrators tended to downplay their descriptions of emotion, creating psychological distance between an affective event and their experience of it, whereas teachers – consistent with their own localized affective culture – tended to "upgrade" their descriptions.

Just as individuals are often motivated to share their affective experiences, others are generally interested in hearing about them because – as social beings connected to the setting – they are finely attuned to one another's affective states and what they may signify (Hareli, Rafaeli, & Parkinson, 2008; Van Kleef, 2008). Moreover, listeners are inclined to then recount affective experiences to still others (Harber & Cohen, 2005). By exercising empathy and sympathy, and experiencing emotional contagion (Barsade, Coutifaris, & Pillemer, 2018; Elfenbein, 2014), a sense of "emotional communion" (Rimé, 2009: 71; see also Zheng, Yu,

Fang, & Peng, 2020) and stronger social bonds tend to result (Elfenbein, 2007). Indeed, mere group attention can amplify the intensity of emotion independent of emotional contagion: "positive stimuli will feel more positive and negative stimuli will feel more negative" (Shteynberg et al., 2014: 1103; see also Collins, 2004). This sense of communion can even occur through computer-mediated communication, as participants socially construct events and pick up on affective cues (Menges & Kilduff, 2015). Thus, as Barsade and Knight (2015: 36) concluded, "Over the past 25 years of research, one key finding has emerged consistently – affect in groups develops toward homogeneity."

It should be noted that while these processes may occur with no specific goal other than to share affect and glean support and cohesion, it is also the case that individuals may be quite deliberate in fostering affect and regulating or feigning their own affect to do so (Clark, Pataki, & Carver, 1996; Hyde, Grieve, Norris, & Kemp, 2020). For example, an individual may want to lighten the mood of a workplace, arouse sympathy for themself, or foster friendships through self-disclosure. Thus, just as the top-down processes are typically enacted with guile, so too may bottom-up affective sharing and, for that matter, appraisal.

Finally, affective displays often trigger appraisal in observers ("why are they acting this way?"), typically leading to "complementary or situationally appropriate emotions of their own" (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008: 41; see also Van Kleef, 2014). For example, anger may arouse fear in observers, and grief may arouse pity. Repeated pairings (or more complicated sequences such as anger [person A] → fear [person B] → embarrassment [person A] → relief [person B]; Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008) give rise to the affect scripts mentioned earlier under Socialization.

Impact on affective climate and culture. Of particular interest here is how affective events, appraisal, affective sharing, and affect scripts influence affective climate and culture.

Given top-down processes, individuals may encounter not only similar events (e.g., harsh one-on-one performance appraisals) but common events (e.g., a flat bonus for all employees). Further, individuals typically look to similar and proximal others – particularly coworkers and network members – to help appraise the meaning of affective events and displays (e.g., Buunk & Ybema, 1997; van der Löwe & Parkinson, 2014). And just as leaders shape the context that fosters affective events, so too are they often motivated to shape and model the appraisals that are derived (e.g., Pescosolido, 2002). The result is that appraisals and the affective experiences tend to converge among coworkers and network members, although some individuals and subgroups may of course form radically different appraisals (Menges & Kilduff, 2015).

Given the chronic context and cyclical or periodic nature of some practices, similar and common events often recur, as do memories of recurring affect, fostering *affect schemas* – that is, "mental structures that specifically predispose individuals to experience a particular emotion [affective state] in a given domain" (Fehr, Fulmer, Awtrey, & Miller, 2017: 363). Moreover, affective sharing per se fosters affective convergence, just as affect scripts foster complementary affect. This accumulating affective residue gives rise to a shared initial sense of the predominant affect in the work setting, even as specific emotions and moods (but less so sentiments) come and go. Further, unique but major events tend to be particularly memorable and can exert an outsized impact (e.g., Dutton, Worline, Frost, & Lilius, 2006; Hatch et al., 2007), shaping one's appraisal of the past and one's expectations, hopes, and fears for the future. This stew of affective memories and projections gives rise to a budding affective climate. The prevailing affective tone may include specific emotions (e.g., a generally joyful team), more diffuse valences (e.g., a generally positive team), and clear sentiments (e.g., a highly committed team).

