TOWARD A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL ENTERPRISES: A CRITICAL ETHNOGRAPHY OF A TOMS CAMPUS CLUB

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green
State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2017

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation explores the lived experiences of Millennials organizing around a social enterprise. It details critical ethnographic methods that include 12 in-depth interviews, and participation and observation for nearly three years of a TOMS shoe company campus club in Northwest Ohio. Visual analysis, political economy, and audience engagement add to a cultural studies perspective that frames this study. Grounded theory principles inform analyses and reveal that the organizing efforts of these particular Millennials involve three processes: living precarity, living affect, and making a local place from a global space. The processes intersect continually yet are distinguishable by various themes that influence a Millennial organizing experience. Laboring as an entrepreneur, laboring in servant leadership, doing charity, and defining needy, work throughout and within club communication in ways that affect members' meaning-making about the club and the TOMS corporation. This research helps define the Millennial experience with one social enterprise in an effort to better understand Millennials and social enterprises in general.

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To the TOMS club members who participated in this project, particularly the members who served on the executive board, for sharing your stories and experiences with me.[i] This is the beginning of my effort to accurately represent everything we did together.

To my husband, Greg, for loving me.

And to my son, Christopher, for inspiring me.

[i] In an effort to maintain participants' confidentiality, I refer to them throughout this dissertation as club members, by a club position held, by an X*, or by another capitalized letter followed by an asterisk.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am immensely grateful that the support of my family and friends continued as I returned to school to study for my Ph.D. in communication, and that I found additional support in mentorships and friendships that I developed with incredible people I met while at Bowling Green State University.

Thank you to my sisters Pam, Cecilia, and Debbie for the delicious dinners and honest conversations that reminded me of my feminist roots, adding to my strength and determination to go all the way. Sherie, you are my sister from another mother (who happens to be my aunt and someone I also love very much), and I want you to always be with us when we gather at CC's. Stephanie and Samantha, I hope you can see how deeply we love each other in our family even when it is not always obvious. I often think of you and Chris when I observe other Millennials, and I want you to know that your parents and aunts have given their very best efforts toward building a brighter future for you and your families. And to my dear friends Teresa, Jackie, Deborah, Karen, and Jerry – thank you for being my family even though biology says we are not.

I thank God that I found you, Erika and Fan. Only the two of you know exactly why I would be saying that, although Yen-I, Dai and Sriya have a pretty good idea. That makes five, enough for a basketball team and spoken like a Hoosier.

Thank you to my other important BGSU friends: Kate, China, Julia, Claire, Fang, Nancy, Linsay, Shrinkhala, Cody, Chelsea, Ben, Chad, Andy, Jing, Kisun, Kayleigh, Liu, Weiwei, Sasha, Saud, Dhiman, Mohammad, Courtney, Anthony, Jason, Saigon, Scott, Tonya, Yannick, and Emi. My time at school was easier and way more fun because you were there. Thanks also to my many students, particularly those who worked and volunteered at WBGU-FM and Falcon Radio. I am so very proud of the work we did together in the classroom, around campus, and out in the

community. Thankfully we had great support from Jim, Jose, and Ken. It was also our privilege to be guided by Drs. Rick Busselle, Louisa Ha, and Laura Stafford as we did our best to create great radio. Being able to work with all of you in the glorious new Kuhlin Center was just icing on the cake.

Speaking of my students, one of the things I enjoyed most was hearing them swap stories about their classroom experiences with professors in the School of Media and Communication. Drs. Joshua Atkinson, Catherine Cassara, Lynda Dixon, John Dowd, Sandra Faulkner, Ellen Gorsevski, Lisa Hanasono, Lara Lengel, Srinivas Melkote, Clayton Rosati, Ewart Skinner, and Gi Woong Yun - please know how much all of you are appreciated by so many of us who watch and learn from you.

Dr. Sung-Yeon Park, you always had my back as you guided me, and I will be forever grateful. July 4th has new meaning for me now. I will miss our summers together. Thank you, too, Kelly, Carman, and Meagon for helping me keep everything straight each and every time I blew into our main office, often related to something Dr. Park had to sign.

Finally, to my dissertation committee -- Drs. Barbara Bergstrom, Radhika Gajjala, Alberto Gonzalez, and Kate Magsamen-Conrad -- thank you for your important discussions and guidance during my work on this project. Special thanks to Doc MC for letting me be your Research Assistant so that I could learn a million “quanty” things with you. Please never forget and always remember: RA4VR. As for you, Dr. Gajjala, thank you for letting me literally live in your space so that I could grow as a scholar. You insisted that I start investigating the club when I did and then guided me every step of the way, even when we were a world apart. You are special to me. Thank you for making me feel special to you.

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What is your best way to fully get out what you have experienced? To help motivate people to maybe take action; maybe help sponsor a child or something? That's what I am still contemplating: how do I want to share my story? (a club member's personal communication with author, June 1, 2016)

Topic Discovery and Positionality

This dissertation is the written account of my investigation into the communication of and with Millennials - a generation born around 1980 and called other names such as Generation Y - are seen as distinct from their parents (often part of the Generation X cohort), grandparents (often part of the Boomer generation), and great grandparents (often part of the Silent generation; see more discussion regarding generational communication later in this chapter). It is an investigation that I thought began by chance, but I now understand was swayed by my personal and professional experiences. This revelation is not an apology for my biases but rather an acknowledgement of them. It is meant to set an honest tone as I take on the great responsibility in accurately detailing my account of time spent with people who opened up portions of their lives to me so that I could share their stories and complete my dissertation.

To be more specific, I believed until May of 2016 that the reason I decided to conduct a critical ethnography of a campus club was because I was responding to an interesting topic that one of my students in 2013 presented in a speech. She focused her persuasive speech on TOMS, a shoe company that gives a pair of shoes to people in need for every shoe purchased ("TOMS FAQ," 2013), and offers a one-for-one purchase/giving model for other products including coffee, eyewear, tote bags, and as of November 2016 - watches. In the speech, she quoted a classmate who was the founder and president of the newly formed TOMS club on the campus where I was teaching and studying for my doctorate. I saw other students nodding as they listened to the speech, apparently supportive of the business plus philanthropic model proffered

by TOMS. I could feel a story and wanted to know more. I did not make a more personal connection for another two years.

The reason I would respond to a compelling story idea is because I have long investigated people's stories. Before academia, I worked in radio for 25 years in all sorts of positions including announcer, reporter, sales representative, news director, promotions coordinator, and interim general manager. In all positions I gathered information about the community, building and rebuilding it as I discussed with others (e.g., colleagues, advertisers, business owners, mayors, council people, nonprofit leaders, listeners, etc.) – sometimes live on the air - the state of the economy, the business competition in the market, the crazy games we could play, and the great money we could giveaway. As I swapped stories and positions, contexts changed and I loved it. Media fed the part of me that wanted to move in and out of situations depending on if they challenged or scared me. The stories I covered could challenge or scare me, too. They could also surprise, sadden, madden and inspire. For me, the point of mass communication has always been to share stories, particularly local stories because most of my radio experience has been in radio programming produced for a particular region or community. But I thought I was mostly telling other people's stories. I now realize that those stories were also my stories that I participated in as an interviewer and community member. I am beginning to understand that stories of mine fed into other people's stories and vice versa. One big story that happened to me and millions of others so long ago has shaped me, and influenced my decision to choose the topic of my dissertation as it related to my son. I am only recently coming to terms with that. I had not planned to come to terms with it in this dissertation.

My story is tied to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. At around 9:45 a.m. that day (Indiana time which was not EDT at the time), I was wrapping up my morning shift on the

public radio station in an Indiana city where I was the local host for National Public Radio's (NPR) morning show program. I was working in a market that, based on the population of approximately 420,000 ranks at 102 in market size in the U.S. by the radio industry's rating organizations (James, n.d.) The area we covered included much of northeastern Indiana and some of northwestern Ohio. I thought of all of those people in all of that area when our operations manager pointed to the Associated Press (AP) computer and asked "What's going on?" It was virtually vibrating with flashing, urgent messages. Much later we would say to each other that we had never seen anything like that before in all of the time we had been in radio but at the time, we just felt the impact of the moment as we stared and clicked reading that a plane had flown into the World Trade Center in New York City. Then we realized that what we were seeing did not match what we were hearing. Where was the coverage on NPR? The story on the air was not about New York. AP and NPR were at odds and we needed resolution. We flipped through the channels on our news room TV and with horror finally knew we had to tell our listeners what we were seeing and reading until NPR started its coverage.

I went into the studio, turned on the microphone, and read from AP copy all of the details I had. It really was not much but not much had to follow an announcement that a plane had flown into one of the two World Trade Center towers. The words hit with every blow, at least I thought so as they came out of my mouth. They were difficult to say. I assured our listeners while I also assured myself that "NPR coverage would begin soon." When I turned off the mic I prayed that NPR would start handling the story. I was in Indiana, far away from New York, and did not want to pretend to cover this story in the way I used to pretend when I worked in commercial radio. I am not really sure when NPR started their coverage but their delay would be noted in later, internal communication between affiliates and NPR of 9/11 reporting.

Unbelievably, planes kept crashing that morning and the towers fell to the ground. I lost track of the order of tragedy as it dawned on me that I was afraid for my four-year-old son. I wanted to leave the station and pick up my kid from school. I decided to call the school to see what they were doing to protect my son. With their permission, I recorded the conversation and felt better as I aired what I had learned. The children were busy doing regular school things and everybody was fine. Nobody at the school seemed alarmed and that helped keep me calm. Then I called other schools, mayors and cops from all around the area, talking about their concerns and airing the conversations. We wanted to reassure each other that we were okay, that our family members were safe, that we were not going to see planes fly into buildings in our communities. Somewhere along the line my news director called to say she was sick to her stomach and could not come to work and I said "You're my boss so you can do what you want but I suggest this is *not* the day to take off." Did she even know that planes were crashing into buildings? I do not remember if I ever asked. I guess I just assumed everyone knew by then and that if not, we all needed to know what was going on and I was helping with that.

She came into the station around noon but I stayed on the air. I shared television news coverage when radio coverage seemed lacking and then finally realized how tired I was and how much I wanted to go home. I saw the anxiety on the faces of the general manager, news director, operations manager, etc. as I gathered my things and left. They did not want the responsibility of the story any more than I had wanted it but they knew they could continue without me and I needed a break.

Yet I never really got one. I went home and kept watching the news. I held my son close when he came home from school, just as I had longed to do throughout the day, but then I returned to watching the news feeling compelled to do so and not just because of my media job.

My husband watched the news with me and he did not work in radio. Everybody in America watched the news that day and we grieved as we saw loss after loss. I feel now that we went to bed that night having spent more time with the news than we did with our son. At the time, though, I felt closer to the life around me than I had the previous day.

The next morning I went back on the air. I decided to keep broadcasting underwriting messages (public radio's equivalent of commercial radio's advertisements) knowing that we had skipped them the day before. I had been in media for a long time and knew that you did not skip sponsorship mentions for too long without hearing about it. But I decided to introduce them differently. I used a caring tone that came from a real place to say "Ongoing news coverage provided by…" or "Today's special news coverage provided by…" before I gave details of the sponsors. One company called in later to ask how they could sponsor special news coverage and my sales manager was proud of me. We were already friends and always friendly but we especially wanted to be kind to each other that day. Community members revealed themselves in all kinds of supportive ways after the crashes, too. They helped with food drives and fundraisers for the people of New York. Some members of our community travelled to New York to help with cleanup.

This continued for weeks although each week brought news that allowed coverage of 9/11 to recede just a bit. Then a plane crashed into a building in Queens two months and one day after 9/11, which was followed by news of a nationwide Anthrax scare. One story after another that I and thousands of media people across America announced built up an argument of fear and protection that somehow naturally led to a discussion about going to war. Then Colin Powell pushed us over the edge. We broadcasted live his speech to the United Nations Security Council in 2003 and I returned to regular programming knowing the impact of his performance. All of us

in America (or so it felt) tacitly understood the pledge we had taken on September 11: to protect and serve the greatest country in the world. We remembered that patriotic place we used to enter each time we stood in front of the flag at school and said the pledge of allegiance. My sometimes jaded, critical soul that communication with myriad people over a lifetime had helped create wanted to be hopeful that those people who were in charge knew things that I did not and would not lead us needlessly into combat. One time during a public radio fundraising season when former NPR president, Kevin Klose, visited our radio station, he cautioned me to maintain "healthy skepticism" as a newsperson and I had heard the wisdom in that. As we communicated about the lead up to war, however, even that was being softened by a sense of nationalism, anger, responsibility, and a need to regain control. After 9/11, things felt out of control. I thought the sense of responsibility was mostly to my community but now I understand it was also to my son. I needed to believe that the world he lived in was a place where he would thrive. War became synonymous with safety for at least a moment for many of us until we could no longer fool even ourselves.

I propose that story, that collective, lived experience communicated in conversation after conversation is an important perspective with which I viewed my students on speech day in 2013. We were all living in a post-9/11 world where terror acts could happen. In the U.S., we had not really had to worry about that, or so we assumed until the planes crashed into buildings and awakened the difficult awareness of our vulnerabilities. Even though I was not sure that my students actually shared my perspective, I wanted to enter into that space I thought they were creating around TOMS that seemed to be comfortable and relevant in a world that was significantly different yet very similar to the one in which I remembered growing up. In a quest to know more about this hopeful place - a refreshing and positive place as it seemed to me - I

became a member of the TOMS campus club in early 2014. I have been a participant observer since March 4, 2014. It is, in retrospect, no coincidence that I chose to study a club made up of Millennials. My study is as much about my son and the life I want(ed) for him as is it is of the young adults who comprised the campus club.

Millennials (My Son)

My son was born in 1997 and is therefore considered a Millennial. Generally recognized as born after 1980 or so (Jones, Ramanau, Cross, and Healing, 2010), Millennials are a part of a generation that according to the Pew Research Center (2014) does not yet have a chronological end point. Chandler (2015), however, details a table of scholars who offer end points to the Millennial generation and others. The year 2000 is offered as a Millennial birth year end point by Strauss and Howe (2000); 1999 is proffered as an end point by Lancaster and Stillman (2002) and Zemke, Raines, and Filipczak (2000); and 1995 is suggested as an end point by Oblinger and Oblinger (2005). Amongst those scholars, beginning points range from 1976 to 1982.

Generational beginning and end points may be in dispute but most people agree computers and computer-like technology have helped define the Millennial generation. Often called *digital natives*, a term coined by Prensky (2001), it is proffered that given their myriad experiences with and immersion in digital technology that Millennials are uniquely equipped to negotiate, create, and translate digital communication via various devices and platforms. Prensky argues that the brains of Millennials have in fact been changed by the digital input so that reaching them pedagogically is furthered by incorporating digital technology in the classroom. Jones et al. (2010) question the supposition that all Millennials are technologically savvy after discovering of 534 Millennial students surveyed from 14 courses across myriad disciplines, most students had minimal confidence in using virtual learning environments like Blackboard and

Moodle, especially if they were distance or part time learners. Gender differences revealed themselves in the use of technology, too. Male students were more confident than female students in their use of spreadsheets, graphics, audio/video programs, and computer maintenance. That said, technology is clearly an integral and ubiquitous part of Millennials' lives. 74% surveyed by Jones et al. owned laptops and 98% owned mobile phones.

Pew (2014) also details that Millennials are less trustful of others than previous generations but still hold a generally favorable view of business. Specifically, Pew tells us that:

> In response to a long-standing social science survey question, "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people," just 19% of Millennials say most people can be trusted, compared with 31% of Gen Xers, 37% of Silents and 40% of Boomers. (para. 13)

By comparison, Millennials generally "have a favorable view of business" even as they reveal they are detached from "traditional institutions" but tell Pew they appreciate an "activist government" (para. 15).

Referring to them as *Generation Y*, Hills, Ryan, Warren-Forward, & Smith (2013) detail findings that Millennials are optimistic, self-confident, prefer instant feedback, seek praise, enjoy freedom in the workplace, are goal oriented, technologically savvy, and seek a life/work balance that offers as much opportunity to socialize as work. Finding work, however, is an issue for most Millennials. Pew (2014) notes that Millennials entering the workforce have faced "macroeconomic trends" (para. 21) that have included a deep recession that has lingered since 2007. Underemployment is as much an issue as unemployment for Millennials in America (Milkman, 2014; Ross & Rouse, 2015). Jobs are apparently difficult for the generation to secure outside of the U.S., too. Heroit (2015) offers an international perspective recognizing that the

unemployment rate of French youth aged 20-24 was nearly three times that of people aged 35 or more in September of 2015. She further contends that "if there's a demographic out there that we ought to be worrying about, it is young people, the perennial newcomers to the economy" (p. 782).

Similarly, Chetty et al. (2016) reviewed more than 40 years' worth of data (e.g., 1940-1984) from the Census and Current Population Surveys for parents and their children and found that "the fraction of children earning more than their parents fell from 92% in the 1940 birth cohort to 50% in the 1984 birth cohort" (p. 2), with children from the middle class seeing the most profound decreases. Chetty et al. suggest that lower growth rates of the Gross Domestic Product along with an unequal distribution of income growth have led to the fall in income for the children of previous generations. The decline in middle class income has been noticed by other scholars, too. Harvey (2007), for instance, suggested that neoliberal policies have negatively affected all but the wealthiest individuals across the globe. He detailed how regulations were lifted to offer advantages to a few entrepreneurs, CEOs, and financiers around the world, while putting most countries in debt with austerity measures that increased global poverty, particularly in Mexico, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Making money off of money or debt rather than tangible products became central to the practice of neoliberalization, according to Harvey, as did globalization. Underdeveloped markets offered the greatest opportunity for loans to be made and debts to be repaid, leading to the spread of neoliberalism via transnational companies. Harvey argued that the economic shift from Keynesian policies (e.g., policies associated with taxes funding social programs such as Social Security, etc.) to neoliberal policies was somewhat unplanned but soon exploited by capitalist motives that have

become so entrenched and associated with cherished values such as freedom that many people have actively advocated for continued practices that actually hurt their own quality of life.

These findings point to a grim, economic present and future for Millennials. Drawing from her work with Millennial students attending the University of California, Berkeley, Roy (2010) recognized their pessimism but also their upbeat attitudes regarding their futures and the future of the world. She contended that they live and she teaches within "this impossible space between the hubris of benevolence and the paralysis of cynicism" (p. 40).

In short, Millennials can be skeptical but they do not seem to wallow in negativity (Pew, 2014). There may be good reason for their optimism as well as their pessimism. Milkman (2014) explored two social movements in which Millennials were actively involved: the Dreamers (a campaign advocating a path to citizenship for undocumented immigrant youth) and the Occupy Wall Street (a drive to bring awareness to income inequality in the United States) movements. This, according to Milkman, evidences that liberals outnumber conservatives within the generation and that their activism reflects:

> … the demographic makeup of Millennials and their economic prospects. They are more racially and ethnically diverse than any previous generation: about 43 percent are non-white (Latinos are the largest and fastest growing group). And they are the most highly educated generation in U.S. history: a third of Millennials over age twenty-six have a four-year college degree or more. But they have paid a high price for this achievement: two-thirds of recent college graduates have outstanding student debt, averaging $27,000. (p. 56)

Milkman suggests that because Millennials are ethnically diverse and under/unemployed that they care about issues related to race, diversity, income, and employment. Additionally,

assuming that Millennials have been as successful in catalyzing legislation (e.g., the 2012 Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals legislation that is currently in place in twenty American states) and income inequality awareness as Milkman claims, the actions of Millennials matter to Americans. The movements they embrace may affect future public policy and voting preferences.

For instance, Hendrickson and Galston (2016) report that 23% more Millennials voted for Barack Obama than Mitt Romney in 2012, which helped Obama win America's presidency for another four years. Nearly 20% more Millennials voted for the Democratic presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton, than the Republican candidate Donald Trump, in America's 2016 general election. Although the Democratic candidate did not win, Hendrickson and Galston suggest that because more Millennials identified then as Democrats (or Liberals) than Republicans, in the future "the millennial electorate is expected to impact how politics is conducted in a two-party system" (para. 6). Thus, the voting preferences and generational articulation of Millennials may lead to certain political candidates winning over others, affecting political agendas, campaigns, and leadership outcomes.

This is not to suggest that Millennials are a homogenous group. In fact, their diversity, particularly their racial and ethnic diversity, are notable (Milkman 2014; Pew, 2014). Perhaps more importantly, however, labeling a generation may fix a group of people in a way that they themselves do not approve or identify with, and I do not want to do that. Hacking (2002) discusses whether labeling people categorizes and in essence creates them. Borrowing from other scholars, including Arnold Davidson (2001) and Michel Foucault (1980), he suggests that types of people are created by classifications, refuting the idea that the types exist before the labels. In fact, he claims, there is no category of persons until a category is named. People are constructed,

according to Hacking, via communication about them. Once labeled, people may then be controlled by that label because with classification comes systems and forces that maintain and sustain how we understand the people of any particular category. Therefore, the results of the categorization are very real despite their "made up" nature. I have no desire to label or create a generation that may or may not exist. My purpose is and always has been to better understand and then describe the world around me. I have no intention of reifying stereotypes of any person or group of people. I simply wish to explore a community to which I have access and whose members are comprised of people like my son who also associate with people like me.

What is perhaps more important to consider than scholarship that labels people is how media and businesses who use media are talking about – and sometimes talking to - Millennials. A Google search of *Millennials* on August 28, 2016, returned more than 28 million results. The first return was a link to Wikipedia's Millennial entry, followed by a link to a survey of Millennials by the Pew Research Center, a link to the Millennial Marketing website, and then links to media stories from two hours (*Detroit Free Press*) to two days old (*Time*). A Google search of *digital natives* returned fewer results, just over 2 million, indicating fewer uses of that term in the media when compared to *Millennials*. By comparison, just a week later on September 5, 2016, a Google Scholar search of academic articles for the same terms only returned results in the thousands. Specifically, a search of *Millennials* returned 33 thousand results, while a search for *digital natives* returned less than 78 thousand results.

After spending time with members of that generation, I question whether the generation of people labeled Millennials actually respond and are therefore rendered subjects when the media "hails" them (Althusser, 1971) or even knows of the academic discussions about them. Yet I also believe in the tenets of social constructionism (see Berger & Luckman, 1967) that

suppose that our interactions with people create our realities, leading to many realities that co-exist together. Media is part of that interaction, as are academic conversations that transpire on and around campuses. Whether people of a certain age recognize themselves when they are called or described as *Millennials* or *digital natives* may not be the point. Because they are talked about in those terms their realities are affected by them and I hope only to avoid adding any negative connotation to the terms. I intend, rather, to create an account and analysis of my time spent with members of that generation that resonates with me and with them as one that is honest and truthful. If I do my work well enough, I hope that Millennials beyond the campus club may see themselves in my account as well.

TOMS and Social Enterprises

I decided to study the TOMS shoe company, in part, because it has been recognized as a preeminent example of a social enterprise that successfully accomplishes both social and financial objectives within one organization (Pedersen & Jørgensen, 2015). Founded in 2006 by Blake Mycoskie, TOMS is not named for a person. It is an acronym of sorts, short for shoes for tomorrow ("TOMS FAQ," 2013). TOMS is a for-profit shoe company that established a nonprofit arm (e.g., Friends of TOMS) to send a pair of shoes to needy children in more than 70 countries for every pair of shoes sold. As of September 2016, TOMS.com promotes that 60 million pairs of shoes have been given away. The company next launched the same one-for-one model for eyewear, then a "buy coffee and give water" exchange, and in February 2015, TOMS announced that for every TOMS bag sold it would fund birthing kits and services to ameliorate infant mortality. In November of 2016, the TOMS club founder shared a post on my Facebook page informing me that TOMS had launched a program that if customers purchased a TOMS for Apple Watch band, they would provide one year of solar light to some of the "1.2 billion people

around the world [who] lack access to safe, reliable electricity" ("Introducing TOMS for Apple Watch," n.d.). The company and its founder have received numerous awards. Mycoskie "received the Secretary of State's 2009 Award of Corporate Excellence (ACE)," and was named in 2011 in "*Fortune Magazine's* '40 Under 40' list" ("Blake Mycoskie," n.d., n.p.). At some point between 2012 and 2014, TOMS nonprofit arm was dropped while the company's philanthropy continued. In November 2014, Mycoskie sold 50% of TOMS to Bain Capital, although he still owns the other 50% of the social enterprise ("TOMS completes sale," 2014).

Worth noting, social entrepreneurship, defined as "entrepreneurial activity with an embedded social purpose" (Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006, p. 1), is not an entirely new concept. The idea of combining for-profit and nonprofit goals is evidenced in decades-old organizations. The nonprofits Salvation Army and Goodwill have funded their missions and their programs for more than 100 years with income from their resale stores. Philanthropic foundations funding nonprofits have long encouraged those organizations to similarly launch for-profit programs to help provide financing for nonprofit missions (Bielefeld, 2009; Di Domenico, Tracey, & Haugh, 2009). What is new, however, is the increased scholarly scrutiny these enterprises are receiving (Smith, Gonin & Besharov, 2013). Relatively recently, scholars have noted that tensions exist in organizations that seek to operate with both a for-profit and nonprofit orientation (Austin et al., 2006; Foster & Bradach, 2005; Katz & Page, 2013; Smith et al., 2013). For instance, Foster and Bradach (2005) analyzed IRS 990 forms of 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations that had launched programs meant to provide income to the charities. They found the programs often did not provide financial sustainability for the nonprofits, and actually became unprofitable over time. They remained in place, however, because of misdiagnoses of financial realities and because of pressures by funders.

Katz and Page (2013) also recognized the dialectic as they examined new corporate legal structures aimed at preserving nonprofit missions in companies also seeking profits. They detailed a couple of court cases in which disputes over nonprofit missions versus profits were decided in the favor of profit-making. For example, in the case of *Dodge v. Ford Motor Co*., the Dodge brothers wanted to receive larger dividends rather than pursue nonprofit goals that controller Henry Ford had hoped to fund. The Dodge brothers won the case. Katz and Page also note that new organizational forms such as *benefit corporations* and *L3Cs* are being created to discourage similar litigation, but the scholars doubt the efficacy of those structures. They tell us that with a two-thirds majority, voting members can change a benefit corporation completely into a for-profit model if they do not want to pursue nonprofit missions any longer.

Ebrahim and Rangan (2014) contend recent scrutiny into social enterprises has not always been by scholars. They posit that "funders, taxpayers, concerned citizens, and clients" (p. 118) have been asking traditional nonprofits and social enterprises to show the impact they may be having as they work to deal with social issues such as poverty. Perhaps Millennials are among them. Roy (2010) argues that Millennials seek to make positive change in their world during their lifetimes. Milkman (2014) suggests they already have in terms of immigration and income inequality awareness. Steinig and Butts (2009) posit that Millennials are equally concerned about the environment and could work with older generations in helping launch environmental projects.

TOMS shoe company, Warby Parker eyewear, and the Tim Hortons restaurant chain are just a few for profit companies that claim to be working in the interest of a better society that count Millennials among their consumer and in many cases, volunteer base. For instance, TOMS has been cultivating its target population of people 18 to 34 since at least 2010 when it partnered

with Microsoft Advertising to raise awareness of and increase registrations for its signature One Day Without Shoes event ("Microsoft Advertising," 2010). Millennials comprising my campus club have been targeted both as consumers and as young adults needed to further the TOMS movement. They have variously been asked to join the TOMS community (TOMS corporate website and email communication 2014-2015) or tribe (TOMS corporate website and email communication 2015-2016).

TOMS is also different from other social enterprises in that the company developed a campus club community in the first ten years of its existence. In response, Millennials at colleges across the country, including the one I attend, created clubs evidencing their connection with the company. As of March 20, 2014, 281 campus clubs existed in the United States with another dozen located in Canada (See Figure 1).

