2018

Can You Feel the Spirit? Towards a Sensory Sociology of Relgion

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CAN YOU FEEL THE SPIRIT?
TOWARDS A SENSORY SOCIOLOGY OF RELGION

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY

BY
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CHICAGO, IL
AUGUST 2018

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My committee has been kind and understanding as well as tough and critical. This could not have happened without their feedback and encouragement. Dr. Williams input pushed me to build a more solid argument, but never discouraged me from thinking big. Dr. Moore introduced me to the sociology of the body and the senses, giving me the language to think about ritual failure that I had been lacking. Dr. Maas Weigert gave me guidance and advice that helped me to pose a question that may have useful implications for faith and religious traditions beyond the study. Thank you all.

I am grateful to the input and encouragement of my department. I would like to thank Dr. Judy Wittner for her mentorship and guidance on conducting compassionate interviews and Dr. Figert for her critical perspective on the importance of embodied data for building embodied theories. Thank you all for your mentorship and encouragement.

Family and friends have been a driving force in keeping me focused. Thank you to my parents for supporting this journey. Thanks to Betty Christianson for the editing. I am honored by all of the cheerleaders I have had as this process continued, especially Gretel, my #Phdlife compatriot this past year.

This dissertation would not have been possible without the love and support of Michael Craig, who has encouraged and prodded me every step of the way. Thank you.

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ABSTRACT

How do the embodied senses play into ritual efficacy? In this dissertation, I argue that the relationship between ritual and This mixed-methods dissertation focuses on the ways individuals, local ritual coordinators, and larger organizations use and understand the senses and embodiment as tools for shaping and experiential results of ritual encounters. Establishing an understanding of the role of the sensory in sociological literature and the historical shifts in the sociology of religion, I build an analysis that models ways that the sensory can be used to understand and analyze religious rituals. Using ethnographic and content analysis of rituals in Pagan, Catholic, Presbyterian, and Unitarian Universalist traditions alongside data from the National Congregations Survey set, I look at US based religious organizations in both the US and UK.

The embodied and sensory experiential is not just a vehicle for reaching a desired goal but also a part of the coordinated religious experience. This dissertation highlights ways in which embodied sensory experiences are shaped by multiple social structures. Individual lived experiences and bodily histories reflect in religious ritual articulation. Local ritual coordinators, those responsible for arranging ritual experiences, work to navigate the relationship between the individual and the organization, managing the local moods and needs at the same time.

These observations of social structures impacting ritual experience led to developing a theory of religious mis-articulation. Ritual articulation refers to the ways the complex local, individual, and organizational social forces intersect and interact and makes space in the

discussion for moments of poor interactions or mis-articulations. I develop a typology here, using study examples, for ways in which ritual mis-articulations might be further understood and addressed. This model may be used assist local religious communities, as well as larger national organizations, in considering some of the ways that ritual can be modified to better reach disarticulated populations and individuals.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Why do rituals fail for some and work for others? Sociological studies of religion most often emphasize the importance of religious communities, the political impact of beliefs, and the role of religion in social change. Religious rituals, *qua* rituals, are looked at as mechanisms to convey symbolic meaning and maintain membership through collective experiences of effervescence. However, recently there has been an increase in works that consider the ways ritualized interactions once gave order to (or continue to give order to) social engagements. Assessing effective rituals is a difficult task. "When we try to express communion with God in words, we rapidly reach the end of our capacities," Anne, one of my interviews who attended a prayer service, said – illustrating how it can be difficult to measure the ways in which ritual is effective. To address that difficulty, I consider ritual efficacy in the context of embodied and sensory experiences. This approach to the sociology of religion allows for developing a typology for understanding the issue of ritual efficacy.

The empirical question of failure within religious rituals is rarely explicitly explored. Collins' (2010, 2004) use of Interaction Ritual Theory (IRT) to interrogate religious ritual is one of few examples. However, ineffective ritual, or rituals that fail to produce social cohesion or participant transcendence, is under-explored even using this approach, as is illustrated by Riis and Woodhead (2010). Wuthnow (2009) also discussed the ways that the Church historically worked to articulate meaning to populations that related their lived circumstances to the nature of

the divine. But, while we can look backwards in history at practices that were shifting in relationship to other shifting social structures, the difficulties inherent in documenting supernaturally associated experiences and current moments of sensed ritual inefficacies often evade scientific approaches to religious experiences. Peter Berger (1990) argues that the only parts of religious life that can be studied are those that can be observed empirically. As well, the sacred and the impactful elements of religious life are perceived bodily in ways that are difficult to scientifically measure.

One of the points of examination where failure, or missed connections, is discussed in the sociology of religion is that of community memberships. Memberships in religious collectives (Putnam and Campbell 2010) and the ways in which those gatherings fail to truly engage both the social and the religious effectively (Lichterman 2005) are an ordinary part of sociological analysis, but the failure of religious rituals is problematic to determine. The question becomes: Who determines ritual effectiveness? How can this be measured? Building on the narratives of experience, as well as documented organizational changes and institutional policies, this dissertation explores ways in which ritual can work, can not work, and when not working, then recover. While participants may have used the term 'failure' to discuss a ritual, they more often spoke to me of its inefficacy, or how it simply "failed to really engage [me]" rather than claim that the ritual itself failed. Thus, I use the term *mis-articulation* to address moments where rituals do not achieve desired outcomes for participants or communities. *Failure* is a contextually-laden term that often implies a permanent end, a permanency that is not what I found in my research. Yet, a ritual may not, in the words of one participant, "work."

This dissertation identifies some of the different forms and factors that articulate, or mis-articulate, around each other in the complex relationship between the individual, the local

religious community, and the national level organizations that comprise elements of each religious ritual experience. I use articulation as a metaphor, building on Collins' idea of interaction ritual chains as well as Hervieu-Legier's (2000) argument that religion is a chain of memories. I think of each element of religious ritual articulation like the simple machines that propel a bicycle forward. Each link in a chain connects two things together, but without gears and levers, the chain simply sits there or provides tension. Add elements that articulate with the chain, and it moves. But, chain links can become askew or twisted in ways that keep them from effectively moving as they were designed to. Much as a bicycle chain becomes kinked due to road debris and needs to be smoothed back out, individuals can experience singular points of mis-articulation. At times, the levers that help chains switch gears fail to move a chain from one gear to another—this is a different type of mis-articulation that retains its functionality (i.e., moving the bicycle forward), but not its efficiency. This, to me, parallels the role of a ritual coordinator, positioning the individual's chain of memories. And finally, a chain can fall off the gears entirely—a drastic articulation that requires intervention to repair. Complex repairs may be related to a defect or new development in manufacture, in the same way that multi-sited organizational changes in response to ritual mis-articulations often shift a larger set of practices through the collection of data and collaboration of experts.

Data from multiple types of sources enable exploration of the points of mis-articulation in this dissertation. In the context of a religious tradition, mis-articulation takes on an extra level of salience. Stories of religious exit, when individuals metaphorically stop riding their bicycles, often reference individual moments that don't work. Many who have these stories find new bicycles or organizations that seem to articulate more effectively. Stories of how organizers navigate mis-articulations often demonstrate the ways in which trained ritual coordinators are

much like bicycle repair shops, capable of fixing the levers that switch the chain between the gears. Interaction rituals are chains looped together to make individual experiences, but the religious chains that interlink with them at the local level and the organizational level shift the simple chain and gears to a more complex machine. For example, a simple kink in a chain often corrects itself while travelling over the gears, much as an individual can adjust for an unexpected difference in experience. On the other hand, when a chain snaps, a professional is typically required to repair or replace it, in the same way that a national organization may make liturgical shifts to better reach parishioners across the tradition. Re-articulation work applies to many types of interactions as all human interaction in Collins' mind is a series of ritualized interactions.

Rituals, organizations, local communities, and the individuals who are members are all points of intersection at which a ritual can be ineffective. It is difficult to look at a long-standing social ritual (e.g., the national anthem at ball games) and find the places where it becomes misarticulated, as this mis-articulation is experienced differently for individuals and groups. Specialist knowledge exists and can inform repairs, but it often happens behind doors after the bicycle owner has returned home although the owner can learn much by reading and asking questions. It stands to reason, then, that it becomes even more difficult to assess religious services when they are being re-articulated, applying an analytic lens to something essentially aimed at evoking and engaging with the sacred. How, then can sociology approach and appreciate ritual successes and failures in the chain of experience?

Religious rituals are felt and sensed by participants, intentionally (and at times unintentionally) shaped by ritual leaders, and understood and structured by the institutions that exist beyond them. Including the traditional five senses and the more difficult to articulate affective perceptions in the sensorium allows for a recognition of experiences that I found

integral to ritual efficacy that exist beyond the rational. While there is indeed cognition in religious actions and interactions, the idea that a cost-benefit analysis influences religious choices overlooks some of the important subtle moments of efficacies and (e.g. Young.: 1996).

Experiences of ritual as sensory narrative opens a new window for studying ritual inefficacies. Informed by IRT and nuanced through other well established approaches to ritual (Bell 1999, Grimes 1995, Hall 1997), this dissertation emphasizes embodied sensory experience as data. I include data that is bodily registered, ranging from traditional sensory data to the affective, which is admittedly often difficult to measure. That which is felt has influenced entire movements as well as organizer choices, proving that the idea of ritual efficacy goes beyond individual experience to an intentional engagement at organizational and institutional levels. Focusing on the perceived and experienced as data, this work is complementary to some current work emerging within the sociology of emotions, particularly in relation to the experience of grief (Power 2009, Beyerlein and Sikkink 2008).

The bicycle gear mechanism becomes my model for embodied religious ritual articulation. Each chain of ritual, both historical and individual, rotates and shifts in relationship to each other along the gears of ritual experience. In survey narratives and ethnographic research I collected, life histories impacted the religious efficacy of rituals and the impact of different types of experiences. This at times threw the chains out of articulation, and ritual did not proceed smoothly. Choices to use bodily participation in ways that vary from the normative institutional perspective reflect shifts in contemporary culture. I initially undertook this project simply to explore how the sensory sociological approach would help illuminate the ways in which religious experiences are understood and shaped. It is through sensory experiences of my

interviewees, my own participatory observations, and the secondary data I analyzed that the larger meanings emerged.

The data in this dissertation include ethnographic research conducted at five ritual sites in four religious traditions, content analysis of grey papers and liturgical texts produced by official religious organizational sources, and quantitative analysis of data from the National Congregations Survey (Appendix 1). The mixed methods analysis in this dissertation provides several case studies on which to build further examinations on, indicating several strong areas of commonality and future directions. There is potential in the concept of mis-articulation beyond religious ritual. Ritual articulations, and the clues that lead to understanding them, should carry beyond this dissertation into other social worlds.

Structure of the Dissertation

In following chapters, I explore some of the ways religious rituals are understood and experienced at the individual, local, and organizational level. A focus on points of intersection between levels of religious ritual life will illustrate the sensory and embodied aspects of religious and ritual life. At times, these elements work together well, but there are examples where different elements of religious ritual life work at cross purposes. Intersecting elements in articulation include those existing between individual phenomenological narratives and life experiences, between ritual coordinators and the participants they coordinate, between individuals and local communities of faith, and between the national organizations and those local communities. I build a structure for examining how ritual can at times become mis-articulated by examining these points of articulation in turn. I reveal evidence of rituals that display successful articulations, others for which re-articulations became necessary due to moments of mis-articulation, and still others that suffered moments of outright ritual failure.

The data for this study are drawn from multiple religious traditions with a US organizational structure, although some data were collected in the UK. This project, in many ways, is an initial foray into a larger question, and thus tests the waters of the utility of sensory and embodied data as an analytic point for understanding ritual efficacy sociologically. By referencing religious rituals in Catholic and Presbyterian churches, as well as Unitarian Universalist and Reclaiming Witchcraft traditions, I hope to provide an overview into the ways that ritual mis-articulations occur across traditions, with frequent similarities but also ideologically rooted differences. I selected these traditions, in part, because they are representative of the predominantly white population that, in the US and other parts of the Global North, is "re-ritualizing" corporate religious life (e.g. www.ritualdesignlab.org) and personal practices (e.g. http://dreambook.vision/) in an effort to re-enchant the world.

I begin in Chapter 2 with establishing the theoretical argument that hangs upon the bicycle metaphor, moving from a critique of the penchant towards the rational in the sociology of religion towards a review of the embodied and sensory theories that are used to explore religious life. In particular, I build an argument that while the body has come to play a larger part in the study of religion, it has consistently been under-utilized. I find a historical explanation for this disconnect between lived experience and theories of religion within sociological studies. Emerging from the fundamental theoretical argument for an inclusion of a sensory sociology of religion that ranges from the phenomenological to the structural, I then build an overview of the varying methods I used to collect and analyze the data in this study and the ways the data interact and change alongside shifts in theoretical understanding. I also outline the basic logics behind the selection of these research sites and the potential limits of this study.

Chapter 3 is an exploration of the ways life histories inform mis- and re-articulations of ritual experiences. Using interview data from Taizé-style prayer service attendees who also have a home church practice, I interrogate the relationship between experiences of the usual and the liminal. Focusing on narratives of the senses, I make an argument for the ways in which reports of sound, sight, and "feeling" become phenomenological touch-points for individual experiences of ritual. Participants make sense of their ritual experiences through the relationship between associations of lighting and mood, proximity and community, and music and joy. These narratives provide evidence that sensory rituals are significant in individual lives (Vannini et al 2012). Discussing the ways in which positive individual articulations can smooth over moments where individual chain links might have previously become kinked, the chapter ends with a précis of some of the ways in which individual links in the chain may break completely.

Community narratives emerge from the forces of ritual coordinators, illustrating ways that the sensory and embodied can be used to facilitate ritual experiences. Chapter 4 uses comparative data from ecumenical meditative prayer service rituals in Catholic, Presbyterian, and Unitarian Universalist traditions and Reclaiming Witchcamp rituals in the US and UK. Some striking parallels emerge. The organizers and coordinators of these non-traditional rituals intentionally create sensory experiences to highlight the translational articulative work between participants and the organizationally structured nature of religious rituals. I use narrative and ethnographic evidence to analyze the leadership's responsibilities for accurate and adequate articulation of religious experiences. I highlight some of the delicate ways in which slight mis-articulations can impact the experiences of participants as well as the ways in which new successful links may be formed. I argue that it is the embodied narratives of coordinators and

participants that highlight ways that rituals can be and are re-articulated as effective ritual experiences.

Chapter 5 examines how national organizations perform articulation work through theological development and liturgical rulings, then implement these changes with a mix of published and face-to-face education. While the institutional level of analysis encompasses the wider religious traditions of membership, meaning the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbytery, the national organizations of the College of Catholic Bishops and PCUSA have particular organizational understandings of liturgy in relation to the larger theology of the tradition. In this chapter, I focus on the organizational, emphasizing how the national organizations have responsibility for and shape understanding through external theological and ruling structures. They articulate understandings within the larger national cultural traditions. Cerebral and ritually European traditions such as the Presbyterian and Catholic Churches allow for me to return a sociological focus on the embodied to 'mainstream' and white religious ritual, which it is traditionally underemphasized academically. After analyzing the content of liturgical texts in these two traditions alongside religious community leaders' understandings of religious ritual, I determined these traditions allow for an embodied approach. I consider re-articulations between local practices and the national policies as a highlight on moments of ritual mis-articulation as well, given that both institutions are re-articulating their liturgical structure. Building on this with data from the National Congregations Study, I find evidence for the work of local communities in re-articulating religious ritual experiences alongside a narrative of a larger American Christian worship pattern. Building on this, some potential points of mis-articulation emerged and the work of re-articulation is clearly triangulated as located in interactions of national institutions, local faith communities, and individual participants.

Finally, I present a typology to clarify the study of ritual mis-articulations. This typology breaks down some of the ways in which individuals, local communities of faith, and national institutions can be rearticulated around each other. From here, I offer a general typology drawing on data from the previous chapters. Establishing what smooth articulation, mis-articulation, and dis-articulation might look at each level, I suggest tactics for repair at the individual and local levels. Using examples of each type of repair, I establish a sort of repair-manual typology for identifying which approach might be most effective for repair of mis-articulations at different analytic levels.

Concluding this dissertation, I suggest potential directions for further study, as well as organizational applications for this model while drawing this disparate collection of data together into a larger body, discussing the practical and theoretical developments that these many points of potential failure provide.

Sensory life becomes the analytic lens that allows points of mis-articulation to be examined and potentially repaired. A sensory approach offers new data for studying religious experiences and life, but most effectively leads to points where non-verbal transmission of subtle but strong impacts can be found and understood through sensory metaphors. It is this focus on the sensory that allowed participants and facilitators to speak of moments when religious rituals and experiences did not quite connect. And for a good portion of my respondents, it was the moment of sensory engagement that enabled a transmutation of the experience from rote to fully realized.

It may be that for many people who describe themselves as “spiritual but not religious,” deeply personal embodied ritual experiences are the aspect of religious experience that is most missing from older and more established religious traditions. Hence, in order to bring in new

participants, these established religious traditions need to nurture and re-articulate embodied participation in religious rituals. The fact that Taizé, France offers the largest continually running youth religious retreat in Europe is one solid indicator that sensory and experiential ritual is a useful religious tool for engaging populations that demographically do not strongly identify with a religious identity or membership. I build an argument that the senses as a lens of perception may have some liturgical utility as well, as the importance is not being placed on bodily pleasure but on the ways in which these rituals are impacting the lives of participants.

CHAPTER TWO

FRAMING THE RITUALS

Sensing and Stories: An Introduction

There is an inherent difficulty in gathering data about subtle perceptions involving interaction with the super- or supra-natural. This difficulty passes beyond the phenomenological challenge of description of the experience to something arguably more intimate, addressing the direct relationship between the individual and that which cannot simply be measured, but intuited and put to words by lyrical wordsmiths and poets (e.g., Larkin 1954). Could I elicit responses nuanced with sensory and affective data, carefully navigating the delicate boundary between belief and evidence? What are the implications of ritual practices that can aid in bringing forward evidence of embodied feeling-states so that the social influences can even begin to be unpacked? In this chapter, I will sketch the conceptual framework for this dissertation project, outlining the ways in which current disciplinary approaches and theories frame this question.

Subtle experiences are things often dismissed as difficult to quantify or verify in a society that privileges the rational and observable. However, these affective and sensory moments are an intricate element of social life (Berlant 2011, Clough 2009). Religion as an investigatory scope can serve as a prime locus for case studies that illustrate larger social questions, given the focused and clearly delineated nature of some aspects of religious participation and life (Guhin 2014). Religion, in the sociological lens, provides a condensed ideological and organizational

package that clearly identifies both in-group and out-group boundaries. However, religious experiences are often something outside of "Religion" as a major tradition's primary rituals.

Religious rituals are a concrete point of entrance into the embodied lives of individuals and communities. At the interpersonal level, testimony is essential to many variants of religious tradition. The ritual of giving testimony is frequently phenomenological in practice, reflecting affective experiences (like goosebumps) socially translated as moments of religious experiences (Bender Et al. 2013). Most voluntary research participants willing to discuss religious experiences are socially primed to tell a story, to make the moment of experience come to life for the listener. The individual researcher, too, often has been socialized to think about religious experiences from a bodily perspective. And yet, most sociological examination of religion involves positivist abstraction. For example, Miller and Yanomori recognize the impossibility of evading embodied engagement within their work on global Pentecostals, and yet they do not spend much time discussing that point beyond recognizing that "it is hard to remain immobilized as the divides between heart and mind, body and spirit dissolve" (2007: 149). The increased focus on "lived religion" opened the door for a return, in some ways, to William James' (2009) early assay into religious phenomenology).

In reality, "lived religious experience", theological explorations of embodied experience, liturgical discussions, ordained and lay religious leaders' discussions of community building, and even online discussions all contribute to the religious life of the mind, the community, and of the body. This chapter will sketch out various parts of the form of my study, building a stable base from which to investigate the interlinked and constantly moving chains of ritual experience. First, I discuss some of the difficulties stemming from the very nature of the sociological understanding of religion and present background on the rise of a sociology of the body that

influences my understanding of the embodied religious. Building on the suggestions made by Shilling (2008) and others, I look at the ways in which contemporary and historical understandings of religion have influenced the study to date. Finally, I break down some of the varied data collection methods I have applied in this research and the data sources I focused on based on the larger interests of this project. The theoretical guides these methodological choices, using the extended metaphor of ritual articulations to understand the ways in which even the sociology of religion and the body impact the framing of the bicycle, driven forward through the chains of participatory ritual.

Religion

Religion, as a term, is most often applied to beliefs and practices aligned with institutions and organizations primarily organized around shared worldviews and beliefs relating to the super- or supra-natural, praxis connecting to the divine and the immeasurable. *Religion* is a socially constructed term, steeped in history and the push-and-pull of power. Practitioners often describe their religious identity as institutional identity (Chaves 2010). Yet, the "lived religious experience" in practice often encompasses a great deal more (McGuire 2008, Taves 2010). For example, individuals often identify the tradition they grew up in as different from their current tradition, and their practices and identities often do not entirely align with their past or present affiliations (Chaves 2010). Many critics point out that the narrative of "religious identity" is a survival of early Western imperialism (Asad 1997, Christ 1976). This emphasis on the high tradition, or the legitimization of text over practice, is echoed within the social sciences. Unpacking the history that gives shape to the sociological understandings of religion, I will develop a brief timeline of the framing of religious life about ritual and embodied experience.

The complex relationship of sociology and religion traces back to Comte, who sought to establish that like any other natural function, society (and religion) could be studied scientifically, without metaphysical underpinnings (Wilson 1992:2–3). Building on Comte, Durkheim believed "scientific thought is only a more perfect form of religious thought (1982:429.)" This understanding of religion as an artifact of pre-Enlightenment thought subtly continues to inform social scientific approaches. Historically, the strongest alternative approaches were put forth by religious sociologists, often members of religious orders or practiced apologists (Hervieu-Legier 2000, McCutcheon 1999). In those cases, as well, the assumption of primacy for text-based traditions remained dominant (McGuire 2008).

Focusing on the scientifically observable, the presumption of logical progression toward "rationality" and secularization carries through to the late modern era. I define *rational* as that which falls inside empirically definable and measurable boundaries, often represented by material objects ranging from texts to loci of practice and seen to be commonly accepted as reasonable and logical. Berger recognized that although religion is socially constructed, that does not preclude the possibility that something more might exist, although this possibility cannot be scientifically examined (1990[1969]). As such, the serious religious practitioner, as treated in most American sociological literature, is often a member of an ideological and theologically orienting institution, finding identity and community in membership (Roof 1999, Wuthnow 2006, Putnam and Campbell 2010). The externally observable nature of most sociological data theoretically facilitates replicability. This need to bracket the supra-natural serves as a primary guideline for examining the relationship between religions and other social structures for sociologists and many secular writers and thinkers.

The rational legacy of sociology's early disciplinary struggles is perpetuated in ongoing challenges to the legitimacy of experiential religious scholarship as apologetics in the modern and late modern era (Bellah 1973, Tambiah 1990, McCutcheon 1999, Davie 2013). That is not to say that individual religious experiences are nonexistent in scholarship, but within the context of studying mainstream religious institutions, the importance of experience as a factor in religious life is minimized as unquantifiable. There is a strong tradition in late modern sociology of religion to either be agnostic or subtly apologetic in the ways in which scholars discuss the sociology of religion or religious sociology (McCutcheon 1999, Hervieu-Legier 2000, Flannagan 2001, Carroll 2007). The easiest avoidance tactic for dealing with either of these two approaches, in modern scholarly work, seems to be to again focus on the institutions, communities, or boundaries that establish "us" and "them."

With the less churched but still religious or spiritual generation emerging today, the focus on the religious institutions is losing some salience (Ammerman 2014, Smith 2003, Woodhead 2017). Beyer (2016) argues that the shift in religious/spiritual life from the hierarchical to the practiced and lived goes beyond earlier approaches and calls for a more nuanced and embodied approach to the social scientific. The continued emphasis on the world of the mind means that analysis of the embodied translates into the ways that bodily actions and perceptions evoke emotional and mental states (e.g., Insgold 2015, Pagis 2013). McGuire (2008), in her review of lived religious experiences, highlights the ways in which the little everyday practices associated with superstitious or religious beliefs were intertwined with the everyday life of the common western European. Encompassing the phenomenological and affective in study shifts the focus of investigation, but it also introduces potentially problematic data. From a

reflexive perspective, discussing sensory experiences de facto requires a certain suspension of disbelief that remains difficult (Goldstein 1995, Sparkes 2009).

Presumptions of rationality lead to scholarly publications that often center around a "belief system" or an "organized religion" that implies a level of holism to religion that is not found in the real world, leading to a "religious congruence fallacy" (Chaves 2010). Asad, among others, argues that for many, if not most, of the non-Western world, "religious" belief is not in any way the fundament on which religion rests (1993, McGuire 2008). One approach that seeks to encompass popular or folk praxis is the idea of lived religion (Orsi 2002, Ammerman 2014, Taves 2010). In this context, the focus is on the ways that religion translates in real lives into rituals, symbols, and meanings that impact aspects of life beyond the structures of the organization. In the above studies, elements such as the hands of Fatima which ward off evil and the Lutheran Supper Prayer which is practiced ritually before every meal are examined as parts of religious life that affirm and enforce religious ideas lived in everyday life, at times differing from formal theology and the complex liturgical practices of the church. While lived religion, as a focus, brings the local or folk traditions of families and small groups back under the scope of the larger sociology of religion, it does not engage directly with a theory of sensed and structured ritual in relation to local communities and larger organizations. It is, ultimately, an approach most often used to look at individuals as members of a religion. Problematically, a common understanding of this turn toward lived religion is to treat religious practice as "expressing in dramatic and corporeal form a sacred belief system" (Smith 2003:16). This overlooks some of the social complexity of religious life and makes it difficult to understand the nature of religion as lived and practiced within communities (Mellor 2007:587). Others, seeing accounts of lived religion in this context, also critique it as a form of apologetics (e.g., Smart 1973). My approach

folds some of the lived religion approach into a larger pragmatic examination of the individual, local, and organizational.

Studies that treat the supernatural and spiritual as real and report it as a part of the ethnographic narrative are often marginalized due to disregard for the supernatural and disdain for apologetics (McCutcheon 1999, Schilling 2008). At a micro-level, scholars who detail shivers and sensations beyond comprehension that are difficult to quantify or externally verify have often been labeled as "going native" or being apologists rather than scientists (Stoller and Olkes 1989, McCarthy Brown 2001, Bado Fralick 2005, Gilmore 2011). If they are published, the "other" aspects are often distilled or bracketed (McCutcheon 1999). It is simple to reduce a discussion of glossolalia or being "moved by the spirit" by focusing only on the instrumental (Martin 1993, Goldstein 1995, McRoberts 2004).

A recent response in the sociology of religion to these conundrums is the investigation of religion from a perspective that incorporates the embodied state as a locus of data (Parker 2006, Mellor 2007, McGuire 2008, Taves 2010, Bender Et al. 2013). While embodied, affective, and lived experiences are emerging as data (Edgell 2012), much of this data is extracted from rituals and populations considered exotic. Some of the best received include articles looking at such unusual characters as "metaphysicals," Buddhist meditators, and Pentecostalists, and practices such as Islamic fasting during Ramadan (e.g., Winchester 2008, Bender 2010, Ozawa-Silva and Ozawa-Silva 2010, Insbody 2015). This reflects the tendency of scholars to look at the marginalized for insight into the embodied, perpetuating subtle inequalities and retaining a separation of the enfleshed from lofty intellectual heights (Turner 2008). As bodily experience is a human universal, there seems to be a need for further exploration (Smith 2008, Edgell 2012). Interreligious examinations of emotion states in religious life spans are being considered by these

scholars almost like consumable experiences that require further deepening of practices in the religious career, building on Roof's (1997) understanding of a spiritual marketplace. Novelty serves as a trigger for moments of potent affective movement (e.g., Tavory and Winchester 2012), and services offered through religious support services provide elements of identity otherwise missing (e.g., Flores 2013). It might be that the fear of apologetics is at play, or on the other hand, Durkheim's bias toward an atheistic rationality.

Incorporating embodied experience in the sociology of religion while focusing on extraordinary or nondominant traditions makes the division between "religious" and "spiritual" problematic as well. This practice perpetuates the Western understanding of religion as formal and institutional, and spiritual as intimately personal. It runs the risk of re-sacralizing the spiritual while leaving the religious as institutional rather than experiential (Flanagan and Jupp 2007). While that might be, to some degree, part of the larger understanding of "religion" as institutional, if we return to the understanding of religion being more intricately interwoven with life, as explored by scholars such as Asad (1993) and McGuire (2008, 2016), the experiential aspect of religion often lumped with the "spiritual" may be more closely interwoven with the institutional influences of the "religious." This depersonalization of the religious again emphasizes the rational bent. In congruence with the focus on the embodied "other" or "exotic" traditions, this reinforces negative associations found within Cartesian duality. In other words, it is only those who are closer to nature or more primitive who engage in the embodied and bodily/emotional aspects of religion, opposed to the inheritors of Enlightenment and its impact on the Protestant legacy (Durkheim 1982). While this is recognizably dated, the difficulty of addressing and respecting sensed experiences as an end rather than as a means remains a flaw in the embodied studies of religion. In part, this leaves space for new work. To explore how this can

be examined in a way that recognizes phenomenological experiences of religious nature for everybody, the sociology of the body provides a means to give this experience interpretive context.

The Body

Sociology, particularly with respect to religion, is well served by a stronger grounding in the theories of embodiment. For example, the sensory experience of holding a burning candle and intimately watching the flame dance and feeling the wax drip as it is carried to the altar triggers particular social connotations, leading to narratives of memory. Often, intimate sense memories as well as intentional symbolic associations play together to heighten these moments. This section highlights the ways in which the embodied, sensory, and affective can better work to interrogate religious ritual life.

To explore the role of the sensory more clearly, I draw on the sociology of the body's framework for understanding the construction of an affective, embodied social self. "Embodied social relations exist both as the context (the prior circumstances) and as an outcome (a consequence) of given social formation, given systems through which we create and gain social meaning" (Cregan 2006:3). Aligned within a social constructionist viewpoint, the sociology of the body and embodiment treats the body and embodied experiences are socially structured and filtered, although underexamined. This de-reification of the body as a mere biological, Cartesian category of "other" instead turns it into a clear focus for sociological inquiry (Crossley 2001, Creagan 2006). Not only is the body a surface on which and through which individuals interact with society as a whole, but it also becomes a component of self-construction and social navigation (Turner 1992, Williams and Bendelow 1998, Schilling 2008).

The philosophical roots of modern Western thought can be observed here as well. Enlightenment philosophy often treats the body as a physical shell that contains the true social self. In a similar light, sociologists have treated the body as culturally formed, oppressed, and modified (Turner 2008), but have only recently focused on the embodied experience itself as a valid source of data collection. However, a lot of the scholarship on the body remains focused on the body as a physical subject or object rather than the point of individual experience (Creagan 2009).

Building on groundwork laid by Dorothy Smith (1982) and other second wave feminists, Judith Butler argues that theorists who treat the body as an occupied form have overlooked something essential about the physicality of existence (1993). Williams and Bendelow (1998) put forth a sociological assay of embodiment that allowed for theoretical reflexivity to consider the ways in which the body itself reshapes the experiences of society and culture, arguing that feminist thought is positioned at the intersection of the Cartesian divide in such a way as to emphasize embodiment as an antithetical approach (p. 130). Ultimately, though, their argument remains that sociology should not develop a sub-field to study the body but be done "from bodies as lived entities, including its practitioners as well as its subjects" (Williams and Bendelow 1998:208). This line of criticism continues to be relevant. For example, scholars who cite Bourdieu and Foucault as primary theoretical influences in their understanding of the body often treat habitus or norms as externally imposed, overlooking elements of the embodied individual in their resistance (Schilling 2008:5, Thomas and Ahmed 2004:5). In response, McGuire, when calling for a new focus on the body in the social scientific study of religion, argued that humans are not "disembodied spirits, but that they experience a material world in and through their

bodies" (1990:294). A focus on embodiment, then, rematerializes the individual self with a feminist theoretical approach.

A re-embodied theoretical focus has provided evidence of many ways that the body social can be observed, experienced, and agentic (Creagan 2006, Turner 2008). Symbolic interactionists such as Waskull and van der Reit argue that personhood emerges from the observable actions of the perpetually socially transforming body (2002). It is the active force of the body, as both an object to be acted upon and as the locus of action, that creates the greatest meaning, and was in fact an earlier point of theoretical development before the influence of rational choice superimposed the Cartesian divide on sociological thought (Crossley 2002). Schilling argues that it is through the acting and shifting body that social structures might best be observed (2008). He believes that by looking at phenomenological data alongside more positivist data, a holistic approach to embodied social life can produce new data that pushes beyond traditional boundaries in the discipline. However;

> "theory has treated those whose bodily demands interfere with acting independently and 'rationally' [as assumed to be the case for women, racialized minorities, people with disabilities, and others] as incapable of fully meeting the criteria for competent agency and, hence, legitimately denied some of the privileges of agents" (Meynell 2009:5)

As such, agentic theories of the body should perhaps be theories of the bod(ies) instead, moving away from a normative embodied state as a presupposition. And in this way, the intersecting factors that impact bodily life are brought into the discussion (Shaprio 2010).

We are limited in the ways that we describe the embodied by the framework of our lives. Both individual lived experiences and formal scholarly training are constrained by social factors, opening specific points through which we can engage with the world at large. Collins (2004) argues that human lives are comprised of chains of interaction rituals of varying success that shape expectations, actions, and outcomes. Merleau-Ponty argues that we can only relay

phenomenological experiences through the limited framework of language (2002). Thus, the ways in which sensory experiences are shared are in themselves socially constructed. As such, sensory inputs registered through and processed by the body become another point of investigation (Sparkes 2004 and 2009, Waskul and Vannini 2008). There has been a movement in sociology toward including the senses as a point of social analysis (Knorr-Cetina 2004). The sociology of religion, at least on the international level, has also begun to address this issue (Beyer 2016). I argue that the sociological emphasis on embodiment has made space for a stronger focus on the senses in sociology.

The senses can be read as encompassing the traditional five senses of Western culture, with a recognized emphasis on the visual nature of society today. Sensory elements that are less discussed, like perio-perception and kinetics, are often shaped and interpreted through social structures (Meyer 2012). However, most studies of the senses parcel out a difference between the sensed and affect. Reports of "feeling" can indicate affective states, embodied and often preconscious internal sensory moments that shape emotional and rational perception of an event (Clough and Halley 2007). I consider these feelings sensory registrations, as they are translated through the sensory interpretive habitus acquired through social membership. Participants and organizations discuss these feelings raised through interaction chains *qua* feelings, thus building a sensory habitus that aids in meaning-making and translation of experiences (Vannini Et al. 2012), much like an emotional habitus can rename social understandings of affective registration (Gould 2008). There are scholars arguing that affective reactions are ultimately the only real source of individual agentic action (e.g., Noland 2009) as well as scholars that reduce affect to yet another empiric data-point, missing the phenomenological nature of the feeling (Clough 2009). And yet affect is sensed, communicated perceptually, and thus sensuous.

Experiences themselves become rooted in not just the cognitive or the emotional, but the sensory. What I mean by this is that memories of experiences are often linked with a sense-memory of the pre-cognitive gut-clenching, spine-shivering, or heart-tightening rather than the interpretive labels then applied using an emotional repertoire that is used to interpret it. Memory, it seems, rests in the body and can be unconsciously triggered by bodily experiences. As such, the sensory inputs registered through and processed by the body become another point of investigation at the micro-sociological level (Waskul and Vannini 2006). My argument here is that a sensory sociology of religion is an extension of embodied sociology with a particular slant. For example, Shotwell's (2009) focus on the importance of sensory knowledge *as* sensory knowledge in political transformation illustrates some ways in which non-reified forms of knowledge can serve as a point of insight into a larger social movement through re-legitimating bodily experience as a form of knowledge. Feelings and bodily sensations are tools to aid in scientific investigations (Mody 2005, Pauwels 2006, Dumit and Myers 2011), although the processes of abstraction translate this data into a legitimate form of literary transcription (e.g., Myers 2012). There is clearly merit in paying attention to sensory experiences as points of knowledge. One learns what it is to "feel the burn" (Meynell 2009) or how to appreciate properly the bouquet of a good vintage (Vannini Et al. 2012). Morgan (2012) argues that focusing on seeing allows for a materialization of religion for study, embodying the experience in a non-institutional way; although his study is primarily social psychological, the data he collects is useful for examining the culturally shaped emotional resonances for believers. This de-reification of not only form but also function takes embodied experience further from nature into the social realm.

Emotions are in some ways the second most common target of religious life within sociology, following the rational. Scholars have examined the ways in which rituals, groups, and individual identities work together to engender something akin to Durkheim's emotional effervescence (Collins 2004, Clough 2009). For Riis and Woodhead, a multivalent approach illustrated the ways in which multiple levels of social structure interacted to engender both successful and unsuccessful moments of religious emotional evocation (2010). Collins' (2004) interaction ritual chain theory (IRT) essentially outlines the ways in which emotional effervescence can be reached. Inbody uses a modified application of Collins' theory to contribute insights into the phenomena of emotional effervescence through Pentecostal religious ritual (2015). However, each of these treats emotional experiences as a means to attain religious success or achieve an end goal. The affective feeling-states and sensory experiences of ritual serve as carriers for ritual rather than as an end game, leaving them secondary in analytical focus to the outcomes.

Looking at affect separately from the socially shaped emotional transcription might provide a different type of insight (Clough 2009, Gould 2009). A great deal of affect theory does, in fact, try to take the affect also as a socially engendered thing. However, it is rarely treated as a bodily sensation, perceived and interpreted through tissue and bone. I argue that this lens, within the larger purview of the sociology of the body, provides nuance to the interpretation of affect. As such, looking at the ways that people try to describe the indescribable can indicate something of the importance and affective relevance of those experiences to the individuals involved. For example, the ways in which language ascribed to sensations in print publications and speeches shifted from fear to anger in the early days of the AIDS epidemic clearly shaped the changes in dialog among both activists and the gay community (Gould 2009). By focusing on the ways in

which they described these affective and sensed moments, it becomes possible to analyze some of the ways in which meaning is given shape.

