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WOMEN, CYCLING, AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE: HOW DISCURSIVE AND COMMUNITY PRACTICES AFFECT ENGAGEMENT

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WOMEN, CYCLING, AND THE PUBLIC SPHERE: HOW DISCURSIVE AND COMMUNITY

PRACTICES AFFECT ENGAGEMENT

By

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This thesis has been approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of MASTER OF SCIENCE in Rhetoric and Technical Communication.

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To my grandmother, who believed in me when no one else did.

To my partner and best friend, who has been by my side since I was 18.

And to my other best friend who is the Jake to my Finn, together we inhabit the struggle.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers the impact that discursive and community practices have on women's access to the public sphere by examining female cyclists and a cycling community in Miami, Florida via interviews and observation. In the interviews, female cyclists frequently reported fears for their safety, including concern over harassment, when riding in public space. I interviewed participants of the cycling community and observed Emerge Miami's meetings and events, where publicly organized cycling excursions were a major component. Using the theoretical and methodological lenses of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis and Communities of Practice, I examined the interviews to understand how participants discursively framed and contextualized gender-based harassment. I found two meta-discourse frames in operation: a normative frame (that essentially accepted the status quo) and a feminist frame (that challenged the "naturalness" of women's harassment as just what one had to live with). The feminist frame offered a pathway for women to exert control over their experiences and alter the cultural understanding of harassment's meaning and effect. The local community practices of Emerge Miami also challenged the normative frames that often silence women, employing explicitly invitational practices, which demonstrates how local discursive and social activity can impact and increase women's involvement by creating a more accessible space for women to engage with their local cycling community.

CHAPTER ONE: A FEMINIST LENS ON CYCLING, GENDER, AND PUBLIC SPACE

This thesis project addresses the intersection of gender and mobility through cycling, a growing area of research in the past 30 years in a number of fields, though there are still significant gaps in the literature on how gender and mobility interact. This project is an effort to extend work on how women's gender impacts their mobility and access to the public sphere. Through focusing on a particular community of cyclists, I hypothesize that experiences while cycling and in the cycling community are gendered through social and discourse norms and practices and that this gendered experience affects women's participation and involvement with the activity of bicycling and the bicycling communities formed around this mode of transportation. I consider the question of what factors impede women's access to the public sphere and the factors that invite women's full participation. This project finds its theoretical foundations in a critical, feminist examination of the public sphere and its meaning and significance for women. But the project was born from a more personal place: my personal involvement in the cycling community of Miami, Florida.

PERSONAL IMPETUS FOR RESEARCH AND STANCE

Until I began cycling in the city, I never thought of bicycling as an activity that might be different for women to engage with. That changed when I moved to Miami, FL from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and decided that biking would be a fun hobby to take up, as well as a practical way to navigate the city without a car. After a few attempts to find social biking activities online, I found a MeetUp.com group called Emerge Miami that hosted a monthly bike ride and I decided to try it out with my partner. The ride began at a metro-rail stop, where new riders were introduced to the basic rules of group riding and to a bit of background as to what Emerge

Miami was. The ride was enjoyable, but what I remember most vividly was how many people went out of their way to introduce themselves and ask about my life and interests. I was immediately invited to attend their monthly meetings. Being new to the city I wasn't intimately familiar with all the neighborhoods and where it was safer to ride but I struck out on my bicycle anyway to attend what would be the first of many of their monthly meetings. The first part of my ride was uneventful, the train station I debarked from was easily navigated and I struck out, confident I'd only have to make a few turns. A few miles into my ride and in a new part of town, I realized that almost every man I passed was gawking at me and a few shouted harassment as I peddled by. My pace quickened as I tried to get beyond the neighborhood; that was when I realized that a truck was following me, circling the block and then coming up behind me again, shouting unintelligibly and leering at me. I rode my bike as I'd never done before and arrived at my meeting, shaken but still happy to be attending.

That moment, and the many more moments that have come from my involvement in cycling and community advocacy compelled me to pursue the issue of gender disparities in cycling for my graduate research and are thus a critical part of understanding how I approach this project. My personal investment in this project informs the stance I take as a researcher looking at the issue of how bicycling provides an intersection for looking at mobility and gender's relation to one another. The concept of a research stance is derived from Jeffrey Grabill's (2012) work on Community-based Research methodology (CBR), where stance is described as "an identity statement that enables a researcher to process methods and make decisions," taking a "'position' relative to issues like purposes, goals, and methods for research" (p. 215). This stance addresses the researcher's identity, purpose, and the question of ethics and power. Since one of my goals and purposes with this work is facilitating positive change and action, locating myself as a researcher is critical.

My research identity is (in)formed by a critical, feminist stance which considers the underlying relations that influence our everyday behavior and the social norms we are surrounded by, especially in reference to language and communication. This stance is reflected in my choice of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis (Blackledge, 2012; Lazar, 2007 & 2008; Wodak & Matouscheck, 1993; Wodak & Riesigl, 2001) and Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1999; Wenger, 1998) as my primary methods of analysis and in my choice of subject.

My purpose, specifically, is to look at, 1) how harassment against women is framed by female cyclists and the affect of those discursive practices, and 2) the role a community's practices play in creating an invitational space for women and how that – in turn – impacts the gender composition of that community. My purpose is motivated by a desire to provide useful theory and observations to people in the cycling community so they can come to better understand women's experiences as cyclists on the road and in communities, and begin to craft intentional responses that will begin working to correct the current disparity. Providing useful theory and observations to my community has always been the primary goal for my research; however, as I began to research my topic I also developed an appreciation for what I might be able to contribute to the scholarship on gender and mobility. Therefore, this research project also speaks to the current gap in literature on gender and mobility, specifically as it relates to cycling.

The final critical aspect of a research stance is how the researcher handles the question of power and ethics. I start with an ethic that recognizes the privileged position occupied by a researcher, committed to yielding that power in unoppressive ways. Paolo Freire's (1970/2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* addresses the complex dynamics of oppression and power, warning against replicating power structures unintentionally. When working in communities the power imbalance must be recognized so the researcher can avoid wielding power oppressively (hooks, 1994). Grabill's Community-based Research extends this into his approach to research and

academic work in community. CBR advocates working *with* community on local problems and issues in a way that respects the expertise of all parties (of both the researcher and the community) altering the power imbalance by reconfiguring the relationship between community and researcher. My dual "citizenship" as a member of the community and as a researcher provide me with a unique vantage point and motivation. My investment in this community provides me with intrinsic motivation to be mindful of power dynamics and to wield my relative power as a researcher with caution.

ACADEMIC IMPETUS FOR RESEARCH

The bicycle has played a historically significant role in (literally and figuratively) moving women into the public sphere provides; this history provides a solid grounding for choosing to look at women's current cycling experiences in one community as a way of examining more general questions about gender and the public sphere. My work considers how the importance of women's increased mobility empowers them to become more active and free in society and how women's mobility is constricted due to gender (Hanson, 2010; Law, 1999; McDowell, 1992; Monk & Hanson, 1982). Tellingly, this was also an issue of central concern to early feminists such as Frances Willard, Susan B. Anthony, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton just as it is still of concern today since women's place in the public sphere continues to be contested. Throughout my work in this thesis I examine the strikingly similar issues women still face today with regard to accessing and participating in the public sphere freely.

(Im)mobility and place have long been signifiers of women's status and location in a society. Women's location in the private sphere date back at least to early Greek times when notions of the public sphere and civic duty were being formalized. Philosopher Hannah Arendt's (1958/1998) insights into how gender is reflected in the historical Greek construction of civic duty and the formation and

formalization of the public/private sphere divide provides crucial perspective on how mobility and access to public space is circumscribed for women. The private/public was divided as household/public respectively, and, according to Arendt, the freedom gained in the public sphere (or polis) was that one interacted only with equals there, which is to say other *freemen* who owned property. In the household realm, men associated with those below them: women and slaves. Gender was the ultimate factor in determining which realm was to be occupied, with property ownership being the other factor. (Without property, a man was unqualified to participate in the public sphere, and he was not considered an equal.). Women, thus, became a fixture in the private sphere, restricted from access to the public sphere on occasion of their gender.

Never content with this situation, women have resisted and attempted to enter public life. In Europe, Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, published in 1792, marked a turning point for women. Nearly 60 years later, the women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York was convened, marking the recognition of a nascent feminist movement that would build to the multiplicity of feminist thought and practice existing today.

In the U.S. feminist movement, access to the public sphere in terms of movement and expression has been of vital importance and the two are deeply intertwined. Being able to freely travel is necessary if one wishes to speak publicly and engage civically.[1] Early feminists active at the turn of the 19th century, such as suffragists Elizabeth Stanton and Susan Anthony, lauded the feminist potential of the bicycle as a means of freedom to travel and challenge conventional gender norms (Bly, 1896; Furness, 2005a; Strange & Brown, 2002;). The intersection of

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[1] Travelling alone was a luxury denied women in the U.S. to varying degrees until the industrial revolution was in full swing. And even today women still face opprobrium for travelling alone if they are attacked (see common rape prevention tips that circumscribe women's mobility as an example).

women and bicycles in the 1890s is one of the factors that forced Americans to grapple with the social order and women's place and function in it, as the numerous columns in newspapers devoted to the topic can attest (see Chapter Two for an in-depth consideration of this history). Strength, vigorous activity, being unaccompanied in public, traveling of their own volition where they pleased - these were all norms for men, not women during the bicycle's heyday in the Victorian U.S. Stanton, Anthony, and Frances Willard - very different sorts of women's rights advocates - all viewed the bicycle as emancipatory, though to varying degrees. Female ridership was a symbol of the changing status of women, though not the genesis of the freedom women were then struggling to achieve.

Today bicycling is still at the nexus of the public/private divide and women's free and unfettered access to the public sphere. This is the foundational issue at stake that women bicycling reveals: the contested place women still occupy in the public sphere. This contestation is the focus of my thesis, particularly as it relates to the framing of public street harassment in discourse and the impact of community practices on women's participation.

When women began documenting and writing about harassment in the 1980's (see Gardner 1980) public street harassment was often experienced as a routine part of women's experience navigating the public sphere. The scholarship women began producing changed that as they worked to codify unwanted attention on the street as an unacceptable way of relating to women in public. Additionally, researchers have found that harassment has negative psychological consequences for women (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Watson, Marszalek, Dispenza, & Davids, 2015).[2] This is why the way harassment is framed in discourse matters. We currently have limited knowledge of how harassment impacts women's cycling and mobility,

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[2] The literature review section that follows later in this chapter details the research done on harassment.

and that knowledge can be expanded by examining the framing of harassment in discourse, and, through that, how women contextualize their experiences. This leads to useful knowledge for those working to end street harassment of women and increases the number of women who use the bicycle. Campaigns aimed at harassment reduction, as well as educational endeavors, rely on understanding how the populations they target interpret and make meaning from harassing experiences of others and themselves. Advocates and academics focused on harassment are already aware that not everyone recognizes harassment as such. Part of what I hope to do is make it clear how those who reject framing harassment *as harassment* contextualize their experiences and how they define what advocates and academics call harassment.

Meanwhile, women are not equally represented in cycling or in the cycling community (Heesch, Salqvist, & Garrard, 2012), but little is known about how community practices may affect women's involvement in cycling. Although in the past 20 to 30 years researchers have begun to focus on gender's mediating influence on mobility (McDowell, 1992; Hanson, 2010; Wachs, 2009) and there has been some research into environmental and social factors that impact whether and how someone cycles (Parkin, Ryley, & Jones, 2007), community as a site of analysis has not been a major focus of academic inquiry. By examining the community of Emerge Miami in particular, which has a high number of female participants, I hope to uncover possible links between community practices and the gender composition of that community.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The motivation for pursuing this topic of gender and mobility can be traced back to the feminist project of interrogating the patriarchal structures of our society, which relegates women to a secondary status even today. Thus this literature review

begins with a firm basis in feminist theory and evidence on women's condition from multiple fields and perspectives.

Feminist Theory

First, it is important to understand the origins of feminism. Sally Haslanger (2012) argues that "critical theories [such as feminism] arise out of social activism" (p. 22) and, thus, that feminism finds its beginning in the recognition of an unjust condition and from that derives motivation to action that will change women's material condition. This has been the bedrock of feminist activism since its inception. From this recognition, feminists have developed theories that critically examine our relations to each other and the world, our social condition, and how our perceptions influence our construction of reality.

The feminist theory most closely tied to my own is developed by Martha Nussbaum (1999) in her book *Sex and Social Justice*. Her work is at least partly in response to feminist thought from the 80s and 90s by theorists who embraced and developed feminist standpoint theory and cultural relativism as critiques of humanist liberal thought and scientific positivism. Briefly, early postmodern feminist theoretical work critiqued fields and enterprises formerly seen as unconnected to feminist thought, such as science and technology, and challenged the epistemological foundations of those enterprises. Feminist theorists such as Hartsock (1983), Haraway (1988) and Harding (1992) laid the foundation of a feminist theory that was focused on (re)assessing how expertise is understood, the value of different and partial perspectives, and the unrecognized ways that perspective influenced the scientific enterprise (see also Wajcman, 1991). Hartsock (1983) provided a new conceptual approach to the feminist enterprise through feminist standpoint theory which held that one's standpoint, or perspective shaped our reality and that it was through taking into account women's standpoint that a better and more accurate version of the world emerged. From this Haraway (1988)

responded by expanding the notion of perspective and its importance by advocating for the situatedness of knowledge and the value of a multiplicity of partial perspectives to craft a better representation of reality. Harding (1992) built on this development in perspective taking and knowledge by questioning the objectivity and knowledge produced by science, but, more significantly, she questioned the epistemological foundations of science. She argued that science's epistemological foundations were fundamentally flawed by a false sense of the ability to objectively perceive a given reality, when, without women's and other marginalized perspectives an incomplete, distorted and simply wrong version of reality and truth is represented. These critiques opened a pathway for feminist researchers in other fields to expand and refocus their work to be attuned to women's and other marginalized perspectives.

Martha Nussbaum's (1999) philosophical work both builds on and points to the limitations of this feminism because it valorizes partial perspectives without answering how epistemological claims can be evaluated (see also Hekman, 1997 for an important critique and extension of standpoint theory and partial perspectives). Nussbaum argues that without stronger epistemological moorings upon which to evaluate claims, custom and tradition are elevated over a liberal, humanist view of each human being as having inherent worth and equality. This poses many dangers because it leaves feminists unable to criticize or evaluate oppressive practices embedded in or derived from tradition and culture.

Instead, Nussbaum puts forward a conception of feminism comprised of five particular features: internationalist, humanist, liberal, concerned with the social shaping of preference and desire, and concerned with sympathetic understanding (p. 6). This is not to reject what Haslanger (2012) calls the "situatedness of knowing" but rather that knowing we are situated is not sufficient. Nussbaum's (1999) feminist approach rests upon the presumption of individual worth and dignity deserved of every person, while recognizing that an identity category such as

"woman" is not monolithic - women have particular experiences and perspectives unique to their relative position in the world and culture they are a part of. In developing the liberal aspect of her feminism, Nussbaum asserts that liberalism's failures to adequately account for women's unequal situation is not a failure of the principles of liberalism but rather "a failure of liberal thinkers to follow their own thought through to its socially radical conclusion" (p. 65) and she urges that feminists not discard liberalism but rather expose those who abuse it for their own ends (p. 67). One of the major tenets of liberalism is the value it places on rationality and on conceiving humans as not only rational but valuing humans partly due to their rationality. The primacy and value culturally inspired by rationality has long been an object of criticism (see Wajcman, 1991) by feminists, but Nussbaum, instead of rejecting rationality, claims it anew for all, especially for women. Women, Nussbaum argues, have an "especially great need for" reason to effectively counter the cultural beliefs and norms that restrict and devalue them (p. 79). I share Nussbaum's views, especially as they pertain to the value of reason for women's emancipation, and ultimately in the pursuit of a more just world.