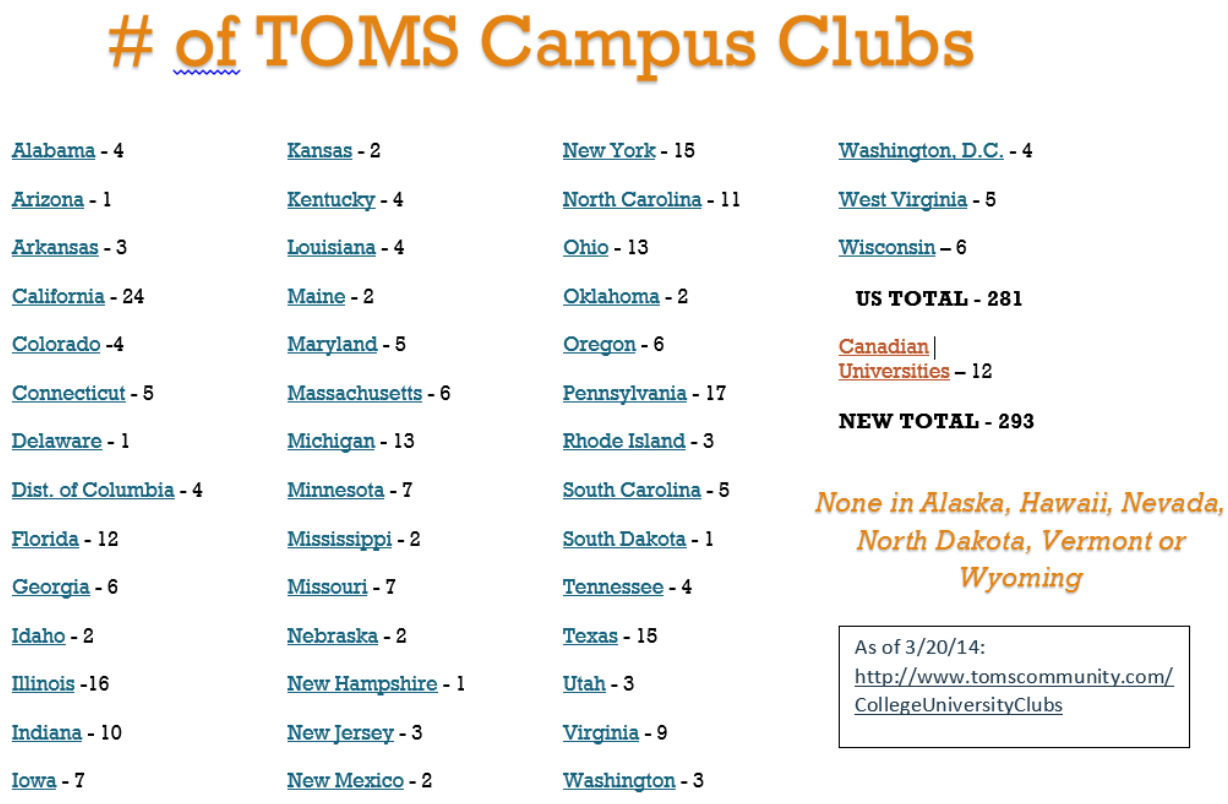
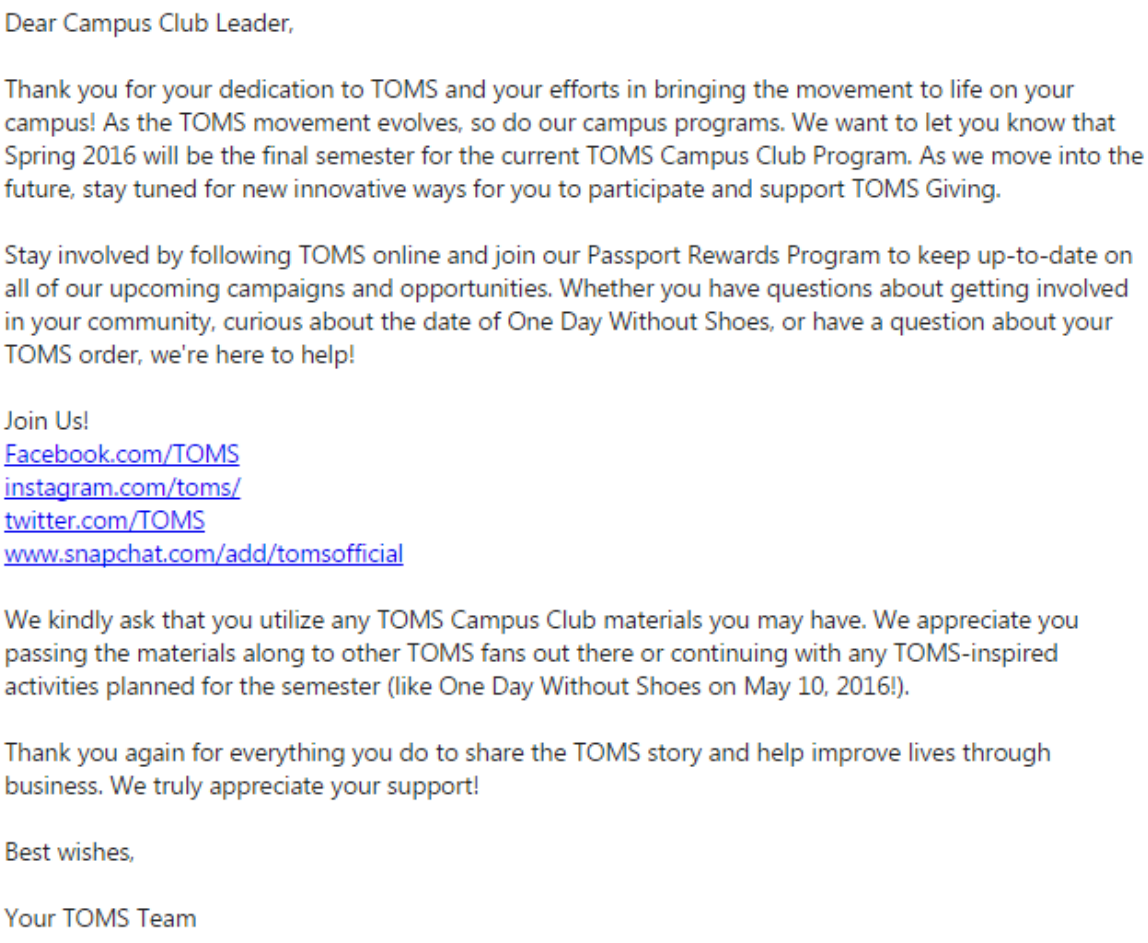


***Figure 1*. TOMS campus club distribution and total as of March, 2014**

By comparison, another nonprofit organization, Lions Club International that was established in 1917 and known for working to end causes of blindness around the world, reported 400 Lions' campus clubs had been formed in 42 countries as of 2012 (Liondavidcaldwell, 2012). In about eight years, then, the number of TOMS clubs approached 70 percent of the number of clubs associated with a 97-year-old organization. I argue, again, that statistics evidence Millennials' support of businesses professing philanthropic along with for-profit goals.

The number of TOMS clubs could diminish in the future, however. As of March 2016, TOMS emailed leaders of its campus clubs that its relationship with clubs was changing. See Figure 2 that follows:



Dear Campus Club Leader,

Thank you for your dedication to TOMS and your efforts in bringing the movement to life on your campus! As the TOMS movement evolves, so do our campus programs. We want to let you know that Spring 2016 will be the final semester for the current TOMS Campus Club Program. As we move into the future, stay tuned for new innovative ways for you to participate and support TOMS Giving.

Stay involved by following TOMS online and join our Passport Rewards Program to keep up-to-date on all of our upcoming campaigns and opportunities. Whether you have questions about getting involved in your community, curious about the date of One Day Without Shoes, or have a question about your TOMS order, we're here to help!

Join Us!
Facebook.com/TOMS
instagram.com/toms/
twitter.com/TOMS
www.snapchat.com/add/tomsofficial

We kindly ask that you utilize any TOMS Campus Club materials you may have. We appreciate you passing the materials along to other TOMS fans out there or continuing with any TOMS-inspired activities planned for the semester (like One Day Without Shoes on May 10, 2016!).

Thank you again for everything you do to share the TOMS story and help improve lives through business. We truly appreciate your support!

Best wishes,

Your TOMS Team

Figure 2. **TOMS notification of policy change to campus clubs as of March, 2016**

In an effort to find out more details about the meaning of the email above, the club where I still belong asked for a conversation with a TOMS representative who they knew fairly well and our club founder often called his "good friend." Several members of the club's executive board and I met to speak with the representative over a speaker phone and discovered that we could continue to call our club the *TOMS* club but that support we had received from the company in the past - which many of us discussed was pretty nominal anyway as it was comprised of hats, wristbands, and a limited number of shoes for giveaways – would not continue in the future. The club decided that was okay and that we would still call ourselves the TOMS campus club, taking power back from TOMS in that decision. Community building, then, was something Millennials of my club needed and/or wanted to continue even though the TOMS connection changed. This understanding informs my dissertation because it recognizes organizing, creating culture and community, communication, etc. as dynamic processes rather than a set of rigid facts.

In this dissertation, I strive to capture many processes that have transpired over my nearly three year ethnography of TOMS and club members who support TOMS. I realize it is inevitable that I will fall short at times. That said, I hope that I get the story right enough of the time that those who see themselves in this account forgive my shortcomings. With that in mind, as part of my investigation, I am willing to believe that TOMS one-for-one model is an exemplar for future entrepreneurs to follow, particularly as they operate with a social conscience. I argue that before that decision is made, however, more research needs to be done into the tensions that are inherent in organizations that try to adhere to both for-profit and nonprofit ideologies. While social enterprises seem to be less capitalistic than normative for-profit companies, it should be investigated whether they are gaining profits from their customers' purchases (particularly Millennial purchases) like other for-profits, while also allowing their customers to fund and staff

the philanthropy that permits the enterprises to receive the financial and goodwill benefits of a nonprofit. I argue that as a communication scholar, I and others should examine if social enterprises, especially those launched by for-profits, are really moving the typical business model forward, or actually maintaining the status quo, all while acting as though they are doing something better than usual and enticing Millennials to embrace their philosophy. Findings of that investigation could add to a general understanding of how "newer" organizations may be affecting Millennials and how Millennials may be affecting those organizations via communication and organizing practices.

To that end, Chapter 2 addresses the method, theory, and study design that I used to investigate my research topic. Chapters 3 through 5 detail the results of my analysis, offering themes that emerged throughout my ethnography interwoven with theory. In Chapter 6, I further discuss my analysis, then conclude my reflections and key points of the study in Chapter 7. My goal is to "get out" what I have experienced with the same sense of integrity suggested by one of the TOMS club members whose comments opened this chapter.

CHAPTER 2: METHODS AND STUDY DESIGN

Through our methods, we first aim to see this world as our research participants do – from the inside. Although we cannot claim to replicate their views, we can try to enter their settings and situations to the extent possible (Charmaz, 2006, p. 14).

Theoretical Framework

Tenets of critical theory underpin this investigation into the communication culture of social enterprises and the people who support them. I approach this research with the understanding that a study of culture can be enriched by using a cultural studies perspective to inform my theoretical frame and methods. Lutz and Collins (1993) note that political economy, text, and audience have been important in readings of cultural artifacts. Similarly, Waite (2009) advocates the inclusion of a variety of perspectives such as "historical, political, geographic, economic, and personal" (p. 445) in forwarding a holistic approach to understanding situations and contexts important to various members of culture and community. Yet most researchers focus on only one of those elements rather than all three at the same time because of the scope of such an undertaking (Story, 2012), or because they believe that one element such as political economy (Garnham, 2009) or audience reception and consumption (Fiske, 2009) deserves more consideration than others. I include three elements in this exploration – political economy, text, and audience - using various methods including ethnography, participant observation, and visual analysis with a focus on the communication practices of the audience of social enterprises, specifically, members of a club on a Midwestern state university campus who support the TOMS shoe company through their club membership. Throughout my study I consistently ask questions about economic and institutional influences, as well as how certain messages created by TOMS are framed then received, negotiated, or resisted by club members, with an emphasis on the communication that is unique to the club. To be clear, then, my emphasis is on audience

although I also include elements of political economy and text as I work to better understand my fellow participants. Moreover, I focus on the communication practices of the audience as I borrow from the work of Carey (1989), who believed in the centrality of communication in meaning-making contexts. He defined communication as a "symbolic process whereby reality is produced, maintained, repaired, and transformed" (p. 23) within cultural creation. Like Carey I argue that language, as a system of symbols, both reflects and creates our realities as we learn and work within various language systems, each one related to others but invariably distinct within each place and space where people gather and interact. By focusing on the communication and culture of one group in particular, I strive toward a better understanding of Millennials and social enterprises in general. Also with the focus on audience, my methods may be categorized as humanistic, which I describe in the next section.

Humanistic Research Methods

Humanistic research methods place human interaction at the core of studies and that is what I have endeavored to do with this study of Millennials. Humanistic research methods have been used in the fields of anthropology, sociology, and communication for decades. When combined with an interpretivist paradigm, humanistic methods presume that the researcher is part of the interaction, and that the researcher will involve herself in the construction of various realities informed by individual perspectives as well as shared experiences. Interpretivists believe that immersion into the culture of those being studied is important for an intimate understanding of the "symbol use, sensemaking, and choice making" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 8) of the people. Theory about the interaction being studied is developed inductively, and the biases of the researcher is acknowledged, particularly when the researcher makes claims about participants.

A cultural perspective is at the heart of humanist perspectives. Geertz (1973), a renowned anthropologist who influenced many disciplines and gave legitimacy to interpretivist approaches, believed in the construction of shared meanings via symbols. In short, he believed that humans created culture and culture created humans as interactions occurred.

Participant observation and ethnography are methods used by researchers interested in understanding meaning making among humans. Flick (2009) considers ethnography a more general strategy than participant observation, recognizing that to an ethnographer, observation is as important as participation. This chapter offers details of both methods toward an understanding of why and how I employed them in this study.

Participant Observation

Saville-Troike (1982) argues that participant observation is "basic for all ethnography" (p. 4) and joins myriad scholars in noting that the method is often combined with others, particularly interviewing (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2002; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Saville-Troike, 1982). Successfully employing the method demands that researchers be flexible, observant, and participatory as they spend time with others, witnessing and sharing in their lives (DeWalt, & DeWalt, 2002; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Spradley, 1980). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) are among the many scholars who offer advice about building rapport and gaining entry to the site of study, as well as discussions about roles that researchers might adopt as they participate, observe and record. Building rapport is considered an on-going process, but particularly important when entry is needed into a site. Closed sites, or those requiring considerable negotiation to access for research, are compared to open sites (those requiring little negotiation to enter). Closed sites will require the researcher to establish great rapport, perhaps with authorities before having an opportunity to try with other participants (Jorgensen, 1989).

Most advocates of participant observation advise that those employing the method do so overtly but recognize covert participant observation may be necessary if a site is very closed (Di Domenico & Phillips, 2010; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; McCurdy & Uldam, 2014). Like building rapport, adopting roles is a dynamic and ongoing part of participant observation as a researcher moves in and out of roles while studying a site over time. Often roles are defined by the level of the researcher's participation and/or by the researcher's degree of inclusion. Lindlof and Taylor (2011) borrow from Gold (1958) in describing four types of roles that others often refer to as well when discussing participant observation: *complete participants* (researchers who are fully recognized as members of a scene, perhaps under pretense); *participant-as-observer* (researchers who participate even more than they observe); *observer-as-participant* (researchers who observe even more than they participate); *complete observers* (researchers who are not recognized as being a part of the scene) (pp. 145-148).

Recording observations and episodes of participation is discussed at length as advocates of participant observation offer advice about keeping fieldnotes (DeWalt, & DeWalt, 2002; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Spradley, 1980). Most instructions distinguish fieldnotes from other forms of note taking including scratchnotes (quick impressions), headnotes (from memory), and diaries (personal and for commentary). Fieldnotes are deemed as more deliberate than most note taking and include core elements for ongoing reflection such as scene and episodic details, quotes from participants, initial impressions and reactions, and questions for future exploration (DeWalt, & DeWalt, 2002; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Spradley, 1980). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) call fieldnotes "textual artifacts" offering evidence of rigorous research as well as research for future analysis.

Jorgenson (1989) referred to analysis as a cycle, noting that during participant observation, the researcher should continually analyze fieldnotes searching for patterns, identifying next questions to ask, and eventually building theory about what is uniquely communicated at the site and how members are constructing meaning. Building theory is often associated with Glaser and Strauss (1967) who posited that theory should be grounded in data collected in the field. They suggested that researchers categorize communication patterns in which they co-participate and/or observe. Tenets of grounded theory, they contended, should guide the researcher's overall objective: not to force data to fit into an already developed theory, but instead to allow categories and properties to emerge from data collected that might relate to other categories and properties posited by existing theories. Theory building is a method of discovery, according to Glaser and Strauss, and that method follows:

> In discovering theory, one generates conceptual categories or their properties from evidence; then the evidence from which the category emerged is used to illustrate the concept. The evidence may not be necessarily accurate beyond a doubt (nor is it in studies concerned only with accuracy), but the concept is undoubtedly a relevant theoretical abstraction about what is going on in the area studied. (p. 23)

Scholars have grappled with grounded theory since its inception, refining and updating it - or as Stern and Porr (2011) describe it – "tampered" with it (p. 20) as the method has been embraced by researchers of various disciplines interested in myriad research topics. It has been well documented that Glaser and Strauss themselves diverged in their ways of doing grounded theory after they wrote their book (Charmaz, 2006, 2008; Kelle 2007; Stern & Porr, 2011). Despite modifications and debates, some commonalities and essential elements remain foundational to grounded theory research: data collection and analysis occur continually and simultaneously so

that the final written account is reflective of the process observed – and most importantly – grounded in the data. Each reading of the data informs the next collection and the developing theory in order to create a final product that is evidenced in the myriad artifacts of the site studied. Feminist perspectives are supported in grounded theory approaches in that both maintain that researcher biases and experiences are inherently part of the research process. Notes are gathered, questions are asked, and details are accounted for according to the interpretations of the individual researcher. This is not to suggest that the interpretations are inaccurate. Quite the contrary, in fact. The analyses are, however, grounded in the encounters as experienced and as recorded by the researcher and therefore part of an evidenced, embodied process and lived experience.

Clearly, then, and in keeping with an interpretivist paradigm, building theory while repeatedly referring to collected notes and artifacts is at its essence a reflexive process. It is also subjective. Codes and categories must be investigated for researcher assumptions and bias, particularly by the researcher herself (see more about bracketing for reflection and bias later in this chapter). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) remind us that the ultimate quest of conducting participant observation is "… to better understand the significance of communication for those who perform it" (p. 168). Remembering that goal is important throughout the process, but especially as findings are analyzed then communicated, leaving a written impression of the community that was studied

Ethnography

"The ethnographer," according to Geertz (1973), "'inscribes' social discourse; *he writes it down*" (italics in the original, p. 19). The point is that an ethnographer is both an observer and a participant but more than anything, one might argue, an ethnographer is a scribe. The

responsibility of recording the element(s) seen is as immense and difficult to quantify as it is subjective and dependent upon the researcher to be the ethical instrument of data collection, analysis and presentation. Imported from anthropology and now found in current research in various disciplines including communication and feminist studies (e.g., for organizational communication see Milburn, 2009; for feminist/environmental/cultural studies see Tsing, 1993, 2005), ethnographic methods are employed to better understand the unfamiliar but also to investigate the familiar with fresh perspectives (Flick, 2009).

Ethnographers immerse themselves in the environments they wish to study in an attempt to gather and complete an accurate account, one they also recognize as "inevitably positioned and partial" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 9). Conquergood (1991) called ethnography an "*embodied practice*" (italics in the original, p. 180), a methodology involving all of the researchers' senses. He credited Goffman with understanding the physical nature of the research approach, referencing Goffman's thoughts regarding fieldwork published after his death in which Goffman explained that ethnography requires the researcher to subject herself to the social situation being studied in order to "respond to what life does to [participants]" (Lofland, 1989, p. 125). Goffman (1959) believed that people constantly perform as they interact with others and suggested that an ethnographer involved in social situations while researching would be no different. It is presumed, then, that ethnography is active. When a researcher undertakes *critical* ethnography, the action is considered even more purposeful than traditional ethnography and not all ethnographers agree with the critical approach. Critics of critical ethnography believe ethnographers should not bring their politics or agendas toward emancipation into the site of study but critical ethnographers believe the politics of the researcher are present upon the researcher's arrival so why not use those political understandings to upset distorted power

relationships (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 12)? An examination of the critical turn in qualitative methods follows.

Critical Theory and Critical Ethnography

Carspecken (1996) contended that "Critical qualitative research was basically born in the 1970s with studies of education" (p. 174). Lindlof and Taylor (2011) tell us in the 1980s, communication scholars adhering to the interpretivist paradigm explored critical theory "for alternate explanations of power, agency, and social structure" (p. 9) as they studied human interaction. The term *critical theory* implies one theory, but in reality, critical theory takes many forms. It has been associated with Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno of the Frankfurt Institute beginning in the 1930s; but it includes precepts proffered by Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels (Craig & Muller, 2007). Today, many disciplines have developed critical theories specific to their studies, among which are feminist, race, and cultural studies (Barani & Yahya, 2012). Most critical theorists maintain their understanding of the earliest roots by investigating systems of domination. The theories are used in analyses that challenge the status quo (Davis & Baran, 1981; O'Mahony & Donnelly, 2010), that probe the inequalities in communication with a focus on power and control (Splichal, 2008), and research that explores "radical changes in the established order" (Smythe & Van Dinh, 1983, p. 118).

Critical ethnography is infused by critical theory and actively incorporates and respects voices beyond the scientist's (Madison, 2005). Recognizing the need for participation by people not necessarily considered experts in a given field of study, Vandenberg and Hall (2011) argue that throughout the research process, the critical ethnographer must be reflexive and work to build supportive relationships with participants to counter biases and avoid reinforcing the status quo. Madison (2005) agrees as she writes of the dialogic, participatory process that the

researcher engages in with community members being studied. Participation is also understood when she acknowledges "the 'performance' of critical theory" arguing that critical ethnography is "critical theory in action" (p. 15). Madison ties key elements to pedagogy and development communication by adding that the critical ethnographer:

> … will use the resources, skills, and privileges available to her to make accessible … the voices and experiences of subjects whose stories are otherwise restrained and out of reach. This means the critical ethnographer contributes to emancipatory knowledge and discourses of social justice. (p. 5)

Madison contends that critical ethnography seeks to understand meanings implicit in social practices, and to make obvious symbols and ideology embedded in cultural and social frameworks that seem natural and unchanging. Critical ethnographers are different from other ethnographers in that they are willing to disrupt any relationships perceived to evidence an unequal distribution of power. Critical ethnographers are not a homogenous group, however. As Thomas (1993) suggests, "Critical researchers range on a continuum from those who adopt a few of its characteristics to those who avowedly attempt to incorporate all of them" (p. 31). Nevertheless, most critical ethnographers are subversive in some way, according to Thomas, even as some believe in more incremental than revolutionary change.

Madison (2005) also underscores that the critical ethnographer needs to bracket or identify early in the process any assumptions the researcher might have regarding the population she intends to study, particularly as she generates research questions. Madison ties bracketing to purpose while also recognizing the lack of agreement about what bracketing actually means. Many scholars in fact, have pointed to the various ways researchers have defined and undertaken bracketing (Chan, Fung & Chien, 2013; Gearing, 2004; Tufford & Newman, 2012). In an effort

to clarify the bracketing debate, Gearing (2004) posits that the technique needed to be continually rooted in its phenomenological origins, even as it evolves. Borrowing from Ashworth (1999), he suggests that when bracketing, a researcher resolves to "set aside theories, research propositions, ready-made interpretations, etc., in order to reveal engaged, lived experiences" (p. 708). According to Gearing, the bracketing technique involves three key phases: an initial phase during which the researcher makes clear her entry point, epistemology, and ontology; the second phase consisting of actions related to setting aside assumptions and suppositions; and a third phase that is arguably the least well defined, that of reintegrating the suspended material back into the study and findings.

Gearing (2004) additionally offers a typology to aid in the researchers' process of bracketing. He contends that together, the types follow the "general historical order in which they were developed" (p. 435), meaning, his typology accounts for the evolution of the technique. He relates ideal bracketing to positivism, descriptive bracketing to postpostivism and interpretive paradigms, existential bracketing to interpretive and critical epistemologies, analytic bracketing to empiricism, reflexive bracketing to constructivism and postmodernism, and pragmatic bracketing to various epistemologies.

Similarly, Chan, Fung, and Chien (2013) offer bracketing strategies while underscoring bracketing's phenomenological roots. Defining phenomenology as a qualitative research approach with a specific focus on identifying what is "inherent and unchanging in the meaning of the issue under study" (p. 1), they argue that bracketing should be a continual part of the research process, and not used exclusively during data collection and analysis. At the same time they question whether a researcher is actually capable of bracketing all that ideally could be bracketed throughout the research process. They discuss how some scholars suggest that the

literature review be suspended until after data collection and analysis but note that some understanding of the literature, particularly that regarding theory, must be done in advance of the study in order to get the study approved by review boards.

The discussion relates to Gearing's (2004) descriptions of existential and analytic bracketing techniques, which include notes about the practicalities of setting some assumptions aside, particularly those associated with theory. Gearing posits that with existential bracketing, it is impossible for researchers to completely bracket some suppositions, and that analytic bracketing theoretical orientations are usually not really bracketed at all as they inform an iterative research process related to grounded theory. Tufford and Newman (2012) also recognize the "tensions around the implementation of bracketing, including the who, what, when and how of bracketing" (p. 93), but contend that a researcher needs to employ the technique regardless of difficulty because it facilitates "innovation and renewed insights into the pressing social phenomenon of our time" (p. 94). Understanding the researchers' power as analyzer and scribe is all a part of critical approaches to research. That is a power relevant in the study of cultures as well, and where this chapter turns next.

Critical Approaches in Cultural Studies

Agger (2014) argues that cultural studies is inherently critical in that researchers eschew standardization in terms of identifying "appropriate" ways or topics of study. The study of resistance is embodied in the researchers who embrace friction and heterogeneity in what and how they conduct their work. Cultural studies is not undefined but it answers to many definitions making it different from other fields such as biology and business where subjects and objects are more carefully categorized and areas of study are more clearly demarcated. Cultural studies comes in at least two forms, according to Agger: the political and the apolitical. His preference is

for the more politically engaged, which he describes as a version that focuses less on cultural texts and more on contestation over meaning and representation. One might argue that the more politically engaged version is even more critical than the apolitical version of cultural studies but of course that is debatable and debate is essential in cultural studies.

Understanding the origin of cultural studies is also essential to taking part in the political/apolitical debate. British scholars such as Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall are credited as two of the founding fathers of British cultural studies (Storey, 2012), seen as distinct from cultural studies in other parts of the world, including in the U.S. (Hall, 1996). The critical essence of cultural studies may have been lost in translation, according to Hall (1996), who questioned the speed with which cultural studies was accepted and institutionalized in U.S. universities. He wondered how a study of culture questioning power relationships fit so quickly in the top-down power structures of the entrenched educational systems of the United States. Does critical cultural studies scholarship depend on independence from institutions?

At the same time, James W. Carey, "arguably the founder of cultural studies in the United States" (Steiner & Christians, 2010, p. xi) is credited with bringing a communication perspective rooted in discourse and conversation to the study of culture in the U.S. (Grossberg, 2009; Hardt, 2009). The discursive attention is particularly relevant given cultural studies semiotic foundation, which Hall (1973) moved forward as he explored the encoding and decoding of media messages by elitists and audiences, respectively. Carey's (1989) attention to words and meanings people make of them was influenced by and reminiscent of the work of Williams (1976) who wrote *Keywords* to offer definitions of symbols and concepts toward a better understanding of describing the world around him. Thus, although American cultural studies is arguably different from its British counterpart, it does share similarities in foci embedded in communication.

Visual Analysis of Cultural Artifacts

Culture can be communicated in various forms – verbal, visual, tangible, intangible – that if captured and studied can reveal the beliefs, behaviors, knowledge, interaction, and laws of people who live within and help to create that culture. Communicative forms may also reveal what some cultures think of other cultures. Visual culture can be investigated as a part of a cultural studies perspective (Mirzoeff, 2002), particularly as a textual element. It is important to remember, however that visual culture is more than images and text, and in fact includes sounds and spatial considerations that create layered meanings leading to multiple readings (Rogoff, 2002).

Analyzing visual culture is also recognized as reading it (Lutz & Collins, 1993), especially with a critical lens. Olesen (2008) contends that critical approaches are especially well suited to studying digital messages shared via the Internet if one wishes to intervene in dynamic issues. She argues that critical methods can "represent, enact, portray, depict, describe alternative disjunctive realities that criticize, differ from, contradict, deconstruct parts, or all of the administration's representations" (p. 53) even as those representations are updated and change over short periods of time. She argues that critical researchers regularly examine situations and adapt methodologies according to context anyway, and are therefore, well positioned to handle the always evolving digital messages shared in email, on websites, and in social media.

It certainly is the case that critical scholars have turned their attention to digital media analysis. In doing so, they have offered methods for visual cultural analysis. Lutz and Collins (1993), for instance, analyzed images in *National Geographic* magazine as capitalistic creations for working class consumption as they offered a list of more than twenty characteristics to look for in images and texts. In Snickars and Vonderau's (2009) *The YouTube Reader*, contributors

often critically approach the study of videos and images on the social media site as they explore the content, use, and industry that comprises the YouTube experience. Snickars and Vonderau point out "If YouTube is anything, it is both industry and user driven" and that "the platform has been negotiating between community and commerce" (p. 11) almost since its inception. Reading it generally involves some mention of its use by professionals and amateurs interested in making money and building community, often simultaneously. Müller (2009) recognizes that dialectic as he looks at the discourse surrounding video quality, as does Lange (2009) as she investigates videos shared among like-minded people as mediated social relationship creation.

There is precedence, then, for using a critical, cultural approach to qualitatively studying the political economy, text/context, and audience associated with a particular communicative process. This understanding informs the design of my investigation into the connection college students have to a specific company through campus club membership. My study focuses on the communication related to that connection with the epistemology that communication creates and recreates the world around us. By concentrating on the communication and culture of the TOMS campus club on one college campus, I strive to better understand and offer an accurate account of what my particular investigation reveals about Millennials and social enterprises in general.

Study Design

The following subsections detail the methods of this study and should exhibit the influence of qualitative scholars who have preceded me. For example, the information about participants is not meant to imply a monolithic understanding or clichéd description of club members, following the lead of researchers such as Hardt and Negri (2000), and McLuhan and Watson (1970). Data analysis has been informed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), Charmaz (2006, 2008), and Wuest (1995) as I have worked to build theory. Underpinning the details, of course,

are the understandings presented previously in this dissertation that noted the critical and cultural studies epistemologies that continually influence my perspective and choices, including my methodology.

Participants

The participants described in this dissertation were members from 2014 to 2017. Of those members, all had attended our university for at least a year (e.g., the club president stopped attending college after about two years for monetary reasons but continued attending club meetings). They appeared to vary little in age and race. They were mostly in their early 20s having been born in 1993 or so (e.g., of those interviewed at length, 3 were born in 1993, 1 in 1992, 1 in 1994, 1 in 1995, and 1 in 1996). Most members appeared to occupy White positionality to me (race is discussed in more detail in subsequent chapters). Their ages, particularly, led me to conclude that I had been studying a cross-section of the Millennial generation, even though Hicks and Hicks (1999) have argued that values developed over shared life experiences, rather than chronological markers such as date of birth, are more salient to understanding similarities that help demarcate one generation from another. I, too, believe that elements other than age can bind people together but I contend shared ages as well as shared experiences in shared contexts such as university settings can combine to explain generational tendencies and characteristics. Exploring club members as part of the same generation is meant to provide explanatory power, not meant to offer a static understanding of a group of individuals. The individuals in my study, for instance, met regularly at a college, in a college classroom, and were college students but for one exceptional case explained later in this dissertation. As members of a generation attending a higher educational institution, then, they are unlike others of their generation unable to access or afford a higher education. They also are unlike those not

attending a university in that in their work, they respond to academic and institutional influences, which can be different from workplace communication. The Millennials of this study, then, are Millennials of a certain kind, and are not meant to represent all Millennials everywhere.