Focusing on the senses also tries to keep the concerns of my participants in mind. One interviewee explained that often people don't have words for their feelings, but

> "asking further questions about what they were feeling and why is almost disrespectful, resulting in false answers that lead away from the truth. . .. After all, isn't it easier to talk about something than cry in public?"

That is not to say that sensory feelings are not, in themselves, socially constructed. Rather, expecting the research partners to rationally deconstruct moments of ritual success and failure diminishes these moments. Instead, looking at the ways in which these interactions occur and the signs and signifiers used to communicate them in conversation outside of the situation emerges as a solid point of focus. Vannini, Waskul, and Gottschalk (2012) argue that a sensory sociology provides insight into the societal influence on how individuals register sensory data. They put forth the idea of ritual sensations, habits that trigger specific sensory registrations and thus affective associations (p. 89). This concept is on point for investigation of religious ritual, providing a new non-reductionist or instrumental approach to religious experience as socially constructed in both intentional and incidental ways.

The Religious Body

The embrace of embodied sociology and the senses plays directly into the recent call for new areas of investigation in the sociology of religion (Smith 2008, Edgell 2012, McGuire 2016). This dissertation takes a cue from Chris Schilling's call for a pragmatic focus on the acting body to take a better snapshot of continually shifting religious moments and look beyond the instrumental elements of religion (2008:160–61). By treating the body as an active and acting element, a level of introspection on the part of the embodied actor is validated, lending the sensed moment validity in ritual analysis. By combining the qualitative, subjectively reported

data with the quantitative, objectively enumerated data in this way, a clearer picture emerges of the ways ritual is shaped by and, in turn, shapes social life. Schilling argues that the macro, meso, and micro levels of social life should be engaged together. Multi-level analysis allows for both the agentic individual and the structural institution to play a role in the larger formation of a social religious self. In this study, the points of articulation between the multi-sited institutions, local organizations, and individual narratives that emerged led to a typology of religious articulation. The following section explores the ways in which embodied sociological approaches, in reference to religion, have historically dealt with each of Schilling's levels.

Explicitly macro-level analysis often tends to focus on the body rather than embodiment. What this means is that the body becomes either subject, abject, or object—a physical materiality that can be examined as a data point through which structure, power, and resistance can be engaged rather than the filter through which all social life is experienced (Creagan 2006, Crossley 2002). This may be, in part, due to the very different ways populations come to understand their bodies and how good comparative data is reported. Quantitative approaches tend to focus more on the bodily, as it is most easily measured. For example, Chaves Et al. (2009:4) found bodily practices such as the raising of hands serve well as measures of the degree of formality in worship. Bodily participation itself may be over- or under-reported, although the documented difference between level of report and actual attendance indicates salience of religious organizational policies as well as perceptions of participation to survey respondents' identities (Chaves 2010, Brenner 2011). Another macro-level quantitative approach, the census of the American Pagan population, built a set of variables around respondents experiential or "felt" registration of the supra-mundane, indicating a correlation between reported experiences and membership in particular pagan traditions (Berger Et al. 2003). More qualitative

examinations of an embodied history of religious life bring the multi-sited nature of the institution as a driving gear for ritual into focus. For example, McGuire's (2008) overview of the history of bodily religious practice and the incorporation of the sacred into the everyday and Mellor and Schilling's (1997) historical analyses of the interlinking of religion and embodiment from the Dark Ages to the contemporary took an embodied perspective, although the sensory angle they took was challenged as not thorough enough (Williams and Bendelow 1998). Combining understandings gained from these approaches establishes a clear disciplinary foundation from which to consider national organizations in articulation with individuals and local religious communities.

At a meso level, analysis of local communities or practices builds on the embodied lived individual religious life. Collins (2010) argues that religious ritual provides, for participants, a particularly intense sense of historical connectivity. "(T)he practice of gospel singing—in ritualized moments of performance, but also through the discipline generated in rehearsals, and in the cultivation of shared religious language and subjectivities—generates social bonds between youth and other church members, the church as an entity, and perceived racial communities" (Schnable 2012:280). Performance and practice can serve as an experiential locus for the generation of solidarity and conveyance of social meaning through collective actions, even among diverse singers (Heider and Warner 2010). On the other hand, it is the embodied experiences that often provide indications of moments of mis-articulation in intentional moments of religious (musical) diversity (Dougherty 2004). In his study of multiracial churches through worship music, Marti (2012:197–98) found "that while the virtuosity of the music can sometimes stir an otherworldly, yet deeply personal, communion with both the spirit of God and the gathered saints, most church members revealed that it was an effort to achieve a deep worshipful

experience." In part, this was made difficult due to the racialized assumptions surrounding music and the general awareness of the raced bodies in attendance. In a book on at tourism and the Quechua, Hill (2008) found similarly that there was both an essentialist reduction of religious identity to racial identity and complex logics that enabled appropriation of "authentic" religious practices for use by the dominant castes. Race, religion, and the body provide new opportunities to examine intersections of power. This highlights the ways in which the embodied religious life is itself exoticized. Looking, then, at local ritual articulations can highlight their relationship to larger social issues.

The micro-level sociological analysis of interaction allows a close examination of embodied religious experience. There is a strong predisposition to focus on religious ritual as the point of analysis in this approach, which often aligns more with Goffman's interaction rituals and dramaturgical analysis than other theories (Goffman 1959, Collins 2004, Waskul and Vannini 2006). Collins argues:

> "Religious interaction ritual involves especially strong, even extreme, emotional experiences; these announce themselves as of the highest significance, transcending all other experiences, and give pervasive meaning to life. . .. (They) are the defining moments for religion, the ritual encounters with the holy to which other rituals look back if only in pale imitation (2010:4)."

Using this interaction ritual model, Heider and Warner found that the act of ritualized singing of sacred music, even outside of sanctioned religious institutions, generated collective effervescence in part due to bodily co-presence (2010). At the same time, the individual as a point of analysis can shed light on the ways in which felt interactions inform group and multi-sited understandings. Winchester's (2008) documentation of his own bodily experiences while fasting provides key insights into the processes and experiences that contribute to Islamic fasting traditions. Pagis (2010) documents bodily sensations of not-aloneness through shared physical proximity in Buddhist meditation through observation and in-depth interviews that documented

experiential and affectual data as well as rational thought about meditative practice Bodily co-presence and physical experience, key elements to Collins' interaction rituals, contributed to the construction of meaning. In a later comparison of her study against other embodied micro-level analyses, Pagis concludes, "[t]he study of religious practices reveals the different ways that people can use the body as a reflexive medium" (2012:103). Zivkovic's (2013) study of the death rituals surrounding the three bodies of a deceased Tibetan lama, illustrated how the body (and the embodied self) are understood and treated differently in different religious traditions. In each of these examples, it is the small-scale individual interactions and experiences that shed light on larger social patterns.

Schilling's tripartite approach can be seen in embodied religious lives, simultaneously lived through articulations of the individual, local, and organizational in ritual. The term *individual,* in the context of this study, is used to refer to the singular unit of humanity reporting on their embodied experiences. *Local* refers specifically to the local community, church, or coven that has a set geographic limitation. I use *organizational* to refer to the national level of the various religious traditions I am investigating in this study. I do this, in part because they are often still part of a larger international institution but have nationally bounded traditions that are bounded by the political structure they operate within. In this study, Chapter 4 will begin with the local ritual coordinator's experiences of how the church rituals relate to organizational structures at a national and international level. Especially in the current era, where the lines between hierarchical organizations and religious identity are becoming more tangled, looking at each of these points of articulation in relationship with each other becomes key (Beyer 2016). For instance, Sutton (2010) found a strong intersection between religious ideology and the sacrificial mother in individual narratives of sacrifice in times of scarcity, but also found the

sacred mother became a mobilizing force that empowered women's bodies to take political action in the public sphere through enacting a larger drama of bodily sacrifice in Argentinian protest. Recently, emotion in religion has been teased out at the macro, meso, and micro levels by Riis and Woodhead (2010), who examined the individual, symbolic, and institutional linkages between religion and emotion. In many ways, this book serves as a solid model for Schilling's 2008 tripartite approach to phenomena and structure although the bodily was overlooked (Riis and Woodhead 2010). Most studies, however, seem to focus on a single level of religious experience, perhaps in part because every human is embodied, and thus studies trying to address each level might in turn become a massive endeavor. The research in this dissertation is targeted at exploring that articulation between institution, organization, and individual through the senses. As such, the embodied data is collected and analyzed in context, using this pragmatic approach.

The conceptual framework, then, for this dissertation is as such: First, the lived and experienced religious experiences of individuals, groups, and institutions are interlinked in complex ways, bicycles powered by articulating chains of ritual. Second, to investigate the efficacy of religious rituals as rituals, a pragmatic approach that incorporates social structural and the phenomenological data in one examination provides a sturdy frame. Allowing for a complex investigation of the ways in which individuals, groups, and large organizations frame these experiences, report these experiences, and respond to expressed needs is necessary. Third, using a mixed-methods approach alongside this pragmatic approach, I collected multiple types of data from multiple social structural angles ranging from the individual to the organizational, allowing for closer analysis of how the structural and phenomenological are interrelated. Building on that, this chapter will conclude with a discussion of the general methodological approach to data collection and analysis that will guide the following chapters.

Methods

There is an inherent difficulty in gathering data about subtle perceptions. This difficulty goes beyond the phenomenological challenge to something deeper. How do we elicit responses that are, in themselves, nuanced with the type of sensory and affective implications that can aid in bringing forward evidence of embodied feeling-states so that the social influences can even begin to be unpacked? Studies intended to gather sensory and affective data must keep the dual nature of the embodied approach in mind. The body itself as a materiality is a carrier of symbols and a point of performance, on which is writ power and inequality (Turner 2008). Embodiment also encompasses experiences—including affect and the intellectual labeling of emotion—as well as individual narratives of self that may relay more about social facts that influence and shape religious life than have been explored sociologically to date.

Giving voice to experiences of something ineffable be fostering faith rather than social scientific reason (McCutcheon 1999, McGuire 2008). Embodied experience, both performative and phenomenological, might be reduced to a dependent measure of faith or participation in survey data, whereas phenomenological moments of awe are at times the foundation on which lived religious identities are built (McGuire 2008, Taves 2010). The bracketing of others' truths in a form of methodological agnosticism when addressing the issue of religion has served to establish a "neutral" participant-observer (McCutcheon 1999), or, as Stark and Bainbridge (1987:23) phrase it, "if the gods do not exist as facts." However, by exempting the need to discuss their own personal beliefs within ethnographic analysis, social scientists establish their position of relative power (Smith 1989). So, too, there is a considerable risk of accusations of subjectivity in the study of phenomenological experiences of religion (Rosaldo 1989, Goldstein 1995, McCutcheon 1999, Flannagan 2001), thus a rounded approach toward the embodied

requires the ability to document and approach embodied religious experience from multiple angles.

My research is iterative and recursive by nature, taking a cue from grounded theory (Glasser and Strauss 1967). When discussing the sites from which data were collected, a basic understanding of the thought processes influencing each wave of data collection may prove to be useful to highlight some of the emerging shifts in understanding. As such, the introduction to each of the phases of data collection, in their multiple layers and locations, is by necessity brief but essential to understanding the thrust of the study and encloses within it the distinct types of data explored in general. Given that each level of analysis utilizes data differently, each chapter will examine these methods and levels of analysis closely.

Origins of Approach—Emergent Theory in Action

This project emerged, in part, from my master's thesis research on Reclaiming Witchcraft "witch camps." I conducted observation and interviews at three separate Reclaiming witch camps offered between 2001 and 2003 in both the American Midwest and in England. Reclaiming, a Feminist Witchcraft tradition, was founded in California by Starhawk (1979) in the late 1970s. I entered the field interested in the way that new religious movements (NRMs) leveraged international connections via listservs and other online communication forms in order to engage in international activism within a religious context. Data were drawn from interviews with twenty participants and four ritual leaders from both camps. I was also archiving emails from each of the online listservs maintained at the time by the tradition, for both ritual and activist purposes. The participants came from a wide variety of backgrounds, educationally and professionally, although they were predominantly white and female. They included a wide range of professions, from a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology to a Mennonite minister and a

professional psychic. The organizers included two who exclusively taught and led rituals in multiple witchcraft traditions and two who did so as a religious service but held other jobs, including the one male teacher/ritual coordinator. All but one of my interviewees for this project identified as white, and only four of the participant interviewees and one of the teachers identified as male. Ultimately, the project morphed from an investigation of virtual community and social action to one of ritual failure and cross-cultural miscommunications (Dougherty 2004). At the end of the project, I maintained contact with some of my key informants and observed the public discourse about the group and its internal ritual conflicts and structural changes.

My next project focused specifically on religious institutions that offered Taizé-style ecumenical prayer rituals. Taizé-style prayer rituals are designed as self-reflective prayer rituals first established by the ecumenical brotherhood of Taizé, France, as part of the liturgical movement of the early twentieth century (Fr. Roger 2006). Rising in popularity from that point onward, these rituals have spread to points across the world and are frequently offered as a meditative prayer service (Santos 2010). These rituals were opened to individuals from any institution who wished to give up a Friday evening, and they were offered by Catholic and Unitarian churches in the same Chicago suburb. From this exploratory study, the language of felt experience became even more evident from both organizers and participants. The initial thrust of this study was to look at the ways in which Collins' (2004) interaction ritual chains allowed for interpretation and analysis of ritual efficacies, testing modifications proposed by Heider and Warner (2011) following my discovery of ritual failures due to differences in symbolic meanings (Dougherty 2004).

I collected observational data and interviews with volunteers from two churches that offered these prayer services in Oak Park, Illinois, between 2010 and 2012. One institution, Ascension Catholic Church, offers the largest regularly run Taizé-style prayer service and hosted visiting groups from around the United States during the time of my observation. On average, attendance appeared to range between 400 and 1,000 people. The other institution, Unity Temple, was a far less traditional offering of a Taizé-style prayer service, as it offered a Unitarian Universalist version in which some of the songs were rewritten to move the content away from its original Christian intent. Both communities, based on observation, were primarily white, although at Ascension Catholic Church, up to 5 percent of the participants on average were Hispanic or African American. European national whites as well as Americans attended and were part of the study. I have interviewed three officials who organize and run these prayer rituals and twenty-four participants. One of the three officials identified as male, and three of the twenty-four formal interviewees did. All my interviewees identified as white. Ultimately, I found myself noting that Heider and Warner were correct in that a shared symbolic attribution was not necessary, but that collective effervescence, or emotional energy, did not actually function for participants in the ways that Collins (2004) suggested it would. It seemed that the ways ritual was experienced were as much influenced by nonreligious life factors as they were by factors put forth by the institution.

The third wave of research includes data from traditional services at Ascension and Unity Temple, from the second wave of research, alongside a Presbyterian church that also offered Taizé-style rituals I attended for this part of the project. I entered this iteration of research curious about the ways in which the phenomenological (as the sensory) emerged while considering the liturgical and theological alongside organizational narratives. I tried to focus on

religious institutions that, unlike Reclaiming Witchcraft, are less frequently identified as in any way aligned with the more embodied variants of Christianity. I was led to this Presbyterian church through interviews with an official from Unity Temple in the second wave of data collection. By focusing on a part of what is traditionally considered "mainstream" American Protestant faith, alongside a demographically similar Catholic institution, I hoped to shift the emphasis on embodied and affective religious life from the periphery of American religion to the center of focus. Entering into this element of the study, my goal was to examine the differences in embodied narrative between ecumenical Taizé-style services and traditional services at the same institutions. I conducted ethnographic research at Catholic, Unitarian Universalist, and Presbyterian traditional Sunday-morning services as well as Taizé-style prayer services on different Fridays. In each location, the main congregations appeared to be more than 80 percent white presenting at the average services, as well as in the congregational directories. Those who volunteered to be interviewed skewed older and female, again, with the average age of interviewees being forty and all but six presenting as female. At the end of this phase, one element that stood out was the fact that a lot of the individuals I spoke to at both the organizer and participant levels sought out other sources of narrative when it came to their religious (or spiritual) lives.

In the third stage of data collection, thus I focused primarily on the articulations of organizational and local data alongside the informal conversations that occurred in the context of the services. I had an entrée into one location that offered Taizé-style prayer services, but the administration and staff had become overly busy due to organizational needs, and while I was thus welcomed to speak to individual members in positions of leadership. I focused on the roles of coordinators in articulation work. In my content analysis of documents provided by each of

the national organizations alongside the 20 interviews with participants, themes emerged that highlighted some of the issues of articulation. Building on trends at the individual, local, and organizational level through mixed methods and ethnographic research, I examined data from the National Congregations Survey (NCS). In addition to my content analysis of liturgical guidelines and documents from originating institutions, and my content analysis of materials provided in ritual itself, the data looking at national congregational practices with an eye toward the bodily proved helpful.

In analysis, having each of these differing data sources proved to be useful, as I learned that the articulations of sensory experience and social structures are nuanced and varied. In this dissertation, I explore the felt experiences of shivers and chills, the traditionally sighted experiences of place and construction of sacrality, narratives of sound and vibration alongside life experiences, and discussions of disconnect and varying cultural backgrounds.

Analysis

Dorothy Smith (1999) calls for an embodied ethnography that incorporates the reflexive experiences of the subjects as well as the scholars (Budgeon 2003). Through interviews, observations, and participation, embodied religious experiences and the use therein of bodies may be detailed (Babbie 2007, Creswell 2009). Interviews, both semi- and unstructured, allow researchers to elicit narrative, or discourse, that can be decoded later for bodily and sensory references (Bell 2007, Taves 2010). For a closer comparative analysis of different individuals' use of embodied and affective terms, semi-structured interviews might be the most effective for eliciting responses that contain key words and sentiments that refer to non-rational ideas and experiences. Ethnographic observation allows for notation of physical movements and significations, documenting religious rituals as performances (Bell 1992) and allowing for

comparison with other documentation for qualitative content analysis of the ritual itself after the fact (Altheide and Schneider 2013). Okely argues that the embodied experiences of the ethnographer should also be recorded as a tool for data analysis (2007). McRoberts' (2004) aesthetic ethnography of religious experience and Winchester's (2008) documentation of what he felt was a tool to better interpret the fasting experience both build a case for more embodied work by the scholars. These works support Okely's (2007) thesis that bodily reflexive documentation during fieldwork at a micro-social level is useful as a tool for analysis, as the sensate experiences often shed light on later understandings. This alignment with a more embodied ethnography is also in line with much of the life-world ethno-methodological research that looks at phenomenological data, although from a slightly different angle (Honer and Hitzler 2015). This study incorporates field notes and memos regarding not only my external observations, but also my own internal moments for coding and analysis. In this way, I hope to break down my own sensory and affective patterns of perception, as both a form of direct evidence of the embodied process and as elements that color my analysis.

The complexity of articulation in religious ritual emerged from data analysis from wave to wave of data collection. The familiarity with the socially normative definition of religion as institutional seemed to clash with the "spiritual but not religious (Beyer 2016)" in practices across traditions. As scholars deconstruct some of the legacy of religion in sociological thought, the ways in which an embodied approach might be useful emerge. Building on this, I argue that sensory experiences are localized in communities (Schnable 2012), ritualized (Waskul, Vannini, and Gottschalk 2012), experienced through patterns of the familiar (Collins 2004), and often mis-articulated by unfamiliar emotive ascriptions and habitus (Gould 2008). In a manner like the exploratory and evolving nature of the study itself, I will present data for each of these

arguments through building the narratives of religious investment that emerged to me as I observed these connections for the first time.

CHAPTER THREE

INDIVIDUAL ARTICULATIONS

I walked into the sanctuary of an early twentieth-century Art Nouveau Catholic church, and the lights were dimmed to enhance the golden hue of the lit candles. Obeying the signs asking for silence until the service, there was a soft susurrus of sound, people quietly moving into pews and holding the paper orders of service and wax candles that were given out on entrance. I sat, and looked around. Many had their heads down, or leaned into companions to whisper softly. There were people sitting on the steps of the altar, on the floor and on kneelers surrounding a lower altar festooned with palms, lilies, and clay bowls of sand surrounding gold-foiled Greek or Russian icons of Christ. It looked different to me than the church in the daylight, the light and arrangements shifting the feel.

After a brief introduction to the history of Taizé-style prayers by who appeared to be the leader of the service, the whole sanctuary filled with people (more than 400, I think) began to sing the songs printed in the orders of service. The sound is amazing, like . . . the one time I sang the Messiah with the entirety of Luther. So many voices, all in harmony, I am engulfed.

Singing for twenty minutes straight, the four songs repeated nine times each. Eight to twelve bars long, half in English and half in Latin, the four-part harmony resonated through the space, gaining strength and fading over time from no real visible clue, striking my ears like waves on the shore of a lake. I sang. My lungs and voice were worn by the end of that first long cycle, grateful for the break where Scripture passages were read, allowing for recovery before we began to sing again as fire was passed from candle to candle by children going down the rows. A call-and-response psalm was led by what appeared to be the ritual leader, we all raised our lights to the sky in praise together. And then we began to sing again, as people seemed almost randomly to move to the front, kneel at the altar, and eventually plant their single solitary lights before they processed back to their pews. As I walked, the sound of voices moving toward and away from me, the eye contact with fellow singers, and the silence facing the clay bowls where sand held the separate lights all struck me as a moment of . . . something. I returned to my seat.

Ten minutes of sitting in silent meditation seemed like ten hours. Cloth banners hanging from the ceiling floated and moved in the updraft from the hundreds of gathered candles on the lower altar. Over time, the sound of shifting bodies in seats was more noticeable,

> as a lone cough echoed. Over time, I stilled. Stopped taking notes, and just . . . sat. Watched people. Got lost in my head.
>
> Then we sang again, and offered prayers, where people voiced their concerns, hands were held, and songs were sung, felt louder after that time alone together. It was a lot like my experience in Rome, singing in the 800-year-old cathedral. A joyous noise, after deep quiet.
>
> People entered in silence, but they left in sound. Lights were raised, small groups coagulated, and many simply poured out of the doors into the night. It was like attending prayers in an old Brother Cadfael PBS movie, with all of the chanting and singing in candlelight. Transported back in time for an hour, then released into community.
>
> Field Notes February 2010

My notes from this experience reflected the sounds, sights, and experiences I had. While not the most eloquent, my thoughts related my sensory memory to prior moments of successful experience. In this way, I was reminded of the moment I sat in a Roman cathedral, with sixty other high schoolers, all in total silence. A single footstep akin to timpani sounding, the vastness of the shared solitude remains one of my most visceral memories of a religious space. My previous chains of religious memory interlinked successfully with the Taizé-style prayer ritual, building a set of connections and connotations. It was in part this realization that led me to investigate the ways that other individuals experience the very sensory ritual moments.

Choice in religious memberships and the ability to travel have contributed to the desire for and availability of nontraditional or atypical religious ritual participation outside of weekly or daily worship. There are many experiences targeted at a larger community of believers. These rituals do not necessarily focus on membership recruitment or even confirmation of an institutional theology.

> "The language given here in Taizé is not the language of philosophy, not even of theology, but the language of the liturgy. And for me, the liturgy is not simply action; it is a form of thought. There is a hidden, discreet theology in the liturgy that can be summed up in the idea that 'the law of prayer is the law of faith'" (Ricœur n.d.).

This chapter focuses on how one ritual form articulates for individuals by focusing on various embodied and felt reports using an analytical model first expounded by Randall Collins: interaction ritual theory (IRT) (2004). In this theory, interaction rituals require specific ingredients that create a ritual feedback loop: barriers to outsiders, a common purpose, group assembly (bodily co-presence), a shared mood. The ritual effectively generates a transmutation of these ingredients into a moment of shared emotional energy or collective effervescence. And then outcomes from this are: group solidarity, emotional energy in individuals, symbols of social relations, and standards of morality. Collins ultimately argues that individuals are simply made up of chains of experiences, but I believe that his theory of interaction ritual creates categories where each element of building a link in interaction ritual provides a diagnostic tool for examining individual ritual articulations. If individuals are made up of chains of experiences, an effective ritual is one that effectively moves these links together in a way that achieves transmutation through collective effervescence. It is through the success of a ritual articulation that a new chain link is transmuted from intersecting elements. Thus, using Collins' ritual ingredients and outcomes as analytical categories, I examine the interplay between different sensory data within each component of ritual life.

Religious ritual is an embodied experience. As in Gerardo Marti's investigation of the role of music in intentionally diverse services (2010), the sensory and experiential plays a major part in religious life and its social outreach. Ritual elements have varying degrees of effectiveness, shaped by multiple factors. Ritual engagement is learned and practiced in differing ways across the world, from the intimate and individuated to the formal and ritualized (McGuire 2008). Social entrainment teaches participants, often from an early age, what specific tones of voice, instrumentation, colors, and décor indicate. Entrainment, or the process of internalizing

experiential ritual behaviors to the point that that they and their responses are habituated and expected (Collins 2004), can lead to moments of success and familiarity, as well as to moments where ritual falls flat. In this chapter, the individual-level articulations of experience, the making and perceiving of sound, the shaping of space through movement and static décor, and reports of subtle bodily perceived elements of ritual experience are highlighted to interrogate ritual success.

Participants discussed the acts of hearing, seeing, singing, moving, and playing to illustrate how religious rituals can work and not work in a very visceral way. After a theoretical overview, I give a brief history of the Taizé-style ritual to establish a background for the further study of the ritual in application. Focusing on the different elements of sound, space, and kinetic perception, I utilize Collins' analytical approach to highlight elements that contribute to ritual successes and some of the points wherein missed articulations might occur. Next, I discuss data collection methods and describe the background information for attendees. Following this, an examination of Taizé-style ritual using Collins' interaction ritual ingredients and outcomes discusses the differences and similarities between two Oak Park sites that offered Taizé-style ritual. Building on Randall Collins' IRT, narrative analysis of interviewees' life stories is used to illustrate ways in which their senses have been primed and trained.

Interviewees frequently spoke of prior interactions and experiences when discussing ritual efficacy. For example, musical participation was frequently foregrounded by those with musical backgrounds as children or a history of membership in a heavily musically liturgical tradition. Experiences might look wrong or "feel" right in ways that are difficult to explain. By exploring metaphors and life histories, this chapter will examine the ways in which these shared and sensory rituals gain strength. I hope to begin to unpack some of the elements that factor into religious experience qua experience.

The Senses in Question

There is a general bias in modern Western culture toward specific types of sensory experiences. We know, for example, that the sciences are biased toward the visual, placing exceptional value on literary transcriptions and visual output in disciplines ranging from biology to sociology (Aman and Knorr-Cetina 1990, Lynch 2005). There is a general assumption that late modern Western society is more visually biased than it has been earlier in history (Synnott 1993, Joyce 2010). Considering the embodied experience therefore necessitates considering the visual experience as a primary social shaper of space. However, in the context of religious experience, scholars and practitioners often focus on the auditory as a sense through which experience is focused or dramatically and intentionally shaped (Marti 2010, Friedman 2016). At the same time, there is a layer of sensory experience underlying these, a participatory and embodied experience where performance and movement (haptic and kinetic) allows practitioners and even scholars to internalize and reprocess experiences (Pagis 2010, Meyers 2013). While these three examples of the senses are not the entirety of the experiential world, I briefly unpack each of these three in this chapter, indicating how each of these may inform or narrate the ways in which individuals in this study experienced religious moments. I outline here the ways that sound, sight, and subtle sensations impacted their perceptions of ritual and its efficacy.

Music is a key example of the ways in which sensory ritualization can be found in religious ritual life. In every response to "tell me a story about a positive experience you had at a Taizé-style prayer ritual," respondents began with discussions of sound. In a ritual of sound and silence, the sensory was brought to the forefront of the experiences. Singing, hearing, and even sitting in silence require education and bodily experience to fully process and perform (Pessin 2017). Repeated experiences are the lenses through which people learn to appreciate or even

dislike styles of music (Schwarz 2015). Religious music, like jazz or classical, is an acquired taste that some simply fail to acquire (Lizard 2006). To understand the full scale of ritualized sensation, an element of prior entrainment is required (Becker 1970, Pessin 2017). Learning to hear and respond, and to attribute emotive and religious meaning to tones or pitches, is part of growing up in a religious tradition (Waskul Et al., 2012). Often, elements of class, race, and gender are included in the act of learning to sing as a youth in a church choir (Schnabel 2012). At times, intentional inclusion of music from other corners of the country or the globe is a way that a church attempts to effectively reach a more multicultural audience (Marti 2010, Miller and Yanomori 2008) or a way that a church can manage to control the level to which they ritually expand to include more minority members (Barron 2016).

However, sound is not alone as a sensory experience that stimulates religious moments. A sense of place that is visual as well as auditory is often as significant to structuring experiences as "normal" or "liminal" (Turner and Turner 1978, Nitz 2005, Merriman 2015). The ways in which spaces are formally laid out can dictate perceptions and understandings of their purpose (Gieryn 2000), and unusual uses of familiar spaces can in fact disrupt ordinary use (Simmel 1997). The rearranging of spaces and the ways in which people interact within them can disrupt and restructure meaning in important ways. Looking at interaction and discourse can help to unpack this meaning-making through space and place. Building on sound with an examination of the utilization of visual repurposing of space, the interplay between sensory elements becomes evident. Religion has a complex relationship with sight and spaces that continues, even in this era of the technologically remote (Williams 2000, McClure 2017). The visual understanding of history in connection to symbols and spaces is clearly tied in to the symbolic formation of meaning (Collins 2004, Riis and Woodhead 2010). Examining the visual impact of physical

spaces and icon usage allows for formative perceptions about space and sound to emerge that may build upon each other to influence the less choate elements of participatory experience (Wade and Hynes 2013).

The third area of focus besides sound and sight is revealed in reports of complex and often metaphorically explained sensory experiences. By focusing on the ways in which perio-perception and other kinetic senses are reported in these moments of shared space and proximity, I unpack some of the experiential impact of shared moments and haptic entrainment (Mellor and Schilling 2010, Meyer and Dumit 2012, Meyer 2013, Beyer 2016). Ritual, in Collins' understanding, requires co-presence (2004). In this context, the perception of proximity and purpose registered with participants in inter-bodily sensations as co-presence but were understood in more complex and meaning-laden ways (Pagis 2012, McGuire 2016). Heat and cold, the subtle registrations of movement, and other subtle perceptions pair with the more internalized and affective experiences. Thus, unpacking the meaning of IRT to examine narratives of sound, sight, and sensation builds a sensory story for assessing ritual efficacy.

Interaction Ritual Theory and Sensory Rituals

Durkheim posited that religious rituals awaken a collective bubbling up of positive emotional experience and affirm a sense of group connection, serving a purpose as a sort of social glue that binds people together (1965). This assumption of a social function has persistently carried through many approaches to rituals both religious and nonreligious over the past hundred years. In fact, sociologists have argued that participating in public ritual serves to confirm group commitment (Bellah 2003, 2006), alleviate social tensions (Gluckman 1962), mediate social disjuncture (Comaroff 1985), and regulate social activities (Rappaport 1979). One method of understanding how ritual affirms commitment stems from Goffman's symbolic

interactionism (1967). Goffman discusses the rise of "interaction rituals" wherein embodied actions and rhythms confirm and affirm membership and values. Randall Collins builds on this theory, exploring the micro-sociological ways that emotion and solidarity arise from rituals (2004). Collins' analytical structure establishes a model for examining the minutiae that contribute to embodied ritual-building solidarity. Providing a template for analysis, Collins' theory allows for assessment of ritual efficacy in social solidarity formation, assuming the functionalist interpretation of ritual by establishing variables for analysis, simplifying an often-confounding process. His theory is applicable to both formal and informal rituals, allowing for analysis of elements that coordinate to generate a sense of solidarity.

In *Interaction Ritual Chains*, Collins develops a model identifying the elements necessary for a socially binding emotional ritual. In the entrainment process, ritual participants synchronize their actions and physiological states, facilitating the generation of emotional energy and the sense of social solidarity (Collins 2004:47). Collins argues that the recipe for successful interaction rituals requires elements of exclusivity, shared symbolic recognition, bodily co-presence, mutual focus, and shared mood. Participating in rituals over time generates a state of entrainment, where the ritual meanings and actions are almost as pre-conscious as social habitus (p. 48). Exclusivity, in this context, implies a shared set of ideas or identities that draws a boundary between participants and outsiders—such as musicians, smokers, or believers in a specific deity. Bodily co-presence affirms and amplifies the ritual, and the shared mood and mutual focus aid in bringing forth a state of transmutation into collective effervescence.

Successful experiences of effervescence lead to specific outcomes. Collins' model identifies outcomes of a ritual as group solidarity, individual emotional energy (EE), emergence or affirmation of shared symbols of the sacred (or social relationships), and a shared sense of

morality. Emotional energy, a key element in ritual success, stems from the physiological alignment with the group mood throughout the course of the ritual and lasts far beyond the ritual experience. High emotional energy generates a greater sense of attachment, and low emotional energy, in Collins' theory, is the absence of Durkheimian solidarity (2004:108). Thus, emotional experience bolsters a sense of social solidarity. It can also affirm group morals and/or symbols, which also boost this sense of social integration and membership. The strengthening of meaning for shared symbols impacts elements of group cohesiveness, as does the affirmation of norms that others should not violate.

Work clarifying Collins' model has produced good critique and some redefinition. For example, Heider and Warner (2010) posit that the recognition of shared importance of ritual participation, rather than distinct shared symbolic meanings, contributes to a new state of social solidarity (p. 89). Their study of Sacred Harp singers focused on a group gathered to sing four-part Christian hymnody. This group came together to sing and reported experiences of increased solidarity and elevated levels of emotional energy but did not enter these symbolic interactions with a shared symbol set. Members identified with different religious traditions, and some were atheists. While the songs were sacred music in an American Revivalist Christian tradition harkening back to the 1800s, faith in that tradition was not the point. Knowing that the musical experience and reverence for musical tradition drew them together was enough to share in the affectively moving experience. Building on Heider and Warner's work, Draper (2014) argues that rituals often produce increased symbolic solidarity rather than strengthening organizational membership, aligning individuals with ideocultures (Fine 1979) rather than local memberships and communities of action. In the context of the Sacred Harp singers, the members found their

love of music affirmed the social importance of participation and being part of a community of musicians.

A modification that emerged from sensory sociology is “ritualized sensation” (Waskul Et al. 2012:87). The process of sensory registration and interpretation is entrained through successful and successive group experiences (Vannini Et al. 2010, Springgay and Truman 2017). In other words, ritualized sensations are the outcome of a successful interaction ritual series (Waskul Et al. 2012). At the interactive level, the senses are trained through participation and moments of inattention—music, for example, can be both a background noise and a preparatory cue at the same time (Friedman 2015). By looking at the ways in which group members report their experiences, some of the interpretive frames that have been socially acquired can be understood.

Tavory and Winchester’s (2013) examination of the life-course of religious converts presents an interesting argument about levels of effectiveness. The beginning of the conversion period has within it a good deal of bodily retraining, creating new sensory rituals amid an emotional and affective state of fragility or tenseness (p. 359). They argued that as converts become more comfortable with these daily rituals and routines, the feeling of sacred and emotional impact diminishes through familiarization. This, for many, leads to a need to add or experience extended ritual moments. While not essentially interactive in nature, Tavory and Winchester’s application of experiential careers to religious conversion speaks to the ways in which interaction rituals can, at times, lose potency through routinization. At the same time, Insbody (2015) highlights the ways in which sensing the divine in the mundane world serves to reaffirm faith and commitment. It becomes a distinct way that long-term exposure to faith can

carry out into the world. The next section examines the history of the interactive nature of the ritual emerging from the brothers of Taizé, opening the topic for further exploration.

A Brief History of Taizé

Taizé-style prayer rituals take their name and form from the prayer services of an ecumenical community of religious brothers in Taizé, France. These brothers drew from ordained or sworn religious from Lutheran, Calvinist, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian faiths and included both priests and theologians in their number who were willing to take up vows in the style of the old monastic religious. In the 1940s, an ecumenical group of men banded together to create a voluntary religious community focused on *communitas*, peace, and reconciliation through simplified liturgical rites and acts of charity (Turner and Turner 1978). The Taizé brotherhood believes the ultimate responsibility for reconciliation with God lies not with an intermediary, but in everyone (Sparks 1986:172). Involved in ecumenical intercourse, contributing to liturgical development, and invested in social justice work since its inception, the Taizé community found itself in a position of strength in the European community. In the wake of the 1968 French student uprising, many revolutionary youths found themselves drawn to the community in Taizé, where they engaged in discourse, avoided legal persecution, and found a community of support in the aftermath of their failed political action. It was this influx that began the brotherhood's youth ministry and engagement, which has led this community to share their prayer services not only with religious officials, but with youth from all over the world. The brothers, as part of their call to strive toward reconciliation, enjoin those who have attended services at Taizé to take what they have learned home with them (Sparks 1986:75).

Taizé-style ritual taken away from Taizé is similar to the evening vespers practiced and observed by the monks and the tens of thousands who attend services there each year. Much like

in my field notes at the beginning of the chapter, the Taizé prayer service is fluid, a simplified version of the Liturgy of the Hours observed by the Catholic religious for centuries. A keyboardist plays, and people sing, often each in their own language. The ultimate focus of this service is on creating a space for meditative union with the divine (Schutz 2006:119). Built from pieces of multiple Christian traditions, the Taizé prayer service is said to reflect the religion of origin of each member of the Brotherhood. Observed three times a day at Taizé, from the opening psalms to the Kyrie, much of the process is sung. The songs are short in nature, consisting of a single repeated verse in simple four-part harmony. There is a Bible reading and a sung psalmody but never a homily or sermon. Instead, there is a period of meditative silence. The brothers hold that it is an individual's responsibility to find reconciliation with the divine, aided by this prayerful silence. On specific days, children may come up to light a candle, which represents the light of Christ in their lives. At the site I observed at, the candles were lit every month, with children walking the tapers down the row. Songs are sung again, and then prayers for the world and the Lord's Prayer are recited and sung by the community. A final benediction is sung by the crowd. The songs are sung in different languages, and every attendee is encouraged to sing or sit meditatively. During the service, people may sit on the floor, on chairs toward the back, or stand. Postures of participants vary, as some prostrate themselves on the floor while others cover their faces or elevate their hands (Brico 1978:96–97).