These processes reflect the general process of *emergence* in multilevel studies, where "A

phenomenon is emergent when it originates in the cognition, affect, behaviors, or other characteristics of individuals, is amplified by their interaction, and manifests as a higher-level collective phenomenon" (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000: 55; see also Collins et al., 2013; Fehr et al., 2017). For example, Cardon, Post, and Forster (2017) describe how differences in the focus and intensity of entrepreneurial passion among members of a new venture team may converge to form team-level passion. It seems likely that an affective climate will emerge more quickly in small and stable subunits with interdependent members (Bartel & Saavedra, 2000; Gamero & González-Romá, 2020). This emphasis on emergence is also consistent with research on LMX, which as mentioned views the development of leader-member relations to be the result of bottom-up processes. Scholars have classified these processes as either ongoing reciprocal social exchange or a permanent role-making process (Herman et al., 2018; Tse et al., 2016).

It's important to add that "bottom-up" does not just mean frontline employees; every level of analysis from a production team to a top management team has their own grounded, affective experiences such that they may generate localized affective climates. That said, just as top-down processes can cascade through levels, so bottom-up emergence can percolate and infuse higher levels.

What about affective culture? Because affective cultures are more prescriptive, we noted that leaders are typically instrumental in trying to foster a set of affective values, norms, and beliefs that are consistent with the organization's mission and the local work context in which that mission is enacted. In a well-designed and managed organization, the emergent affective climate will reflect and thus validate and reinforce the hoped-for affective culture. In less well-designed (or in dynamic) contexts, the climate – with its "outlaw emotions" (Jaggar, 1989: 166) – might actually clash with that culture. For example, Rodriquez (2011) describes how some

nursing homes, concerned with efficiency and control, view emotion as a threat to order or a tool for managing residents, whereas staff form bottom-up authentic attachments with residents as an end in itself (cf. Beus, Lucianetti, & Arthur, 2020). Because individuals tend to give more credence to what they actually experience (affective climate) than to what they "should" experience (affective culture), in time, they may come to view elements of the latter with skepticism if not cynicism. Moreover, regardless of the affective climate, individuals may view top-down cultural prescriptions as oppressive or insincere (e.g., Fineman, 2010; Van Maanen & Kunda, 1989). Such reservations are likely to encourage ambivalence and even outright resistance. In an ethnography of a high-tech corporation, Kunda (2006) described members' "cynical awareness of manipulative intents [such as] doing 'rah-rah stuff'" (p. 158) and the various ways they engaged in "emotional distancing" (p. 181) from the culture. More generally, given the power imbalance between managers and subordinates, a common response to skepticism may be to provide lip service to the affective culture (e.g., rote conformity to framing, feeling, display, and interaction rules).

Might an affective climate help shape the affective culture? Yes. With repeated interactions in a given context, individuals develop descriptive affect schemas regarding prototypical sequences of events (Baldwin, 1992). These include the affect scripts, consisting of context, antecedents, agents, emotional expression, and consequences (Gibson, 2008). For example, rude comments from a customer to a hairdresser may become a prompt for coworkers to publicly defend the hairdresser and privately console them. In time – especially if the affective culture is weak, viewed skeptically, or changing – these descriptions may become taken-for-granted *prescriptions*, such that the ways things *do* unfold come to be seen as the way things *should* unfold (cf. Jarvis, 2017). These rich, bottom-up prescriptions flesh out and may even

challenge the more abstract top-down cultural prescriptions, such that *lived* affective culture is ultimately an amalgam of top-down and bottom-up processes. For example, an initial display rule espoused by management (e.g., “always smile and be deferential to customers”) may be modified in light of grounded experience (“rude customers do not warrant smiling and deference”) (Rafaeli & Sutton, 1990).