As club members, about a dozen Millennials I studied attended meetings on a fairly regular basis but there were more members than that in the club as evidenced by the nearly 300 email addresses used in club email blasts. Generally at least five club office holders attended each club general meeting and therefore comprised on average a third to one-half of the meeting's attendees. Fewer men than women were club members (about 10% of members were male). When I first began attending meetings, nearly half of the most active members had been part of the club since its founding year, 2013. As of 2016, about one third (3 of 8) members would still be considered founding members but two of the three graduated in May of 2016. Many members belonged to more than one student club on campus, often as many as three or four. For instance, about one third (3 of 8) of the most active members at one point also belonged to a campus co-ed service fraternity, Alpha Phi Omega.

Procedures

I conducted various types of interviews including ethnographic, informant, and narrative (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Spradley, 1980), which may also be understood as intensive interviews (Charmaz, 2006), with members of the TOMS campus club at BGSU. I began by interviewing my former student and club founder with whom I had the closest relationship and expected could give me the most insight into the original vision and communication processes of the club. All in-depth interviews lasted at least an hour and although the interviews were unstructured, I often drew from a list of potential questions that I detailed for my campus Human Subjects Review Board (HSRB; see Appendix A for questions filed with BGSU's HSRB). HSRB approval as an

exemption was received for this ethnography in June of 2014 (See Appendix B) as part of a class project. Although as an HSRB exempt study I did not need to receive written permission from interviewees, I did so as a matter of transparency to all participants by asking them to read and sign a consent form before the interviews (see Appendix C). Following suggested grounded theory principles (Flick, 2009), sampling for in-depth interviews corresponded to my need to develop theory (e.g., theoretical sampling; Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Next interviews were decided upon following line-by-line readings (Charmaz, 2006) of previous interviews that I had recorded and had transcribed for payment by a third party. During each review I noted emerging themes, next questions, and people I might wish to interview next until I believed I reached saturation. Transcripts, meeting notes, and information collected was kept in a secure location to protect confidentiality. It was stored in a password protected database at all times. The principal investigator (e.g., this author) and her faculty adviser were the only parties allowed to see all data collected; the transcriptionist heard twelve, in-depth interviews. Some information from this study has been presented at a professional conference, but all names were changed to protect identities, and all participants signed releases to allow for the presentations as well as future publications.

As per advice from advocates of participant observation, I kept fieldnotes and memos to help organize my observations of communication practices. The notes included episodic details from club meetings and events, quotes and more information identified as important by researchers and previously detailed in this paper (DeWalt, & DeWalt, 2002; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Jorgensen, 1989; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Spradley, 1980). The memos, often written extensions of my fieldnotes, included my ideas about possible themes related to details in my fieldnotes (Creswell, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967) Since March 4, 2014, I attended hour-

long meetings, approximately 25 per year. I have also taken part in a minimum of seven club events, including two Trivia Crack Live, two Start Something that Matters, two One Day Without Shoes, and two Campus Fest events, as well as participated in countless conversations during meetings and informal interviews while prepping for events. I moved into digital spaces because that is where club members communicated as they forwarded the goals of their club. As a member, I consistently collected content from corporate and club websites, Facebook pages, YouTube videos, and mass emails sent to me as a TOMS shoe purchaser and TOMS community/tribe member.

Analysis

First, I manually reviewed transcripts highlighting elements I deemed relevant, making notes in the margins as I worked to understand potential themes (sometimes referred to as codes by grounded theory scholars; see Charmaz, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Miles & Huberman, 1994). I then did the same with meeting/event notes and memos. In doing so, I was following constant comparative principles proffered by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and developed further by Charmaz (2006) which suggests identifying processes as initial codes as they emerge for further investigation in more focused coding later. Although I was influenced by grounded theory methods, particularly the iterative process of analysis, rather than refer to my analysis as *coding* I refer to it as *identifying themes* in an effort to underscore my work as qualitative and humanistic. As themes emerged, I found the process of clustering to be particularly helpful in understanding those that could be included in the same clusters with one theme label that seemed most salient and the best descriptor overall (like identifying conceptual codes; see Charmaz, 2006). Following grounded theory principles, I worked not to force my findings into an already developed theory but to instead allow themes to emerge from information collected (Glaser and Strauss, 1967).

Dialogue and discussion with my faculty advisor were also important to my remaining reflexive during the recursive process of analysis while conducting an ethnography and while building theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). She was also important in helping me identify and bracket my biases, as well as suppositions about some theories and the participants of my study (Chan, Fung & Chien, 2013). Given the embodied practice of ethnography, new insights gained in my graduate classes and while writing papers for those courses, discussions with my cohort, my work as an instructor and research assistant, questions posed to me by my graduate committee during the defense of my preliminary examination and dissertation topic proposal, and in general the experiences of being a graduate student while conducting my research affected what I collected and analyzed, and ultimately my understanding of the TOMS club experience. I often referred to my fieldnotes and memos while writing class papers, sometimes reviewing literature on potential themes and creating conceptual maps to illustrate emerging theories (See Figure 3).

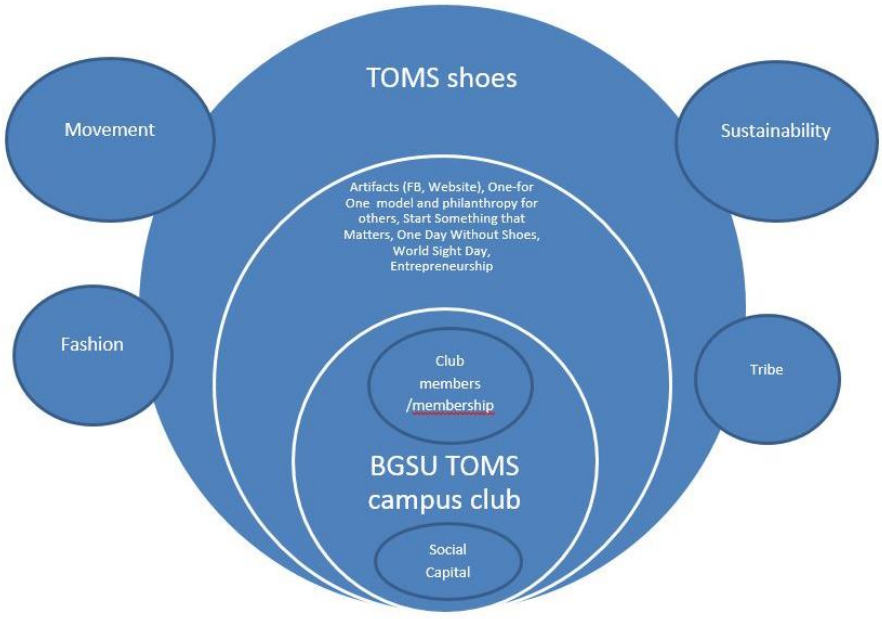


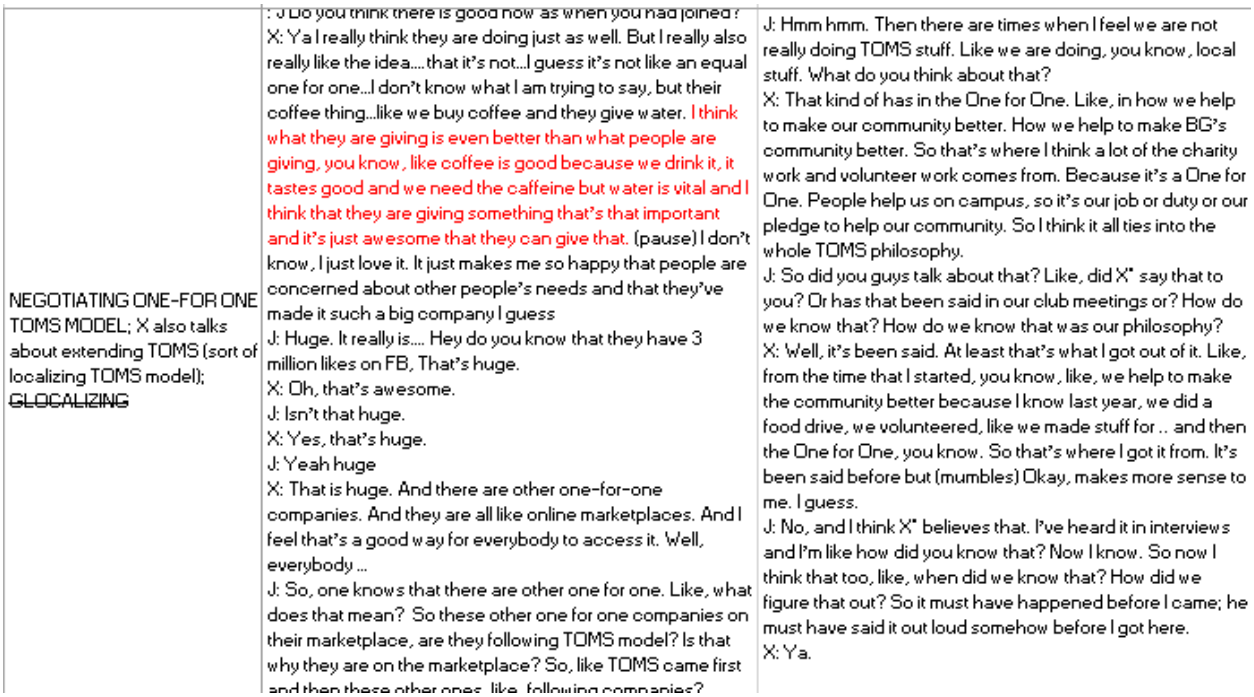
Figure 3. **Conceptual Map of Emerging Theories as of May, 2015**

Figure 3 illustrates several concepts – including movement, fashion, and tribe membership - that seemed important to the TOMS corporation early in my investigation but were not ultimately, fully embraced by club members. For instance, the tribal theme was one that TOMS introduced in 2014 that never seemed to catch on in club conversation. I heard only one member say that word once (maybe twice because I do not want to overstate my case) in all of the time I spent with club members. Therefore, concepts like "tribe" were not as important to club members as were others. The conceptual map detailed in Figure 3 remained editable in my mind to allow for information to emerge regarding the saliency of connections as my research continued.

Often after conversations transpiring during classes and walks with my faculty advisor, I would ask club members during casual conversations or in-depth interviews what they thought of my working suppositions. For example, after discussing with my advisor that only a few club members were of color I realized race may be an issue and asked future interviewees if they thought all members were treated fairly. When another member of my graduate committee suggested club interactions may be rooted in play I asked future interviewees how they would characterize our club activities – as social interaction, work, play, etc. It was also my faculty advisor who helped me realize I may have a connection to club members because of my son, and that they may have a connection to me because of their mothers or previous teachers.

I began placing themes that were ever more focused into an Excel file along with quotes from interviews as I worked to clarify what I was seeing and hearing. In putting together the file, I quoted from my own memos and notes less often than transcriptions, deciding that an analysis of my analyses was too insular to offer the most accurate account. To be clear, I still used my notes to help decide themes but I did not depend on them as I developed my Excel file to provide

evidence for themes present, preferring club members' explanations to mine. Please see Figure 4 for examples:



NEGOTIATING ONE-FOR ONE TOMS MODEL; X also talks about extending TOMS (sort of localizing TOMS model); ~~GLOCALIZING~~	: J Do you think there is good now as when you had joined? X: Ya I really think they are doing just as well. But I really also really like the idea....that it's not...I guess it's not like an equal one for one...I don't know what I am trying to say, but their coffee thing...like we buy coffee and they give water. I think what they are giving is even better than what people are giving, you know, like coffee is good because we drink it, it tastes good and we need the caffeine but water is vital and I think that they are giving something that's that important and it's just awesome that they can give that. (pause) I don't know, I just love it. It just makes me so happy that people are concerned about other people's needs and that they've made it such a big company I guess J: Huge. It really is.... Hey do you know that they have 3 million likes on FB, That's huge. X: Oh, that's awesome. J: Isn't that huge. X: Yes, that's huge. J: Yeah huge X: That is huge. And there are other one-for-one companies. And they are all like online marketplaces. And I feel that's a good way for everybody to access it. Well, everybody ... J: So, one knows that there are other one for one. Like, what does that mean? So these other one for one companies on their marketplace, are they following TOMS model? Is that why they are on the marketplace? So, like TOMS came first and then these other ones, like, following companies?	J: Hmm hmm. Then there are times when I feel we are not really doing TOMS stuff. Like we are doing, you know, local stuff. What do you think about that? X: That kind of has in the One for One. Like, in how we help to make our community better. How we help to make BG's community better. So that's where I think a lot of the charity work and volunteer work comes from. Because it's a One for One. People help us on campus, so it's our job or duty or our pledge to help our community. So I think it all ties into the whole TOMS philosophy. J: So did you guys talk about that? Like, did X" say that to you? Or has that been said in our club meetings or? How do we know that? How do we know that was our philosophy? X: Well, it's been said. At least that's what I got out of it. Like, from the time that I started, you know, like, we help to make the community better because I know last year, we did a food drive, we volunteered, like we made stuff for .. and then the One for One, you know. So that's where I got it from. It's been said before but (mumbles) Okay, makes more sense to me. I guess. J: No, and I think X" believes that. I've heard it in interviews and I'm like how did you know that? Now I know. So now I think that too, like, when did we know that? How did we figure that out? So it must have happened before I came; he must have said it out loud somehow before I got here. X: Ya.

Figure 4. **More focused themes from 2016-2017**

I additionally conducted a visual analysis of artifacts that club members shared and referred to in meetings and in digital communication with club members. Analysis of visual material can include text, sound and composition (Rogoff, 2002), which allowed me to explore themes I saw repeating in emails from the TOMS corporation and the club, YouTube videos created by TOMS and the club, as well as pictures and posts on TOMS club and corporate websites and Facebook pages. Given the quantity of material that I could examine, I narrowed my visual analysis to a sample of communication either sent to me or shown to me during campus club general meetings or events. I argue those artifacts are most relevant to TOMS or club members or they would not have sent or shown them. Also, the elements were part of my TOMS experience and often part of other participants' experiences and therefore important

shared communication among club members. I adapted the photograph codes that Lutz and Collins (1993) used as they analyzed photographs from *National Geographic* magazines in an effort to better understand how working class Americans might understand the world outside of the United States. Specifically, I removed three of 22 codes from their list (e.g., aggressive activity or military personnel or weapons shown, female nudity, male nudity) because they were not relevant to any pictures or videos I had seen from the TOMS corporation or club. I replaced them with three of my own codes (e.g., type of music, gender of voiceover announcer, transcription of voiceover script, transcription of words used in the chyron of the video or placed on the picture) to better account for the audio and textual elements that often accompanied pictures or videos I had collected from websites, YouTube, etc. For a detailed description of the codes, please see Appendix D.

My goal has been to remain open and resourceful in the face of change as I investigated the communication and culture of a small but dedicated group of individuals who comprised the BGSU TOMS campus club. In the end I sought to create a thick description, explained by Geertz (1973) as "… a multiplicity of complex conceptual structures, many of them superimposed upon or knotted into one another, which are at once strange, irregular, and inexplicit, and which he [the researcher] must contrive somehow first to grasp and then to render" (p. 10). I have worked to leave a valid, written impression of the TOMS campus club community at BGSU to add to our understanding of Millennials, social enterprises like TOMS, and the way in which Millennials connect with them.

To that end, in the following chapters I discuss what I argue are the three, primary or overaching themes that emerged from my time with club members. I have separated the themes to further explicate theory that I am building about Millennials and social enterprises, but I

contend that in reality, the themes are very much connected. They are also different, however, and I have divided them to better explain characteristics particular to each theme.

CHAPTER 3: LIVING PRECARITY - WORKING AND ORGANIZING IN 2016

I am a peer educator, I am a member of SWN [Student Wellness Network], I am vice-president of the TCOM Student Association, and I also do BG on TV. (a club member's personal communication with author, April 6, 2015)

Precarity & Positionality

What is it like to go to bed at night wondering if your college education will get you a good job when you graduate? How do you find the energy to consistently attend classes, work for a paycheck, and volunteer for several organizations in an effort to evidence your personal ethics, eagerness to work, and ability to learn new skills? What is it like to live a life in limbo, wondering what work may be presented to you next that you may not be prepared for but better take because you do not know when you will next be presented with an opportunity? Standing (2016) gives a name to people who may see themselves in the answers to those questions. He identifies them as members of the *precariat* - an emerging class of people working in temporary or unstable jobs such as part-timers, independent and dependent contractors, and interns. He counts women, the working poor, migrants, minorities, and Millennials among the precariat, adding that a sign of precarity membership is that members' identities, securities (of all types including income and employment security), and careers are not furthered by the work they do for a living. He argues that precariats are denizens, or people who do not enjoy the full rights of a society, and he asserts that they will remain denizens until they advocate to upgrade their status to citizens, which may require a concerted movement to accomplish. Precarity, according to Standing, consists of positions that people throughout the world increasingly enter that is influenced by the politics and policies of globalization. (Standing, 2014). I contend that the Millennial club members I studied were not just a part of the precariat but that I witnessed them

living the life of precarity, and saw that my life was similarly in tenuous balance. This chapter explores how some people organize, socialize, and work while living precarity.

Interestingly, TOMS club members did not say that they were members of the precariat but they worked as though they were. I argue that I can say that as a member of that class that has been emerging for a while (Standing, 2014, 2016). I remember a phone call that I had with my dad in 1987 or so while I was attending a college in a small, Midwest city. As a White man who had inherited wealth and parlayed it into a successful career as a research engineer, he told me in that phone conversation that "the economy isn't bad, it's the media making us think that it's bad." I responded, "No Dad, it's bad. I don't think I'm going to find a good job" and I meant it. I was living in an era of mergers that had not yet affected men like my dad, men Standing (2016) might categorize as *salariats* because they earned comfortable salaries as they enjoyed other benefits (e.g., health care and the promise of pensions) as employees of large corporations. The mergers had begun affecting me, however, as I pursued a career in media while wrapping up my undergraduate education in telecommunications. I started to think of myself as lucky that I had a part-time job with no health care benefits and no time off during holidays, because at least I was getting paid to learn the industry. To earn my degree I had to complete an internship and I did, unpaid. As my graduation date grew nearer, I felt more and more betrayed by my mentors and teachers who talked in classes about 15% raises and job openings in the media when it was clear in my job search that full-time employment would be extremely difficult to find, a living wage may not be one that I would be paid in my first full-time job, and 15% annual raises were nothing short of a pipe dream. I was despondent at times and angry at others that no one thought to mention how difficult life would be despite the fact I had a college education and several years of work experience in my field of study. A few years after graduation, I once asked a few of my

friends if they felt that they would ever enjoy the same quality of life as their parents and the majority of us figured we would not. We supposed we would not be joining the middle class even though we worked more than 40 hours per week, were White, and all of us had completed four years of college. I did not know then to call myself a precariat but that is certainly a label that resonates with me for the life I led then and even the life I lead now. I saw TOMS club members going through similar machinations with even more intensity than I had undertaken in the 80s and it is in part through that lens that I now understand some of their conversations and actions. Thus, *living precarity* is the overarching theme that I explore in this chapter, detailing subthemes and supporting evidence from my notes and interview transcriptions to make clear what constitutes the overall theme and how I reached those conclusions.

Eventing

I did not immediately identify club conversations or activities as ones that could comprise the theme of "living precarity." It took me awhile to figure out what club members were doing together and how they were communicating about it. As I participated in club activities, I first noticed we were hosting a lot of events – fundraisers for local charities that either we or event participants identified as preferred recipients. More than once the leader of the club, reminded us that "TOMS is a for-profit company and we don't need to raise money for them." Thus, we raised money for local nonprofit organizations that members usually called *charities* that in our estimation did need our donations.

As I became more focused in my analysis, I began thinking of those activities as *eventing*, trying to create a term to describe the whole process of hosting an event. We painted paper banner after paper banner to hang in the university's student union while we *tabled* (a term club members use to describe when they sit at tables in the middle of the union and promote

upcoming events, try to recruit new members, or sell baked goods to raise money). We talked in executive board or general meetings about our marketing campaigns to drum up participation, we made or bought items that event participants needed to use during the event, and we arrived before the events to help set up and stayed later to help teardown. Eventing is meant to denote a certain magnitude of work that I variously initially identified as clubbing, socializing, volunteering, serious play (borrowing from Turner, 1982), recognizing work in play, busy being busy, normalizing constant work, and always working. In an effort to determine what club members thought of eventing, I asked several members who were among the last that I interviewed how they would describe the activities we did together, wondering if we thought of it as play, work, or what. One club member said she considered club activities as fun work, but work:

> *Jeanette*: And then how do you see, like, would you say that we, like, what do we do with the club? Do we play, do we, what do we do?
>
> *Club Member*: As a club, I mean, we definitely have fun with what we do, but more so just trying to, it's mostly like going out and reaching out to more people and sharing what TOMS company is about. So that way, they can, like, connect with us in that aspect in that we are just trying to help other people. I feel that most of our events [are] mostly just raising awareness for other people …
>
> *Jeanette*: Right.
>
> *Club Member*: Like yes, with ODWS [One Day Without Shoes, TOMS corporate and club signature event] we are being social, giving the word out, like it's fun and it doesn't feel like work, but we are doing work. We are raising awareness and we are doing something that matters. (personal communication, February 1, 2016)

Similarly, another club member shared that she viewed our activities as something more than play, too:

> *Jeanette*: And, but at the same time, I feel we socialize a lot in those GA meetings [TOMS club general attendance meetings also called general meetings].
>
> *Club Member*: Yeah, I feel like, I guess, yeah, our meetings are a little bit more laid-back, so we socialize. But it's not like we put on social events. You know (overlap).
>
> *Jeanette*: I agree. We don't do dinners and potluck parties. Do you think we play? Are we more business or are we more play?
>
> *Club Member*: I think we are more business, from my perspective.
>
> *Jeanette*: I do too.
>
> *Club Member*: Because if we were more play, I feel like we wouldn't be doing anything that we do.
>
> *Jeanette*: Or are we playing at business?
>
> *Club Member*: I think, I mean, I don't know.
>
> *Jeanette*: And play doesn't have to be bad. I mean, are we sort of exploring how to do business?
>
> *Club Member*: Maybe, I think, I don't know. We are doing our business as we should be doing, but then also adding like an element of play there, because we always have fun. We say that Trivia Crack went so terribly, well, we're here and we are going to have fun. And that was what happened. So every event, no matter how…we make sure to have fun, you know? (personal communication, January 29, 2016)

In those remarks I heard the real effort and work at the core of *eventing*. I also heard what Turner (1982) might identify as play although the club members quoted were using the common

understanding of play. In Turner's anthropological approach to play, he recognizes play as a simulation or practice for something more serious such as work. Also to be clear about something else I recognized in members' responses to these probes and others, the social and relational aspects of club activities were important to members I interviewed and I discuss that in subsequent chapters. However, that we did real work as we hosted our events was also recognized by club members and, therefore, became something notable in and of itself. I began to think of the work as even more salient when I realized we were not getting paid for it. In fact, many times when we raised money during an event, we gave away the majority of the money raised to other nonprofit organizations and did not keep the money for our club, let alone individual members. Why, I wondered in my notes -- and eventually asked of more than one member -- do we give away a lot of our money instead of building up our own treasury? Again, I relate the answer to this question less to the precarious work discussed in this chapter and more to the affective intensities that I talk about in the next chapter. Worth reiterating, I do not believe that the three, main or overarching themes discussed in this dissertation are discrete categories. I contend that they all intersect in material and immaterial ways important in describing how club members connect with TOMS, talk about TOMS and the club, and live their lives as Millennials. The themes are different, though, and I have separated them in chapter form in order to explicate those differences.

Also worth noting, "doing something that matters" mentioned by the club member in the first quote is very close to *Start Something That Matters,* the title of TOMS founder, Blake Mycoski's (2011) book. We can clearly see the language of doing something meaningful espoused by TOMS being reiterated by at least one club member describing her perception of club activities. TOMS communication became on more than one occasion our club's directive.

Not only, then, were we doing what some of us perceived as work, but we were doing work influenced by TOMS. Eventing did not encompass all of the club's work, however. I began to see a recurring subtheme of work in leadership and eventually developed - *laboring in servant leadership*.

Laboring in Servant Leadership

The founder of our club introduced me to the idea of servant leadership explaining in one of our interviews it is "where your own end goal is the success of someone else. Or being able to provide resources for another individual that they will be able to gain [from your leadership] because of their location or because of different circumstances." Greenleaf (1977) is credited with coining the term and online at the Greenleaf Center for Servant Leadership a servant leader is currently described as someone who "shares power, puts the needs of others first and helps people develop and perform as highly as possible" ("What is servant leadership," n.d., para. 5). Many other scholars have theorized about the concept and style of that leadership (see van Dierendonck, & Patterson, 2010), and even developed assessment instruments to measure variables of a servant leadership theory in various populations (Dennis, Kinzler-Norheim, & Bocarnea, 2010). Service to others is at the core of this leadership style and certainly an influence for the frequent leader and founder of the TOMS campus club. I argue he was drawn to that style for the same reason he was drawn to TOMS – it evokes a sense of purpose, perhaps even a belief in a higher calling. That is an idea I explore further in another chapter.

In this chapter, however, I want to continue focusing on what it means to live a life of precarity which I contend always involves work of some kind and often lower than expected pay, if the work is paid for at all. In the case of TOMS club leaders, there is no salary or wage involved in their labor whatsoever. They did not complain about a lack of financial

compensation, however, but they did express their recognition and acknowledgement of laboring in leadership. Leadership is hard work and not everyone wants to do it, as the club founder discovered when he asked another club member to lead the club for a semester, and then ended up returning later to lead, again:

> *Club Founder*: … like beginning this semester she had to go back and take all her exams and stuff and so I was, like, I'll take this back under my wings and take some weight off your shoulders. That's why this semester we are more active and I think she can tell the difference. (personal communication, February 13, 2015)

Another club member noticed the lack of labor in leadership, too, when someone other than the founder was president of the club:

> *Jeanette*: So what do you think strengths and weaknesses were [when the founder wasn't club president]?
>
> *Club member*: Strength was definitely our willingness to be there and give time and do things but the problem was there wasn't a strong [leader]. I am not saying that [the first successor] wasn't a strong leader but she didn't have, like, all those things lined up for us to do. So we just kind of sat around and then at the last minute we'd like do things together. So, we were really good at throwing things together but I feel like just planning is something we definitely need to work on. (personal communication, February 28, 2015)

More than one of us had expectations about how much labor should be involved in leadership. I argue that was tied to standards our founder had set and modeled, but had not thought to offer training for until he tried a second time to find a new president. Another club member recognized the difference in the founder's approach to his second successor:

> *Club member*: I think he [the club founder] is training her.
>
> *Jeanette*: Oh, okay.
>
> *Club member*: Ya, I think he is training her to be the president, which I think is nice because I don't think [the first successor] had the same training, so with him training [the second successor] it's going to be better. Like, more successful. She won't feel like she's thrown into it because she has, like, training and she has time to think about it and make different decisions. Whereas I feel [the first successor] might have been kind of thrown into it, like, maybe she just accepted it because she didn't think. (personal communication, April 6, 2015)

If the TOMS club were mostly a social club would leadership training have been necessary? I contend the fact that at least one of us perceived the presence of training indicated how seriously the founder treated the leadership position and how we all normalized that. In fact, we kept working (e.g. "throwing stuff together") despite the lack of compelling leadership (as we tacitly defined it together) because we remembered what to do and followed the example already set.

I later learned that the reason the first successor was "thrown into" the position was because the founder's grades had slipped and he was not allowed to hold the position of club president until he regained a certain grade point average. This was something I did not know for a year and only found out by chance after interviewing the club's faculty advisor. I decided to talk with the advisor because I had so few face-to-face encounters with him. I had only seen him at one club meeting and one club event. He knew many important things that I did not know, despite the fact I had spent hundreds of hours with club members by the time I interviewed him, and he had spent comparatively fewer. In the following interview excerpt, the advisor revealed two of the biggest facts about the club's founder that I had not been privy to:

> *Faculty Advisor*: So last year he couldn't be president because he was academically ineligible. So as the advisor, I was reading all these emails, and I am like okay, what are you going to do now because you can't be an officer? And, who's the treasurer now?
>
> *Jeanette*: [supplies the name]
>
> *Faculty Advisor*: He's like [the treasurer] is going to be president. I am like okay. But *you* can't. You know, as advisor I have to tell you that you officially cannot be an officer in this, because now he is not a student—do you know what I mean—he is working or whatever, he cannot afford it. Anyway, so part of it is he was doing all this stuff for TOMS… (personal communication, October 22, 2015)

I was flabbergasted to learn that the founder had been forced to appoint someone else as club president, and that he was no longer even a student at the university. This was a very different story than the founder told me when I asked him about the change in leadership during an interview eight months before I talked to the faculty advisor:

> Jeanette: So did I miss the vote? Not that I care. I am just like, is she president? Whaaat?
>
> *Club Founder*: So what happened was that this fall I got a job. Did I tell you about the business fair? I think I did. So ya, this fall I was on a camp for teacher training and I am supposed to be like speaking about working in the camp.
>
> *Jeanette*: For Tim Hortons?
>
> *Club Founder*: Right. So I thought it was going to be a lot of work in fall. So I was like "[Successor] I am going to step down and let you step up." So just because at that point it was like (keeps going off recorder) all those meeting, you know, so. Then, this semester I could tell that [successor] was really weighed down with everything and so, I was like I

> will take TOMS back … I wasn't really pleased with that so much, how it went that way. (personal communication, February 13, 2015)

It would be easy to suggest that the founder was saving face when he told his story to me, or even that he knew I was writing an account of the club and he did not want to look less than his best in that account. Goffman (1959) laid the groundwork for our understanding of how people perform in certain ways hoping to control impressions we may form about them. Managing face is something Goffman (1956) additionally suggested was what people did for themselves and for others when in uncomfortable social encounters. That I believe only partly explains this discrepancy in stories. I additionally argue that it is as important to recognize that labor of any kind requires an investment of time, and the founder was spending a lot of time taking care of his club creation. The faculty advisor in the earlier quote had speculated about the founder's ability to run a club and study full time, too. Without good time management skills, a person can become overwhelmed with responsibilities and not realize they are in trouble until too late. He or she may even think they have the solution to their troubles well in hand, which I proffer in part could explain the disparate accounts. Regardless, labor costs the laborer something, always, and that adds to the value of what is produced. Labor is at the core of traditional Marxian economics, particularly as it is explained in the labor theory of value. Prychitko (2008), writes that the theory is rather simple: "the value of a commodity can be objectively measured by the average number of labor hours required to produce that commodity" (para. 3). Classical economists such as Adam Smith (1776) had discussed the theory before Marx, but Marx modified it by putting more emphasis on time spent laboring than earlier economists (Prychitcko, 2008).