Taizé-style rituals have spread far beyond the boundaries of the brotherhood in France. Documented instances of regular Taizé-style services exist across the globe, some of which are listed by the brothers on their website (http://www.taize.fr/). Structure in these rituals varies from site to site, but all include the utilization of silence and song, prayer and readings. A religious publishing house, GIA Publications, controls the site licenses that must be purchased to use the

music and form of this ritual, offering books of song and prayer as well as compact discs of music. The brotherhood offers a list of institutions that offer services on their website as well, aiding seekers in finding sanctioned rites in their home countries. The brotherhood offers a newsletter with suggestions for readings and prayers, and new songs are published regularly. In this way, some consistency and central authority in ritual form is preserved.

Individual institutions make modifications to the rites depending on their own needs and interests. In the Chicago area, there are more than 20 different religious institutions that offer Taizé-style services (Santos 2008). For example, from 2008 to 2012, one Chicago suburb had three separate churches offering Taizé-style services monthly. This suburb, Oak Park, was the initial point of exploration for this dissertation.

Methodology and Research Sites

The evidence for this examination is drawn from the first wave of my dissertation research, pulling on ethnographic research from two Chicago-area sites that perform the Taizé-style ritual monthly. The data for this chapter draw on formal interviews with participants, informal conversations with participants, and ethnographic observations over a period spanning 2009 to 2012 (see Appendix 1). My own bodily and emotional impressions factor into the analysis as experiences of entrainment, influenced by Smith's understanding of a feminist approach to ethnography (1987), although they are minimally highlighted in this chapter. Data from both sites have been compiled, transcribed, and analyzed using codes for each of Collins' identified variables as the predominant schema.

The first site, Ascension Catholic Church, offers an ecumenical Christian service and is arguably the largest site that observes this style of ritual regularly outside of the brotherhood in France. For the past 18 years, the first Friday of every month has marked an observation of the

"In the Spirit of Taizé" service with attendance between 400 and 900 people. Over the duration of my observations, groups of visiting ministers, nuns, and college students were greeted frequently and offered an informative session after the service. Twenty-four interviews were conducted with volunteers from Ascension, all of whom were white and the majority of whom were female (n=18).

Unity Temple, the second research site, is a small Unitarian Universalist church in the same city that offers an ecumenical Unitarian Universalist "Taizé" service on the fourth Friday of every month, with attendance ranging between 15 and 80 individuals. Taizé-style services have been offered at Unity Temple since the summer of 2008. Twenty interviews were conducted with participants here, all of whom identified as white and the majority of whom were female (n=18).

These two sites offering the Taizé-style service are both located in Oak Park, host the service on a Friday evening (though not the same Friday of the month), and hold site licensing from GIA Publications to offer the service. Due to their shared geographic location, there is some overlap in attendance. These two sites were chosen, in part, because the symbolic content differs while the basic form of the ritual remains the same. This allows for a clear comparison of variables utilizing Collins' interaction ritual model. Further complexities of these sites within the larger project will be addressed later in the dissertation, although I recognize the limitations that are placed on a study focusing on predominantly white participants in an affluent suburb of Chicago.

Voluntary Open Rituals and Motivations

To understand how Collins' model can be used to examine Taizé-style ritual as a solidarity-building interaction, motivations and prior connections among the group need to be

clearly understood. This occasional, densely packed ritual draws individuals from diverse urban and suburban populations, many of whom (n=25) have no formal affiliation with the institution where they attend the ritual, although this varied between locations. Attendees voluntarily and semi-regularly travel distances to attend these services on a Friday night outside of their local community of primary membership. Among my research participants, the average distance traveled was greater than 8 miles, and the average rate of attendance was 4 times a year for more than 8 years. More than half (n=28) arrived at the ritual with members of their home institution or their family.

In general, of those who were interviewed for this phase of the project, thirteen were Catholic-identified but only five of these identified as members of the parish. On the other hand, most attendees at Unity Temple who offered to be interviewed were members of the temple or otherwise Unitarian Universalist–affiliated (n=16/20). Both institutions offered a preservice introduction to newcomers, which highlighted the unusual and open nature of the ritual. At Ascension, visiting groups from as far as California, Boston, France, and Poland were welcomed during my research period. A visiting Brother was also present at Ascension on one notable occasion. I was also informed that ministers from other Unitarian Universalist churches attended Unity, as well as a group of students who were slated to attend a service at Unity Temple in the future. This reflects the nature of the Taizé-style rituals, as identified by their host institutions, to serve diverse populations that are not necessarily socially bonded prior to their attendance.

Motivation for attendance at the Taizé-style ritual varied, but common themes among interviewees were social isolation and a need for emotional rejuvenation. Each of the volunteers I interviewed identified in some way with the need to find alleviation from stressed or negative states on an individual and isolating level. Brenna, who had attended services at both sites,

stressed that she was "angry, with a capital A." She felt constantly surrounded by "super-conservatives" who took their own affluence for granted, and for whom the ideas of local charity and social justice were foreign. She felt her anger was mitigated by the monthly Taizé experience, where she was surrounded by individuals who "shared some of her values and faith" and could "let the anger go" more effectively than she could in her home and home church environment.

Others found the opportunity to participate in a Taizé-style service uplifting and socially rejuvenating. One study participant, a psychologist, theorized that Taizé-style ritual spoke particularly to those with a sense of weak social attachment, affirming a sense of stronger social ties after participation. These initial direct statements from project participants indicated to me that social solidarity was sought by these gathered strangers, rather than being a pre-existing condition. But, how might that solidarity emerge, and how was it experienced? After my initial visit, I discovered that Collins' IRT stages serve as a useful tool. By breaking down the reports with codes that reflect his theory, it became possible to look at the interviews in a new light. The focus on the sensory aspects of ritual emerged in part from examining some of the ways in which the sound, space, and feeling might, at an individual level, work to create new links in the chain of religious memories.

The Stages of Interaction Ritual

Rituals have key structural elements that they need to function (Bell 1999) but moving beyond the performative script allows for analysis of the *experience* of ritual. When examining how Collins' ritual ingredients bodily affect the participants in Taizé-style services, it becomes clear how they experience Taizé-style ritual as something outside, though connected to their prior ritual and religious experiences. Interpreting my field notes and interviews using Collins'

IRT categories (2004), I focus on sensory-laden understandings of the immediate phenomenological experience of ritual. I find ritual participants reported measurable experiences, allowing for examination of the elements of successfully articulated interaction rituals. Here, I discuss the ritual entrainment process, with an emphasis on the moment of transmutation where successful interactions of ritual ingredients combine to create moments of shared collective effervescence, thus generating ritual outcomes.

Each of Collins' identified ingredients builds on the other, working together to create and entrain the participating groups into a temporarily connected community. Breaking down each of his elements alongside excerpts from my interviews, I illustrate some of the ways in which Collins' insights help to probe the interrelationships between sight, sound, and the kinetic and proximal registration of space and bodies in the embodied experience of intentional religious ritual. The ways in which each of these elements build together to create moments of shared positive experience are outlined below. I also discuss moments where ritual mis-articulations at the ingredient stage and the identification of what a successful or desirable outcome is.

Ingredient: Bodily Co-Presence

A sense of intentional gathering is essential to a successful interaction ritual (Collins 2004:54). Bodily co-presence for Taizé-style prayer rituals is established on arrival at the ritual place, even before entering the ritual space. As participants enter the physical location, ritual space is signaled clearly by signage requesting silence in the sanctuary before ritual. These behavioral requirements separate Taizé-style ritual from the everyday, signaling a liminal zone and setting the mood and clarifying participation. A transitional space at each site serves to establish a boundary between the outside and the ritual space. Attendees are greeted by individuals dispensing candles, orders of service if they are available, and signs requesting

prayerful silence in the time before the service. Those who wish to talk can be seen gathered outside or in the narthex, chatting and sharing space.

Silence falls among talking participants as they enter the ritual space, leaving only whispered conversations about seating, the brushing of objects, and the fall of feet. This transition from social chatter to quiet and dimmed lights aids in physically setting the stage for the ritual, signaling an entrance into the ritual community. Attendees frequently arrive as early as 20 minutes ahead of the service to sit and be still in shared space. This time before the service aligns the moods and behaviors of the attendees, establishing a primary level of physiological similarity that enables entrainment.

These services are held at architecturally significant locations built in the early twentieth century and made mostly of cement, the presence of the space being another type of physical co-presence. Rose said that she "really loved being in these places . . . where the architecture helps to speak to you, tells you that this space, this space is special." The Art Nouveau Cathedral style of Ascension and Unity's legacy as Frank Lloyd Wright's first real Prairie-style poured-concrete structure give the spaces a physical sense of presence, deepened by the sense of connection to the history of the sites as continuously occupied by the religious traditions offering Taizé-style prayers. Both spaces have seating on the sides as well as the front, all facing inward and offering a space physically arranged to force interpersonal co-presence visually. Lowered lights and glowing candles also aid in physically setting a ritual space for the service, with candles burning in the altar-space for the service at the front of the sanctuary. Musicians at both institutions are in the front on the side, facing the back of the room. It is possible for attendees to sit in such a manner that they can see each other, and at Ascension this is taken a step further with individuals being encouraged to sit on the steps leading up to the high altar that face the back of the

sanctuary, a strong divergence from traditional institutional use of space and another way in which the visual sense of co-presence is created. With faces looking into faces from each side, the traditional space at Ascension is re-imagined for this service.

The sanctuary is often crowded, and individuals sit on the floor or in the choir loft due to choice as well as space constraints. Individuals select seats near others, although they tend to sit at least 4 feet away from non-acquaintances. Rarely does an attendee sit completely apart. Each of my subjects reported that sitting near others, or facing others, allowed them to align their own bodily participation with that of the rest of the crowd. This positioning in assembly facilitates synchronization with the other participants for performance. In observation notes, I noted that I had to watch and listen to the cues of others in order to know what I was doing, as the cues were often subtle. First-time attendee George noted that he "felt a little lost but listening and following movements [of those nearby] helped me find a place and eventually feel a part of it."

Proximity is another aspect of bodily co-presence. At Ascension, the pews are often filled, and participants often report that the proximity of other bodies means a lot. Iona described the feeling of physical proximity like the force of water: "They bore me up like a boat upon the waves." For her, the feeling of bodily warmth and the vibration of sound waves felt like floating on the water in the sun. The sharing of space is also felt in less populated Unity Temple. Colleen, for example, reported that the act of arriving and sitting, even when alone, felt companionable. For her, much like others, it was a sense of common intent even in the co-presence: "You know you are there with a group of people who all are like the same thing, nobody would be there if they didn't want to be." Actions in the ritual where bodies move together and apart, processing forward with candles or holding hands in prayer, or standing to sing and sitting to listen, all

emphasize this type of shared experience. Bodily movement toward and away from other bodies within the spaces occupied was tied to a recollection of proximity in interviews.

Sound is another way co-presence is experienced. “I physically feel it differently than taped music . . . I was swept into it easily,” says Maura, whose physical experience of sound, through the live musicians and singing participants, drew her to participate in her first Taizé-style prayer ritual and gave her a strong experience. Soundscapes shape our perception of a space as a tangible location and experience (Dean 2016). For others, such as Ryan, it was the ability to make the sounds with others that allowed him to fully embrace the experience. Visually impaired, he found that the ability to sing loudly (although he believed not well) while hearing so many others do the same gave him an intense sense of connection.

The dimmed light of the evening setting in these spaces emphasized the intimacy of the evening service. There were candles glowing and lower lighting and silences at the beginning, and the susurrus of sound that was people moving into the space was in some ways weighty. Colleen argued that “the darkness and the candles, I think, make you feel cozy and connected.” Robert said, “When you’re passing the light, from candle to candle, you can see the individual flames of faith that are all brought together into a great mass of light, like the community of faith as a whole.”

In interviews with those who made longer trips, or even pilgrimages, from Boston or further abroad, one of the things emphasized was the importance of bodily shared experience. Not only were these attendees experiencing a pilgrimage of sorts, they were doing it in community with others (Turner and Turner 1978). That sense of sharing was emphasized through the bodily. However, the importance of proximity, sharing in meditation, and the sharing of space has been discussed in other traditions (Bender 2010, Pagis 2013). I spoke to a couple who

made a pilgrimage from Boston once a year or so to reaffirm their own experiences of Taizé-style prayer. Their ability to participate together at Ascension, with its history of hosting the service, rejuvenated their commitment to offering a quarterly service in the Boston area.

Prayer, traditionally, has been a fairly solitary or intimate practice among white Euro-American Catholics and mainline Protestants, and the emphasis on the importance of co-presence for this prayer ritual signals one change away from earlier understandings of the difference between a service and prayer (Wuthnow 2008). Locals and those who traveled all spoke emphatically about the ability to bring someone important to them to the ritual so that it was a shared experience. One regular attendee, a religious leader elsewhere, spoke about the importance of the ability to share that bodily co-presence with her spouse, echoing some of the subtle nuances that emerged in many of my interviews. She stated: "There is a divine spirit that is present, and so the more love there is in the room, the more the spirit is present. And I love my husband, so when he's next to me, there's more love in the room."

For some participants, however, there was such a thing as too much or too little bodily co-presence. Lavergne reported that she feels a little lonely because her husband does not come with her, and others are there with loved ones they embrace. But, as she says, "I'm used to doing things on my own most of my life," so she started arranging for church friends from Ascension to meet up and attend together. Doug and his wife both reported a sense of being overwhelmed because "there were too many people, too close to us. It felt like we couldn't meditate or be truly in the moment, with all the noise. . .. [We] liked it better when it was still smaller." While this did not deter their attendance, they did identify it as a reason they attend less frequently now than in the past. On the other hand, Lucy had attended a Taizé service at a different church after attending for a long time at Ascension with its large population. She found that "it wasn't as

inspirational, there weren't all those people there, so it was in one of those rooms [where classes and meetings are held]." Both the co-presence and the space in which the service was held impacted her participation. This is an indication that complex factors from other elements of interaction ritual factor into the co-presence of bodies. In other words, even the co-presence is shaped by the architectural presence of space.

Ingredient: Barrier to Outsiders

While bodily co-presence is fairly easy to observe in a concrete material way, the barrier to outsiders in Taizé-style ritual is less immediately obvious. A clear definition of in-group identity assists in engendering a sense of solidarity, granting membership in a larger community of faith (Numrich and Wedem 2015), and constructing boundaries that aid in defining those lines (Fuist and Josephsohn 2013). Clearly, physical attendance at Taizé-style prayer is required to be an insider to the ritual, but no other direct prerequisites are explicitly provided.

Prior appreciation of music seemed to be a membership prerequisite, as all but four of my informants reported prior positive history with music in their lives. For most, the ability to use their skills in concert with others was a potent motivating factor. Eve said:

> I love folk music. So sitting there, and listening to the harmonies, and hearing it all come together . . . is just amazing. And I think that's a lot of what I like, is just the songs . . . they're easy, so if you go regularly, you sort of know them, you can learn the harmonies . . . and so it's very simple. And I like that part. And I think it's the harmonies . . . I'm moved, when I go to the services, by one or more songs, just like, "this is so amazingly beautiful."
>
> I like the ones with a little more basic and simple harmonies, and I also find it really neat . . . when David would sing, and we'll be humming, and then he'll sing something, and then he'll sort of change key, when he starts singing, [Eve sings as example], and then he'll sort of change key and it's sort of blending, and it's beautiful. It's the music.

Eve's musical understanding influenced her appreciation, and as the interview went on, her formal training in music as a youth emerged. This is a single example, but for many participants, the embodied performance of music was a key part of how this meaning-laden experience was

discussed. Mark was particularly impressed with the way "tempo and timing are so well managed without obvious conducting. It makes the experience feel natural. I am always confident about volume changes and when a song ends, even without clear visual direction. The musicians just signal it so well."

Discussions overheard after the service illuminated the fact that the music-focused service was less appealing, and thus less likely to incite repetition, for those who were musically disinclined. Embodied learned reactions aid in experiential reception and normalize a set of practices, and those who do not already understand those practices remain to some degree distanced (Shapira and Simon 2018). Melissa noted that "I can hear something and sing, but I can't read music. . .. With these repetitions, this service makes a space for me to do that." Her experience was about the freedom of having that moment, but she related that "They [her church friends] kept going and I found that I could learn and sing along . . .. It's easier now. I know more of the music" Her level of training was on the lower end of skill for my interviewees, who frequently reported years of informal or semi-formal training.

Behavioral expectations also served as a barrier for some. Extraordinary ritual actions rooted in the larger tradition of the host institution frequently served as barriers to participation, for member participants and outsiders alike. Lavergne, a lifelong Catholic, was particularly uncomfortable with the Adoration of the Cross within the Taizé-style prayer service, because it changed the flow of the service.

> I don't like that because then you can't talk afterwards, you gotta leave quietly, and you can't socialize with people. . . . And I'm not so comfortable with the Adoration of the Cross Part. I don't—I'm just not comfortable with that, and I'm not gonna kiss the cross 'cause that would be germs. I will touch the cross, but not kiss it. That's just, it's just dark; that's just a dark part of it, and I miss being able to talk to people in church afterwards.

For her, one of the primary functions of the service was its social nature and the easing of her solitude in a practice of faith. There was something specifically about the ritual practice of the Adoration that had an affective feel of darkness to her. She couldn't explain her affective reaction beyond a fear of biological contamination, but there was a discomfort about that aspect that seemed to be deeper than just a fear of infectious diseases. *Dark* is a meaning-laden term, but one Lavergne struggled to express. As such, she modified her behavior toward that element of the ritual over time. She was not alone in experiencing this kind of affect in response to the Adoration, although she was the clearest among the participants about the ways in which she renegotiated her actions over time to cope with and refocus on the ritual.

For outsiders, there are both structural and subtle barriers to participation that are often enacted bodily but built on a chain of religious memories and prior ritual interactions. At Ascension, it could be argued that the explicitly Christian purpose of the ritual serves as a barrier to non-Christians. I interviewed three non-Christians who attended service at Ascension, although there was a significant difference in their faith practices. Others told stories of Buddhist figures in attendance at Ascension services in the past. Unity Temple had a more challenging time encouraging outside attendees, as the Unitarian Universalist faith is a little less understood by most. The sign out front of the building invited all to a Taizé service, but in interviews, several onetime attendees from other faith traditions had great difficulties in accepting the Taizé prayer service at Unity as legitimate. They experienced those barriers internally and, in both cases, opted to not return. Lucy, a Lutheran from Michigan who attended services primarily at Ascension, had also visited Unity Temple alongside other Christian Taizé-style prayer services. At Unity, she reported that she:

> "felt bad for those people . . . I left a little angry, I think. I don't know—*anger* is not the right word . . . it was such a different feeling from when I leave Ascension. Was judgmental too, which, I don't know how great that was."

In fact, it was because of this upset that she was driven to participate in this study.

This barrier of faith and Christianity as a central core of Taizé-style prayer services was a recurrent theme with others. In fact, 20 different interviews led to a discussion of the importance of the inclusion or exclusion of explicitly Christian themes in the ritual itself as a requirement or barrier. In fact, multiple Ascension attendees who reported attending or being aware of Taizé-style prayer services at Unity questioned their legitimacy due to the lack of focus on Christ. At the same time, three separate groups I interviewed informally at Ascension identified ways in which they felt outside of the practices, as the Ascension service "felt too Catholic." In one case, there was a noted preference for the services as offered at Fourth Presbyterian in the city, but in the other cases, the style of the prayer ritual was the primary barrier to effective participation. A formal interview participant from Unity Temple, Rose, opted to attend drum circles as a form of musical meditative prayer, citing her negative religious memories as a "recovering Catholic."

Ingredient: Mutual Focus of Attention

A shared focus binds the group together and contributes to the attainment of an emotional state (Collins 2004:59). At both sites movement, singing, meditation, and prayer are embodied elements that focus the ritual experientially through mass performance. Mutual actions bodily focus the service and shape participant understandings. Entrainment arises from the embodied nature of the service. Performing and enacting the ritual itself builds a ritual chain link, entraining responses to repetition of this ritual. Those who regularly attended the Taizé-style services all reported that it became easier over time to really "get into" the service and worry less

about flow and timing. Avon said that, at times, ritual is like being “in a school of fish” because you just kind of go with the flow.

A sense of responsibility held by all participants seems to contribute to this entrainment process. This shared mutual performance of song and silence places the burden on each participant to help carry the experience. As David stated before one Ascension service, “You are the choir!” This can be seen in the times when singing is weaker or stronger, when individuals moving forward stall until they see others moving, or when people hesitate to call out concerns during the prayer that invites contribution. During these prayers, participants in one segment of the sanctuary often remain silent until they hear someone near them call out in a firm voice, after which a chorus of softer voices can be heard contributing their own prayer concerns.

Participants at both sites commented on the difficulty they had at first in becoming accustomed to the lack of direction during the service, saying that they had to learn to listen carefully to those around them for cues to increase the volume of their voices, move, or stop singing. Dee had to “figure out what the cues are” because they weren’t terribly obvious at first. However, participants become accustomed to the patterns in rhythm and ritual over time, reporting that familiarity increases their ritual experience. This active, self-directed movement focuses the mind, engages the body, and is a key example of Collins’ physiological entrainment. Performed and repeated experience aids in focusing all participants, with each participant listening or watching carefully for signals from ritual coordinators.

The rituals are tied together by content as well as movement, further focusing the attention and intention of participants. Ascension services focus on Jesus Christ, whereas the Unity Temple services focus on a more transcendentalist message regarding humanity and the divine. Informants at Unity specifically identified the purpose of the service as a chance to come

closer to understanding self and assistance in coping with moments of loss and grief, as well as deep emotional struggles. Only three Unity interviewees out of twenty referenced the divine as an external deity, although most echoed the theme of nature-as-divine found in the hymns. On the other hand, at Ascension, the themes of reconciliation with the divine and opening their deep emotional selves safely to the support of Jesus and God were echoed.

In rituals, symbolic items and actions can have differing meanings and uses for different participants (Heider and Warner 2010). For some, tools such as the candlelight and lyrics can simply become tools of focus. Paul said:

> "I find that I use the words also like the focus of the candle . . . you can learn the words, they're not—no big deal, but I find myself reading them and not thinking about them, just mouthing them, and it becomes a tool to go into another meditation."

Words, lyrics, and even tonality can become, for some, a carrier for the ritual, a tool rather than significant content. For others, the dimness helps to focus the sense of community. Barnum reports,

> "There is probably something of my shyness that appreciates the anonymity of darkness. That we can be together and perhaps even be a bit more vulnerable when we don't have to see every detail of each other."

The intimacy of the dim light, for him, helps to narrow and focus the ritual and in some ways, perhaps, strips away social layers so there is an honest gathering together of people.

The content of the lyrics and prayers communicate clearly the theme, and both services left spaces within them for a multiplicity of shared concerns and needs. However, for some, this was where the moments of misstep occurred. The shared focus was, in some cases, diluted or disturbed by a breaking away from what was acceptably seen as a religious line of thought, moving the participant outside of their embodied habitus. Avon, when discussing her one visit to Unity, was incensed with the reading of secular poetry where Ascension and Fourth Presbyterian would have used scripture. The Prayer around the Cross, discussed earlier, was cited by many as

equally disruptive of focus. Thus, some of the tools to focus intent were where the ritual missed the mark for some participants.

Ingredients: Shared Mood

Collins argues that emotional contagion plays a predominant role in establishing a shared mood for an interaction ritual (2004:108). Music shapes moods and calls upon prior interaction ritual chains, or chains of religious memory. “The music moved me” was a common interview refrain. The experience of singing and acting in concert with others with a shared intent helped to create a state of shared mood among participants. The spaces around them, the music that shaped their experiences, and their proximal perceptions of en-masse prayer and reverence all focused from that initial silent entrance, shaped the space, and primed the affective and emotional states of the participants.

Moods were shaped through a shared intent to reach a prayerful or meditative state. This was reflected for many participants in the introductory words and the readings, while for others, the lyrics were foundational. The themes of hope, loss, sorrow, and affirmation of value were present at all services at both sites, enhancing the mood of the experience. Some attendees simply sit and listen, while others sing their hearts out. Multiple informants stated that the repetitive and prolonged singing allowed them to become part of the flow of the song, less conscious of the words and more conscious of sound as a meditative tool. “The words aren’t important,” Mary said; “the singing together in harmony, with the instruments and sounds, that’s what gets me.” On the other hand, Avon said she “prefer(s) when we sing in other languages. . .. It gives reverence to history.” It seems that for participants, the mood itself is both reflective of the choices of lyrics and the style of chant, four-part hymnody with short patterns repeated many

times. This connects many to distantly understood chains in religious memory, of the medieval monastic prayers and Gregorian plainchant with a modern twist.

Music and meditation established the most noticeable transient emotional stimulus, but the mutuality of emotional vulnerability during the Taizé-style ritual was the dominant mood-related theme intentionally reported in interviews. The ritual created a space in which each could be present in their individual emotional states. Jean, for example, said,

> "I never have good weeks. I have a very stressful job. I've been around really not pleasant things during the rest of the week, I physically smell sometimes. I can't go to church and sit by people without showering and changing clothes. . . .I like to be there a little earlier and settle in. I sit as close to the front as I can, sometimes off to that side. I can hear better, I can see better. And people that tend to sit up there are people who have been there before, so they respect that quiet."

A participant could sit in silence, sing as loudly as they wanted, and call out names and issues dear to them in a space where, as Bonnie says, "everyone is here for similar reasons." This sense of intimacy was also observed in the willingness of some participants to cry in front of strangers.

Meditation at Taizé-style services is in part facilitated through the sudden cessation of music and reading, occurring 35 minutes into the ritual. This cessation and the immobility of participants as soon as the silence starts seems to facilitate the act of prayerful meditation. The music director at Ascension noted:

> "You can meditate every day, by yourself, in solitude. But often, it will be hard to get there. . . . Taizé is a way of having the support you need, having a group of hundreds of people all helping each other capture that moment."

Shared moments of silence in small and large crowds, for more than 10 minutes at a time, spoke of a shared intent that helped to focus and sustain moments of meditative experience.

For many, the ability of participants to join in the flow of song and silence and drop out and simply experience meditatively was a strong key to maintaining the mutual focus. It was not necessary, in other words, to continuously be performing or producing, as there was clearly

space for diverse types of participation in this structured but not entirely scripted ritual at each site. Avon said that there's something "very resonant" about the way that Taizé-style prayer music runs: "Some of it really kind of makes you plug in and be aware of what you're saying. . . And then, just, if you sit there and listen to it, it's so beautiful."

This ingredient was not entirely effective or present. The establishment of a shared mood requires shared understanding of the intent to create it. In an informal interview after one service, an attendee spoke with me about their dislike of "all of this ritual" because it just felt awkward to them to sit in silence for so long. Rose, in a more formal interview, stated that while they did not share the same "headspace," being in a situation where each person had arrived with an intent to worship was the most important part. The degree to which different participants felt taken up by the shared mood of the rituals varied based on a lot of different life situations, as well. Disabilities both permanent and temporary can lead to decreased engagement. In an informal interview, Luke said that it was less engaging because he could not sing due to a head cold. Brenda "can only really experience it when I can hear. I wear hearing aids, so I have to sit more to the front, you see." I found attending a service after I had surgery was less engaging, more in touch with my pain than I was with my prayers.

Collective Effervescence: The Point of Transmutation

In Collins' understanding, these ingredients of shared mood, mutual focus of attention, bodily co-presence, and barriers to outsiders in dynamic process with each other create or transmute a simple ritualized exchange into a moment of collective effervescence. The mutual focus of attention and the shared mood repeat rhythmically through a common action or event, triggering or triggered by a transient emotional stimulus, and engender a moment of essentially affective lifting up (2004). It is this process of transmutation through repetition of familiar

elements in charged ways that reinforces or elevates the shared mood through bodily co-presence and a common purpose and then lifts the individuals.

In Taizé-style prayer rituals, the songs are each repeated as many as nine times in a row and sung back-to-back for a period of almost 10 minutes before a break in the process for a reading. Candles are lit to another repeated song, prayers are said, and then 10 minutes of co-present silent sitting is followed by more repetitions of music in action, with singers' voices shifting from harmony to melody and back again in concert with the musical accompaniment. Bodies stand, sit, and move while voices vibrate with air circulated through lungs.

The biological stimulus of extended singing is enough to trigger some affective body states through a shift in breathing patterns (Howard 2009). In the same way, the extended period of silence is an unusual practice, especially in today's busy world, leading practitioners to often find themselves relying on the stillness of their neighbors to reaffirm and re-enforce the importance of these actions (Pagis 2013, McGuire 2016). These kinetic moments of learning are key to the formation of a bodily understanding of interaction and engagement. Rupert, who works with liturgy professionally, reports that at Taizé-style prayer services,

> "a lot of my perceptions fade away, and if I'm really singing and getting into the music, you know, it's almost like the endorphins are kicking in. I can almost feel what I have now read about . . . I actually feel in a better place than when I'm not there." Repeated actions transformed simply singing to something kinesthetically immediate.

Kinetic and affective transformations are difficult to explain; thus, there was a common reliance on metaphor. Rhianna, for example, says, "I don't know if the word is *meditation*, but I come to another place where you're not at church." She went on to gesture in the air, tracing a shape that was clear only to her, her tone becoming lighter as she reflected on what meditation is outside of these rituals. Ultimately, she was trying to explain that her experiences in Taizé-style prayers

were similar to secular meditative practices, but . . . not quite the same. Ultimately, she did not have the words to encompass the affective experience. Pulling from her experiences elsewhere, Alice described it as being like "that moment in yoga when your body and breath align." Parallels of experience in other areas of life helped to make the moments of collective effervescence make sense on an individual level, and others used metaphors to speak more broadly about the impact of these moments on the group. April said that "the sheer numbers of people all there for the same purpose bore you up like a boat on the waves."

In most cases, there was a moment in the periods of repeated silence and singing that was the tipping point into an effervescent experience, but not for all. In my interviews, there were two individuals who were less invested in the meditation and the singing due to career-related formal training in music or psychological techniques, such as leading guided meditations. Brenda identified a general inability to sing or hear tones well as another barrier. As such, these three and another five found that their tipping point into collective effervescence was less about these bodily song-and-silence repeats than it was triggered through the repeated and ritualized prayer moments when these strangers all lifted up their individual concerns, fears, joys, and pains to a communal sharing.

Those who felt disconnected from ritual satiation or ecstatic relief often had mixed understandings as to why. In many cases, however, it tied into negative or strongly different memory chain moments. Rose had such a strong reaction to the Catholic nature of prayers being offered at Unity that she lodged a formal complaint with the minister. Robert talked about the ways in which he thought some songs were just overdone, and it was hard to participate when all he could think of was rehearsing the Jubilate Deo as a round with a choir in college. The senses tugging on the memory chain of the individuals remind participants not only of their own

religious background, but also of past traumas that are often subtly experienced through the flesh. However, while it was observable that people sat and at times were detached or bored, they often were that way in the company of those who were not. In informal conversations, participants revealed that attending because a significant person asked or invited them was important. In one interview, Michelle identified that she only attended because an acquaintance had experienced a deep personal loss, saying that "I liked the prayers, and I might do it again, but . . . it was mostly for her." When I had observed that service the week before, I had noted her as one of the bored participants, looking at her phone.

For some, the sensations being generated were diminished due to familiarization. Lucy, for example, spoke about how she used to feel an added layer of connection with the raising and lowering of candles.

> "It's just kind of an 'aahhhh.' You know? . . . And there's sometimes honestly that I don't really notice. It's just what we do. Yeah, I mean, it feels kind of common now."

Over time, Taizé-style prayer rituals continued to be meaningful for her but diminished in their emotionally and affectively moving power as a logical progression of her experiential career (Tavory and Winchester 2013). This may also be related to her attendance at other services discussed earlier in this chapter, which provided her with the emotional fuel to volunteer for this study. Lucy and others like her will ultimately seek out other opportunities to build on the sensory and affective experiences gained in these moments of collective effervescence.

"I get chills, I start to cry, and it's beautiful," says Danielle, who regularly experiences sensations that are beyond simple action and are triggered by ritual transmutation, particularly at times when singing in harmony has entered its third or fourth round of a song, building to a peak. For her, the familiarity adds to the experience. Grace, too, finds that the service captures the "silence that speaks to me" that she first found at services in Taizé, France. Entrainment, for

some, then aids in reaching the now-familiar experiential state of collective effervescence when the group is singing well or sitting quietly well together.

Outcome: Emotional Energy in Individuals

Emotional energy, as identified by Collins, is not the emotionally contagious mood of the moment during a ritual, but a lasting emotional effect experienced well beyond participation (2004:118). In a simplistic way, high emotional energy can be ranked as an increased level of trust or confidence, among other things. After rituals, individuals often shared upbeat conversations with others and generally stood straighter and more confidently. Interview subjects reported a greater sense of emotional "lightness" and satisfaction after the ritual that carried over into their home lives in a positive manner. For some, this state lasted weeks, only to be renewed at the end of the month by participating in the Taizé-style service again. Others reported using songs or recordings of songs from Taizé prayers to reconnect with this emotional state through the physical performance of the songs of ritual. Each of my interview subjects reported coming away from the Taizé-style service with a bolstered sense of rightness. As such, there is strong indication of the production of high emotional energy from Taizé-style ritual. Linnea, who works with the homeless, identified that:

> I need to get my "end of the Taizé shot"—you know, the Taizé boost, you know, like Taizé injection. . . . Because sometimes, I really need it. It helps me work things that I get angry about out. I mellow out . . . I think that's the colloquial way of saying it; it helps me mellow out.

She was not alone. There was a disproportionately high number of participants who worked in caregiving roles, most of whom identified the need for emotional bolstering and uplifting on an individual level as a primary motivation for attendance. Merritt, a nurse, went so far as to explain why she intentionally did not attend with anyone else. "This is me time. It's the only time I have

to unwind from caring for family and patients and focus on renewing my own heart." This need to unpack and unwind was important for many.

While useful, this extension of Durkheimian understanding that emotional energy is generally a positive driving force misses some of the complexities of shared anger or grief, which can also be an emotional energy outcome (Gould 2008). Rebecca explained it like this:

> Life is marked by periods of loss and grief and as a culture we're eliminating the rituals that identify those times, that honor those times. And we're becoming so protective of ourselves, from hard emotions. We are really defending and protecting ourselves against hugely important emotions that help us cope with life. And Ritual like Taizé, and the naming of names in prayer and being present in sacred space and being in community with candles and music . . .
> Your mother dies and you get three days off of work. You come back, and nobody wants to talk to you because they don't know what to say because . . . We're not having these experiences where we learn how to do it. . . . I don't know where Taizé fits in that other than it does provide an effort to move. It gives you a door that you can walk through or not. Singing and meditation often opens up places in us that we're not planning to open. . . . And you can grow, you heal.

Rebecca spoke of her concern for the lack of religious chains that societally aided people in coping with moments of loss and sorrow. She worked as a "death doula," teaching classes on assisted dying, and working with those who are about to go. She found a growing need in increasingly isolated lives for ritual moments to connect with deep emotions. Ten of the participants formally interviewed in this study identified a need to grieve as a motivation for attending. The shared ritual built a space for safe mourning of their loss. Iona had lost her spouse, and she intentionally brought different friends with her to Taizé-style services so that they could share her grief with her but leave secure in a sense of warmth. One hospice worker, Maura, identified the spoken and voiced prayers for the ill and deceased as a point of recognition that gave the ritual more emotional resonance for her, buoying her own longstanding grief for her patients with a sense of communal shared positivity around the idea of loss.

There were some who were untouched by a sense of emotional energy, or even negatively impacted. The tears and suffering openly expressed by those praying around the cross were off-putting for some of the more casual attendees because "it felt like idolatry." At the same time, some were untouched after reporting the failure of one or more of Collins' ingredients for them, and beyond missing the moment of collective effervescence itself, they exited the ritual with an almost negative reinforcement of their own experiences. For those with previous good experiences, the inability to experience a rise in emotional energy after a ritual experience sometimes felt like a failure on their part.

Outcome: Standards of Morality

A sense of shared standards of morality is another outcome described by Collins (2004). In conjunction, he identifies an elevated level of emotional energy as an affirmation of moral uprightness (p.120), in this way reaffirming the correctness of a path or a group identity through a ritualized moment (Inbody 2015). This shared sense of moral commitment spreads beyond the general commitment of a small local group to itself, however. There were both commitments to and disagreements with elements of the moral messages contained within the ritual, but for individuals the ability to hear and witness differing stances and still find a sense of fellowship and shared belief enhanced perceptions of communal membership. For many, the element that played most strongly into moral boundary-making was the prayer time when individuals could call out for people or concerns that they held dear. Marian, for example, said that she always "called for an end to the death penalty." She knows that is her contribution and feels that bringing that to the table helps her reaffirm her own moral convictions and share them with the community.