Top-Down and Bottom-Up in Dynamic Equilibrium

Assuming some consistency over time in the nature of affective events and their appraisal, the emergent affective climate along with the affective culture (if reinforced or modified by the climate) becomes stronger, that is, more “widely shared and strongly held” (O’Reilly & Chatman, 1996: 166). A strong climate and culture – especially with the latter’s framing rules – provide clear cues for appraising subsequent affective events. Accordingly, even dissimilar and ostensibly discrepant events may be seen as actually reflecting the climate and culture (cf. Fehr et al., 2017). For example, a positive culture that values employee development may lead employees to socially construct a manager’s harsh criticism as “tough love” that affirms employee development. Thus, strong affective climates and cultures tend to become self-fulfilling (cf. Creed et al., 2014; Kelly & Barsade, 2001).

However, affective climate and culture, particularly in small subunits, remain susceptible to disruption from major events (e.g., a charismatic leader retires). Because “bad is stronger than good” (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001: 323; see also Maitlis et al., 2013), negative events are likely to have an outsized impact on climate and culture. That said, depending on how such events are managed, the climate and culture may ultimately return to their affective “baseline” (Menges & Kilduff, 2015: 894). Further, as with other kinds of organizational climates and cultures (e.g., for service, for safety), affective climate and culture

are susceptible to entropy unless actively maintained by consistent top-down and bottom-up processes. Thus, a tacit reason why many organizations celebrate accomplishments, ritualize affective events (Collins, 2004), and develop symbols as potent "carriers of emotion" (Menges & Kilduff, 2015: 871) is to further stoke their affective climate and culture.

We should note that sentiments play a somewhat different role than emotions and moods in some of these processes. While emotions are a direct response to affective events and moods are a more indirect affective residue, sentiments like job satisfaction are more enduring and may only be marginally impacted by most relatively mundane events. That said, again following social information processing theory, individuals can be persuaded – especially before their sentiments have solidified – to feel better or feel worse about their tasks and work setting such that sentiments also tend to be socially constructed. Finally, as an evaluation, sentiments may be particularly self-fulfilling as individuals are generally motivated to confirm their affective beliefs (e.g., Williams, Kern, & Waters, 2016).

Ultimately, then, affect may become more or less institutionalized – if not throughout the organization than in subunits – in practices and structures that both elicit affect and shape its social construction. While the top-down processes may have first-mover power to create (and maintain) the affective infrastructure, the power of the bottom-up processes to reinforce, flesh out, and modify – if not directly challenge – that infrastructure remains very real. The outcome is a perpetual dance between the top and bottom, leading to a dynamic equilibrium (cf. Lewin, 1951; cf. emotion structuration, Callahan, 2004). A great example is Dutton et al.'s (2006; see also Kanov, Powley, & Walshe, 2017) description of "compassion organizing." A fire destroyed several students' apartments, triggering an outpouring of empathy and resources from members of the students' business school. This compassionate response was initially enabled by widely

shared values (e.g., humanism, family), student-service oriented routines, and an organizational network, and gave rise to informal roles (e.g., expediter, coordinator), improvised routines (e.g., emergency loans), leader symbolic acts (e.g., publicly pledging support), and shared stories of caring. Thus, the affective climate and culture of the business school enabled the bottom-up development of roles and routines that were implicitly sanctified by leader symbolic acts and shared stories. It's not hard to imagine how such compassion organizing might have reinforced and further institutionalized affect.

A Swizzle Stick: How Identification Augments the Dynamic Equilibrium

When individuals identify with an occupation, team, organization, or other collective, they internalize what that collective means (its identity) as a partial definition of self. They perceive a sense of "oneness or belongingness" (Ashforth & Mael, 1989: 21; see also Patchen, 1970). As depicted in Figure 2, this means four important things to the institutionalization of affect. First, identities typically include affective expectations. Team members are expected to enjoy one another's company; firefighters are supposed to be brave in the face of danger; members of a particular brokerage firm are expected to be aggressive. If individuals actually experience the expected affect, they interpret it as a signal that they are becoming bona fide exemplars of the identity (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; cf. affect control theory; Heise, 2007), encouraging further engagement. To the extent that a collective is known to have an affective climate or culture, newcomers will thus be predisposed to experience and exemplify it (cf. emotional self-stereotyping; Menges & Kilduff, 2015). More generally, as suggested by Ahuja, Heizmann, and Clegg's (2019; see also Burke & Stets, 2009) study of junior architects, the experience of positive rather than negative emotions, moods, and sentiments signals to individuals that they are resonating with the identity.