After attending several club meetings, I started calculating the hours that club members worked. They met for an hour on Tuesdays for the executive meetings. They met for an hour on

Thursdays for general meetings. They sometimes met for an hour or two after general meetings to prepare for that month's event. Events generally required five hours of time on the days they were held. Emailing and texting back and forth I guessed added another two hours at least to their monthly investment. At a minimum I estimated club members of the executive board spent at least 17 hours a month on club business. Plus, many of them belonged to as many as two other student organizations that I assumed also required time commitments. Finally, most of them were full-time students - meaning they were taking at least four classes totaling at least 12 credit hours requiring at least that much time of classwork per week. I had wondered how they juggled all of those obligations and realized when I heard that the founder had not kept up with his grades that perhaps not everybody was successfully negotiating that process. Worth noting, however, more than five members who were a part of the club's origination graduated as of December 2016. Clearly, members of the TOMS campus club did manage to participate in club activities and still stay in school with a certain grade point average. Two of the five graduates, in fact, were presidents of the club for at least one semester. But most of us recognized that as much as we labored, the founder labored more because he had more invested in the club's success:

> *Club member*: Because when you start something, sometimes it is really hard to let it go. If you know that, like, without you it probably wouldn't be what it is, I think he kind of has this thing with it, so it's kind of hard. So I definitely try to not step on his toes, you know, because I can understand that. If I had to start something from the ground up, and it's doing really well, I think I would be kind of like the tiger mother or the helicopter mom. (personal communication, April 6, 2015)

That said, another one of the graduates shared that she stopped attending TOMS club meetings to concentrate on her studies. She needed to cut work from one place so that she could manage

working in another. I argue that further evidences the labor involved in club activities, particularly for people in leadership positions. One club member speculated that because of the labor, some people did not even join the club:

> *Jeanette*: But do we have members from outside the exec board?
>
> *Club member*: Not really. I think people don't really understand what [the club] is. Like initially when they think it's just about shoes. So I think that's why people don't really stick around much. Once they realize there's way more than the shoes.
>
> *Jeanette*: Oh, it's like we are not going to do all those events.
>
> *Club member*: Ya. (personal communication, April 6, 2015)

I additionally argue we were doing work benefitting TOMS even when we were not doing something directly related to Mycoski's book, TOMS mission, or giving to any of TOMS partners detailed on their corporate website. At every event we hung TOMS banners that mimicked the TOMS flag logo, not the footprint logo of the club. Also, if we went into detail at events about the work that we did we always related it to the TOMS corporation and its mission rather than making our club seem independent of TOMS. The club members' work, I finally decided, could also be understood as labor for capitalism, albeit a form that social entrepreneurs might want to nuance as a new and improved type of capitalism because nonprofit goals are furthered, too.

Laboring as an Entrepreneur

I argue that *laboring as an entrepreneur* is another subcategory or subtheme of the overall theme *living precarity*. Similar to *laboring in servant leadership*, laboring as an entrepreneur implies a certain element of leadership. This subtheme is most profoundly evidenced by the founder of the club, but I observed communication and actions by many

members that could fit the subcategory leading to the overall theme. I contend it was embraced by all club members as they hosted each year an event in support of Mycoskie's *Start Something that Matters* book. The first time they hosted the event was in January of 2014. During that time, members posted the following event description on the club's Facebook page:

> This new and exciting event will is not just for those who want to start a business, but for those who strive for more than just financial success. How this event will work is that we will show the TOMS 20 minute documentary, and then we will break everyone up into groups, and each group will go through the book chapter by chapter with the help of our expert facilitators who are student leaders or have started something that matters to them.

In the above Facebook post, business, financial success, and leadership were promoted alongside ideas of passion and striving for more, sentiments that aligned with concepts Mycoskie promotes in his book.

I do not think it is surprising that club members would be influenced by entrepreneurial concepts detailed in Mycoskie's book, because those concepts were supported by TOMS corporate marketing materials that they shared with our club and I presumed other clubs that asked for the information. The information was also available online at TOMS.com as resources for clubs to use. *Start Something that Matters*, for instance, is the name of a book, dvd, and printed guide with ideas for how to discuss key concepts. Members could and did refer to all of those as they hosted the event.

What did surprise me, though, was that they continually created new events seemingly unrelated to TOMS that still exhibited their dedication to laboring in entrepreneurship as learned by TOMS corporate communication. "Trivia Crack Live" was the first such event, followed a

year later by "Giving Spree." The club founder explained where he got the idea of "Trivia Crack Live" and how he changed it up to create the event for the club:

> *Club Founder*: I mean, there's a game called Trivia Crack. I don't know if you know that.
>
> *Jeanette*: I didn't.
>
> *Club Founder*: Okay. So there's like an actual app (papers rustling). There's a game that's part of those, umm, current times [talking away from the recorder, showing the game to Jeanette].

He continued:

> *Club Founder*: So, I wanted to play Trivia live at a restaurant in Perrysburg and that night I was like we should do that and I was like Trivia Crack's real popular and so we kind of named it after that. Then we'd get twice as many people by just saying Trivia Live, you know what I mean? … Right, so the game Trivia Crack isn't my idea or our idea; making it into a live game is.

Then he explained how he turned it into something to benefit charities identified by participants who came in groups of five people and told us in advance who they would be raising money for:

> *Club Founder*: Essentially, it's a community fundraising outreach event. It's kind of, like, an outreach thing because we honestly can't really have a fundraiser for us - we can't donate to TOMS - so, like, there's no point raising money for us. Like, we have plenty of money, you know. So we are using it as a fundraiser for the organization that way, essentially. (personal communication, February 13, 2015)

I contend that the emphasis on benefiting others while working for the club was learned from TOMS, as suggested in evidence detailed earlier in this dissertation. I also want to underscore

that the work we did as a club as we hosted our own events required real effort. I talked to one club member following "Trivia Crack Live" and she confirmed that the event we created for our club required a lot of emotional and physical labor:

> *Jeanette*: [The club founder] said there were 26 [TRIVIA CRACK TEAMS IN] the first round…
>
> *Club member*: Ya there was a lot. It was really good. I am so happy with all the turnout. But we did umm union tables the week before so we were there with our big sign like saying "hey guys this is happening" and we made it an option to pre-register but we didn't force anybody to pre-register. We were just like "show up early and like get your teams together and like take your time, no rush." And so I think that it something that was nice how it was kinda like laid back and you just show up if you wanted to. But at the same time that made it a little stressful for us coz we are like we don't know what to plan for.

When I probed further, she downplayed the amount of hours she worked but it was clear that she had worked nearly nonstop, just on the day of the event:

> *Jeanette*: When did your day start yesterday [DAY OF TRIVIA CRACK LIVE]?
>
> *Club member*: I didn't till 8:30 yesterday but I had class.
>
> *Jeanette*: And then you were done last night at 10 and then you probably went to sleep around…?
>
> *Club member*: 12:30 [in the morning]
>
> *Jeanette*: And then you woke back up at 5:30?
>
> *Club member*: Yeah. (laughs) It's usually not that bad though. (personal communication, February 28, 2015)

Another member created "Giving Spree" for our club and worked for months putting the event together. "Giving Spree" was held at the local Walmart store after 10:00 p.m. on a Friday night when there were not a lot of regular shoppers in the store. Teams of about five people met to shop for the local homeless shelter while being timed and competing to buy the most items for $50. The club member had her friend design the logo for the posters, printed the posters, helped promote the event by sitting at tables at the union, pitched the event to city council and administrators to get their support and funding, worked with Walmart managers to coordinate carts and check out participants, and generally led the club through the process of hosting a new event in the community. She did not downplay the amount of work she devoted to the project, unlike the previous member:

> *Club member*: Oh, we came up with the idea in April, right before school ended. So, it ended up being, I dedicated my summer, basically, planning Giving Spree because I would work in the morning, you know, 6 am to 2:30, Monday to Friday, and then I would come home, and I would work on Giving Spree stuff. So, like, I would have a list of things I needed done for Giving Spree and then I would get those things done. And then I would have some dinner and then I'd hang out with my parents and then I'd go to bed. And then I'd wake up the next day, and do it all over again. (personal communication, January 29, 2016)

She explained that she did that much work in part to develop an event that could be replicated by club members in the future:

> *Jeanette*: Right, okay, so countless hours. You spent countless hours on Giving Spree. That's how I felt. And you found the person to do the logo, and it was great. Are we doing it again?

Club member: Yes, absolutely. I did not do all that work for a one-time event. So it will go on again.

Jeanette: So we are going to do it in the fall?

Club member: Yeah. (personal communication, January 29, 2016)

I contend that founding anything, a club or an event for a club, evidences innovation which is core to *innovative entrepreneurship*. Mayhew, Simonoff, Baumol, Selznick, and Vassallo (2016) note the difference between innovative and replicative entrepreneurship positing that innovative entrepreneurs advance new ideas while replicative entrepreneurs are similarly interested in newer products or ideas but do not advance their own in the marketplace. Financial gain is key in both entrepreneurial instances, according to Mayhew et al. who contend that *innovative social entrepreneurship* brings "new processes and products to market that add direct value to all members of society, including anonymous others" (p. 27). That was an idea previously advanced by Gill and Larson (2013) who proposed that wealth creation was a driving force in the entrepreneurial model admired in the United States – that of a technically savvy celebrity advocating innovation and change while making money for himself and others.

Mayhew et al. (2016) also investigated the efficacy of teaching entrepreneurship in universities. They found some successful programs, usually in business colleges, but called for further research into actual outcomes rather than entrepreneurial intentions to better understand if entrepreneurship could be taught (nurtured) or whether entrepreneurs are born with certain personality traits (nature). Chandler (2015) conducted a pilot study of 20 Millennials and suggested that the fact many were college students led them to identify the "opportunity to develop" as a top motivator in their lives, which had more to do with their interest in continued learning rather than a need to innovate. Regardless, Chandler's findings with a very small sample

furthered the notion that Millennials may be drawn to entrepreneurship because of their own career interests rather than a devotion to a company, a motivator generally associated with workers from earlier generations.

With that in mind, I view the communication that I initially considered *laboring as an entrepreneur* a subtheme of *living precarity*, in part, because it is a developing mode of education for Millennials that is tied to their future success in a precarious economy. Whether they learn about entrepreneurship formally, in a college program or education track, or whether they learn it from modeling their work after entrepreneurs like Mycoskie who seem incredibly successful, may not really matter in the end. What is important, I contend, is the presence of the innovation effort. Laboring to develop ideas you can claim as your own and then pointing to those accomplishments adds value to your resume. That is what I believe club members were communicating in part via their words and actions.

Their labor, therefore, was for a reason. It was seemingly given freely, and often at no financial gain for them. Yet I argue as they lived precarity, the Millennial club members were more calculating about their labor than we may imagine. For instance, two of the club members were rewarded for their founding and entrepreneurial efforts by going on a TOMS Giving Trip – fully paid travel to Peru where TOMS gives shoes to children. The experience required labor (people on giving trips work with nonprofit organizations to distribute shoes in person) yet it also involved paid travel outside of the Midwest, which felt like a special experience, according to the members who went on the trip:

> *Club Member*: So what we are doing? We are going to the schools, like, school areas. So like education is really big for them. So when you go to one of the schools, you'll be giving shoes to the children. But also, like, from my understanding—probably ask more

> after our trip is over—but it's more the community partners as well. What was exciting was that they were talking about these older ladies who are over there all the time. When they get big shipments, they are the ones distributing them. And they have some resources and they are, like, you need to talk to them … But it's going to be such an exciting experience.

The club member was excited about laboring during the trip and working with others who also labored for a reason, all while traveling to a different part of the world free of charge. Labor was omnipresent, yet in no way diminished the feeling that the travel was a gift.

The club founder similarly attempted to turn labor into a reward by underscoring his work for TOMS as he searched for a career after college. In 2016 he applied to be a TOMS Key Holder described by TOMS as a position for a person who "will work directly with local partners, as well as TOMS HQ in creating weekly and monthly events to help activate and engage your surrounding community" (personal communication, April 21, 2016). The founder added in a text to me "Hello, what have I been doing for three years?" with the obvious opinion that the work he did as a club founder and leader helped qualify him for the position. He in fact interviewed three times with the company but did not ultimately get the job. Given the difficulty in finding employment discussed earlier, the fact he received any interviews with TOMS may be more surprising than the fact he did not get the job.

An important point regarding laboring as an entrepreneur in particular and living precarity in general: these processes can be shared via face-to-face communication, or via social and new media communication, which moves constant labor into virtual spaces. On May 3, 2015, the founder of the club forwarded an email to me describing how to apply online for a TOMS Global Giver Dream Job – where the winning applicant would "travel to the TOMS

headquarters in Los Angeles, CA and work directly with the Giving team to help provide shoes, sight, water and safe births to the people who need it most" ("Global Giver," 2015, para. 2) and then go on a giving trip to see the distribution of the products/services firsthand. The founder knew that I wanted to go on a giving trip to further my studies of TOMS and suggested that applying for the job might be something I wanted to "take up" (personal communication). I ultimately decided to do so. I managed to cobble together a required 60 second video application that featured information and pictures from my TOMS club experiences as I tried to sell myself as a fan of giving and TOMS. The finished product can still be found on YouTube ("BGSU Dillon TOMS Dream Job," 2015). On June 12, 2015 at 3:18 a.m., I received a confirmation email from DreamJobbing.com that I had successfully uploaded my video application on the DreamJobbing site. The email included tips on how to involve my social networking friends in the application process:

> Upload your application video directly to your social media accounts with a link to your application video on the DreamJobbing site. Encourage friends to write a supportive comment on why you are perfect for this DreamJob. The DreamJobbing team and the DreamMakers that make these jobs happen are following your social conversation (personal communication).

Thus, DreamJobbing.com and by extension, the TOMS corporation, was requesting that members of my social network be an audience for my video, making my desire for a job part of a social media conversation. As suggested, I asked for my friends support (and their friends support) on my personal Facebook page, and I also posted a request for likes and comments on the TOMS club's Facebook page. Ultimately I did not receive the job but I did receive 38 likes in

total, a little more than half of the 70 likes (and 52 comments) that the woman who won the position received.

In summary, eventing, laboring in service leadership, and laboring as an entrepreneur are all subcategories, or subthemes, of *living precarity*. A precarious living is one that consists of wondering if the job we are currently doing will last for a long or short time, or if that job ultimately will lead anywhere or instead necessitate that we exhibit another set of skills to secure a different job. A life of precarity means that everything you do must matter at some level and sometimes you may have to make a case – in fairly public fashion - about how that work is valuable even if no one actually paid you for it. The Millennials I worked with in the TOMS club managed to make their constant work valuable in many ways – in relationship and community building, as well as in skills building that actually led to obvious rewards for at least two club members (e.g., they went on the giving trip and later received job interviews due to their club work). I argue that the Millennials I studied are managing their precarious lives by focusing on activities benefitting others while taking from their experiences as much as they possibly can. I suggest that is something they learned from TOMS, but not something they actually figured out how to make as financially viable as TOMS. I contend that they continue to chase that dream that TOMS has proffered, being propelled forward by affective intensities and triggers that render the dream worthy while also positively affecting TOMS bottom line.

CHAPTER 4: LIVING AFFECT – EXCHANGING DEFINITIONS OF NEED AND CHARITY

I am the TOMS guy on campus. That's literally who people know me as. (the club founder's personal communication with author, February 13, 2015)

People and Positionality

At first it might seem that information in this chapter is merely an extension of previous findings regarding labor and precarity. That is because in my analysis, labor and the members' precarious existence are central to most of my findings. However, they do not describe for me fully the club labor that I participated in. Members of the TOMS club were motivated in various ways to labor for others with no present or promised compensation, and only the hope of opportunities where they could sell skills gained to future employers. Why did they bother? That is a question I asked of the club's faculty advisor who seemed equally impressed by how much the members worked for others. His response centered on the club founder who the advisor had taught when the founder was a first semester freshman:

> *Faculty Advisor*: From what I remember and I know of him, he was definitely somebody who was trying to find his way—do you know what I mean?
>
> *Jeanette*: Yeah.
>
> *Faculty Advisor*: He had some "not fitting in with family" [issues] as I recall. I wouldn't say he was a black sheep. Just somebody different from his brothers especially. I don't know.
>
> *Jeanette*: So maybe he wanted to start something of his own, just to find a place for himself?
>
> *Faculty Advisor*: I think so. I mean, I think that's a lot of it. Especially for kids who, like, invest their time. For instance, they are like…don't really know what to do and how to do

> it. And they find a small group of people or whatever that are similar. (personal communication, October 22, 2015)

Like the faculty advisor, one club member recognized that college students gathered through club activities but she viewed that action as not just a part of the TOMS club experience but general to college life, and more to do with curiosity than anything else:

> *Club member*: I feel that colleges are really the cool place because there are all the students that are passionate. I feel that college kids are more looking for what they want to represent; more looking for causes they want to be involved in. (personal communication, February 28, 2015)

Regardless of motivation for club membership, clearly members were needed for the club to be a club, and more than one member I interviewed cared about who was in the club. In fact, in one particular interview the people were noted as being important to the club's future – not just to its present:

> *Jeanette*: I think you guys are amazingly dedicated. And I don't know what you get out of it.
>
> *Club member*: Ya.
>
> *Jeanette*: Like, what do you get out of it?
>
> *Club member*: I like the people, I think that's probably what I like most. I like seeing our events happen, and they are successful, I like that. I think if we were closer as an exec or knew each other, like, outside of TOMS, I think maybe that could help our club more. Because then we could start doing more social events with each other, and then our friends would be friends, you know.

> *Jeanette*: You think it would be a more natural, you think if you hang out together it would grow naturally or it would just get better?
>
> *Club member*: Ya. .. I think that's why we don't have a big general body because people ask themselves the same question, like, if I join this what am I getting out of that? (personal communication, April 6, 2015)

The advisor's answer, therefore, was in part confirmed by members' own words. Yet worth noting, even as the member above described what "she got out of" the club experience, she mentioned that she liked the club's "events" and qualified them with the adjective "successful." I argue that the labor was never far from any participant's enjoyment of the club experience, although it was labor of a certain kind and with a certain understanding of success. *Purposeful labor* is one term I started calling this labor as I identified initial themes, which I contend could be associated with if not an extension of *laboring in servant leadership*.

Thus, for me the answer that the people made the club experience enjoyable simply did not fully answer the real "why" club members joined or stayed with the club. I contend that it is one thing to gather with others to satisfy a desire to belong, but it is another to exert real effort to help others while you gather, particularly for no financial gain. The advisor and I joked about how when we were doing our undergraduate studies, we did not devote time to causes outside of classes and partying. Our sense of belonging related to school or leisure, not to work without pay. To us, the seemingly selfless labor of club members was unique and notable.

Identity creation was certainly important to involvement as well, particularly to the club's founder. The club's advisor and I agreed that the club was essentially about the founder, and that even when the founder was not officially the club's president, unofficially he still ran the club. With that in mind, one could argue that the work of the founder was work, in part, that was

selfish. He was straight forward about the fact he always wanted to start a club and so he did in order to fulfill his leadership identity:

> *Club Founder*: Just cos I'm, like, I'm a leader. At least I think I am and I wanted to make sure I leave my impact here. You know, like, I was student counselor and class president in high school, and my main goal was to like make it better. Then when I left, like, then when I got here, I was like I want to do some type of organization that would make this campus better than when I got here. And so I was like start an organization. (personal communication, February 13, 2015)

The founder gained a sense of self through his labor and the labor of other club members who helped him become "the TOMS guy" as he called himself in the quote that opened this chapter. Identity is something Althusser (1971) challenged as he observed how individuals could be hailed, and when turning in response, they secured both their identity and their subjectivity – their identity in that they turned when called because they recognized themselves in the call, but in turning they became the subject of the ideology inherent in the call.

The club founder was in fact hailed while I was with him and that began our discussion about his intertwined identity with that of the TOMS corporation. Before our first interview in February of 2015, we stopped at the coffee shop in the student union for coffees and I noticed that "TOMS guy" was what the barista had written on his cup. I asked him about it and that was when he confessed that he was known on campus for his association with TOMS and the TOMS campus club. I contend the moment evidenced identity/subjectivity creation explained by Weedon (2004) as one that relies on "active processes of identification, for example membership of a club or religion…" (p. 7). Clearly, then, identity and subjectivity were recognized by the club founder in his explanation to me, even though he may not have labeled it as such. Portions

of himself were tied up in his position, and recognized and reified by others – literally in their own handwriting.

Similarly, another club member who created and launched a new event for the club recognized herself when she was hailed as she entered into the elevator with the founder, on their way to the club's cubicle on the fourth floor of the student union. She told me with pride as we were later entering the same elevator how she and the founder were once asked by someone exiting the elevator "Aren't you with the TOMS club?" After they responded that they were, the person said "You do cool events" and the club member considered that an important compliment and a moment of affirmation. Her identity with the TOMS club, related to her labor and the labor of other club members, was created in part by that moment and via social interaction.

I also wish to recognize the social capital that I believe was perceived and then evidenced by the founder and the club member when he said "I am the TOMS guy on campus," and when she shared the story of her encounter in the elevator. Bourdieu (2011) proffered that there were three forms of capital: cultural, social, and economic. Economic capital, according to Bourdieu, is the one most easily translatable to money, while cultural and social capital can become economic capital but that is not always the case. Social capital is most often linked to organizing and networking, and therefore the capital that I believe best describes what I observed in conversations that I contend helped explain motivating factors for club membership and club labor. Calling the production of social capital "an endless effort" (p. 87), Bourdieu theorized that the effort was necessary to create relationships that could lead to material gain. He proposed that the effort could be "individual or collective, consciously or unconsciously aimed at establishing or reproducing social relationships that are directly usable in the short or long term" (p. 87). Given the labor-time invested by members in club activities, the mix of individual and collective

achievements of the club, the acknowledged and unacknowledged (yet understood) communication of club members, and the temporal nature of membership, I argue that social capital is a result of membership that some members – particularly the founder – accumulated over time. I suggest that the capital's value is limited for most members to the campus community.

I contend that as important as belonging, and identity and social capital creation were to the club founder and at least one other club member, as I became more focused in my analysis, I realized those elements and initial subthemes were not necessarily the most salient, motivating factors for the continued labor of all club members discussed in the *living precarity* chapter. In terms of identity creation in particular, I argue that the club founder had a much greater identification with the club than any other member. For most club members, identities and subjectivities they created were more collective than individualized, which led me to investigate a theory positing collective subjectivities and pulls to perform. As I participated and watched us labor as a club, I also heard us talk about *passion*, *need*, *charity*, and *helping*. In affect theory, I found propositions that helped explain some of what I thought was going on in the club, particularly "why" members not only labored but labored for the financial gain of others rather than themselves. In the following sections, I suggest that intensities and circuits of exchange integral to affect catalyzed member labor - given freely to TOMS, the TOMS club, and other organizations – in support of particular missions, and done in particular ways that benefited some people over others. In short, the conversations and activities that I observed and took part in over three years leads me to the following findings that are informed, of course, by all that I have argued to this point but I contend are better explained by theories related to affect.

Affect Theory

Gregg and Seigworth (2010) explain that "There is no single, generalizable theory of affect: not yet, and (thankfully) there never will be" (p. 3). They consider it a pluralistic theory that has a foundation in psychoanalysis. They credit Freud (1966) with discussing affect as an act rather than a thought or reflection, beginning an ongoing debate of what affect is and is not. For instance, Seigworth and Gregg contend, affect is a study of motion best described by emotion rather than words, though emotions and affect are not interchangeable (Watkins, 2010). Not all social scientists accept that affect is different from emotions. In fact, Larsen (1984) developed the Affect Intensity Measure to test the strength of emotional responses, which he clearly defined via affect. Tests of affect/emotions still exist as scientists investigate causes of stress, happiness, and sadness (see for example Dunkley, Ma, Lee, Preacher, & Zuroff, 2014; Vasquez, Denson, Pedersen, Stenstrom, & Miller, 2005).

For clarification from a qualitative and often philosophical rather than strictly social scientific perspective, Gregg and Seigworth (2010) refer to the work of Tomkins (1962) and Spinoza (1959) arguing that Tomkins' investigation of positive and negative affects offered an almost biological approach to the debate, while Spinoza's theorizations suggested a disembodied perspective where influences outside of the body and biology became central to the discussion. Gregg and Seigworth contend that discussions of affect now occur in many disciplines to further explorations of phenomenology, cybernetics, robotics, bioengineering, philosophy, psychology, politics, practices of power, postcolonialism, and materialism. They argue that affect is applicable everywhere because it exists everywhere, especially in places that generally go unnoticed.

Thus, affect theorists call on us to explore the unexplored places in all areas of our lives. Moreover, they say, affect is a study of *force* and *in-between-ness* (Seigworth and Gregg, 2010, p. 2). Affect is always *almost* a place, a body, or a moment; affect is present yet still on the outskirts of concrete formation. Affect is somewhat unexplainable but no less real because of it. We know affect exists because we have experienced it. Clough (2010) underscores the point telling us about Massumi's" illustrations" of affect during which monitored participants exhibited brain activity "a half second before they can consciously register the reactions" (pp. 210-211). With that, Clough contends, affect theory addresses what has not yet happened but could and often does. It is the "ah" of "ah hah" or as Gregg and Seigworth (2010) explain, affect is the "hap" of "happiness" (p. 14). Affect describes that shimmer of a moment when you know something is happening - and you may even be able to affect the ending of what is happening - but only if you are open to recognizing the moment.

Importantly and confoundedly, some scholars remember that once someone puts a name to affect, the labels are no longer affective (Gregg and Seigworth, 2010; Watkins, 2010). Yet affect needs to be described in some way and that is usually when emotions enter again into the discussion. Clough (2010) suggests that the narration of affect is often the same as the narration of emotions, and that all of it is about conscious perception which in the end is not really affect (p. 209). Watkins (2010) does not actually dispute that but allows for affect to be both ephemeral and lingering. She supports this claim by borrowing from Spinoza's (1959) differentiation between *affectus and affectio* explaining that *affectus* is "the force of an affecting body" and that *affectio* is "the impact it leaves on the one affected" (p. 269). Cole and Groes (2016) contend that they are aware of the ongoing affect-versus-emotion debate but prefer to think of affect and emotion as part of a circuit that not only allows for the emergent nature of affect, but also

emotional and relational elements and perhaps most importantly, material consequences. More specifically, they define affective circuits as "the social networks that emerge from the exchange of goods, ideas, people, and emotion" (Introduction, para. 10). Cole and Groes are among scholars included in their edited book investigating affect who believe affect cannot be easily defined as only emergent when it is interconnected with closely related social elements that are both immaterial and material depending on cultural context.

At the risk of oversimplifying a complicated process, I will follow more closely the contentions of Cole and Groes (2016) than Clough (2010) as I identify and describe the affective intensities (Massumi, 2002) that I argue are at the root of "why" club members labored in the name of TOMS. I contend that the intensities that are most often described in emotional terms acted as catalyzing elements in a circuit of affect that produced and reproduced a club communication climate essential to continued club labor. I also contend that affect theory's attention to in-betweenness and exchange are essential to understanding club action and communication. We recognized our club in terms often shown or told to us by communication produced by the TOMS corporation that evoked feelings of obligation, responsibility, pity, charity, passion, generosity, privilege, satisfaction, and happiness that I found especially prevalent in in-depth interviews. I posit that our club membership depended on affect, and more particularly on affective labor, and that our shared communication evidenced the affect effect, which we produced, and reproduced as we lived it.

Defining Needy

One of the subcategories or subthemes that I contend evidences *living affect*, is *defining needy*. After much analysis, I developed this subtheme to recognize the way TOMS and TOMS club members identified and discussed who was in need in order to work or raise money for

them. For the founder, the major reason for the club's existence was to help children, as he explained when he recounted why he launched the TOMS club in the first place:

> *Club Founder*: First up it's a popular brand and so I knew that it wouldn't so terribly hard to find people that were going to jump on board. And then, second I think, the most important one was that I love giving back to kids and I knew that if I started something with TOMS, getting that message out there that would make an impact through TOMS. (personal communication, February, 13, 2015)

I probed him further for an explanation as to why helping children was important to him:

> *Jeanette*: So, you shared with me that the kids [focus] kind of came from Tim Hortons. The experience you had with Tim Hortons, is that like, did I understand that correctly? Like, that's when you started wanting to give back to kids?
>
> *Club Founder*: Ya, like, Tim Hortons Children's Foundation they give to kids that come from economically-disadvantaged families. Like I went to camp …
>
> *Jeanette*: Like, more than once.
>
> *Club Founder*: Right, like, when I was going the counselors, they decided who they were going to send back. Now it's, like, we have enough camps where everyone can apply and like they'll still make decisions but like it's not up to your counselor because if you had a really bad experience, like you hated your counselor, and I hated you, like, you know you are a really good kid, like that's not - that's not your fault ... When I was a kid, we had like a really good reputation with our counselors so I kept getting to go back and I think that really helped me realize that I want to do the same thing they did for me.

