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A different type of dirty work: Hidden taint, intersectionality, and emotion management in bureaucratic organizations

Shawna Malvini Redden[a] and Jennifer A. Scarduzio[b]

[a]Department of Communication Studies, California State University, Sacramento, CA, USA; [b]Department of Communication, University of Kentucky, Lexington, KY, USA

ABSTRACT

This study explores the intersectionality among identity markers, such as gender, race, and class, and emotion management in two bureaucratic organizations – municipal courtrooms and airport security checkpoints. We name and explore a new type of dirty work called "hidden taint," which we describe as a larger, encompassing category of dirty work that involves the experience and dynamic co-construction of taint. Utilizing qualitative methods including participant observation and interviews, we compare how hidden taint is experienced in each bureaucratic context. The results focus on the relationship between (1) hidden taint and the co-construction of emotion norms and (2) hidden taint and power dynamics. This study extends communication theory by naming and describing hidden taint as a new type of dirty work, extending literature on emotion management and intersectionality by exploring their connection to dirty work in occupations with varying levels of prestige, and detailing how emotion management is co-constructed between employees and patrons in bureaucratic contexts.

Scholars have long been fascinated by social constructions of work, especially work that is considered dirty or tainted (Hughes, 1958). Historically, dirty work involves job characteristics that are stigmatized, either physically (e.g., garbage collecting), socially (e.g., serving stigmatized or marginalized groups such as correctional officers), or morally (e.g., sex work or pawn broking) (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999). Other scholarship shows that work can also be made dirty through emotional taint (Rivera, 2017), which refers to "emotional displays and emotional labor that are perceived as objectionable" (Rivera, 2015, p. 218), whether organizationally mandated or socially constructed.

A key occupation of scholars in this line of research is exploring how social constructions of work influence and challenge workers' identities. For instance, scholars have examined how coal miners construct "discourses of dignity" in the face of physically stigmatized work and make social comparisons between mining and other jobs (Lucas, 2011). Likewise, research shows how morally tainted workers are viewed as more stigmatized than socially or physically tainted workers, while socially tainted workers tend to cultivate

an ideology of providing critical services to manage perceptions of stigma (Ashforth & Kreiner, 2014). However, much like critiques of organizational literature broadly (Ashcraft & Allen, 2003), the dirty work literature has not substantively considered important identity differences that influence organizational processes. In relation to emotion, Rivera (2015) specifically calls for work that examines "the intersections of identity, dirty work, and emotional labor while also exploring the role of broader discourses including … race, class, [and] gender" (p. 222), explaining that categories of difference influence how dirty work is socially constructed.

While scholars have explored intersecting identities, calling for research that studies gender, race, and class simultaneously (Kadowaki & Subramaniam, 2014), few have examined the connections among intersecting identities, emotion management, and dirty work (notable exceptions: Kang, 2003; Slutskaya, Simpson, Hughes, Simpson, & Uygur, 2016; Soni-Sinha & Yates, 2013). Likewise, much research focuses on the emotional experiences or identities of individuals, usually employees in low-prestige occupations, without considering the perspectives of patrons (Tumbat, 2011). We argue that examining identity and emotion management provides a more complex understanding of organizational phenomena generally and dirty work specifically. Putting these concepts into conversation enables us to demonstrate the emotionality of dirty work, expanding upon Rivera's (2015) concept of emotional taint and illustrating how identity differences can contribute to marginalized groups experiencing more taint than privileged counterparts in the same role. We make these arguments by analyzing emotion management, dirty work, and identity differences that are co-constructed between employees and patrons in two bureaucratic organizations, comparing between high- and low-prestige positions.

Bureaucratic work is characterized by formal structures, centralized hierarchies, red tape, and slow moving procedures (Pines, Aronson, & Kafry, 1981). Employees in bureaucratic organizations must move patrons through organizational systems quickly while following appropriate feeling rules (Hochschild, 1983). Macro-level pressure to move patrons, combined with micro-level expectations of emotion management, creates tension for bureaucratic employees. These tensions are amplified because bureaucratic employees perform repetitive tasks while negotiating emotional guidelines that foreground elements of their identities, sometimes in problematic ways. To understand these tensions, this study investigates how judges and Transportation Security Officers [TSOs] in airport security co-construct emotion management with patrons and how that emotion management intersects with identity differences.

Comparing these two settings, which are both bureaucratic and professional but differing in prestige, enables us to provide a compelling portrait of identity, emotion, and dirty work in these contexts. For instance, we consider the ramifications of predominantly White, high-status judges, processing defendants from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds, and of varied social status. Similarly, we examine airport security checkpoints that include a more ethnically and gender diverse group of TSOs[1] of lower occupational status performing service for passengers of diverse social status who are primed by airport structures (e.g., priority check-in lines) to have certain expectations[2] of service (Atlas, 2013). This analysis is significant because it features a complex approach to the study of emotion management, considering the experiences of employees and the patrons they interact with who contribute to emotion management.

By examining emotion as it manifests in interactions that foreground identity differences, we show how bureaucratic work normally considered professional is actually quite "dirty," expanding the literature on unexpectedly dirty occupations (Stanley, Mackenzie Davey, & Symon, 2014). Theoretically, this study offers three implications for organizational theory. First, we name and explore a new type of dirty work called hidden taint, which is a larger, encompassing category of dirty work that involves the experience and dynamic co-construction of taint. Second, the research on dirty work is expanded by examining how aspects of identity such as race, gender, and class intersect with emotion management and taint in occupations from the same sector but with varying degrees of prestige. Finally, we illustrate how hidden taint is created through the co-construction of emotion management.

Emotion management, identity differences, and dirty work

In this section, we discuss relevant literature about emotion management, identity differences, and dirty work to show that dirty work is context specific and could be experienced in unique ways when identity differences are present.

Emotional labor and emotion management

Bureaucratic organizations, like municipal courtrooms and airport security, are settings where emotional expression has important consequences for processing cases, facilitating timely experiences, and performing identity. Employees in both settings display a wide range of emotions, and must communicate to manage their own and others' emotions. This emotional labor, which is employee emotion management mandated by organizations to create specific responses from customers (Hochschild, 1983), requires employees to perform organizational emotion norms or "feeling rules" not always consistent with personal feelings.