Returning to the origins of feminism advanced by Sally Haslanger (2012), my project too is born from social activism and finds its footing academically in the work and knowledge made possible by critical feminist theory. This knowledge and work includes understanding women's place and representation historically so I can accurately depict women's place in society currently, with respect to the public sphere. This is why my literature review turns now to a historical perspective that reflects on women's condition.

Gender and the Private/Public Sphere

Throughout the history of the United States, gendered expectations for women dictated that they remain in the private or domestic sphere - the domain of family, home and hearth - restricted from entering meaningfully into public life.

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Prior to late 1800s, married women in the U.S. could not even own property – it was automatically transferred to the husband as husband and wife were considered one entity under the law, with the husband being the only visible party (Warren, 2009). As women began to enter the public sphere and agitate for their right to move beyond the home, they received enormous pressure to retreat and fulfill what was presumed to be their God given duty to "learn in silence with all subjection" (1 Timothy 2:11) and to be "makers at home": in other words to marry and have children, make a home for their husband, and stay out of public affairs. Women were supposed to be innately maternal and caring in nature: soft, delicate, and fragile. Contestations over women's place were particularly evident in the 1890s when women first began to ride bicycles in greater numbers. In response, columns were written about decorum, women, and bicycle riding and doctors and moralists warned that bike riding would ruin a woman's constitution or turn her into a sex-crazed maniac (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009; Strange & Brown, 2002). Cartoons from the turn of the century depict women riding bikes as slovenly, mannish, or imply that they are or will become prostitutes (Garvey, 1995).

The Public and Private Sphere

As alluded to earlier in this chapter, when the public sphere was beginning to form, women were excluded from it by default. Arendt (1958/1998) describes the private sphere as a place of darkness and despair – there is no freedom to be found there. But the private sphere served an important function: it enabled the creation and continued existence of the *polis*, where equals could converse (location 668). Over time, empires and nations adapted the public sphere in their own ways, and contestations arose. For example, in the U.S., the end of slavery and enfranchisement of former slaves marked a point where the notion of who belonged in the public sphere was reorganized – although it is still contested today, just as women's right to equal access and participate in the public sphere is.

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This contestation is what drew me to Linda Flowers' (2008) work, which is heavily involved in articulating the public sphere in relation to community literacy. Flower provides a powerful critique of the public sphere as it has historically been idealized. The vision of public discourse that emerged, where "valid arguments are not based on local, particular experience or personal opinion but on universal premises to which all men would agree," Flower argues, sounds excellent in theory but in practice has had negative implications for marginalized groups like women. This is because the "universal premises" being agreed upon and used were decided by a privileged subset of society – the landed, protestant white male of Christendom (p. 31). This perspective still holds primacy today, though with some modifications. This is why Flower moves to engage a *local* public sphere, which she defines as a "deliberative community built around discourse, shared concerns, and different perspectives on change" (p. 29). The concept of publics (plural) is important to Flower because it reconfigures the idea of participatory democracy toward an embrace and acknowledgement of difference. In my work I find the concept of a local public significant because it is another way of thinking about community, and thus adds to the significance of considering women's access to and participation in a local community such as Emerge Miami.

Gender Norms

The belief that women and men are vastly and inherently different is still pervasive, and dubious studies that purport to be scientific lend a semi-credible veneer to these claims (see Cordelia Fine's (2010) comprehensive critique of biased research into gender in her book *Delusions of Gender*). The belief that women are innately more maternal, communicative, supportive, and passive is still common, and these beliefs influence people's reactions to women's and men's choices in a multitude of ways (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013; Nosek, et al., 2007; Rudman & Glick, 2008). Historically these beliefs have manifested whenever women have moved into

traditionally male occupations, such as the legal and the medical profession (Baron & Bielby, 1985).

Currently, the bias these gender norms create can be seen in the ambivalent sexism that pervades women's interactions and experiences in academia (Krefting, 2003; Williams, Alon, & Bornstein, 2006), such as the way women's academic writing is less likely to be accepted by journals (Harper & Willis, 1989; Kretschmer, Kundra, Beaver, & Kretschmer, 2012), their resumes viewed less favorably (Moss-Racusin, 2012; Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke, 1999), and their career track more likely to be derailed by family concerns (Wolfinger, Mason, & Goulden, 2008), just to name a few ways in which gender bias impacts women throughout their lives.

Gender bias, exemplified through institutional sexism as well as individual bias, affects every facet of a woman's (or man's) access and experience in the public sphere from literally traversing public space to participating in the free exchange of ideas in civil discourse. The lens through which I examine this issue of unfettered access to public space for women is cycling – specifically the ways in which street harassment is framed discursively by either validating or negating/redefining it and how a cycling community's practices affect its accessibility to women. Both of these issues turn on the intersection of public space with gender norms and institutionalized sexism.

Public Harassment

One such area of intersection is the phenomenon of street harassment. When feminists first began to develop a definition for what is now called street harassment, they relied on Goffman's (1963) foundational work on norms of public interaction that govern everyday behavior - from how long we look at a stranger in passing, to how intently we read the newspaper on the train. Goffman asserted that there are norms for staring: how long it is polite and expected to exchange looks with a stranger one passes on the sidewalk, as well as norms for verbal exchanges.

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Feminist scholars in the legal field (Bowman, 1993; Thompson, 1994) and elsewhere (Gardner, 1980 & 1995; Macmillan, Nierobisz, & Welsh, 2000) took the norms of public interactions and applied them to the interactions women experienced on the street at the hands of men, arguing that many of those interactions violated the norms of public interaction and thus constituted harassment. This harassment was a daily occurrence for at least 80% of women according to studies in the 1990s (Macmillan, Nierobisz, & Welsh, 2000), and the latest survey indicates that at least 65% of women have experienced street harassment (Stop Street Harassment, 2014). Today, street harassment, though contested in some quarters, is generally recognized as a serious from of abuse that targets women. Research into the effects street harassment, which includes the threat of sexualized violence and abuse, is somewhat recent so there is a limited body of knowledge. However, the studies that have been done indicate a significant negative psychological impact on women, resulting in fatigue, stress, and anxiety, among other issues (Fairchild & Rudman, 2008; Fairchild, 2010; Kinney, 2003; Watson, Marszalek, Dispenza, & Davids, 2015).

Participation in Local Publics and the Public Sphere

In addition to the harassment women experience, women's engagement and participation in the public sphere (such as at community group meetings) is mediated by the institutional sexism that pervades our socio-cultural experiences. Linguistics, communication studies, and other fields have studied gender differences in conversational turn-taking (West & Zimmerman, 1983) and other topics like the gender bias in how Wikipedia articles talk about women and men (Wagner, Garcia, Jadidi, & Strohmaier, 2015**)** and in other areas where gender differences arise.

Researchers have also examined how gender based bias mediates and/or constricts women's job opportunities, advancement and pay (Ryu, 2010; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013), as well as many other facets of women's experience. These studies all indicate that women face barriers that men do not when engaging

in the public sphere. For example, women's linguistic strategies for constructing a leadership style may retard their ability to advance (Kendall, 2004), women's leadership positions are likely to be more tenuous and risky (Haslam & Ryan, 2005), and women are perceived as overly bossy or controlling when engaging in similar leadership styles to male colleagues.[3] It is reasonable to extrapolate then that women's ability to fully access the public sphere through civil discourse is curtailed by experiences and attitudes that marginalize or discourage their participation, and indeed there is research that supports that claim. For example, Gaucher, Friesen, and Kay (2011) found that gendered wording in job advertisements exerted a subtle influence on whether women applied for jobs with masculine coded language. Multiple studies (Ferraro, 1996; Watson, 2015) have shown that fear of rape constrains women's movements and shapes their daily lives.

Meanwhile, mobility and transportation research has found that fear for physical safety (in multiple senses) limits women's bicycling activity (Brown, 2004; Heinen, Van Wee, & Maat, 2010; Krizek, 2004). Other studies have also shown that gender is a mediating influence on women's mobility (Hanson, 2010; Lahsaeizadeh & Yousefinejad, 2012; Law, 1999).

Mobility, Cycling, and Gender

Research on the topic of gender and mobility has consistently shown a deficit in our knowledge of how gender impacts mobility. Though a growing body of research points to myriad ways that women's mobility is limited or impacted by gendered concerns and norms, there is still not a deep enough focus on how gender and mobility interact with one another. Research on gender and mobility is still segmented instead of fully incorporated into research on transportation and public

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[3] See the Ban Bossy Campaign (banbossy.com) which works to dismantle harmful stereotypes about how leadership behaviors are perceived differently based on gender, with women and girls coming out on the losing side.

space.[4] Early work by Monk and Hanson (1982) in the field of Geography called for a focus on gender as a salient factor when looking at mobility because research on transportation and mobility treated men as the null or default gender, meaning that men's experiences traversing public space were taken as the norm of behavior. Hanson and Monk advocated for a feminist approach in geography that would help to correct the deficit in knowledge of women's mobility.

McDowell (1992), Rose (1993), and Law (1999) echoed this call, pointing toward the need for a more robust application of feminist approaches in mobility, geography, and transportation studies.[5] Law, in her comprehensive critique of the treatment of research on women and transport, was one of the few researchers to discuss the impact of the threat of sexual violence on women's mobility and tie it to more traditional transportation research. She found that "journey-to-work" transport research predominated in the Transportation field, while research with a more nuanced and specialized focus on gender and mobility continued in other areas - namely in feminist studies and in the fields of cultural geography and mobility studies.[6] Hanson (2010) continued this argument over a decade later in her article, published in a feminist geography journal, on the relationship between gender and mobility. Hanson argued that mobility shapes gender and that gender shapes mobility. These claims have significant implications for mobility studies (and other disciplines) in terms of what questions are asked and how mobility is conceptualized. Hanson believed that creating sustained, full-spectrum mobility

[4] For example, the Transportation Research Board held their 5th International Conference on Women's Issues in Transportation in 2014, an encouraging development that shines a much needed light on gender as a salient factor to consider when conducting transportation research. However, it remains to be seen how this will be completely incorporated into the field instead of relegated to a separate subset of the field with its own conference.
[5] Additionally, see Doreen Massey's (1994) book *Space, Place, and Gender*, which also includes previously published articles, such as one with McDowell on gender and place.
[6] Journey to Work research means research that considered travel back and forth from work and neglected other reasons for travel and, hence, other travel patterns.

meant gender must be fully considered, especially to develop a better sense of which mobility practices are desirable (and sustainable).. She looked at a variety of studies that point to significant differences between men's and women's mobility -–— such as distance traveled, proximity to work, and transportation choices. Considered together, Hanson (2010), Law (1999), McDowell (1992), Monk and Hanson's (1982), and Rose's (1993) call for focusing on how gender and mobility are intertwined takes on increasing importance - especially when examining cycling research.

And indeed, more recent work over the last decade has focused on cycling and gender. This research has indicated important differences in women's and men's cycling choices and the unique constraints women face when cycling. Aside from the gender gap in cycling documented by Garrard (2003), Garrard et al. (2008), Emond et al. (2009), and Heesch et al. (2012), studies have also indicated a gender difference in cycling habits and constraints. Those studies found that women are more likely to go additional distance to seek out more desirable roadway infrastructure (i.e. protected pathways and two track roads) and to choose infrastructure that supported a more comfortable and safe riding experience that minimized interactions with cars and busier streets, such as separated bicycling lanes and off road paths. This aspect of physical safety is frequently shown to be more significant for women than for men (Emond, Tang, & Handy, 2009; Garrard, Rose, & Lo, 2008; Heesch, Sahlqvist, & Garrard, 2012; Krizek, Johnson, & Tilahun, 2004).

Additional studies and surveys have also shown childcare responsibilities and other life events factor into women's cycling choices (Bonham & Wilson, 2012; Brown, 2004). Bonham and Wilson's (2012) in-depth look at women's cycling choices over their lifetimes found that cycling habits changed depending on women's age and life situation. Their results indicate that women bicycled during childhood for many reasons, including "getting around" as well as socializing with peers. Overall, cycling dropped off as women approached their teen years because cycling was no

longer perceived as "cool," but rather as childlike, and there was the expectation that adults drove cars. Women returned to cycling as adults for a variety of reasons, but the main reasons centered on forming new relationships, fitness, and accompanying their children (should they have any). Paradoxically, having children tended to restrict women's ability to cycle as a means of transportation (adding to a body of research that has reflected that childcare responsibilities has restricted women's mobility choices). Chatterjee, Sherwin, and Jain (2013) also found that life events serve as significant triggers or as constraints on cycling behavior. They observed that life changes such as having children, getting a new job, and concern over physical health were driving factors in altering cycling behavior while exterior environmental changes had only a secondary effect. Their most significant finding was that "contextual changes preceded deliberation over behaviour" (p. 192), suggesting that more study is needed on social and contextual issues to better understand increases and decreases in cycling habits.

Understanding how cyclists construct their identity may also shed light on gender differences and similarities that could impact who cycles and their behavior. A research project by sociologists Aldred and Jungnickel over the course 2010-2011 sought to understand the importance of context (location, policy, etc.) in the creation of a thriving cycling culture.[7] One paper that emerged from this research (Aldred, 2010), found that cyclists tended to construct their identity as cycling citizens in contrast to that of other imagined "bad" cyclists and to explain how their behavior and identity was different (they obeyed traffic laws, didn't cut through traffic, etc.). Additionally, concern for the global (and to some extent local) environment was identified as an important aspect of their identity. Cyclists that Aldred interviewed also tied cycling to "independence and freedom" (p. 44) and

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[7] See their project site, which is still updated, for more information and links to their publications: http://www.cyclingcultures.org.uk

some related this to a feeling of happiness as well. Relationship to place also figured prominently in cyclist identity construction - cyclists reported feeling more connected to and able to experience their local surroundings when cycling (an observation supported by Furness (2005a; 2005b) and Horton (2007)). She also found that these cyclists tended to locate themselves as within a broader cycling community even if they didn't actively participate in activist efforts and to express a sense of fellow feeling with passing cyclists - as though all cyclists shared an affinity through the act of cycling.

As described earlier in this section, geographers were calling for more attention to gender as a salient factor in research on women's mobility and transportation choices. Though there has been an increase in research that focuses on and includes gender as a factor when examining issues related to mobility, their call reflects the reality of continued deficits in their fields when looking at this issue. These researchers aren't alone, either. As my literature review has demonstrated, many disciplines have not historically considered how gender impacts what is studied and how.

STUDY UNDERTAKEN

My study on the impact of community and discursive practices on women's involvement in the public sphere responds to the feminist call for more work on mobility that attends to gender by focusing on how what the everyday cycling experience of women is like, and how this intersects with their experience of community. I begin by interviewing cyclists in Miami and studying the cycling collective Emerge Miami that I have been a part of for four years. My study (see IRB number M1191 [591062] for confirmation of study approval) is comprised of two different elements: semi-structured individual interviews with adult female and male cyclists (16 in total, 4 men and 12 women) and observation of Emerge Miami's meetings and events. Interviewees were given pseudonyms to ensure the anonymity

unless they elected to use their real name. Interviews were conducted over a four-month period in person and via phone and internet chat. Group observation occurred over a six-week period in the summer of 2014. Additionally, I attended group events and conducted informal observation there. Interviewees were asked about when they began cycling and their everyday cycling experience, including questions about whether their gender influenced that experience, and they were asked about the role the cycling community plays for them and how important the community is if they are involved in it. Interviewees were selected using the snowball method of opportunistic recruitment via my pre-established social networks in the community. I sent out emails to the Emerge Miami listserv and made Facebook posts in various cycling related groups in an effort to recruit interviewees from the cycling community.[8] The purpose of the community aspect of this study was to understand whether and how community was significant to interviewees and to make a profile of Emerge Miami as a Community of Practice that could be analyzed for significant practices that created an invitational space more accessible to women. The interviews were also analyzed for another purpose, to understand how women frame and contextualize harassment.