Times of shared prayer emerged as an especially important recognition of a not-always-shared sense of morality and an affirmation of the importance of faith as a touchstone, even when there were counterpoints being prayed for. This disagrees with Collins in specifics, but the ability to have differing moral stances yet share a common identity in faith was a stronger overarching element. The prayers offered by one individual for the pro-life warriors and another across the cathedral for Planned Parenthood within 3 minutes of each other are a striking example. Zelda reported that "even if I don't like them, it's still good to know that people care." She went on to talk about how, when one offered a pro-life prayer, but the person who offered the other prayer did not, she felt "deeply awkward, and I wound up offering it up, at least very quietly, myself. Not that I believe that, but because . . . well, we're praying for both, and that's important." For her, the simple awareness that people were concerned about the world and social injustices was enough to bolster her own commitments. While the strongest contrasts in interests were found in the widely attended Ascension Prayers, there were times at Unity Temple that social issues were also held up for prayer. These tended to be environmental or peace-oriented. There was a prayer for the end to the death penalty offered at Unity Temple, too, and pro-life issues were never brought up.

It was not just the political moral universe that was affirmed. For attendees at Ascension, reports were given of a stronger commitment to Christian morals after participation, affirming that their beliefs were strengthened with the confirmation that others were concerned about peace, charity, love, and Christ. Rick reported that the most important part was that bringing these prayers together, as a community in Christ, recognized that there was space for believers "to love and honor each other even if they were politically opposed." For participants at Unity, the most common moral report was of an affirmed sense of interconnectedness with life and a

stronger desire for harmony. Thus, both rituals engendered a stronger sense of moral commitment, although on various levels.

Some, however, reported a sense of discomfort with the messages contained in hymns and prayers. One couple I spoke with mentioned that they left the Ascension service feeling that they had shifted away from the heavily Catholic element in their own life path. They later found the Presbyterian Taizé-style service downtown more to their tastes.

Outcome: Shared Symbols of Solidarity

Collins argues that a shared symbolic understanding is essential to a potent interaction ritual. He states that "skill in such activities (as singing or dancing) is part of the stock of membership symbols . . . ways of communicating membership (154)." New symbolic meanings to objects and acts can be gained through participation in socially bonding interaction rituals. Heider and Warner (2010) suggest that the outcome of shared symbols must be retheorized in the context of their ethnographic example. They argue that shared symbolism is less important as a socially binding outcome for Sacred Harp singers than a sense of shared participatory experience of some sort (89). In this way, it is not the sharing of a meaning, but the act of having participated in experiencing varied meanings together that unified participants. The act becomes more important than the symbol.

Both types of shared symbols are present within Taizé-style ritual. While the primary symbols of membership are the actions of having participated together, on an individual level Taizé-style ritual translates symbolically. Many spoke of using the songs or silence of Taizé-style ritual outside of the service, and of bringing it to their home churches. One attendee reported using Taizé-style meditation at a shelter she runs to help victims of trauma work through their recovery. In fact, Unity began offering a Taizé-style ritual in part because many

components of it had been introduced to the membership by members who had experienced it elsewhere.

Within the Taizé-style rituals observed, participants identified the act of having participated as a social tie of significance. Participation served as a symbol of membership as well as commitment. The social commitment of moving forward with a candle as a significant act of commitment within the ritual lasted beyond the day. Remembrances of having shared this experience with others through movement and co-presence commonly affirmed ritual importance. This recollection of solidarity also served as a symbol of silent community, a connection that reminds Bonnie that "I'm not alone. There are others who pray, who feel, who come together with me in faith. That's powerful."

The visual and proxemic importance of candles as an item of shared symbolic significance emerged. Holden, who attended both at Unity and Ascension, stated that:

> The candles are a pretty powerful piece, in that setting in particular. You have the opportunity to go up in sort of a circle setting, and so you can go up to the front, and they have fort of a 15-by-20-foot platform ahead boxes of sand. And there was a lot of space, a fair amount of anonymity, even though you're in front of the group. You know, nobody's really—you kind of have your own space in front, to just sit and be with the candles. . . . And there's something about flames that is very evocative. There's a place to dry your tension, there isn't—there's no words, there's nothing to be looking at except what is. And so, it really draws me into being, you know, what is.

This theme emerged in both the Unity and Ascension interview series, with the glowing light in the darkness symbolizing the individual lights coming together. Bryan talked specifically about the ways in which the lights of individual faith were all brought together by Christ, in the center front of the room. There was an affective, entrained recognition of the space as "Taizé space," where prayers could be safely offered and emotional loads could be shared.

Riis and Woodhead (2010) found that the shared or less strongly shared symbols in rituals could lead to less or more effective ritual. This proved to be true for some of my

participants. There were a number who were disturbed by the prayers around the cross, which, in some ways, were more idolatrous than the icons encircling the altar-space. At the same time, the symbols (and lack thereof) at Unity Temple proved to be too off-putting for some of the attendees I spoke with. References connected to prior memory-chains for the participants had a strong likelihood of mis-articulation. Of the reports of moments of disconnect or mis-articulation, more than half were directly referencing external knowledge or experiences in participant's personal histories. Successful experiences of collective effervescence led to the building of new shared symbol sets, allowing for better moments of experience.

Outcome: Group Solidarity

Interaction ritual in Collins' model has social solidarity as a target outcome. This solidarity can vary in strength and nature, dependent on the type of ritual it is gained through and should carry beyond the experience itself. I suggest that in a lay-led ecumenical ritual focused on creating a sense of mutuality, Victor Turner's definition of *communitas* has utility as an explanatory measure. Much like the community at Taizé in France, groups in search of *communitas* are seeking, as Turner describes, "a transformative experience that goes to the root of each person's being and finds in the root something profoundly communal and shared (1969:138)." While this is not as hierarchical as what Turner was examining, nor as totalitarian an experience, the desire was ultimately to find that shared and profound reconciliation. With no clear hierarchical or in/out-group distinction at the ritual site, a sense of egalitarianism is evident within the ritual experience that may lead to this sense of *communitas*, serving to affirm or engender the communal social bonds (p. 132). Bond generation is not, ultimately, the purpose in the way that reconciling pre-existing community relationships within faith and humanity is. This was identified clearly in introductions by each leader but affirmed in interviews. Community of

faith was noted, but there were not local organizational memberships emerging from participating in these rituals.

Interviewees each identified that the ritual was moving and effective because they had common intent, and they were all participating on a more or less equal playing field. Many commented on the feeling of support or mutuality that emerged from their Taizé experiences. Participants at both churches commented on this feeling of mutuality, with shared moments of intent drawing them together in a temporary community. This seems to be reflective of the Gnostic focus of the ritual on meditative silence and group connection that arises from the rhythmic entrainment observed during the ritual process.

A sense of solidarity remained a complex reported outcome of the ritual. Reports of an expanded sense of connection with others were focused less on an affirmation of place in a particular social order or space-based community, and more on an affirmation of self and the social ties to a "community of believers" in a larger social world. Individuals who saw each other only in the context of Taizé would greet each other in the street, but new friendships forming from ritual participation were rare. However, the overarching theme was not one of social solidarity with the group, but of reaffirmation of solidarity with other communities of membership and the value of the individual within them. As such, most participants (n=32) reported an increased sense of connection to the world, while even more (n=41) reported a strengthening of their sense of self and commitment. Affirmations of pre-existing bonds were more common for groups who attended rituals together.

Communities of specific faiths were less often the focus of emphasis. For those at Ascension, it also affirmed their sense of commitment to the larger Christian community, but in none of the Ascension formal interviews was there an example of new membership growing

from participation. Rather, there were communities of individuals from distant traditions (both geographically and spiritually) who often made a pilgrimage of sorts to attend these services, seeing in them a value of affirming a connection to the long chain of Christian history (Vilaça 2010).

The Taizé-style services did provide opportunities for participants to affirm their membership in their local community. Those who were both local members and a part of the planning or setup felt a sense of ownership that grew with each moment of involvement. Jenny found that once she began offering to set the candles, she felt more invested in the community, and Piotr played instruments on occasion as another way to experience worship.

Aging members of the communities who felt a loss in connection previously found that attending with community members strengthened their sense of community within the home church outside of regular services in a way that was more manageable for their physical needs. While committee membership was no longer a regular option for her, Lavergne found that attending the Taizé-style service provided her with a similar sense of connection beyond the "obligatory Sunday services." She found the Sunday services valuable, but on the level of "it's just what you do if you're raised a good Catholic." Her extra commitment to attend Taizé-style services once a month gave her that sense of connection to the community. And she was not alone. A sizable number of the retired and aging attendees in both formal and informal interviews identified the Taizé-style prayer ritual as a way to reconnect with community in the form of a faith practice rather than a weekly routine.

Summary and Conclusion

In applying Collins' IRT model to the Taizé-style rituals I observed, I found a useful lens for categorizing and examining some of the moments of sound, sight, and sensation that were

reported by my research participants. The whole-body experiences co-presence, and it is from there that the other ritual ingredients build. Space creates barriers, but so do words and sounds. Symbol sets and actions can direct focus, but this shared focus emerges through the making of sounds and sitting in stillness. There is a complex interrelationship between the need for affective and sensory data to engender a ritual that contains all the essential elements.

Transfiguration, the moment where ritual ingredients combine to generate collective effervescence, emerges from the combination of these ingredients in the alchemical laboratory of the interacting body. The shared focus through singing and silence enables the meditative and emotionally supportive mood of the ritual to emerge. While the ingredient of exclusivity is the weakest of the ingredients within Taizé, there is indeed an element of it in both the theological and musical underpinnings of the service that factor into making the liminal space that the transmutation occurs in something separate and sacred.

Ritual outcomes, using this model, demonstrate that participants leave with a notable change in their individual emotional energy and a subsequent boost to their morale. Closely echoing Heider and Warner's (2010) prior IRT modifications, they did not always have the same symbolic associations but they all spoke of the importance of sharing moments of ritual around these elements, no matter how individuals ascribed their meanings. For most, the ritual experience is the most symbolically significant element. And solidarity was found to be a regularly experienced outcome. However, the type of solidarity achieved was, for most, a sense of fellowship with the larger community of faith and co-ritualists rather than a sense of connection and solidarity with the host organization's faith of choice.

Interaction ritual theory as Collins describes it does not identify and discuss ritual failures. Building from the moments in my research when rituals did not connect with

individuals—where they reported that rituals "didn't work" or "failed"—I found new questions developing. Was it the failure of an ingredient that served as a barrier to transfiguration for an individual, or was it the interaction between two or more elements that failed to live up to the goals? There were individual moments of glaring mis-articulations when individuals clearly left the ritual dissatisfied. Particularly around the issue of shared symbols and common purpose, the missteps were most notable. There were moments in personal religious memory chains that individuals felt were inaccurately expressed in the local rituals. Others simply felt that a ritual had grown to no longer meet their needs.

Looking at these religious rituals from an individual perspective, it is important to consider the construction of meaning and space through time. Tradition plays a role in the construction of chains of memory, Hervieu-Léger argues (2000), shaping in subtle as well as overt ways our experiences and expectations. This memory chain, constructed of meanings passed down through practical experiences and tacit understandings of meanings ascribed to signs and places, shifts and exerts itself in many different sorts of ways. The moments when we embody and perform these actions become an intrinsic part of our repertoire from childhood, building on the stories of elders and the traditions of generations past (Schnable 2012).

In the case of Taizé-style ritual, the rite is focused on meditative prayer. Facilitated by the participatory nature of the ritual and focus on meditative silence and song as the emotionally potent elements, bodies were entrained to recognize the sensations of prayer and meditation, primed to repeat. An increase in emotional energy, identification with the ritual community, and an enhanced sense of solidarity all emerged in the ways that Collins predicted. However, the *communitas*-like focus of the ritual did not create or moderate social positions but served to affirm previously existing social ties. An experience of solidarity in solitude emerged, affirming

confidence and enabling smoother connections outside of the ritual itself. Perhaps this is part of the appeal to seekers, that this ritual does not require or mediate social memberships, but simply provides a space for affirmation of prior affiliations and the self.

CHAPTER FOUR

LOCAL COORDINATION

> The camp was a bit of a pilgrimage, a long trek and a week of living out of a suitcase and in a tent. I had packed sunscreen, dresses, shorts, sandals, and soap. The first day, they gathered the mix of seventyish adults—mostly white, more female than male, but from all over—and explained that the entire week would be set within a 'ritual space' established in the opening ritual.
>
> That night, we gathered in a circle, to ground ourselves before the ritual. Standing in silence, incense burns, flames leap, and the river burbles in the distance. Bugs chirp and the leaves flick shadows above my head, and rocks protrude into my shoes. Once we have meditated, been guided through that thought exercise, the Reclaiming staff invoke the elements, one of them honoring air—which is inspiration, the breath of life. Then, a circle is cast, and we are led in a welcome to the spirits.
>
> Reclaiming leaders running the week established through dramatic ritual performance the purpose of the week, the story that will be explored each night. Costumes, flutes, and dramatic storytelling and acting perform the beginning of the tale of the 12 Wild Swans. Everyone joins hands and begins to sing the song we were taught that afternoon, walking in a circle as drums are pounded and harmonies offered.
>
> I can feel the warm moisture of sweat in the hands of my neighbors as we walk and sing, stepping in front and behind, as the long chain of dancers begins to spiral back out, singing into the faces of those of us further down the line as we still spiral in, following the loudly singing leaders. At the climax of the singing, the drums reaching a crescendo of sorts, one of the leaders raises his hands and arms and shouts to the sky, directing the energy—or cone of power—upwards and towards the work of the week. We thank the elements and the spirits and disperse, but leave the greater sacred circle established, as the week is set within this sacred intent and space.
>
> We were prepped ahead of time, with a song or chant taught to us by the host community over a shared meal, leaving time for people to go and change into their ritual garb for the evening Work. Each day, in classes, we are led through different aspects of Reclaiming and other traditions, but at night, the whole group is brought together to learn through participation, raising the energy.
>
> Field notes, Glastonbury UK 2003

This narrative of ritual in the Reclaiming tradition is only a small snapshot, but the importance of ritual coordination emerged in my field notes. *Taught, prepared,* and *led* are some

of the most commonly repeated themes emerging from studies of both Taizé-style prayer and Reclaiming witchcraft rituals.

Building on the examination of singing and phenomenological religious experience in chapter three, this chapter explores the ways the embodied experience was structured, both within Collins' (2004) model and beyond it. I spent weeks over three summers in ritual spaces. I attended seminars, celebrated in ritual circles, and chanted with the community. To this day, the experience of dancing in a spiral, holding hands and singing directly into the faces of my companions, is something my body remembers. I then spent Friday evenings over three years at varying Taizé-style prayer services, and hearing *Ubi Caritas* in a church service elicits similar responses through my sense-memory. I hear the music, and I *feel.* As I collected data and participated in varying rituals, I began to wonder: Why could a ritual experience in a witchcraft movement remind me viscerally of an experience in a Christian prayer ritual? What is it that enables some experiences to create an inchoate but nonetheless powerful response? Reviewing field notes, memos, and interviews brought the importance of the ritual coordinators to the forefront. *Ritual coordinators*, in this project, refer to the people who hold responsibility for organizing and facilitating a temporally and spatially limited (read, local) ritual.

In interviews with coordinators, they discussed the intentionally structured sensory moments that contributed to optimal ritual experiences. Organizational narratives were shaping experiences and sound-making moments in subtle ways which I was not wholly aware of as a participant. I came to see the ways in which individual coordinator choices and the host religious community's perspectives could either mesh or clash. Interviews with participants reflected the effects of this intentional organization of sensation; this reflected coordinator intent through the

phenomenological experience of ritual as experience. When looking at the points of articulation in ritual settings, the one most often overlooked in the literature is that of the individuals directing or coordinating the rituals at the local level. Both religious themselves and professionally responsible for facilitating experiences, ritual coordinators can include clergy and other professionals within the ministerial staff. In the context of this dissertation, I focus specifically on the coordination work involved in hosting and arranging rituals outside of the traditional and liturgical core of the traditions. The focus on the role of the coordinator becomes clearer by pulling in material from ecumenical Christian religious rituals, Unitarian Universalist variants thereof, and non-initiatory witchcraft rituals offered as part of an immersive experience and cast specifically as something special or "outside" the normal boundaries of participation.

In the last chapter, I discussed the ways in which individual biographies influenced experiences when it came to the efficacy of ritual participation. In this chapter, I move beyond the individual phenomenological experience, the ritualized interactions of participants in biographic context, to the structured and intentional entrainment of participants in new ways of embodying and enacting religious rituals for spiritual growth (Collins 2004, Vannini et al. 2012). By focusing on the missing link of the coordinating figure, it becomes possible to look at the ways in which ritual articulation may become unhinged at the local level beyond the missed interactions between biography and structural organizations.

In the age of globally connected seekers, believers, and skeptics religious practices have changed. Religious rituals are not limited to groups that explicitly require membership or a shared background (Bender et al. 2012). In fact, there are multiple types of open and ecumenical religious and interreligious services aimed at seeking moments of reconciliation or growth beyond current traditions (Beyer 2016b). While these services and offerings often make religious

experiences accessible for those who Roof (1998), first termed "seekers," ecumenical and open offerings by initiatory or membership-driven organizations must simultaneously appeal to lifelong members. As such, participant backgrounds influence their experiences and recollections. In this chapter, I explore ways organizers work to meet the ongoing needs of long-term members while also meeting the emerging needs of seekers in a spiritual age (Flanagan and Jupp 2007). As such, this chapter asks: How do modern ritual coordinators intentionally establish liminal spaces and significant ritual experiences?

Exploring experiential parallels between an ecumenical neo-pagan ritual and an ecumenical Christian-originating ritual offered by a Catholic and a Unitarian Universalist church, I focus on the intentional structuring of the sensory by ritual coordinators. Ethnographic work with Reclaiming Witchcraft communities and Unitarian Universalist and Catholic churches provide evidence of a common trend between ritual coordinators and participants. Recollections of physical affect by participants relate directly to coordinators' intentionally organized physical spaces and bodily experiences. Embodied sense-making appears essential to the potency of religious experiences in narratives of Christians, Unitarian Universalists, and pagans. For example, chills and feelings of floating go beyond proxemics (Pagis 2013) to something more complex. In combination, the data suggest commonalities for these subjects' intersections between religious experience and bodily sensations. These shared elements illustrate organizer influence on ritual experiences and the impact of prior social formation of the individual.

Through a close understanding of the institutional histories that shape organizer understandings and ritual approaches, this chapter provides a clear examination of some of the ways in which ritual coordinators intentionally structure these moments of affective immersion. I also take into account the embodied experiences and histories of the coordinators themselves,

which also influence ritual structuration. By finding the points on which coordination pivots, it also becomes possible to understand the potential for mis-articulation at this level. As such, this chapter begins with the histories of the rituals in question, outlining the context coordinators navigate.

Institutional Histories

Relating a history is a performative act of remembrance (Hervieu-Legier 2001). In this section, I will present the histories of Reclaiming Witchcraft and Taizé as they were known to the coordinators at the time in which the studies were conducted. I term these *institutional histories* because they go beyond the national political organizations. Understanding how the cornerstone communities for each religious movement were established and thus defined themselves publicly is important to understanding the ways in which their outreach to ancillary organizations and individuals was displayed. Ritual coordinators were grounded in these histories, and incorporated fragments of these histories into the rituals. Both Reclaiming and the Brothers of Taizé qualify as new religious movements, as they both have their origins in the twentieth century. Both have, in their own ways, played pivotal roles in shaping various discourses about accessibility, participation, gender, and the role of the individual in worship. As such, there are similar patterns in parts of their histories.

Reclaiming

Reclaiming is a new religious movement (NRM) that found itself in a prime position to sate the newly refined tastes of the West in the post–Vietnam War era (Saolomonsen 2002). By addressing ecology, political activism, and feminism through mysticism and magic, it appealed, and still appeals, to many different areas of society. Scholars who raise claims that Witchcraft is an embodiment of the latest popular trends, serving as a hobby for most, recognize that, for a

significant minority, Witchcraft is a true religion rather than a hobby (Adler 2006). Reclaiming is one movement that seeks to facilitate the transition of hobbyist to serious Witch. Rowan said that: "[w]e offer the 'elements of witchcraft' path at camp for those who need to be grounded in Reclaiming's understanding of the universe." The roots of Reclaiming's faith can be found in Gardenerian and Feri Wicca, British and American initiatory witchcraft traditions respectively, with elements of other earth-based spiritualties mixed in. In the elements path at camp, this history is related to campers through individual ritual coordinator's tales of their own trajectory towards Reclaiming rituals. Originating in a single teaching coven, Reclaiming's tenets and beliefs enjoy a widespread popularity (Berger et al. 2003). Reclaiming does not self-identify as Wicca, although it is Witchcraft. This is due to a difference in theology that sees the ultimate divine as feminine in nature rather than dual-gendered or genderless, and a distinct difference in ritual, organization, and form that is more flexible and eclectic than the initiatory traditions alone (Salomonsen 2001).

Reclaiming arose out of a teaching program established by members of a class taught by Starhawk in the late 1970s. A psychologist seeking to find a more genuine embodiment of feminist religiosity, Starhawk drew on existing traditions but worked toward creating more opportunities for genuine experience and growth. Covens formed out of the classes, and a teaching team began to offer the same experience to other spiritual seekers. Public rituals were held in the San Francisco area, more interest was garnered, and a local community (or collective) sprang into active life. A consensus-based anarchist organizational pattern was established to hold the core of the organization, aiming to allow for each voice to be heard and facilitating organized outreach (Magiolicco 2004). Starhawk spoke to campers, in her pathway course about money and capitalism, about the importance of consensus in group process and affirmation of

ideas, discussing the work she had been engaged in at the WTO protests in Seattle as well as within the tradition itself.

The Spiral Dance was the first published feminist form of Witchcraft. The attention this garnered played an important role in initially attracting new interest to Reclaiming. Due to this interest, training procedures for Reclaiming teachers slowly evolved into being. In the 1980s, the San Francisco Reclaiming community incorporated as a government-recognized NGO (Salomonsen 2002). Luna and other coordinators spoke about the use of ritual in protest, organizing, and engagement with other pagan movements across California that were interested in Witchcraft and justice work. Then, the first Witchcamp was held, making Reclaiming-style rituals and instruction available to an even larger crowd. Teachers traveled and camps were held that attracted interested newcomers from outside California, and a larger community began to evolve. In this feminist NRM, the emphasis on moving beyond a Cartesian dualism placed a heavy emphasis on understanding through experience (Magiolicco 2004).

Reclaiming is not a tradition in which initiation is required or even seen as necessary for leadership positions. The primary emphasis for each participant is ritual as a shared, divinely inspired experience based on personal inspiration and ecstatic states. Initiation is an optional rite without a set format, to be undertaken only if the Reclaimer feels it necessary for personal growth. However, most of the leadership within the organization holds initiations in other mystery traditions, such as Victor and Cora Anderson's Feri Witchcraft or Covenant of the Goddess. Thorne, for example, spoke of her background in an initiatory Witchcraft tradition and the ways that the Reclaiming tradition makes space within it for those with different traditional backgrounds.

Teachers began traveling globally to lead courses, and an international community began

to organize. This growth is due partly to the popularity of Starhawk's writings, and in part due to the organized outreach of the community, with its concerted efforts toward public instruction and ritual. This civic commitment led to political and social activism engaging with global cultural neo-liberal capitalisms. By 1999, Starhawk and many members of Reclaiming were actively engaged in actions targeting the World Trade Organization meeting in Seattle (Starhawk 2000), and new members had been drawn into Reclaiming rituals from the various protest communities. Ritual coordinators in this chapter came from Canada, Great Britain and the US but individual members attended camps from all across the European and European settled countries.

In 1997, due to significant international development related to the intersection of public actions and publications, the San Francisco collective disbanded, and the international Reclaiming community and movement of today was born (www.reclaiming.org 2012). The group established rules for teacher training, procedures for organizing Witchcamps, community building resources, and *Reclaiming Quarterly* magazine. To bind it all together, a statement entitled "The Principles of Unity" was issued by the California Reclaiming Collective and its founding members, to which all Reclaiming witches must adhere (Salomonsen 2002).

However, at the time of my research (2001 to 2003), the central consensus unit for Reclaiming, as a tradition, was still based in California and had multiple members of the original collective engaged with it. Regional units are run by regional groups, which all have a single appointed member who coordinates as a spokesperson in larger community gatherings. At the time of my research project, there was the Tejas Collective, the California Collective, a Washington Collective, the Midwest Reclaimers, two separate groups in New England, Canadian Reclaiming, a collective in the UK, one in continental Europe, and at least one group in Australia that I was aware of. The consistent coordinators across camps and continents that were present

for my study were members of the California Collective, although different members of the New England Collective were also coordinators at each site.

Taizé

Taizé-style prayer rituals take their name and form from the prayer services of an ecumenical community of voluntary brothers in Taizé, France. In the 1930s, an ecumenical group of men who were mostly ordained or who otherwise identified a religious vocation banded together to create a voluntary religious community focused on *communitas*, peace, and reconciliation through simplified liturgical rites and acts of charity. David likes to emphasize the importance of inter-Christian reconciliation that originated with the brothers. He was careful to repeat that the service was conducted "[i]n the spirit of the brothers of Taizé." The Taizé brotherhood believes the ultimate responsibility for reconciliation with God lies not with an intermediary, but in each individual (Sparks 1986:172). Originally settling in the Alps, they had relocated to Taizé, France, prior to the advent of World War II. During the war, the brothers continued to observe their services of the hours while providing shelter to fleeing Jews and hiding resistance forces during the occupation. At the end of the war, the brothers hosted the German prisoners of war, ministering to them as they awaited their fates.

Involved in ecumenical discourse, contributing to liturgical development, and invested in social justice work since its inception, the Taizé community found itself in a particular position of strength in the European community. Prior to Vatican II, the pope visited with Brother Roger in Taizé, and several of the senior brothers who had taken orders within the Catholic church were present in the Vatican to provide advice during the meetings that led up to that massive change in Catholic liturgy and process. At that time, however, the brothers were still for the most part insular, providing acts of charity and conducting services and writing liturgy and hymnody that

was distributed across varied Christian traditions. That all changed.

In the wake of the 1968 French student uprising, many revolutionary youth fled Paris in the hopes of evading persecution. Some found themselves drawn to the community in Taizé, where they could engage in discourse and find a community of support in the aftermath of their failed political action. It was this influx that began the brotherhood's youth ministry and engagement that has led this community to share their prayer services not only with religious officials, but with youth from all over the world (Flannagan and Jupp 2007). The brothers, as part of their call to strive toward reconciliation, enjoin those who have attended services at Taizé to take what they have learned home with them (Sparks 1986:75). Establishing a separate council, Taizé is now recognized as the single largest religious movement for youth in Europe. Discussed as a Gnostic Christian movement, the ideas and sentiments from this religious tradition have spread widely (Jupp and Flannagan 2007). At Unity, the original coordinator who sparked the flame for conducting a Taizé-style service was a German citizen who as a youth had attended retreats at Taizé. The PowerPoint created for Unity Temple states that:

> The Taizé worship style and the music of the community has spread around the world. This is a service in which time is suspended. Silence is a central part of this service, and it is a gift in this busy world.

Taizé-style rituals have spread far beyond the boundaries of the brotherhood in France. Rising in popularity from that point onward, these rituals have spread to points across the world and are frequently offered as a meditative prayer service (Santos 2010).

Gnostic in nature, Taizé-style prayer services are explicitly meditative and internally focused. The website hosted by the Brothers of Taizé, who hold the copyrights for the service and songs and from which it emerged, state that "in the USA, there are countless groups that meet regularly for prayer, inspired by Taizé" (www.taize.fr 2016). In fact, David formally offers training through GIA, the publishing house which holds the brother's US copyrights, for

seminaries and churches on how to offer Taizé-style service.

Ritual Narratives

If memory is essentially a narrative act (Namer 1987) and religion is a chain of memories (Hervieu-Legier 2001), then ritual is an act couched in narratives (Sakaranaho 2011). The narrative nature of religion can be observed as it is enacted in writing, speaking, and ritual. Luhmann (2000) argues that the one characteristic that makes religion discrete from other aspects of social life is the narratively distinct difference between the finite and the transcendent and the ways in which that boundary is negotiated. This is taught through *body pedagogics* (Mellor and Schilling 2010). In other words, the feeling and breathing body is taught through formal experiential processes to recognize and experience the internal dimensions of religion (p. 30). The explicitly embodied methods of teaching and learning are key to this chapter.

Religious responses to the increasing complexity of social life can span from an increase in insularity to an outward reaching, but each of these responses can be observed in the ways the stories of the religious organizations are told and framed (Rambo 1993, Demerath et al. 1998, Cassanova 2001, Bruce 2006, Berger 2002 and 2007, and Wuthnow and Offutt 2008). For example, Vatican II gave divine sanction to regional influence in local masses. Pentecostalism is positioned as a globalizing movement that has grown stronger through its adaptation to other local traditions (Miller and Yamomori 2007). While an analysis of the intersection between the institutional and localized discourse at my own research sites will be covered in a following chapter, the narratives told by organizers and participants alike provide another rich site of investigation. I begin with this because it is the point at which the embodied realization of the articulating nature of local groups and larger organizations is experienced through group ritual and local coordination.

In the analysis here, I focus on the narratives offered by coordinators and participants in order to bring forward the intentional elements of sense-making and sensory formation. Wuthnow (2011) argues that investigating narratives of religious experience as forms of social performance allows for clear analysis of social elements of internal sense-making. Treating the sensory as exceptional rather than the norm leaves the religious lives of many practitioners underexamined (Asad 1993, Schilling 2008). Stories of "feelings" lend communicability to otherwise complex religious experiences, creating an opening in ethnographic research for development of a sociological approach to religious sensory experience. I operate under an assumption from ethno-methodology in which individual stories are social performances in sense-making (Eisewicht and Kirschner 2015). As such, language and metaphors are expected to convey meaning across shared social worlds. In this study, organizer and participant sense-making conversations provide a new approach to the often inchoate elements of religious experience.

The use of ritual as a structuring narrative and the role of the ritual coordinators as storytellers became apparent in my interviews. Reclaiming Witchcamp and Taizé-style prayer ritual participants frequently reference the forms and formulas of the ritual as a structuring narrative principle. These stories are transmitted by organizations through ritualized performance of both organizer and organized (Bell 2009) and through sense-making discussions before and after the performance itself (Weick 1995).

This structuring and shaping of the ritual experience directs emotional outcomes and focuses the shared symbolic linkages. Durkheim (1965) posited that religious rituals awaken a collective bubbling up of positive emotional experience and affirm a sense of group connection, serving a purpose as a sort of social glue that binds people together. This assumption of shared

emotional experience as a source of social cohesion has carried through many approaches to rituals both religious and nonreligious over the past hundred years. In fact, sociologists have since argued that participating in public ritual serves to confirm group commitment (Bellah 2003, 2006), alleviate social tensions (Gluckman 1962), mediate social disjuncture (Comaroff 1985), or regulate social activities (Rappaport 1979). In Draper's (2014) quantitative analysis of the relationship between collective effervescence and solidarity, he found that Durkheim's understanding of the relationship between shared cathartic emotional release and membership affirmation held true, with some modifications partly indicated by Goffman (1969) regarding class and by Heider and Warner (2010) regarding shared symbolic values. Unpacking the ways in which the ritual setting both overtly and covertly referenced a larger institutional narrative through the sense-making activities incorporated in these open rituals by coordinators, I highlight some of the messages that are intended to organize experience and reach beyond the membership barriers to form a larger symbolic community.

Local Communities of Experience

Rituals open to members of wider communities of shared symbolic associations are increasingly common in this rapidly globalizing world (e.g., Bender et al. 2012). As practitioners move beyond the necessity of an institution-focused spiritual life, these rituals provide experiential moments of religious (or spiritual) affirmation and community outside of the organized and hierarchical western Christian formal religious life (Beyer 2016b). At the same time, contemporary rituals are marshaled by organizations to reaffirm membership for individuals in the larger institutional hierarchies, such as the Catholic Church or the Reclaiming community (Morrill 1999). This case study focuses on two separate emergent religious rituals run by individuals who are trained by religious leadership or who themselves are members of a

hierarchy of religious leadership.

In many ways, the people I interviewed were what are often treated as the dominant motif in sociological investigations of American religion: white and middle class. Most coordinators were female rather than male. Most were white, and primarily occupied skilled positions that required a degree of higher education, as ministers, educators, therapists, and church musicians. Many of the witches, aside from high levels of Reclaiming training and credentials, held formal degrees from Cherry Hill Seminary or advanced degrees in psychology, English, and history. The church musicians held formal training and accreditation, and the Unitarian ministers engaged in Taizé-style coordination also held formal training.

I conducted observation and interviews at three separate Reclaiming Witchcamps offered between 2001 and 2003 in both the Midwest USA and in England (Dougherty 2004, Appendix 1). Data are drawn from interviews with twenty participants and four ritual leaders from both camps. The participants included a variety of backgrounds, educationally and professionally, although they were predominantly white and female. They included a range of professions from a PhD candidate in ethnomusicology to a Mennonite minister and a professional psychic. The ritual coordinators formally interviewed included two who exclusively teach and lead rituals in varying Witchcraft traditions (Coyle and Starhawk) and two who did so as a religious service but held other jobs. Each camp had four or five special ritual leaders and teachers brought in by the host collective to run the rituals and offer seminars or classes during the day. There were four male-identifying ritual coordinators that I observed, with at least one at each camp. The average age of coordinators interviewed was 40.

I collected observational data and interviews at two institutions that offered Taizé-style prayer services in Oak Park, Illinois, between 2010 and 2012 (Appendix 1). One institution,

Ascension, offers the largest regularly run Taizé-style prayer service and hosted visiting groups from around the United States during the time of my observation. On average, attendance appeared to range between 400 and 1,000 people. The music coordinator for Ascension is also the instructor for GIA in America who travels nationwide teaching religious institutions how to offer prayer services "in the spirit of" Taizé. The second location is Unity Temple, a Unitarian Universalist church that offers a Taizé service on a different Friday of the month. At Unity, the service is coordinated by Martha, the church music coordinator, but attended by a rotating group of the Unity Temple ministry staff, who offer readings. Attendees at Unity Temple ranged from 20 to 75 in number. I spoke extensively with the ritual coordinators, interviewed a group of 20 to 24 volunteers, and collected ethnographic data collection at each location.

Each of the sites, and many of the coordinators, indicated their willingness to be identified. Participants have been anonymized to protect their identities and accommodate Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements. Data include both informal interviews conducted at ritual sites and 45 formal interviews conducted at a later date either in person or via the telephone. There are, as usual, limitations to exploratory studies and the data contained herein. Interviewees were recruited voluntarily and were fairly representative of the local ritual participants. I suspect that the number of voluntary interviewees in their later years had more to do with less demanding obligations on their time than other participants had.

The brothers of Taizé and the witches of Reclaiming focus on the experiential as the point of religious growth in ritual settings. They have composed rituals and organized systems that can be offered by local organizations beyond their initial borders. Both rituals have elements that focus on furthering individual mental and spiritual development through relationship with the ineffable. Both formal organizations intentionally teach their ritual forms to nonmembers and

encourage them to take them into the world (Starhawk 1979, Fr. Roger 2006). In both Reclaiming and Taizé-style rituals, there was variance in the ways the rituals were performed, although the forms were close to the originating structures as published and practiced by the brothers and the Reclaiming collective in San Francisco (Starhawk 1979, Fr. Roger 2006). In the following section, I highlight some of the thoughts and practices characteristic of each ritual.

Taizé-Style Ritual

Taizé prayer service is a fluid and simplified version of the Liturgy of the Hours for the purpose of prayer and meditation by the Brothers at Taizé (Spink 2006). This falls within the context of Christian spirituality, wherein individual experience is a primary feature of the ritual (Veersteg 2007). At Taizé and in local congregations, the ritual focus is to create space for meditative individual connection with the divine (Santos 2010). David said, on reflecting on his own first visit to the brothers, that:

> [P]eople are struggling with a hunger that they often can't describe or enunciate very clearly. . . . But also realizing that there are many, uh, Catholics and Christians of different denominations that, um, don't feel like they have many tools or ways to do that. So, I kind of carried that with me and then brought back here the idea to kind of start doing a monthly prayer in the spirit of Taizé, where we could start to invite people, you know, in an ecumenical context. 'Cause that's very important with Taizé, that people understand the ecumenical Christian context of bringing people together for prayer and to pray for peace and reconciliation

It was that same recognition of need that drew Unity Temple to offer a Taizé service, although the leadership offered the opinion that it would not be a long lasting solution.

Taizé-style ritual practiced outside of Taizé, France, is similar to the prayer service observed by the monks and the tens of thousands who attend services there each year. During a Taizé-style prayer service, a keyboardist plays and people sing, often each in his or her own language. The ultimate focus of this service is on creating a space for meditative union with the divine (Schutz 2006 (2005):119). Much of the ritual is sung. The songs are short in nature,

consisting of a single repeated verse in simple four-part harmony. There is a Bible reading and a sung psalmody, but never a homily or sermon. Instead, there is a period of meditative silence. It is each individual's responsibility to find reconciliation with the divine, aided by prayerful silence. On specific days, children may come up to light a candle, which represents the light of Christ in their lives. Songs are sung again, and then prayers for the world and the Lord's Prayer are recited and sung by the community. A final benediction is sung by the crowd. The songs are sung in different languages, and every attendee is encouraged to sing or sit meditatively. During the service, people may sit on the floor, sit on chairs toward the back, or stand.

Structure in these rituals varies from site to site, but all include the utilization of silence and song, prayer and readings. A religious publishing house, GIA Publications, controls the site licenses that must be purchased in order to use the music and form of this ritual, offering books of song and prayer as well as compact discs of music (www.giamusic.com 2015). The brotherhood offers a list of institutions that offer services on their website as well, aiding seekers in finding sanctioned rites in their home countries (https://www.taize.fr/en 2017). The brotherhood offers a newsletter with suggestions for readings and prayers, and new songs are published regularly. In this way, some consistency in ritual form is preserved.

Individual institutions make modifications to the rites dependent on their own needs and interests. In the Chicago area, more than 20 different religious institutions offer Taizé-style services. In the suburb of Oak Park alone, three separate churches offer Taizé-style services monthly. Each institution belongs to a different denomination, and the modifications to the service can be seen in the bodily movements, elements incorporated, and words shared in song and reading. Different understandings arise, and different practices appeal to each attending party. David Anderson is the music coordinator for Ascension, as well as the contracted

instructor for GIA in America. In this position, he flies across the country to teach various institutions how to offer prayer services "in the spirit of" Taizé. It is, according to at least one of the visiting Brothers of Taizé from France, close to the daily worshipful intent of the Brothers. As such, he often serves as a touchstone for other services in the area.