While much emotional labor research focuses on individual employee experiences, some work illustrates emotion management among employees and the movement of emotion in organizations. For example, Lively (2000) found that paralegals and lawyers manage their own emotions to decrease the stress of other employees, a process she labeled reciprocal emotion management. Similarly, Tumbat (2011) explored the service experience between guides and patrons on hikes of Mount Everest revealing that customers demonstrate control over service encounters. Others have studied how emotions move between employees, creating different types of emotion cycles (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008). Specifically related to identity, one study focused on mandatory encounters between airport security officers and airline passengers, showing how patrons perform "organizationally preferred emotional management" in response to the emotional performances of officers, describing these performances as "emotional taxes" that varied depending upon factors like identity (Malvini Redden, 2013, p. 138).

Collectively, these studies suggest that emotion management is not an individual process but something negotiated with others. These studies detail the emotion management of employees, and briefly between employees and patrons. Other research has begun to explore specific individual aspects of identity in relation to emotional labor – an issue we turn to next.

Intersectionality and emotional labor

A growing line of emotion research examines how emotion management relates to identity. We draw upon intersectionality scholarship that explains how identities overlap with each other (Harris, 2016), foregrounding the "multiple, sometimes contradictory, social positions, and experiences that situate people's lives" (Parker, 2014, p. 624). An intersectional lens highlights specific identity, institutional, and social practices that reveal how individuals, relationships, and structures reify difference in organizations (Holvino, 2010). By examining two bureaucratic contexts, we investigate how gender, race, and class are (re)produced through communication and influence emotion management.

Since Hochschild's (1983) early work, much scholarship has investigated gender and emotional labor, especially in service and care work frequently filled by women. For example, female teachers face higher emotional burdens at work, particularly, women of color (Moore, Acosta, Perry, & Edwards, 2010). Gendered emotional labor occurs across occupations (Sharma & Black, 2001; Vincent & Braun, 2013), and differs for men. Indeed, when male nurses use higher levels of emotional labor, they are shielded from negative consequences more frequently than female nurses (Cottingham, Erickson, & Diefendorff, 2014). In bureaucratic contexts, where various types of masculinity are privileged, it is important to understand how issues of gender collide with typical notions of masculinity and femininity.

Just as it is gendered, emotional labor is racialized, with people of color needing to labor more and differently than White counterparts (Harvey Wingfield, 2010). For instance, the work of professors of color is made more complex because "negotiating a devalued status requires extensive emotion management" (Harlow, 2003, p. 348). Likewise, women of color are judged on physical identity markers as well as emotional performances in ways different from White people. Women of color describe feeling like they are "judged for appearance, personal decorum, communication skills, and emotion management in addition to work productivity" (Durr & Harvey Wingfield, 2011, p. 559), and use emotion management to create a veneer that helps them fit in (Harvey Wingfield, 2010).

The intersections of race and emotional labor show how people of color contend with feeling rules that conflict with facets of their identities and require them to conform to emotion norms that do not match their experiences. Likewise, Mirchandani (2003) suggests that debates on emotion work normalize Whiteness by relying on racially homogeneous samples and assuming workers are, by default, White. She argues that minorities devise strategies for managing financial, psychological, and social risks including higher levels of relationship work.

Identity conflicts surface clearly in emotion research related to the intersections of race, ethnicity, and class. For example, employees in transnational call centers labor to "sound right" on the phone (Mirchandani, 2008) where accents indicate location and class hierarchies. Furthermore, some employees must conform to friendliness norms outside of their own culture, such as "smile training" in Japanese service work (Raz & Rafaeli, 2007). Likewise, Kang's (2003) study of Korean immigrant-owned nail salons showed how emotion work became gendered, raced, and classed through focusing on expressiveness, high-service, and routinization. While the previous research demonstrates connections between identities and emotion during relatively simple interactions, it would be important to know how emotion management is co-constructed between employees

and patrons in bureaucratic settings where exchanges involve more diverse people and identities, and when interactions are often difficult or dirty.

Dirty work

Dirty work is labor considered physically, morally, or socially stigmatized (Ashforth & Kreiner, 1999, 2014). The work of judges could be viewed as socially tainted because judges serve morally stigmatized populations such as defendants who are sometimes sex workers, homeless, and/or mentally ill (Scarduzio, 2011). The work of TSOs is physically stigmatized, as they are required to touch passengers and perform menial physical labor, both aspects that can become morally stigmatized in popular discourses that frame the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) as sexually deviant for invasive patdowns, TSOs as unintelligent, and the job as a waste of tax dollars (Malvini Redden, 2013; Schneier, 2012).

Dirty work research has typically explored low-prestige occupations, but recent scholarship details how dirty work can occur in unexpected, high-prestige occupations such as investment bankers (Stanley et al., 2014), airline pilots (Fraher, 2017), professors (Sanders-McDonagh, 2014), and health care executives (Urasadettan & Burellier, 2017). Dirty work research in high-prestige occupations illustrates that societal events, such as financial crises and 9/11, shape the social construction of taint for workers. For example, Fraher (2017) illustrated how the work of pilots includes invisibilized dirty work, which is work that is "perceived by outsiders as elite yet nonetheless involves activities that employees believe to be degrading or demeaning to them" (p. 134). Importantly, invisibilized dirty work is not seen by outsiders but rather is internally constructed by employees. As a new area of interest for scholars, research about dirty work in high-prestige occupations has less frequently explored intersections of identity.

Research on low-prestige occupations, however, shows the intersections of dirty work and marginalized identities. For example, Soni-Sinha and Yates (2013) explored how men and women janitors construct dirty work and gendered divisions of labor. Interestingly, janitors constructed men's work as "heavy" because men lifted heftier objects and women's work as "light" because women accomplished less physically taxing tasks. Moreover, Slutskaya et al. (2016) examined how gender and class intersect in the experiences of male refuse collectors and street cleaners, finding that men resisted the stigma of their dirty occupations through social comparison. Finally, Cassell and Bishop (2014) depicted how taxi drivers drew on metaphors about customer service interactions and hidden transcripts including stories, myths, and rituals to make sense of job-related taint. Importantly, taxi driving involves compartmentalized stigma where "the majority of the tasks are not stigmatized, but one or more tasks are strongly stigmatized" (Kreiner, Ashforth, & Sluss, 2006, p. 621). While the work of judges and TSOs also includes compartmentalized stigma, the experiences are different because of the occupations' associations of prestige.