My position in the Miami cycling community as a core member and participant affected whom I had access to, and, hence, who I was able to interview and those recommended to me to interview. Hence, many of those interviewed are community leaders and/or core members. Because I am part of the community in Miami focused on transportation and sustainability, I cannot pretend to hold an unbiased view of cycling or of the community collective Emerge Miami. However, membership, though a cause of bias, also ensures a deep structural knowledge of the organization and how it functions. My insider status also made it easier for

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[8] See Appendix A for a sample of my email and Facebook posts and Appendix B for my interview questions.

interviewees to disclose to me during interviews, and I recognize that it may also have motivated them to self-edit how they present themselves and the community because they want to represent cycling well.

When I began analyzing the interviews and observation, I was not entirely sure how my initial questions would be answered by an analysis of my data. Once I began closely looking at the interviews it became obvious that harassment would be a salient issue, just as I had initially anticipated. Ultimately, I examined the interview responses for the ways that harassment is framed in discourse by female cyclists using the principles of Critical Discourse Analysis (Blackledge, 2012; Wodak & Matouschek, 1993; Wodak & Reisigl, 2001), especially from a feminist perspective (Lazar, 2007; Lazar, 2008). Additionally, I also considered how the practices of a community (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1999; Wenger, 1998) create an invitational atmosphere conducive to women's participation, addressing the other initial question I had at the outside of this study, which was that women's participation would be impacted by an organization's practices.

BREAKDOWN OF CHAPTERS

Chapter Two covers the early history of cycling during the 1890s and its relationship to feminism. There is a strong relationship between feminist activists of the time and cycling advocacy, with many prominent feminists of the time commented on the importance of the bicycle for women's freedom. Other historical accounts of women and cycling are also considered in this chapter to provide context for this project's focus on cycling as an avenue to exploring women's access to the public sphere.

Following the work of Bing and Lombardo (1997) on harassment frames in discourse, in Chapter Three, I look at how interviewees define, explain, and contextualize harassment. Two frames for harassment in discourse are identified: the normative frame and the feminist frame. The normative frame minimizes and/or

redefines harassment as trivial, infrequent, or a misunderstanding. The feminist frame notices and validates harassment as a real and significant problem. These frames are determined through the application of Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to the transcripts of interviews I conducted with female cyclists in Miami, most of whom are connected to Emerge Miami. Interviewee's macro and micro language features were examined, particularly as they related to explanations of harassment, harassment avoidance, and the effect of harassment threat. Significant micro-linguistic features included minimizing language using hedges and boosters (Holmes, 1990) and repetition strategies (Tannen, 1987).

In Chapter Four **I** build on Communities of Practice (Wenger, 1998) as a method for examining the learning practices of communities by observing Emerge Miami and interviewing participants to understand how community practices impact women's participation. The practices of Emerge during meetings and events are observed within the CofP framework and contextualized by interviewee reflections on whether and how community is significant to them. Significant practices identified were invitational practices that include a non-hierarchical participation structure, shared responsibility, intentional inclusiveness, diverse endeavors united by common purpose, and attention to relationships.

Chapter Five provides an overarching summation of this research project, pulling together the threads of harassment frames in discourse with community cycling group practices to consider their significance to women's interactions with the public sphere.

CHAPTER TWO: BICYCLE HISTORY AND WOMEN'S PLACE

The bicycle is a particularly interesting way of examining women's access to the public sphere because of the unique history women's use of the bicycle has had in the United States since the bicycle first became popular. The bicycle "craze", as it was called at the time, in the U.S. was mainly concentrated around the turn of the century, during the 1890s, and it has been widely studied by many disciplines, ranging from history, sport, to women's studies. Women's use and uptake of the bicycle during this time is of particular interest to researchers focused on gender and mobility. The bicycle's rapidly growing popularity and the nascent feminist movement of the time both contributed to women's use of the bicycle and the popularity cycling began to enjoy as an activity for women. Women bicycling during this time was not without controversy; on the contrary the appropriateness of female cyclists was a hotly debated social issue at the turn of the century with moralists, doctors, and social reformers all weighing in on the issue. The bicycle enjoyed particularly vocal support from early feminists, including Susan B. Anthony, Francis Willard, and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. However, it was a confluence of factors, including early radical feminists, extreme female novelty cyclists, and manufacturer desire for female clientele that contributed to successfully integrating female cyclists into American culture. And, it is by looking at the historical use of the bicycle by women in the 1890s we can see that cultural accommodation of the bicycle contributed to a shift in the boundaries on what is accessible and acceptable for women in society, leading to greater mobility and action within the public sphere.

In particular, popular stories that positioned the bicycle in familiar territory (the romance), advertising, newspapers, and coverage of women cycling in popular magazines worked well together to alter the social landscape of what was acceptable activity for women, serving to broaden and re-define what was feminine. The rhetoric employed within all of these strategies was one of accommodation: not

directly challenging norms but expanding and revising them to allow for women to become more active and more public via cycling. These changes needed to be perceived as of minimal threat to the traditional order, not shifting the fundamentals of women's gender roles. This held true for manufacturers and sellers of the bicycle, as well as *some* of the women who were explicitly feminist in their reasoning for expanding the boundaries of womanhood.

SHIFTING TIMES AND SHIFTING NORMS

The bicycle came of age during a time when Americans were fascinated by the material, the modern, and the technological. Views on women, their place in society, and the limits of their sphere were shifting, ushering in the much discussed "New Woman" who was more active and beginning to challenge the rigid boundaries placed on their gender (Park, 2012). This is nowhere more evident than in women's adoption of the bicycle as an example of women's growing interest in athleticism and sport. Early bicycles were not developed with women in mind (Garvey, 1995), but, despite this fact, some adventurous women rode anyway. Newspapers from the time provide evidence of this, showing that women were competing in novel races on the bicycle as early as the 1880s (Park, 2012), when the Ordinary (or penny farthing) was still the bicycle of choice, which presented considerable more challenge and danger than did the later safety model.

The bicycle at this stage was still not broadly or immediately accepted by the American public according to historians (Garvey, 1995; Harmond, 1971). In fact, Garvey (1995) and Harmond (1971) note that male cyclists were sometimes disapprovingly regarded as daredevil risk-takers, disrupting pedestrian life, and running willy-nilly over city and country roads. Garvey's research into popular advertisements and magazines in the 1890s shows that cycling was an activity taken up, initially, by only a select few men. Although such views did not readily invite women to cycle, women became interested anyway, no doubt influenced by the

general cycling craze that took the nation by storm as the 1890s progressed (Harmond, 1971). Scholars (Christie-Robin, Orzada, & Lopez-Gydosh, 2012; Hallenbeck, 2009) have noted that the development of the safety bicycle in 1885 further propelled women interested in cycling since this bike was more comfortable and easy to ride, and, further, it was actually marketed toward women.

The safety bike departed in its design significantly from the penny farthing bicycle that had previously been the common bicycle model. The wheels were approximately the same size, a rear drive chain was introduced, and inflatable tires were added, among other improvements (Harmond, 1971). As more women became interested in cycling, "experts" began weighing in on the advisability of women cycling (Hallenbeck, 2009). Some doctors and many cultural critics advised against it; they warned that it would turn women into frenzied chronic masturbators and assault women's "naturally" frail constitution (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009; Strange & Brown, 2002). Women at that time were thought to be in their best health when sedentary (at least if they were of the middle to upper class), and much of the uproar by physicians was over the damaging effects of women being so physically active (Strange & Brown, 2002). A doctor from that time period, Arabella Kenealy (quoted by Strange and Brown) observed that other doctors warned female cyclists could develop "gout, tuberculosis, lunacy, epilepsy, neurosis, and even cancer" from cycling (p. 613). Some physicians of the time were particularly concerned with whether physical exertion would render women infertile or make pregnancy more difficult. This was likely tied with the fear that cycling would rob women of their feminine charms and masculinize them, as the aforementioned scholars have noted. These concerns constrained the way in which women interacted physically in space and verbally in discourse.

As cycling gained in popularity during the 1890s, professional opinions began to diverge more and a greater majority of doctors deemed cycling a safe activity for women if practiced "correctly" (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009; Harmond, 1971). In

this case "correct" meant that women needed to cycle slowly and avoid racing about as young men did. According to Garvey (1995), the "scorching" position, leaning far forward over the handlebars to increase speed, was especially frowned upon and the subject of much dismay. This was due to the fact that many doctors believed this cycling position enabled women to masturbate themselves while riding. This fear produced a stream of literature on the subject by physicians warning of the dire effects of such activity (Garvey, 1995, p. 73). Frightening images of "emaciated" girls, engaging in a "frenzy" of masturbatory pleasure was painted in vivid detail in physician accounts. Advertisers responded to these concerns by creating a special seat for women that created a hollow where the vulva would normally rest, thus preventing the ability to create friction on the seat by rubbing while riding (Hallenbeck, 2009). Additionally, Garvey notes women were always shown riding in an upright position in advertisements, unlike men who were shown in a variety of positions, and the graceful, pleasing nature of such posture was spoken of in rapturous tones in the advertising copy and by some cycling enthusiasts themselves. These strategies of accommodation allowed advertisers to avoid charges of the bicycle promoting female wantonness and lax morals without directly addressing such delicate matters as female sexuality.

Doctors who were proponents of female cycling ranged from the cautiously optimistic to the enthusiastic. Hallenbeck (2010) describes several female physicians who wrote vigorously in support of the bicycle, lauding its curative powers and the benefits of exercise, in defiance of many male doctors' opinion. However, other doctors were much more reserved in their endorsement, couching their recommendations within warnings of the danger of depleting women's energies and their fragile constitutions. In a seeming contradiction of terms, Garvey (1995) said that some doctors argued for cycling *in moderation* as a cure for bedridden women and that such positive recommendations were also linked to claims that it "strengthened the uterus", thus reconstituting the "natural" female role of

motherhood in society (p. 80). However, it was everyday women, Hallenbeck (2010) contends, who most popularized the bicycle and countering so-called expert discourse as to its ill effects on the female constitution. In fact, "women authors asserted that bicycling had demonstrated that women's energies were…as renewable as men's and that women themselves were capable of managing their own care through appropriate exercise, both preventative and therapeutic" (p. 329). These women wrote of their experiences with the bicycle and argued that women were not actually delicate or frail, but that fashion had made them so. They spoke in glowing tones of the joys of riding in the fresh air, better health, and freedom found in the bicycle, using anecdotal examples of these benefits. These accounts reflect the ways in which women took an active role in changing the shape of culture and their role in it.

CHANGING NARRATIVES

The written narratives women (and some male writers) constructed were one of the most visible means serving to normalize the bicycle. Newspaper accounts, stories that positioned the bicycle in familiar territory (the romance), advertising, and coverage of women cycling in popular magazines were some of the other ways the act of a woman riding a bicycle was reshaped. These representations subtly altered the social landscape of what was acceptable activity for women, broadening and re-defining what was feminine. This task was made easier because many who used, created, and advocated for the bike wanted to soothe fears over its disruptive potential and assure others that the bicycle and female riders posed no threat to prevailing social norms (Furness, 2005). Advertisers and most women wanted the bicycle to be accepted into the mainstream and normalized within current gender constructs (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009). Stories in popular magazines, advertisements, fiction, and memoirs, all served to normalize the bicycle and show that women could ride without losing their femininity. These rhetorical moves

helped integrate women riding the bicycle into American culture without overtly disrupting gender norms or threatening patriarchal social institutions.

Fictionalized Narratives

Fictional accounts of bicycles during that era were an important aspect of this accommodation. They often folded bicycles into the familiar romance genre, taking the sting out of the threat of the masculinizing effects of the bicycle. These short fiction pieces frequently featured female and male riders meeting by some happenstance and finding romance – a properly decorous romance of course. Garvey (1995) describes many of these fictional stories from the 1890s, illustrating their power to open up space in popular culture to accommodate the bicycle. In one, two riders meet and the man, Sam, is struck by the woman's riding prowess; so lovesick is he that, during a moonlight ride while they are crossing a stream, he loses his footing and crashes, breaking his leg in the process. This opens up a clichéd romantic opportunity, where the young woman, Nathalie, nurses him back to health and falls in love with him. The story ends with the happy couple taking a wedding bike tour.

In yet another of these sappy tales, a young woman, Elizabeth, is attempting to raise funds for a bike by selling a story. The editor refuses her story, and privately mocks her, but is so taken with her that he begins a courtship "under the guise" of helping her develop writing skills (p. 86). Eventually the couple buys a tandem bike, signaling their progressing courtship and eventual marriage. These stories conform to earlier attempts to normalize the bike for young men and romanticize the male rider that Garvey describes in her survey of popular fictional literature on cycling.

Manufacturer Narratives

Manufacturers also crafted strategies to expand their market and to ensure the bicycle was accommodated. These included using ad copy and new designs to

feminize women cycling and reassure the public that such activity would not have a masculinizing effect. Fashion and textile historians Christie-Robin, Orzada, and Lopez-Gydosh (2012) point to the significance of the safety bike in this regard: with its inflated tires and equally sized wheels it was less dangerous to ride and the special drop frame designed for women's skirts enabled women to ride with decorum. These specially designed bikes were also marketed specifically toward women and given feminine names that heavily differentiated them from men's bikes. One of the first safety bikes marketed toward women by the Overman Wheel Company was released with the name "Victoria" – a safety bike to complement the "Victor". The bike was advertised as "designed to meet the requirements of ladies, light-weight men, and boys" (as qtd. in Hallenbeck, 2009, p 66). Other companies also released special models for women, such as the "Josephine" and the "Fleetwing" line, which Garvey (1995) notes had feminine "birdlike" connotations (p. 69). The advertising was also distinct, and Garvey describes one ad that was in the form of a paper doll. Additionally, she points out that ads targeted at female riders frequently pictured them with flowing gowns covering their feet, fully upright, riding modestly in a natural setting. These depictions reified gender tropes, rendering the bicycle a non-threatening object and contributing to its accommodation.

Such ads were commonplace in magazines of the era and, because magazines relied heavily on advertisers, many articles in them were highly influenced by advertiser desires (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009; Harmond, 1971). Thus, popular magazines were frequently filled with glowing depictions of bicycle riding for men and women. Although these stories often served a liberating purpose by advocating that women cycle, they also tended to situate the bicycle as a nonthreatening object that appealed to cultural ideals of white, middle-class womanhood in describing the benefits of cycling for women. These articles typically lauded the healthful aspects a ride could provide to a woman, and also took care to emphasize that her natural womanly qualities were still intact, and perhaps elevated

through the moderate exercise afforded on a bike ride (Garvey, 1995; Hallenbeck, 2009 & 2010).

Newspaper Narratives

Newspapers of the day provide a particularly instructive window into the shifting thoughts on female cyclists. Because cycling was enjoying such a rise in popularity, a significant amount of space was devoted to cycling, and inches were also given away to speak on female cyclists in particular. Coverage typically provided guidance, admonishment, and commentary on the lady bicyclist. Columns on female cyclists included frequent recommendations as to how a woman should comport herself on a bicycle as well as fashion advice on bicycle costumes and disparate opinions on the morality of women bicycling. These examples demonstrate the subtle ways in which women's use of the bicycle was accommodated into everyday life. By focusing on such minutiae at dress and comportment, the bicycle itself was removed from view and criticism shifted to the way women cycled not on cycling itself.

For example, *The Maysville Evening Bulletin* (1896) devotes an entire column to the question of whether "bicycle riding [is] Injurious to women?," presenting ministerial and physician opinion as to the health and moral consequences of cycling. Dr. Forbes Winslow a "famous London specialist" is quoted, stating that "No woman should ever be allowed to exercise in that manner. It is dangerous to health and it is injurious to morals," but the newspaper then presents an alternative opinion by Dr. Champiouniere, who they say has made a study of cycling that is more positive. He say that "the bicycle is of direct benefit to women in increasing muscular strength." In the closing paragraphs of the column cycling is linked to better motherhood, suggesting that "Women who ride the bicycle are, other things being equal, far better fitted for the duties of the nursery than those who have kept themselves there to satisfy the contentions of the men who believe a woman's sphere should be

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as narrow as the man's sphere is broad." The doctor recognized the gendered nature of the public and private spheres but instead of arguing that women should be present in other spheres, he countered that allowing women access to cycling will make them happier and better fit for motherhood and, hence, the private sphere.