At Ascension, musicians play bass, violin, flute, trumpet, clarinet, and flute alongside David on the piano. The music flows from the front of the space, sweeping back over the participants; although it is difficult to see the musicians, all can hear them play. In the sanctuary, the altar is set up in the front, with bowls of clay surrounding orthodox icons, one of which was a gift from the Brothers. Participants are encouraged to sit on the steps of the high altar as well as on the floor around the icons, and many do. Upon entering, they collect a printed order of service and candle in the narthex by the church bookstore, which is open and featuring books and CDs related to the service. Signs on the way into the sanctuary ask for silence. People enter and sit, waiting patiently. A short introduction each week by David sets up the ritual, welcoming student groups from California or making a light joke of the difficulty of singing things perfectly. A practice song is sung with David in the lead, and then the service begins. After participants sing three songs nine times each, an unordained individual (usually an Ascension parishioner) steps forth to read scripture from the Bible. Then David leads a call-and-response psalm by singing the first part, with the congregation singing the reply as noted in the order of service. One distinct element of Taizé-style ritual at Ascension is a segment where candles are lit, one from the other, while people stand and sing, then sit in silence. Eventually, we process with candles to the altar where we plant them in the clay, little lights joining into a larger glow. In the darker months, with the lights in the sanctuary dimmed, the impact of this procession and the candles being placed in clay pots around the icons is particularly striking. One notable prayer at Ascension on

Good Friday as well as at least one other service a year is the Prayer around the Cross. In this segment, which is placed at the end of the service before the last song of the day, any who wish to are welcomed to come up to the front and circle around the cross while singing.

The other institution, Unity Temple, had a far less traditional offering of a Taizé-style prayer service. Unity Temple is a Unitarian Universalist church in Oak Park inside a Frank Lloyd Wright building. At the time of the study, the "Taizé at Unity" was a Unitarian version for which some of the songs were re-written. In particular, mentions of Jesus were removed, and in some cases, songs were rewritten (while retaining the original melody) to celebrate the beauty of creation rather than a specific divine being. Martha S., the music coordinator for Unity Temple, helped a German interim minister who had spent time in retreat at Taizé establish this offering on the fourth Friday of the month.

Unity's Taizé service takes place in the main sanctuary at Unity Temple. A group of five musicians, including a flutist and a pianist alongside several violinists, are seated at the front by the podium. Candles are placed and lit on each of the balconies in this space in the round, creating a different atmosphere than in the traditional service. Here, too, sand-filled clay pots and candles are distributed in the narthex, which then are processed to the front in the ritual. This was an element borrowed from Ascension's Taizé-style service, as it was moving for Unity members who also had attended services at Ascension. A projector and screen are above the musicians, and in the time before the ritual starts, a history of Taizé prayer is projected on the screen, establishing a sense of historical connection and a basic outline of the intent of the ritual. During the service, which also features song and reading and silence, differences can be noted in that the readings are conducted by various ministers affiliated with Unity. The readings are not explicitly and exclusively Christian in nature but come from a variety of sources, including Kahlil Gibran,

Anne Lamott, and Maya Angelou. Claire focused on finding on short readings that "fed silent reflection" about peace and healing.

In both locations, cross-pollination is evident. In fact, eight of my formal interviewees had opinions on and stories about both services. Another seven had experienced Taizé-style prayer outside of the two institutions I was working with. Each institution takes their standard service form from that of the Brothers, but the degree of orthodoxy clearly varies with the local organization's interests. There is some discussion at an institutional level as to whether the Unitarian Universalist Church in America's interest in Taizé-style rituals is entirely appropriate, given that the rituals' originating movement is explicitly Christian in nature. This emerged in interviews with participants, who were clearly aware of some elements of the larger ideological conflicts, if not the exact details of the situation.

At these two local Taizé-style prayer ritual sites, there was a clear articulation of the theology of the host community with the intent of the Brothers and Taizé-style prayer as a whole. At Ascension, this was most strongly notable in the inclusion of the Prayer around the Cross. Many touch the cross, which is brought down for this purpose, or even kiss it while others leave when this segment begins. In the introduction to the services at which this prayer is featured, David explains what is going to happen and welcomes people to "remain seated or leave quietly" if they do not wish to participate in this part of the ritual. At Unity, the rewriting of the lyrics to exclude references to Jesus and at times deity in general alongside the more secular readings clearly reflect the Unitarian Universalist nature of the ritual. In the introduction at Unity, the slides explain that the service is an "adaptation" and thus differs in spirit from the Brothers' services. Several participants identified these elements as the reasons that they opted not to return. At both, however, there was an intent to foster a moment of quiet, moving religious

experience that did not focus on membership recruitment or sermons. At both sites, a sense-making activity shaped the ritual by providing an introduction through spoken words or a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the intent of the ritual, with wording such as “time for self-reflection” and “quiet time” indicating an inward and at times bodily focus.

Reclaiming Rituals

Reclaiming Witchcraft has at its core a ritual practice that generally follows a Gardenerian format for grounding, calling the circle, summoning the elements, and invoking the gods, which is the first contemporary Witchcraft ritual as well as the most influential (Hutton 2001, Bado-Fralick 2005). A feminist Witchcraft tradition emerging from Starhawk’s Spiral Dance (1979), Reclaiming has no singular set liturgy, although it incorporates elements of other magical traditions (Magliocco 2004, Salomonsen 2002). In typical public Reclaiming-hosted rituals, participants gather and a circle is cast, usually by ritual leaders walking its limits with some cleansing agent like salt water, incense, or sage. At this point, the elements and the divine are invoked, and then the main body of the ritual takes place, during which some sort of energetic/magical work is pursued. Typically, a “cone of power” (focused magical energy and intent tangibly sensed and directed by participants) is raised and directed toward a purpose before the gods are thanked and there is a dismissal of the circle and a regrounding through food and drink.

These camps have a general format, where the opening ceremony for the week casts the entire camp into “ritual space” to establish it as a liminal place and time. The entire week is set within the context of a selected myth. In the observations referenced here, the Midwest camp engaged with the story of the 12 wild swans while the UK camp enacted the story of Taliesin and Cerridwyn’s cauldron. Each day, there are various sessions taught by the invited ritual

organizers. The Witchcamps are arranged by local collectives, but teachers are drawn from the larger Reclaiming teaching pool, who control the general thrust of the week, although the local group selects the theme. The ritual coordinators are typically outside the local organization, invited in to coordinate and run the rituals and classes in camp. During the day, each instructor teaches breakout sessions on various skills and themes, such as capitalism and magic or leading trance in ritual. Every night, a ritual organized by ritual coordinators tells the theme the week is based around and attendees participate. This is the standard form internationally, but the teaching staff and themes for the week vary between sites and years.

I conducted observation and interviews in two separate countries. Twice I was located at a camp run by the Midwest Reclaiming Collective in the Ozarks (2000, 2001) and I also attended a camp run by the UK Reclaiming Collective near Glastonbury (2003). The attendance at each camp was less than 60 but more than 30. These camps have a general format, where the opening ceremony for the week casts the entire camp into "ritual space" to establish it as a liminal place and time. Each day, there are various sessions taught by the invited ritual organizers. They are different from the host organization, as they are invited in to coordinate and run the camp around a ritual theme for the week.

The ritual coordinators are particularly significant, as there was an overlap of coordinators attending and working at both the Midwest and the UK, camps. This is indicative in part of the role that members of the original cell of the NRM still play. At the first of the Midwest camps, Starhawk was present as one of the instructors, as it was the year of the release of her book *Twelve Wild Swans,* which then became the focus of the rituals for the camp. T. Thorne Coyle, another core member, was an invited priestess at all three camps. Local collective members also host and teach if they have attended and been certified through Reclaiming's

teacher training program. River, in the Midwest Collective, was not a certified teacher the first year, but she was on the second and thus helped to run ritual and direct the flow of the week. At the Midwest camps, there was only one ritual coordinator who was not a US national. At the UK camp, only two of the six ritual coordinators were not from North America. Typically, the coordinators are all certified by the larger teacher training program or in the process of obtaining that organizational authority.

In Taizé-style and Reclaiming rituals alike, it is the theology of the local organization hosting the ritual that comes to the fore. In many ways, European pagans have a different attitude than those based in the United States, especially when it comes to the ways in which ritual is practiced. In part, that may have to do with the social habitus that are commonly shared by people who occupy similar positions within a culture (Mellor and Schilling 2010). But like the Taizé-style rituals, Reclaiming camp rituals are not entirely exclusive. It is this emphasis on openness that introduces some of the difficulties in communication. In fact, it became obvious in my research in the UK that the sense-making (Weick 2012) activities organizers led participants through were in part intended to help frame ritual moments that were not as well received by participants. Each of the group rituals were introduced by the ritual organizers, with the purpose of the ritual clearly identified. During the post-ritual grounding snack, the experiences were discussed and unpacked by participants and leaders together. In this way, talking about the experiences helped to make sense of the various responses and understandings that this disparate group brought together.

Wuthnow (2011) argues that investigating narratives of religious experience as forms of social performance allows for clear analysis of social elements of internal sense-making. As such, materials used for this particular chapter beyond this point are thus limited to transcripts of

interviews with participants and coordinators in each of these studies, and my after-observation reflections from participant observation. I am limiting my materials in this way so that both the more recent and further removed studies are being treated equally, and the social elements of internal and interactional sense-making are brought to the forefront. I will begin with looking at the sensory narratives being told and engineered by the master storytellers, or ritual coordinators. Following this, I will look at both positive and negative stories of ritual that participants shared with me along with stories I told in my own field notes about successful and unsuccessful ritual experiences.

Coordinated Experiences

Stories of ritual experience are shaped by those who participate and those who conduct. Ritual coordinators are cardinal to establishing the narrative of a ritual through action and deed, leading participants to elements of common purpose and shared meaning discussed in the previous chapter. Similar to Vilaça's (2010) discussion of contemporary religious pilgrimages, the participants seek religious experience through these rituals that require extraordinary effort and often travel to attend. They set the time spent "in ritual" apart from their daily life, outlining it as a type of liminal space shaped by the coordinators (Gilmore 2008). In interviews and interactions, ritual conductors emerged as the storytellers, structuring the language and sensory experiences of participants. By examining the narratives of ritual leaders, as well as their intentional actions to shape and frame the sensory experiences of participants, it becomes possible to see the overarching sensory story of the ritual.

At the same time, the participants' words and metaphors used to describe impactful positive and negative moments shed light on more than just the organizational intent. Careers, childhood religious identities, and even hobbies informed the ways rituals were sensed to

succeed or fail. The evidence presented here is broken into the stories intentionally told by the ritual coordinators and the stories of positive and negative sensory experiences of participants. By looking at the "official" stories and the intimate stories in this way, I highlight some of the ways organizational structures and individual life-stories interact to create bounded liminal space and ritual experiences.

Explicit Entrainment

Understanding of the intentional sensory moments within ritual experiences are distinct for each of these rituals, and determined or expressed by the ritual coordinators within the ritual frame provided by the institutions of origin. While effectiveness of reaching diverse audiences could serve as a test of ritual power, the ritual coordinators at each site spoke of the importance of "framing" the ritual to shape expectations. It appeared that in the coordinators' minds, rituals are "open," not requiring initiation or confirmation into a particular faith structure. As such, there is a degree of negotiation needed to generate collective effervescence within this particular ritual setting. As such, by providing a cursory historical chain to connect the ritual to, efficacy is increased. "Having a sense of history . . . a connection makes a difference in how everyone relates; it gives us a central story," Rowan said, when asked why rituals were always framed within folk tales at Witchcamps. Those in positions of authority balance and engender shared moments, while navigating the challenges of extra-institutional ritual. Shaping liminal moments of ritual experience outside of normal space through sensory simulation was, for each of these coordinators, their responsibility, and it began with communication of a historical connection to establish shared symbols and meanings.

Successful participation is the means through which the aims of the service are accomplished. As Mara, a Reclaiming priestess said, "[i]t is by letting people really experience

ritual that they learn [Reclaiming tradition witchcraft].” Ritual coordinators focused on the ways they work to engage the ritual participants in the larger performance, and the ways that they perceived leadership gave shape to the experience. Direct instruction, modeling, and the intentional construction of a liminal space created sensory experiences specific to the rituals. Practicing the songs, I noted at my first Ascension visit, made me feel “less awkward about singing right away.” At the same time, I clearly recollect being led through grounding exercises before each Witchcamp ritual, and to this day, I “stretch my toes into the earth like the roots of the tree, feeling the branches of energy reaching up to the sky, pulling in water, pulling in light, and cycling through to support the world.” Through each of these techniques, coordinators sought to immerse participants in the ritual setting, establishing a distinct experience that forms strong symbolic associations (Collins 2010). Framing and bounding the experience as “other” emerged as intentional bodily practices in each of these settings.

Rituals open to participants outside of a tradition or member-oriented organization need a certain degree of overt bodily instruction to entrain or ritualize sensations (Collins 2004, Vannini et al. 2012). The rituals in this study included participative iterations of the lessons each tradition holds as central to their practices. At Ascension, David structures the preservice introductions to inform people of the history of the service, as well as to lead the participants through a trial run of one of the songs. When a practice song round went poorly, David laughingly noted that there would be no judgment as “we *are* the choir.” This emphasis that everyone was a performer rather than an audience member minimized the boundary between ritual specialists and attendees. In an opening gathering for the Reclaiming camps, priestesses introduced the basic Reclaiming ritual structure, identified the energetic focus for the week, and led the group through a round of a new song so that they could be active participants in establishing ritual space. Each subsequent ritual

during the week included similar practices and an emphasis on the role of participants in establishing the liminal space. Rehearsal served to familiarize new participants with the host group's practices as a form of preliminary entrainment, diffusing some of the sense of difference that some attendees experience.

Rituals may share form but differ in symbolic association. At the two Taizé-style prayer ritual sites, there was a clear articulation of the host community's theology in relation to the original ritual intent of the Brothers of Taizé. The Prayer around the Cross at Ascension was a striking example of the strong Catholic nature of the host institution. As mentioned earlier, David explained what was going to happen and welcomed people to "remain seated or leave quietly." The procession to the cross was sporadic, with people moving forward at no given pace and in a small trickle, to kneel by the cross and touch it to pray, or even kiss it. Many never stand for this option, preferring to witness, and yet others leave when this segment begins. Unity Temple featured lyrics that had been altered, excluding references to Jesus and at times God, alongside the more secular readings clearly reflecting the Unitarian Universalist nature of the ritual. In the introduction, the slides explained the Unitarian "adaptation," differing in form but not in spirit from that of the Brothers'. Emphasis on the importance of reconciliation between self and the divine, the different Christian faiths, and other religions was discussed to address Unitarian understandings of religious life, drawing bounded lines of meaning.

Reclaiming Witchcamps provided instruction on the general structure of a ritual, as people unfamiliar with Reclaiming-style rituals were a large portion of the attendees. Evening ritual experiences were enhanced by daily classes offered to aid in building attendees' knowledge of and familiarity with elements such as trance work or the basic nature of the elements utilized in most western Magical traditions. "It takes experience to be able to feel

energy . . .” one leader explained to a camper group. “The sacred space here makes it easier for you while you are here.” The best kind of learning, the coordinators and campers alike identified at the end of the week, was practical learning that took place *in the ritual.* It was through acting on instructions, and even making mistakes, that participants learned from coordinators how ritual should be experienced and conducted.

Tacit Entrainment

In both Reclaiming and Taizé-style rituals, there was a sense in the organizational narrative that the occupation of liminal space is temporary, an extraordinary experience much like a contemporary pilgrimage to a holy site (Vilaça 2010). By establishing a separate space in which the liminal moments of ritual can take place, coordinators intentionally shape the liminal through a reshaping of the space itself (Collins 2004). Organizers at each site discussed the ways that they worked to shift perception of space and sound to something different and new. The importance of using visual symbols that set the rituals apart from other experiences can be found in many coordinator narratives. David, who uses icons on the altar in the way that the Brothers of Taizé do, ran into problems when he traveled to a Calvinist college to teach a group how to worship in the style of Taizé.

> And I was in the seminary chapel of Calvin College and I was not allowed to use icons, you know . . . I did kind of protest a bit because I said, “You’ve asked me to come here. This is Taizé-style prayer, they use icons.” You know, and they’re giving me all this thing about the icon, it caused controversy and all that. And I said, “I can assure you that none of your students will think that these pieces of wood are God.”

He addressed this difficulty with aplomb, but felt that ultimately, the ritual would not be fully taught or appreciated without the willingness to embrace the practices of the brothers. By teaching in this way, he intends to spread the experiential structure of Taizé-style ritual as well to new coordinators through these lived experiences.

Part of structuring the sensory experience for this temporary visit to liminal space is the intentional shaping of perio-perception as well as sight (Pagis 2012). Both Reclaiming and Taizé-style ritual coordinators openly discussed the ways in which the perception of space was altered in order to create a more liminal experience. They discussed the importance of creating an "otherness" through proximity, movement, fire, and light. The Reclaiming priestess Thorne states: "We talk about entering sacred space, and what that means is entering nonordinary space and time, and that can only be done by a person entering sacred consciousness." As such, there are physical movements, delineations of ritual space, and actions that the participants undertake to establish those boundaries. This aligns with an emphasis on the use of space to create successful interaction rituals, using the architecture and landscape in novel ways to generate new sensory stimuli that break beyond expected sensory rituals to a new formation (Brenneman and Miller 2016). The physical and sensory space is intentionally structured to shift away from the everyday. Participants noted the importance of this coordinator-crafted space to their ritual experiences. Breena, a Reclaiming coordinator, said that "moving into this [ritual] space, it's a physical thing, not just headspace. That makes a difference."

Taizé-style services also change the use of physical space. At Ascension, icons are placed on the lower altar in the forefront of the cathedral-like space. They face in each direction and are surrounded by pots of sand that, by the end of the evening, have glowing candles deposited in them. Participants are encouraged by David and the musicians to sit on the steps of the main altar, on the floor around it, and in the pews. The use of icons, more commonly seen in Orthodox churches, is a common tactic in Taizé-style services and was intentionally used by the Brothers of Taizé as a way of focusing the ritual on practitioners of all types of Christianity. Martha at Unity had fewer options in some ways, due to the architectural design of the space, but she

moved the group of musicians to the front and moved a table to hold a glowing candle and bowls of sand, shifting the space. By projecting images on a screen above the musicians, she shifted the focus away from the ways in which the sanctuary is traditionally used.

Light and fire are used to shift spaces. Each coordinator recognized the use of fire and light, at specific times of day, to set moments aside as different and sacred—as other. Candlelight service elements found at both Taizé-style services provided strong moments. S. P. found "taking the candles up symbolizes the fact that each is placing their hope . . . light . . . faith together with others to illuminate the community." The candles' haptic associations related to larger symbolic meanings. Similarly, fire at Reclaiming rituals was used as a focal point in dance and experience each evening, strongly associated with symbolic and sensory symbols. One participant told me that the fire and candles "are more smell and heat than light at the beginning, but by the time we're done . . . it feels like the space has transformed." These symbolic implications create a visual perception of unity of action and community engagement, fulfilling their purpose and engendering a sense of shared general symbols even if the specifics vary (Heider and Warner 2010). These structural changes helped participant actions fall outside their customary bodily patterns in a coordinated fashion, a physiological and sensorial signal of difference demarcating a purposive ritual gathering (Collins 2004).

Ritual coordinators, and the theological and liturgical practices they are grounded in, have an impact on how rituals are perceived. I was asked more times than I can count if David was "a religious" as there was something about his manner that conveyed Church doctrine clearly. Laurie stated that "I just thought really that he was a monk or something like that. But last time he mentioned he had kids." Reflections on his careful leadership were offered by one couple came from Baltimore where they coordinate a quarterly ritual. They attend here to refresh

their own joy in the ritual, because his leadership sets the scene so clearly. The thought given to the sensuous nature of the space for participation highlights the explicit use of the sensuous by religious leaders to enable successful religious ritual experiences. One chorister at Unity commented on how important the candlelight and PowerPoint images were to her experience, expressing gratitude for Marty's decisions to offer these visual stimuli to support the other-ness of the experience. By restructuring spaces and guiding and encouraging physical participation, including theological understandings in the explanation of practice, these organizers and coordinators play a demonstrable role in establishing temporary boundaries between the ordinary and the liminal.

Positive Experiences and Entrainment

Ritual facilitation involves the introduction of distinctive actions, songs, and moments of bodily co-presence. These sensory rituals (Vannini et al. 2012) entrain the body and mind of the actor to enter into states of altered consciousness, creating set perceptions of ritual experience. Coordinators introduced and led these moments, often carefully leading and directly instructing participants during the ritual itself. Sabine, a camper at the first Midwest Reclaiming camp and a coordinator at the second, said, "The very best [rituals] have moved me in a deep nonverbal way, where it's a matter of what do I take away in the depths of what I'm feeling and the connection that I'm feeling?" She was not alone in this sentiment. This common language of movement indicates the very bodily nature of religious efficacy for participants and the challenge for ritual coordinators in facilitating such moments. Reclaimers talk about a sense of energy being built up, perceived through an entrained bodily sense (Collins 2004), or ritualized sensation translated through a sort of habitus particular to magical religious practices (Pike 2001). In each of these

examples, facilitation by an expert and successful ritual repetitions worked to establish perceptions of success.

Bodily entrainment goes beyond vocabulary to physical actions. At Reclaiming events, the movement and dancing, led by coordinators, engaged everyone. The Spiral Dance that is characteristic of Reclaiming events features people dancing and singing in a hand-holding chain while facing each other in a geometric dance. J. C. said, "It's the facing each other that makes it so powerful. Not only are you moving with purpose, together, holding hands, but you can see the faces of everyone else, and hear their voices, directed at you. That's the coolest part of the dance." This aligns with Collins' (2004) interaction ritual structure, as commonality of purpose evidenced through shared actions unite people in specific ways. David frames the Taizé-style prayer rituals within his understanding of what it is to be a church musician:

> As a church musician, I've always been primarily concerned with how do you, how do we . . . how do we help people connect to the Holy? And how can music be that vehicle, or be that bridge, you know, to connect people to a sacred space?

His work as a church musician, then, is to help others become more connected through music. This happens through singing and silence, through their performances, not only in Taizé-style rituals, but in all worship.

Frequently, stories of positive sensory experience reflect a level of expertise gained through repetition of similar experiences, or familiarity with the moment or ritual action that provided the biggest lead. For example, Stone described a Spiral Dance: "The cone of power was tangible, and the energy rose . . . it's powerful." One Taizé-style service participant, Rick, reported that positive sensory experience "often occurs when we sing the Halleluiah song . . . I always find that very moving, and it kind of gets me over the top." When asked what "over the top" meant, he replied that it meant "that I can really feel like I'm into the prayer experience at that point." This sense of ecstatic or effervescent experience wasn't seen as an element of

"emotion" or discussed specifically as an outcome of collectivity in action by participants, but as a sensation facilitated by the ritual.

David recognized the added impact of group movement in ritual, noting that "[processing with candlelight to the front] brings people together in purpose." Similarly, my notes about Ascension read, "Five hundred voices really make your body vibrate." At the Reclaiming camp, one of the most frequent reports was how amazing it was to share in this ritual experience with so many people. Proximal participation is key to effective ritual, even if it is simply sitting in silent meditation (Pagis 2013). Sharing in an intentional experience with a group of people gives the experience strength in some ways, effectively affirming significance through bodily co-presence (Collins 2004).

Energy is a term that emerged as significant within the Reclaiming interviews, indicative of a discrete perceptible element. The ability to sense and manipulate energy within the magical traditions Reclaiming is situated within was a topic for some of the classes conducted during the camp weeks. This ability to perceive and magically manipulate the energies is a sign of aptitude or supernatural skill. In interviews, with both repeat attendees and new campers, the term emerged in sensory stories of ritual experience. *Energy* also appeared in interviews with two Unitarian Universalist Taizé-style prayer ritual participants, used to indicate a sensation of spiritual power. It was also referenced in the readings offered by a ritual coordinator one month. Another term used by the Taizé-style participants at both locations is *spirit,* referencing the Holy Spirit in action, often linked to Charismatic or Pentecostal experiences of religious affect in daily life (Inbody 2015). These terms were referenced by the ritual coordinators in the ritual introduction and prayers as well as in interviews. This is suggestive of the ways coordinator

terminology can prime participant understanding of bodily experiences. For example, Parker said of Taizé-style prayer at Ascension that

> …within minutes of-of sitting down and how the service starts you just feel the energy of being together in it. It's a place where you can be quiet and kind of be in your own space, but you're also- I just felt connected. It was just a very strong feeling. And I think it's a combination, um, it being prayer but also being music.

By framing these bodily experiences differently than ordinary life, the boundaries between the liminal and the mundane were drawn and experienced. The language was modelled in the introductions, then mimicked by participant narratives – this is entrainment in action.

As I worked with these two groups, I, too, began to use those terms to explain my own sensory experiences. One of my memos reads, "I felt the energies rise . . . I didn't know that was a thing, but it was like, the louder we sang, the more we moved, that sudden moment of silence gave me goosebumps." The terminology I used was shaped by the experiences I had participated in, reflecting over time my own embedding in each of these ritual traditions. I noted differences in levels of experience based on proxemics and found solace in fire. Intentional structuring of these experiences was clearly expressed by organizers and embodied in participant narratives. In the reflections of participants on ritual experience, the varyingly successful choices and adaptations emerge. Clear ritual experiences are established, and moments are shaped. However, there were some moments in ritual that were less successful.

Entrainment and Experiences

Ritual doesn't always work. Sometimes there is a disconnect between the individual and the experiential community. Most examinations of ritual efficacy focus on the outcomes as measured by attendance and organizer report (Grimes 1995, Bell 1997). In conversations with participants, the almost inchoate bodily reactions they had while talking played a role. One woman burst into tears, and another needed to take a break. Another man shook his head and

laughed, story trailing off as he experienced moments of bodily sense-memory, voice softening in recollection. And yet, another woman's voice went from warm to cold as she shifted through her memories to describe her least favorite moment. The emphasis on how ritual felt appeared in almost every interview where participants talked about why rituals did not work for them. Treating the stories of felt experience as data points rather than symptomatic of functional failures, further shifts the sociological narrative of ritual efficacy beyond the mismatch between symbols and intent as outlined by Riis and Woodhead (2010). For example, Ax commented on coordinator instructions being an "interruption from the flow of the ritualizing." Sometimes, there is a clear relationship between organizing and participating in ritual failures. So what is the importance of coordinator engagement in ritual failure? I argue that timing, biography, and history all play a part.

Biography, as Mills (1959) would frame it, became a constant pivot for ritual inefficacy in the communities I studied. Life experiences impact the points where nostalgia and experience collide. Birch and Ash felt that the Reclaiming rituals were, in essence, more similar to their backgrounds in liturgically focused forms of American Protestant traditions than they found comfortable. Mary Margaret, who identified as a "recovering" Catholic, said that even the Unitarian Universalist Taizé-style prayer services were far too similar to her childhood experiences of religion. The structure of the service and the host church just "put her off," even though she loves the music and the message. One subject reported that he and his wife used to attend Taizé-style services at Ascension, but that over time they "just stopped feeling right for us." When asked why, they talked about how they had moved away a little from their religious origins as Catholics to a more ecumenical Christian identity. As a result, this couple switched to Taizé-style services at the Unitarian Universalist church because their religious thinking shifted,

but the ritual form remained effective. Especially for interviewees who identified a break between prior religious membership and current practice, similarities to the past practices seemed to engender strong negative sensations. In these cases, there was nothing that the coordinator could do to draw the boundary and build liminality for the participants while still providing positive experiences for organizational members as well.

Prior education and training outside of religious experience impacted the way participants and coordinators alike understood and experienced the ritual moments. Martha, a Taizé ritual coordinator, said of her first participant experience: "As a musician, I found it incredibly boring and not very interactive . . . it just drove me crazy." The sense memory of this experience, even in the interview, agitated her. Light, a Reclaiming participant, found herself "tuning out" during guided meditation exercises as she used them for clients. David told me a story of a nun visiting from Central America who left a Taizé-style ritual at Ascension, as "there was too much darkness and suffering there." In each of these situations, the disengagement from the ritual in question had a good deal to do with its similarities and striking differences to life experiences. The organizers, here, could do little to make a difference to participants.

Responsibility changes embodied experiences as well. Those in positions of leadership have vastly different experiences during the rituals than those who come to participate. Coordinators who find the musical and physical nature of their ritual appealing often also find their experiences vastly different as participants. Maya said that "In [Reclaiming] public ritual, if I have any role at all in organizing, I tend not to get a lot out of it because I'm really putting my energy into providing support for other people." David also spoke about the different experience he has as a participant versus coordinator, and how he has worked to create space for his own moments of effervescence. This is one of the places where Collins' (2004) interaction ritual

chains fall short. The ritual coordinators, responsible for facilitating effective rituals, do not themselves by nature have to be equally engaged and, in fact, coordinating the ritual makes it difficult to engage at all. The struggle to balance the role of coordinator and celebrant highlighted again the ways in which coordination is as much work as it is worship.

Sometimes, too, there can be disconnect between the coordinator and some of the attending population. While the Taizé-style services at Unity appealed to many of the local members, two of them commented on the ways in which one coordinator interrupted the experience for them by directing too obviously. At the same time, at Witchcamp in the UK, a group of campers were put off by the American-ness of the coordination team. In each case, this individual moment of mis-articulation influenced the experience.

Coordinating Complexities: Two Case Studies

I too have felt disconnected from experiences. As a young ethnographer, I suspected it had a lot to do with being in a new place, but as I have grown, I have noticed my tendency to "feel" is also tied to my own religious background and internalized norms as a white American woman from the Midwest raised in a Lutheran tradition, but well familiarized with the world of neo-pagan rituals. Using two sets of notes from my memos, I would like to highlight two moments of mis-articulation to examine the ways in which coordinators do their best to navigate moments of ritual failure for participants.

At my last UK Reclaiming ritual, I found myself uncomfortable. My memo after the event read: "Something just felt off. I just had to stand there, watching, as people were encouraged to roll on the ground, enacting something that made little sense to me. It felt debasing. Wrong. It just didn't work for me." I literally took myself out of the ritual because I

could not perform, the sense of wrongness was so strong. Both bodily limitations and an ingrained sense of dignity kept me standing and feeling awkward.

I wasn't the only one to report dissatisfaction with the experience; participants reported their own discomfort to me. For some of the participants, the complaint was that the ritual *felt* disrespectful. One participant said there was no respect for the Goddess who was the subject of the ritual. Another simply complained that this felt like kids playing rather than serious religious life. This indicated a cultural disconnect between the participants and the ritual conductors, in part due to the American and Canadian contingents' different understanding of social norms and local history. For others who complained to me after the ritual, and in some cases stood back during it, the physical actions of running and rolling on the ground were too debasing to engage in. The next day, ritual coordinators led the camp in a toast over dinner to honor Cerridwyn, who had conveyed her anger over this ritual disrespect to one coordinator in a dream. The ritual coordinator's own sensory experiences played into the genuine understanding of ritual failure and was conveyed as a legitimate source of information to influence further ritual. By taking formal action, the coordinators sought to remedy the moment of missed articulation.

My second moment of personal mis-articulation came from the first Prayer around the Cross I saw at Ascension. I felt a similar type of disconnect. I was singing and watching people in varied states (crying, somber, smiling) come forward to kneel around, touch, and even kiss the cross. Rather than simply writing about it and observing, I was fidgeting and doodling on the order of service and in my notebook. In my memo, I noted that I "felt anxious, like I should have left, like a good third of the attendees did. It was like I was intruding." On reflection, I suspect that my anxiety and sense of displacement were due to the unfamiliarity of the practice, my upbringing in the Lutheran church, and some vague notions of idolatry.

In the introduction to the Good Friday Taizé-style ritual at which the Prayer around the Cross was featured, David shared with attendees that they have the option to leave or remain seated at the time when the procession began, repeating what he had noted earlier in the introduction. Andrea, a retired teacher, spoke of how the caravan of Taizé participants who regularly make the pilgrimage always leave when that part of the ritual starts, because it's "not for us, you know? We tried, once, but . . . it's too much." These moments of discomfort were visceral and often helped to highlight the ways in which biography can impact the sensory experiences of participants. In an interview, David noted that the non-Catholic attendees often found this the most unusual element of the ritual, although it is a common daily practice in ritual at Taizé, France. It fell outside the parameters of normal experience, but people often participated in repeats of the ritual. In each of these cases, coordinators worked to redraw boundaries and reach those who may have fallen outside of the lines of the ritual experience. However, some points of failure remained outside of their purview.

Discussion

When I engaged in each of these studies, the sensory was not something I was thinking about at all. This data emerged from review of my notes and transcripts, where the striking commonalities between the narratives of participants and organizers emerged. The fact that these data were collected from two studies, at two very different times and locations, heightens the importance of the sensory in the formation of liminal spaces and the direct role of coordinators. It is striking, to me, that there were strong parallels in how these rituals were discussed by participants and organizers.

Rituals like Reclaiming Witchcamps and ecumenical Taizé-style prayer services seek to provide moments of individual religious inspiration and guidance to participants. Intentionally

shaping sensory experiences, coordinators use the ritual itself as a moment of entrainment. There are many elements that they can control, but others fall outside of those bounds. Participants learn as they experience, ultimately leaving with new sensory ritual associations. While the theological/thealogical underpinnings are different, these rituals share many of the same coordinator-structured elements. Liminal ritual space sets the time apart, allowing participants to share sacred experiences (Turner 2008). The direct instruction and modeling by the organizers lead people in these newfound ritual experiences. But for some participants, each of these rituals failed to connect due to cultural miscues and other expectations. In each of these cases, the stories of sensory experience cast light on the ways in which ritual worked and failed to work.

Emergent religious rituals for voluntary participants such as these provide distinct sensory frames to enhance participant experience. The dominant reason for participation in these voluntary rituals outside of primary organizations of membership was that "it moves me." This aligns with Tavory and Winchester's (2012) idea of experiential careers, as participants are seeking moments of elevated effervescence in order to affirm their religious development. In each of these cases, participants are not seeking to further commit to a community but to a personal relationship with the divine through extraordinary engagement (Vilaça 2010). This focus on seeking individual moments of religious and spiritual experience outside of or as a supplement to traditional religious experiences poses specific challenges to coordinators in what participants are noting and measuring in effective ritual moments (Flanagan and Jupp 2007).

Discussions of energy and "being moved" may well harken to a sort of phenomenological experience of Durkheimian collective effervescence (1982). In contrast to his focus on community bonds, the ultimate goals identified by ritual coordinators in these contexts are inward and individualistic, seeking to further each participant's individual relationship with the

sacred rather than with the local organization. Collins' (2004) theory of interaction ritual chains can to some degree indicate likelihood of a successful ritual, as ritual participants come together with a shared set of desires, a shared symbol set, in a shared space, and from the successful participation and performance in ritual together, they experienced an affectively and emotionally moving moment. Like Heider and Warner's (2010) Sacred Harp Singers, the participants did not always share a specific set of fundamental understandings, nor did they seek community affirmation, but they did come together with a recognition of the general cause in gathering and ritualizing together. And from this shared togetherness, a sense of companionship may emerge. This strengthening of fellow-feeling might well feed into larger institutional goals of maintaining membership and engagement with the congregation for those who may have slightly different worship styles or furthering engagement with a larger religious ritual community. But, the role of the ritual coordinators remains previously unaddressed.

Participating in a ritual is visceral by its very nature. Religious musical experiences, in particular, carry a strong element of experiential memory (e.g., Miller and Yamomori 2008, Marti 2012). In interviews and conversations, participant narratives reflected the clearly articulated intent of ritual organizers. Sensory rituals trigger bodily and affective states associated with experiences of singing, meditation, and prayer that habituate bodily responses and actions (Vannini et al. 2012). Upraised hands in supplication, hands held in unity, and the vibrations generated by singing and speaking in unison all build on previous ritual interactions in religious and secular culture. Participants reported an achieved heightened sense of aliveness and bodily awareness, an "intense embodiment" (Allen-Collinson and Owton 2015) with an added sense of spiritual or energetic states triggered by intentional construction of actions and associations. The extra-organizational nature of these rituals set these ritual gestures and sensory

experiences apart from the everyday lives of participants, which often become less extraordinary and more habitual over time (Tavory and Winchester 2012), making routinization problematic for those who experienced it. The sensory experiences shaped not only their bodily awareness but their senses of spiritual presence as well, and the extraordinary nature of these experiences set them apart further.

The results of effective ritual coordination were reflected in embodied narratives. Participant stories reflected a larger and often imperceptible thing that moves beyond a simple shared emotional experience and into liminal space that the extraordinary occupies. Participants learned to sense and understand moments of powerful spiritual or energetic connection and reflect that understanding in the stories they tell and the affect their own bodies show as they tell these stories. At the same time, some like Bonnie requested, "don't ask me why I'm crying." She went on to explain that she was aware of her own motivations, but elucidating them for me would in some way strip them of their power for her. And yet, the stories she told were packed with explanatory context that alludes to complex sensed experiences.

I found organizer influence on the sensory was key in these open rituals in a way that remains underexplored in the closest literature on embodiment, leadership, and facilitation (Inbody 2015). It indicates a structural element to ritual life that has been intentionally shaped but is socially influenced in ways that can lead to moments of ritual failure. Boundaries between the ordinary and the liminal were experientially shaped for people who often did not have a shared ritual framework ahead of time. Reports of successes and failures of ritual are structured in the context of experiential sense-making by both participants and coordinators. Feelings and subtle perceptions become far more important in effective ritual participation and are indeed tied

into previous ritual interactions, although those connections often require examination of participants' social histories beyond their current involvement (Heider and Warner 2010).