A recent avenue of dirty work research specifically investigates how dirty work connects to emotion. For instance, scholarship about how people in "dirty" occupations like butchery cultivate emotions about their work shows how dirty work is embodied and "affective experiences complicate the clean/dirty divide" (Simpson, Hughes, & Slutskaya, 2016, p. 204). Likewise, Rivera (2015) explores "emotional taint" as a category of dirty work, which describes emotional performances that are full of "emotion (or lack of emotion),

whether 'real' or "fake," that are viewed as inappropriate (not fitting the situation), excessive (too much or too little emotion required …), or vulnerable (causing the person to subject themselves to "difficult" feelings)" (p. 218). This research provides a foundation for understanding the emotional experience of dirty work.

In this study, we examine the intersections of identity, emotion management, and dirty work in two bureaucratic contexts by analyzing the experiences of employees and patrons. Building upon previous scholarship, we compare a high-prestige (i.e., judges) and a low-prestige prestige (i.e., TSOs) occupation, answering Rivera's (2015) call to study emotion, intersections of identity, and dirty work simultaneously. We address the following question: What does intersectionality and emotion management reveal about dirty work in bureaucratic contexts?

Methods

This study includes 307 research hours from participant observation and interviews in 20 organizations (2 municipal courthouses and 18 airports), resulting in 1345 single-spaced pages of data. The data were initially collected for two separate projects investigating emotion in bureaucratic work, but neither was specifically focused on dirty work. The data were re-analyzed together to explore the nature of emotion, identity, and dirty work.

Data sources

With Institutional Review Board approval, the second author spent 107 hours shadowing employees and watching arraignments at the Equitas and Curia municipal courthouses in the Southwestern United States (U.S.) over 13 months.[3] An arraignment is when individuals are initially seen after charges are filed. For example, someone ticketed for driving with a suspended license is given a court date. On that date, that person (a defendant) goes to court any time during business hours. Defendants check in and are assigned to a courtroom, which typically includes a judge, a bailiff, and between 10 and 50 defendants. Interactions last between one to five minutes.

The second author also conducted 24 informal ethnographic and 20 semi-structured audio-recorded interviews with judges. Defendants were not interviewed formally; however, 28 defendants were asked questions in the gallery and/or observed discussing the judges' behavior. Interviews were transcribed and fact-checked within a week of completion. She spoke to 27 judges who were all lawyers prior to being appointed judges and had experience ranging from 1.5 to 25 years (M = 11.6 years). Interviewees included 13 women and 14 men who identified as White ($n = 18$), Latina/o ($n = 6$), Black ($n = 2$), and Asian American/Pacific Islander ($n = 1$).

Research also took place in 18 airports across the U.S. and in Canada and Germany, with focused observations in two large West Coast locations. The first author spent 30 months studying airports, devoting 110 hours (not including travel time) primarily studying interactions in security checkpoints. Observations centered on TSOs who managed checkpoint interactions, including checking IDs, running advanced imaging, and performing searches. She took 133 one-way flights, often with multiple passes through security each trip.

Informally, she spoke with 200 passengers and TSOs during ethnographic interviews. She also conducted formal, semi-structured interviews with 30 passengers and 14 TSOs.

TSO work experience ranged from 1.5 to 10[4] years, averaging 6.25. TSO interviewees included 4 women and 10 men who identified as White ($n = 9$), Latina/o ($n = 3$), Black ($n = 2$), and Asian American/Pacific Islander ($n = 2$). Passengers described taking between 1 and more than 60 round-trip flights per year, averaging 10 round-trips annually. Passenger interviewees included 17 women and 13 men, who identified as White ($n = 25$) Latina/o ($n = 1$), Black ($n = 1$), and Asian American ($n = 1$). Passengers and TSOs described emotional experiences at the airport, including how they managed feelings during surprising or troubling events, and how experiences matched expectations.[5] Interviews averaged an hour and were professionally transcribed.

Data analysis procedures

Data were initially collected with the sensitizing concept of emotion management in mind. For the current project, we had a series of conversations about challenges related to identity differences and dirty work. We discussed the difficulties that female judges, and male and female TSOs repeatedly mentioned – especially related to the mandated emotion norm of neutrality – and how emotion management seemed to relate to perceptions about each organizational context. We each re-read both data sets and recognized that many challenges related to how emotion management intersected not only with gender, but also race and class. We decided to use intersectionality as a lens to guide our analysis.

Employing an iterative approach (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2011), we moved between the data and relevant theory related to intersectionality, emotion management, and dirty work. We started primary cycle coding (Tracy, 2013) where we re-read the data line-by-line and named first-level, descriptive codes including emotional expressions such as anger, neutrality, and compassion, and identity categories including gender, race, and class. We used a process of consensus coding to ensure reliable interpretations and applications of coding schemes (Harry, Sturges, & Klingner, 2005), including discussing codes and how they fit the data, and sharing examples of coding to reach agreement.

Then we identified patterns and discussed relationships between codes and sensitizing concepts. We wrote separate theoretical memos (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011) about (1) how the emotion norms of each context related to the emotion management of employees and patrons and (2) how power intersected with emotion management. At this point, we realized our analysis could be enriched by, and extend, the dirty work literature. The memos helped us develop secondary cycle codes, which involved synthesizing first-level codes into theoretical concepts (Tracy, 2013). Our second level codes included: (1) emotion norms, (2) co-constructed emotion management, (3) power dynamics, and (4) a new type of dirty work, which we call *hidden taint*. Our coding process ceased at theoretical saturation, which is when no new important insights emerged from the data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

Hidden taint, intersectionality, and emotion management in bureaucratic work

Our analysis focuses on two distinct but comparable bureaucratic organizations – municipal courtrooms and airport security – each of which is associated with order, law, myriad rules, and rationality. Yet, despite their stated missions – to serve the community and enforce laws,

and to ensure safe travel, respectively – employees are required to engage in additional unseen and difficult emotion management and power negotiation as part of their work.