In keeping with concern over physician opinion, *The Sacramento Record-Union* (1895) had a doctor write his perspective on the question, "Can a Woman on a Bicycle Look Graceful? A Physician's View." In the editorial he argues that since men have an active life they don't need to cycle but that "the bicycle gives women a good excuse to get away from the *petty cares of home* for a while and stay out in the sunshine, and it is a blessed thing on that account" (p. 8). This implies that for women to happily occupy the home and perform their duties, a little recreation is necessary, which the bicycle provides. He also airs his thoughts on the propriety of women's dress opining that:

> The impression seems to prevail that for a woman bicyclist to decry skirts is to proclaim herself unfeminine, somewhat more immodest than her conventional sisters. I say that such is not the case. In my opinion, for a woman to ride in bloomers, with a skirt over them, which is continually blowing up and showing the bloomers beneath, is far more indelicate than for the bloomers to be in evidence from the start. (p. 8)

This passage is particularly intriguing because it is still concerned with women's modesty but is arguing that women may still be modest in the formerly scandalous bloomers; in effect, he is shifting the locus of what should be examined for modesty. However, his comments were somewhat at odds with bicycle fashion writer Ellen Osborn (1896) of *The Saint Paul Globe*, who recommended bloomers reluctantly and only if female cyclists had the "strength of mind to stop there and not make them knickerbockers." Osborn devoted considerable more space advocating the divided skirt and claiming that "A woman doesn't as a rule, care so much about 'scorching' as about looking sweet on the seat of a bicycle built for herself, with or without

another" (p. 5). Again, this is in keeping with positioning bicycling within the realm of feminine womanhood, in effect expanding the private sphere not accepting women into the public sphere.

Newspaper accounts often pushed the narrative that there is nothing immoral about women cycling, taking pains to argue that women cyclists may be just as modest and proper as other women. In this way we can see that concern over women's femininity, modesty and "true" womanly nature is as present as before but that the threat to it has been (or is being) relocated elsewhere (to comportment and dress and not to the bicycle). *The San Francisco Call* (1896) is particularly forthright in its defense of the bicycle for women, reporting that a D.C. women's society was "making war upon the bicycle" quoting them as saying that "'immorality is alarmingly on the increase among American women'," which *The Call* laughingly remarks is "all because of the horrid bicycle" (p. 6). *The Call* chastises this women's society for having "so little confidence in their sex" and claims that it is "the guilty mind that suspicion most troubles" about "familiar association between men and women." In fact, they assert that "a true woman does not compromise her modesty a whit more on the bicycle than she does riding on a streetcar or a buggy", placing the bicycle into the realm of the everyday and dismissing naysayers as mere cranks and busybodies always thinking the worse. A more positive defense of the bicycle can be found in *The New York Sun* (1896) which champions female riders by arguing that rural young women cycle in droves, as do "matrons," and that it is now a "fashionable practice" with no negative moral consequence. *The Sun* actually found that the bicycle costume was "both modest and suitable," and waxed poetic over "[p]retty girls in pretty bicycle costumes [who] are wonderfully pretty to look upon as they stand by their wheels or walk about in the intervals of rest from riding" (p. 6). In the final sentence, the paper eloquently echoes the feminist sentiment of the time that "Nothing more in recent times has done more for the desirable advancement of women than the bicycle."

These newspaper texts normalize women bicycling in a variety of contexts, first by discussing female cyclists at all and second by creating a realm of critique that is not focused on bicycle riding per say but the way in which women cycle (refocusing modesty concerns). These accounts show how norms of a woman's place were beginning to shift, and looking to texts such as newspapers provides novel insights into the way women accessed, used, and perceived sporting activities such as bicycle riding (Brandy, Gori, & Jinxia, 2012). Other texts, such as memoirs, also provide valuable insight into women's personal history with bicycling. Of particular interest here is Frances Willard's account of learning to ride a bicycle, which is discussed in detail in the next section.

Feminist Narratives

Newspapers and popular magazines were not the only places where cycling was under discussion. Early feminists saw the bicycle as immensely important to increasing women's freedom, but approaches varied as to how to get the general public to accept female cyclists (and their broader aims of greater gender equality). Suffragist and temperance advocate Frances Willard was an early proponent of the bicycle as well as a crafty political strategist whose strategy for mobilizing women in support of suffrage differed considerably from her more radical contemporaries, such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Instead of directly agitating for suffrage because women deserved equal rights and the franchise, Willard engaged in what Marilley (1993) calls a "feminism of fear," linking women's motherly instinct, the sexual contract, men's drunkenness and violence, and the need for women to be protected together in a complex argument that ultimately resulted in a call for women to support suffrage.

Marilley (1993) asserts that Willard "designed and promoted a new and radical vision of the role of women in politics and society that put security, not rights, first" (p. 126). Her success was predicated on her ability to draw on already

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established notions of women's moral superiority to men and their "natural" nurturing capabilities. She turned those beliefs into a call for change by asserting that men had failed in their duty to protect women, instead turning into women's abusers. This rhetoric drew masses of women in to the temperance movement, which Willard utilized to argue that, since men were failing in fulfilling their sexual contract[9], it was women's duty to enter the political realm and vote in order to protect themselves and their children. Her appeals resting on "innovative interpretations of biblical mandates that called women to exercise public roles as moral authorities" (p. 128) were particularly effective because she was engaging with beliefs already firmly established in her audience's mind. Willard's feminist politics aimed at transforming women's situation by appearing not to threaten prevailing norms; instead she accommodated those norms and sought minimal revisions to women's place. In an exhaustive biography of Willard, Bordin (1986) observed that Willard was a "successful leader because she did not appear to challenge her society's accepted ideals, especially the tenets of the cult of domesticity" (p. xiv). However, appearances are deceiving here because "Willard used conservative values to promote radical ends" (p. 10), engaging and disarming her audience within their own value system but moving them toward progressive political action.

Willard took a similar approach to cycling, which she learned how to do at the age of 53, promptly writing a book about her experience titled, *A Wheel Within a Wheel* (1895). It is significant that "...Willard cast her discussion of cycling as a personal story rather than a political argument...*A Wheel Within a Wheel* even suggested that cycling might enhance rather than undermine the grace, beauty, and moral virtue of women" (Strange & Brown, 2002, p. 617). This theme continues

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[9] Marilley explains the sexual contact as "women exchang[ing] obedience to men for physical protection" (p. 126).

throughout her text. Willard positioned cycling as a personal pastime that threatened neither her family nor her femininity, even arguing that cycling helped with women's fertility (Garvey, 1995). Willard focused on cycling as a personal activity, on the individual joy she (and other women) might draw from it rather than claiming use of the bike as a political tool (Hallenbeck, 2012). Additionally, she located cycling as a way of connecting with a higher power and finer sensibilities, writing that cycling uplifted her spirit and inspired her to a higher moral purpose, which further served to situate the bicycle as non-threatening (Furness, 2005). Willard (1895) undercuts viewing the bicycle as threatening to women's natural place, establishing it as a healthy, wholesome activity at the outset by calling on her credentials as a "temperance reformer" and asserting that the wheel is a "vehicle of so much harmless pleasure, and because the skill required in handling it obliges those who mount to keep clear heads and steady hands" (p. 13). This handily associates the bicycle with sobriety and good Christian morals, a recurring theme in her own advocacy of both temperance and suffrage, as we have seen in Marrilley's (1993) historical feminist analysis of Willard's organizing tactics. Willard acknowledges the controversy over women cycling but cleverly attributes it to public opinion. She implies such talk is rather similar to idle gossip that should not keep the "upright in heart" from pursuing the cycle and compares collective social nose-holding to earlier prohibitions against women riding in carriages by themselves, which she notes only an "imbecile" would disapprove of now (p. 14-15).

Willard frequently peppered her narrative with philosophical musings, using the bicycle as a platform to draw all manner of recommendations about how one should approach life. She even claimed that she "found a whole philosophy of life in the wooing and the winning of [her] bicycle" (p. 25). She also said that the relations between men and women would be improved by women riding the wheel. She devoted nearly two pages to a restrained argument about women's "rational" dress, believing that as more women began to cycle the demands of the sport would push

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forward more sensible, healthy, and comfortable forms of dress for women (p. 39-40). *A Wheel Within a Wheel* mixed Christian mores of the era with appeals to American grit that persuasively situate the bicycle as a worthy activity for women that doesn't fundamentally alter women's role in society or gender norms. In her conclusion Willard directly compares learning the bicycle to an act of "grace" and "religion" (p. 72). Throughout her text she opens up space for the bicycle to be placed within women's everyday experience and likens it to the concerns of moral conservatives with her frequent references to Christianity and religious language. While not radically transformative, her argument positioned women with greater access to the bicycle and by implication extended women's access to the public sphere of life, all without directly confronting sociocultural beliefs about women and their place in society.

Willard's approach to the cycle and her efforts to accommodate it in discourse provide an interesting contrast to more radically identified feminists, namely Elizabeth Cady Stanton and to a lesser extent Susan B. Anthony. Unlike Willard, Stanton was a vocal critic of Christianity, a position that made her increasingly unpopular amongst her contemporaries (Hogan, 2006; Park, 2001). Lucy Stone went so far as to refuse to be included in Stanton's exhaustive and explicitly political *History of Woman Suffrage* (Hogan, 2006, p. 10). Stanton tended toward more full throated advocacy of women's rights, explicitly challenging the naturalness of gender norms and she brought this same enthusiasm to women cycling. Elizabeth Cady Stanton championed the bike as a transformative and emancipatory tool for women (Strange & Brown, 2002). Unlike Willard, whose strategy reinforced notions of traditional (if somewhat expanded) femininity, Stanton saw the bicycle as a way for women to escape the private sphere and travel into the public sphere. She believed this increased mobility greatly multiplied women's options and access to each other, to new ideas, and to a defiance of gender norms restricting women, a

view advanced today by feminist researchers focused on issues of gender and mobility (see Blomley, 1994; Law, 1999; McDowell, 1992; Monk & Hanson, 1982).

Additionally, in the bike, Stanton saw another avenue to critique women's confinement to the private sphere and to traditional notions of femininity. She wrote at least two essays in *The American Wheelman* publication, ruminating on women and cycling, arguing that cycling "challeng[ed]...artificial and outmoded gender distinctions" (as qtd. in Strange & Brown, 2002, p. 617). Although accommodationists sought to quell fears that cycling might make women manly, Stanton openly championed cycling as a means for women to adopt "androgynous" values and obliterate useless, harmful, and artificial distinctions between men and women. Stanton believed cycling was an avenue through which women could adopt the virtues of "courage, self-respect and self-reliance" (as qtd. in Strange & Brown, p. 619), which she identified as universal values. Stanton's visionary approach connected the bicycle to the revolution in women's treatment that was to come as feminism progressed throughout the 20th century.

Susan B. Anthony shared a similar view of the bicycle's transformative potential, which she expounded on in her famous interview with reporter Nellie Bly in 1896, saying:

> "Let me tell you what I think of bicycling," Miss Anthony said, leaning forward and laying a slender hand on my arm. "I think it has done more to emancipate women than anything else in the world. I stand and rejoice every time I see a woman ride by on a wheel. It gives woman a feeling of freedom and self-reliance. It makes her feel as if she were independent. The moment she takes her seat she knows she can't get into harm unless she gets off her bicycle, and away she goes, the picture of free, untrammelled womanhood." (p. 34)

Here Anthony joins Stanton in unapologetically advocating for a radically different society, and in a later portion of the interview she goes even further when asked

about the new woman and what she will be. "She'll be free" asserts Anthony. "Then she'll be whatever her best judgment wants to be. We can no more imagine what the true woman will be than we can what the true man will be. We haven't him yet. And we won't until women are free and equal" (p. 34). Anthony goes far beyond Willard's strategy of accommodation, instead openly envisioning and advocating for full equality of women that would overturn the current cult of domesticity and gender norms that were embraced by 1890s society.

Sporting Narratives

In addition to feminists, highly visible women engaging in sport for wager and competition indirectly assisted accommodation strategies by making those seeking to normalize use of the bicycle appear reasonable and conservative by comparison (Kinsey, 2011; Park, 2012). Annie Londonderry is perhaps one of the best known examples of this phenomenon, popular at the time, of engaging in wagers (of dubious origin) to be the first person to complete a given task in a specified amount of time. Londonderry emerged from obscurity temporarily in 1894 claiming that she was fulfilling a wager between two rich business men over whether a woman could round the globe by bicycle in 15 months (Zheutlin, 2007). In the subsequent months, Londonderry, whose real name was Annie Kapchowsky, traveled by bicycle, train, and ship around the world. She engaged in endless self promotion by catching the interest of reporters always eager for a good story. Newspaper accounts across the world followed her in her adventures, including wild tales that she clearly exaggerated or completely fabricated to enhance her side-showesque appeal. Most reports in the newspaper favored her, describing her endeavor as daring, but they also showcased plenty of horrified reactions to her unwomanly behavior from townspeople as she passed through different cities. Despite her unlikely stories, such as claiming to have hunted Bengal tigers in India (p. 117) and seen firsthand the Gesan battle that took place during the war between

China and Japan (p. 79-80), reactions were strongest over her male bicycling attire. One woman "'threw her hands up in speechless horror' upon spotting Annie in her bloomers and bemoaned the 'depravity and boldness of the nineteenth-century girl'" (p. 101).

Londonderry was not alone in providing an unusual spectacle of the sporting woman. Park (2012) details women's entrance and participation during the late 1800s in a variety of sports, ranging from swimming to bicycling, and demonstrates that they too received mostly favorable mentions in the press. However, the women participating in these activities clearly fell outside the norm, thus lending themselves to an almost theatrical interpretation of their activities – not something the everyday woman could participate in without drawing criticism. In a similar vein, Kinsey (2011) turns her eye to Australian women's participation in competitive and touring cycling activities during the 1890s; according to her account, favorable reactions to women's entrance into these activities varied but were more likely to swing to the positive if women comported themselves in an "appropriately" feminine way, riding in long skirts and keeping an upright posture - hallmarks of the instructions on the correct way for women to cycle (Garvey, 1995).

ENTERING THE PUBLIC SPHERE

Attempts to integrate women cycling within a normative gender framework coupled with more radical claims for uses of the bicycle enabled women bicycling to become more broadly accepted, and it advanced a feminist agenda for women that recognized the vital importance of mobility in furthering women's equality. Women were successful in engaging a new technology, the bicycle, and appropriating it for their own use to gain access to the public sphere, and thus expanding their role as women in American society during the Victorian era. Although Stanton's vision of overthrowing gender categories (Strange & Brown, 2002) was not realized at the time, her outspoken advocacy helped to provide space for accommodationist

approaches to thrive as the culture/society found revising gender categories to be a more palatable than abolishing them altogether (Hallenbeck, 2012). Thus, radical and accommodationist approaches worked in concert, even if unintentionally, to increase women's mobility through the bicycle and begin to transform social views of women in relation to sport, the public sphere, and their very bodily capabilities.

Women's adoption of cycling and feminists' development of it to its revolutionary potential for moving women into the public sphere and obliterates or alters gender norms constricting women makes this historical period essential reading. It provides context and evidence for how women's place in the public sphere has been contested in U.S. culture historically. It also points to the early role bicycling played in moving women out of the private sphere as well as expanding the parameters of that sphere. Looking back to the historical significance of the bicycle in relation to women provides historical grounding to my projects and signals its current value as an object and activity of research when considering the question of how gender and mobility intersect for women in terms of the public sphere.

CHAPTER THREE: FRAMING HARASSMENT IN DISCOURSE

"I don't like being scared, I don't like the fear being a limiting factor"

- Interviewee Marta

"I was once riding a bike that was too big for me...while wearing shorts. A man, who

I believe to be a pimp kept following me and offering me "work"...I turned around

and went home. I was on my way to a group ride and the fact that my bike didn't fit

me made me feel especially vulnerable...if I fall, what will happen?"