Insert Figure 2 about here

Second, when individuals identify, they psychologically yoke themselves to the collective such that they experience its ups and downs as *personal* ups and downs. If their department wins an award, they feel pride; if their organization experiences a scandal, they feel shame (Salice & Sánchez, 2016). Moreover, this dynamic also applies to *anticipated* future events; thoughts of a new organization's market potential or a team potentially suffering a reputational loss will tend to arouse *current* affective states among highly-identified members.

Third, "work-related identifications provide the psychological context within which people give meaning to what they do and experience at work" (Conroy, Becker, & Menges, 2017: 1088; Yzerbyt, Dumont, Mathieu, Gordijn, & Wigboldus, 2006). Highly-identified members of a collective are predisposed to interpret events in ways that are relevant to and flatter the collective, suggesting some convergence in experienced affect. Huy (2011) describes how middle-managers in a Canadian technology firm interpreted a strategic initiative in terms of veteran vs newcomer identity and English-Canadian vs French-Canadian identity. The veterans and French-Canadians felt aggrieved by what they perceived as disrespect of their identity – even when their immediate personal interests were not threatened. Indeed, recurring disrespect could have spawned affective counter-climates and -cultures among these informal groups.

Fourth, when individuals identify, they tend to trust other members of the collective simply because they *are* fellow members and assume that they are thinking and feeling much as they do. This *depersonalized trust* (Brewer, 2008) predisposes individuals to view other members as reliable sources of information, motivating them to engage in mutual sensemaking and affective sharing *and* to seek affective convergence. Moreover, identification enhances the

motivation of individuals to monitor, discern, mimic, and experience the affect expressed by other members (e.g., Stevenson, Soto, & Adams, 2012; Thibault, Bourgeois, & Hess, 2006).

The net effect of these four processes is that the greater the identification of members, the greater the likelihood that they will jointly enact the affective climate and culture and will experience similar affective states. This convergence of affective experiences helps further crystallize the affective climate and – if supportive – reinforce the affective culture. Thus, the general tendency for collectives to experience affect more strongly than individuals is likely to be greatly amplified if identification is pervasive (cf. Menges & Kilduff, 2015; Smith, Seger, & Mackie, 2007; Walter & Bruch, 2008).

Just as identifications increase the likelihood of shared affective states, climate, and culture, so too do these shared affective qualities in turn increase the likelihood of stronger identification. Sharing creates a "we feeling" that slides easily into a sense of oneness or belonging (Kelly, Iannone, & McCarty, 2014; Livingston, Spears, Manstead, Bruder, & Shepherd, 2011; Páez & Rimé, 2014), leading to a virtuous circle of affective sharing and identification. While the sense of oneness may initially be momentary – as members are "caught up in the moment" (e.g., celebrating a successful product launch) – with the gradual institutionalization of affect, the identification tends to become more abiding. Even sharing *negative* affective experiences and states can foster a sense of identification if members can attribute them to outside causes or find shared meaning in their suffering. For example, Weeks (2004) documents how employees of a British bank seemed to bond over ritualistic complaints about their employer. As one person put it, "Staff love the Branch, hate the Bank" (p. 124). That said, positive affective states are inherently less stressful and thus generally provide a far more reliable basis for long-term identification.

Discussion

Our understanding of the role of affect in organizations has come a very long way over the last 25 or so years. Considerable progress has been made in understanding how emotions and moods (despite their ephemeral nature), along with sentiments, become more or less stabilized in organizations (and subunits) as affective climates and affective cultures. As summarized earlier in Figure 1, we sought to assemble the eclectic studies into a coherent model of the top-down and bottom-up processes through which affect becomes institutionalized in organizations as "objective" states that are exterior to any one person and resistant to change.