As we elaborate below, judges view themselves as holding high-prestige occupations and know that defendants expect them to fulfill this role, but judges find themselves doing socially stigmatized work, such as communicating with marginalized populations and making decisions about tainted charges (e.g., urinating in public). This dirty work contrasts with judges' prestige in ways that can be demeaning, frustrating, and provoke emotional interactions with defendants.

Meanwhile, TSOs work in a socially *and* physically stigmatized low-prestige occupation that conflicts with how they are socialized at work. For example, TSOs are trained to uphold the TSA's mission to "Protect the nation's transportations systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce" (TSA, n.d.) with the mantra "not on my watch," which refers to preventing another 9/11-style terrorist attack. Many TSOs describe their jobs as professional and mission-oriented. However, these messages starkly conflict with how TSOs are viewed by the public where they appear in headlines for inefficiency, crime, and inappropriate treatment of children, veterans, people with disabilities, and people of color (Craven, 2015). Routinely mocked in popular culture, TSOs are portrayed as sexual deviants for invasive scans and performing pat-downs, including areas such as breasts, groins, and buttocks (McGlynn, 2010). Furthermore, TSOs are tasked to confiscate contraband, such as weaponry, but usually find menial liquids and gels. Thus, TSOs are not afforded high status from passengers, but still have to manage emotions to get passengers to comply and efficiently move through security.

The two bureaucratic contexts have marked similarities and differences that influence how employees experience what we describe below as "hidden taint." Employees in both settings must process large numbers of people through complex governmental systems quickly. However, judges do not possess as much power and discretion as defendants expect, while TSOs actually have more power and ability to punish than passengers may recognize. These power discrepancies frequently spark emotions for employees and patrons that make navigating the respective organizations more difficult for both groups.

Our analysis also concerns facets of identity, both observable, demographic descriptors, and performances. For instance, we observed apparent differences between female and male employees, while also analyzing how they performed masculinity and femininity, regardless of sex or gender identity. Likewise, we considered how differences were socially constructed in relation to cultural and organizational discourses. We draw upon Acker's (2006) view of race as "socially defined differences based on physical characteristics, culture, and historical domination and oppression" (p. 444) observing how race factors into emotional interactions. Similarly, we primarily consider "occupational class" (Mooney, 2016), which is privilege embedded in organizational processes and related discourses, not necessarily individuals' specific class backgrounds (e.g., socio-economics, education), except where relevant.

Our analysis demonstrates how judges' and TSOs' roles include a new type of dirty work we call "hidden taint" for the way it is constructed through communication. By examining identity and emotion management during interactions, we show how hidden taint embedded in these distinct but professional contexts emerges. We were especially able to see the intersections of identity markers and hidden taint through the co-construction of emotion norms and power relationships, as we detail below.

Hidden taint and co-constructed emotion norms

Bureaucratic organizations, such as the TSA and courtrooms, are built upon a façade of rationality. The pseudo-military systems are rife with uniforms and protocols to signal authority (e.g., black judge's robe, TSO uniforms), rigid physical spaces (e.g., tight security lines, small courtrooms), and technologies that control employees and patrons. One system of control involves emotion norms regulated by organizational discourses and management.

Municipal court judges are not formally required to express emotion at work. In fact, Judge Darson stated she was trained to "NOT be emotional" and Judge Adams claimed he must be "dead-pan." Judge Ryne explained, "As a judge, you are neutral. You just sit neutrally listen, make rulings when people object, make a ruling on their case at the end." Judge Nixon echoed, "We are trained to use logic and reason and leave emotion out of it." Thus, judges are only officially required to display neutrality.

Similarly, TSOs described emotion norms that privilege "calm, cool, and collected" control and neutrality, as well as the assertive, sometimes aggressive "commanding presence," a masculine performance of authority. TSOs discussed being trained for these emotional performances, while judges indicated they are required by organizational norms. Through observations and interviews, we learned masculine emotional displays such as mild anger, sarcasm, irritation, intimidation, and neutrality are often rewarded by both types of organizations through raises and re-appointment, while feminine performances of kindness, compassion, and care are subject to censure as we depict below in experiences by TSO Roger and Carrie, and Judge Major, as well as previous work (Scarduzio & Malvini Redden, 2015).

Examining how emotion norms are co-constructed between employees and patrons revealed hidden taint and demonstrated how some identities are fraught with more and different experiences of taint than others. For example, in interactions between primarily White judges and Latino/a defendants communicating through interpreters, neutral performances by judges sometimes led to confusion or perceptions that the judge was "angry" rather than acting neutrally. Related to gender, Judge Major, a White woman, explained:

> If it's a male judge … he's being stern about it. If it's a woman, it's a bitch . . . And that's one of the kinder words that you get called as a female judge. I've never heard a male judge – oh he's a bastard. I can't tell you how many times that they have referred to women judges as bitches.

In this excerpt, Judge Major communicates frustration at feeling that female judges receive more negative responses from defendants for expressing neutrality than male judges, and experience more challenges than men. She suggests that as a female judge, she has to, "Be more calm and more hanging onto it [her emotions]." Furthermore, she described feeling pressure to decrease negative impressions through the communication of compassion and/or care in addition to neutrality. She explained that defendants fill out customer comment-cards about courtroom interactions, and these reports have the potential to spur repercussions from management. This resonates with Hochschild's (1983) previous findings about status shields, namely that masculine emotion expectations protect male employees from the same expectations as women, and generates benefits when emotion norms include "emotionless" expressions like neutrality.

On the surface, the emotion norm of neutrality does not involve hidden taint. However, when neutrality is gendered, female judges' work can become unexpectedly dirty when

their behavior conflicts with defendants' expectations of how female judges should communicate. Courthouse administrators require all judges to perform neutrality but defendants also expect female judges to be compassionate. Judge Major, who perceives she is a high-status employee, must adapt her communication style by "holding on" to emotions to appease lower status defendants and avoid negative feedback that could influence her reappointment. Judge Major communicates neutrality based on organizational expectations, and then must work harder to communicate continued neutrality in the face of derision. Judge Major grapples with layers of emotion while interacting with defendants, starting by expressing neutrality, receiving negative responses, and then as discussed during the interview, potentially responding with compassion. The emotional norm is co-constructed between the judge and defendant, from organizationally mandated neutrality to a revised, co-constructed norm that features neutrality on the surface and the external expression of compassion underneath. The consequence of being called a "bitch" is extra, hidden emotion work that her male counterparts may not experience.