- Interviewee Sara

The quotes above are from women I interviewed about their encounters with harassment when bicycling. They are a small sampling of women's everyday experiences, adding credence to an ongoing body of work that began contesting the way women were treated in public space, on the street, many years ago. Forty years ago in what would become a foundational paper, Gardner (1980) described in academic terms the phenomenon of street harassment: the verbal and non-verbal onslaught of commentary on their bodies women had to endure everyday, and one that was normalized, taken for granted. Women were recognizing that the way they were treated in the public sphere when walking the street was different from a man and most importantly, that the treatment they received was wrong and damaging. Activists, scholars, and everyday women were developing a feminist frame for their experiences on the street and turning to the power of discourse to call it what it was – harassment. In 2014 harassment is still being reframed in discourse, but the numbers tell a story of their own about harassment. A comprehensive national study conducted in 2014 by *Stop Street Harassment* shows that women are harassed in disproportionate numbers: 65% of women experience street harassment versus 25% of men (queer -identified men where more likely to experience harassment than heterosexual men). This harassment impacts women's ability to move freely in

public space, effectively curtailing women's involvement in the public sphere, recalling a time when the private sphere was idealized as a woman's domain (Arendt, 1958/1998; Bowman, 1993; Lahsaeizadeh & Yousefinejad, 2012). But, although public harassment of women is becoming well established in the literature and activists are working to shift public understanding of harassment, there is not a uniform public perception of harassment or what constitutes it. That is why it is important to explain what I mean by harassment. Drawing on scholarly literature and activist work, I define and consider harassment to exist on a continuum of violence that spans from non-verbal hostile staring to rape or other forms of physical assault. Because women are not treated equally and violence toward women often has a gendered component, fear of safety for women is gendered by default: women can never be sure when the threat of violence will manifest in a gender-based way, meaning that concern over physical and psychological well-being is a different consideration for women than men.

Although there are competing definitions of harassment, the question of how harassment is framed in discourse has been considered, with Janet Bing and Lucien Lombardo (1997) identifying four frames of harassment in media: the judicial frame (emphasizing legal aspects of harassment), the victim frame (focusing on the effect harassment has), the initiator frame (negating or minimizing harassment), and the social science frame (abstracting and objectifying harassment for study and consideration). Although this is useful for examining media framing of harassment, I extend their work more broadly here to consider the main ways harassment is framed in general discourse. I identify two meta-frames from which discourse around harassment is derived, understood or made sense of: these meta-discourse frames are the normative frame and the feminist frame for harassment. The normative frame upholds and reifies patriarchal social norms that deny women equal access to the public sphere, while the feminist frame challenges those social norms and offers a discursive path of resistance to normative framing.

The normative frame interprets the invasions women experience in public space as natural, normal occurrences by minimizing or reframing the experience of harassment, often asserting that what women have identified as harassment is not truly harassment but rather "just a joke" or a compliment (Gardner, 1995). These frames result in two primary discourses around harassment, one that identifies violations of civil inattention as harassment and one that seeks to retain the status-quo of harassment as a natural, unproblematic experience for women. Thus, the definition and impact of harassment is contested in one discourse domain while it is emphasized and legitimized in the other. When people approach the topic of harassment from these two frames, conversation may become difficult or impossible, as can be observed in almost any comment section on a news article on harassment. This is the result of different definitions of what constitutes harassment and of the effect harassment has on women. Currently, the normative frame is being contested by those participating in feminist discourse, which is attempting to frame women's experiences in public of stares, gestures, touching, and verbal interactions as harassment.

In contrast to the normative frame, the feminist frame recognizes and names the oppressive and unequal relations in the public sphere, resulting in the possibility of material changes in women's social condition. Whether the discourse or the recognition of the social wrong came first is difficult to pinpoint, but now the two constitute and reconstitute one another (Breeze, 2011). The feminist frame for harassment gives social activists and critical (and other) scholars language to use that more accurately describes women's experiences and can be used to change how those experiences are perceived by others, even to the point of changing the law. For example, see Franks' (2012) work on harassment online as a form of sexual harassment that can be prosecuted under the law.

These competing frames, revealed through discourse, are evident in the interviews conducted with women in Miami, FL regarding their experiences with

harassment while cycling and in the cycling community. The discursive reframing of the harassment women experience provides a mechanism for women to exert control over interpretation of their experiences. But also importantly, it shows how socially influenced harassment frames are and how they are reified by participation in discourse that either situates harassment in normative ways or problematizes it. This chapter examines a selection of interviews of women who cycle in Miami, FL and their discourse on harassment, how they experience it and contextualize it. I use a feminist interpretation of Critical Discourse Analysis (Blackledge, 2012; Lazar, 2007 & 2008; Wodak and Matouschek, 1993) to examine how women participate in a feminist discourse frame and the significance of those linguistic practices in discourse.

METHODOLOGY

I approach the issue of frames for harassment in discourse and their significance by employing a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis approach (Lazar, 2007; Lazar, 2008) that answers criticism of CDA's lack of specific focus on gender as it pertains to power and discourse. Feminist CDA "critiques from a feminist perspective...gender structures sustained in/through language and other forms of communication" (Lazar, 2008, p. 80), which is precisely what my purpose is here in examining harassment and how it is framed in discourse. Lazar outlines five key principles of FCDA: analytical activism, gender as an ideological structure, complexity of gender and power relations, discursive de/construction of gender, and critical gender reflexivity. Analytical activism refers to analysis as a form of activism with the goal of emancipation for women from oppressive social structures. FCDA embraces an understanding of gender as ideological, performative, and socially situated in nature (see West and Zimmerman, 1987; Butler, 1999) and of how language reifies gender difference and gender relations. Gender and power relations are also complex, intersecting with many other identities that will impact how gender

asymmetries are enacted (Crenshaw, 1989). The fourth principle Lazar (2008) considers is how "the relationship between discourse and the social is dialectical" (p. 92): both constitute and create the social reality of the other. Finally, FCDA demands that its practitioners retain a reflexive stance, meaning that I must reflect on my own practices as an academic and individual to understand how I am situated and whether my work is serving emancipatory ends or not.

FCDA builds on the basic premise of Critical Discourse Analysis to consider how social inequality and power is enacted, reified, and represented through both written and verbal discourse. Many permutations and concentrations of CDA have been developed over the years to address specific issues appropriately. Ruth Wodak and Bernd Matouschek (1993) define the values and purpose of CDA as a concern over "social inequality, injustice and relations of power" and how those are "disclosed by means of the analysis of discourse in their respective settings" (p.227). Blackledge (2012) conceptualizes a CDA that blends the systemic and the local/particular situation in discourse. He terms this approach linguistic ethnography, which "attempts to offer close detail of local action and interaction embedded in a wider social world" (p. 618). Feminist CDA takes that critical focus and concentrates special attention to gender as a critical lens of analysis. The critical lens offered by FCDA and CDA fit the needs of this project well since the purpose of my research project is to examine women cyclists within the context of the Miami cycling community, while giving consideration to the wider social context, or frames from which interviewees are operating within (Bing and Lombardo, 1997).

Another core concept drawn from CDA is the role of the researcher and their influence on their subject and subjects. CDA posits that the researcher impacts their subject in two ways: 1) by approaching it with a particular framework and agenda in mind and 2) by interacting with the subjects/material at hand. As noted in Chapter One, his research project has consistently been shaped by my own involvement in and membership with the Miami cycling community. This membership has allowed

me access to a sample of interviewees that might not be available to someone who was not already a part of the community; as a consequence, many of my interviewees happened to be deeply embedded in the cycling community and in transportation activism. Sixteen interviews were conducted with four men and 12 women, lasting approximately 30-50 minutes, and three main questions were pursued: when cycling began as a child and as an adult and what that experience was like, what their current everyday experience of cycling is, and what the level of importance community plays for them as cyclists. There were free-form, conversational interviews so follow-up questions varied by subject; however, I made an effort to explore with all interviewees whether they thought their gender impacted their experience riding and in community, particularly around harassment. From the 16 in-depth interviews conducted, I selected the most relevant interviews for detailed analysis, and then focused in on sections where interviewees talked about harassment, since that was what I was concerned with analyzing.

The interviews were analyzed closely for micro-linguistic features that would illuminate the frames from which these women were operating. Specifically, the import and significance of hedges/boosters, mitigation, and repetition were considered as they related to the themes identified. Hedges, according to Janet Holmes (1990), can be deployed in many ways, as ways of eliciting agreement, to fill gaps and smooth conversation, to indicate authentic uncertainty, and as politeness signifiers when delivering negative information (For example, the word "like" when it is used as an uncertainty marker or to fill gaps in conversation). Repetition (Tannen, 1987) in discourse can be used to increase emphasis of specific ideas or words or link ideas together (Connection); engage the listener by producing a rhythmic (or poetic) quality to speech (Interaction/Coherence); aid in memory (Comprehension); and make language production more efficient (Production). Mitigation and intensification, as elaborated on by Wodak and Reisigl (2001), alter persuasive impact, indicate degree of certainty and the status of knowledge claims,

and modify the speaker's expressiveness (p. 81). Mitigation can be expressed in discourse many ways; particularly of interest here is mitigation through vague expression, hesitations, and through particle/adverb use.[10]

By taking an overarching FDCA approach, I can apply additional linguistic methods in service of a critical analysis. The micro-linguistic analysis of the interviews is interpreted through a FCDA lens that hones my focus on how gender and power are inscribed through and in discourse practices. Applying FCDA through a critical analysis of women's discourse on harassment reveals power asymmetries in language as well as in the social relations of the public sphere, and the significance of the way women situate harassment in discourse.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

Segments of the interviews were chosen for analysis via a close reading of interview transcripts that considers whether and how the interviewed cyclists experienced verbal and nonverbal attention that overstepped the norm of civil inattention (i.e. harassment) and how they categorized and described this, including important commonalities and differences in how interviewees contextualize harassment and their own experiences. Linguistic strategies in their discourse, including word choice when describing harassment, illuminate how harassment is viewed and constructed by these female cyclists through either a normative or feminist frame, and a critical feminist analysis shows the significance of those constructions. I argue that the normative frame erases harassment and, thus, perpetuates the unequal power relations between men and women (expressed in discourse and lived daily by women). Conversely, I assert that through participation in a feminist frame women exert control over their own experiences by naming

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[10] See Wodak and Reisigl's (2001) list of mitigation strategies (p. 84).

them accurately, changing the language they use, which contributes to shifting cultural norms and diminishing power asymmetries in gender relations.

In this section, I excerpt and separate the interviews via the frame made evident through their discourse, and they are analyzed by looking at salient linguistic factors such as hedging, word choice, intensifiers, mitigation, and repetition. Finally, I consider what those strategies can tell us about how women perceive, describe, and mitigate harassment.

The interviewees were given pseudonyms to protect their personal identity unless they elected to have their real name used. In the excerpts, brackets ([]) indicate inserted words and ellipses (...) signify segments of the same interview excerpted to save space and show only the most relevant aspects of the interviews.

Normative Frame

The normative frame for harassment reifies power asymmetries between men and women linguistically and in physical space. If offers the heteropatriarchal view of harassing interactions as normal, acceptable behavior for men. The normative frame construes harassment as complimentary, something women should enjoy or alternatively see as a joke. In other words, the normative frame *normalizes* harassing behavior and privileges the patriarchal viewpoint of public interactions as appropriate when they are actually harassing in nature.

Although it may seem counterintuitive, it is not only men who participate in this frame; women are also influenced by the dominant power structures and their place in that system. This means that women are also likely to adopt the normative framing for harassment by minimizing their experiences of harassment or sexism or brushing it off as a compliment or joke. In these interviews this minimization was primarily accomplished through mitigation strategies such as hedging words/phrases, adverb and verb choices, and vague language (Tainio, 2003; Wodak and Reisigl, 2001). These strategies were deployed when describing harassing or sexist behavior

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of the men around them, and when they positioned themselves as not disadvantaged or marginalized as cyclists, especially as cyclists in the cycling community.

Although almost all interviewees sought to convey that their cycling experience was mostly positive, a few interviewees spent more time emphasizing that harassment was not an issue by minimizing the behavior of the men they interacted with through mitigating descriptions and by minimizing their own harassment experiences; it is through these discursive strategies that women reify the normative framing of harassment.

In the excerpt below we turn to Amy describing harassment and the mitigating strategies she employs to avoid it. But in this case the focus is on how she contextualizes her choices to mitigate harassment.

EXCERPT 1

1 **Amy:** Um, I don't actually get like hollered at or whistled at that much. I
2 know that like a lot of girls complain about that when they're here but,
3 like, I'm very diligent about covering up my cleavage when I ride**.**
4 (laugher)

In the above excerpt Amy first emphasizes that she doesn't frequently experience harassment, which could be regarded as a minimizing strategy, then she contrasts her experience with other women's implying that although many women complain of harassment she doesn't experience it much because she takes personal responsibility to avoid it. We also see Amy again involved in two discourses of harassment. While the feminist frame is evident in acknowledging harassment as an issue, the normative frame downplays the frequency of harassment while simultaneously attributing harassment to the personal behavior and dress of women.

In the next excerpt Janelly employs a number of linguistic strategies to minimize objectionable behavior from men. She situates herself as a tomboy who is

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strong and gets along well with men. She repeatedly emphasizes that the behavior that might be bothersome to others doesn't disturb her.

EXCERPT 2

1   **Janelly**: I've always been **one of the boys**. I can compete with the best

2   of them and I'm **really tough** and I'm not **easily intimidated**. So, I,

3   generally I'm **hyper competitive** and I go for whatever I want - male or

4   female. Um, so I can say that I never had a hard time blending into the

5   community; men generally don't, you know, they don't really say

6   things to me that would be offensive or (inaudible) they make the

7   comments here or there. Um, generally, I feel like it's, um, a really

8   roundabout insecure way of them approaching and saying a nice

9   compliment. Um, but they say that in a traditional way **that maybe**

10   **some people would be offended** like "don't talk to me like that" or so

11   what. I guess because **I'm around it so much I'm not really bothered**

12   **by it**.

13   I don't feel shy or anything like I go to the track I act like I own it. **I'm**

14   **like one of the guys**, it's great. Like, they don't look at me differently,

15   you know?

16   But I don't get too many people that are like, wow, like, "you're so

17   sexy", this and that, but there'll be a few people that'll just say their

18   **silly comments or stupid comments,** um, but I kinda just take it as like

19   empowering in a really round about way. Like you notice that I'm

20   doing something that nobody else is doing or you notice that I'm out

21   here you know. If I can change the way you look at me, so that it's not

22   like, uh, like **objectified perspective** and more so a "rock on you're

23   fuckin' tough", like, "you're awesome."

Janelly is of particular interest because, prior to minimizing the statements and behaviors of other male cyclists, she situations herself as similar to, or the same as, men. She asserts in lines 1-3 that she is "tough", "not easily intimidated", and "hyper competitive"; she is literally "one of the boys," a theme she returns to on line 14 when she says she is "like one of the guys." In these sections she is taking a strongly individualistic stance, implicitly asserting that there is no systemic power structure in place limiting women's engagement with cycling but rather it is all about individual will and determination (the belief in individualism is unsurprising given how popular this belief is in U.S. culture. See the many "rags to riches" novels in the tradition of Horatio Alger as an example). By rejecting the view of systemic barriers, she is more easily able to dismiss sexist and harassing comments from her male peers as awkward attempts at a compliment (a defense that is frequently offered when verbal harassment is pointed out).

However, she does acknowledge that objectification is a problem (line 22); in some ways negating her prior statement when she talks about changing the way someone views her. And, in another possible negation, she acknowledges that being surrounded by those comments, she is perhaps desensitized to them (lines 11-12). Often, though, in these interview excerpts she recontextualizes the men's comments by claiming that they are just clumsy attempts at compliments (see lines 17-19). However, at the end of each segment where she reframes men's comments and behavior, she begins to negate her statement (see lines 21-22 when she talks about changing how people view her). These negation attempts indicate that her perception of events is not necessarily as unproblematic as she initially asserts, pointing to some recognition of the feminist framing of harassment in discourse, although her framing is largely normative.

The push and pull in these excerpts between the feminist and normative frame are evident in Excerpt 3 where I again return to Amy's interview to look more

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closely at how her comments on harassment situate her experiences and reflection on harassment within the normative frame for harassment.