Economically-disadvantaged children, who Tim Horton's serves with its summer camps that the founder once took part in, helped define "needy people" for the founder. Needy children are

served by TOMS and the TOMS club, too. That is not entirely clear regarding TOMS these days, however. On the TOMS.com homepage as of January 1, 2017, the company explains that its one-for-one model meant that "with every product you purchase, TOMS will help a *person* in need" (emphasis added), which I argue is a more accurate reflection of how sales of TOMS products other than shoes (e.g., eyewear, coffee, birthing kits, etc.) provide matching services for adults as well as children. Yet most club members still understand that the TOMS giving model was originally designed to provide shoes to children who did not have shoes – a concept supported in the company's overview online:

> While traveling in Argentina in 2006, TOMS Founder Blake Mycoskie witnessed the hardships faced by children growing up without shoes. Wanting to help, he created TOMS Shoes, a company that would match every pair of shoes purchased with a new pair of shoes for a child in need. One for One®. ("About TOMS," 2017, para. 1)

One club member confirmed her understanding that the TOMS giving process was designed to help needy children at first and then more people later, such as women who give birth to children:

> *Club member*: Ya, I always hear about the kids. Even when I look further into it, I see a lot of children. There's like children all over the website. So like I do think that kids are getting the most of it.
>
> *Jeanette*: Even the sight thing?
>
> *Club member*: Ya.
>
> *Jeanette*: (Overlap conversation)
>
> *Club member*: Maybe depends on the product. As far as the shoes I think it's more children and younger, maybe. The birthing kits, of course, is for all mothers in need. I

> don't really think the age is a thing, you know? (personal communication, February, 6, 2015)

The affective intensities described above such as "economically-disadvantaged children," "wanting to help," "mothers in need," and "a child in need," comprise in part the subtheme of *defining needy*.

The exchange process of affect was eventually evident to me, too, and one that I argue TOMS corporation more often led and club members followed. As an example, one club member actually did some research for a university class regarding need, using the number of shoes people have as a marker:

> *Club member*: If you go out and survey—which I actually did when I was doing interviews for my project last year— one of my questions I asked people was, how many shoes do you own? And I got anywhere ranging from like 5 to 35 pairs of shoes that a person would own. So I am like, we don't think about how available and accessible shoes are to us. But for other countries, like, there's millions of children and families going without shoes. So I feel on *that* aspect that you don't realize how privileged you are living here as compared to everyone else, like. We don't, like America, we have our own backyard policy that we don't realize it or we don't see it, we don't do anything about it unless something happens in our backyard. There are still people in America, we still have the poor people and the poverty and everything. I think they were saying TOMS even does a shoe drop-off in somewhere like Kentucky, in that area somewhere. (personal communication, February, 1, 2016)

"Poor people" "in our backyard" were in part defined by this club member by the number of shoes they did or did not have, and whether TOMS delivered shoes to them. As TOMS defined

needy, so did we. In fact, one club member saw the club's giving process as a derivative of the TOMS giving model:

> *Jeanette*: How do you understand the TOMS club?
>
> *Club member*: TOMS club is promoting that one-for-one mission that TOMS has, like I said, where they would buy the shoe, they would give a shoe. We do that here locally, with like doing our events, everything, with the proceeds of the fundraisers going to any local charity selected to do so. While TOMS does, like, global impact, we do local impact here.
>
> *Jeanette*: So you see us almost like TOMS the company as the model for the club.
>
> *Club member*: Yes.
>
> *Jeanette*: Okay, so we like model our club…
>
> *Club member*: Yes, TOMS, like the company's kind of like the mother and then TOMS campus club is like the little baby. (personal communication, February, 1, 2016)

This club member's comments were told to me with slight variation by other club members. In essence, we understood who was needy – children and mothers who could not afford basic clothing or services – and that we were emulating TOMS in making sure that as long as we had what we needed as a club, we could give the rest of it away. In the next chapter I investigate further how we localized TOMS global efforts in the process of *placemaking.* In this chapter, however, I argue that part of the affective experience and exchange that leads to the overarching theme of *living affect* is described in emotional terms by TOMS club members and is in part a pedagogical experience with TOMS as the teacher. This assertion follows some of Watkins (2010) theorizations that "Affect is importantly a relational phenomenon and using an exploration of pedagogy to theorize affect highlights this relationality" (270).

Can a relationship be built without face-to-face contact? In part, given the amount of digital communication that I argue built the connection between club members and TOMS, I suggest that it can. However, face-to-face contact was also important in the TOMS club/corporate connection, particularly for the club's founder. For instance, it was a person sent by TOMS who influenced the founder to start the club. The moment was explained by the founder in the following account of when he went to a college campus event that helped him decide to launch the TOMS club:

> *Club Founder*: Yeah spring 2013 Dance Marathon invited TOMS to come and like they had a table and they gave away 10 pairs of sunglasses and that's where I got a copy of the [Start Something that Matters] DVD. It's where I got the idea of starting the TOMS club.
>
> *Jeanette*: So that's when you knew that you could either do To Write Love on Her Arms [another organization funding a cause] or TOMS?
>
> *Club Founder*: Right. The guy that was working, his name's M*. He's a really cool guy. He was with the organization on campus here and…
>
> *Jeanette*: He was alone?
>
> *Club Founder*: Hmm. So he was like you should start this organization on campus. Like a chapter of TOMS. So I didn't even know about it 'til he told me and that's when I, like, that's when I knew it was TOMS… (personal communication, February, 1, 2016)

That initial contact was an affective exchange that led to a lasting relationship with TOMS and the founder, as well as a year-long relationship with M* who was later replaced by D* as a regional, community liaison serving TOMS and TOMS clubs within the United States. D* eventually became someone that the founder called "my good friend" on more than one occasion. I contend that was not a completely misplaced assessment on the part of the founder,

either. D* certainly did seem like a friend of the club as he visited our campus to congratulate the club on signing up the most people out of all TOMS clubs during the 2014 One Day Without Shoes event. While he was at our campus, we held our Style Your Sole event and D* provided TOMS shoes for people to paint at the event. Club members seemed to enjoy his visit on a personal level. One member's description of D* follows:

> *Club member*: He was really chill and he was like I'm really glad to be here. I'm just really glad to see you and what you guys are doing and he was really cool to talk to. (Laughs). He was just so proud of what we've been doing, it was like aww, so sweet. But it was so, he'd come out all the way here. And he was like, but that's kind of my job. It was really awesome to - awesome to have him here. (personal communication, February 28, 2015)

Further evidencing the relational connection that TOMS and the TOMS club developed over time, club members turned to D* as a friend and TOMS insider after we received word in spring of 2016 from the TOMS corporation that their support of campus clubs was changing, as described in the introduction of this dissertation. We did not completely understand how to proceed as a club, and executive team members called D* to find out what he could tell us. I asked for his permission to tape and transcribe the speaker phone conversation and D* granted it to me. The first thing the founder asked was whether the club could continue using the TOMS name in the club's name. D* responded:

> *D**: Oh no, absolutely, I would, you guys have been such an engaged group. To be honest, campus clubs started at TOMS before we had a program for it. And I, you know, imagine that groups like yours will continue to be TOMS campus clubs. But internally, currently we don't have a team but they *will* support that program. So you guys don't

> need to disband your club or stop doing any of your activities. We would actually love [for you to continue]…you guys have been performing for so long… [The change means that future communication will] likely be a digital-based program that will ask you to do more things on social media and things like that. The best way to stay tuned on what's happening on that front is to follow us on social media and we are going to push out those different opportunities. (personal communication, March 24, 2016)

His explanation to us regarding the change was surprising to me in part because I had not known that TOMS was following the lead of college students when it originally created support kits and online resources for campus clubs (e.g., see "Style Your Sole," n.d.). When I heard that, I realized there was an exchange of ideas between the corporation and its supporters that I had not known about. I also imagined during that portion of the conversation that continuing that support must have cost TOMS more than it was gaining from the clubs but I did not learn during that conversation if that was actually the case, nor have I been able to find evidence to support that supposition. I make note of that here to evidence how I continually worked to acknowledge and bracket my biases as I studied TOMS and the TOMS club.

The affective moment continued as the phone conversation continued. The club founder next asked that TOMS remember us the corporation changed their club support program:

> *Club Founder*: Whenever you have something available [as you pilot a new program], you need a trusted group to try it out, like, you know, we'd love to jump on that.
>
> *D*:* Knowing all the stuff you guys have done in BG, I personally in my mind have made a mental note of that and when we get ready to pilot something, I know that you guys will be first in line to do it. I am actually moving into a new job at TOMS. I am not going to be supporting community any more. I'm moving into the learning and development

function. But I will make sure that the team that's going to be running this program will reach out to you guys first.

Club Founder: Awesome. Thank you so much. It really means a lot and you can't see it but we all have really big smiles on our faces. Because this is year 3 for us I think, so we got this far. (personal communication, March 24, 2016)

Not only were club members smiling, but one club member wrote the following as she kept notes on the white board in the room where we were conversing via speaker phone (see Figure 5):

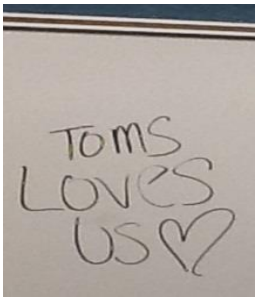
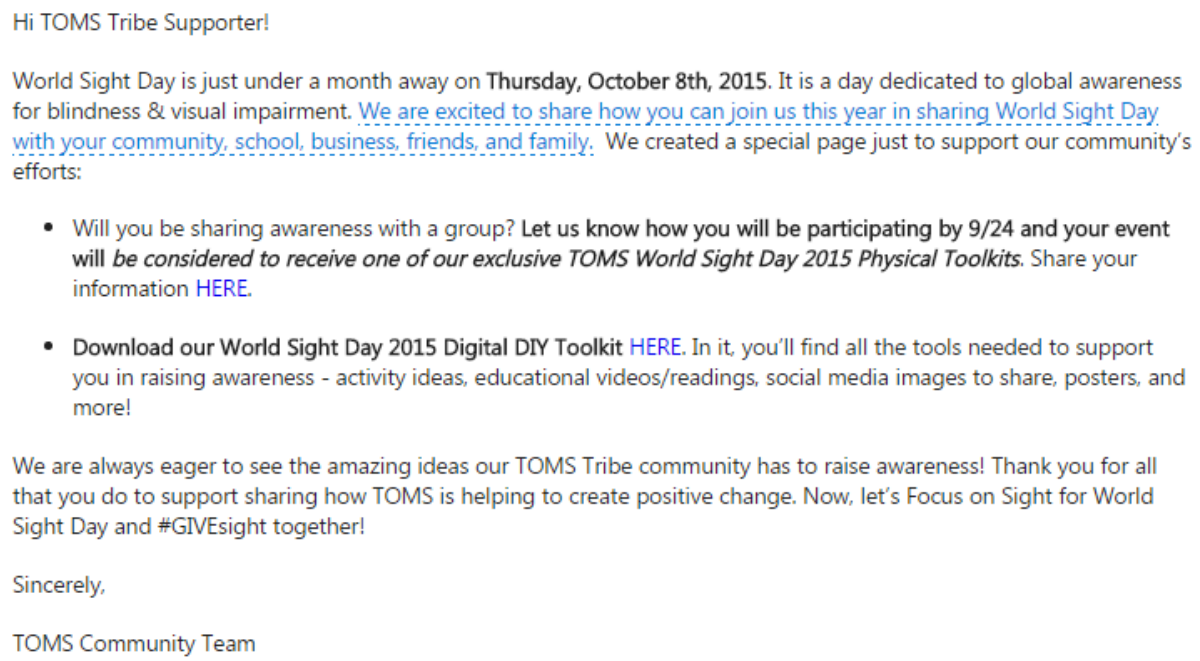


Figure 5. **White board message written as club members discussed TOMS campus club changes with the TOMS representative on March 24, 2016**

I contend that the drawing of the heart on the white board evidenced that the call was an affective exchange that led to emotional responses that furthered the club's relationship with D*(even though he was going to be reassigned to another position in the TOMS corporation), and continued club support of the TOMS corporation in general. This was not the first exchange that evidenced and reproduced social ties. I argue that the club's general meetings were face-to-face experiences that produced and reproduced affective exchanges and continued messages of affect, generally instigated by the TOMS corporation with some well -produced pedagogical and marketing information and tools. For instance, before World Sight Day in 2015, TOMS sent the following message (see Figure 6) to all "tribe" members who were formerly called community

members:



Hi TOMS Tribe Supporter!

World Sight Day is just under a month away on **Thursday, October 8th, 2015**. It is a day dedicated to global awareness for blindness & visual impairment. We are excited to share how you can join us this year in sharing World Sight Day with your community, school, business, friends, and family. We created a special page just to support our community's efforts:

- Will you be sharing awareness with a group? **Let us know how you will be participating by 9/24 and your event will *be considered to receive one of our exclusive TOMS World Sight Day 2015 Physical Toolkits*.** Share your information HERE.
- **Download our World Sight Day 2015 Digital DIY Toolkit** HERE. In it, you'll find all the tools needed to support you in raising awareness - activity ideas, educational videos/readings, social media images to share, posters, and more!

We are always eager to see the amazing ideas our TOMS Tribe community has to raise awareness! Thank you for all that you do to support sharing how TOMS is helping to create positive change. Now, let's Focus on Sight for World Sight Day and #GIVEsight together!

Sincerely,

TOMS Community Team

***Figure 6*. TOMS email sent to Tribe members on October 8, 2015**

I contend words in Figure 5 such as "supporter," "dedicated," "sharing," and "positive" evidenced action and reaction that TOMS hoped for from TOMS "tribe" members, and that "blindness," and "visual impairment" helped defined people in need. The affective terms support how TOMS corporation narrated affect that TOMS club members reiterated in club communication, which led to club action.

For instance, just two days after receiving the email in Figure 5, in our club general meeting the club founder played a TOMS World Sight Day video on YouTube ("TOMS," 2011). The video voiceover told us that "284 Million (repeated three times) in the world are blind or visually impaired," echoing the wording of the TOMS email even though the video had been created three years earlier. We also heard that "90 percent (repeated three times) of people who are visually impaired live in developing countries" that also repeated email verbiage and helped to underscore people of need. We were also told in the video that "80 percent of impairment can

be prevented or cured" and that "there is no reason (repeated three times) for people to be unnecessarily blind," which I argue evidences affective intensities that continue as TOMS offers a resolution in the final screen of the video asking viewers to "Be a part of the solution" ("TOMS," 2011). In the case of this particular video, I argue that verbally the video defined who was needy but visually the video helped define who helps the needy.

The club member who traveled with the founder to Peru on a giving trip was particularly descriptive of the type of needy person TOMS was helping. She called her visit to a school to give shoes to children "humbling" as women of a local charity worked side-by-side our two club members thanking them for bringing shoes:

> *Club member*: So I think that [the local charity is] providing a safe space because when you walk into a Coprodeli school, you walk into the gates and it's like this little safe haven for the children. And it's really neat to look around and it's like, this is their home. Even one of the directors was telling us, "We don't call them by our students. We call them our sons and daughters, because they are our family." But I think TOMS, the reason TOMS is so important, partnering with Coprodeli is because they are providing that incentive piece that they won't be able to provide. So they are providing that encouragement and when we come out to Peru, about four times a year—they have people go to Peru—and when the children get to see us or when the families get to meet us, it's kind of that extra encouragement they need to continue to work hard. Or the families to continue to do their best and try because sometimes they need that spark. (personal communication, June 1, 2016)

Over time I began to realize that TOMS work shown to two club members in person and in videos to the rest of us, evidenced for us not just who needs charity but who does charity, and in

many cases, how charity is done. With that in mind, I developed a subtheme of *doing charity* as part of the overarching theme *living affect*.

Doing Charity

I contend that one of the affective intensities that drew club members to TOMS was that they saw themselves in TOMS marketing images, in one case, quite literally. Once a picture of our club members was the photograph TOMS used on TOMS.com to link TOMS community members to campus club resources (see Figure 7). When I happened upon the photo in the spring of 2015, I asked the founder if he had sent it to TOMS and he said he had through one of our club liaisons. The founder had not realized that TOMS actually used the photo in any way, but he seemed pleased when I told him the social enterprise had actually posted the picture.

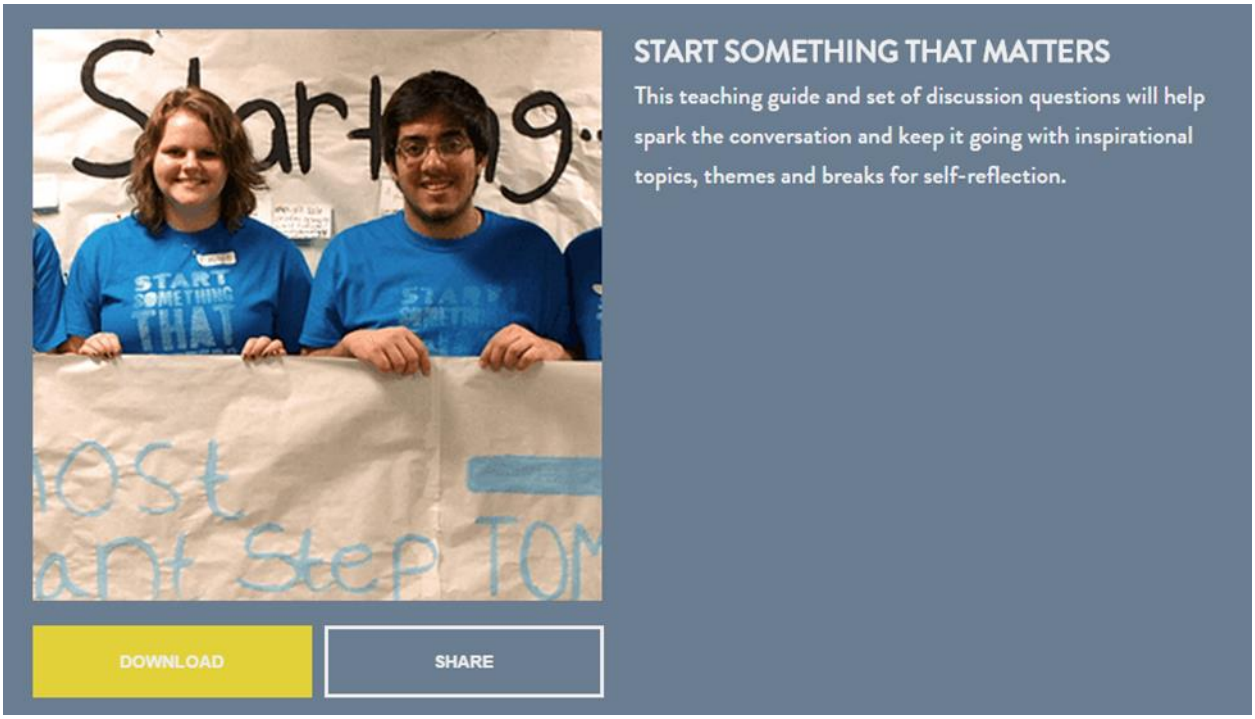


***Figure 7*. TOMS campus club members pictured on TOMS.com in 2015 for their *Start Something that Matters* work**

Thus, pictures of people supporting TOMS have actually been used by TOMS corporation as it markets products and mission. It is not much of a stretch to imagine as a viewer, therefore, that young people shown in videos could be supporters of TOMS.

In the 2011 World Sight Day video, people who seemed to be the age of Millennials or at least younger than 30 talked directly into the camera. Of the eleven people shown in the video, four were women, the rest were men, a gender configuration different from my TOMS club where more women than men comprise membership. The racial makeup of those shown in the video seemed to be reflective of my club's membership, however. Most people in the video read White, only two had dark skin. Likely because the theme of the video was sight, several people in the video wore eyeglasses (e.g. three), while several others wore sunglasses (e.g., three). What they were doing was in part the focus of the video: one young woman professed that she could read her scripts because she had the sight to do so, another young man could paint, another take photographs, another read music, another could surf, and so on. They all asked viewers to imagine what they could do because of sight and imagine those who could not do those things because they were "unnecessarily blind," meaning, some forms of blindness could be eliminated with charity and action.

The charity that club members put into action for World Sight Day on our campus was to collect old eyeglasses. The founder explained to the campus newspaper that we were giving the glasses "to the Bowling Green Lions Club who will clean them and give them to people with visual impairments" ("TOMS Campus Club hosts upcoming charity event," 2013), mimicking language used by TOMS corporation when describing the purpose of World Sight Day. Club members also set up a table, outdoors, in the middle of the campus and asked people passing by

to write in chalk why they were grateful for their sight, similar to the expression of gratitude shown in the TOMS corporate video (see Figure 8):

***Figure 8*. Chalk message on World Sight Day on TOMS club's campus in 2015**

They also took pictures of themselves holding signs with expressions of appreciation of sight, and invited people who stopped to do the same (see Figure 9):

***Figure 9*. Picture of some TOMS campus club members & World Sight Day signage in 2015**

As in the TOMS 2011 video, TOMS club members wore sunglasses and eyeglasses in pictures snapped during the World Sight Day campus event. In part then, I suggest members were doing charity as they saw charity being done in video communication crafted by TOMS.

Following our World Sight Day event in 2015, we had a general meeting that night and I could tell that club members who had helped with chalking and signage throughout the day were tired but satisfied with their efforts. We ate snacks, listened to music and continued to snap pictures with the signage we had made for the event.

We had many moments like this as club members and it is with this knowledge one of my committee members suggested that club members were playing. At sometimes they were and I contend it was usually around food. At one point in our club journey we actually played games at the beginning of meetings and sometimes club members gave me a break when I just did not understand the rules.

One particular game that we played in a January meeting in 2015 was called "I'm a Falcon; you're a Falcon if…" The game was underway as I arrived late to the meeting so I went into the room and dropped off my coat. One club member, a Black woman, was sitting on the right side of the room, not playing, looking at her computer. I dropped off my things as the club founder stuck his head in the doorway and invited me to come play. I soon joined them. One person was "it" and stood in the circle of people and said "I'm a Falcon; you're a Falcon if…" choosing an item of clothing the person in the middle was wearing that others were wearing too or mentioned something that others in the circle may like or dislike. Barely understanding what we were doing, I found myself in the middle. I felt a little doomed as I said "I'm a Falcon; You're a Falcon if… you're wearing a zip up jacket" but nobody started walking through the circle of people to reach the other side (kind of like musical chairs) because I said an article of

clothing I was not actually wearing having already forgotten the rules. When I changed it to "I'm a Falcon; You're a Falcon if…you're wearing jeans," and everybody (including me) tried to find a place to stand in the circle. The person that didn't find a place was "it" and in the middle, and off we went to repeat the process. I noticed as we played that there were new people at the meeting. Four women I had not seen before; three were White and one Black. Finally the game was over, having lasted about ten minutes which was the usual length of games when we played them. I always felt old when we played the games. Other club members seemed to have fun during them but I felt each time like I was taking a test. The food that we usually had following the games was always great to have as we met anywhere between 7 and 9 at night. I could always eat chips and salsa and other club members felt the same way as we all ate at least something. Play, food, and socializing, as described before, added to affective exchange, this time face-to-face between club members. One of the later club leaders said she decided early on that food would be something she shared often during meetings, explaining: "I think food just makes it more welcoming. You know, like, you let your guard down a little."

In the information about playing games above, one might have noticed that I was counting whether faces of color were a major part of our club membership. The counting was part of my exploration of race and one that eventually folded into my theorizing about how our club defined needy as well as who needed our charity work. Race was something I could investigate both in person as we gathered during our meetings and in the virtual world as we watched TOMS videos at those same meetings.

For instance, as we chatted after a busy day following our World Sight Day event in 2015, we watched another TOMS corporate video promoting World Sight Day, one that had been uploaded to YouTube three years after the previous video ("TOMS," 2014). It was similar

to the earlier video in that who was needy was clearly defined verbally (e.g., "A 70 year old farmer, blind in both eyes and unable to see the road in front of him. Gyualjin must be carried by his son and accompanied by his wife"). In addition, the 2014 video showed pictures of people being helped (e.g., Gyauljin, a brown-skinned older man, was shown with two other men being carried into a rustic clinic and being treated for nearly 40-seconds of the four minute video), and had title slides with words to further underscore who was in need and how TOMS – and TOMS supporters/customers - helped them (e.g., "when one person purchases a pair of TOMS eyewear, a professional, locally staffed eye care program will have the resources it needs to reach one more person"). As I referred to the more than 20 visual codes adapted from Lutz and Collins (1993) that were created to help analyze United States' depictions of people from other countries (see Appendix D), I was particularly struck by how the video continually showed people who read other than Westerners. They were predominantly people of color and when people spoke on the video, they had accents other than those associated with America as music with lyrics not in English played under the vocals. People of color included the nurses and doctors. Only one person who read White to me was Blake Mycoskie who was on screen for perhaps one or two seconds and only in the background. In retrospect, the video was rather voyeuristic in that we as Westerners and mostly White were watching a video that confirmed the work of TOMS in mostly dark-skinned places that somehow translated into purposeful work we did to benefit local charities.

Worth noting and also in relation to race, the visibility of the charity-driven, often White, celebrity helping people across the world in crisis has run parallel with the increasing visibility of for-profit companies with a social conscience. Bell (2013) has discussed how "the famous perform real-life hero roles as philanthropists who endorse and fund a variety of social causes

around the so-called 'developing' world" (p. 1). She was more blunt about White helping brown when she argued that the "celebrity gaze on Africa produces material benefits as it maintains a normative discursive space of whiteness" (p. 3). Bell's observations are pertinent in the study of TOMS because the TOMS founder is White, and arguably a celebrity. Mycoskie first visited Argentina, the country where he was motivated to create TOMS, when he and his sister competed in *The Amazing Race*, an American television program in which couples complete tasks around the world to win a million dollars (Mycoskie, 2011). He and his sister did not win during the season in which they competed but he was seen by millions of viewers. After that, he penned the book *Start Something That Matters* in 2011 which "became a *New York Times* best-seller" ("Blake Mycoskie," n.d.). Then, TOMS became recognized by more and more shoe buyers who wanted to help others with their purchases. With all of that, I argue that Mycoskie could be considered a White celebrity helping needy and brown people.

Given Mycoskie's early presence in media (e.g., TV) and current presence in social media platforms such as YouTube, it may be worth noting that the White savior trope and celebrities who advance it have been explored by cultural studies scholars interested in media, particularly films. Cammarota (2011), for instance, discussed how movies like *The Blind Side* and *Dangerous Minds* in which actresses Sandra Bullock and Michelle Pfeiffer respectively perpetuated the notion of the White savior saving the neglected students of color who could not save themselves. Cammarota argued that "The focus on 'saving' rather than 'transforming' fails to address oppressive structures and thus the privileges that maintain white supremacy" (p. 244). He would rather the "savior" worked as an ally in fighting structural elements of society that led to subpar education and poverty and wished for films that showed leadership of color emerging from within to further people of color.

Perhaps something about a White savior trope played a part in the affective intensity experienced by supporters of TOMS that helped catalyze labor of club members. I argue that it could and that if it did, it most likely combined with other catalyzing affective elements that in the end, benefited TOMS and therefore its profits while also supporting its charity work in faraway places. In the next chapter I will further discuss how affect and labor are a significant combination in club communication and action. In this chapter, however, I want to emphasize affect, and how the 2014 video evidenced that *defining needy* and *doing charity* were separate yet intertwined with affective intensities, often exchanged with TOMS, that evoked emotional responses from club members. I propose those exchanges evidenced an affective circuit between TOMS and the TOMS club that was supported by face-to-face and digital communication. In fact, virtual communication was critical to the club's understanding of how to be a club.

To be clear, virtual communication may still be affective communication according to Hansen (2004), who posits that the virtual is as affective as face-to-face communication. Watkins (2010) interprets Hansen as saying "the digital acts as a technological intensification or expansion of the nonlived, nonlinear complexity, or indetermination of bodily affectivity" (p. 212). Club members enacted what they learned from TOMS, and talked about their work in ways that they also learned from TOMS. It was obvious to me that they were not TOMS automatons, however, even as they were excited by the work that TOMS did. Many times they were as excited by their own work as they were that of TOMS. One of the successors to the founder explained that the founder could be pretty convincing and she used emotional terms to make her point:

Jeanette: Is he hard to say no to?

> *Club member*: Yeah, because he is just so passionate. I love everything that he is doing. I am totally *behind* all these ideas and everything. (personal communication, February 28, 2015)

I contend a great deal of members' connection to their club and the social enterprise of TOMS was based in affect that was evidenced in certain emotional terms such as "love" and "passion." I also argue that affective exchanges were central to their club labor and that their labor was in fact, affective labor.

I am not alone in recognizing the affect involved in doing charity. Dowling (2016) has defined a type of charity work, *volunteering*, as "unpaid, non-compulsory" and exhibiting "value to someone or to a community of beneficiaries beyond the individual volunteer" (para. 14). Moreover, Dowling noted the affective nature of volunteering suggesting that it occurs within a set of affective structures defined as "relatively stable sets of interlocking relations that operate to produce certain feelings, sensations and motivations" (para. 15). That understanding adds to my analyses of affective labor discussed in the next chapter that explores how members localized a global model of charity through their affective labor.

CHAPTER 5: PLACEMAKING: LOCALIZING A GLOBAL MODEL OF GIVING

> *I mean, giving through TOMS is really super cool. But we don't exactly see where it's going, you know. So I'm not saying that what they are giving is less impactful, it's just that you don't see it as much so, I just feel that with more local stuff, we just see it and identify more with it and, I don't know, get really excited about it.* (a club member's personal communication with author, February 28, 2015)

Positionality

I do not mean to give the impression that club members accepted TOMS communication without question, or copied without modification the way that TOMS did charity. In fact, I argue that TOMS messages and mission were negotiated continually by club members as they paid more attention to local rather than global concerns. The point is, however, their starting place for much of their club communication and labor was always at the very least TOMS inspired if not a localized event based on a TOMS signature event. Perhaps that is not surprising given the fact the club was created in TOMS name, but as a club member, I was cognizant of TOMS presence, even when we did our own thing. We, as a club, created a place for TOMS worldwide mission at a university in a small, Midwestern town. We labored with enthusiasm and without pay for a company that profited from our efforts because we believed we were helping others who needed aid.

Initially, I labeled our actions as selling for TOMS, negotiating TOMS mission, talking TOMS, mimicking TOMS, and extending TOMS. I decided that *glocalizing* was the best term to use and settled on that overarching theme for a moment as I concentrated on writing the chapters for other overarching themes. I wanted my findings/themes to be presented in a certain order because although the themes are admittedly interconnected, the story of what I was hearing and seeing unfolded for me in a certain way. Glocalizing, as I thought of it, may have been where I entered the conversation on that speech day when I learned about a global TOMS and a local

club, but over time a more nuanced picture began to present itself and other overarching themes became more salient to discuss first.