The co-construction of emotion norms is especially challenging when considering race, gender, and class. For instance, Judge Hernandez, a self-labeled Latina judge, suggested she is a judge partially because courthouse administrators wanted someone on the bench who looks "like the people," that is, Latina. However, Judge Hernandez is not "like the people" she serves. Most of the Latino/a defendants speak English as a second language and come from lower socio-economic classes, whereas Judge Hernandez revealed that she makes a three-figure salary and does not speak Spanish. Judge Hernandez is "like the people" in a token sense and this may further complicate her interactions with defendants when they try to speak Spanish to her or draw upon commonalities in their racial identities. Defendants who see a Latina judge may perceive they will receive different, perhaps preferential treatment, than in interactions with non-Latina judges, when it is unlikely. If defendants then communicate extra negative emotion as a result, that constructs an unexpected layer of hidden taint for Judge Hernandez not necessarily expected for her prestigious role, but directly tied to her identity.

Judges and defendants co-construct emotion norms that permit lower status defendants to express negativity about female judges as long as it is indirect, and require female judges to engage in the hidden taint associated with emotional suppression or masking. When judges have intersecting identities that are marginalized, such as Judge Hernandez who is a woman and Latina, the emotion management requirements can make her job more difficult. Furthermore, the prestige associated with being a judge is diminished when lower status defendants can undermine the authority and influence the co-construction of emotion norms and hidden taint.

Similarly, in airport security, passengers sometimes view neutral emotional performances with contempt. Numerous passenger interviewees referred to TSOs as "machines," noting how they seemed bored, stupid, and rude during apparently emotionless interactions. Rachel, a 28-year-old passenger, described TSOs: "Their exterior is hard … Emotionless, kind of a robot." This places TSOs in a tenuous situation where performing "calm, cool, and collected" results in appearing less professional and less human by passengers. Performing emotion rules well can perpetuate a cycle. When TSO neutrality results in passenger disdain, the situation requires further emotional suppression ("robotic" behavior) that can reinforce passengers' negative views about TSOs. When TSOs are treated as unfeeling automatons, it can be problematic because the job is disproportionately

occupied with women and people of color who experience excess stigma when they act outside of gender or racial norms. Relatedly, passengers describe taking cues from TSOs' emotional performances to know which emotions they are expected to display, demonstrating a cyclical, co-construction of emotion norms (Malvini Redden, 2013).

While the co-construction of masculine emotion norms is prevalent in security, emotional suppression also occurs relative to emotions associated with femininity such as care and compassion. Several TSOs complained about being confined to specific emotional performances, namely masculine enactments of intimidation and neutrality. TSO Roger stated that performing intimidation was difficult. He preferred to demonstrate care, humor, and helpfulness. He said of the TSA: "We're all people. We're not robots that just do our jobs and don't care about the passengers … We care so much that is why we are there for them, to make sure that they are safe." In almost the same breath, however, Roger lamented that "they" (TSA bosses) did not like TSOs who were "nice" because being nice contravened the directive to be authoritative.

Likewise, TSO Carrie, a White woman, shared several examples of performing care work that management viewed as "unprofessional," such as comforting grieving passengers and helping elderly travelers tie their shoes. She said: "They want us to be really hard and cold and not compassionate. I'm sorry, I can't be. That's what makes me who I am. I'm a compassionate, caring, loving person." However, Carrie also shared how she actively confines her compassionate behavior so her manager cannot see and reprimand her. Carrie described this as extremely difficult, especially in comparison to her previous work as a home health aide. TSO work, then, becomes stigmatized by management when they perform feminine emotions, illustrating hidden emotional taint.

The above examples compare how hidden taint is experienced in high- and low-prestige bureaucratic contexts. At security checkpoints, care and compassion, stereotypically feminine emotional performances, are deemed inappropriate in almost the opposite way that Judge Major described the disadvantages of being a female judge performing neutrality in court. Namely, TSOs felt unable to perform feminine emotions while female judges felt less able to perform masculine emotions due to organizational constraints and patron responses. These examples reveal how performing the "correct" emotion according to organizational preferences is not only personally difficult, but creates different experiences of hidden taint in each context. The judges' emotional work included hidden taint when female judges had to express neutrality in response to name-calling by defendants and expectations of compassion. In contrast, TSOs were not expected, and even punished, by administrators for expressing feminine emotions. For instance, TSOs Carrie, Roger, Neecie, and Peter admitted being written up, passed over for promotion, and not given scheduling preferences when deemed "unprofessional" by management.

Importantly, when TSOs perform organizationally appropriate masculine emotions, they run the risk of passengers judging them negatively. For instance, TSO Alexa, a self-identified Black Latina, described an incident with an older White male passenger who did not want to take his shoes off in security. When she forcefully insisted, he "snapped," got "mean" and called her "missy." She said, "I have to do a job, and I'm not a little girl … I have to be a little tough sometimes." In U.S. culture, women are generally expected to be "nice," happy, and kind (Hess, Blairy, & Kleck, 2000). By not demonstrating emotions in line with gendered expectations, Alexa seemed to invite even more

anger. This example also demonstrates some class issues implicated in airport security – that some higher status passengers expect certain privileges, such as circumventing the rules, and express anger at being told what to do by lower status employees, including a younger woman who is also a person of color. The use of derogatory terms such as "missy" to belittle Alexa emphasizes the passenger's perceived social differences.

In co-constructing a difficult exchange, the passenger and TSO not only reinforce prevailing negative emotion norms, but also show how interactions reveal hidden taint. Alexa recalled that the man had a legitimate health condition that made removing his shoes difficult. She indicated that had he been nicer (and mentioned the problem before "getting mean"), she could have helped. On its surface, asking individuals to remove their shoes seems mundane but due to the complexities of race, age, gender, and health, Alexa's emotion management was actually quite dirty and difficult. The prevailing emotion norm called for the interaction to be neutral, but due to the passenger's response to Alexa, the exchange was co-constructed negatively. Yet, Alexa's reflections suggest that the interaction could have been constructed more positively, and therefore potentially less tainted for both her and the passenger. Had the passenger, for instance, revealed his health condition instead of "snapping," his trip to the airport and Alexa's day at work may not have been fraught with emotional stigma. Of course, the greater burden falls on the TSO, who then must face hundreds of more travelers. As a working-class person of color who discussed "just trying to make ends meet," Alexa revealed it is difficult to manage emotions at work: "It's hard to sometimes keep your composure … You guys really don't even know what it's like to have to deal with … your shit all day."