EXCERPT 3

1   **Amy:** There's a group ride and you ride out on the key and like go train

2   early in the morning and it's mostly guys and just a few girls. And...it's

3   very - like **they make very jokingly chauvinistic comments**. But **it gets**

4   **really old.** It's very - I don't know – it's **almost hard to be in that group**

5   **as a girl**. You - just like, wow, this is the way you guys think about

6   women.

 In a similar fashion to Janelly's description of the hostile environments created by other cyclists, Amy indicates in this interview excerpt that she clearly feels uncomfortable and unwelcome as a woman in the group ride she references, stating that the comments male riders make get "really old" (line 4), and she engages in classic hedging strategies when talking about her reaction to their actions by saying that it is "almost hard to be in that group as a girl" (lines 4-5). It is common for women to minimize their experiences of harassment or hostility through these hedging strategies (Tainio, 2003). Why is this of interest though? Because it indicates a power differential between her and the men creating the unwelcoming environment. Paying close attention to the way she contextualizes the comments the men make, I again see her hedging by attaching the qualifiers "very" and "jokingly" in front of her assertion that the men make "chauvinistic comments" (line 3).

Feminist Frame

Harassment is named as such and defined as invasive and problematic behavior in the feminist frame. This framing is significant to discourse on harassment because it is in contrast to the normative framing that still enjoys widespread use socially, although, as indicated earlier, harassment is becoming

more recognized as a legitimate issue for women accessing public space. This section follows Lazar's (2008) lead to focus on how interviewee's language "constitute[s], reflect[s], and challenge[s] gendered power asymmetries which underscore participation in the public and private spheres" (p. 89-90). The unequal power balance affecting women's access to the public sphere is evident in the interviews where women describe a sense of fear and concern for personal safety when cycling that was closely tied to the threat of harassment or violence.[11] In particular, women (in the interviews excerpted here for close analysis) were concerned about being alone as a cyclist. When asked about harassment, women attached significance to whether they were alone or not when describing what they were afraid of and how they curtailed their behavior and travel patterns.

Perception and Description of Harassment

In this section that considers feminist framing of harassment I examine how women perceive and describe harassment. Many of the excerpts below show the depth of consideration given to being alone and what could happen to a woman who is alone. These fears were initially discussed in response to harassment, but clearly go beyond that fear to concern over assault and other forms of physical violence/intimidation. These interviews take place within the broader context of discourse around violence against women, and, more specifically around the discourse of rape, where (as feminist activists and scholars have noted) women are expected to feel afraid and apprehensive if alone and in the dark. This is coupled

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[11] Due to the unequal position women occupy in our society, concern over personal/physical safety is always gendered because women's experiences and men's are not the same on a systemic (or generally a personal) level. The ever-present threat of sexual violence that women contend with brings a different lens to bear on issues like being alone or riding a bike at night. In addition to the generalized fears cyclists have about being run over by a car or harassed simply *because* they are a cyclist, women must also wonder if they will be attacked, harassed, or even raped, simply on the basis of their gender. It is the threat of violence and harassment that colors women's perspective and experience, and that can cause us to alter our behaviors.

with a cultural discourse that places blame on women when they are harassed or assaulted and responsibility on them for preventing harassment or assault, so it is within this cultural context, as well, that conversations on harassment occur.

In Excerpt 4 below Marta, an active community member and transportation advocate, describes how traveling alone feels to her, and her concern over safety when she is in isolated areas of the city. She feels exposed and vulnerable because she is a woman and this concern translates to her daughter who she worries about as well, especially since men have already begun cat-calling and following her daughter near their neighborhood (this is revealed in her interview but not excerpted here).

EXCERPT 4

1   **Marta**: There's still so many places that are **too empty too dark too**
2   **desolate** and I can't get away from the feeling of at anytime anything
3   can happen, and I don't - I don't have - I mean like living down here we
4   see a lot of homeless people, we see a lot of, just, people on the street
5   that look a little bit...you're like, I'm not sure. (Laughter). But being in
6   anything - being - it's the feeling of **being exposed constantly** of **being**
7   **vulnerable constantly**, which then pisses me off cause I don't want -
8   you know - I'm going to kick your ass! But, um, I that other feeling of
9   safety of being able to to just be alone, um, as a woman and move
10   about. And then [I] have a 13-year-old daughter, [to] think about her
11   walking alone - riding alone - whatever, uh, it doesn't sit well.

Here Marta emphasizes the sense of fear she experiences when alone in some public places through repetition of "too" three times with several different descriptors on lines 1 and 2 and she engaged in repetition again in lines 6 and 7 through the use of "constantly". This repetition communicates to the listener not only that these experiences make Marta fearful but also help the listener to remember and place

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importance on this information. Additionally, repetition of the same theme (fear and safety) create a sense of urgency, of intensification, in relaying Marta's concerns over harassment and violence.

In Excerpt 5 Leah, who is involved in cycling advocacy, relays a number of concerns about her safety and how she handles them while riding her bike. She emphasizes the heightened sense of awareness she has when cycling and the forethought that must go into deciding to ride her bike.

EXCERPT 5

1 **Leah**: I don't know. I think I'm just **always worried** about harassment of
2 every sort.
   …
3 **Leah:** I keep **hyperaware** of my surroundings, **largely** for safety reasons.
   …
4 **Leah**: And, of course, being a female on the street opens you up to
5 certain kinds of violence/stress.
6 **Interviewer**: Can you talk some about how that introduces a different
7 aspect of safety/awareness for you?
8 **Leah**: Well, I also have to think about **where I ride**, if I'm **riding at night**,
9 etc. because I **worry** about being robbed or assaulted.

In this interview excerpt Leah emphasizes how the threat of harassment (and general violence) affects her through the choice of intensifiers like "always" and via repetition of what she considers prior to riding on line 8. Her concern is also evident in her description of feeling "worry" and "worried" (lines 1 and 9 respectively) when talking about her sense of safety. Also, in lines 4 and 5 she alludes to how being a woman in the public sphere is automatically a different experience that brings with it unique concerns for safety and interactions in public.

Excerpt 6 features more guarded language to describe concern over safety, employing euphemisms to describe what could happen to her when riding alone or at dark. Tamara also describes restricting her cycling based on concerns that cycling in her neighborhood after dark is unsafe. Additionally, Tamara lives in Little Havana, which has an elevated crime rate when compared to the rest of Miami; this is likely a contributing factor to her worry over safety.

EXCERPT 6

1   **Tamara**: ...being a woman riding through down the same streets

2   they're not as lit in some parts um you know, I'm looking out for both,

3   you know, are **people around that might mess with me**, and also, uh,

4   as you would in any city if you're smart that's how you avoid incidents

5   is you keep your eyes open and uh then also looking for cars.

    ...

6   **Tamara:** There's certain parts of this city where I'm like, I'm gonna skip

7   going there, or certain parts that I know are a little rougher, that I

8   **might not** wanna ride though by myself at certain times of day. Um, I

9   lived in Little Havana last year and I **would've** ridden my bike a lot

10 more - I **would've** left, you know, ridden on my bike - but I knew I

11 **would be** biking home in the dark by myself and so I'd put my bike in

12 my car and drive to where I wanted to go.

Tamara beginning in lines 1-5 to describe how, as a woman, she is particularly vulnerable to danger, expressing concern that people "might mess with" her. She describes avoiding areas that might be more dangerous for her as a woman as well as times of day when she changes her habits. Tamara used the verb "might" in lines 3 and 8 – these serve as hedges and allow for a hesitancy in ascribing certainty to her statements regarding safety. However, it is still clear that she modifies her behavior out of safety concerns when she describes what she "would've" done using

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the modal verb form three times before elaborating that what she actually does instead of riding her bike back and forth to work is drive to go for a bike ride because she doesn't feel safe cycling in her own neighborhood at night.

In Excerpt 7 interviewee Amy describes how harassment makes her uncomfortable, making it clear that experiencing such attention is unwanted and unsettling. It seems clear that Amy wants to be left alone, not gawked at.

EXCERPT 7

1 **Amy**: Yeah, cause I just don't like it [verbal harassment/staring while

2 riding]. It makes me uncomfortable and **I don't want anyone, like,**

3 **looking at...me.**

Lines 2 and 3 are particularly of interest here, there is both declaration and hesitation evident when she says she doesn't want anyone to look at her. The use of the hedge "like" suggests a certain amount of discomfort even describing the behavior she finds objectionable.

Excerpts 4 through 7 all describe how women are affected by harassment and harassment threat and their concern over it. The interviews excerpted show women employing a variety of different linguistic strategies to situate harassment. And, in their own, way, each women used the feminist frame for harassment by recognizing the behaviors they have seen (and the threat of them) as harassment and recognizing that their interactions in the public sphere are characterized a power structure that is gendered and places them on the defensive.

In the excerpts, the women emphasized how they experience harassment through intensification strategies (Wodak and Reisigl, 2001), repetition (Tannen, 1989), and hedging (Holmes, 1990). Words such as "constant" and "always" augment these women's descriptions of the way they feel about the potential for harassment or violence, indicating that this is an issue that is frequently considered and an important factor in the choices they make about transportation. The verb,

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adverb, and adjective choices here are also revealing. In Excerpt 6 Tamara is concerned about people who may "mess with" her while in Excerpt 5 Leah says she stays "hyperaware" when riding. Marta's descriptions of her surroundings in Excerpt 4 also demonstrate a sense of vulnerability and lack of control over her person and sense of safety, while Tamara (Excerpt 6) reports "looking out" for potential violence/harassment and altering her riding behavior based on how safe she feels in different neighborhoods. The narratives constructed by their discourse indicate that they experience concern and fear over the potential for harassment and worry over their own well-being when riding.

Mitigating Harassment

It is evident from the prior examples and literature review in <u>Chapter One</u> that the threat of harassment limits women in significant ways, such as inducing a state of fear, as seen above. This can lead to attempts to mitigate harassment, which is the focus of this section. Mitigation here is focused on behaviors or action women engage in to minimize their experiences with harassment, such as alterations in behavior or dress. The women interviewed revealed a number of strategies for avoiding or reducing harassment that focused on altering their personal behavior and physical appearance. This can be seen in some of the prior excerpts but will be discussed in more detail here.

The mitigation strategies disclosed also show how women attempt to make sense of harassment and to control whether it happens to them or not. Their discourse around harassment avoidance is also indicative of how harassment is often treated in American culture as a personal, individual problem that must be solved by women altering their own behavior. Thus their discourse is situated and influenced by the cultural frames around women, public space, personal responsibility, and harassment, even though I argue that these women are still framing harassment not through the normative frame but through the feminist

frame. Although the focus is on personal responsibility through altering behavior throughout the following excerpts the women are still participating in a feminist frame for harassment through acknowledging that harassment is undesirable and unacceptable behavior. What the following excerpts also show is the pragmatic concerns of these women: for them emancipation through radically altering the social landscape is not within the scope of their day-to-day activities; they must take other action so that they can enter the public sphere.

Excerpt 8 demonstrates one form of action taken: here Leah describes staying aware of her surroundings and she doesn't ride at night in an attempt to reduce her chances of harassment or violence.

EXCERPT 8

1 **Leah:** I keep **hyperawa**re of my surroundings, largely for safety reasons.

 …

2 **Leah**: I usually will not ride alone at night anywhere. And, umm… if I am

3 riding by myself in certain areas… **ride fast**.

Leah focuses on her own behaviors and what she alters in order to maintain a sense of safety. Her word choices ("ride fast" and "hyperaware") communicate a sense of urgency and vigilance around the potential for harassment and the consequences she must deal with if she is harassed.

In Excerpt 9 there is a similar focus on altering personal behavior, but this time the focus is on clothing and what Sara, the interviewee, changes about what she wears to reduce instances of harassment. She also talks about what she fears may happen if she doesn't alter her appearance.

1   **Sara**: I also tend to **dress more conservatively** when riding alone...my

2   goal is to **avoid attention**. I fear that I won't be able to fend off drunken

3   or insistent advances when I'm alone so **I try to be less noticeable**.

Again, fear is the motivating factor for altering behavior, in this case making more "conservative" clothing choices in the hopes of going unnoticed by potential harassers by appearing less sexually appealing. This strategy is only made legible in a cultural context where harassment of women is viewed as a reflection of how attractive a woman is to a heterosexual man (there is conflicting data on whether perceived attractiveness increases harassment or not).[12] Throughout this excerpt the onus is on Sara to prevent harassment. This is signaled linguistically through using "I" language that describes what she is doing to take personal responsibility to prevent harassment. Line 3 is particularly significant because it reveals how she is positioned in public space by potential harassers. To stay safe she feels that she must be "less noticeable" and unobtrusive, placating or avoiding male attention. This signals that space in the public sphere is still not really accessible to women, for men can ride in shorts in hot and humid Miami, generally with less commentary, though gender-based harassment may still occur to men perceived as gay or presenting themselves as insufficiently "masculine."[13]

The next interviewee in Excerpt 10 also implicitly asserts the value that being less noticeable can have when avoiding street harassment. Amy attributes altering

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[12] See Abdolali Lahsaeizadeh and Elham Yousefinejad, Elham's (2012) paper "Social Aspects of Women's Experiences of Sexual Harassment in Public Places in Iran" and Stop Street Harassment's 2014 report: http://www.stopstreetharassment.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/2014-National-SSH-Street-Harassment-Report.pdf

[13] My interviews with male cyclists support this assertion. Of the men 4 men I interviewed, 2 described harassment that they attributed to their perceived sexual orientation or to gender policing of their masculinity by other men.

the way she dresses to the fact that she doesn't get harassed as much as other women she knows.

EXCERPT 10

1   **Amy:** Um, I don't actually get like hollered at or whistled at that much. I

2   know that like a lot of girls complain about that when they're here. But

3   like **I'm very diligent about covering up** my cleavage when I ride

4   (laughs). Um, I've always been like super

5   **Interviewer:** (interrupts) **You think that makes a difference?**

6   **Amy:** I don't know. I**, I feel like it probably does.** I mean I know that if I

7   wear short shorts I'll get whistled at more. But like, normally, I don't. I'll

8   wear like Bermuda shorts or wear pants - and I always if I'm wearing,

9   like, a low cut shirt and I have a backpack I pull my shirt up in the front

10 and like tuck it under the straps of my backpack so, like, no boobage is

11 showing.

(laughter)

....

12 **Amy:** I mean I wear leggings under my dresses like or put on shorts

13 under my dress that I can take off when I get there. Like cause I'm not

14 willing to risk that. And that gets kind of annoying sometimes.

Amy described her efforts to avoid harassment in detail, explaining how she covers up her breasts (line 3) and legs (lines 6-8) in an attempt to avoid harassment. By speaking of "risk" in relation to the consequence of *not* covering her body Amy indicates that fear over potential harassment motivates her choices, which appear to be successful in these instances.

However, at times these strategies do not appear to be effective as they cannot account for men's comments to other women that are overheard nor can these strategies control the behavior of would-be harassers. For example, in another

part of her interview, excerpted below, Amy describes how harassing comments toward other women by fellow male cyclists created a hostile environment that made her reconsider participating in the group ride where this behavior occurs.

EXCERPT 11

1   **Amy:** There's a group ride and you ride out on the key and like go

2   train early in the morning and it's mostly guys and just a few girls.

3   And...it's very - like **they make very jokingly chauvinistic comments**.

4   But **it gets really old**. It's very - I don't know - it's almost hard to be in

5   that group as a girl. You - just like, wow, this is the way you guys think

6   about women.

In this excerpt Amy employs mitigating strategies when describing verbal harassment she overhears, describing the comments first as "jokingly" made in addition to the more serious descriptor "chauvinistic." This would seem to indicate participation in the normative frame for harassment but it is more complicated than that. Instead it appears that the normative frame and the feminist frame are being interwoven as she is speaking. On the one hand she mitigates the severity of the unwelcome comment she hears but she still makes it clear that this harassing behavior toward other women by fellow cyclists makes her feel unwelcome in the cycling group herself. When the men in her group openly sexualize other women, an atmosphere of disrespect and objectification of women is created, and a clear power differential emerges. Men are able, through persistent such remarks and other behaviors, to assert dominance and effectively push women to the sidelines within a given group.