The moments of failure were also related to the intentional organization of the ritual, stemming from larger cross-cultural conflicts both current and historical. There was a deep dislike for the experience of ritual dissonance that actively disrupted—and in some cases dismissed—the established moments of liminality for participants. In other words, the general cultural story bringing the group together needed to have some shared resources to succeed. When that happened, these significant experiences carried forward into outward-facing life to some degree, creating shared symbolic capital (Inbody 2015). Through intentional shaping of ritual experiences, such as David's introduction of the Prayer around the Cross or the Reclaiming toast to the Goddess, coordinators worked to overcome some of these social and cultural differences.

Ritual coordinators' roles in shaping experiences can be examined through institutional logics or through their own words. Focused on the words and terms coordinators used, alongside the experiential narratives of participants, moments of sensory ritual entrainment became clear. In each of these religious rituals from differing traditions, coordinators used the sensory to intentionally draw a boundary between the sacred space of the ritual and the rest of the world. I suggest that this sensory boundary-work allowed for the establishment of an extra-institutional ritual moment.

Conclusion

When a bicycle chain partially slips off of a gear, sometimes simply using the shift function will help it to catch on the teeth of the next one if the machine is complex enough. It seems to me that the Taizé-style ritual at Ascension is similar, with David offering options for

those who are estranged by the Prayer around the Cross to help mitigate its unfamiliarity. Less so, for the Unity Temple service, where there seemed to be no fancy gears to shift when participants felt estranged by the de-Christianizing of the lyrics and traditions. The coordinators there simply recognized that, for some, the service wasn't the best option, but these practitioners could find other services at the institution or elsewhere that might better serve.

Reclaiming camps, however, were in an interesting position. Consisting of what might be analogous to riders in a cross-country race that doesn't require professional levels of skill but requires extraordinary commitment for a brief time, the campers at times required on-the-spot mechanical repairs. In the example here, the adjustment of ritual with a toast to Cerridwyn was the coordinators' work at re-articulation. But, while on-the-spot repair jobs can at times be helpful, sometimes the machine itself needs retooling. In the next chapter, the linkage between local practices and institutional recommendations will be explored to highlight some of the ways in which this may happen.

CHAPTER FIVE

ORGANIZATIONAL ARTICULATION

> Light shines through leaded glass windows into the granite sanctuary. The golden glow on washed out grey reminds me of places of worship I visited in Ireland and Scotland, Germany, and France. Dusty blue faded pew cushions top the dark wooden pews, and people are thronging into the space while chattering with each other.
>
> The altar in front is covered with a white cloth and candles are burning on it. One of these candles, as I observe, is blown out by an individual in dark clothing. There is a thrust lectern, elevated above even the altar space, crowned with granite and decked out with cloth. I wonder, is this where the Gospel is to be read, or the homily to be delivered? There is a wooden sign that lists the numbers of the hymns in the hymnal to be sung. The pipe organ towers over the altar space in the back.
>
> … The service begins with a choir singing from the back of the sanctuary, as a youth bears a lit wick forward and a cross processes to the front of the room, trailed by individuals in clerical garb. The congregation stands to face the procession and rotates as the cross moves to the front; the sound of the choir processing behind them follows. I am struck by the acoustics and the impact of moving in this way, as though our bodies themselves are following the cross, driven forward by the sound.
>
> The service proceeds, a combination of group recitations confessing faith, identifying creed, and praying the Lord's Prayer. In recitations of faith and prayer, there is standing, but we sit when the choir sings, or when we sing. Scripture is read while we sit as well. At the time for a reading from the Gospel, the lead clergy for the service steps out into the thrust lectern, which rises above the congregation. Reading the scripture, a sermon on Jesus and social care is delivered. Prayers are again offered, offerings collected, and songs sung.
>
> Field Notes from a Presbyterian Service, June 2016

There is a notable similarity between the rituals of the Protestant liturgies offered in traditional styles, which recognize a Holy Catholic Church, and their Roman Catholic origins. In the service description above, identifying what older Christian tradition was being offered can be

difficult. While a lot of work can and has been done to look at the differences between Catholic and Protestant liturgical practices, I focus on the commonalties between the traditions in this chapter. Differences in theology and liturgy will emerge, but ultimately, I suspect, many of the ritual articulation work is found across boundaries in American faith practices.

At the national level, religious membership is measured by multi-sited religious organizations. Christian denominations, for example, often have a national-level organization that helps to oversee theological and liturgical matters as well as the interests of members of the faith community. Attrition in US religious organizations, especially of younger generations of Americans, is a major concern for those institutions (Gunnoe and Moore 2002, McDowell 2018). A quarter of Americans now see themselves as spiritual but not religious, although a notable number of these still attend religious services in mainline traditions (Lipka and Gecewicz 2017). Secularization, "spiritual but not religious" identity, and a period of rapid growth for unaffiliated and evangelical Christian affiliations pose a set of complex challenges for hierarchically and textually organized Christian traditions to navigate (Flatt Et al. 2018). Many Generation X and Millennial individuals still identify as religious, although they are disillusioned with the existing structures (Smith and Snell 2009). Using a mixed-methods approach, this chapter looks at steps some religious institutions have taken to re-articulate rituals, including those already understood as effective for attracting seekers, while maintaining current members (Putnam and Campbell 2010, Roof 1998).

The emphasis on the ideological power of religious organizations in much of the sociological literature, alongside the focus on the non-joiners, overlooks some of the ways existing institutions re-articulate religious ritual for potentially disaffected believers. The Roman Catholic Church and the mainline Protestant faiths that arose from the early eras of the

Reformation are my main point of inquiry in this attempt to add sensory and embodied data to this field. Focusing on these longer-lived traditions that were in existence by the time the Enlightenment era requiem for religious ritual began, this chapter investigates some of the ways that two of these traditions are currently addressing ritual as a point of sensory and embodied articulation. The shift in these traditions toward a more embodied and performative aspect has ties to the Liturgical Movement that began across European Christian traditions in the early twentieth century (Flanagan and Jupp 2007). While the Roman Catholic Church has always been ritually focused in a way that most of the early Protestant traditions were intentionally not, Vatican II worked to re-articulate religious ritual into a form more approachable to the general believer at the same time as liturgists and movements were working to bring ritual back to the performance of faith. Feminist theologians and lay leaders highlighted the importance of the body as part of religious worship (e.g., Daly 1968, Christ and Plaskow 1979). Pope John Paul II delivered a series of addresses, since collected into a theology of the body, from which embodied understandings in the new translation of the Missal emerged (West 2003).

Religious practices in local churches, national organizations, and institutional thought require triangulation to attempt to understand ritual articulation in the larger context. In chapter three, the impact of religious participation for individuals at various religious locations demonstrates the ways in which sensory experiences give meaning to religious actions and the ways in which metaphors and similes shape embodied understanding. In chapter four, I examined how histories shape the coordination of local open rituals offered within the purview of national organizations. Building on that, this chapter focuses on the broader level of articulation, wherein national organizational edicts become more significant. My approach is still based on two ethnographic case studies alongside content and data analysis (Appendix 1). As a

spin on triangulation in case study work (Yin 2013), I use the bridges between emergent interview themes and content themes to zoom out. There is a larger national lens that emerges, shaping some of this dialogue and practice. I argue that the patterns emerging in these cases are rooted organizationally as well as locally, and that the articulations are being managed by and impacted by the larger cultural frame.

In the past ten years, Catholic and Presbyterian liturgy has been re-articulated (or retranslated) in ways that highlight the complex relationship between the embodied religious ritual celebrant and the divine. Emerging in part from links to the Taizé-style prayer worship, my focus on the Presbyterian and Catholic traditions highlights ways in which introduction of ecumenical prayer rituals is part of a larger practice stemming from the Liturgical Movement (Santos 2008). Using published documents regarding two new institutionally established liturgical guides, content analysis sheds further light on this relationship.

This chapter, then, examines how narratives of local leaders reflect institutional themes and local church behaviors reflect national institutional themes at a time that they are being rehabituated and normalized. The internal documents, liturgical publications, and larger liturgical texts produced for both leadership and laity in each tradition develop organizational narratives of articulation, which I analyze. Next, data from three waves of the National Congregations Survey highlight changes in Catholic and Protestant ritual participation and offerings, as well as an overall national tendency toward a bodily participatory ritual. I conclude the chapter with discussion of some of the ways the embodied and sensory might be re-articulated, based on the data from each point of triangulation.

Narratives of Organization

Interviews with local community coordinators who work under the auspices of national religious organizations revealed the articulations between the local and the organizational both subtly and directly. At times, the influence of theological understandings of the nature of worship was omnipresent, and yet at times other paradigms for thinking about ritual as a performance emerged in the story. Themes emerging in conversations with religious leaders for traditional and Taizé-style services at Catholic and Presbyterian churches cast light on some of the ways that the national organizational guidance and other cultural factors intersect to create points around which articulation work must be done. These themes align with later concepts from the other points of the study.

The Interview Sources

I interviewed clergy and laity in positions of responsibility for ritual services from Presbyterian and Catholic traditions for this section of the project. Sampling attempted to be moderately representative, with a small but even distribution of clergy and lay folk across both traditions. In addition to a clergy member from each tradition, I interviewed a paid church music coordinator, a liturgical/theological scholar, and two local congregation members with a prominent level of responsibility as deacons or ruling elders for each tradition. This sampling emerged from my desire to examine how the narrative changed based on position and level of responsibility, but I was struck with similarities across the board, although sometimes from opposite ends of the power dynamic. Due to employment concerns, all interviewees and churches for this wave of interviews were kept anonymous and are neither referred to by name or organization. Not all of them were recruited at the institution they served at but through their

participation in Taizé-style prayer services elsewhere as congregants or through reference from initial interviewees.

Demographically, this sample reflects the mainline traditions I am focusing on. All the leaders were white-presenting and almost uniformly 40 or above. Of the leaders, three were female-identified, only one of whom was affiliated with the Catholic tradition. The interview process focused on the importance of ritual, but without direct probing into the immediate and recent changes in official church structures. Many interviewees referenced theological and liturgical texts and thinkers who influenced their understandings of the ways liturgy enacts religious life.

Interview Themes

Religious habitus shapes embodied experience (Bourdieu 1979, Mellor and Schilling 2010) and thus emerges in narrative performance of membership as well as ritual enactment. This habitus emerges in my interviews with religious officials when discussing both tradition-specific rituals and Taizé-style prayer rituals, framing understandings. They discussed their responsibilities in shaping ritual experiences as well as the influence on these rituals of their own embodied habitus, building subtle patterns of behavior and world perception in congregants through ritual participation. Emerging from the themes and patterns that repeat among professional and lay officials is a clear insight into some of the ways modern globally interlinked and scientifically grounded life has required religion to re-articulate rituals in order to genuinely engage participants. Habitus can be intentionally structured or reshaped by organizations or through repeated messages about subtle experiences and bodily responses (Gould 2009, Clough 2009). Narratives reflect the habitus intentionally shaped by the documents and discussions that exist at an institutional level. Themes that repeated in interviews and published documents

included conscious discussions of the ways in which leadership tried to impact the habitus of the parishioners as well as subconscious recurrent trends in liturgical conceptualization. Each of the emergent themes is identified in italics, at the lead of the discussion of it.

Responsibilities. Religious ritual leaders, ordained and lay alike, have special responsibilities to both the local organization for whom they coordinate rituals and the larger community of faith. The two spheres are coordinated by an overarching institution that employs them and in which they hold membership. Each organization has rules and guidelines for professional church musicians and guidance for deacons, elders, and other lay officials who have responsibilities related to the ritual of the liturgy. Responsibilities and vocations, or callings, were emphasized regarding the rituals I was asking about. “It is my job to lead the ritual, to help the congregation feel the flow of the moment, from emotional buildup to catharsis and release,” says Anne, who saw her responsibilities as a religious leader as akin to a conductor of an orchestra, building moments of swelling and fading of sensed emotional registration. George spoke of the responsibility of delivering a service that is relatable, even when he struggles with focus and questions his own ability to lead. It was still his responsibility to serve. Marie was honored by her responsibilities to the church in setting up the altar and serving on the music committee. She had a physical and tangible role in setting up the space so that it “looks nice and feels like a well-respected altar and [church].” She also helps to steer musical choices to align more closely with the sentiments and musical tastes of the congregation (which differed from those of the directors).

Immanence. The challenge of every religious official is to engage the participants so that the sacred nature of the religious ritual is immanent for them. Several spoke of trying to lead the type of worship that most impacted them. Donald states: “Catholic Sunday liturgy . . . that’s the

source and the summit, but it's nothing if it's not nourished and nurtured by other types of prayer and study." He pulls resources from the larger faith community to offer alternative prayer opportunities such as Taizé-style prayer services and contemplative retreats, building opportunities for deeper connection with the faith beyond the central liturgical offering. George spoke about his own introduction to the immanence of the divine at the triduum when he was a young college student.

> I found that was emotionally overwhelming when from the back of the church I hear the voice of the rector chanting behold the wood of the cross upon which our savior hung. . .. I remember Father George coming up to me and saying, well what do you think? And I said, "If I ever worship God again, it's got to be like this!"

Experiences of religious power were echoed by many of the members of the religious community alongside the coordinators, highlighting ways that priests and ministers find opportunities to refresh their faith and commitments through sensory experiential narratives, embodying that experience of immanence for the parishioners and un-ordained.

Drama. Performance, on the part of the leadership, requires an embodiment of the sacred. The job of the priest or minister is to "talk all of the time" according to one Presbyterian minister. Anna's understanding of Sunday services was that they were "so word-centered that the engagement with a topic changes radically from week to week." It is in this content that she saw the primary work of the ministerial or priestly staff, in setting up the sermon to tie in with the readings for the week along the liturgical calendar. "You're the stage manager on Sunday and the worship service is, among other things, a drama, like theater." The congregation of worship through song and communal recitation must engage with the service to build the experience. At the same time, Maureen talked about the ways in which the choristers were the emotional drive for worship, voicing hymns and singing responses loudly to lead the congregation in performance. George also mentioned the role of the drama and the production, discussing his

role as a priest as one of performance, with the goal of engaging the parishioners in the ritual and the emotional journey of faith that the liturgical structure builds. However, he also spoke of the failings of this. He felt that, at times, the liturgy became too much like a performance for the worshipers, and that elements of routinization and observer status meant that at times the Sunday Mass missed its mark. He suggested that alternative and more individuated prayer options offered chances for participants to strengthen their experiences of faith outside of the weekly performances with community, and he offered such in his home parish.

Ego. But at the same time, "particularly for ministry, ego is a terrible risk, and it's a monster . . . worship service is not about you, it's about God" (Anna). Several Catholic ritual coordinators, from clergy to deacon, shared the difficulties tied to the shift to "and with your spirit" in the Roman Catholic liturgy. While the translation was about a deeper understanding of the wording, moving from the ego of "you" to the divine of "spirit" (or soul), the entrenched habitus of the ritual was hard to overcome. While it was hard, at first, to shift the English language practices toward that new routine, the Catholic liturgist I interviewed pointed out that this shift was "about the fact that it is the spirit that is nourished, the soul." The need to focus on the divine and the ways in which institutional membership, ritual structures, and regional guidance help mitigate some of the risks of ego went beyond just this one Catholic example. Organizational oversight also helped with keeping the leadership humble. When George was a young priest, his homilies were apparently quite bombastic, but the higher-ranked clergy worked to "encourage me to . . . tone it down? To stick closer to the tone for the message that the Church wanted." The organizational structure, including a system of mentorship for junior clergy, plays a role in a system of checks and balances. In this way, some wider consistency can be maintained in the homilies or sermons delivered nationwide.

Participation. All interviewees were concerned with the need for increased congregation-wide participation. Jeanie is particularly unhappy with "audience style" worship, as she believes it is when people get engaged that "real" worship happens. She feels that the more lay-led services, including leadership by female deacons as well as male leaders, represent the church more believably and encourage more participation for the body of the congregation. Catholics are most accustomed to "corporeal" worship with communal recitations, but the Presbyterian and Lutheran traditions, too, feature traditional liturgical structures that require group recitations that encourage engagement at each Sunday service. One issue with that is the weight placed, as Maureen said, on the choir in leading the congregation in ritual. The emphasis on cerebral worship and the individual salvation of the soul, to some degree, is not an emphasis on communal song and recitation. As such, choirs and teaching elders and religious performance begin to carry a wider load in encouraging participation.

Local Flexibility. Interviewees noted that while there are guidance and official rules for ritual form and liturgical structure, there are individualized services at each location. In PCUSA churches, there are trends within the tradition toward additional service offerings. Contemporary services are one example, where Hillsong music and other contemporary Christian music is featured in the structure of worship although the basic liturgical structures remain fairly similar although couched in more casual language. Donald, the Catholic liturgist, noted that there is a complex and semi-organized system of internal diversity in Catholic worship offerings, which is ultimately the nature of large-scale institutions with millennial-long history.

> Right now, you can go to a Catholic church and meet all kinds of culture or all kinds of worship ways, different perspectives. . .. You know, between Latin and vernacular. And reform of the reform, you know, and all of these things are—that are going on. It's a very big church and always will be.

Bruce, a Presbyterian theologian, recognized ways the church demonstrated internal flexibility. At the same time, there was discussion of the ways in which the services were often tooled to address local losses and rising global concerns through sermon and prayer, alongside calls to action.

Cultural Influences. The members of a parish or church influence rituals and the forms that they stake. George makes a point of including messages and music from the cultures represented by the parishioners, including Spanish and Polish being used in secondary readings, including prayers in times of political or environmental unrest, and at times using the language for sacred music. Marjorie argues that religious experiences must be more intimate as people push for a stronger sense of personal connection. In her case, she moved toward offering a longer and more structurally welcoming friendly socialization period after the church service with soft music in the background and a variety of informational tables manned by volunteers who also have supplies like snacks, coffee, and juice. One Presbyterian elder reported that his congregation had voted to enact the social call of the church by ministering to the community one Sunday a month, and another institution had added a Spanish-language service based on the local demographic demands. In each of these cases, the concerns and cares of the local populations were being addressed by coordinators and the local community.

The Importance of Laity. Interviewees emphasized that lay engagement with music, altar decoration, ushering, and other internal services was intrinsically necessary for organizational operation. “We couldn’t do [the music of the service] without them,” Donald said of the participation of the music committee and volunteer parishioner musicians both willing to play alone and in groups. “I think, overall, that they appreciate my firm grasp of what musically reflects the spirituality of the day,” Maureen stated, regarding the way in which she finds that the

music committee serves as a supplement to her work as a coordinator. Richard stated that without the input from the elders in the church serving as a series of checks and balances, the general nature of the Presbytery would not have been well served liturgically. Members of the altar committee, ushers, deacons, and other heavily engaged parishioners who serve the church "make things run smoothly. I might be standing up there, wondering if the candle lighting will be timed accurately during Advent, but generally the support from committees lets me focus on the rites." Those who volunteer understand their services as committee members, musicians, deacons, and singers as part of the successful ritual.

Laity/Clergy Differences. Lay committees often held opinions or offered ideas that internally conflicted with or diverged from those of the ordained and called leadership. In those situations, referencing the authority of guiding theology and organization served as an optimal method of redress. Conversations emerged with elders and deacons about times when they have shared opinions or guidance on behalf of the congregations with the music ministry or the clergy. Laity felt heard, but in some cases, they had to accept that the disagreements were going to be dealt with authoritatively. In other words, while elders and deacons may make a suggestion and be respected for their input, that respect had some strong limitations. This was more complex for Catholic than Protestants, although the leadership team still had a strong hand in ritual coordination and weekly messages. Donald serves a clerical education organization within the Catholic church, and he spoke about his own mis-articulation with the institution in this way:

> As a layperson in the church . . . one of my gifts happens to be leading prayer. Of course, . . . I mean, under the current polity of the church, I seldom have a chance to share that gift, so you know I'm very happy to see that at least somebody [the unordained Taizé-style service coordinators he knew] does have that opportunity.

The desire to be more engaged was a motivating factor for parishioners to become part of the lay leadership teams in many ways. Over time, the constraints of organizational rules and laity's

external commitments provided conflict. Some found that their time was constrained due to their life outside of the church. At the same time, respect for the engagement of laity was paired with a strong awareness of the boundaries between ordained ministry and lay leadership.

Different rituals. Alternative ritual opportunities for providing leadership and additional engagement for the laity emerged in many interviews. For music coordinators and church musicians, there was an understanding that the leadership of the clergy was essential for adherence to liturgical correctness. However, through offering alternative options for prayer and meditation, alongside less formal "praise" services in contemporary styles, there was a point where laypeople within the organizational hierarchy (and voluntary committees) could find space for increased empowerment in organizing religious ritual.

Modernity. Until the last quarter of the twentieth century, there was no specific set of degrees offered for liturgical specialists. The rise of interest in modern constructions of liturgical experience, or "flow" as Bruce spoke about it, appears to have emerged because of the liturgical movement earlier in the century and at the same time as a greater interest in the interconnectedness between body and mind. In speaking with George, who was first ordained in the early 1960s, there seemed to be an informal level of instruction during the process of becoming a priest where the ways in which theology informed liturgical structure alongside historical developments were studied, but the impact of musical selections and interactions were not at that time as key a point of focus as they developed into being. This also aligns with the *Sacrosanctum Consilium* (Paul VI, 1963), which emphasizes the sacred nature of liturgical music and the importance of theologically correct lyrics within religious rites and sacraments. While the Presbyterian interviews did not reflect this same emphasis on right presentation, there was a strong theme of the need to incorporate music in line with the theological orientation of the

church but also with the musical traditions of the local community. Telling me of one instance where a modern song from the larger work of Christian contemporary music was incorporated into a Sunday morning service, Anna emphasized that some music just "wasn't a great match for who we are as a church, or how we [PCUSA] see the relationship between man and God." Donald noted that religious publishing houses often offer services to make sure that the materials being provided are being utilized correctly.

Professional Training and Conferences. Religious guilds and gatherings are a venerable tradition within both Catholic and Protestant churches, but the ways that they function have shifted over the years. Travel is simpler, and thus religious conferences and inter-diocesan gatherings are more universally available within America. The ministerial staff, both lay and clergy, spoke of attending varying conferences and meetings where resources and ideas were offered for new opportunities. Maureen and Gardner both attended church musician conferences, where songs and instrumentations were offered alongside suggestions for other music-based worship opportunities they might bring home to their communities from the larger tradition. And there are national assemblies and theological conferences, where both laity and clergy might attend to interact with others from different parishes or churches and see how they are re-articulating their liturgical practices in light of theological developments and congregant needs. Mark, a member of a guild of church musicians, saw this guild as an important community for sharing resources. Of the participants I spoke to, almost all had attended a national event that sponsored or endorsed educational/experiential gathering outside of their home religious community in the past five years. Jean, who had not, was an older member of the lay staff, a volunteer member of the altar committee and music committee rather than a paid professional.

Ritual Commitment. There were references to external offerings as a way of engaging parishioners in new ways. General Assemblies and gatherings of members of the faith, interfaith and ecumenical gatherings in response to specific social strains, and church-organized trips to sites like Taizé, France, were all referenced as ways in which the organizational leaders worked within the larger structure to revitalize participant life. At the same time, all but one of the interviewees offered a reference to the organizationally sponsored conferences where ritual experiences (often new or slightly revised) were offered in ways so that organizational leaders could participate and afterward learn how to incorporate the rituals into the services of the home congregation. Maureen and Donald both spoke about experiences with Taizé-style prayer and silence as a chance for this type of growth. At the same time, outside life experiences provided religious leaders with other tools to bring back to services for their home congregations. Matthew's experiences with European prayer and silence work led to his desire to offer times to sit in silent prayer; Anna worked with interfaith social justice outreach groups and thus visited churches from which she learned songs and concerns to pray for; and Peter had served at Holden Village as part of their meditative prayer and song retreats and incorporated the lyrical style of music at times in the service when a collecting together of congregational attention was called for. In each of these cases, lessons from the other religious rituals and rites were brought home and discussed, tacitly informing ritual negotiation even if the practices religious leaders engaged in did not directly inform ritual.

Leaders of religious rituals expressed desire to deepen the participatory relationships of parishioners and the divine. This complex emergence and performance of religious life both within ritual settings and without is constrained and shaped in part by local and national contexts. Internal committees had input into ritual guidance but were restricted by formal ritual rules of the

organization. Within these rules, the musical programming and the content of the sermons could be altered and varied enough to reach the individual participants in new ways. Larger adjustments always relied on the institutional boundaries for re-articulation, unless local institutions were to offer alternative services. And even then, there was official guidance regarding the ways that Taizé-style prayer services should adhere to the general guidance of the host institution.

Published Narratives: Organizational Communications

Content analysis of liturgical text and internal organizational documents builds a larger image of the ways in which sensory engagement in ritual life is constructed. I collected interviews with religious officials and former officials who served at multiple institutions, but who were recruited to this project initially due to attendance elsewhere; thus, this content analysis works as a second data point for triangulation. This point includes data taken from institutional guidelines offered through official media presentations and liturgical work from both PCUSA and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, published works referenced by my interviewees, and those published by the organization.

Qualitative analysis identified several themes, repeated in both traditions and across many secondary documents as well as the primary documents that led to the reworked liturgical guides for the Presbyterian and Catholic services. This allowed me to investigate the tones and language used to introduce and explain the recent organizational shifts in rituals and rites to both the ordained and the laity. As this phase of the research focused more on the qualitative aspects of the liturgical texts and internal documents in reference to the interviews conducted with religious officials, it functioned well as a tool for triangulation.

The Data

In the past ten years, both the Roman Catholic Church and the Presbyterian Church USA have undertaken efforts to offer updated guidance for worship. For the Catholic Church, this is the 2011 new English translation of the Missal (ICEL 2010), and for the PCUSA, this is the 2016 officially approved and updated Directory for Worship, which is the third part of the Presbyterian *Book of Church Order* (PCUSA 2017). Both institutional guides offer instruction for proper theological and liturgical construction of religious worship. Documents surrounding these primary elements written by liturgists and scholars, help parishioners, pastors, and priests understand the materials clearly.

Selection for this process was difficult, as there are many internal documents and published books and articles. Academic/theological works referred to in interviews were used as points of analysis. I also narrowed my document selection initially to American national official statements of faith, formal texts of guidance for ritual implementation published for internal reading, and some of the conversation around the changes introduced in both American Catholic and PCUSA ritual formations between 2011 and 2016 in their newly issued guides to ritual structure and order. I then expanded my sample to 50 supporting documents that addressed the body, ritual, and liturgy on the websites of the organizations in question or were referenced in the books and articles I located. In this analysis, combining the sources referenced by interviewees with the primary liturgical orders of service for each organization and a selection of internal documents for different layers of membership, I used 129 separate publications. Internal theological and liturgical consistencies emerged through repetition, although points of debate emerged and were addressed within the larger theological tradition. I believe that the level of

saturation emerged in part from my focus on discussion surrounding the primary rituals of worship at each organization.

There are some limitations in this approach. These documents are partly produced for a specialized audience, and as such, while electronic coding was especially helpful in identifying themes that emerged first in the internal documents and materials produced for parishioner and lay leader reading, I found myself having to seek advice and additional readings that fall outside the content analysis to verify my understandings. Fortunately, Dedoose electronic software allowed for some auto-coding and was helpful after the first read-through. I was able to use Dedoose for coding filters, but I believe that a further, deeper look at the quantitative analysis of the published texts used as teaching materials for new priests and ministers would be useful. Beyond that, there was no way in this timeframe to establish intercoder reliability aside from the use of support software.

In relation to statements made by other participants regarding their experiences in religious life, it is apparent that institutional themes iterated in the documents being made publicly available are touchpoints for clergy and laity alike. However, after combining interviews and content analysis, the efficacy of these institutional themes regarding embodied practices appears to be articulated differently by those who occupy each role in both traditions. I also found that the texts being published for both laity and clergy to help to re-articulate and reframe ritual in participative action signal awareness of these themes but reframe them. In the section below, I address the italicized themes that emerged from the content analysis. I then went back to the interviews to verify.

Themes

Ritual, within religious organizations, is built on a foundation of theological understanding. Understanding this link is essential to the ways official documents cope with the work of reframing or reintroducing religious rituals. The Presbyterian Church is structured as an electorate, with an assembly of elders who reach decisions debated in committees. One interviewee argued that "the US government is modeled after the Presbyterian Church," where there are subcommittees and votes and a general respect for both ministers who are called and ordained and members of the larger community of faith who are not. As such, many of the internal documents were regarding proposed changes and discussion of approvals and modifications. The Catholic church is ritually organized around seven sacraments including the rites of transubstantiation, which occur within the central rites of the mass. The ultimate authority rests with the Pope and in Rome, with a political organization reminiscent of late medieval European monarchies. The Roman Missal, a guide to how rites and sacraments should be conducted, is the ultimate guide to the sacraments in the Roman Catholic tradition. However, with the allowances in Vatican II for the use of local language for conducting sacred rites, a recent revisiting of the Roman Missal is a "new translation," shifted to the structure of the rites but maintained orthodoxy with the original. Each of the themes that emerged here is framed by these understandings.

PCUSA and the Roman Catholic Church have issued new guidelines in the past two decades for understanding the shifts in ritual life. But the structure of the organization, and the understanding of the relationship between the divine, ritual, and hierarchy, affects the ways each tradition frames these understandings. Ultimately, the institutions themselves have not changed,

but have re-articulated (or retranslated) a key element of ritual life. The themes below, aside from the first two theological ones, are found across both traditions in interviews.

(Protestant) Liturgical Theology. The relationship between liturgical structure and theology is firmly respected in the Presbyterian tradition. Within the PCUSA, the responsibility of the ordained is to be ritually flexible and capable, serving as "practical liturgical theologian(s)" (MidCouncil Ministries 2016). Emphasis on the ability for ordained and ruling elders to be cognizant of the dialogic nature of the interplay of theology and liturgy is essential in multiple texts. A familiarity with this interrelationship is inherently necessary for ritual leadership among both the ordained and the laity who hold coordinator roles. Several of the documents surrounding the new Directory for Worship emphasize the need for ritual, and religious celebrants can adapt to their current cultural settings and immediate neighborhood needs while still adhering to the theological truths of the tradition (Lieberman and Wiley 2016).

(Presbyterian) Organization. Between the initial discussion of a need to revise and revisit the directory and the definitive version, more than three years passed. This is in part due to the democratic nature of the denomination. The proposal for modifications to the Directory for Worship was submitted and discussed with many of the elder members of the Presbytery in smaller regional meetings, then submitted to national committees on liturgy and theology who then revised and approved it to be distributed at the 222nd General Assembly for an assembly-wide vote. This organizational system, which puts the power of religious coordination and ritualization in the hands of the members of the church in good standing, echoes the fundamental theological basis for the Presbyterian faith, but also shows the initiative and roles of ordained and theologically trained individuals (ruling elders and teaching elders) at the administrative and ministerial levels.

(Catholic) Liturgical Theology. The Vatican holds ultimate authority in the interpretation of the will and word of God within the Roman Catholic Church. Edicts are thus issued by papal leadership that guide liturgical practices that fall outside of the missal, like the sacred music that is part of the ritual but not as stringently proscribed. The *Sacrosanctum Consilium* is the most recent papal edict, directing attention to all aspects of song and praise as worship and highlighting the importance of right words to direct right thought. The 50th anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Consilium* resulted in a reiteration of the importance of this text by the Vatican. The Vatican Committee on Divine Worship issued new examples in this letter to the faithful, emphasizing the sacred nature of the rites and sacraments which states that:

> The Sacred Liturgy is of utmost importance in the life of Catholics because in and through it we make present and participate in the Paschal Mystery of Christ, and in so doing we are incorporated into this "Mystery of Faith" for our redemption and the continued building up of the Church as "one body, one spirit in Christ" (Eucharistic Prayer III). (Committee on Divine Worship 2013: 1).

As such, all liturgical elements from hymnody to bodily motion must correctly reflect the theological orientation of the Church. The new English translation of the Missal introduced new interpretations in ritual form and understanding, translated through theological guidance from Rome. The essential argument in the *Sacrosanctum* is that "no person, even if he be a priest, may add, remove, or change anything in the liturgy on his own authority (Paul VI, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* 22)," and the new translation of the Missal simply clarifies the understandings of the sacred held therein. Alongside Pope John Paul II's theological understandings of the body in ritual and society, the *Sacrosanctum* appeared to be one of the key theological elements for shaping understanding of ritual and embodied worship.

(Catholic) Organization. The Pope is the ultimate authority in the Roman Catholic Church, served and supported by cardinals and councils. Conversations between clergy who serve in the higher echelons of the church are always documented and sometimes made public.

One article published in 2016 brought to my attention by an interviewee included copies of letters documenting disagreement between the then-Cardinal Ratzinger and the liturgist Farnes regarding *In the Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ratzinger's theological examination of liturgical structure and divine meaning. While it was well received, his work:

> . . . did not meet a lot of acceptance from "professional" liturgists and those who teach liturgical studies at many universities. In particular, Cardinal Ratzinger's support for the tradition of celebrating the Eucharist *ad orientem* met with a lot of disagreement (O'Donoghue 2012: 75).

The letters documented there centered around the bodily positioning of priests and parishioners in relation to the altar during the sacrament of transubstantiation and highlight the vital importance of bodily performance and positioning in the Catholic Sacraments. The meaning behind bodily positioning, and its shifting position in historical and contemporary understanding, serves as one example of a larger debate about the ways in which seemingly simple elements of ritual performance become an inherently potent part of religious life (Carroll 2007, Mullins 2012). The new English translation of the Missal was issued during the papacy of Benedict XVI, who was once Cardinal Ratzinger, although the work on this newer translation and understanding of the sacred rites in the local language was in the works for quite some time.

Difficult Emotions. Grief, anger, and loss all are emotions that ritual and prayer addressed in both traditions. In times of strain and difficulty, both traditions also recognized religious ritual observations outside of the formal institutional structures that practitioners also needed guidance for. Death and illness appeared as potential indicators for ministerial needs and community support. Specific guidelines are established for clergy ministering to the sick. Sacred rituals are outlined for new life changes such as birth, marriage, and confirmation of faith in each tradition as well. The sacrament of reconciliation also aligns with the need to ritually navigate challenging times, offering tangible acts of faith to demonstrate submission to and remorse for inappropriate

actions. It should be noted that at times, the navigation of difficult emotions must be done by entire local populations. For example, the PCUSA Office of Theology and Worship offers a ritual that aids in the severing of ties between a church and the denomination and another to help with supporting the growth of a new ministry or outreach.

Sacred Ritual. Ritualization of life changes at a collective level are solemnized through the rites and/or sacraments. Thus, ritual guidance regarding role entry and exit serves as a key focus of many internal documents. Altar adornments and the prescription of bodily postures to facilitate the transmission of messages and engage communal worship of the sacred in ritual performance emphasize the symbolic meanings of each item and action. Documents targeting lay church professionals such as music coordinators highlight the ways communal recitations and audience experiences should impact the worshiper-participant. The need for music and adornments to clearly reflect the sacred year, the importance of communal recitations, and bodily rites of communion are all part of the central participatory elements of religious life. Texts and documents for those who wish to assist clergy in producing these rituals emphasize these elements in both traditions at the lay level.

Clergy and Ordination. The importance of ordained leadership is emphasized in the ways that clergy and laity are trained and instructed. Reviewing examinations for entering the Presbyterian ministry, guidance offered to church deacons and elders, and syllabi for the liturgical courses offered at several of the divinity schools run by the Presbyterian and Catholic faiths led to a clear organizational iteration of the formal meanings of shared symbolic actions, words, and objects. The importance of posture and garments in both traditions highlighted the ways in which the very bodies of leadership were a part of the message, formally instructed in the tradition. However, documents recognized as well the importance of accommodating cultural

variances and the need to cater to local communities. A deeper theological understanding of the motivations behind bodily postures and the structure of rites and rituals is seen as necessary, built through texts and courses, evaluated through distinct types of church-prescribed examinations. The goal appears to be a thorough intellectual and bodily adaptation to the needs and motivations of the institution, potentially to the degree of formalizing an embodied ordained habitus.

Sacred Embodiment. The theological turn to the body echoing common themes in modern to late-modern philosophy was also demonstrated in the liturgical texts. An emphasis on positioning and performance seems to in part tie into an understanding that actions are important. Texts instructing ritual coordinators (both clergy and lay-folk) in the proper conduct of ritual in the Roman Catholic tradition have strong sets of instruction regarding bodily positioning. Similarly, the Presbyterian tradition's texts regarding the faith are foundationally based on this premise. The 2016 PCUSA Directory states:

> God's gifts of Word and Sacrament establish and equip the Church as the body of Christ in the world. The mission of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church flows from Baptism, is nourished at Lord's Supper, and serves to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to all. In the same way, the Church's ministry emerges from the font, arises from the table, and takes its shape from the Word of the Lord (Presbyterian Mission Agency Board 2016:4).

The importance of positioning and the intentional structuring of religious worship contribute to establishing the ritual formula congregants are entrained with. A congregational confession of faith and shared understanding of the importance of the rite of Baptism is conveyed through these liturgical guides and the rituals they describe in both theological and physical ways.

Bodily Differences The PCUSA Directory contains less bodily performative direction than found in the Missal, both cases highlight the importance of posture and bodily positioning. One key example of this is the importance of words and posture in the rite of physical (Catholic) or spiritual (Presbyterian) transubstantiation. Guidance as to the ways that sacred word should be

read, song should be sung, and prayers should be corporally or separately recited is provided by each organization, although there is some leeway for local implementation of liturgical guidance. Recognition of the importance of prayers and worship outside of the traditions as individual and collective practice seemed to focus on the importance of habitual and ritual affirmations of faith throughout daily life.