I thought that I had either created the label of glocalizing, which in retrospect seems incredibly naïve, or that I was correctly using a term I had heard somewhere in my studies. Neither was the case as my faculty advisor pointed out during one of our ongoing and later chats that I found incredibly important to my recursive analysis of club participation. She was circumspect as she questioned my labeling, asking me how I had come to that term and what I thought the term described. Then she sent me Bauman's (1998) article on the subject making it clear that I could use the term but I needed to understand the discussion surrounding it, starting with Bauman, and moving to Giulianotti and Robertson (2006) among others. What I appreciated with Bauman (1998) was that he extricated *glocalization* from *globalization* to underscore the privileged/poverty divide. Giulianotti and Robertson (2006) continued that explication nearly ten years later. Given the underlying power differential between those who give and those who receive as evidenced by club members' actions and conversations, glocalization is important to my analysis. Therefore, I will touch on glocalization a little later in this dissertation. But I will not use the term to describe the overarching theme of how a place for TOMS global messaging was created in a small town in the Midwest by the devoted labor of Millennials. Placemaking and community-building through affective labor, instead, are terms and processes that I argue describe more accurately what I observed and participated in while active as a TOMS club member. The spaces and places this small group of Millennials occupied and worked within are thus, an important part of this chapter.

Space has been separated from *place* in areas of scholarship such as development communication (Escobar, 2000) and philosophy (Casey, 1997). Lefebvre (1991) defines space as

both mental and real, recognizing the differences between space and place, but he argues for reconciliation of the two. Space and place have been joined together in organizational studies focusing on sites, contexts, practices, and materiality (Schatzki, 2005). I recognize the continuities and oppositions of space and place as I examine how they were socially constructed by Millennials who support the TOMS shoe company, while also explicating the affective labor undertaken by Millennials in these places as they brought the global to the local and vice versa.

Affective Labor

I begin detailing my findings of placemaking with yet another look at labor as I not only tie members' labor to space, place, and community-building but also as I come full circle in recognizing the amount and kind of work that comprised the club's communication and organizing practices. In the *living precarity* chapter, I underscored the material consequences of constant work that I argue was continually evident at the club. In the living affect chapter, I highlighted the affective intensities that I contend fueled club communication and actions. Now I wish to put the two together, labor and affect, to clarify how a certain kind of labor meant to benefit a certain kind of people was central to the places members created and the spaces they occupied.

Hardt (1999) writes that affective labor was considered at one point to be the type of labor that was situated somewhat outside of capitalism, and associated with the feminine rather than the masculine. Sometimes called *caring labor*, Hardt argues that affective labor is "the constitution of communities and collective subjectivities" (p. 89) that became prominent in the postindustrial, service economy. Affective labor, according to Hardt, is usually characterized by its mobility and flexibility, and has knowledge and information at its core. He also argues that affective labor is a type of *immaterial labor*. The scholar most often associated with the term *immaterial labor* describes it as "the labor that produces the informational and cultural content of

the commodity" (Lazzarato, 1996, para. 2). Immaterial laborers still labor in very real terms – meaning they exert real effort so it is labor - but sometimes the labor is hidden because the final product is not something that can always be seen or traced. The products they create do not come off a Fordist assembly line and get stocked in showrooms and on shelves. Yet like tangible products, immaterial products have value. Like production of old, immaterial labor often makes money for capitalists. Moreover, according to Lazzarato, social and cultural capital is created by immaterial laborers which add additional value to the intangible products they produce. Hardt and Negri (2000) contend when immaterial labor becomes affective, it becomes embodied. Affective, immaterial labor is personal "with its focus on the productivity of the corporeal, the somatic" (p. 30). Dowling (2007) speaks to that in her autoethnography of her work as a server in an expensive restaurant where managers trained servers to "produce" a dining "experience" (p. 117). They kept their jobs by performing for patrons, making them believe that servers were their friends who were having fun serving them. This is the labor- affective and immaterial - that I propose describes much of the club members' work, particularly as they created a place for their budding community following the TOMS model of giving. I argue that rather than contradicting the way that I discussed labor in the living precarity chapter, I am rather expanding upon it. Of course their labor required real and obvious effort as I already argued, but something more was involved in that labor, too. That *something* was not necessarily visible, and bigger than clocking in and clocking out, because it needed and expended thought and emotion catalyzed by affective intensities linked to local and worldwide need. Through affective labor club members not only carved out a place for themselves on campus, but also created community in *spaces* important to TOMS and the club. I want to be clear how I am differentiating place from space as I describe my findings and therefore do so in the following section.

Space and Place

Early investigations into space, particularly those of Hall (1966), discuss the spaces inherent in places in an effort to describe how population density negatively affected population health, and not just because resources decreased as the population increased. Animals, and by extension people, Hall argues, need their living spaces (which some scholars today may call places) to offer elements of privacy and community as defined by their cultural heritage. For instance he proffers, people from Japan might be fine with movable walls that can be opened and closed to define and redefine space, but Americans more often choose solid, immovable walls to delineate spatial boundaries. People, Hall contends, are affected by the space that they occupy, and they in turn have an effect on their space.

Casey (1997) does not so much separate place and space as recognize that a separation exists. In fact, Casey works to clarify how globalized space displaced place, "rendering the 'global village' not in a positive sense but as a placeless place indeed" (p. xiii). He calls for a return to the understanding that place is important in people's lives. He believes people are not being sentimental but honest and accurate in their desire to live in place as well as space. Escobar (2000) recognizes Casey's argument that place has been marginalized and summarizes the defining elements separating the two: "Space is the absolute and universal, while place is contingent and secondary" (p. 167). Space is big, while place is small; space is mobile, while place is stagnate, according to Escobar. He also wonders what the difference in space and place may mean to movements that have long been about people thinking globally, and sometimes acting globally, all while living in local places. If the global "space" loses its appeal, what could that mean to those in need living in places around the world?

Colonial power was predicated upon the domination of space and resources. England and Spain, for instance, conquered weaker countries and used the resources of those countries, including their lands, to strengthen the Empires of England and Spain. Colonization still exists despite the fact many lands have been decolonized. As Childs and Williams (1997) explain Western powers still try – and in most cases succeed - to control other spaces and lands throughout the world by dominating politics, economics, and culture. Nations are no longer tied to geographical boundaries but can now move freely within other systems of control and domination that are supported by new technologies and the imagination of the people. Thus, postcolonial approaches recognize that space still matters whether it be real or imagined, or at the micro- or macro-level, because contentious power relations exist within those places and spaces. People can find themselves navigating between and operating in spaces of in-betweenness as power shifts. Broadfoot and Munshi (2014) note that the in-between spaces can be digital rather than geographical but still inclusive of real bodies even if the spaces are virtual. Space still matters, the authors contend, but our understanding of it must be investigated, undone, and redone to include myriad in-between spaces where power is reified and/or contested.

Much of our understanding regarding the in-between spaces as described by postcolonial theory borrows from the work of Bhabha (1994) and his conceptualization of *hybridity*. Hybridity is used to express the intersections of cultures, especially the cultures of the colonizers and the colonized. During the mixing process, new cultures, meanings, and ways of communicating can be created. Cultural differences and similarities are articulated in these spaces, moving culture to a place Bhabha calls the *beyond*:

> The "beyond" is neither a new horizon, nor a leaving behind of the past… in the *fin de siècle* [end of the century], we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time

> cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the "beyond": an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words *au-delà* – here and there, on all sides, fort/da, hither and thither, back and forth. (p. 2)

In these in-between spaces where cultures intersect, boundaries blur and may realign. Power can be destabilized, something that Bhabha argues makes colonizers anxious.

Spaces, therefore, are produced, according to Bhabha (1994). Lefebvre (1991) agrees as he argues that space is socially constructed. He posits that space as a mental abstraction is intimately connected to physical places and social engagement. Social practices undertaken every day, Lefebre contends, affect and are affected by space. People struggle over power in social practices, and thus, as they create space. According to Lefebvre, space is dynamic because it is actively produced.

In this chapter, I differentiate mental space from physical space using the terms space and place, respectively. Although I agree with other scholars that mental and physical space are rarely apart and therefore inextricably mingled, in an effort to better explain my findings, I need to distinguish space from place and have done so throughout this chapter.

Bringing the Outside Inside

While attending one of the club's events on February 19, 2015, I was very aware of how the TOMS corporation filled the university room where members were hosting the event. The mental space occupied by TOMS virtually enveloped the physical space as the club president played segments from a DVD produced by the TOMS shoe company to encourage people to "start something that matters." The event and DVD were named for and followed Mycoskie's (2011)

bestselling book, *Start Something that Matters*, which details one step, per chapter how to create a socially conscious enterprise. About 25 people in attendance, including a dozen of my classmates who wanted to observe a TOMS event, watched entrepreneurs who had started companies that mattered talk to us on the DVD. From "find your story" to "giving is good business," we heard from the founder of Butter Busters and Blake Mycoskie's mother, Pam Mycoskie; the founders of Methods environmentally-friendly cleaning products; as well as the founders of nonprofits helping provide food and water to people in need. In all, more than seven people TOMS called "social entrepreneurs" told us "stories, ideas and practical tips" to help us create our own organizations that combined "profit, passion, and meaning all at once" (Psyk, 2011). We were being asked to imagine the beyond, a space inspired by real people working in real places that we could occupy someday in the future. We learned we could make a living making a difference. TOMS ideology espoused by seemingly successful leaders literally filled the place where TOMS club members gathered. One of my classmates in attendance noticed and wrote in a discussion entry online:

> Immediately when walking into the room, I could feel that the members of the club have a deep desire to "start something that matters," as the motto of the night accurately summarized. With my own passion for social justice activism, I could relate to the members of the group. (personal communication, February 26, 2015)

We were constructing our understandings of "what matters" with a lot of input from TOMS DVD communication. Then, through action in place, we began creating a shared understanding of what we learned, reproducing and producing space connected to TOMS.

Action transpired after each chapter topic was covered on the DVD. The club president stopped the DVD and he and other members led attendees in activities related to information we

had just seen. Our first activity was meant to help us find our own stories. In his book, Mycoskie (2011) explains that personal stories create sustainable missions that can be the foundations of successful enterprises. We kind of understood that concept as we turned our attention to magazines and other supplies like glue sticks and crayons scattered in the front of the room. We were asked to create collages of our visions. In my field notes of the night I wrote:

> The club members were VERY good about breaking into action to make sure everybody had scissors (after somebody said "are there anymore scissors"). X* went out into the hall and grabbed more university magazines and newspapers so that we had more pictures to choose from to create our vision boards. We had seven minutes, according to X*, to complete the vision boards. Then X* read from a pamphlet that talked about what to do with visions.

This activity seemed materialistic rather than mentally stimulating to one of my classmates who attended. She offered during a class discussion one week after the event that she felt like the "vision boards came from materialistic magazines which kind of put us in the capitalist mode from the beginning of the event." At the same time, this classmate had also noticed a nonprofit connection that she shared with me via email:

> When I worked for Girl Scouts, clearly another not for profit company, every meeting or training was accompanied by minor activities to reiterate the point of training. I thought of this last week when we did the small activities after every chapter. I wonder if this training process is a general non profit training structure. (personal communication, February 26, 2015)

For-profit and nonprofit spaces combined in our minds as it also does in TOMS actual corporate structure. The space informed the place of the gathering although it did not dictate all details of every activity. We did not think only positive thoughts about what we were hearing

and doing. Yet we still thought about concepts that TOMS put forth, into space that was then welcomed into our gathering place. As a club, we were creating a place for others in the overall campus community to join our smaller, club community that had global implications according to TOMS communication central to the night.

What occurred to me over time was the way media and digital communication flowed so fluidly between place and space during club activities. I remember when I was 10 years old and in my local 4-H club, we generally did things during meetings that did not involve media, which in 1975 would have consisted of radio, television, or film. I remember seeing a film or two but feel confident that we never played a portion of the film, stopped it to do an activity, and then resumed the film in a pattern of media – activity – media – activity, etc. I do remember watching demonstrations, though, as club members showed how they had completed a project sheet. Members wanted to complete several project sheets while they were members in order to be considered successful in the club. My project demonstration was for cooking, something still listed as a project area for some 4-H clubs in the United States (see "4-H Youth Development," n.d.). My friend Veronica and I showed our club of about five girls and two leaders how to make peanut butter and lettuce sandwiches on white bread.

Activities and learning how to do things, then, is not a new concept for a club experience. I argue, however, the way that space is negotiated in place in this particular club is very different for these Millennials than it was for much of my youth and young adulthood. I posit that as digital natives (Prensky, 2001), Millennials have been born into a world where time and space have been conflated by technology and globalization (Melkote & Steeves, 2015). They simultaneously occupy spaces around the world via technology and very real places of bricks-and-mortar. Spaces and places overlap creating continuities and ruptures, places of entry, in-

between spaces that I argue Millennials of the campus club I participated in occupy. Millennials are different from previous generations in that they were born into a world that treats virtual spaces as real, in part by filling real places with the virtual world and representations of people, artifacts, work, and play – often in real time. The virtual can be real and Millennials were the first generation to grow up within that new brand of negotiated realities. They are set apart from preceding and succeeding generations, then, by virtue of being first, by being natives of the digital. That is why I argue that they occupy an in-between space that postcolonial theory and Bhabha's (1994) *hybridity* help explain.

This hybrid space may not feel new because so many of us occupy it every day. Only over time did I realize how normalized it had become for me, and started seeing that was the case for other club members. Yet I argue that it is something new to this generation and worth recognizing. A group of individuals now have the ability to combine place and space in myriad forms – sometimes more place than space, sometimes more space than place, etc. The *Start Something that Matters* club event exemplified this. For example, the club president explained to us that at the same event the previous year, attendees had watched the DVD in its entirety, not chapter topic by chapter topic. Thus, the place/space mix was newly negotiated even as the event itself remained similar in many other ways.

Importantly, I recognize that long before me, Geertz (1973) argued that when people gather, they create something unique, and that it is an ethnographer's job to not just describe but provide a nuanced account or "thick description" that makes clear the distinctiveness of the people and the experience observed. One of my mentors and committee members reminded me of that during one of our humanistic methods class. As we discussed our observations after attending a local art's fair for a class assignment, I shared that I thought it was like every other Midwestern

fair/festival I had attended nearly for my whole life, and definitely during my days as a radio announcer. He said quite simply, "But we need to notice what's different about this particular event." As I tried to remain open for what was unique in TOMS club events that I attended annually, I began to understand events were exceptional in part because of the space/place negotiation that occurred at each of them.

I also began to notice that we viewed more brown faces as people from other places than we did as we looked around our local places. Most often, those brown faces were associated with need. One of my classmates who attended the *Start Something that Matters* event in 2015 noticed that as well:

> In the video that was shown to us, most speakers sharing their stories were white people trying to improve the lives of "the Other." This is a very Western outlook on the world; it underlies the assumption that the global South is in need of help by the "generous North." I am not sure if the members of TOMS are aware that they, at times, play into an orientalist, otherizing (and capitalist) logic. (personal communication, February 26, 2015)

The so-called North has yielded great power over those in need in the oft-called South for hundreds of years, particularly as the North worked to colonize and develop underdeveloped areas. My classmate recognized how the information shared during the club event reiterated and reified power relations of the past.

Worth noting, TOMS was inspired by a product (e.g., shoe design called the *alpargatas;* Mycoski, 2011) from the formerly colonized country of Argentina. One of TOMS factories is currently in operation there and TOMS shoes are still donated to Argentinians in need. Additionally, TOMS today provides shoes and other one-for-one products to people in need in other formerly colonized territories including India, Mexico, Philippines, and South Africa

("One-for-one giving report," 2013). A postcolonial reading would posit TOMS work looks much like elitist development in the Third World. Yet another reading is that TOMS is involved in a movement.

Affective Labor in Placemaking: Part of a Movement?

The term *movement* has already been used in this chapter within descriptions of space and place to mean motion. Movement can happen within and between one place or space and another. Movement adds to the dynamic nature of space production.

Movement can also mean a type of collective and/or social action that also implies motion, usually toward a stated goal. Bob (2005) uses the terms *challengers*, *insurgencies*, and *movements* interchangeably to describe action that challenges systems of oppression and power. Movements to Bob are rebellious, and he takes a marketing approach to understanding how some movements receive the world's attention while others do not. People with causes receive help, according to Bob, because they ask for help in the right way. He contends that advocates of certain causes tailor messages to garner funding to further their work.

Thus, I agree with other scholars that movement can be thought of as motion within a space or as collective action to move forward a cause. Importantly, TOMS not only calls the work that it does a movement ("Questions," n.d.), but it includes the work of other organizations as it promotes involvement in the movement. We were made aware of some of those organizations in the *Start Something that Matters* DVD. Others were featured on Marketplace, a shopping site included on the TOMS website starting in 2013 (Fox, 2013) but no longer featured online as of early 2016 ("Where the Wildings are," 2016). As of February 2017, rather than Marketplace, TOMS promotes its social entrepreneurship fund to help like-minded entrepreneurs ("Social enterprise," n.d.). Thus, in many ways and in many spaces, TOMS positions itself as inside a

growing community of businesses that do more than make a profit. This community of businesses is also philanthropically minded, as - we are led to believe - are its shoppers.

TOMS club members did not often say the word movement nor did they categorize the work that they did for TOMS as the work of a movement. Nevertheless, I contend that they did the work of the TOMS one-for-one movement just the same. Each time they hosted a club event promoting messages created by the TOMS corporation, they furthered TOMS ideology which is peppered with the word movement. One need only visit the social enterprise's website to see how often the term is used. As a TOMS community and tribe member, I received numerous emails promoting a movement. See Figure 10 for just a few examples:

***Figure 10*: Montage of 4 emails received from January 2015 through August 2016**

During one in-depth interview with a club member, I asked if she thought TOMS was a movement. Her response was ambivalent. She agreed that movement was not a term the club used a lot and had an explanation for why she in particular did not use the term:

> *Club member*: I think TOMS, as a corporation, not a movement. TOMS Campus Club, I think we are trying to create a movement. I think we have a good start on it, people know our name, we've had a few big successful events, you know. Like One Day Without Shoes last year, that was really successful. Well, Sight Day last year was really successful, Trivia Crack, you know, so I think we are working on trying to be a movement, you know. But I think the corporation is definitely a movement.
>
> *Jeanette*: So you are thinking that it's a different, like, why do you think that's a movement?
>
> *Club member*: The spectrum is different. It's more widespread, it's on a bigger scale than we are, we are just trying to conquer [our campus], you know. I've felt like TOMS has conquered the world, you know, almost everybody. TOMS is everywhere. They help so many people… (personal communication, April 6, 2015)

By the end of her response, it seemed as though she did define the work that TOMS was involved in as a movement. Moreover, she perceived the space where the TOMS movement transpired as global (e.g., "the world"). That space was different from the place where her club's actions occurred. She thought the club was moving toward that space but was not there yet.

Two other club members that I interviewed in-depth recognized that club members' actions were modeled after the TOMS one-for-one paradigm, which TOMS had identified as a movement in and of itself ("TOMS Affiliate Program," n.d.). For example, one club member who was a part of club creation shared what she realized through the process of helping launch the club:

> *Club member*: It was really interesting because that's when we started learning more because I think we only knew much about, just like TOMS the shoes and that it is more like a global awareness bringing it to the local level. And then we started, through that we had the opportunity to start doing World Sight Day here on campus. Our first one, I remember, it was so awesome having all these different pairs of glasses—sunglasses, just regular glasses—a lot of people brought them from like their grandparents and stuff like that. So you had, like, it was so cool because we were doing something globally and bringing that more to a local level. Because a lot of what TOMS does is very global. However, if you take their mission and take their vision and bring it back, like, locally, you can impact a lot more people in your area. I think that's what we wanted to do—in general, with this organization—was being global issues back to the local communities. (personal communication, March 8, 2016)

Similarly, the club president shared his vision for reproducing the one-for-one model on the university campus as he founded the club as a TOMS club rather than a club affiliated with a different organization:

> TOMS has the One for One, like when you buy a pair of shoes and they give a pair, so I really wanted to take that. And like once I did the One for One, [I knew the club I created] would be TOMS. And all our events would promote TOMS and promote like, on one side what they are doing; and the other side would be campus. And so like we'd be working to better the community here… I felt like there aren't enough organizations doing something about our community. (personal communication, February 13, 2015)

Another club member in leadership reiterated similar sentiments, but she made it seem even more personal and connected it to shopping:

Club member: Because it's like, hey, if I can do something for myself, I can do something for somebody else. It's like … when we have a meal plan. Like I had extra, so I'm like I have to buy food for me but I don't have to be excessive so I can buy extra food and donate it. And it's simple things like that, you know.

Jeanette: What are you talking about? Do you mean about that meal plan … when you get that card you do your swipes?

Club member: Oh, I am talking about like having extra [university] dollars, which would just go to waste if I didn't spend them.

Jeanette: Right because they end at the end of the semester, don't they?

Club member: Yes. So instead of just buying everything for me, I like buy things and donate it. And that's kind of like the one-for-one model in another way. (personal communication, March 6, 2015)

Later in the interview she directly related the model to disseminating TOMS main messages:

Jeanette: So, why do you think TOMS does campus clubs?

Club member: I feel like it's just to get their vision and purpose, their mission, more widespread. Because as I was saying I feel like supporting TOMS in more than just buying shoes. It's kind of embodying what they believe, that the one-for-one-giving-is-good-business, sort of idea. (personal communication, March 6, 2015)

One-for-one is based in charity and capitalism in seemingly equal measure and at least one club member seemed to recognize that without actually calling the model a movement.

For most of my active time with the club, however, movement as a term did not seem to convey the club's purpose, nor did we overtly use the word in conversation. By comparison, the term *change* was used more frequently by club members, a word used only on occasion in

TOMS corporate messaging. Perhaps the term was a synonym for movement. Change, like movement, implies a shift of some kind. During an in-depth interview, I noticed that the club member had said change more than once and asked her why:

> *Jeanette*: So you said change earlier. Do you feel like you guys are part of change?
>
> *Club member*: I would say yes. I would say especially through having this club expressly, I think, we've gotten so many more shoes out there, we've gotten so many more people to wear those shoes. And with having such a strong relationship, I think with the TOMS Corporation, our campus has been able to provide World Sight Day to a larger scale. And One Day Without Shoes has been pretty big on our campus and I think people are starting to be, like, "I'm intrigued by this. I want to learn more." A lot of it also comes from— the only way you are going to make full change is when you want to learn about it yourself and you want to educate yourself. And I think that's extremely important when working with awareness-type things on global issues. You need to present something that people are going to be intrigued about and want to educate themselves on. (personal communication, May, 8, 2016)

Later in the interview she linked TOMS to the spread of change:

> *Club member*: So I know that it is making change in a lot of other large corporation-type deals because it's like, okay I see what they are doing. Because then you have that aspect of, like, you can raise the price of certain things. Things that they are buying for charity. Buying for services for resources. And I think it's making a difference. (personal communication, May, 8, 2016)

We even made a banner with the word change on it once (see Figure 11), something we had not done for *movement*, leading me to believe that some words resonated more with club members than others even though the resulting affective labor looked the same to me.

***Figure 11*: Banner with *change* for Start Something that Matters, January 2016**

Beginning in the latter part of 2016, though, I found the following image espousing movement on the club's website (see Figure 12):

***Figure 12*: Banner image found on events page of club's website on October 23, 2016**

Movement may be more a part of the placemaking that occurs today in the club than it did just a year ago, evidencing again the dynamic process of placemaking.

Words and pictures are important in our understanding of club members' influences, but I argue their actions that I would classify most often as affective labor spoke volumes about the way they brought the global influences of TOMS into local places. I propose that a sense of responsibility driven by affective intensities helped catalyze and justify continued labor that brought the global mission of TOMS into the local action of the club. Interview excerpts with club members helped lead me to that assessment. For instance:

> *Jeanette*: Do you think about the impact of what we do? Like, if you were to describe the outcome?
>
> *Club member*: I think that, hmm, it's a good question. I feel like our overall call is, like, to be like the impact in the local community or even to those families at the Toledo Family House. Like, even if you just reach out to them and help them and talk to them, I feel like that's enough of an impact. (personal communication, January, 28, 2016)

That club member is talking about one of the many instances when we gave locally in similar mission to and in the name of TOMS. We raised money during one of our events so that we could host a holiday party for an area nonprofit organization helping homeless families. We bought toys with money raised and all children in attendance could choose from the pile. We played music, provided activities for the children such as coloring and collaging, and served snacks throughout. My recollection from the year I attended is that the club members worked really hard to transport the experience that they had labored to raise money for to an area 20 minutes from campus to see their intentions in action. The caring labor – the affective labor - was obvious to me, as was the commitment to the often brown-faced people we were serving, and hopefully not patronizing, at the event.

The other model that TOMS represents but does not promote is the *shopping for charity* model, which one could argue is another way to express the one-for-one model. The TOMS club was not hesitant to express the model in those terms as they launched the "Giving Spree," moving the model off campus into a slightly different place – Walmart. As the club invited teams to shop to benefit homeless people, they furthered the model of purchasing to fund the less fortunate (see Figure 13).

***Figure 13*: Front page of college newspaper promoting a TOMS club event fall 2015**

In "Giving Spree," benevolence was linked to shopping and charity, much like the TOMS model of doing business/philanthropy via purchasing shoes, etc. In many ways, then, we were making our own place in our community while localizing a global giving model named and even copyrighted by TOMS.

One more note regarding localizing affective labor: affective labor in many places and spaces, particularly in feminist studies, has been associated with women's labor due to the caring and often invisible/unpaid nature of the work (Dowling, 2007, 2016; Hardt, 2009; Jarrett, 2014; Weeks, 2007). Even before it was labeled "affective," Federici (1975) was making a case for

recognizing the gendered nature of work that was not only productive in of itself, but essential to others productivity. Today that labor is sometimes called *reproductive* (Dowling, 2016). My point is not to get into the battle of terms but rather to recognize the sex of club and other laborers in the TOMS local/global place and space making. As mentioned earlier, to me, more club members read as women than men. Pictures of club activities also indicate that more women than men participated in club events. Adding to the gendered and mostly women-based picture of labor associated with TOMS giving is what I understand from our club members' giving trip. As one of the club members explained to me, the Peru volunteers they met during their trip who helped give away shoes were usually older women who handled the work on their own when the TOMS people were not there:

> *Club member*: Like there's some volunteers who are 77 years old and helping with Coprodeli literally half their lives… But if we are not there, the Coprodeli volunteers just line up the children and they do it [size children's feet and give out shoes]. So we had about 16 people on our trip giving it; whereas in one school, there were only two volunteers. So you can imagine; that's what, like, it took four hours to complete the school. Two people—that would be an entire two days of trying to fit all these children with shoes. So it was very eye-opening that they are all thanking us for the work we are doing. (personal communication, June 1, 2016)

This sentiment was reflected in a TOMS employees online journal entry promoted by TOMS following the employee's visit to Peru during a giving trip:

> Coprodeli is an amazing organization, founded by Padre Miguel after he arrived in Peru in 1983 from his native Spain. This organization serves over 375,000 Peruvians and 100,000 children annually. The driving force of Coprodeli is their amazing volunteer

> base, mainly female. These volunteers work full-time hours with huge smiles. These wonderful women seem to produce the energy of two or three normal people! ("TOMS," 2015, para. 7)

Locally and in Peru, women were providing the labor, which I qualify as affective labor, for organizations created and often led by men. I do not believe that is a coincidence and contend that the connection evidences the type of labor that TOMS club members were doing as they created a local place for a global mission. It is additionally a composition typically found in nonprofit organizations in the United States and across the globe (Themudo, 2009).

As our local club members labored with an affective and global perspective that created space in local places for a much bigger mission than our own, I found one comment particularly compelling in the way it evidenced the afffective exchange between the club and TOMS. It was made during an interview with one of the two club members who traveled to Peru on a giving trip:

> *Club member*: I have always thought very highly of TOMS but I also think I was kind of getting used to things. And, like, so it's just a shoe. I think that was my main thing, you are giving just a shoe to someone. Okay, so does it symbolize anything? Here's a shoe, you are barefoot, let me give you a shoe. That was my mindset, like, what it was. But when you go, you really see that TOMS is a part of something bigger. It's not just TOMS, it's Coprodeli partnered with TOMS. And that was amazing to me to see that TOMS is just an addition to something that's bigger. Rather than TOMS is the big thing making the difference. It's Coprodeli making the big difference, and TOMS is aiding them. If that makes sense. So it's not just a shoe anymore. It is a child receiving

> education and it's parents feeling that their child is being taken care of. It's more than just a shoe, it is a lot more than that. (personal communication, June 1, 2016)

In those words I hear the exchange of the local and the global places and spaces. Partnerships and connections, and virtual and face-to-face communication and conversations, helped to create realities and meaning both here and there. Those connections, I contend, were affective. They were more than emotional connections because they lingered. When labor was added, they became an affective experience solidified.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS

And X* and I had meetings, you know, meeting, meeting, meeting, afterwards, talking to each other, talking to USG, talking to FAO, talking to … City Council. (a club member's personal communication with author, January 29, 2016)

Labor and Postionality

Labor has been an underlying element in most of my analysis of club organizing and communication. I argue that is the case because that is what I saw and heard as I participated in the club. However, I also understand that my biases may also have added to my labor focus. I have often admitted that these Millennials are the same age as my son and I worry about my son's future, particularly his ability to find a job paying a livable wage. Statistics support my worries as they continually indicate Millennial's hindrances in finding profitable work in current economic conditions (Chetty et al., 2016; Heroit, 2015; Milkman, 2014; Pew, 2014; Ross & Rouse, 2015). It may also relate to my own hindrances in getting a job in the 1980s during mergers and trickle-down economics.

I acknowledge those biases, but also submit via evidence given throughout this dissertation that real labor transpired in the club without compensation and for reasons that extended beyond compensation. Whether the labor of the club, or the labor associated with social enterprises in general, supports or resists more capitalistic organizational forms is debatable. In an effort to turn the discussion back to political economy, a portion of that debate follows.