In Excerpt 12 Leah explains her own experience with harassing comments and stares, describing how intrusive staring makes her feel vulnerable and exposed. Outlined as well are her strategies for avoiding or getting away from harassing

behavior, finding in ineffective to confront those who harass her, opting instead to try to ignore the behavior. She also speculates on possible reasons that men harass.

EXCERPT 12

1   **Leah:** There is a spot on Key Biscayne where a lot of bicyclists stop for

2   coffee, snacks, and water. Mostly the spandex-wearing type of cyclist,

3   mostly men. **Walking through these groups of men** to get to the water

4   **feels like being undressed by eyes** sometimes.

…

5   **Leah**: Yes [responding to how she responds to this form of

6   harassment]. I tend to just try to be as stand-offish as possible**.** I think

7   the thing that scares men most is female confidence.

8   **Interviewer**: Have you ever verbally responded to staring harassment

9   or other forms of harassment? Or responded in some other way?

10   **Leah**: It usually does not help. Sometimes I will **scowl** or **glare** if the

11   person is close enough to my face to feel it convey my rage.

12   **Interviewer**: What kind of response is there?

13   **Leah**: If it is not apologetic, I just tune it out.

14   If it is a group of men, **they'll laug**h or **call you bitch**.

15   I don't know. I really do try **to tune out** groups of men on the street as

16   much as possible.

Leah has a similar experience to Amy at a popular watering hole for cyclists (its popularity is due to its location by a bridge that is frequently used for training rides). Her experience riding is disrupted and made uncomfortable by the harassing stares of men when she stops for water (lines 3-4).[14] Importantly she describes herself as essentially helpless to prevent this form of harassment; beyond a "scowl" or "glare"

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[14] See Goffman (1963) *Behavior in Public Spaces* for more on how staring violates social boundaries.

(line 10) her only identified option is to "tune it out" (line 15). This shows a failure of the mitigation strategies focused on altering personal behavior, because no matter what her actions are harassment still occurs.

Throughout these examples the interviewed women relate strategies for avoiding harassment by modifying the way they dress (not wearing short shorts, hiding cleavage), altering their routes, or trying to ignore the harassment. These are routine and carefully thought out strategies, as evinced in their word choices to describe them. Amy says that she "always" covers her cleavage by pulling her shirt up, while Sara says that she dresses "more conservatively," altering her normal style of dress, in order to achieve her "goal" of being "less noticeable". Although Leah doesn't describe altering her clothing choice, she relates that she is always "hyperaware" when out cycling in order to be safe, that she "will not" ride alone at night, and that she hurries through areas where she feels unsafe. An undercurrent in this discourse, though unspoken, is on individual responsibility to avoid harassment by altering travel routes, changing clothing, and not traveling during the evening or nighttime.

It also becomes clear from these excerpts that these strategies may have limited effectiveness, especially when combating harassment from other cyclists. Developing alternative routes, modifying dress, etc., are all individual strategies adopted by those harassed, but when the harassers are fellow cyclists or harassers engage regardless of their targets choices such personalized strategies fail.

DISCUSSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of this analysis lies in constructing a more complex understanding of how competing frames for harassment operate and are used by women in their discourse on harassment. What has emerged is here is a recognition that women participate in both the feminist and normative frames of harassment, sometimes switching back and forth of blending the two together in contradictory

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ways. This is not entirely surprising since the normative frame reflects longstanding power hegemonies that oppress and limit women's (and men's, though that is not the focus of this analysis) ability to move freely into and in the public sphere. It is also evident that the feminist frame offers women a way to exert control over their experiences of harassment, defining their experiences with unwelcome attention as a legitimate and serious issue by naming such attention as harassment.

While redefining experience through discourse may seem trivial on its face, it is far from it. Through discourse social realities can be reshaped; a feminist frame provides women (and men) with language they can apply to alter the socio-cultural norms that accommodate harassment. For example, understanding how these frames operate and are reified in discourse is vital for feminists who wish to engage with those who do not share their frame. By closely examining the linguistic features of women's discourse around harassment, I hope that it will be possible to develop more successful strategies to shift women and men away from the normative framing of harassment to a feminist frame which recognizes the damage and seriousness of harassment, including how it limits women's ability to participate in the public sphere by curtailing their mobility.

Through examining these women's discourse, a picture of the logic and rhetorical strategies used in service of the normative frame begins to form. Women (and men) who use this frame accomplish a redefinition of their experiences into something other than harassment by minimizing their and other's experiences, redefining verbal and other forms of harassment as complements or jokes, and by positioning themselves as unlike other women. Meanwhile, within the feminist frame, women seek to establish the legitimacy of calling it harassment by demonstrating its effect on their emotional and physical well-being. This is accomplished by emphasizing how harassment threat creates a climate of fear and unease, and by then explaining the many steps they take to avoid or curtail

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harassment. Additionally, they also emphasize how their mobility is limited by harassment threat.

This has clear application to female cyclists, beyond the women interviewed. Women are not equally represented in the activity of cycling, for leisure or for sport (Emond, Tang & Handy, 2009; Garrard, 2003; Garrard, Rose & Lo, 2008; Heesch, Sahlqvist, & Garrard, 2012). One factor that may explain lower numbers of women involved in cycling is that women get harassed while cycling and that women experience harassment and a hostile climate within cycling communities. These in-depth interviews, though small in number, begin to shed light on this hypothesis, indicating that harassment is indeed a factor for women who cycle. This lends credence to the idea that the threat of harassment may discourage women from cycling or curtail the cycling they do engage in. Based on these interviews it is clear that for some women, fear of and prior experiences with harassment do limit how and when they cycle, and even when it doesn't, it is still an element that they prepare for when preparing to cycle. This research on discourse may guide the actions of cycling communities that choose to make cycling an activity that women can pursue with the same freedom as men.

CONCLUSION

Beginning to grasp how individuals who cycle contextualize harassment is vital to understanding its impact (Fairchild and Rudman, 2008), and developing ways of reducing harassment in public and private spaces. The subjects in their interviews point to harassment affecting women in several ways, by inducing a sense of fear, through raising concerns with safety, and by curtailing mobility. It is notable that harassment doesn't have to actually occur all the time for a climate of fear to be induced: for some of the women I interviewed, the fact that other women have experienced harassment or that they have experienced it in the past is enough for them to alter their behavior. The ripple effect of harassment (Kinney, 2003;

Thompson, 1994), like the threat of rape, creates a hostile climate for women in society. In these interviews, women indicated that their mobility was restricted or they felt compelled to alter their behavior based on the threat of harassment. Some changed their attire to avoid harassment or altered their routes or times of day when they would ride out of concern over harassment (and other more physical forms of violence). Several interviewees indicated that they felt unwelcome in certain groups due to gender based hostility, such as men in a cycling group commenting on other women in objectifying and demeaning ways or a general "boy's club" sensibility in some communities.

Historically, women's experiences of harassment have been minimized or considered to be a matter of course, something to endure (Thompson, 1994). But, over the past 30 years, a growing body of research has emerged demonstrating the deleterious effects harassment and a hostile climate have on women (and other minorities) (Macmillan, Nierobisz & Welsh, 2000). Harassment of women works to preserve and enact power upon them and it is primarily exerted by men as a way of asserting dominance, and controlling how public space is accessed by women. The normative frame assists in normalizing harassment, while the feminist frame works to reveal and change the issues of power at play in women's everyday interactions. By understanding how these frames are reified and enacted in discourse, feminists can alter or refine their own discursive practices and hopefully shatter the normative frame that is currently working to delegitimize women's experiences as harassment.

CHAPTER FOUR: COMMUNITY PRACTICES AND WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION

Sweat Records looks exactly like what you'd expect an independent record store in Miami to look like – complete with a color scheme that recalls the best of Miami Vice. While I am parking in the back, the homeless man who is always there offers to watch my car, his hand coming out expectantly for a few bucks. The smell of stale beer and urine radiates up from the sidewalk – partly the fault of the English pub -style dive bar on the corner next to Sweat.

Inside, tables are being rearranged to accommodate the growing number of people gradually drifting in for the weekly Emerge Miami meeting – Emerge has met at Sweat for years now and the two seem intertwined at this point. Half the people at the table have their favorite espresso bar drink in hand – courtesy of the other part of the record store's business.

"Ok, who wants to facilitate the meeting this week?" Sara asks in an effort to get things started – it's already 7:10, 10 minutes past our meeting time. Sara typically serves as our note-taker, unless she is held up on a case (she is a Public Defender), and she helps keep everyone on track too. Angus, a somewhat newer member, offers to facilitate and the meeting begins. "Alright, let's do introductions!" Sara says, and around the room we go giving our names and what motivates us as part of a quick ice-breaker.

As we do introductions, Angus notices who is new to the meeting and after introductions are over offers them the floor. "We always invite newcomers to tell us what you are doing and what you're interested in" he says. Then, one of the new participants explains that he works on interest free loans for lower income people. Murmurs of interest and approval ripple around the room. Next we dive into past events, with Angus querying participants in our past events how things went –

multiple people report on a recent commissioner meeting amid laughter and small
side conversations related to the remarks made by one of the commissioners.

Conversation moves on to upcoming events and activities and members
excitedly begin discussing the test ride to make sure there are no kinks in the route
for the upcoming ride. Members talk back and forth about the test ride and who can
participate in it and then what time it can be that will work for those interested.

As 8:00 PM approaches, Angus helps push us through the remaining final
agenda items. Another member queries whether we are ready to adjourn. We are,
but prior to that Sara quickly reminds everyone that if they are interested in joining
the Emerge listserv to see her after the meeting so she can add them to the listserv.
(The listserv is where Emerge does all of its organizing prior to and after meetings).

As tables are shuffled back to their former places and chairs are stacked up,
people linger in small groups, engaged in animated side conversations – some of the
core members seeking out the new attendees to say hello and invite them out to
Lime for a quick bite to eat and more conversation.

_____

This vignette is a compilation based on typical Emerge meetings, the
community organization I observed as part of my work on women's access to the
public sphere. In this case, my focus is on participation in community and practices
that invite women in. This is important to understanding access because
participation in community is a foundational aspect of the public sphere; it is where
engagement with others of common interest and agitation for change takes place.
The assumption that everyone has the ability to access the public sphere unfettered
is both a basic assumption of democracy as well as its greatest lie because,
historically and currently, access to the public sphere is asymmetrical, more
available to some than it is to others. Women have traditionally not been granted
access or welcomed to the public sphere. From voting rights to employment, women
in the U.S. have had to fight for the access that was granted by default to (landed,

white) men since the signing of the U.S. constitution. Today women face other barriers to equal access, as my prior chapter details, such as how harassment while cycling can act as a significant constraint on women's travel choices by limiting their mobility and access to the public sphere.

These barriers are the result of deeply ingrained gender norms combined with institutionalized sexism that work to produce environments difficult for women to navigate. Anecdotal accounts by women (and other minority groups) of subtle to blatant sexist treatment and attitudes abound in academia, science, industry, and within activist communities, and research continues to bear out these reports. Given how our everyday actions and participation in the public sphere are embedded in a cultural legacy of sexism, that women's participation in community would be affected is obvious. However, what is not completely understood is what practices might serve to open access to women. It is this question that motivates this chapter's focus on a cycling community group, Emerge Miami, as a Community of Practice (CofP) (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998).

Under consideration here is women's participation in the cycling community, in particular how a community's practices influence who participates, as well as how and why women (and men) participate in the cycling community. A comprehensive understanding of how a community functions through close examination of that community's practices via CofP reveals for whom that community creates space. Considering the Miami cycling community, I hypothesize that the practices of a community will affect how accessible it is to women. To explore this hypothesis I conducted interviews of cyclists in Miami and observed a community group called Emerge Miami that has a significant cycling component (they plan monthly bicycling rides) and whose core membership is comprised of approximately one-third to one-

half women.[15] My interviews with cyclists and observation of the community organization, Emerge Miami, explore the practices of the community and the motivations for participant engagement. While not conclusive, the observations and interviews regarding how the group functions and the details of the motivations of participants suggest that the ways engagement takes place, the community norms, and everyday practices affect how accessible such spaces are to women.

I asked interviewees about whether community was important to them, and, if it was, then what level of importance it held and why it was important to them. They responded with comments on different types of communities and their membership or non-membership in each. They also gave assessments of their respective communities as well as communities they knew but were not a part of. The majority of interviewees found community significant for a variety of reasons. Community participation was an avenue to engagement in socialization, relationships, environmental activism, and more.

Additionally, I observed Emerge Miami to better understand that community's norms and practices, such as how meetings and events are run and developed. This observation, coupled with the interviewee's responses leads me to conclude that Emerge Miami's practices create a particularly invitational space that is accessible to women. This chapter explores those practices and their effect on women's access to community in detail.

METHODOLOGY

I engage the issue of how a cycling community is constituted through the theory of Communities of Practice developed by Wenger (1998), following his earlier work with Lave (1991) on social learning. This theory and method has been applied

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[15] Because core and peripheral membership is in a state of flux the exact percentage of women to men varies somewhat within a given year.

most frequently in the field of Business (Gherardi, Nicolini, & Odella, 1998; Handley, Sturdy, Fincham & Clark, 2006; Kempster, 2006); however, CofP has proven to be broadly applicable in many areas of research from linguistics work on language and gender (Bergvall, 1999; Eckert & McConnell-Ginet, 1992 & 1999; Holmes & Meyerhoff, 1999; Pogner, 2005) to education (Eckert, 1993). Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wenger (1998) elucidated a new way of thinking about learning, termed "social learning theory," advancing the idea that learning takes place in and through practice situated in a community where people are united in a mutual endeavor. He then identifies core aspects of what make up a Community of Practice by providing a case study analysis of an insurance company, particularly the claims processors division, as an example of a community of practice that learns and is constituted by their practice.

Wenger (1998) identifies the dimensions of practice in community as mutual engagement, joint enterprise, and shared repertoire. Briefly, mutual engagement is, much as it sounds, engaging in a shared endeavor with other interested parties through speaking, acting, and negotiating. This engagement is around a joint enterprise, that is, the project, activity, or issue in question, and this enterprise is defined by a constant process of negotiation and reification of boundaries and priorities. Through these processes a shared repertoire is developed, which includes skills, norms, and ways of communicating.

Work by Handley, Sturdy, Fincham, and Clark (2006) extends CofP through discussion of situated/social learning theory, which was the genesis for CofP's development. Handley et al. argue that participation via action and relationships forms the backbone of situated learning theory and is how "individuals develop their identities and practice" (p. 648), which emphasizes Wenger's conception of how communities are constituted by meaningful practice and participation around a mutual endeavor. Their argument considers the pillars of situated learning (how learning takes place in social learning theory) within CofP to be participation,

identity, and practice, which all affect and reconstitute one another. An important aspect of these related theories in Handley et al.'s view is that conflict and peripheral involvement are both accounted for and regarded as vital to understanding how communities of practice function.

The Communities of Practice methodology provides a unique perspective on communities that is ideally suited for examining a cycling community, which, by its nature, is comprised of an active practice that participants engage in through the activity of bicycling and organization around its practice. Using this approach I will examine the community organization Emerge Miami that is formed partly around the practice of cycling as a means of developing and sustaining local community. An analysis using CofP will illuminate the practices of Emerge Miami: what the participants engage with and how (mutual engagement); how they create and sustain meaning through a shared repertoire; and how boundaries, goals, and processes are negotiated in pursuit of a joint enterprise. The purpose of looking at this community as a CofP is to understand how the practices of a community affect who participates.

EMERGE MIAMI AS A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

In this study of Emerge Miami as a Community of Practice, I will explore my observations of the collective as well as interviewees' accounts of their experience and thoughts on community. Based on my interviews and observation, key practices of Emerge and their significance are identified. These practices include creating an invitational space through non-hierarchical organization structure, developing an ethos of care through peripheral and core member interactions, and engaging in intentional inclusivity of (potentially) marginalized participants.