Biological Sciences. Pope Francis addresses the relationship between religion and science in the Catholic tradition and the responsibility placed on the Church and humanity as custodians of this earth in his writ *Laudato Si* (2015). This is only one example of the shift in the understanding of the relationship between nature and the divine (Gautier et al 2017). The complex shift in the relationship between the soul, mind, and body (Zimmer 2003) navigated and triggered by modern neurological sciences is reflected in the 2011 translation of the Roman Catholic Missal, which has shifted the conversation about the relationship between soul and body in new ways. Body becomes the term referring to human flesh as well as the body of Christ. This has been argued to be reflective of the larger scientific shift in understanding of the relationship between the mind, the body, and the soul (Mullins 2012). Theologians have addressed the relationship between the body and the soul in new ways, understanding that while the body in Catholicism has never been the same as the body within Protestant traditions (Carroll 2007), theological discussions spurred on by neurological developments have led to a new articulation of the understanding of the relationship between the body and the soul (Mullins 2012). The relationship between science and faith within the Presbyterian Church is found enacted through interfaith ecological interests. For example, in 2017, the church offered funding to a Presbyterian secondary school in New Mexico to develop a program exploring the ecological sciences and their relationship directly to the teachings of faith. The Presbyterian Ministry statement on the

environment highlights how "God's work in creation is too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated. Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore" (www.presbyterianmission.org/ 2017).

Social Science. The texts identified as essential for understanding liturgy by study participants were also heavily reflective of the scientific shifts in understanding the relationship between the soul and enfleshed daily life. Catholic and Protestant Christian traditions have liturgical and theological guidelines for understanding the complex scientific discoveries around the nature of human life. Specifically, texts referenced the social sciences to examine how this engagement takes place. Recommended by a Catholic liturgist I interviewed, Morrill's published examination of Catholic embodied theology and liturgy incorporates a strong tie to the social sciences as a gateway for understanding (1999). At the same time, for early academic-track ministry students in (predominantly) Protestant traditions, publications such as *Foundations in Ritual Studies* highlight some of the direct ways the social sciences and humanities shape understandings and formations of ritual (Bradshaw and Melloh 2007).

Local Cultural Particularity. Adaptation to local political and cultural elements is a necessity for an organization to stay relevant. The PCUSA Directory for Worship reissued in 2016 encompassed in "The Theology of Christian Worship" a section clearly addressing "Language, Symbols, and Culture" (1.03) as well as a study guide issued alongside the 2016 directory. This is a shift from its earlier formation, wherein the "Dynamics of Christian Worship" separated the "Language of Worship" from the "Responsibility and Accountability for Worship" with no direct reference to culture as a mediating effect (Presbyterian Mission and Agency Board 2016). The new translation of the Roman Catholic Missal, and the theological development that led to this, was also a response to cultural changes (Akin 2011). An understanding of myth and

narrative in ritual reminiscent of Campbell as well as Turner and Geertz played a role in a book co-authored by a pair of Lutheran and Catholic theologians and liturgists, echoing Van Genep's understandings of ritual as intrinsic to rites of passage, but also to acts of reconciliation (Anderson and Foley 1998), and in an article essaying the religious need for ritual that uses social scientific explanations for the underlying human drive for ritualization.

Individual religious leaders are guided by the organizational articulations of theology and liturgical practice. Connections are refreshed through publications, podcasts, conferences, congresses, and conclaves that aid in reaffirming or repositioning the musicians, clergy, deacons, and elders. However, there were times that this articulation did not quite succeed to address problems in their entirety, or effectively translate and re-articulate ritual for the local communities. Shifts in the theological and liturgical realms sat poorly with some church members because it was too new or too popular, while other older members missed the glamour of the Latin mass. Each local church or parish had to find its own culturally specific way of understanding and enacting the rituals and embodied performances prescribed in the texts, and at times there was difficulty in effectively coordinating rituals that led to moments of ritual mis-articulations.

Organizations in Context: Statistical Narratives

The National Congregations Study (NCS) is a consistent but not longitudinal multiwave congregation-focused study that samples all the American religious traditions and asks the same questions across denominations and faiths (http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/). Variables measuring bodily practices in worship services, such as the raising of hands, meditation, and participation through dance and music, are a part of the survey, although not the primary thrust of the study (Chaves and Eagle 2015). Part of the study focuses on questions about directly

observable elements of the most recent service, making data about physical practices measurable and empirically reportable (Chaves Et al. 1999:465). Physical actions of worship are often analyzed with Pentecostal practices (Baker 2010, Inbody 2015) and practices within predominantly nonwhite congregations (Tavory and Winchester 2012), but this survey set allows for an examination of the US landscape on a tradition-to-tradition basis. To this date, the NCS has not been examined specifically for bodily engagement in Catholic and Protestant nonevangelical American Christian traditions, but larger examinations of performative worship have included some data on actions, particularly musical, in religious service (Chaves and Anderson 2014, Chaves Et al. 2015). In this section, I identify the variables in the cumulative three-wave dataset most useful for this work of triangulation. These variables, in relation to their larger sensory interpretive frames, provide another set of insights into ways participatory religious ritual is shifting, as reflected in the institutional and individual themes emerging in the prior sections.

The Data

The NCS involves in-depth interviews with religious or congregational leaders about issues ranging from staffing and budget to outreach projects and elements of the last main worship service offered at the institution. Survey waves have been collected in 1998, 2006, and 2011. A new set of data is being collected for a fourth wave in 2018. The survey is administered by NORC (www.norc.org 2017) and analyzed by a team led by Dr. Mark Chaves. The study contains consistent questions regarding a lot of the religious practices that involve music, call and response, and hand-holding. The third wave featured an emphasis on Latinx religious life in America, so relevant additional questions and an oversampling to collect a statistically significant sample were introduced. Anonymized data from the first three waves collected to date

are publicly available and is used in a considerable number of studies, although none looking explicitly at embodied and sensory life.

There are some limitations in focusing on the NCS dataset. Congregations sampled are partly located through successful survey responses in the General Society Survey (GSS) and filtered from there, and additional religious institutions are identified through phone book listings (Chaves Et al. 1999). Some of the religious demographics may also be influenced by the wave three focus on Hispanic respondents due to Pew funding (Chaves and Anderson 2014). Additionally, some of the smaller religious traditions did not have a large enough response rate for accurate analysis. However, in general, this survey series is well sampled and representative of the diverse religious organizations that compose the American landscape.

The NCS, in each wave, had an even ratio of Presbyterian/Reformed and Catholic respondent sets. The combined three waves to date included 4,071 separate congregations, initially identified through a set of GSS questions administered by NORC, although there was some oversampling of the Latinx population in the most recent wave (Chaves and Eagle 2015). Data from each wave was analyzed through both regression analyses and simpler cross-tabulations with a lambda, and the most significant findings were overall patterns that echoed my findings and year-by-year comparisons. Even when pared down to simply the PCUSA and CATH variables within DENCODE, there was no real indicated relationship in regression analyses. The data is a small enough sample (100 CATH, 79 PCUSA give or take per wave) that a comparison of the data from these two institutions reveals a lot about reported change over time.

The study results from the last wave offered discussion of some of the ways in which a general increase in bodily engagement through music and other actions was understood (Chaves

and Anderson 2014). Looking at cross-tabulated data, they noted some ways that local congregations have made changes to music and use of technology in an attempt to provide a more modern and engaging service. In part, this verifies that tendencies toward a more bodily engaging worship style are more common. My data analysis here seeks to build a larger argument out of the evidence.

In this survey, respondents in the beginning focused specifically on the most recent service offered by the church. Treating the last service as an empirical snapshot aided in increasing reliability of responses. I treat these snapshots literally and assume that while they may not be entirely representational, they do reflect larger denominational trends and tendencies. Ultimately, I sort the data on bodily themes to shed light on the organizational articulation that can be documented in action. While the NCS did not initially seek to document the issues I am investigating, there is utility in this approach. This use of quantitative data in a mixed-methods analysis draws meaning from surveys beyond their initial points of analysis, allowing for creative and novel methods of data exploration (Small 2011).

The Themes

In this survey set, the sensory and the embodied were inextricably interlinked. As observed in prior chapters, the bodily experiences of religious rituals register somatically. As such, I identified these bodily moments through the lenses of bodily proxemics, bodily performance, sound, silence, affective exhortations, and charismatic practices. I also looked at some of the flexible alternative articulations of ritual offered in order to address attrition, which address bodily performance differently and have larger national trends. Each of the themes I assigned variables to emerged from my discussion in prior sections and chapters of bodily and sensory ritual. Following my convention, I identify themes using italics at the beginning of the

section. In the tables associated with some themes, unless otherwise noted, I used a collapsed dataset including responses from all three waves of the NCS.

Bodily proxemics indicate levels of physical proximity or closeness, including physical contact with other congregants during the religious ritual itself. As discussed in the prior chapters, bodily co-presence is often a generator of high impact for religious ritual participants. There were two questions: "Was there a time during the service in which people in the congregation greeted each other by shaking hands or some other way? (GREET)" and "Did people join hands at any point during the service, such as during a prayer or at other moments? (JOINHNDS)," which both address times when the congregation is instructed to physically acknowledge the people around them through bodily and proximal interaction. However, there were over 1,000 non-responses to join hands, as it was not a question asked in the first wave of the study. There was a less than 15 percent chance, in both Presbyterian and Catholic services, wherein individuals did not, in fact, greet each other at some part of the service. It appears commonplace to establish a sense of participant connection to the local community through individual greetings and handshakes.

Bodily performance is indicated through dancing and movement, either spontaneous or planned. Questions asking about it in the most recent service included "Did any adults jump, shout, or dance spontaneously during this service? (JUMP)" and "Did anyone besides the leader raise their hands in praise during the service? (RAISEHND)." Across the board, religious services offer musical opportunities for congregational participation in fairly uniform and universal numbers (96 percent of all services have music in some form). There is a tendency to have at least a few congregational recitations or readings or confessions, although it is less common than the presence of music. However, there is a noted pattern in Roman Catholic (and

Greek Orthodox) churches to use incense in services to offer an additional stimulation of the senses, although that occurs in less than 10 percent of the Catholic services discussed in the interviews.

Table one suggests that hand-raising occurs in almost half of all Catholic churches, but less than a third of all Presbyterian ones. The use of distributed materials, in the form of an order of service or missal or hymnal that provides guidance to the ritual, is also present in more than 90 percent of all Catholic and Presbyterian services, although the tendency to use projectors and other types of technology is more common in Pentecostal and Other Evangelical Christian traditions. This holding of printed materials may potentially signal to participants the differences in ritual by not freeing hands and arms for bodily participation. While the raising of hands in the service was not uncommon in any of the traditions, it is notable that the Roman Catholic tradition engages the bodily and sensory participation of the population in this way in almost half of the services investigated.

Table 1. Bodily Performance—Hand Raising

DENCODE3	OVERALL PERCENTAGE
Roman Catholic	47.6
Presbyterian or Reformed	28.4
Episcopal Church	29.1
Lutheran	15.6
Methodist	46.2
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	36.1
Pentecostal	97.8
Baptist	70.2
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	52.7
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	71.5

Table two shows rising percentages in all *but* the Pentecostal traditions, with some statistical significance. It is indicative of increasing bodily engagement or a sampling error. It is, in either regard, worth thinking about as a potential indication of a larger trend in American religious life, as reported by Chaves and Anderson (2014). While the hand-raising is less full-body participation, there is a strong tie between both sets of action and voluntary bodily engagement being treated as a norm. Data would not likely be reported in cases where there was a single outlier or set of outliers within the congregation, as the survey set is looking at wider congregational responses. As such, then, these congregations that either had strongly prescribed ritualized actions or that strongly avoided highly performative ritual actions have seen an increase in spontaneous action.

Table 2. Bodily Performance—Jumping or Dancing Spontaneously, Change over Time

DENCODE3	OVERALL PERCENTAGE	1998*	2006	2015*
Roman Catholic	2.1	1.6	1.6	3.1
Presbyterian or Reformed	6.1	3.9	1.2	15.7
Episcopal Church	.0	0	0	3.8
Methodist	12	4.5	13.2	19.1
Lutheran	1.5	1.0	0	4.1
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	13.0	.9	15.3	16
Baptist	30.3	22.0	31.7	37.4
Pentecostal	67.7	69.3	69.6	65.1
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	13.2	11.1	11.6	17.0
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	36	63.0	31.6	42.4
*Weak relationship indicated by Lambda ranging from 10 to 20 percent, with significance of .002				

Performance incorporated a measure from questions that asked if offerings that were nontraditional had occurred at an institution in the past year, including several that measured moments of bodily performance: "Within the past 12 months, was an acting skit or play performed by teens or adults at any worship service of your congregation? (EVERSKIT)." Less than a quarter of institutions reported skits in their worship services, and the results were not statistically significant. I also looked at testimony, as it was asked if in the past year parishioners had the chance to TESTIFY, or speak of their own religious experiences at a service, another form of formal performance. Across the board, more than 30 percent of all religious organizations identified the opportunity to testify as a feature of a religious service.

Sound-making indicates ways the congregation is encouraged to make sounds together. Singing in church appears to be universal in these congregations. First, I look at the question of whether there was singing by the congregation at the service (SINGING). This consideration, alongside the earlier reports of musical performers and the number of choristers (compared to average congregation sizes), feeds into an understanding of the ways in which the congregants participate musically. Song was, of course, almost universal, but almost 10 percent of each set of services (CATH and PCUSA) did not feature singing in their last service. I also look at the question "Did the people speak or read or recite something together at any point? (CONGREAD)" in this context, as mass recitation generates a sense of proximity generated through sound and unison that engenders a sense of togetherness like that of singing. Less than 25 percent of the Catholic and less than 30 percent of the Presbyterian respondents did not report congregational recitation, as noted in the data report published by Chaves Et al. (2014)

Silence, the direct opposition of singing, is another auditory sensory theme. Silence in this context could include reflective prayer, meditation, or the practice of silence as an

observation of moments of loss or respect. Another moment of auditory simulation, the absence of sound became a feature of analysis. While there was no statistical significance due to differences in sample size, the patterns still reflect the organizational guidelines for liturgical offerings. As can be noted in table three, the near universality of silent prayer or meditation in the Catholic tradition is worth noting in comparison to other traditions. Most particularly, Pentecostal and conservative Christian traditions that focus on the sacred nature of sound and auditory communication with and of the divine, report the least silence in their last service.

Table 3. Silence

DENCODE3	OVERALL PERCENTAGE*
Roman Catholic	96.5
Presbyterian or Reformed	87.1
Episcopal Church	89.6
Methodist	84.4
Lutheran	85.7
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	84.7
Baptist	72.1
Pentecostal	65.4
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	55.9
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	71.3
	*Data was not collected in 2015 wave

Affective exhortations (AFEX) include applause (APPLAUSE) and the shouting of "amen" (AMEN). Both of those noise-making moments are used to indicate agreement or strong agreement with a sentiment, thought, or emotion. While these are bodily indicators of experiential significance, each are frequently seen as less crucial elements of congregational worship and life. In table 4, the frequency of "amen" being shouted is just under forty percent for each tradition, which significantly lower than the more bodily traditions. Both applause and "amen" in the congregation had similar statistics, again highlighting the ways in which religious

ritual engages outbursts of participation beyond the written guidelines for the services. While it was most likely for Baptists and Pentecostals to shout and applaud, the Catholic and Presbyterian traditions were more likely to do so than Lutheran or Episcopal traditions, although they are comparatively conservative bodily.

Table 4. Amen

DENCODE3	OVERALL PERCENTAGE
Roman Catholic	38.6
Presbyterian or Reformed	37.7
Episcopal Church	26.2
Methodist	56.7
Lutheran	17.8
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	39.2
Baptist	89.5
Pentecostal	93.0
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	70.2
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	77.2

Charisma Table five lumps together a set of practices often identified as charismatic in nature. The charismatic Christian tradition exists both within and beyond denominational boundaries. There are charismatic Lutherans and Catholics, in the same way that many Evangelical churches incorporate charismatic and heavily bodily practices. These practices engage the bodies and emotions of faithful adherents, offering opportunities for prayer through the laying on of hands, speaking in tongues, and other engagements with lived bodily faith. Charismatic practices did not align with the popular mythos about Presbyterian and Catholic traditions. This echoes to some degree Carroll's (2007) argument about the ways in which the Protestant imaginary has shaped understanding of Catholicism. In reports of aspects of religious life most often aligned with understandings of evangelicals and Pentecostals, such as the

speaking in tongues and shouting of "amen," finding similar percentages of Catholics and Baptists engaging in charismatic Christian acts is unsurprising to scholars but is statistically significant and should be noted. Aside from the question about glossolalia, these questions were limited, but they do indicate willingness to engage with embodied religious practices.

Table 5. Charismatic Practices

DENCODE3	In the past 12 months, did people speak in tongues at any service?	In the past 12 months, did any service include praying over or laying on of hands (1998 only)?
Roman Catholic	17.4%	63.6%
Presbyterian or Reformed	5.1%	35.0%
Episcopal Church	9.7%	80.7%
Methodist	11.3%	60.8%
Lutheran	2.7%	44.5%
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	8.6%	26.9%
Baptist	16.8%	58.7%
Pentecostal	90.1%	94.4%
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	13.3%	46.5%
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	39.0%	69.1%

Table six explores the differing rituals also offered at each of the traditions. In this case, there was a lambda that indicated some statistical significance. The most liturgically heavy traditions offer opportunities for less formality in alternative worship services as well as musical offerings that differ from the traditional. Most of the rest of the variance in religious offerings was linguistic in nature—for example, services in Spanish or Polish were two options. While the

Catholic churches offered services with varying types of music, they were less likely to offer more informal services, reflecting the theological understanding of the sacred nature of the rituals and rites contained in the Missal. The Presbyterian traditions were equally likely to offer musical variance and variance in formality, although moderately less likely than the other Protestant traditions. It is worth noting that the religious traditions that are essentially less formal are slightly less likely across the board to offer different music or levels of formality in their other service offerings. The incorporation of dance and music, across the board, also struck me as cultural in nature. The recognition of liturgical dance ties in with the larger liturgical movement as well as feminist theological discussions of prayer and motion (Abraham and Procario-Folely 2009). The question of teen participation was also striking, as there was a marked difference between the Catholic, Protestant (Methodist, Lutheran, Presbyterian), and other Christian traditions in the level of engagement teens had in services.

Table 6. Different Rituals

	Music*	Formality*
Roman Catholic	41.9%	15.4%
Presbyterian or Reformed	32%	36.0%
Episcopal Church	50%	50%
Methodist	54.4%	54.4%
Lutheran	52.1%	47.8%
Other mainline or liberal Protestant	38.4%	46.1%
Baptist	17.4%	23.8%
Pentecostal	12.5%	14.5%
Other conservative, evangelical, or sectarian Protestant	12.8%	21.4%
Other Christian, not elsewhere classified	13.5%	18.7%
*Extremely weak lambda (<10) with high significance (~45%)		

Given my focus on the bodily and embodied, the things that I was most interested in measuring were perhaps the most poorly coded. Questions about services of healing and the

laying on of hands code just as easily to the sacrament of the ministry to the sick as they do to the holiness movement practices of healing through physical contact and prayer, for example. On the other hand, the Pentecostal, conservative, evangelical, and sectarian congregations less frequently identified a time for silent prayer or meditation, although within the services there are indeed times that could be labeled as such. I found this striking and potentially indicative of institutional congruence on issues or re-articulations in the responses themselves (Chaves 2010).

Analysis

In each of these data sets, the local church performance is articulating with the larger national organizational goals. While there are larger theological guidelines driving both of these two comparatively formal religious traditions, they also each adapt to the national and local cultures in which they are embedded and show signs of offering opportunities for embodied engagement that have emerged from other traditions in the surrounding area.

My interview participants reflected an awareness of their theological, liturgical, and local political climates. Changes to structure, hymns, or even the tenor of sermons or song selections were at times challenged and recognized. Interviewee's phrasing and understanding of ritual structure and order clearly repeated themes identified in liturgical texts and the guides to the Missal and Presbyterian order of worship. This increasing formalization of liturgical musical performance and coordination is a microcosm of the increasing formalization of many other career tracks, ranging from the establishment of the MBA to specialized degrees in Urban Planning (Brown 2001), reflecting the interplay between local agents and institutional re-articulation in cultural context.

In the context of the new Directory for Worship and new translation of the Missal, the lay and ordained people all had to reorient some of their bodily and sonic participations. From self to

spirit, the translation of the Missal shifted the understanding of individual nature to something more complex. Strongly grounded in the corporeal community of faith for the Roman Catholics, the translation clarified some of the ways in which the spirit and the form related to each other while strengthening the emphasis on the importance of the community of faith. The Directory for Worship also focused on strengthening the community in a time of change, offering new guidance for services that adapt to local cultural needs and reaffirm communal memberships through liturgical practices. Both traditions are striving to articulate the relationship between theology and science liturgically.

This was where themes relating to articulative work emerged. Adaptation was a process, identified abstractly or discussed indirectly in texts and interviews. The new English translation of the Missal, with the drastic liturgical change to "spirit" led to individual moments of mis-articulation for clergy and laity before they became accustomed to the newer tradition. At times, those who had religious identity predating Vatican II argued still for the earlier articulation because "a traditional Latin service . . . feels more like what I grew up with." Presbyterian examples were a lot less uniform, but there were those who harkened back to older orders of service.

The Presbyterian church in America has faced some difficulties relating to theological understandings of sexuality, marriage, and leadership. From this, the PCUSA was formed and then later more churches opted to leave the denomination. One element that emerged in both interviews and discussions regarding this was the idea that there could be times of extreme conflict. There had been a schism a while back, one elder explained, during which "we lost some member institutions but merged with others based on our shared identification of ideals." The office of Theology and Worship assembled Bible passages, along with hymns, prayers, and

liturgy, for each stage of the church-level debate about whether to remain or not. There are liturgical provisions for supporting conflict mediators and for a peaceful separation if no other solution can be found. Built on the theological underpinnings of Presbyterian faith, they establish a safe outlet for grief and reincorporation of the communities of believers involved. One passage states:

> There are times when pilgrims' paths diverge
> though we continue to walk in The Way. … c
> Yet we remain confident of our call to serve separately
> for the good of God's reign in Christ Jesus. (Office of Theology and Worship 2)

There is a parallel between the tearing of the body of Christ and the rending of the community of believers, and that although "we know our witness to the world is not served by rancorous fighting and that this parting of the ways might be for the best, it still hurts (ibid)." Giving a name to the experience and recognizing its impact is an elemental part of each of the aspects of ritual offered. Thus, the national structure provides a shape and language for dealing with re-articulations and even articulating moments of complete breakage so that the rest of the community of faith may continue to articulate together.

Articulation is harder to examine in the context of the National Congregations Survey dataset, as there is no opportunity to further query the institutions in question. However, the survey does provide information about the ways in which bodily changes in religious liturgical engagement can be culturally shaped across traditions. In addition, the evidence points to the need to offer alternative or supplemental types of religious services to engage attendees in a way that differs from the more "contemporary Christian" musical and informal ritual practices. Again, this is a sign of work to re-articulate on the part of the national institution or the local organizations.

These three different data points highlight some of the ways multi-sited organizations such as denominations are analytically useful as a locus through which ritual articulation work occurs. As products, the larger organizational documents that frame the work of local churches and parishes, reflect some of the ways in which the individual leaders and official documents interact to develop local articulations of faith. This was evident in both surveys and interviews, where the local communities clearly echo the traditions and understandings of their organizational affiliations. Leaders are conscious of the ways in which local culture and contexts shape the rituals they offer, but the rituals themselves are formally constrained by the denomination. In gatherings and conferences, as well as in formal education, the two faiths work with and provide materials for local articulative work. This intersecting and overlapping system of checks and balances echoes Riis and Woodhead's (2010) understandings of religious emotion, but it also highlights some of the ways that the bodily (and thus the sensory) are utilized in this articulative work. Ultimately, while some of the questions posted to the ritual coordinators were not explicitly about intentional structuration of the senses, the bodily performances translated into sensory moments and can thus be understood even through survey sets as shaping experiences beyond the bodily.

CHAPTER SIX

RITUAL MIS-ARTICULATIONS

In the last three chapters, I examined varying types of embodied ritual articulations. Individuals experienced successful rituals when the interactions generated emotional energy, ritual coordinators worked to make religious experiences relevant across traditions yet also relevant within their local churches and communities. Organizational policies and theologies worked to maintain theological coherence through changing religious services and liturgical understandings. However, I also briefly touched on moments of dissonance in ritual experience for participants and coordinators. While I briefly covered some moments of mis-articulation, they were not the primary focus of the last three chapters. This chapter seeks to develop a pragmatic understanding of ritual mis-articulations in all their forms by directly incorporating micro-, meso-, and macro- level data in order to examine the ways in which organizational articulation work creates and moderates ritual experiences.

Sensory and embodied experiences often are the angles through which narratives of dissatisfaction or discomfort emerged. Inchoate, uncomfortable experiences were tacitly referenced through the sensory symptoms they engendered. Local ritual coordinators, clergy, and laity spoke of embodied experiences and sensory registrations to explain both the moments they had to work the hardest to make a ritual effective and the times when adjustment of habitus was most difficult. Organizational repositioning in times of ritual mis-articulations or inefficacies

emerged through publications and data regarding supplemental services. But, what does ritual mis-articulation really mean?

In this chapter, data from each wave of my study are used to build a model of religious mis-articulations. I typify the ways in which bodily and sensory data contribute to managing ritual efficacies from each element of ritual composition. I first put forth a model for the ways mis-articulations can be visualized, building from individual, local community, and national organizational elements of articulation. Generating a typology of points of interaction and re-articulation helps build a scaffold on which re-articulations may be supported. There are different periods of duration, and the model includes separate discussion of long-term and short-term mis-articulations. Ethnographic work with local communities and individual participants provided additional evidence for how work is done to redress these mis-articulations at these two levels. As such, I build from the typology of mis-articulation to identify distinct levels and magnitudes of mis-articulation and potential methods of redress. The prior chapters examine the individual and local organizational perceptions and understandings of ritual failures and mis-articulations, supplemented with data from organizational documentation. Identification of points of potential re-articulation emerged and is further explored in this chapter. After developing my model, I will discuss the ways in which rituals may be mis-articulated but impactful and the ways in which ritual is not the final measure of religious experience.

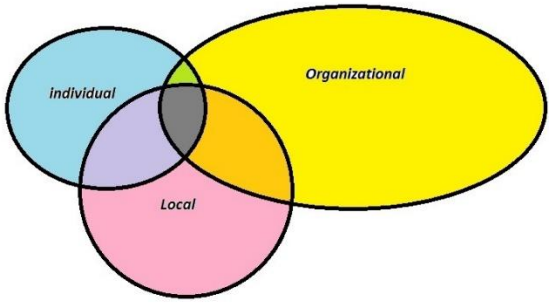
Mis-Articulating Elements

Ritual articulation happens at multiple levels. Think of the individual, local-level church or community, and national-level organizations as interacting elements with distinct characteristics, articulating with each other much like a bicycle chain requires interaction with pedals and gears to propel the bicycle forward. Local, in this dissertation, refers to a community,

church, or gathering that shares a physically bounded space. I use the term organization to refer to the national groups which have the liturgical authority to provide structured guidance for rituals. I opt for this term, in part, because there are larger international institutions or communities of faith which share common points of worship and often a degree of theological/theological authority which work to help set the agendas that national-level organizations like the USCCB work to adapt to rituals within American Catholicism. My model focuses on sensory data as a point for assessing ritual efficacy and highlights the ways in which different elements can become disjointed from one another at times. While there may be moments of mis-articulation, or varying degrees of efficacy, that does not necessarily invalidate the ritual for all participants.

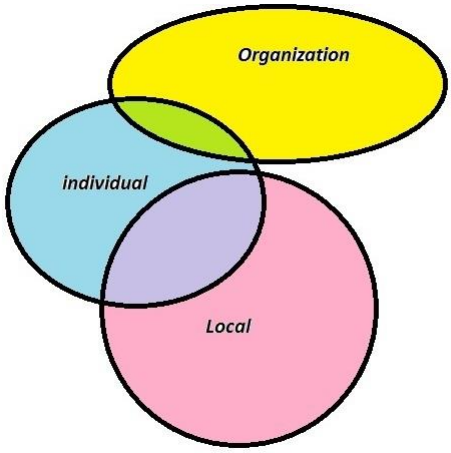
In a fully functioning model, there is an area of overlap between the three separate elements, as in a Venn diagram. While the local ritual may not reflect the entirety of the organization's guidelines, it does not need to. There simply needs to be a place where the local and individual smoothly intersect and shift against the organizational structures. The varying degrees of overlap are reflected in the visualization. For example, while Ascension offered Taizé-style services to fulfill a desire to perform outreach in accordance with an ecumenical mission, they also aligned it in articulation with a Roman Catholic understanding of the liturgical schedule, as evidenced by the 3 p.m. Good Friday Taizé-style prayer service offered each year, which includes the Prayer around the Cross.

Figure 1. Articulation



There are times when religious ritual is explicitly not experienced through articulation with the local community; however, the individual experiences the ritual in articulation with the habitus inherited from the larger organization. In these situations, the individual attending a specific ritual offered by a local community may still understand and experience it through their organizational habitus, but the local community may not have that connection. In the context of Taizé-style services, there were times when the services were found to be a good, but not exact, fit with the understanding of what it is to be Catholic. June, for example, spoke about how going to services like this was a way to step aside from her local church membership in a manner that was still in line with her understanding of religion and the divine, but separate from her community and primary religious responsibilities. Still connected to her religious organization, she experienced collective effervescence in this prayer ritual offered by a separate local community but found that her overall religious experiences and identities also benefited. Leaders and clergy, too, spoke of the desire to attend services where they could experience the divine differently to refresh a sense of connection to the divine that was embodied and experiential. Pilgrimages and retreats can at times be a similar sort of positive articulation.

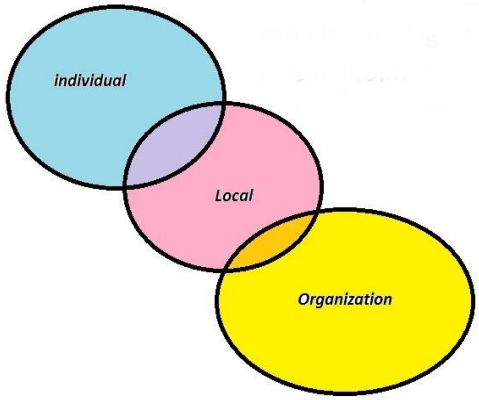
Figure 2. Separate Articulations



The individual realm is the main place where mis-articulation occurs and is also a prime instrument for registration of mis-articulation. There are times when a ritual offered at the local level could simply miss the mark. Several individuals I interviewed spoke about switching local institutions because of a lack of membership or because they simply disagreed with a strongly held policy by one of the clergy or (in one case) the musical choices being made by the music director. In Catholic and Presbyterian churches alike, the clergy can have a variety of opinions, and at times this was off-putting to certain individuals. In these cases, the individual was mis-articulating with the local church but not the larger national organization. In other cases, parishioners were disenchanted with a local service simply because there were too many or too few people there to worship with them. Complex relationships emerge wherein ritual experiences and the overarching organizational rationale are more or less impactful for the participants' bodies. Often the mis-articulations do not mean that the individual leaves the local community, or even leaves the overarching faith, so much as disavows their identification, as in the cases of two of my interviewees: a "lapsed" Catholic who still attends Taizé-style prayers and a doubting Presbyterian who still goes to Sunday morning service. Miriam highlighted the way that rituals

outside of the organizational structure also allowed for a sense of separate articulation. She said: "The Sunday service is an obligation. I go for the community, for the religious obligation. Taizé [-style prayer services] is where I go for religious experience. That's where I feel most attuned [to her Catholicism]." In this case, she sees membership in church and faith important, but the ritual element of it does not reach her entirely. The local community has redressed this ritual mis-articulation through the offering of a meditative prayer service. I term this a *chain articulation,* where the local articulates with the individual and provides some facilitation with organizational/individual articulation, but for the most part separates the individual from the larger organizational theological and moral guideline

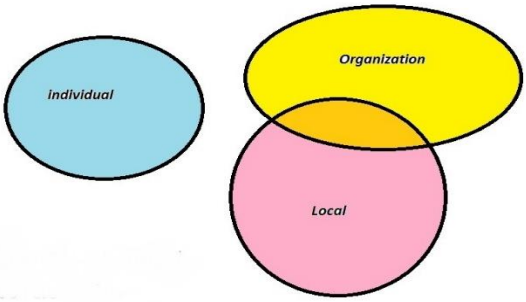
Figure 3. Chain Articulation



When ritual mis-articulations increase in intensity or exist for a long duration, the articulations can go from mis- to dis-. A dis-articulation is a point where there is a break in the chain or a failure in the machine. While rituals may still *work*, the coordinators or a larger national policy may begin to detract from the community efficacy of membership in an organization. One theological difficulty that might be addressed through ritual is the Presbyterian

church's decision regarding marriage and ordination of LGBTQ+ members. The national organization offered a set of ritual guidelines for resolving splits from the denomination in the event of irreconcilable differences. While the largest denominational divide between the PCUSA and the PCA had occurred in the late 1970s and early 1980s relating to the more liberal slant of the PCUSA and the ordination of women, there was a more recent schism in which some PCUSA churches left the denomination in response to the PCUSA vote recognizing same-sex marriages as legitimate in the church constitution. "It was just . . . too much for some," one church elder related. "The tenets of the church still held true, and the leadership was too liberal in their interpretation." At times like this, organizations and local communities were expressing theological differences in their ritual and policies, thus not articulating well. The elder talked about the churches who left the PCUSA but was proud to say that his church had voted to remain after some discussion, although they had lost members. Rose, on the other hand, left her local congregation as it adapted the organizational reworking of liturgy. The figure below models her dis-articulation, and I found that this type of individual dis-articulation was the most common, given that an individual in the USA can nearly always find a new spiritual home much more simply than a local congregation can leave the larger tradition.

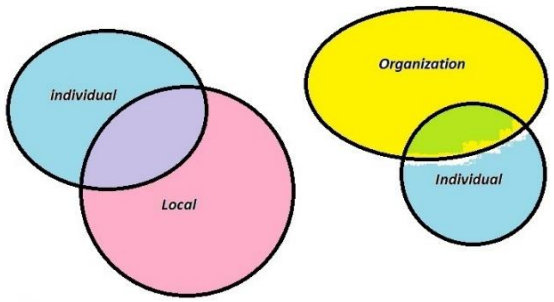
Figure 4. Dis-articulation



Dis-articulation of ritual and organizational structure and the emergence of separate, or even older, ritual articulations can occur for multiple reasons. However, I found several examples wherein the local community and the national organization became disconnected, and the individual had to navigate these separate but concurrent articulations. For example, when his church opted to remain a part of the PCUSA, Peter felt that the community shifted priorities regarding a specific social justice issue. “I still go; it’s still my community. I just . . . don’t agree with the larger [PCUSA] take on things. But, so far it’s not been an issue [at his home church].” Using the individual as a starting point, more extreme forms of mis-articulation, such as Peter’s, can be envisioned as a set of chains where the local community provides all the articulative work, bringing a little of the organizational level to the experience of the individual, while allowing someone like Peter to still feel less connected with an organization he saw as denying an essential part of his Christianity. Local rituals and churches can experience moments of disconnect from the larger organizations at hand. The Reclaiming ritual offered in the UK, for example, was seen by members as missing connection with the local community in the UK, strongly reflective of the larger organizing American tradition. For some, this heightened the

idea that ritual structure was good, and that the organization was good, but that it might be more useful for those less rooted in a nationally and geographically bounded pagan tradition. Some individuals in the UK opted to retain their affiliation with the local community but felt distanced from the larger US-based organization. Although they were in ritual interactions with the international but US-based Reclaiming organization at the camp, they identified more clearly with their British traditions and practices. Peter, on the other hand, saw his local community in two separate articulations: one with the parishioners, and one with the organization. He felt that the local leadership aligned with the more socially conservative congregation than with the national organization, but that leaving the denomination was too drastic. As such, the local coordinators had to carefully navigate the narrow divide between individual parishioners and the national organization in what he spoke of as two separate community relationships, engaged in related but dis-articulated rituals.

Figure 5. Separate Articulations



Individuals, communities, and organizations can experience such a large amount of dissonance that the pushback leads to a full dis-articulation. In that context, none of the elements are in relationship with each other ritually anymore. While that may occur, the sense memories

of both positive and negative prior ritual experiences will influence individual choices, effectiveness of group rituals, and the reformation of organizations.

Elements of ritual articulation do not only interact singly. As such, an individual experiencing a temporary mis-articulation with the denomination may still find the local church services to be impactful and effective. Frequently, interviewees spoke of "coming back to the church" or "finding a need for prayer again in my life," pointing to the ways that mis- and even dis-articulations were not necessarily the end of a religious career. At times, shifts in organizational understandings of theology or leadership made space for people to re-enter the fold. For example, the installation of Pope Francis made a significant difference to a socially liberal Catholic I interviewed who found a sense of new hope in the Catholic church as a whole. Sometimes, though, the change occurs at the local level, where new clergy are installed to lead the congregation or community forward. Still others seek and find alternative rituals that speak to them in ways that allow for a reconciliation with the faith of their choice. In this project, I had frequent conversations and documents addressing ways which individuals, local coordinators, and national religious organizations were seeking to understand some of the nuances of mis-articulation. This was to seek potential redress. As such, I focused on some of the common elements of mis-articulative experiences to discuss the ways in which individuals and communities might address these.

A Typology of Mis-Articulation

Ritual chains can become mis- and dis-articulated. The following section will break each of these points of articulation down further and offer the potential steps identified in texts and interviews with informants to remedy these disarticulations. Building on my typology of ritual mis-articulations, I outline some of the reasons I identified for why a ritual might have mis-

articulated. In my data, duration of mis-articulation emerged as a major factor. In most cases resulting in community exit or organizational disassociation, the mis-articulations in ritual experiences had been persistent. While I have one solid example of a sharp and intense dis-articulative moment, with the UK Reclaiming ritual, I can only suggest that moments of high intensity may have a similar impact as moments of long duration. I also recognize that mis-articulations are often underreported because they are of such short duration or such mild intensity that they are navigated and rectified before they become a major concern. However, using the examples in my study, I suggest that by understanding causes and degrees of mis-articulations, the informed ritual mechanic may have a better toolkit to effect repairs.