As mentioned, the co-construction of emotion norms intersected with gender, race, and class, and highlighted how the emotional requirements of socially and physically stigmatized occupations are dynamic. In terms of emotion, hidden taint involves the experience and co-construction of unexpected emotions not called for by organizational protocol which are made more difficult when involving identity differences. In the bureaucratic organizations in this study, the emotion norm of neutrality was expected but the experiences of judges and TSOs showed that in reality, their emotional work diverged from organizational expectations due to the responses of patrons. In both contexts, the co-construction of neutrality was not clear-cut, especially when considering facets of identity such as gender, race, and class. In the next section, we demonstrate how power dynamics further influence how hidden taint manifests in each context.

Hidden taint and negotiating power dynamics

In security, structure and protocol embed physical and psychological distance between passengers and TSOs. While lines and machines physically separate, TSOs wear uniforms with brass badges, heavy belts, and thick-soled boots, while passengers must divest themselves of protections – shoes, belts, and jackets. Technologies like X-ray machines and backscatter scanners look inside baggage and through clothing, eliminating privacy. Interactions during security, however, emphasize how power is negotiated and co-constructed.

Physical screenings reveal the complex power in security. TSOs – often viewed as absurdly powerful in this limited context but also frequently disrespected by passengers – are required to screen passengers, ostensibly to root out dangerous contraband, and ensure safety. The material reality of these goals, however, involve putting passengers

through highly contested "naked scanners" as well as touching passenger private parts while on display in the middle of checkpoints. TSO Jonathan, of Pacific Islander heritage, reflected on the impact of these procedures: "I do not like the public image we have. Contrary to the average person's belief, we are not out to touch people. Believe it or not, we hate the patdowns as much as anyone else, but it has to be done." Patdowns would be an example of physically tainted dirty work because they involve touching passengers. However, the protocol involves hidden taint when passengers and TSOs negotiate power during patdowns in ways that make them emotionally difficult.

While most passengers are compliant and docile, a fair few resist patdowns, including a woman who furiously applauded the first author's "solidarity" for also opting out of advanced imaging, saying she requests patdowns to "stick it" to the TSA and make more work for TSOs. The passenger's loud applause shows the active co-construction of resistance to organizational norms. In observations, other passengers made lewd comments during patdowns such as "Oh baby, right there, that's it," when being touched on the backside. Moreover, TSO Lucky, a Latino, described a passenger who, after agreeing to the procedure and declining a private screening, yelled, "Rape! Rape! She's raping me! Somebody stop!" during her patdown. When asked how he was trained to respond, Lucky said, "On the inside, I can be very mad for what a passenger does or says, but according to my operating procedure I have to say/do certain things." The correct response involves controlling emotions, getting a supervisor, and walking away. "That way I get to keep my job and someone else deals with the passenger." Regardless of TSO response and contrary to what many compliant passengers think, passengers can use emotional performances to negotiate some power during interactions. When passengers claim "rape" or sexualize encounters through lewd comments and TSOs have to suppress emotions, they construct a situation where TSO work becomes dirty and unexpectedly tainted.

The negotiation of power dynamics also occurs in the courtroom where a perception of power is created through the physical layout (e.g., the elevated judge's and bailiff's bench). The judge's higher prestige is communicated through formal black robes and conventions like defendants being made to stand when the judge enters the room. However, the perception of power is somewhat misleading. In arraignment court, the judge only has the authority to take pleas of guilty or innocent. Yet, defendants – who usually come from lower status and less educated backgrounds – are frequently unfamiliar with the legal process. Judge Ryne explained:

> Arraignment's not the time when a person can tell their story and a lot of time defendants don't understand that. A judge has to be able to explain to the person, you can't tell your story today but do it in a way so that you are not rude.

As mentioned, judges are mandated to demonstrate neutrality. In situations where defendants are ready to "tell their stories," judges must also communicate care and patience to tell them the time is not right, without escalating potential negative emotions of defendants who might feel slighted. Like one defendant the second author observed who was rehearsing her story and later rolled her eyes at the judge when she was not allowed to tell it. When defendants are confused about the judge's actual purview, judges must be able to communicate care and compassion quickly while still moving cases through the system. These interactions reveal hidden taint for judges that is exacerbated when marginalized differences, such as class, are considered.

The negotiation of power dynamics also surfaced relative to the appearance of patrons. For example, TSOs frequently single out people based upon appearance – be it skin color, bountiful hair, religious headgear, or clothing. Passenger Nate, a lawyer, discussed emotional tensions that emerge regarding his racial identity:

> The security line has always been a little bit stressful … I'm half-Mexican. I don't know if that means that I would be singled out, but it has felt that way … Since September 11th, I've gotten singled out for special, not excessive, screenings. They watch you through the metal detectors. They pull random – supposedly random – people out and pat me down. I've gotten patted down many, many times.

Nate suggested the reason for his additional screening is due to his appearance – dark skin and facial hair. This profiling also foregrounds his identity as a man, since media portrayals and stereotypes perpetuate the image of terrorists as brown and male (Nacos, 2006). It is not surprising that the TSA has been attacked by civil liberty organizations regarding racial profiling and has agreed to institute training and policy adjustments (Craven, 2015). When passengers get upset for being singled out, be it for wearing long skirts or using a wheelchair that requires extra screening, they often channel anger at TSOs who only enforce, not create rules. To expediently get through screenings, however, passengers are required to perform significant emotion management as racial and ethnic stereotypes are reified. As TSOs wield power and target passengers based upon their identities, the experiences become tainted for both passengers as they navigate additional screenings and perform extra emotion management not required of other travelers, and employees as they manage passenger reactions to policies outside their control.