Labor, Capitalism and Political Economy

Labor, in general, has been inextricably linked to capitalism by scholars from Marx (1904) to Harvey (2007). Capitalism, in turn, has been linked to political economy, apparently rising alongside political economy during the 17th and mid-19 centuries ("Political economy," 2010). In fact, Harvey (2010) contends "Marx's aim in Capital is to understand how capitalism

works by way of a critique of political economy" (p.7), offering another seemingly inextricable link between political economy and capitalism. Importantly, there is no one definition of political economy. In fact, the debate over the concept is in part focused on definitions. Babe (2006) for instance, associates political economy with domestic and foreign policy, power, class, knowledge formation, and the generation of wealth in America but does not actually proffer a one or two sentence definition of political economy. Marx's (1904) critique of political economy is at the heart of much of the discussion surrounding the concept but Marx never offered an explicit definition of the concept, either. He instead defined elements of political economy in great detail (e.g., commodity and its values, production, consumption, etc.) while expounding in general about how the elements comprised a system, or relations of production, in which humans labored only to be exploited by those for whom they labored. The system, Marx argued, was fueled by power and oppression of different classes of people. Smith (1997) contends that key to the system is the understanding of labor as an activity and a source of power, realized in value that takes several forms including use and exchange. Like others before him, Smith connects capital to political economy when he writes that Marx's "discussion of commodities and value refers directly to *bourgeois society*, not to pre-capitalist conditions" (p. 139). He additionally contends that often as Marx referred to the "system of bourgeois economy," he was really referring to "the science of political economy" (p. 124).

Thus, many scholars relate the concepts most often associated with Marx and his understanding of labor and production to political economy. In some ways, then, discussions of capitalism and labor have not changed in more than a hundred years. In other ways, the scholarly debates are completely different because labor is increasingly tied to intangible rather than tangible products as capitalism has had to move out of factories and into cyberspace to make a

profit from those intangibles. Ruccio (2007) argues that in the last two centuries capitalism has grown in breadth and depth, but posits that it has almost always been global as merchants traded commodities around the world, long before "globalization" was identified as a real, material process. The global expansion of capitalism, according to Ruccio, has been uneven and has created strife and wealth simultaneously in cultures around the world. He contends that scholars need "to recognize – and analyze concretely and historically – the cultural conditions of capitalism" (p. 36). He argues that class, language, and economics should be explored as a part of that process, as well as "collective noncapitalist economies – including barter, communal production, gift-making, and solidarity" with the goal of discovering alternatives to capitalism produced within a global, capitalistic system.

Grossberg (2000) similarly argues that capitalism in the 21st century has been fundamentally redefined. Capitalism has changed from a labor base dependent upon the creation of tangible products to a labor base, if one exists at all, that depends on people using their intellect and creativity to produce intangible products. Grossberg contends that labor is now less essential to capitalism's success than before. Capitalists can make money off of money, bypassing labor entirely.

Lazzarato (1996) would likely agree with the idea that capitalism is changing but would argue that labor has not become nonexistent but rather immaterial, something covered more at length in the *placemaking* chapter of this dissertation. Nadesan (2001), meanwhile, questions whether capitalism's reliance on physical labor and products has really changed at all over time, suggesting the work has simply shifted to other areas of the world where labor is cheaper than in the U.S. Developed nations, according to Nadesan, have seen a decline in physical labor that provides a livable wage. Developing nations, meanwhile, have seen an increase in feminized

industrial labor allowing for production of tangible goods without the threat of organizing to demand better wages (e.g., women, apparently, are less likely to organize if given flexible working conditions).

Thus, labor is still fundamental to an exploration of capitalism, regardless of its material or immaterial nature. By definition, even immaterial labor is linked to capitalism. By placing immaterial labor in the marketplace as a commodity, Lazzarato (1996) recognizes Marxist influences related to commodity, a base element in understanding capitalism in Marxist terms. Marx believed that commodities were different from goods or services because they were more reliant upon their exchange value than their use value (Marx, 1904). The use-value of a commodity was generally anchored in the physical, but the exchange value depended upon the variabilities of the market. Harvey (2010) contends if one read Marx closely, commodities also have a third element attached to them, that of "socially necessary labor time," which may be the most useful element to consider when discussing immaterial labor or labor that is dependent on its value in a culture of exchange networks:

> The exchange ratios between commodities at first appear accidental, but the very act of exchange presupposes that all commodities have something in common that makes them comparable and commensurable. This commonality, Marx cryptically asserts, is that they are all products of human labor. As such, they incorporate "value:' initially defined as the socially necessary (average) labor time necessary to produce them under given conditions of labor productivity. But in order for the labor to be socially necessary, somebody somewhere must want, need or desire the commodity, which means that use-values have to be reintegrated into the argument. (p. 25)

The abstract turns to the material and vice versa when one discusses labor of any kind as a commodity. Therefore, one might argue that labor and capitalism are not fundamentally changed but rather they are evolving. Labor can change forms without necessarily reformulating capitalism and perhaps that is the case with this new form of labor that Gill and Pratt (2008) have called creative, network, cognitive, affective, or immaterial labor in "contemporary capitalism" also known as post-Fordism, information and network society to name a few more terms used by scholars. It is not new, then, for scholars to revisit Marxist theory and use it as a lens to investigate labor and capitalism within the historical period in which the scholar lives. Perhaps, though, a theory proffered in the 19th century is more applicable in the 20th century than in the 21st century. Are scholars today too far removed from the world in which Marx constructed his theory to allow them to use the tenets of his work? Arguments of three authors who have addressed that question specifically relating it to labor and capital follow. When appropriate and in an effort to contextualize my findings, I have added information to tie the arguments to the labor I contend is promoted in the TOMS club and TOMS social enterprise models.

Terranova: "Producing Culture for the Digital Economy"

Terranova (2000) explores production of information as labor in what she calls the *digital economy*. She investigates the structure of society positing that the Internet is a platform (e.g., structure) that allows for the production of information, its distribution, and its profitability. She describes digital economy as a mechanism that captures social and cultural knowledge that includes forms of production such as "Web design, multimedia production, digital services…" as well as "chat, real-life stories, mailing lists, amateur newsletters, and so on" (p. 38). She argues that capitalism is ever present in the process because the digital economy originates from a field that is "always and already capitalism" (pp. 38-39). The idea that we operate within a structure

that both benefits us and benefits from us, as well as one that we construct and that constructs our reality, is one that Marx also noted in his precepts. For instance religion, Marx argued, was both an ideology and a structure in which people found comfort but to their detriment (Marx & Engels, 1970). Marx and Engels contended that as people fully participated in religion, they produced and reproduced a system of control in which they felt they benefited, but instead were actually hurting themselves by maintaining a structure that impeded their intellectual freedom.

A natural extension of this argument is the contention that an elitist, intellectual force dominates in the digital age, but Terranova (2000) spends more time addressing Marxist notions of labor and immaterial labor than arguments regarding base and superstructure. Calling "Multimedia artists, writers, journalists, software programmers, graphic designers and activists together with small and large companies" the *knowledge class* (p. 39), Terranova does not focus on explicating the parameters of that class, but rather concentrates on elucidating how labor functions on the Internet. Borrowing from Lazzarato, Terranova argues that the immaterial laborer does not belong to a specific class, and is instead found throughout the Internet adding to the Net's *collective intelligence*. She touches upon structure again by discussing how hierarchies of knowledge decide what immaterial labor capitalists will assist in moving from the virtual to the actual in an attempt to control and monetize the labor. In fact, she contends that the Internet is structured in such a way that it extracts value out of labor at an intense pace, demanding that knowledge (e.g., information) be continuously and relentlessly updated to maintain value and relevance. The immaterial labor of one person can be supported by the immaterial labor of another as Internet users both access and build upon their favorite sites.

Immaterial labor can also be *free labor* although that does not always lead to *exploitation* (Terranova, 2000). The Internet does allow for autonomy and horizontal communication, which

allows people to network as they prefer. Free labor can lead to exploitation, however, which Terranova links to capitalism:

> Free labor is a desire of labor immanent to late capitalism, and late capitalism is the field that both sustains free labor *and* exhausts it. It exhausts it by subtracting selectively but widely the means through which that labor can reproduce itself: from the burnout syndromes of Internet start-ups to underretribution and exploitation in the cultural economy at large. Late capitalism does not appropriate anything: it nurtures, exploits, and exhausts its labor force and its cultural and affective production. In this sense, it is technically impossible to separate neatly the digital economy of the Net from the larger network economy of late capitalism. (p. 51)

Late capitalism noted above is understood as capitalism in the digital age and different from capitalism explored by Marx in the 19th century. Exploitation in late capitalism is loosely contrasted to exploitation that Marx contended was evidenced in the way that capitalists paid workers less than the market value for their work to gain profits that were not shared with laborers. One could argue that the labor, including the immaterial labor of the TOMS club members, that although given voluntarily is something that benefits capitalists (e.g., TOMS). Whether or not it was exploitative could be a difficult case to make given the fact that the TOMS corporation made few demands on club members to labor in its name. In fact, in 2016 TOMS distanced itself from club activities as it changed its club program to something it has yet to redefine. Yet, the TOMS model of funding and delivering its philanthropy depends on the labor of others, often without compensation. The way that laborers communicate with TOMS and help further its philanthropy is often by means of the Internet. With that in mind, this discussion turns to Rey (2012) and an ongoing exploration of exploitative labor and the Internet.

Rey: "Alienation, Exploitation and Social Media"

Rey (2012) examines alienation and exploitation within the digital age and within digital media, particularly social media. He acknowledges that the factory, which he refers to as Marx's *paradigmatic example*, is very different from social media or Web 2.0 websites. He argues that factory labor is coerced while social media labor is voluntary. He references Terranova when he recognizes scholars who have criticized the exploitative structures of social media sites that benefit from, yet do not compensate, user-generated content. He contends that the online structure is as exploitative as industrial capitalism, but that the level of alienation is less intense at these sites when compared to the alienation of factory work. Defining alienation as "the process through which capitalism disrupts workers' natural relationships to the objects they create, their labor, their species-being, and to other people" (p. 401), Rey argues that he is adhering to a traditional understanding of *alienation* as a *Marxian* term. He contends that users generating content in social media are actually connected to their products and willing to forgive some exploitation in exchange for the ability to create and share free content. Therefore, although alienation exists in the Web 2.0 world, Rey posits that the work is not *particularly* alienating.

Rey (2012) argues that exploitation, on the other hand, is as present today as it was in the historical context in which Marx created his theories. Not only is it present, Rey contends, but its rate can be calculated as: value of the worker's labor – actual worker's wages. Because laborers do not receive 100 percent of the profits from their labor, they are laboring without full compensation and thus, exploited – some at a higher rate than others. Rey continues his application of Marx's understanding of exploitation within the 19th century in the 21st century by reminding us of Marx's surplus value formula: "surplus value/value of labor power" (p. 413).

More formulas follow to further evidence Rey's argument that exploitation in Marxian terms is as present today as it was in the 19th century. Therefore, he argues, Marxist theories regarding labor are applicable when analyzing our digital world.

Extending the conversation, Losh (2014) identifies "selfies" as work, noting that in some business models the use of selfies adds to the value of the organization as it posts or reposts selfies of people supporting the organization's mission. She does not argue that exploitation is involved in that process but notes that labor – informational labor - is involved and that capitalism along with activism is often advanced in the selfie-posting process. Selfies and various postings on Twitter and Facebook have always been a part of TOMS club communication. According to more than one scholar, that communication could be categorized as labor, furthering the argument that labor is an essential element to club organizing although it is still unclear who benefits most from those efforts, and whether exploitation is involved.

Reveley (2013) is one scholar who believes social media work is not exploitative. In the following section, Reveley criticizes Rey (2012) and Terranova (2000), complicating the debate regarding labor in the 21st century. The criticism also offers a fuller perspective of how the labor of TOMS club members may be understood.

Reveley: Exploitation Revisited

Reveley (2013) argues that Rey (2012) and Terranova (2000) are among the scholars who make a "fundamental category error" (p. 512) when arguing that exploitation is inherent in the social media structure. He offers allowances to Terranova because she notes that free labor is not always exploited labor, but generally blames Terranova for misleading scholars to incorrectly pursue the argument that free labor and immaterial labor are foundational in online structures. Instead, Reveley posits, exploitation is only a minimal concern on the Internet and that social

media's usefulness in organizing social movements ameliorates any "rises in the rate of exploitation" (p. 512).

Reveley (2013) also argues that Rey (2012) "too cavalierly [wields] the term exploitation" (p. 513) in his analysis applying Marxist theory to labor involved in maintaining social media sites. Reveley contends that the Marxist theory of exploitation is misused when applied to conditions outside of the factory. Exploitation, according to Reveley, can only exist if workers are removed from the means of production and compelled to work for a wage from which capitalists profit. Because "no one is compelled by capitalist social relations to use social media" (p. 514) exploitation is not really a factor in user generated websites.

Reveley (2013) criticizes others scholars, too, who he believes incorrectly suggest that exploitation is everywhere on the Internet. He points out that Fuchs (2012), for instance, oversteps boundaries by suggesting that users of social media are infinitely exploited because they generate content crucial to site maintenance, while the administrators of the site mine user data to sell to advertisers for a profit. Users are not compensated and therefore, victims of exploitation, according to some scholars but not according to Reveley. He contends that social media users are better categorized as advertising recipients, which cannot be labeled as an inherently exploitative position. Reveley argues that social media users would be better categorized using different terms created by Marx including *economically oppressed* and/or the *underclass*. I would agree with Reveley that those labels could certainly apply to the TOMS clubs members I worked with as they struggled to make their way in economically trying times. I also argue that the members did not see themselves as exploited, but rather in control of how and where they volunteered their time. They did, however, realize that they labored, even in digital spaces, particularly as they worked to drum up participation at club events.

Future Implications

Among the many arguments I have made in this dissertation, arguments that center on labor and capitalism supported by Marxist theory may be the most relevant to a continued examination of Millennials living in a digital economy, which may be the best name for the political economy of the 21st century. Investigations into exploitation and alienation have been useful in describing some concerns regarding today's laborers, including TOMS club members, and I do not pretend that my study of those issues have been exhaustive. However, other areas deserve exploration as well in furthering our understanding of "what's going on." Just a few suggestions follow.

Foucault's (2007) concept of biopower – the idea that people's actual bodies can be controlled by nation states via policies and structures – may also help us understand how people laboring in online and offline spaces can be the subjects of domination yet also have the ability to resist using the same policies and structures of oppression as they do so. Coté and Pybus (2007) turn to Foucault to theorize about relating a "particular Foucault" to a "particular Marxism" (p. 92) to understand how power could be negotiated in a positive fashion, through biopower, and in accordance with Marxist theory. Given arguments I have made regarding the embodied nature of Millennial labor, biopower investigations may lead to a better understanding of how and why Millennials labor as they do, and how that connects to businesses they support.

Perhaps future work should focus on a better understanding of the many economic values identified by Marx, including use, surplus, and exchange. For instance, pulling from affect theory as well as Marxist theory, Kologlugil (2015) argues that if affective labor produces surplus value for a capitalist, it could be categorized as productive labor according to Marx and therefore, fits within the capitalist relations of production. He takes the argument one step further by

suggesting even seemingly unproductive labor serves capitalism not by creating surplus value but by creating a collective intelligence that can be appropriated for profit (e.g., Red Hat uses open source coding to develop customized programs that it services for a fee). Thus, rather than looking holistically at political economy, future research could look more closely at perhaps the use of profits from surplus value, which TOMS is arguably redefining as it charges much more than its material and labor costs to fund its philanthropic activities. Millennials, as well as all TOMS customers and volunteers, are implicated in that process which I argue deserves researchers' consideration.

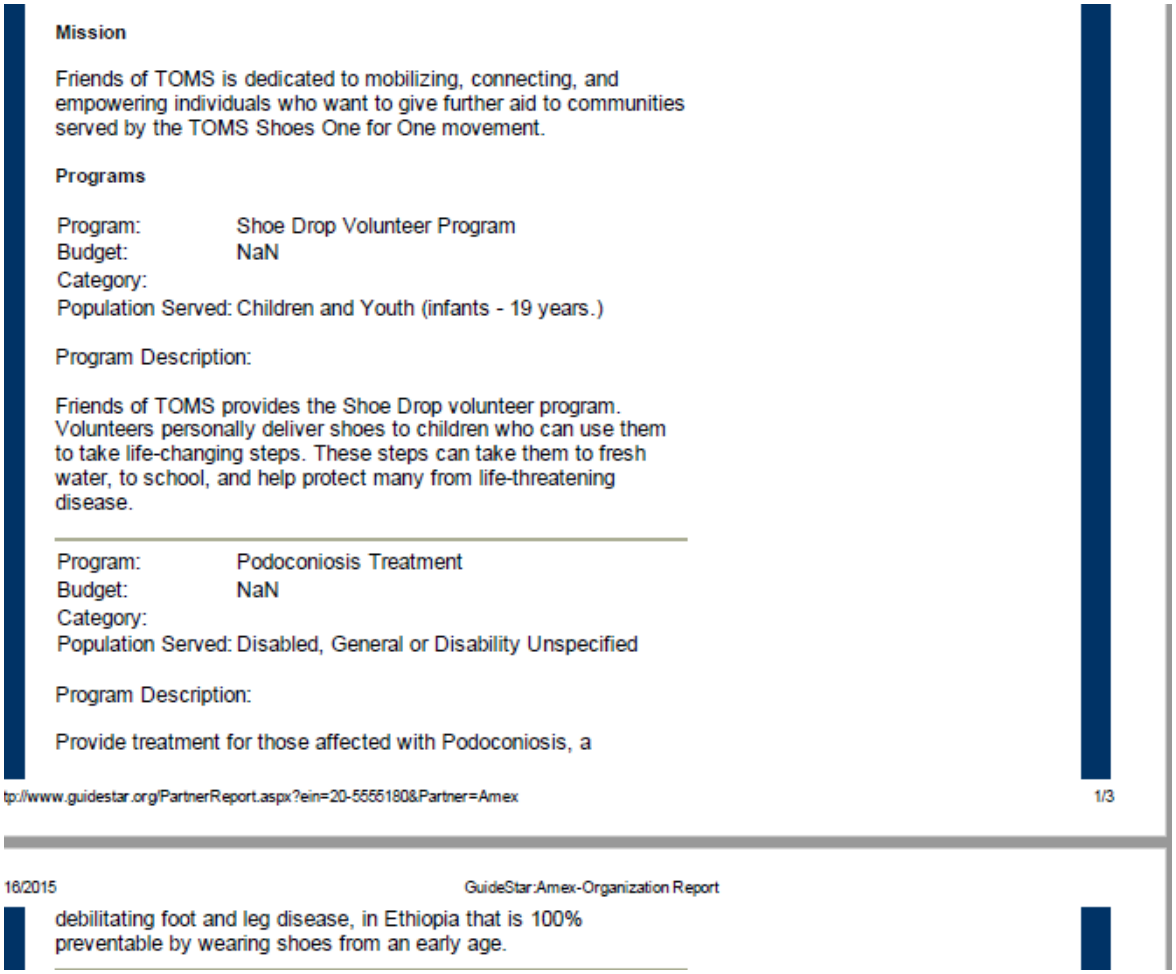
Future scrutiny could focus on labor as I have clearly done in this dissertation, but perhaps it could investigate a different type of labor. Rather than immaterial labor, perhaps the labor of Millennials could be explored as that of production and consumption. Alvin Toffler is credited with coining the term *prosumer* (Banks, 1998; Ritzer, Dean & Jurgenson, 2012) to describe people who exhibit elements of being both a producer and a consumer of commodities, which is arguably what the members of TOMS have been doing for several years, if one considers the production of events to be a production of commodities. That area of study is rich with debate and perhaps worth investigating in relation to club activities. For instance, Ritzer, Dean and Jurgenson (2012) contend that producer versus consumer binary is false and ahistorical because producers have been consumers almost always although sometimes more of a consumer than a producer, and vice versa. Grinnell (2009) recognizes the producer/consumer history but adds that what is different from the past is that the two are now occurring simultaneously, especially in online spaces. She refers in particular how people are both the viewers and the viewed on YouTube, Facebook, and other social media platforms. The conflation of the producer

and consumer into prosumer may be the best description of how Millennials understand labor, or maybe it is only a portion of the labor they undertake as well as the labor they see around them.

And what about glocalization? Bauman (1998) is among the first to recognize the relationship and disparities between globalization and glocalization. He contends that globalization is unruly, uncentered, and uncontrolled while glocalization is more located as it recognizes local places but not always in a positive way. Bauman theorizes that people take on the role of tourist as they bring the global to the local. At the same time, he posits that the local creates *vagabonds* who follow but benefit only briefly from the global class that moves from place to place. Thus, for Bauman, the glocal is a mix of the haves and have-nots as the global moves in and out of local places. Giulianotti and Robertson (2006) take a slightly different view as they investigate how local communities accept or negotiate the global in local places. They focus on the cultural aspect of glocalization, suggesting that as global travelers locate in local places they adapt and revitalize their own cultures, even as they participate in building a hybrid culture at the local level. I suggest that glocalization is a worthy lens to explore TOMS more than the TOMS club, particularly as the social enterprise enters into local places overseas, sometimes building factories and creating a semi-permanent presence within those communities.

Finally, I argue that part of the affective argument of TOMS in particular is one that resonates on a basic needs level. I have in this dissertation most often looked at affective narratives as one of charity and poverty alleviation, particularly for brown-faced people, but I also contend that TOMS connections with its supporters could be investigated as planned responses to strategically designed health campaigns. I argue that rather than using fear appeals common to public health campaigns (Witte & Allen, 2000), TOMS uses *responsibility* appeals to motivate purchasers and supporters of its products. Eyewear, clean water, and safe births are

most obviously health related outcomes associated with TOMS eyeglasses, coffee, and tote bags, respectively. The shoes, the dominant product line of TOMS, may seem unrelated to health concerns but according to TOMS earliest communication, that is not the case. Shoes were given to children in particular as a podoconiosis treatment, as described in GuideStar documentation from 2009, when TOMS was both a profit/nonprofit company that included the Friends of TOMS 501(c)(3) public charity that is no longer a part of the TOMS corporate model (see Figure 14):



Mission

Friends of TOMS is dedicated to mobilizing, connecting, and empowering individuals who want to give further aid to communities served by the TOMS Shoes One for One movement.

Programs

Program: Shoe Drop Volunteer Program
Budget: NaN
Category:
Population Served: Children and Youth (infants - 19 years.)

Program Description:

Friends of TOMS provides the Shoe Drop volunteer program. Volunteers personally deliver shoes to children who can use them to take life-changing steps. These steps can take them to fresh water, to school, and help protect many from life-threatening disease.

Program: Podoconiosis Treatment
Budget: NaN
Category:
Population Served: Disabled, General or Disability Unspecified

Program Description:

Provide treatment for those affected with Podoconiosis, a

tp://www.guidestar.org/PartnerReport.aspx?ein=20-5555180&Partner=Amex 1/3

16/2015 GuideStar:Amex-Organization Report

debilitating foot and leg disease, in Ethiopia that is 100% preventable by wearing shoes from an early age.

***Figure 14*: TOMS 2009, 990-EZ report on GuideStar, a nonprofit reporting service**

Even with shoes, then, TOMS claimed its product had positive health outcomes for people it gave shoes to overseas. Its YouTube videos consistently market the company's health initiatives.

To be clear, emails that I have received from TOMS (that I started receiving following a shoe purchase in June of 2015) usually promoted products rather than health initiatives, but they also promoted special days with a health focus (e.g., World Sight Day, One Day Without Shoes, etc.). Thus, I contend in the future it may be worthwhile to research TOMS marketing messages as health campaigns, or at least partly health campaigns, that at times harken back to the development programs of old.

Given the multiple perspectives that one could take in studying social enterprises and the people who support them, I contend the work of this dissertation is just a beginning in a line of worthy investigations. Marx (1904) posited capitalism would at some point collapse on itself but as many before me have noted (Grossberg, 2000; Lazzarato, 1996; Reveley, 2013), capitalism has a way of reinventing itself guaranteeing its survival. Social enterprises, I contend, are a part of capitalism's efforts toward survival. In moving into spaces overseas and missions associated with nonprofits, companies operating with a social conscience have found messaging that combines shopping and helping in all sorts of places with all sorts of products to be persuasive and profitable. How profitable? Some estimate that social enterprises employ 10 million people and account for $500 billion dollars in revenue in the U.S. alone (Thornley, 2012). Given those statistics, the communication and actions associated with social enterprises and people who support them matter, and therefore, deserve future investigation.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

Over the past 4 years I have built a fun exciting relationship with TOMS, an amazing company who gives another chance. I also have a history with the THCF; who gives hope. And with Alpha Phi Omega, who gives back. And a strong relationship with God who gives salvation. So to wrap those all into one, I think of the word love. Without all of the love I've gotten I wouldn't be here today. I can't thank those enough who have helped shaped and encouraged me every day. Remember to give hope, second chances, give back and most importantly give love.

***Figure 15*: Club founder's Facebook post and tattoo picture from February 7, 2017**

An Overview

Millennials, as evidenced in part by the experiences of TOMS club members, have grown up watching and learning from laborers and businesses of all kinds. They have seen how immaterial labor became central to the workforce as well as most social processes they enjoy. As their classrooms, friendships, shopping, and games moved online, so did the workplaces of their parents, siblings, and potentially themselves. They have been told they will need to know how to communicate with others via technology in order to do even the most menial of tasks. They have also learned that lucrative entrepreneurship happens in spaces that traverse the world. They have seen entrepreneurs like Facebook founder Mark Zuckerberg and Apple guru Steve Jobs become rich using their intellect, creativity, and understanding of technology. Members of BGSU's TOMS club certainly understand the story of TOMS founder, Blake Mycoskie's journey to success and wealth. Do they labor in TOMS name in the hope of becoming more like Blake?

In part, I suggest, that arguments in this dissertation point to “yes,” Millennials labor in a certain way for certain people in order to find their own success. They connect for particular reasons with companies such as TOMS that seem to be leading the way in the digital economy while also doing good work. The pull of missions that social enterprises like TOMS promotes is strong. Who among us does not want to believe that somewhere there is a way to take care of ourselves and others if we just work with a conscience? I, too, want to believe that my path to success can be reached if I care, volunteer, and shop wisely, assuming I have not found the winning formula to launch my own enterprise leading to social justice.

What is missing from this picture is the bad news. Sometimes when we mean to do good work, we actually hurt those we are trying to help. Banning-Lover (2015), for instance, describes Millennial volunteers who travel overseas to help the less fortunate as well-intentioned, but misguided, and in need of training about responsible, informed philanthropy. She asks “how would you feel if someone came from abroad and took your job? Because that’s what volunteers sometimes unwittingly do, take local jobs."(para. 19). Banning-Lover is in part describing the political economy in which Millennials live and generate globalization. She points out that doing good work is big business, a 2 billion dollar industry, in fact. She argues that "Aid and social change” have become a commodity (para. 12) that is bought and sold in a globalized economy.

Similarly, Miller and Mauren (2015), helped produce the documentary, *Poverty, Inc.,* where many interviewed in the film reiterated the sentiment that helpful people who descend into areas that are not their homeland are not always helpful. During the film, for instance, one person interviewed shared the following:

> There's a certain paradigm in which we try to help the poor. And it comes with underlying assumptions and images about poor people. It comes from a good heart …
>
> The problem is, it does not work … and yet the icons of charity remain the same.

Calling the system of poverty alleviation broken, the movie reminds us that development projects of old look very much like the poverty alleviation projects of today. They specifically point to TOMS as a social enterprise involved in that broken process that some in the movie dubbed *paternalism*.

Being associated with past, failed development projects should be insulting to companies caught in that net. The paradigm mentioned in the documentary quote above has also been called the modernization paradigm given its adherence to modernizing underdeveloped countries, and criticized as one that does not actually further the economic or cultural development of countries (Frank, 1996; Melkote, 2002; Melkote & Steeves, 2015; Schramm, 1978; Sparks, 2007). Rather, poor countries targeted for development have remained poor, while rich countries have remained rich.

Harrison (2000) is just one scholar who recognized that development projects have failed to meet their goals of furthering societies deemed in need of improvement. He notes that development should strive to improve people's quality of life through education and the mitigation of health concerns. He details gaps in the developed and underdeveloped countries offering the explanation that others have offered regarding the reason for the gap: "… that the rich countries are rich because the poor countries are poor" (p. 1). He proffers that explanation, however, only to counter it. Instead of focusing on political, historical, or societal forces that could be adjusted to moderate uneven development, Harrison advocates a neoliberal approach calling on more individual creativity to further future development. Specifically he advocates an

"inward rather than outward" (p. 2) perspective to explain and solve development problems that a society may be experiencing. He did not label his approach as neoliberal, but it is exactly the approach explored by Harvey (2007) and Rosati (2012) who posit that the core problem with neoliberalism is that it burdens individuals with undo responsibility in controlling all aspects of their lives, including those aspects that could be handled and have been handled by governments and societies in the past.

For example, Rosati (2012) argues that capitalism and neoliberalism have systematized a shift from the collective to the individual to provide for the well-being of society. Not only are people expected to take care of themselves, but they are also expected to take care of the market by producing more than they take. In the end, capitalism is served, and the wealthy are allowed to maintain if not increase their wealth.

The criticism of development communication started decades ago, yet is still applicable today. Schramm (1978) wrote in an article nearly thirty years ago that development communication needed to change. His call reflected that of others, including Rogers and Shoemaker (1971), as well as Rogers, Singhal, and Quinlan (1996), who admitted that the modernization paradigm did not allow for local knowledge and expertise to inform development programs. Schramm (1978), even in the 70s, recognized the downfall of the old paradigm, and stressed that development needed to remain respectful of culture and tradition. Borrowing from Eisenstadt (1997), Schramm introduced the concept of "cultural codes" to recognize some cultures have coping mechanisms that are different from other cultures. Those codes were essential to know, according to Schramm, especially for potential inclusion in social change programs.

Some things in development communication and programs have not changed but criticism has led to discussions promoting new approaches. Important to the dialogue surrounding social enterprises and the people who support them, Harrison (2000) links development creativity to entrepreneurs, reiterating an individual-bias prominent in the dominant, modernization paradigm. Harrison promotes the idea that entrepreneurs are the "real creators of wealth and progress" (p. 2), while Melkote and Steeves (2015) note that entrepreneurs have long been considered catalysts in development programs. At the same time, associating the role of the entrepreneur with economic factors has also been criticized as a shortcoming of the dominant paradigm. Specifically, Melkote and Steeves observed that quantitative measures such as the gross national product are used to decide the performance of most development programs, rather than recognizing alternative indicators such as gender equality, universal primary education, and environmental sustainability as detailed in the Millennium Development Goals adopted by many countries around the world (Melkote & Steeves, 2015).