The two tables below outline the levels of ritual mis-articulation, developing a space for nuanced analysis. The duration of mis-articulations is a significant factor, with short-term and long-term mis-articulations resulting in varying degrees of impact. I treat the individual and local levels of mis-articulation separately for ease of analysis but also because of the difference in the level at which re-articulation work must take place. Local communities or congregations experiencing mis-articulations are always addressed through assistance from religious officials and coordinators at both the local or organizational level, whereas the individual mis-articulation is more personal and thus sometimes only requires individual work. In other words, the ways in which re-articulations can be managed are sometimes hierarchical. Organizations have much responsibility for the re-articulation of local ritual failures when the majority of the communities are reporting ritual mis-articulations, whereas the responsibility for the individual mis-articulations often falls upon the shoulders of the local community or congregation. At the same time, there are points where individual mis-articulations occur for external reasons that only the individual can manage, or individuals can find themselves with positive ritual experiences with

the organization elsewhere, but not with the local community. In the following section, I use the notation of {Mis-articulated element} x {Articulating element} to indicate levels at which mis-articulations are occurring and in order to discuss the interacting factors that might play some role in moments of ritual mis- and dis- articulations. There are times when multiple elements compound the initial element, and thus are noted with a repeat of that symbol set.

Table 7. Individual Mis-articulations Among Three Elements

	Individual	Local		Organization	
		Individual	Organization	Individual	Local
Short Term	Disinterest or aversion to ritual due to personal life changes or outside experiences	Temporary disruption due to individualistic reasons, such as an inability to engage positively due to conflicts with coordinator or community members	Moment of difference between local and organizational theology/ liturgy or politics as enacted in a specific religious ritual	Temporary disagreement with theology/ liturgy or politics of the organization enacted or affirmed by ritual practices, steps away from ritual temporarily but may remain part of local community	Conflict with organization due difference in theology/liturgy/ politics, attends local service elsewhere that may violate organizational edicts in order to ritualize disagreement and cement shared symbol sets
Long term	Disinterest or aversion to ritual due to personal life changes or outside experiences reinforced by absence or location of other ritual and community	in members of the local community depart the ritual or begin to offer a different one due to differences in ritualized theology/politics	Search for different organizationally affiliated local community with better liturgical matchup	No longer identifies as being ruled by or rituals of that particular faith but may still remain part of local community rituals or personal connections	Selects to leave the organization and the local community alike if no resolution is found, or agitates for shift in local community's membership in organization

Individuals can have bodily or situational causes for temporary or even long-term ritual dis-articulations. Recognizing and navigating these short-term individual mis-articulations is a good part of the work of the ritual coordinators discussed in chapter four, although the organizations also provide re-articulative resources. Individual x Individual mis-articulation can be entirely personal or situational but is rarely directly related to the local or organizational levels of religious and ritual life (such as a period of income insecurity). At the local and organizational levels of articulation with the individual, however, there appear to be compounding factors that impact ritual efficacy for the individual. For example, Individual x Local x Individual is a disruption between the local and the individual at the individual level ("sometimes, the service just doesn't quite . . . connect, you know? It's too routine"), whereas Individual x Local x Organizational is a disruption of ritual due to the local ritual enacting something in a way that does not align with the perceived political orientation of the national/international organization (such as a "pro-choice" prayer being offered at a Catholic service). At the same time, Individual x Organizational x Individual indicates an individual's disaffection with some element of the larger organizational life (such as the exclusion of women from the clergy), although they may still seek community and effective ritual in the local congregation.

Opportunities to remedy most ritual mis-articulations exist, but the difficulty is in identifying them at the outset. At the individual level, many mis-articulations occur due to variances in individual biography and history (Mills 1959). Interviews with ecumenical and open ritual participants revealed that their efforts to seek out new and novel religious rituals for personal religious growth was motivated by a perceived need for further growth and new avenues for ritual experience. Experiences that individuals selected for personal ritual

enrichment almost universally related to some biographic detail from their education, family life, informal training, or childhood that they either eschewed or adored. For others, it was the familiarity and routinization itself that made religious community participation more of a driving factor than successful ritual experience. Conversely, that familiarity can work against individual experiences. One "recovering Catholic" at Unity Temple's Taizé service felt extreme discomfort due to their earlier individual dis-articulation with the Roman Catholic Church, no matter the connection they had to Unity Temple's congregation. Ultimately, for this person, it became one more wedge in their separation from the local Unitarian Universalist community, but not the larger organization.

"I go because I should" was a statement of motivation provided by many ritual participants, but in these cases, there is no large-scale mis-articulation but a minor diminishment of impact. On the other hand, for those with a strong tie to liturgical experiences in their youth, services that are more modern can cause a kink in embodied articulation. While narratives and other forms of feedback can highlight these difficulties, research partners spoke frequently of how normalized ritual dis-engagement may become. In some contexts, religious rituals could simply lose their ability to engender a positive interaction ritual, although the obligation remained. Social ties, in these cases, replaced experiences of positive ritual experience at the local level. At other times, individuals reported that they had a positive experience, but they found it to be out of step with their understanding of the larger national organization. In those cases, there were internal dissonances that were often affectively registered. Understanding that these moments of mis-articulation at the individual level can be subtle and difficult to document, one overall suggestion was that the offering of alternative methods of individualized prayer was for some impactful, while others preferred opportunities to "do good" in the community.

However, for all of those I spoke with who were seeking some sort of articulation with either their lifelong religious organization of membership or a new one, embodied and experiential engagement remained a factor. Tavory and Winchester (2013), looking at converts to Judaism and Islam, spoke of a similar moment of ritual normalization in which converts sought to add new moments of growth and stimulus to their experiential careers. However, for many individuals, participating in these normal rituals was also a way of upholding a habitus of religious faith.

Table 8. Local Mis-articulations Among Three Elements

	Local	Organization		Individual	
		Individual	Local	Local	Organization
Short Term	Local community and ritual coordinator(s) temporarily at odds or missing each other's meaning due to cultural differences	Local ritual diverges temporarily from organizational theology/ liturgy/politics that member agrees with	Local ritual diverges temporarily from organizational theology/ liturgy/ politics	Poor ritual performance of a member or official leads to a mis-articulated ritual	Theological difference with a religious leader setting organizational policy leads t ritual mis-articulations if edicts offered differ from local expectations
Long term	Community fails to re-articulate in such a way that it maintains membership, community members or ritual coordinators leave the community	Local community ritual diverges permanently from some organizational theology/ liturgy/ politics. Local community leaves, but not individual not.	Church or parish permanently departs organization due to differences in theology/ liturgy or politics	Division from or dismissal of a ritual coordinator official due poor performance as ritual coordinator	Theological divide between organizational leadership and individuals who are members of local community may lead to individual ritual disarticulation and search for new community.

Table 7 focuses on the moments of mis-articulation from the perspective of the local community. This community may be a parish, a congregation, or even a group gathered for a week in sacred space. In this situation, the local community experiences ritual mis-articulation.

For example, the Local x Individual x Organizational may be a point where the local community misses the mark, offering a ritual experience that does not align with the individual's perceptions of the organizational theology/liturgy or politics in some way (the ritual flight from the goddess in chapter two), but does not have same perception of mis-articulation for the entire local community. Local x Organizational x Local disarticulation can lead to the types of separations from the denomination discussed in the PCUSA document providing a service for a "church leaving the denomination peacefully." There can also simply be times that the local institution just does not have the financial or personnel capacity to continue. Ritual mis-articulations can occur in these cases simply because there are not times and spaces to offer the rituals that once were regular. For example, one organization I worked with, the Midwest Reclaiming Collective, lost the physical location that was used to host their gatherings. This Local x Local mis-articulation occurred because the loss of physical locality stretched available resources and impacted the sustainability of ritual practices over time.

Local communities and congregations can have moments when they fall out of step ritually. While these are not registered in a single embodied and habituated way, members and coordinators within the local community often experience a sense of discord. Local parishes or congregations have voted to separate from the national organization in both Presbyterian and Catholic traditions. The impact of this is reflected in the PCUSA rituals and rites for the separation of a church from the denomination. A failure of the organization to articulate effectively can also impact the local community and even the individuals within it who feel closely connected. I spoke with an ordained priest in the Alternative Catholic movement who spoke of liturgical engagement once ordained. She felt that there was a hyper-individualistic, but still paternalistic, attitude amongst some of the clergy who were also called to serve. When asked

to discuss and establish a shared liturgical practice, individual egos also came into play, and ultimately, she was frustrated with the lack of cohesion. Although the theological goals were ideal, the national organization leaving the local community of faith struggling without any clear organizational guidance to sustain it was what led to her departure from the tradition.

Long-term Local x Organizational schisms are infrequent, but they do have complicating factors. National culture, for the Canadian and UK branches of Reclaiming, made the US-based teaching community at odds with the international organization. The denominational departure from the PCUSA by the congregations that disagreed with the recognition of gay marriage and the ordination of LGBTQ+ clergy were also a Local x Organizational mis-articulation, but there was much work done within the denomination to negotiate these differences and navigate a compromise that allowed for re-articulation of these elements through prayer, conference, and election. Vatican II is an excellent example of an international institution, the Roman Catholic Church, working to re-articulate its ritual practices.

This typology does not need a separate table for the organization mis-articulating with the local and individual. Influenced by critical theorists and framed by my few opportunities to interview individuals at the hierarchical levels of the national and international organizations, the focus remains on the experiences of mis-articulation from the perspective of the smaller and more mobile social elements in each layer. National organizational mis-articulation with local institutions was experienced far more at the local level. The national organizational founder Starhawk experienced an individual/organizational disarticulation with Reclaiming. She, and much of her original Reclaiming cell, left the tradition entirely to practice other spiritual traditions. Since the end of my research project, the US magazine ceased to publish, and the web presence of Reclaiming has dwindled in part due to the loss of its founding charismatic leader.

There are fewer courses, and much of what was once under the auspices of the national organization in America has dissolved into the hands of smaller local communities.

Discussion

Re-articulation is a process at each level of religious interaction. Five elements beyond the simple typology emerged in analysis that both complicate and add nuance to the understanding of religious ritual and the ways that ritual failures might be remedied. Power hierarchies, cultural attributions, and personal elements all impact ritual importance in individual and community life. At the same time, ritual participation may not be the primary engagement of individuals in local spiritual communal life. Organizations also shift within the larger cultural and political dynamics, incorporating techniques from beyond their respective traditions in order to better examine mis-articulations and re-articulate ritually.

A distinct power dynamic shapes the ways that articulation is being continually narrated and reworked. Building on the chain of religious memories (Hervieu-Legier 2000), there were actions and signs such as the geographic spaces rituals were held in and the use of Latin for song and chant that tied into historical associations outside of the norm that carried symbolic value that generated emotional and affective responses (Riis and Woodhead 2010). While these moments of mis-articulation have rarely been incorporated as data points in sociological analyses of religious ritual to this point, they provide an acute angle for questioning how religious experiences create and navigate meaning. In interviews and literature reviews, local communities and national organizations are conscious of the need to think through ritual and the ways it engages people in religious life. The overarching theme is that the national organization, be it denomination or Pagan tradition, shapes articulative narrative quite strongly.

The discursive process of validating religious experience for individuals (Bender 2007:209) was part of the narrative process that drew from childhood, training, and travel. Individuals make the choice to engage in the "audience" aspect of religious performance while adding other supplementary but still theologically driven ritual encounters to enhance their life and make up for these mis-articulations. Most of this dissertation drew from self-selected participants, well informed about theology/thealogy and ritual. Yet, they still performed narratives that worked to validate extraordinary moments of religious experience. As they sought out alternative opportunities for the engagement with and performance of faith, embodied and sensory affirmation of their narratives emerged through the shared individual nature of these opportunities.

Participation for the sake of participation and organizational affiliations without regular community membership is a type of individual articulation might be read as a ritual mis-articulation, although it is better understood as an individually dis-articulated ritual experience that remains locally and organizationally articulated. People participating for the purpose of community growth sought powerful religious ritual experiences outside of formal affiliation. They did not affiliate with any local community or congregation, but frequently these folks still identified as members of the national organization. In this way, being a "lapsed" Catholic who still believes in the sacraments or a solitary witch from an initiatory tradition maintains their personal religious identity and loose affiliation with a larger community without the driving need to follow organizational norms or perform religiosity in a local group. This vicarious participation in religious ritual (Davie 2007) provided some with a sense of local and organizational articulation that did not necessitate a significant embodied and sensory experience, as long as the divine's work was being done. One Taizé-style service attendee

attended simply because of the moments of ritual failure she experienced in her local religious community elsewhere, identifying a new sense of connection with her home community arose through this disconnected Christian ritual.

Local communities and organizations work together to redress moments of mis-articulation that are culturally bounded as well. For example, guidance on ways of better engaging celebrants through music and embodied action is offered by local laity and clergy as well as through books and websites. The music and spatial experiences can be reworked to shape the experiences or shifts in the flow of ritual or the language of the songs might be used to offer moments of better engagement by local coordinators. Evidence of organizational work on re-engaging liturgical and theological integration of neuroscientific theories of music's relationship to emotion work include the new scientific understandings of sensory experience in the body (Molnar-Szakacs and Overy 2006). "[B]odily renewal is part of God's intention for humanity . . . [therefore] Worship in the Spirit, through Christ, will by its very nature be caught up in this bodily transformation" (Begbe 2011:352). In accounting for and navigating these social and biological realities that exist outside of the boundaries of the explicitly religious domain, ritual mis-articulations are being addressed in their social context. Anne spoke of trying to build emotional levels of catharsis (Scheff 2001) to help alleviate emotional strain from social ills highlighted through the service.

Ritual is not the sole focus of religious life, but it does remain underexamined. By looking briefly at the ways in which it may not always succeed, mechanisms through which ritual can be improved are identified. Mis-articulated rituals often indicate strains or conflicts within a tradition, minor or otherwise, which may lead to religious schism or an individual's ritual disavowal. My typology of ritual mis-articulation brings to the forefront of the

investigation the question of relationships and communication. Subtle adjustments to ritual structure, or even ritual priming before a service, can lead to a smoother articulation. I suggest, then, that this typology may serve a purpose in analyzing ritual and constructing more effective coordination.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSION

"When we try to express communion with God in words, we rapidly reach the end of our capacities." This quote, from a study participant, illustrates the difficulties of measuring the inchoate. In the prior chapters, I made space for the phenomenological aspects of religious life through a close focus on ritual. Starting with narratives of embodied ritual, sensed and shaped ritual experiences have been examined from individual, local, and organizational angles. The importance of ritual coordinators in engaging individuals and navigating organizational liturgical decisions was drawn forward, focusing on the ways in which religious ritual leadership meets the challenges of daily life. I developed a typology to better understand the ways that individual, local communities and congregations, and organizational religious associations work as interacting elements which at times articulate and mis-articulate within ritual contexts. Ultimately, this dissertation serves as an example of ways in which to think seriously about what happens when rituals just don't "work."

Religious life is not an object kept in a box or an experience forgotten upon departure from the sanctuary. In sociology, as in real life, it is often treated similarly – but it subtly pervades the rest of life, from Durkheim's theory of collective effervescence in symbolic interactionism to the recitation of "bless you" when someone sneezes. It is something experienced daily in familiar or innovative ways. Religious rituals are participatory and embodied, with the role of the congregant as important in collective rituals of worship as the role

of the clergy enacting sacred changes. Building a focus on the ways senses shape ritual experiences and memories, I modeled approaches to the sensory and ritual at each level. My multi-method and multi-faceted dissertation contributes to efforts in understanding the impact of the sensory to religious ritual. Through this study, I believe that a tool emerged that allows me to answer a question that often remains unaddressed in the field of ritual studies: Why do rituals work well for some and not so well others?

The Bodily Senses and Narratives of Experience

The sociology of religion has continually focused on the importance of the quantifiable and externally observable or measurable. Institutions and opinions emerged as primary points of study, and the immeasurable becomes marginal as the focus is on that which is easily empirically studied. While lived religion perspectives try to approach religious experiences from the individual perspectives, they still fail to account for the data that is least externally documentable: the sensory and affective. The sociological focus on the body treats the body as performative, enacted, and agentic. However, it leaves the emotions and affect mostly separate, contained wholly within the neurological self. Sensory sociology and affect studies both attempt to bridge that gap, but here I make the argument that affect is, itself, a sensory registration. My dissertation incorporated an embodied sensory approach to religion and ritual alongside content analysis and statistical work to unpack some of the ways less explicable elements of religious life impact the utility of religious rites and rituals. I found, in the end, a focus on the sensory also highlighted the importance of the embodied in effective ritual experiences.

I used Randall Collins's interactive ritual chains as a frame for analysis and extended the understanding of chains further. Understanding that religion similarly is a chain of memories

(Hervieu-Legier 2000), it recognizes that chains and mechanisms work around each other in interactive but structured ways, facilitated by mechanisms which drive them forward.

I began to think about articulation as a way of understanding the intersections where ritual elements combine and collide for varying degrees of ritual efficacy. In part, this echoes Robert Wuthnow's (2009) understanding of articulation. He states that;

> if cultural products do not articulate closely enough with their social settings, they are likely to be regarded by the potential audiences of which these settings are composed as irrelevant, unrealistic, artificial, and overly abstract, or worse, their producers will be unlikely to receive the support necessary to carry on their work; but if cultural products articulate too closely with the specific social environment in which they are produced, they are likely to be thought of as esoteric, parochial, time bound, and fail to attract a wider and more lasting audience. The process of articulation is thus characterized by a delicate balance between the products of culture and the social environment in which they are produced (p. 3).

Following him, I use the term *articulation* as it references this delicate balance.

The bicycle metaphor, then, allows the chains of ritual to articulate with each other – presupposing mechanisms of the social environment that facilitate this interaction. Much like a vehicle, rituals are meant to drive experiences forward and strengthen membership. But, in many cases, as with a bicycle, something becomes mis-articulated. At times, this can be a simple kink in the bicycle chain, but at other times it can be a more complex mechanical problem that requires a professional or trained amateur to intervene. Sometimes, even, the entire bicycle is rethought, like the lightweight aluminum bikes that had to be redesigned for larger riders. The original lightweight aluminum bike frames crumbled under strain, a total dis-articulation. I use dis-articulation here rather than another term because the chain links do not break, as the interaction rituals and chains of memory are still related and intertwined. While the ritual frame may have crumbled, the chains of prior experiences and memories did not. Thus, re-articulation remains possible. I do not use failure because while it may be understood by some as such, I

interviewed a number of people who felt dis-articulation was freeing rather than a flaw. Ritual redesign is re-articulative work, reconnecting rider and machine to carry forward. Building on the metaphor of chains, if each ritual interaction is at the individual, local, and organizational level, a separate chain intertwined or moving each other, articulation is an effective term for envisioning the process.

Starting at the individual level, I broke down each of the ingredients, the moment of transmutation through collective effervescence, as well as Collins' measured ritual outcomes for Taizé-style ritual attendees. One interviewee, Donald, said, "You can meditate every day, by yourself, in solitude. But more often than not, it will be hard to get there. . .. Taizé is a way of having the support you need, having a group of hundreds of people all helping each other capture that moment." It was the interactive ritual that pushed Donald over the edge, transmuting his ritual experience into a moment of collective effervescence. Impact of ritual ingredients varied by factors such as childhood experiences (a "recovering" Catholic who felt the medieval style of the service was reminiscent of her childhood experiences of Latin mass and the participant who felt joy in unfettered worshipful singing after years of music training as a child), immediate bodily states (attending while ill, joyful, or grieving), and shared focus (prayer, reconciliation).

Collective effervescence, a moment of transmutation from the ingredients of ritual to the outcomes, is a deeply sensory experience. Being shaken or lifted up, having one's load lightened, or even reaching that moment of euphoria that repeated yogic breathing inspires are all sensory registrations. While meaning is given to moments where shivers ran down my spine, after the fact, I still *felt* the shivers, and the sense-memory of those feelings carries with me to this day.

Ritual outcomes, interpreted through Collins' model, are registered through sensory measures. The ways participants spoke about these experiences was deeply sensory, relying on

metaphor and allusion to illustrate moments that were difficult to describe. It was "nice to feel a part of the larger [Christian] community of faith, supporting each other in prayers, even when we disagree," Mary reported. The sense of shared solidarity was there, even if there was disagreement about moral outcomes, "solidarity without consensus (Kertzer 1988: 69)." Data emerged to highlight individuals who felt connected or out of sync with the national organization, the local community, or even simply with themselves. Ultimately, the links in individual chains brought together through local rituals articulated smoothly.

Reviewing my field notes, I found many points where physical discomfort or emotional states impacted my own experiences. When I was hungry or in pain, my notes were shorter and my own experience less beneficial, but in times of immense sorrow, such as when my brother-in-law passed away, I cried and felt a vast sensation of support. Like myself, when interviewees tell stories and summon up visceral memories, passing sensations of discomfort are rarely the focus. Rather, it is the chain of religious and secular experiences and those positive recollections of sensations that illuminate stories—for example, the candles that represented the individual lights of faith to one interviewee or reminded another of ritual in their "old country" many years before. It is through these stories that the importance of visceral memories emerges.

Ritual Coordinators

The immediately experienced intentional manipulation of the articulating chains of ritual experience happens at the level of what I term *ritual coordinators* (Dougherty 2018). Ritual coordinators include elders, deacons, collective members, music directors, priests, and pastors. Often, the clergy rely on their elders, deacons, altar committees, and music directors to make sure that all the elements of religious ritual are arranged and performed correctly. While there is an organizational hierarchy at each of my sites, the cooperation and contribution from these

coordinators remained essential for successful ritual experiences. These actors play a role in ritual facilitation that aids in bridging the gap between the individual, the local, and the organizational. They interpret organizational edicts for members of the local congregation, communicate local concerns to the larger organization, and often have a say in the ways that ritual is rethought and performed. Ritual coordinators are often the initial touchpoint for participants when they seek guidance regarding both ritual and larger spiritual issues.

Ritual coordinators shape the sensory frame for religious rituals. In one example, David instituted the use of candles to Taizé-style prayer rituals to shape the visual and kinetic experiences of togetherness, structured the spaces so that they were used in a way that the sanctuary was not used in traditional services (creating a liminal or othered space), and fostered bodily movements that coordinated with prayer and song in order to engage attendees. The importance of co-presence and community emerged, and the power of a ritual coordinator who effectively facilitates an experience that is clearly other than the traditional came to the forefront. Many attendees found the movement past one another while singing to be the moment that made co-presence in a shared space something extra, drawing the boundaries between the outside world and the moment, and pushing them to a moment of collective effervescence. Others spoke softly about the impact of having time alone, to have that emotional transfiguration from burden to light emerge in silence and shared songs rather than at a pinnacle moment or through conducted energies. The use of candles and processions at Taizé-style services was so effective that attendees who also led services in their home communities “borrowed” this innovation for themselves, and it is an increasingly common American innovation. Songs sung at Reclaiming camps that emerged from one local community travelled to new ones, and different methods of meditation and collaboration were shared through carefully conducted rituals.

Ritual coordinators are the frontline for registering and addressing moments of mis-articulation. Individuals who felt disconnected from a ritual were supported through respectful listening and suggestions of other offerings at the church or in the area. One example of this is Lily, a first-time attendee of the Unitarian Universalist Taizé-style prayer service who complained directly to the coordinator about how it felt too Christian to her. The coordinator suggested a Zen meditative service that the pastor was offering one Saturday the next month as an alternative prayer-and-meditation option.

Often there is an organizational element of ritual that coordinators are aware can be problematic. Setting up introductions and a structure to frame ritual engagement, especially to the element of the ritual that was most othering for participants, was a significant part of the coordinator's job. At Ascension, the Prayer around the Cross became one of those points, so through careful framing, a re-articulation of the ecumenical nature of the service, the local religious community hosting the ritual, and individual sentiments about veneration of the cross that exist in a significant percentage of the Protestant population occurred. The ritual coordinators were also a source of mis-articulation. The ritual coordinators at the UK Reclaiming camp were out of articulation with the local community, offering a ritual that felt exceptionally disrespectful to a good portion of the local population. After meditation and sleep, a ritualized re-articulation of this experience was managed through a toast to Cerridwyn. Both of these re-articulations were effective for some, but not others, but the navigation of those moments was clearly the responsibility of the ritual coordinators.

Articulations

I propose a general typology of ritual articulation. Articulation, in a basic way, refers to the way that multiple elements move around each other, points of linkage where elements of

individual, local, and organizational social chains come into relationship. Building outward from Collins' (2004) idea that individual beings are made up of chains of successful interaction rituals and thinking as well of Hervieu-Legier's (2000) idea of religion as a chain of memories, I argue that rituals are a simple machine like a bicycle whereon these elements interlink and articulate. Ritual participants, ritual coordinators, and the organizations that give shape to ritual are the three elements that interlink. However, these interlinkages can fail to articulate smoothly; I term this mis-articulation. In a mis-articulation, the three elements of participants, ritual coordinators, and organizations hit snags or kinks in the chain that can typically be remedied. I suggest that these mis-articulations, when broken down typologically, help identify the best way to re-articulate or repair. For example, individuals can opt to distance themselves from a local Catholic church that is mis-articulated with the larger organization in some way but still identify as a practicing Catholic. Another individual might remain connected to the local community while rejecting some of the organizational goals and finding services at other locations problematic. In each of these cases, there appears to be work that the local community and/or the national organization can do to re-articulate.

Breaking this down further, one element that factors into mis-articulation is duration. Short-term experiences of mis-articulation are often singular in nature. I argue that individuals can simply become disconnected from a desire to participate due to changes in other areas of their lives. However, they may also become mis-articulated locally due to local or organizational factors. In one example, a short-duration mis-articulation at the local level occurred due to a prayer offered that was felt to violate the consistent ethic of life. I also suggest that local institutions can experience varying degrees of mis-articulation with the larger organization or

simply within themselves for internal political reasons. I suggest that understanding each of these nuances of ritual experiences of dis-articulation can be used for greater understanding.

Re-articulation does not always succeed. In some extreme cases that led to schisms in my limited study, the individual retained articulation with both the local community and the organization, but separately. I prefer to think of these as dis-articulations, the point where ritual failure leads to ritual exit. I cannot speak to potential remedies for dis-articulation, as I don't have any data on the permanence of dis-articulation. In my small sample, I found that ritual coordinators played a fulcrum role in facilitating or derailing ritual dis-articulation. Collaboration with and clear communication with these coordinators seems to be a key element in supporting positive ritual experience.

This is notable, as ritual studies rarely look at rituals that don't fully succeed. Even when ritual inefficacy is noted, it is often simply brushed aside as a failed ritual. I argue here that understanding the complex factors that contribute to ritual articulations allow for a better understanding.

Going Forward

I began this dissertation interested in the ways that the sensory experiences of religious ritual shaped people's membership and identity. Over the process of the study, I found that it was more complex than I had expected, with a continuous interplay between local and organizational elements of ritual structuration in the individual experience. More often than not, parishioners are not conscious of the work that the ritual coordinators do to facilitate an engaging ritual. At the same time, organizations offer guidance and guidelines for ritual and theological orientations for the content and understanding of the form. Again, though, the local coordinators are mediators and interpreters. Ultimately, it is this three-way interaction that came forward.

Religious rituals do not need to be limited to weekly services or the sacraments to be significant. They do not all need to be conducted by ordained officials. But each of these experiences impact individual articulation not only with the local community hosting the ritual, but with the organization affiliated with it. In some cases, this can be strongly positive or negative for the coordinating organization. There are times, too, when rituals have their roots in a particular organization and are offered elsewhere. Those with strong organizational affiliations who seek these out will walk away with an even weaker attachment to the local community who offered the ritual that did not align with the originating organization's forms.

Ultimately, this is the beginning of a larger project. I intend to collect data from a broader sample of rituals and religious communities. I intend to work on a method to approach how ritual experience is habituated differently in the digitally connected generations, as most of my interview volunteers were "seekers" of the last two generations (Roof 1999). At the same time, I am interested in the ways that the successfully growing mainline Protestant churches (such as Cornerstone Lutheran in Indiana) are negotiating potential ritual mis-articulations and whether political affiliations have anything to do with attendance and identification rates. I believe that this will lead to a stronger book project and feed into a lifetime agenda of the sensory ritual as a point of investigation into social life.

Best practices for an embodied sociology centered around the sensory need more development. I found Collins' IRT useful because it was a premade framework that embodied reports and observations fit neatly within. However, developing a better data collection method including visual ethnography and digital documentation of body postures and such would have added to the analysis. There is fertile ground in the intersection between the digital community and successful religious ritual experience, as so many of a younger generation are using podcasts

and virtual community-building exercises to perform, observe, and testify. Moving beyond that, however, there is a ritualization of community participation in many games and through the use of sensory triggers such as music that entrain responses of solidarity and effervescence.

Testing this model of ritual mis-articulations with data from other types of intentional rituals would help to develop a more nuanced approach. I would like to test this model of mis-articulation and ritual efficacy in understanding the local, individual, and national organization of protest actions. I suspect that the work of protest coordinators is not dissimilar. I also suspect that this model of ritual articulation can be found in practice at various secular athletic training studios that offer group courses that lead into competition-level sports, ranging from karate to CrossFit. I am fascinated with the ritualization of professional motherhood—ranging from MommyCon to multi-level marketing (MLM) schemes that engage women who are suddenly disconnected from prior sources of identity in constructing through ritual a new sense of identity through the performance of a professionalized motherhood. I say "ritual" because the MLM companies use group solidarity actions and retreats to engage people, and the MommyCon gatherings also offer moments of experienced solidarity in situations that meet Collins' credentials for a successful interaction ritual. I am curious as to whether the ritual experiences here reflect in similar sensory narratives and articulations, or if the differing situations add or subtract elements from the narrative.

Overall, I believe that thinking about ritual articulations repositions negative experiences in ways that open them up for growth. For religious organizations and local communities, there are lessons that can be taken from my study. A stronger awareness of the background factors that impact different types of ritual receptiveness in individuals may help local organizations identify additional services they could offer to attract or retain populations. A better awareness of the

articulative work that nonordained ritual coordinators do to bring organizational and individual goals and understandings together in a successful ritual experience highlights areas in which religious communities and organizations could offer stronger support to these coordinators. In particular, directors of adult introduction to the faith classes might benefit from having shared narratives to pull from. Building a typology for navigating the nuanced layers of ritual articulation makes the rituals easier to navigate for individuals, communities, and organizations.

"Can *you* feel the spirit?" was a question I was asked many times. At times I did, and at times I did not. But the idea that a person can feel or sense the divine in some way was culturally normal. In each situation, people spoke of moments of religious experience when they felt uplifted or when they worked to help a community feel connected to the divine. Organizational documents spoke of ways to engage the body to reach the spirit. Successful generation of positive sensations serve as moments of religious affirmation, not persistent but exceptional. The subtle chains of religious memory were persistent and nigh omnipresent in interviews and documents alike. The moments when they were not felt were ritual mis-articulations. Now, those feelings and perceptions have a stronger analytical frame.

APPENDIX 1

List of Data Sources

Table of Research Sites, Types, and Years

Site	Years	Ethnographic Visits	Memos	Interviews	Document review	Chapter
Reclaiming Midwest	2001-3	2 weeklong visits	50 pages	24		4
Reclaiming UK	2001-3	1 weeklong visit	25 pages	20		4
Taizé Unitarian	2009-2011	18 visits	75 pages	24		3,4
Taizé Catholic	2009-2012	22 visits	75 pages	20		3,4,5
Traditional Catholic	2016-17	10 visits	10 pages	10	75	5
Traditional Presbyterian	2016-17	10 visits	10 pages	10	75	5
National Congregations Study						5

APPENDIX 2

Interview Schedules

Organizer/ Officiant Interview Schedule

Organizer History

- How were you led to this path in life?
- Tell me a little about your educational background
- How long have you been engaged in running services here?

Institutional Background

- How many individuals traditionally attend services here?
- How many individuals attend Taizé-style services?
- How many parishioners are engaged with Taizé-style services here?
- Do you know if any parishioners joined this church after attending Taizé-style services here?

Services

- What kinds of influences do you see in the ways that you plan religious services?
- Can you describe for me the ideal service experience that you hope to bring forward for your parishioners?
- Can you tell me about one of your favorite moments officiating at a traditional service?
- "…" least favorite moments officiating at a traditional service??

Taizé-style services

- Can you tell me how Taizé-style services first came to this church?
- Tell me how you became involved in organizing Taizé
- Can you describe your strongest memory of organizing Taizé for this institution
- Can you describe for me the ideal Taizé-style prayer service experience you hope to bring forward for attendees?
- What does the church hope to gain from hosting Taizé-style services??

Taizé-Style Service Participant Interview Schedule –

(all questions are open to being probed for development)

Demographic info

- Gender, age, ethnic identity
- City of Residence
- Relationship status (married, partnered, widowed, parents, etc)
- Church of membership
- Occupational background
- Is there any other background information you think is relevant for me to know going into this interview?

Taizé-style services

- Can you tell me about your most powerful memory of Taizé-style services?
- How did Taizé-style services become part of your life ?
- Tell me a little about the last Taizé-style service you attended
- Do you have a favorite element of Taizé-style services?
- Do you have a least favorite element of Taizé-style services?
- How many Taizé-style services do you think you have attended?
- What do you feel like when you leave a Taizé-style service?
    - Is this distinct from how you feel at other times?
- Who do you usually attend Taizé-style services with?
- Have you had other experiences that are similar to Taizé-style services?

Religious Background

- Can you tell me a little about your religious institution of membership?
- Have you been a member at this institution or another one within the larger tradition (Catholic/Presbyterian) for your whole life?
- If not, are there other institutions that you have been a member of?
- Can you tell me your strongest memory from a traditional service?

Educational Background

- Tell me about your educational background.
- How do you think this impacted your relationship with Taizé-style prayer services/traditional services?

Musical Background

- What is your musical background? (probe)
- Do you still participate in musical groups?

Traditional Service Participant Interview Schedule –

(all questions are open to being probed for development)

Demographic info

- Gender, age, ethnic identity
- City of Residence
- Relationship status (married, partnered, widowed, parents, etc)
- Church of membership
- Occupational background
- Is there any other background information you think is relevant for me to know going into this interview?

Religious Services:

- Can you tell me about your most powerful memory of a traditional church service?
- How did church become part of your life?
- Can you tell me a little about the last service you attended?
- Do you have a favorite element of church services?
- Do you have a least favorite element of a service?
- How many services do you think you have attended?
- What do you feel like when you leave church services?
    - Is this distinct from how you feel at other times?
- Who do you usually attend with?
- Have you had other types of experiences that are similar to a traditional church service?
- Have you ever attended the Taizé-style services here at your home church?
    - What did you think of them? Was there something you liked? Disliked?

Religious Background

- Can you tell me a little about your religious institution of membership?
- Have you been a member at this institution or another one within the larger tradition (Catholic/Presbyterian) for your whole life?
- If not, are there other institutions that you have been a member of?
- Can you tell me your strongest memory from a traditional service?

Educational Background

- Tell me about your educational background.
- How do you think this impacted your relationship with Taizé-style prayer services/traditional services?

Musical Background

- What is your musical background? (probe)
- Do you still participate in musical groups?

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VITA

Beth L Dougherty is a sociologist with interest in religion, culture, embodiment, and technology. The research contributing to this dissertation builds on prior interests and provides a framework to take forward to test against new data. One chapter of this dissertation was accepted and published by the journal *Sociology of Religion* in January of 2018, and another chapter is currently under preparation

Dr. Dougherty is currently collecting visual examples of rhetoric used in protests and online public displays of political action to compare them to the language and images leveraged by religious groups in reaction to increasing globalization. She aims as well to study the use of podcasts, unchurching, and spiritual "self-care" to examine the embodied, the religious, and the ritual in the forthcoming years.

Dr. Dougherty has worked on research projects examining online social tie formation in gaming communities and multi-cultural religious youth in Chicago, and currently has a coauthored paper under preparation for submission looking at online infrastructure and the maintenance of family connections in times of physical or economic inability to travel. She plans to continue to examine the ways in which the virtual and reality intersect.

Dr. Dougherty began her undergraduate education at Luther College in Iowa, before completing her Bachelor of Arts in Anthropology in 2002 at Iowa State University. Following this she earned a Master of Arts with Distinction from King's College, London in 2004.

"Angry Goddess, Recalcitrant Reclaimers: When Ritual Goes Wrong" was awarded the Shelford Prize for research excellence in the study of religion. This research into the Reclaiming Community at the turn of the 21st Century in the US and UK led Dr. Dougherty to her interests in embodiment and ritual efficacy.

Dr. Dougherty has taught at Ball State University, Wabaunsee Community College, College of DuPage, Morton College, and Loyola University Chicago. In this time, she was awarded the Spirit of Service prize for her work with the National Environmental Teach-in at College of DuPage and served as a Title V mentor at Morton College to freshman students. She also has served as a mentor for honors projects at both Wabaunsee and Loyola and received a summer research grant for an undergraduate assistant.

Dr. Dougherty was offered a departmental award for pursuit of her PhD at Loyola University Chicago in 2009. She has been an invited speaker in graduate student forums and departmental brown bags, as well as a guest lecturer in graduate courses. While at Loyola, she served as the Co-Chair of the Logistics committee for the Chicago Ethnography Conference from 2014-1015 as well as volunteered to proofread HUD grants for the Chicago Coalition to End Homelessness. In her time in the department, she published a book review, an enhanced media review, and a peer reviewed article containing original research. Dr. Dougherty has been a Predoctoral Teaching Fellow for the university as well as recipient of both the Robert McNamara Prize for Excellence in the Study of Religion and the Wittner Walley Prize for Outstanding Scholarship.