"Top down" reflects deliberate attempts by organizational representatives to foster organizationally-desired affective states together with an overarching affective culture and climate. The intertwined processes of leadership, attraction-selection-attrition, and socialization, coupled with the physical, task, and social contexts, create a scaffolding for organizational members. "Bottom up" reflects more reactive and organic attempts by members to understand, flesh out, and perhaps modify that scaffolding. The appraisal of affective events leads to affective experiences that are often shared, giving rise to affective convergence and schemas. Given the chronic context, an affective climate typically emerges that may validate and reinforce facets of the espoused affective culture even while it may challenge and shape other facets. Top-down and bottom-up processes thus engage in a perpetual dance, fostering a dynamic equilibrium. However, the stronger the resulting affective climate and culture, the more self-fulfilling they tend to be. Additionally, as summarized earlier in Figure 2, the more that members identify with the organization (or subunit), the greater the likelihood that they will jointly enact the prevailing affective climate and culture and will experience similar affective states. This convergence of affective experiences helps reinforce the affective climate and – if supportive –

the affective culture.

Implications for Future Research

Our analysis suggests at least several directions for future research. First, focusing on how affective states become institutionalized in organizations may create the wrong impression that such states are necessarily monolithic and static. In contrast, research has shown, for example, how an affective reaction by an ingroup member may trigger a contrasting reaction in outgroup members (e.g., joy eliciting fear; Weisbuch & Ambady, 2008) and how group affective tone may change over time (Ashkanasy & Härtel, 2014). Additionally, as alluded to earlier, an overarching organizational affective culture is likely to be instantiated in diverse ways, depending on the function, history, and so on of the subunits, along with idiosyncratic bottom-up processes. Further, as noted, "institutions," like any structure, are susceptible to entropy unless actively maintained (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). Thus, a challenge for future research is to explore how the tendency toward institutionalization meshes with the perennial threat of *de*institutionalization and turbulence, how the affective states of diverse subunits converge and diverge (and with what positive and negative effects), and how affective cultures and climates can be actively maintained or modified as desired. In short, if the dance of top-down and bottom-up processes indeed results in a dynamic equilibrium, how do organizations manage that razor's edge over the long term?

Second, we argued that the genesis of bottom-up processes is affective events (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). Organizational members experience affective states and come to viscerally understand the affective climate and culture through their appraisal and sharing of events, begging important questions. Given the central roles of appraisal and sharing, what kinds of events are more amenable or less amenable to varying social constructions? How does the

cacophonous mix of events over time lead to generalized inferences of an affective climate and culture? Is it typically a case of gradually accreting affective residue or more of a punctuated equilibrium? To what extent do initial or early events serve as first movers, fostering affective states that render later events – even if dissonant – less impactful? For example, might a particularly upbeat initial team inoculate a newcomer against later downbeat teams? Given the earlier argument that bad is stronger than good (Baumeister et al., 2001), what kinds of bad events (and with what frequency) are likely to tip an otherwise positive climate and culture into negativity – and vice versa?

Third, power has been an absent presence in our analysis. The top-down processes of leadership, ASA, and socialization, and the crafting of the physical, task, and social context, represent at least an implicit attempt by those in authority to institutionalize a certain affective culture and to foster certain affective states and thereby an affective climate. The exercise of power is inherent in these processes. Similarly, the bottom-up processes represent coming to terms with these machinations and, possibly, resistance to them (cf. Kemper, 1978). The literature on emotional labor is perhaps the most obvious example of the often pernicious interplay of control-resistance-counter-control in organizations (Hochschild, 1983; Leidner, 1993). Future research should delve more deeply into the power dynamics of organizations as "emotional arenas" (Fineman, 1993). For example, what archetypes of affective culture and climate do organizational representatives seek to impose and why? What political tactics are used to impose affective preferences, to resist those preferences, and to counter that resistance? How are these machinations affected by "the simmer of gender, class, ethnic, and racial divisions that emotionally-advantage some people, while depressing or oppressing others" (Fineman, 2008: 218)?