In court, defendants' appearances impact how judges respond and discipline. For example, at the Equitas court, a Black man in disheveled clothes, carrying two half-full black garbage bags was called forward. Before the man could even reach the bench, Judge Harris, a White male, called, "Please sit down in the front. We will speak to you in a minute." Later, Judge Harris revealed he assumed the defendant was homeless and planned to suggest a diversion program. Judge Harris was trying to assist the defendant but through his assumptions, based on race and physical appearance, and his quick and unprompted response, his behavior could be read as dismissive or uncaring by defendants in the gallery. The example highlights the complexity of making decisions based on observations of identity markers.

Additionally, Judge Major explained, "Everybody comes in with different levels of understanding, which has a lot to do with whether they are understanding what I am communicating. I have to be able to pick up on whether somebody is understanding or not." This comment highlights the different levels of knowledge and perhaps intellectual ability that defendants possess and her attempt to "pick up" on these knowledge differences illustrate the co-construction of empathy between defendants and judges. Judge Major used physical appearance, including visible hints regarding gender, race, and class, to determine if she needed to adjust her communication and demonstrate empathy for defendants' knowledge of court processes. This dynamic maneuvering shows judges perform extra labor not accounted for by organizational procedures or power relationships, but emotion management that is entrenched in stigma and potentially problematic assumptions about identities. It also illustrates an overlap between emotional and social taint in a prestigious occupation.

Defendants also judged each other based on identity markers and communication, as evidenced when the second author observed a Black male defendant hop on one leg up to Judge Adams' bench (a White male) and explain that he had a "hole in his leg." The defendant did not elaborate and the ambiguous description resulted in raised eyebrows, a series of terse questions from the judge, and audible smirks from two White defendants nearby. The defendant explained he could not afford a doctor. Rather than enforce jail time, Judge Adams offered community service, saying he would give the man one more chance. The judge's leniency inspired disdain from the White defendants, as demonstrated in this fieldnote: "When Judge Adams gives the defendant community restitution, the two individuals behind me can't believe it. 'He's watched T.V.,' one says. "They wait until people kill somebody then they put them in jail," the other replies." The man who says "He's watched T.V." suggests the Black defendant has watched judge reality television shows and is purposefully dramatizing his injury to avoid harsher penalties, while the other insinuates the man got off easy. The White defendants distance themselves from the T.V.-watching defendant and cast aspersion on the judge for falling for the hype. Here, T.V. caricatures of judges shape the negotiation of power dynamics in court, in this case relating to race and class, and potentially undermining Judge Adams' credibility.

Furthermore, the interaction highlights larger societal discourses that judges grapple with as they negotiate power dynamics in court. As mentioned, the defendants watching interactions with Judge Adams shaped their own perceptions about how communication would unfold, which contribute to the negotiation of power dynamics and the co-construction of hidden taint. For example, the defendants witnessed that a potential fake injury was afforded community service instead of jail time, and that the defendant was able to negotiate by evoking sympathy. At the same time, Judge Adams managed his frustration – evidenced through vocal cues and nonverbal behavior – toward the supposedly injured defendant and controlled his emotions as the defendant hopped to and from the bench. The emotion management of the judge, the injured defendant, and the defendants in the gallery suggest that under the façade of prestige, judges' work actually involves expressing compassion toward lower status individuals, even begrudgingly. This particular emotion work is unexpected, hidden in the negotiation of power dynamics, and directly related to class. Taken together, these results highlight how co-constructed emotion norms and power dynamics relate to hidden taint.

Discussion

In this study, we explored how identity markers like gender, race, and class impact emotion management in bureaucratic organizations, and the relationships among emotion management, identity, and dirty work. Below we explain how these findings extend theory.

Theoretical implications

This study provides three important contributions for organizational theory. First, we offer a theoretical extension to the dirty work literature by introducing a new type of dirty work called hidden taint. Previous research describes dirty work as either physically, socially, morally, or emotionally tainted. We view hidden taint as a larger, encompassing

category of dirty work that involves the experience and dynamic co-construction of taint. In this article, we demonstrate how hidden taint can involve the co-construction of unexpected emotions and power dynamics not called for by organizational protocol that is made more difficult when multiple identity markers intersect. Ultimately, we show how different types of taint overlap and how hidden taint emerges through interaction, bringing an explicitly communicative lens to the study of this organizational construct.

In the two bureaucratic contexts we studied, emotion norms were influenced by hidden taint when employees received responses from patrons that conflicted with organizationally mandated emotional expectations, such as when passengers expressed displeasure at "robotic" TSOs, thus requiring more difficult emotion management for those employees. Likewise, the active negotiation of power molded interactions and ultimately sustained hidden taint, especially when such negotiations surfaced the discrepancy between perceived and actual authority. For example, municipal court judges are perceived by defendants as powerful and prestigious yet, they only have the authority to take pleas, and TSOs must demonstrate a "commanding presence" even though they have no meaningful control over policies and procedures. Under a façade of professionalism, judges' work is tedious and involves processing cases that are socially tainted (e.g., prostitution, urinating in public) and involve stigmatized populations (e.g., homeless). Likewise, in security, TSOs labor under military-like protocol that portrays patriotic service, while obscuring the daily work of processing, touching, and enduring ridicule from thousands of people each day. These processes become more difficult in interactions where certain identity markers are foregrounded and marginalized.

By considering intersecting identity markers, we were able to assess how and to what degree hidden taint emerged in the co-construction of power and emotion management. For example, gender and race influenced defendant perceptions about female judges expressing neutrality and TSOs' ability to demonstrate care or offer help, with hidden taint emerging when feminine emotional expressions became stigmatized during interactions. Additionally, class intersected with race and gender to reveal how employees' and patrons' communication is constrained and emotional experience made more difficult when class or status expectations are challenged. Our analysis also demonstrated how discourses about race, class, and gender shape the social construction of dirty work and hidden taint between employees and patrons.

Examining hidden taint illustrated how patron expectations and experiences in bureaucratic contexts conflict with organizational reality. For instance, the type of emotion management required by the organizations we studied runs contrary to patron expectations. Whereas Western customer service norms suggest "the customer is always right" and pleasing customers is a priority, in both of these bureaucratic contexts, employees must perform emotions that make interactions with patrons more challenging. This, in turn, adds taint to the employees' emotion management as unmet patron expectations can generate defensiveness, escalate negative emotional performances, and lead to more difficult and stigmatized encounters.