As suggested in *Poverty, Inc*., as poverty persists, capitalists launch new business models in those impoverished spaces (Dowling, 2016; Miller & Mauren, 2015). Dowling (2016) argues that public/private partnerships and social enterprises are on the rise as governments cut funding of social programs. This rise needs to be critically investigated, according to Dowling, who recognizes that non-compensated volunteers provide a labor base that ostensibly helps some of the most vulnerable in the world while also adding to the profits of private investors.

Those who study and support social enterprises and community models formed to benefit all involved need to ask at least one critical question: "Who benefits the most from poverty alleviation programs?" Other questions that also deserve answers were asked by one of my committee members as he wondered about connections TOMS club members were making in

regards to those they helped: “Do TOMS club members know why the countries that get shoes are impoverished?” and “Why don’t they ever talk about how the U.S. might be implicated in the poverty of a country or region?” Similar questions could be asked with even more of a U.S.-to-U.S. focus: “Why are the people being helped by local fundraising activities by club members usually women, children, and people of color?” and “Why does there never seem to be a shortage of people to help?”

In some ways, then, the TOMS shoe company – like other social enterprises and organizations designed to serve impoverished populations - is positioned both outside and inside of capitalism, as well as the communities where it distributes its products and services. Headquartered in California, TOMS does give to people within the U.S. (“Stories,” 2015). However, the majority of most of its services and certainly its shoes have been given to people in other countries such as India, Mexico, the Philippines, and South Africa (“Improving lives,” n.d.). At the same time, TOMS has built factories overseas creating hundreds of jobs in those areas, promoting on their website that they are “committed to producing one third of our Giving Shoes in the regions where we give them” (“Production,” n.d., para. 2). In the U.S. and in those communities where shoes are produced, then, TOMS is arguably comprised of members of the community they serve and therefore, constitutive of the community. On the other hand, when it travels overseas, TOMS is also “structurally distinct from the community” it serves and is therefore positioned outside of the community (Ganesh & Stohl, 2014, p. 745). That matters when organizations care to work *with* people rather than *for* them. Working with people assumes people matter, and that they should be a part of solutions to their own problems. Working for people, or worse – around them – discounts people’s talents, skills, and local knowledge, something criticized time and time again in critical development communication.

I have heard the argument, particularly during discussions in my graduate development class, that doing something is better than nothing. It is true that TOMS and TOMS club members are doing *something* for community members when other organizations and their supporters are doing little to nothing, particularly in partnership. Partnerships are in fact very much a part of the TOMS corporate model, especially after it moved its philanthropic work from its own nonprofit organization (e.g., Friends of TOMS) to nonprofit organizations that are a part of the areas in which TOMS gives ("Thoughtful partnerships," n.d.). TOMS has promoted corporate partners, too, who seemingly followed the same philosophy of the TOMS movement. As mentioned previously, in 2013, TOMS created a marketplace that via the TOMS website, visitors could shop for products created by like-minded entrepreneurs (Fox, 2013). Although the marketplace closed in 2016, it was replaced with the TOMS social entrepreneurship fund meant to help other entrepreneurs like Mycoskie start enterprises of their dreams ("Social enterprise," n.d.), thus continuing a movement of growing businesses with a social conscience.

Ganesh and Stohl (2014) argue that movements can be confrontational or contentious, or collaborative and coordinated. I contend that because TOMS continually collaborates with other organizations, including campus clubs that still bear the TOMS name spread throughout the U.S. and Canada, the enterprise's movement would be considered collaborative, and an act of commensalism and symbiosis (Ganesh & Stohl, 2014). It competes for similar resources (indicative of commensalism), as well as customers, with other organizations that comprised the Marketplace that now may receive support from the TOMS entrepreneurship fund. At the same time it partners with students on campus and volunteers from nonprofit organizations around the world to create awareness and distribute its products (indicative of symbiosis).

Continuing with the positive work that might be associated with TOMS, the TOMS movement could additionally be categorized as one of collective action defined by Ganesh and Stohl (2014) as "two or more people acting for the benefit of three or more people" (p. 757). The work could also be considered a positive example of corporate social responsibility defined by May and Roper (2014) as corporate philanthropy. There is evidence that TOMS is providing goods and services to people in need in areas where government welfare is falling short. It is engaging others, particularly Millennials, in this action as it provides these products. At the very least, the social enterprise is working to provide products and services that are not otherwise provided, and it is financing it in a way that club members recognize as sustainable.

Social enterprises like TOMS are a part of a system that promotes it is working to improve the quality of life for people around the world. I, despite my criticism, imagine that it is. Could the enterprise be doing better? Of course. All businesses and all people could always do better. Stemming the tide of parasites, blindness, unclean water, and unsafe birthing practices is a noble goal regardless of effectiveness. The point is, as we labor and make some people rich and others less poor, do we have a responsibility to look at our actions in light of marginalized labor, and marginalized people? My contention is that we simply must or we will continue to diminish work that is important yet not compensated, and people who are trapped in systemic conditions that lead to their less than desired existence.

TOMS has responded to criticism in the past by working to right its model ("Project Just," 2016), adding factories, jobs, and paying attention to needs of people in areas they serve. If I were to rate the way that I feel about the company after participating in the TOMS club communication and activities for several years, I would give it a 7 out of 10 with 10 being the most efficient and socially responsible. I am extremely close to rating it an 8, and here is why: 1)

I do not see the TOMS corporate model or its one-for-one philosophy losing customers or philanthropic impact, therefore, its attention to both making profits and fulfilling philanthropic goals seems sustainable; 2) #1 matters because I do not know the answer to what the correct model of giving, developing, or communicating may be that would make the TOMS model better, nor do I have evidence of a better model (e.g., other models such as financing entrepreneurs in impoverished countries comes with its share of problems, see Gajjala & Birzescu, 2011; Gajjala, Gajjala, Birzescu, & Anarbaeva, 2011); and 3) I watched the TOMS club members respond to the TOMS mission with emotion (generated by affect, as I have argued) that they supported with labor, and then extend to their own community, and I cannot label that misguided when they are helping, even if only temporarily, real people with real problems.

My reluctance to label club members' work may be because I have worked beside them, yet I argue precisely the opposite. It is because I have worked beside them that I have the ability to critically analyze them. Toward a balance, I suggest that until and unless someone categorically offers a better way for people to devote their time, energy, and connections to bettering their lives and the lives of others, perhaps what is going on in the TOMS club should be considered a legitimate path to individual accomplishment and worthwhile attempts to upend global income inequality. Whether the system of poverty alleviation is the correct one as proffered by TOMS or the TOMS club I suggest remains to be seen, but I appreciate the effort that all seem to be making. Perhaps in the end, effort is the point. Perhaps that people respond to affect and give their time to serve is enough to excuse an imperfect model that has the very best intentions at its core, particularly when they are working in rather powerless positions to serve others.

At the very least I think the members of the club are responding honestly to the communication that surrounds them. In this dissertation I have discussed the exchange of information between the club and TOMS, but I want to make note of another affective exchange that I argue is less prevalent but could be meaningful to club members who are also students at our university. On one of its webpages meant to promote the benefits of attending BGSU, the university suggests to students ten ways to "get involved" starting with "volunteer in the community" and ending with "join a student organization, fraternity, or sorority" ("Office of campus activities," n.d.), promoting the more than 300 student organizations that are on our university's campus, including the TOMS campus club. They invite students to find out "where they belong" by visiting the list of organizations students could join. The university also hosts a day on campus each year where various student organizations have members sit at tables and talk about their activities to prospective members. Millennials of the TOMS campus club and others on campus may have been influenced to desire club membership of some kind or another given those recruiting efforts. By comparison, another university in the region boasts that it has 400 organizations students could choose to join to "become involved" in campus life ("Student life," n.d.), as does another in the same state ("Student organizations," n.d.), underscoring the pervasive nature of communication university students receive about joining student organizations that may have added to the TOMS club members motivation to join the TOMS club.

The members of this study, then, are similar to others on their campus, and might be similar to other Millennials on other college campuses. However, they may not be representative of other Millennials in other places and spaces around the globe. The replication of this study is questionable but not in any surprising way according to scholars like Suter (2012):

> Although a case study design may include only a single case (perhaps one person, classroom, or school), designs built around multiple cases (or at least two) are often more informative, given their potential to replicate findings and test (or rule out) rival explanations. Case studies pose challenges partly because the mindful researcher must use creative insight and careful interpretation to make sense of and explain findings (explanation building) that were observed as well as what was not observed. (p. 366)

Members of the TOMS club may not be representative of all Millennials everywhere, yet the experiences detailed in this dissertation may inform the discussion *about* them because the discussion in this dissertation has been *with* them.

Participant Observation, Bracketing, Reflexivity, and the Account

Earlier in this dissertation I noted that scholarship tells us the critical ethnographer must be reflexive regarding herself as the research instrument and the scribe to avoid reinforcing the status quo (Madison, 2005; Vandenberg and Hall, 2011). I was often cognizant of my reflexivity, perhaps because I was a graduate student and asked to do so in my classes and by my committee members. As a participant observer, the person who is both inside and outside of the group being studied, I found that there were times when I could actually feel when I was on the outside of the group. Those moments made me reflect as to why I was on the outside. Those were good moments, please be clear, because I am convinced following nearly three years in the field that reflexivity is integral to humanistic methods and not just a term to be bandied about. However, I also appreciated when someone, often my faculty advisor, would mention something to me during our discussions and suddenly I would realize I had not been reflexive at a critical time. I was fortunate to be able to go back into the field and revisit a situation or do a member check regarding my working assumptions (that I often considered my *biases* noted throughout this

dissertation), as I believe most participant observers can do. Yet it made me realize the power of the voices we do not hear but want to represent as critical ethnographers. Those perspectives I had not considered until they were pointed out to me or became obvious in other ways helped me understand the need for constructing the account with my fellow participants, giving them a chance to reflect with me and on behalf of others in the club.

Throughout this dissertation I strived to point out my biases in an effort to bracket them, meaning to recognize and set them aside as often as possible as I conducted my research (Chan, Fung, & Chien, 2013; Gearing, 2004; Tufford & Newman, 2012). Today I am reminded of when my faculty advisor told me early in the process, literally before I even went to the first club meeting, to forget theory and simply participate in and observe the club experience before trying to figure out what was going on. We even joked about it in a departmental presentation, laughing but recognizing that I took her direction seriously and strived to follow it then, later, and still. I contend that bracketing is essential in the reflexive process. I argue that discussion is essential to the critical process. I suggest that all of that is accomplished through communication with others.

One Last Note

Although I have noted before that I am old enough to be the mother of all club members I studied, and in fact, see my child in many of them, I have not been entirely forthcoming in suggesting that the age differences between us could be the single most serious limitation to my study of how they were connecting with the TOMS shoe company. I imagine I misunderstood meaning making being done by members, and therefore, could have incorrectly identified themes. I also contend that member reactivity to my presence, as a teacher or parent-like figure, may also have created an inauthentic member response.

And yet I argue - as a committee member pointed out to me - that perhaps our age difference is an advantage rather than a disadvantage to this research. Maybe my lived experiences added to my ability to identify themes and add a learned perspective to all that I saw and participated in. Moreover, Maxwell (2013) suggests that a continued presence over about three years should have counteracted any reactivity to my role as researcher in the room. I noticed, for instance, that particularly during the set up or teardown of an event I was a welcome worker and argue that I was most like other members in those moments. My continued presence, therefore, may have adequately addressed those issues. Additionally, I did my best to counteract researcher effects and misunderstandings by checking with members in meetings, at events, and during one-on-one interviews whether what I thought might be going on was really going on. I suggest in the future, however, that I need a more formal process of member checking such as sending portions of my dissertation to club members and receiving their feedback. I suggest, then, that the work of this dissertation is not complete, but rather an ongoing exploration of Millennials, social enterprises, political economy, power relationships, and culture. I look forward to continuing investigations in the future.

CHAPTER 8: EPILOGUE

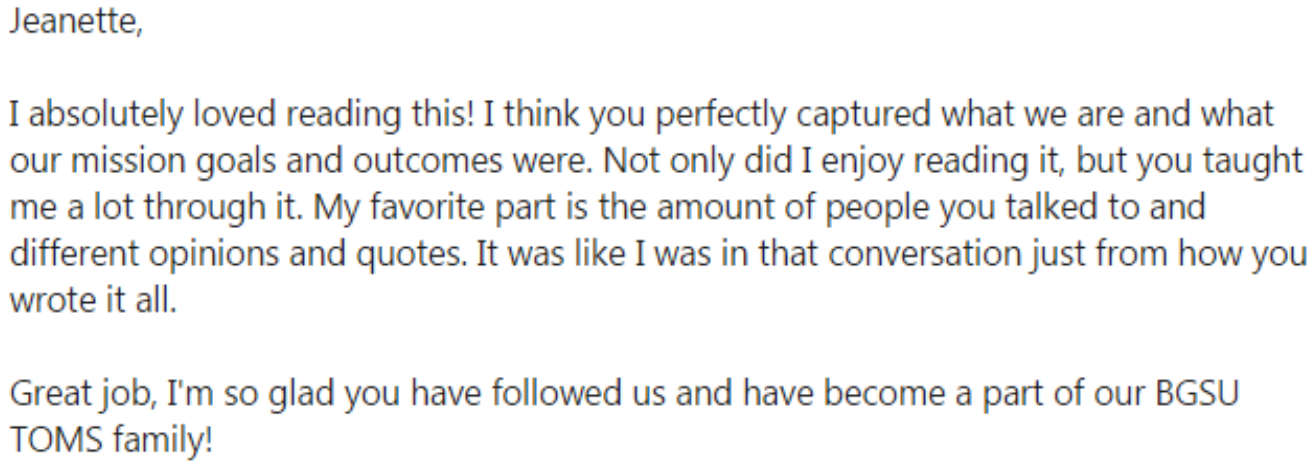
I am extremely delighted with the work presented as I get the chance to fall in love with TOMS all over again ☺
(a club member's personal communication with author, March 24, 2017)

Update as of April 2017

I had hoped as part of the dissertation process – and to member check my findings to add to a critical perspective - to have a group interview after several members read at least portions of my dissertation. I imagined I could provide pizza and beverages and it would be a sort of reunion where we all felt comfortable in discussing our time together. I wanted to record it, have it transcribed, and spend plenty of time analyzing the transcription.

I did not get that far, but I made progress toward that goal.

I emailed two chapters of my dissertation (e.g., Chapter 1 for background and Chapter 5 for accessibility) to members who I thought would read the chapters and offer feedback. One of four members chosen did not respond. All of the feedback from three of the four is presented in the following figures in their original form as received.


Jeanette,

I absolutely loved reading this! I think you perfectly captured what we are and what our mission goals and outcomes were. Not only did I enjoy reading it, but you taught me a lot through it. My favorite part is the amount of people you talked to and different opinions and quotes. It was like I was in that conversation just from how you wrote it all.

Great job, I'm so glad you have followed us and have become a part of our BGSU TOMS family!

***Figure 16*: Response received from club founder after reading two chapters of my dissertation**

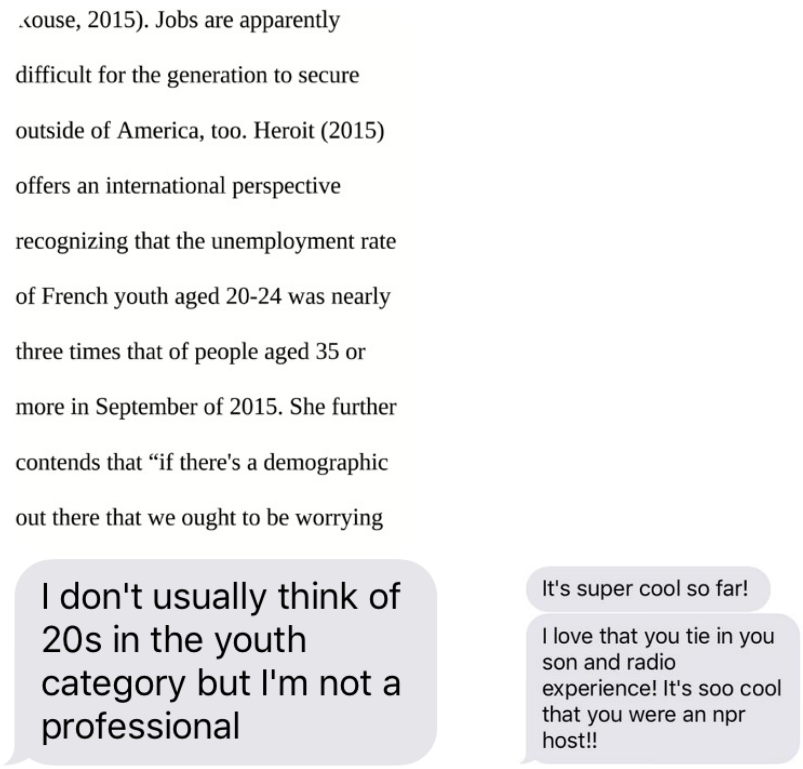


***Figure 17*: Responses received from club member after reading two chapters of my dissertation**

Below are some comments:

1. In Chapter 5, the ending seemed to end abruptly. The statement provided seems to be connecting the pieces from the chapter yet last paragraph seemed to be a slight disservice to final message you were wanting to convey to the audience.
2. I was intrigued a lot by the aspect of millennials during the introduction and at the beginning of the chapter 5. However, after page 11 was the last moment in which millennials were mentioned. I make this comment because The follow section is about the movement. Movement is something that a millennial for the most part strive to participate in and ultimately is the reason students because passionate about their organizations and causes. Therefore, during the section of a movement it could be interesting to bring back a few points from the introduction of the fascination of the millennial generation.

3. I may have missed this portion or may be going a route that doesn’t fit with the overall goal but for some reason was compelled to share.

a. Something so powerful about the parallel between TOMS and our Campus Club and Corpodeli is that everything started with a single passion and drive to make an impact. This relationship ties directly into the ability to bridge the gap between generation by focusing on humanity for all. A single person can implement a globalization, campus impact, or community initiative if we inspire. Creating buy in is the hardest part, however, when we see individuals focus more on inspiring those to find value in a mission is when change begins to happen.

b. Example: Feed My Starving Children was an organization that started a semester after TOMS Campus Club launched their first big event because they were inspired by the one for one movement in a different aspect which was to provide food. This is the same food in which both Rod and I ate at one the schools. Impact is everywhere.
c. Additionally, when speaking of the movement of TOMS, we also were able to see this in the schools in Peru when mothers would work as a kitchen aid so that their child was able to attend the school without a fee. One for one is a global phenomenon and has been adapted in many capacities. Which sometimes directly correlates to the mindset of a millennial.
d. However, in that same sense, looking at generational theory how the organization started could be seen as a contradiction to how corporate society views the millennial generation of needing a step by step how to guide rather than utilizing their creativity to raw passion to make a change.

I am not sure if any of my rambling helped at all but I became re-passionate about the experience, TOMS, and the millennial generation. I hope this helped and would be happy to aid in any way I can. Let me know what you need from me! I am extremely excited to see how far this has come and truly appreciate you taking an interest in the work of the members involved in this organization.

***Figure 18*: Response received from club member after reading two chapters of my dissertation.**

The comments in Figures 16 through 18 suggest to me myriad things including that some of the members were more willing to critique what they read than others, and that even though all who responded were busy - and so few of us wanted to read 40 pages of somebody else's writing -– they did it because we have a connection. I will go further and say that we all still want to help each other, even though most of us are no longer active in the club.

The club, by the way, will no longer be a club at the end of Spring Semester 2017. The club founder called me on March 23, 2017, to tell me that the club would be dissolving in the near future. I wondered why now and he said that he and the current club president thought it was time to end the club, in part, because there was no one who wanted to take on the leadership of the club. Also, he said that when TOMS pulled its support of its campus clubs in 2016, it was a "ding in our morale" (personal communication, March 23, 2017).

I was not surprised that the club may not continue without the founder's leadership and in fact had more than once asked members I interviewed what they thought of the club's prospects

if the founder ever left. One answer that follows exemplifies a hopeful picture for the club's future beyond the founder:

> *Jeanette*: I always thought, if [the club founder] goes, there's no club.
>
> *Club member*: I disagree.
>
> *Jeanette*: I think so too. Now. I don't think that that's accurate now.
>
> *Club member*: No, yeah. I think we definitely have grown as a group because like last semester again, it was very small when I joined. I joined in March last year and like the fact that he was like, "Oh you want to be on the exec, okay, awesome, great. You are on exec". I am like wait, what? I don't have to interview? I don't have to do anything? I don't have to make a speech? And he was like, "No, you are just going to come in, say you are taking this position. It's yours." I'm like, okay. I mean, the fact that it was so…
>
> *Jeanette*: Doesn't sound very coveted.
>
> *Club member*: No. It was very informal and everything. And I feel that like now yes we have taken on more people on exec, like, kind of in the same manner I joined. But I feel like the exec we now have, like, it's a group of people that do care and we are friends. So I mean, we can still hang outside, like X* and I are brothers. So I mean still outside of that, we still hang out and talk. We spend time together. It's a fact that we do have those refocusing meetings where—we have done these a couple of times—like, why are we here? Or how does TOMS align with your personal feelings and your personal views and values and everything. Like, we tie that to a greater purpose. (personal communication, February, 1, 2016)

After the club had different presidents than the founder, we started finding a way to move the club forward without him and that boded well for the club's future. However, perhaps the

dissolution of the club was inevitable given the amount of work that I argued was required to be an active member of the club. During my defense of this dissertation, one member of my committee wondered if prospective club members, in fact, opted out of joining the club because they did not want to work for TOMS without compensation. How much people are willing to labor for a university club while juggling other obligations is a fair question and one that I frequently asked myself - and others (albeit in roundabout ways). Are people less or more willing to labor for their organization in other campus clubs that do not have a for-profit parent organization benefitting from that labor? That is an excellent question to be answered in future research.

Perhaps a more pertinent question is whether the club is disbanding because the founder is leaving our campus. In the same conversation during which the founder expressed to me that the club was closing, he shared with me that he was leaving to move to Texas by the summer of 2017. In fact, that is how he opened the phone conversation, and then he explained that the club was shutting down. So his move to Texas was the lead. What does the club launch and closure say about the founder in particular and what does it say about the club members in general? After all, more than one Millennial member worked myriad hours serving the club. What does its closure mean to them if anything? Do they care? Why or why not? Those are all questions worthy of future investigation.

Other questions that still confound me are tied to one event: when TOMS pulled their support of the campus clubs. Why did we seem to walk away from that conversation with the TOMS representative unscathed in 2016 but a year later dissolve the club with the founder blaming (in part) that pullback at the corporate level as leading to the club's ending? Why did TOMS ever pull its support from the clubs in the first place? When and why did campus clubs

lose their meaning for TOMS? Campus clubs seemed to me to be free and easy promotional avenues for a newly formed corporation. Perhaps as the social enterprise matured, however, it wanted to be in more control of its branding for particular reasons to which I am not privy. Those reasons may have trumped consumer innovation and appropriation with TOMS products that led to some enthusiasm but not necessarily enough to support the risk of such uncontrolled activity.

Many of the questions I have posed in this chapter may seem specific to TOMS and TOMS club members, yet I argue they are meaningful in a broader context, particularly as scholars like me explore free labor in online and offline spaces. Political economy that social enterprises like TOMS and Millennials like TOMS club members (and my son) operate in is worthy of investigation, if only for a better understanding of the newest forms of building survival skills and/or capitalist exploitation of labor in a market-centric economy. I contend that social enterprises, and the consumers and volunteers who support them, tell us something about our past, present, and future as a globalized society. I anticipate that the discussion will continue and I look forward to being a part of it.

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APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Dillon Potential TOMS Interview Questions

Note: Since the research method is semi-structured in-depth interview, there are no fixed questions that will be posed to the participants. However, the scope of questions will likely be limited to categories as below:

1] Interest and Engagement in TOMS' activities

Question examples:

- Where and how did you learn about TOMS?
- What do you know about TOMS?
- What do you like about TOMS?
- What do you dislike about TOMS?
- Who or what was your inspiration for joining the TOMS campus club?
- What work do you do for/in TOMS campus club?
- How does your TOMS work impact your everyday life?
- What do your friends and family think of your TOMS activities?
- Do you encourage others to join the TOMS campus club?

2] Interest and Engagement in philanthropy

Question examples:

- What other philanthropic groups and communities do you belong to?
- What do they do and who do they help?
- What is it that these groups have in common with TOMS?
- How are they different?
- Do you encourage others to join these groups?
- What impact do you think these groups have in the United States?
- What impact do you think these groups have around the world?

APPENDIX B: HSRB APPROVAL

BGSU
BOWLING GREEN STATE UNIVERSITY
Office of Research Compliance

DATE: June 26, 2014
TO: Jeanette Muhleman Dillon, MA
FROM: Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board

PROJECT TITLE: [580263-3] How Millennials connect with TOMS at BGSU SUBMISSION TYPE: Revision

ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS
DECISION DATE: June 25, 2014

REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # *2*

Thank you for your submission of Revision materials for this project. The Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board has determined this project is exempt from IRB review according to federal regulations AND that the proposed research has met the principles outlined in the Belmont Report. You may now begin the research activities.

Note that an amendment may not be made to exempt research because of the possibility that proposed changes may change the research in such a way that it is no longer meets the criteria for exemption.
A new application must be submitted and reviewed prior to modifying the research activity, unless the researcher believes that the change must be made to prevent harm to participants. In these cases, the Office of Research Compliance must be notified as soon as practicable.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

If you have any questions, please contact Kristin Hagemyer at 419-372-7716 or khagemy@bgsu.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board's records.

APPENDIX C: CONSENT FORM FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

BGSU
Bowling Green State University

INFORMED CONSENT SHEET

Study Title: How Millennials connect with TOMS at BGSU

Principle Investigator: Jeanette Muhleman Dillon, Graduate Student

Department of Communication, Bowling Green State University

INTRODUCTION:

You are invited to participate in a research study. You must be at least 18 years of age to participate. Please read carefully the information provided below before agreeing to participate in this study. If you have any questions or concerns regarding your participation in this study, please contact Jeanette Muhleman Dillon by phone, or e-mail using the following contact information: Phone: (419) 372 8349; E-mail: jmdillo@bgsu.edu. Any questions may also be asked of the graduate student's advisor, Dr. Radhika Gajjala by phone, or e-mail using the following contact information: Phone: (419) 372 8349; E-mail: radhik@bgsu.edu.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this study is to investigate the way in which college students are connecting with TOMS at Bowling Green State University (TOMS is the name of the organization and is short for *shoes for tomorrow*). The results of this study will contribute to our understanding of how Millennials relate to social enterprises via civic engagement.

PROCEDURE:

An interview of no more than one hour in length will be conducted and transcribed for accuracy, primarily focusing on gaining deeper understanding of your experience working within the TOMS Campus Club at Bowling Green State University.

VOLUNTARY NATURE:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. This means that you choose whether or not to participate in this study. You are free to withdraw from this study at any time. Deciding to remove yourself from the study will in no way negatively affect you, or your relationship with Bowling Green State University.

CONFIDENTIALITY PROTECTION:

The information you provide in this study is confidential. This means that the research records will include some information about you, such as name, age, gender, and race. This information will be protected by limiting access to the research data and keeping it in a secure location. Specifically, data collected will be stored in a locked filing cabinet and/or a password protected database. The principal investigator and her faculty advisor are the only parties that will be allowed to see the data. If a report of this study is published, or the results are presented at a professional conference, only group results will be stated, unless you have agreed otherwise. Therefore, any risk or possible discomfort to you due to participation in this study is expected to be minimal. However, if you have any concern about your participation in this study, please contact the principal investigator, Jeanette Muhleman Dillon.

RISKS AND BENEFITS:

Participation in this study involves risks that are no greater than those encountered in normal daily life. The researchers will take every precaution to protect your confidentiality. Participation in this study may not benefit you directly but it will provide invaluable insight into the correlations between civic engagement and communication.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the Chair of the Human Subjects Review Board at Bowling Green State University at:

Bowling Green State University Human Subjects Review Board
Office of Research Compliance
309A University Hall
Bowling Green, OH 43403
Tel: 419-372-7716
Email: hsrb@bgsu.edu

Thank you for your time.

Please sign below if you agree to participate in this research study. You may request a copy of this form at any time.

Subject's Name (printed)_____

Signature _____ Date _____

I have been informed that this study involves the audio taping of my interview with the principal investigator. I have been informed that the tapes (digital recordings) will be transcribed. Transcripts of the interview may be reproduced in whole or in part for use in presentations or written products that result from this study.

Please check one of each pair of options:

INTERVIEW

A.___ I consent to have my interview taped.

___ I do not consent to have my interview taped.

B.___ I consent to the use of quotes from the written transcription of my interview in presentations and written products resulting from the study.

___I do not consent to the use of quotes from the written transcription of my interview in presentations or written products resulting from the study.

_____ _____

Participant's Signature Date

APPENDIX D: ADAPTED VISUAL ANALYSIS CODES

Visual analysis codes adapted from Lutz and Collins (1993). An * indicates codes added by author. The categories "Aggressive activity or military personnel or weapons shown," "female nudity," and "male nudity" have been removed from the list as well given my experience that the categories are not pertinent.

World location
Unit of article organization (region, nation-state, ethnic group, other)
Number of photos including Westerners in an article
Smiling in photograph
Gender of adults depicted
Age of those depicted
Activity level of main foreground figures
Activity type of main foreground figures
Camera gaze of person photographed
Surroundings of people photographed
Ritual focus
Group size
Westerners in photo
Urban versus rural setting
Wealth indicators in photo
Skin color
Dress style ("western" or local)
Technological type present (simple handmade tools, machinery)
Vantage (point from which camera perceives main figures)
Type of music (tempo, genre, artist name if recognized)*
Gender of voiceover announcer (please note name of announcer if stated)*
Transcription of voiceover script*
Transcription of words used in the chyron of the video or placed on the picture*

Adapted from: Lutz, C., & Collins, J. L. (1993). *Reading National Geographic.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.