Implications for Practice

In focusing on how affective states become institutionalized in affective cultures and climates, we did not discuss specific *types* of affective cultures and climates. At the most basic level, we can simply group them into positive and negative cultures and climates. A variety of authors have given advice about how leaders and managers can create positive affect in the workplace. By applying our model to this research, we can begin to understand how these positive affective cultures and climates can become institutionalized and thus persist over time even with the change of individual leaders and managers. For example, Humphrey (2008) has argued that leaders need to allow their followers autonomy and flexibility when performing emotional labor. When followers have the appropriate degree of autonomy, they are likely to use the more positive form of emotional labor (i.e., deep acting) as well as genuine and natural emotional labor (Humphrey, Ashforth, & Diefendorff, 2015), and to experience positive affect and well-being as a result. In order to become institutionalized, this autonomy needs to be enshrined in organizational-wide emotional labor display rules, with exemplar stories and examples from the lives of founding (or otherwise widely respected) leaders.

Like other models on creating organizational culture, our model (see Figure 1) emphasizes the importance of attraction-selection-attrition. Most of these models focus on job abilities, with some examination of personality traits that lead to a better person-job fit. For example, people high on traits such as extroversion, positive affectivity, and emotional intelligence are more likely to have good person-job fit for most jobs that require emotional labor, and to use deep acting and natural and genuine emotional labor as a result (Humphrey et al., 2015). However, most models overlook the important role that people's average emotional baseline has on organizational culture and in particular on affective culture. According to

affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), people have an average emotional baseline, with some people normally experiencing positive emotions most of the time, whereas others normally experience negative ones. This is why organizations such as Southwest Airlines prioritize hiring people who naturally feel positive, friendly emotions over hiring people because of their technical job qualifications (Humphrey, 2013). By selecting employees with average emotional baselines in the positive zone, organizations can more easily create the affective convergence that leads to identification with the collective (see Figure 2). Affective events theory researchers have also examined the influence of specific job characteristics and work events on peoples' experience of particular emotions, such as happiness or anxiety (Basch & Fisher 2000). Our model (see Figure 1) highlights the crucial role these affective events play in the creation of affective culture. Knowledge of how these events influence peoples' emotions has tremendous practical importance to any organization that seeks to build a positive affective culture.

For an affective culture that is desired and espoused by managers to become the actual or lived culture – whether at the organizational or subunit level – it is vital that affective events and their social construction support that culture. This means that deliberate attempts to foster a certain affective culture and complementary climate through the *processes* of leadership, ASA, and socialization, and through the design of a chronic *context* of task, social, and physical attributes, give rise to ongoing affective experiences – the raw material of institutionalized affect – that resonate with that desired culture. Because employees put more stock in what they experience than in what they're told, the watchword here is *authenticity*, namely, that managers embody and model the desired affective culture and climate. At the same time, because the interpretation of the raw material is somewhat malleable, managers can help their subordinates

construe affective events in a way that fosters certain affect schemas that promote a complementary climate and reinforce the espoused culture. However, there is a fine line to be walked here. Management attempts to foster affective states, climates, and cultures that come across as heavy-handed and oppressive are likely to invite a self-defeating backlash.

To the extent that management can indeed foster, in an ongoing manner, the espoused affective culture and complementary affective climate, both are likely to become *strong* – that is, widely shared and deeply felt – such that they become more or less self-fulfilling. That said, even strong cultures and climates are subject to the law of entropy such that management must remain vigilant for signs of dissensus and backsliding. Ultimately, because institutionalized affect results from a confluence of top-down and bottom-up practices – as depicted in Figure 1 – managers retain a multitude of levers for maintaining that affect.

Conclusion

When we published our own modest contribution in *Human Relations* over 25 years ago to the halting conversation about affect in organizations, we had no inkling of the tsunami of terrific research to come. This impressive body of work has enabled us to conclude that, far from being oxymoronic, institutionalized affect is baked into the very DNA of organizations in the form of affective culture and climate.

Notes

[1] We are using the term *subunit* loosely to mean not only a formal grouping in an organization, such as a division or department, but any formal and informal grouping of multiple people, such as an occupational community, hierarchical level, and clique.

[2] An "affective competence" represents a slight reframing of Voronov and Weber's (2016: 456) concept of "emotional competence," defined as "the ability to experience and display emotions [affective states] that are deemed appropriate for an actor role in an institutional order."

[3] The exceptions are shame and guilt because these social emotions motivate withdrawal.

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Biographies