Likewise, we show how patrons are linked into these processes and also experience unexpected stigma related to their identities during organizational interactions, extending Malvini Redden's (2013) discussion of emotional taxes. For instance, the co-construction of emotion norms reveals hidden taint in both the TSO and passenger experiences. TSOs' work becomes tainted when they perform the organizational emotion norms, absorb related passenger abuse,

and further suppress emotion, which introduces unexpected emotional taint into their work. This bleeds over into the passenger experience, wherein passengers must interpret the behavior of the TSOs and perform complex emotion work in order to successfully navigate security (see Malvini Redden, 2013). These interactions show the overlap of different types of stigmatized work in that much emotional stigma emerges from physically tainted processes like patdowns. Similarly, defendants experience tainted organizational interactions when judges shape their communication around marginalized facets of identity, such as when judges make sentencing decisions related to perceptions of class.

A second theoretical contribution of this study is its extension of Rivera's (2015) discussion of emotional taint by showing how hidden taint suffuses certain types of work. Rivera (2015) says emotional taint is connected to emotional workplace performances that may be inappropriate, excessive, or vulnerable. In response to Rivera's (2015) call to examine dirty work in relation to emotion and intersectionality, we demonstrate how intersections of identity create challenges in relation to emotion management in bureaucratic contexts where emotional performances outside of neutrality or intimidation are considered inappropriate or excessive. The challenges centered on real and perceived emotion norms, and the negotiation of power dynamics.

By considering the interplay between employees and patrons, we show how hidden taint is not a static feature of occupations, but emerges dynamically in interaction. Our analysis offers a substantive contribution to organizational theory by demonstrating how this dynamic interaction and co-construction of stigma is intricately related to intersecting identities. While hidden taint could certainly be evident in interactions that do not include intersectionality or emotion management, these factors made the co-construction of hidden taint more evident and complex.

A third contribution to theory is our exploration of what we call co-constructed emotion management, which is the process of emotion management that occurs between organizational actors, in this case, employees and patrons. As mentioned, researchers have examined reciprocal emotion management between employees (Lively, 2000), how emotion cycles from employee to employee (Hareli & Rafaeli, 2008), and the construction of the service experience between employees and patrons (Tumbat, 2011). However, co-constructed emotion management is distinctive because it focuses specifically on the constitutive nature of communication, and how emotion processes develop in communication between employees and people who visit organizations. One contribution of our study is that it addresses co-constructed emotion management between employees and patrons, providing a more intricate analysis of emotion processes than focusing on employee perspectives alone.

Practical implications

The bureaucratic systems we studied are complex governmental agencies. Therefore, we offer ideas that can be implemented reasonably quickly rather than sweeping but unfeasible recommendations. For both settings, our findings suggest a deep need for training about identity differences such as gender, race, and class. Employees seemed especially challenged when encountering people different from them, especially with regard to language and appearance. While the TSA, for instance, has implemented training about how to better manage interactions with people who live with disabilities after several

well-publicized complaints (Diament, 2013), there does not seem to be training that connects policy implementation and emotion management. Employees in both contexts would benefit from discussing uncomfortable interactions – those that make them feel powerless, for instance – and generating emotional responses healthier than suppression, which is linked to negative health outcomes (Gross, 2002).

Bureaucratic workers in both settings could also benefit from revision of emotion management training and norms that dictate narrow definitions of appropriate emotional displays. For instance, TSOs are trained to either be "calm, cool, and collected" or have a "commanding presence," while judges are meant to be objective and neutral. These emotional display choices limit the range of appropriate expression, and cause difficult situations that employees must manage. Having a wider range of appropriate emotional displays, especially for TSOs who have less discretion at work, would be useful. Additionally, due to the unexpectedly difficult emotion norms of bureaucratic work, patrons may experience dissatisfaction with their experience within these organizations. Thus, trainings should cover how interactions with patrons change the nature of work, especially in relation to emotion and power negotiation.

Directions for future research

This study extends communication theory by showing how identity and emotion management illuminate hidden taint. Importantly, our study examined identity differences, but did not involve a fully intersectional analysis. Future research could make contributions by using an intersectional analysis to reveal further complexity between dirty work, emotion management, and overlapping identities. Likewise, while our study considered some identity differences, scholars could address sexuality, religion, or ability – categories that certainly impact emotion management. Furthermore, the interactions we studied were short. Future research should explore the ongoing co-construction of emotion management in settings where employees and patrons have more prolonged or repeated contact. Additionally, we examined hidden taint in two bureaucratic contexts and in the process compared low- and high-prestige occupations. Future research should investigate hidden taint in other types of work, such as high- and low-prestige roles in healthcare or education, to examine how experiences of hidden taint compare to one another.

Notes

1. The TSA has been recognized by national organizations as a top employer for diversity, women, and people of Hispanic/Latino and African American heritage (2011).
2. Airport customers vary widely in their knowledge of security procedures and expectations of service. While frequent travelers such as business customers know the rules and processes, they are also used to being treated with a high level of service and expediency. Contrarily, many infrequent travelers do not have enough experience to know how security processes unfold, and at the same time, bristle at perceived inequities during travel (e.g., first class/frequent flier/priority lines, TSA pre-check, etc.). Likewise, the expansion of pay-to-upgrade airport perks enables fliers without a lot of travel experience to develop high expectations for service. Some research argues that conflict in security settings is due in part to the prevailing expectations of "the customer is always right" service that does not exist in airport security where mandatory encounters prompt unique emotion management for patrons (Malvini Redden, 2013).

3. Pseudonyms for participants and organizations have been used to protect confidentiality.
4. At the time of the interviews, the TSA as an organization was approximately 11 years old. Four TSO interviewees had worked at the TSA almost since its inception.
5. Interview guides available upon request.

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Notes on contributors

Shawna Malvini Redden (Ph.D., Arizona State University) is an assistant professor at California State University, Sacramento. Her research examines emotion in organizing, organizational sensemaking, and identity construction and performance.

Jennifer A. Scarduzio (Ph.D., Arizona State University) is an assistant professor at the University of Kentucky. Her research examines the intersections of emotion, violence, and wellness in a variety of organizational and health settings.

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