Overview of Emerge Miami

A small grassroots collective founded in 2005, Emerge Miami is characterized by its flexible and diverse nature. It is a unique organization in the Miami cycling scene because members do not define themselves as a cycling organization even though they are a core part of the cycling community who helped to build and contribute to the burgeoning scene in Miami.[16] Instead, the collective is focused broadly on progressive issues in the local community, particularly around transportation and livable communities, and has incorporated cycling as a key aspect of their practice. Participants in Emerge report a wide range of cycling activity and, while cycling is not necessary for membership, many of the core members are committed cyclists. However, interviewees who weren't frequent cyclists emphasized that they found themselves welcome and were able to participate in Emerge because there were other issues engaged in aside from cycling.

As noted above, Emerge situates itself as more than a community cycling group. Their mission, and the joint enterprise participants engage with, is "strengthen[ing] social bonds between progressive individuals, organizations and independent businesses in South Florida in order to more effectively accomplish...[their]...individual goals" (Emerge Miami, 2015). This rather broadly defined joint enterprise allows Emerge to become involved in a variety of community activities, ranging from Buskerfest – an event that promotes local music and envisions a more active and accessible city center – to a voter guide that provides recommendations on local, state, and national candidates. These events and activities are planned at the weekly meetings that Emerge has at a local coffee shop and independent record store – a conscious choice made in an effort to support local businesses – which is another important aspect of Emerge's mission.

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[16] Emerge has led guided monthly rides for nine years, reaching their 100th ride in the fall of 2014.

Emerge's mission is partly accomplished through their biking activities, which are seen as a vital part of community connectedness and growth. Bicycling is a key part of mutual engagement for Emerge, and this is not accidental. Bicycling has a long history of being tied to progressive change (Furness, 2005b; Garvey, 1995: Park, 2001), which is part of what Emerge is dedicated to. But, aside from that, bicycling is a practice that slows people down at the community and individual level, making for a more accessible environment so riders can connect with and observe their surroundings. Interviewees frequently mentioned that biking connected them more to their neighborhood, community, and city. It was more difficult to ignore road conditions, homelessness, and poverty when traveling on a bike. A heightened awareness of community and surroundings fosters engagement and connection with community. Additionally, biking is known to have positive health, environmental, and infrastructure effects on individuals and their community, which is in keeping with Emerge's broader message.

Practices of Emerge Miami

The relevant practices of Emerge Miami can be seen at their meetings, where planning and socializing take place, and at events, where socializing and collective action occurs. Monthly bike rides, meetings, and socializing activities - that will be examined in detail here.

The planned monthly group rides provide a fun and low-stress way for people to socialize and become more confident riders; additionally, the rides are typically planned around a theme that showcases local events and businesses. Emerge's rides (a joint enterprise) are engaged in via particular ways, with practices that sometimes differ from other group rides:

1. All rides meet at a metro-rail station, meaning that they are more accessible to people without cars and they expose people to public transit options.

2. Their rides are held on Saturdays at 10 a.m., a time that allows for parents to bring their children easily if they desire.

3. The rides are moderately paced and people who are experienced riders block traffic at intersections so that everyone travels through safely. (This practice is common for large group rides, like the international Critical Masses, and in cycling is called *corking.*)

4. The rides are guided by core Emerge members at the front of the ride and there is also a person at the very rear to ensure that no-one is lost along the way.

5. The rides are themed and focus on local places and businesses, for example there are annual rides to local farmer's markets and to urban gardens.

These factors all contribute to making the rides more accessible to a greater number of people, including novice riders and those with families. This is significant for women's involvement for two reasons, 1) because women are underrepresented in cycling it is likely they will be less confident or novice riders, and 2) because child and family responsibilities have been identified as a barrier to cycling for women in multiple studies. Having a ride that is accessible and implicitly welcoming to people who are not experienced cyclists or who may have children likely encourages a greater number of women to ride. It may also increase the possibility of them becoming involved in Emerge Miami; this is supported by interviewee's comments on their own involvement, which they often tied to the interactions they had with Emerge members during events and meetings.

In addition to the way group rides are planned and conducted, Emerge Miami's weekly meetings also follow a particular pattern of mutual engagement that reifies and constitutes a shared repertoire of communication practices. Prior to the meeting, on the Emerge backchannel listserv, an agenda is created in Google Drive that anyone can edit and add to. Although one member usually commits to put

together the basic agenda, the agenda creation duties are rotated every few months or so. Then, at the meeting, a meeting leader is chosen to go through the agenda -- the meeting leader rotates at each meeting and newer members are encouraged to lead meetings after they have attended for a few months. The meeting agenda also follows a set pattern: first, there are introductions, which usually includes a small icebreaker; second, guests or new attendees are asked if they would like to speak or if they have ideas or projects they want to bring to Emerge; third, past events are reviewed and evaluated; and, finally, new projects, events, and ideas are considered. After the meetings people will frequently get a late dinner, which further cements friendships or helps to begin them; this is also a conscious way that newer attendees are often made to feel welcome.

Mutual engagement at Emerge meetings is characterized by a nonhierarchical meeting structure where responsibilities are not only shared but rotated amongst both core and peripheral members. This is in contrast to the more traditional meeting structure (Such as "Roberts' Rules" led meetings) that is more hierarchical with rigidly defined roles that allow for less flexible movement from periphery to core (and vice versa). The other aspect of meeting structure that differs from typical meetings is giving guests and new attendees the opportunity to speak first, signaling that a new person's ideas were just as important as those of the more established members. These practices constitute part of the shared repertoire of Emerge participants. Additional engagement through attention to relationship**s** outside of meetings and friendships formed through after-meeting socializing, indicate that developing personal relationships is a core aspect of engagement.

Another key aspect of Emerge rides is that ride ideas can be proposed by any member, and other members then lend their support in planning the new ride. Although some core members typically have the same role in each ride due to specialized expertise (such as planning the exact route), members are encouraged to share responsibility and the person who proposed the ride takes on the leadership

role in planning that particular ride. The open way rides are planned allows for a greater diversity of rides and for both peripheral and core members to become involved and invested in the community. Also, the fact that the rides are more slowly paced and community-oriented may also factor into greater participation from women, especially novice riders who may have lower confidence levels.

These meeting and event practices I characterized above are invitational, and evoke an ethos of care that draws in female participants (Bond, Holmes, Byrne, Babchuck, & Kirton-Robbins, 2008). Non-hierarchical meeting structures that explicitly favor newcomers and invite them to share in key meeting and planning duties (such as facilitating a meeting or planning a bike ride) combine with cycling events that privilege and accommodate novice riders and parents to create an invitational atmosphere that is attractive to marginalized people, in this case women. In the next section participants in Emerge Miami share their experiences and perspectives on the Emerge Community and explain their reasons for membership.

Participant Experiences of Emerge Miami

Participants identified a number of reasons for their involvement in Emerge Miami and cycling, and, although each cyclist was somewhat unique in their cycling experience and how they came to participate, a common factor amongst many of the interviewees was that civic engagement and socialization and/or friendships were the primary outcomes or reasons for their participation in the cycling community, and specifically Emerge Miami.

The presumption of shared values also motivated several Emerge Miami participants. In her interview with me, Sara, one of the founding members of Emerge, has found that common values is one of the significant factors for her participation; she identified kindness, unity, localism, and fitness as the shared values she finds with Emerge. Angus, a member who considers himself on the periphery identified one of his main reasons for attending Emerge and his

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involvement the presumption of shared values, namely civic engagement, which has served as a shortcut to developing friendships and additional community involvement.

Tina, another Emerge member who was interviewed, noted that her confidence was boosted and her riding habits expanded after beginning to attend group rides with Emerge. And Adam, one of Emerge's early members, also found his confidence increased from participating in the group rides. His rider behavior altered as well; as he became more active with Emerge, especially in terms of civic engagement, he became more aware of proactive cycling habits such as paying attention to his surroundings and wearing a helmet. One interviewee, Marta, in particular contrasted her experience with Emerge to other groups in the cycling scene, saying that she found herself completely welcomed at Emerge even though she was not a frequent cyclist. This was in contrast to experience she had had elsewhere, with groups and individuals who were cycling-centric, meaning that they believe cyclists should have primacy over other forms of transportation. Marta noted that she found these anti-car, "bicycling is best"-type attitudes reminiscent of drivers who think that cars are more important and everyone else should get out of the way. Another interviewee, Tamara, characterized Emerge as "very inclusive" and "diverse," commenting that Emerge was "intentionally inclusive," which made her experience as a new comer very welcoming.

Interviewees focused on the strong bonds they formed with others through Emerge Miami; how the collective had positively impacted their individual riding experience; the importance of shared values, and in particular a commitment to civic engagement and the local community; and the welcoming atmosphere they found as new participants.

DISCUSSION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Overall, there was significant overlap between interviewees' motivations for joining and the result of joining. Socialization, civic engagement, and personal relationships were both the primary motivators for involvement and the result of involvement. Participants on the core and periphery had varying levels of cycling activity, with some being dedicated cyclists and others more casual cyclists. There did not seem to be a strong relationship (based on interviews and observation of Emerge) between frequency of cycling and core or peripheral membership, although at least one interviewee said that they considered themselves more of a peripheral member due to a lack of consistent cycling. However, what was significant is that both frequent and infrequent cyclers were engaged as participants in the mutual endeavors of Emerge Miami. That the joint enterprise of Emerge is not cycling per se but rather involves cycling as a component may be a key factor in drawing in cyclists of varying levels and commitments.

Practices, especially communication practices, of a community affect access by implicitly discouraging or inviting participants. Emerge's practices, such as sharing important meeting responsibilities with new and peripheral members, create an invitational space likely to make women feel welcomed, in contrast to overt hierarchical or competitive space and practices which serve to limit access for socially marginalized group.[17] Research into women's participation in meetings and organizations has shown that women are frequently treated unequally in meetings, their contributions minimized or even ignored (Konrad, Kramer, & Erkut, 2008). Additionally, one study on cycling community leadership (DeLuca, 2011) has indicated that women hold off on involvement in cycling organizations due to a fear

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[17] This is not to say that Emerge is a perfect organization with no room for improvement or that everyone always feels welcome at all times. One shortcoming would be that Emerge typically attracts middle to upper-class people as participants. This suggests that issues of class need more thoughtful consideration.

of lack of expertise. These misgivings, coupled with already marginalized access for women to the public sphere, illuminate why Emerge's meeting structure could be a significant factor in why their meetings are more accessible and welcoming to women. In contrast to a structure that would limit who participates, the rotating structure of the meetings increases the likelihood of women's participation and their subsequent investment and involvement with this community.

Note that this is not a matter of innate relational gender differences but rather an effect of how social capital and social norms function to continue (passively) marginalizing women and other oppressed groups. Disrupting those traditional, hierarchical patterns through invitational practices, as Emerge Miami does, destabilizes institutionalized power structure and norms that favor those with more relative privilege by default. Non-hierarchical, decentralized power practices are not more inviting because women are inherently more consensus oriented[18], but because men's voices are more likely to be amplified in any space.[19] Thus to create invitational space for women requires intentional practices that create an opening for marginalized voices. Emerges invitational space and practices have produced an environment that is accessible to marginalized and underrepresented groups in cycling, specifically women in this case.

Aspects of Emerge that create invitational space include the shared repertoire seen through the linguistic practices evident at meetings. The aforementioned rotation of meeting responsibilities, which distributes authority, is one important aspect. Another is the way the floor is given to others during the course of a meeting. Aside from granting guests the right to speak first, all members who attended events under discussion are invited to express their thoughts on how

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[18] This is a common belief about women's problem solving preferences.
[19] See Rebeca Solnit's (2014) book, *Men Explain Things to Me*, a collection of essays on the topic of men's propensity when talking to women to assert expertise and talk with no regard for the woman's experience.

things went. This period is when the group evaluates past events, offering affirmation for what went well and constructive criticism for what could be done better. At each agenda item the participants involved in it are expected to provide updates on progress, check in, and ask for assistance. Although the meeting facilitator has more relative authority and access to the discursive space/floor, they use that authority to ensure equal access to the floor for peripheral and core members. Newcomers are also immediately invited to join the listserv back channel which is where day-to-day organizing occurs. These linguistics/discursive practices contribute to the creation of and reification of an invitational space.

These invitational practices and the resulting participation from them have had positive effects on members, both peripheral and core, who link these cycling specific benefits to their participation in Emerge. They have become more confident riders, feel safer and more in control, and now ride further distances. Perhaps most significantly, many interviewees became civically engaged through Emerge – with one member crediting his involvement with realizing that advocacy was part of his life's work.

Through the individual snapshot of the larger community provided by the interviews, these bike riders' experiences with community participation suggest how significant involvement (in any level) can be for a person, and particularly a woman, who rides a bike. In turn, the positive effects that involvement has on the local community are also evident, indicating that a fruitful reciprocal relationship exists between participants, a community group, and the larger community in which the group is situated. This has particular implications for women's involvement, suggesting that invitational practices lead to greater more sustained participation, not only with cycling but with their local community as well.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH AND SHORTCOMINGS

Further research is needed into how community practices affect involvement of underrepresented groups, such as women, and moreover the impact that involvement has on the constellation of communities that a single cycling community is embedded in. Comparative and long-term studies of a constellation of cycling communities could reveal insights into community participant configurations and how group practices and climate affect those. A clearer understanding of the role community plays in women's involvement could lead to new, more focused approaches to alleviating gender disparity in the activity of biking as well as in participation and identification with a bike affiliated community.

It is difficult from examining such a limited sample of people to determine how much self-selection plays a role in behavior. In other words, I cannot definitively state that involvement in Emerge makes a person more prone to civic engagement or if that person was of that bent already prior to seeking out involvement. Additionally, I chose to interview and focus on highly involved participants and/or dedicated cyclists, this undoubtedly has resulted in a limited perspective that doesn't fully account for peripheral participant perceptions. There are additional gaps as well that include limited certainty in terms of whether organizational practices are definitively linked to women's participation. Larger scale, mixed method research could continue expanding on, and testing, the preliminary claims made here in this chapter.

CONCLUSION

Originally developed as part of a larger project on learning as a social endeavor, the Communities of Practice approach enables us to understand the ways a community constitutes itself in action. This made CofP an ideal way of conceptualizing the Emerge Miami collective. It enabled a focus on the moving parts

(people) that comprise the collective and bring it to life, and it revealed the impact and significance of those practices on the collective and its participants.

Teasing apart the practices of Emerge illuminates and makes legible the experiences of individual participants, offering a path to interpreting how participation in this particular community affects people on an individual level. Greater confidence, increased knowledge, and civic engagement are all ways that Emerge Miami participation altered individual interactions with bicycling, the local environment, and the community at large. Of particular significance is the way these practices may result in greater participation from women, which could have far reaching effects into the cycling community and beyond.

CHAPTER FIVE: COMMUNITY AND DISCOURSE PRACTICES, IMPLICATIONS FOR ACCESS TO THE PUBLIC SPHERE

As I bring this project to a close, I have realized that one thread drawing these chapters together is the question of how to make the public sphere inviting to women. I was compelled to ask this question based on my experiences as woman in the public sphere and through conversations and observation of other women's experiences. Sally Haslanger (2012) talks about "critical theories arising out of social activism" and I want to go one step further and argue that with this project my understanding and development of theory was the result of a feminist perspective called into existence by necessity through my and other women's experiences of discrimination and "otherness".

In this thesis, I considered the question of women's access from multiple viewpoints – all through the lens of women who bicycle and their local bicycling community – looking at the public sphere in terms of discourse, public space, and local publics. All of these aspects intersected in my data Chapters Three and Four where I considered the effects of discursive and community practices' on women's engagement in the public sphere. The result of examining these different ways women who cycle experience and interact with the public sphere reveals that gender does shape how women move through public space and in their local publics; in this case we can see this shaping in Emerge Miami and in women's discursive framing of harassment on the streets of Miami. The women I interviewed expressed concern and fear over harassment threat and they altered their behavior in an attempt to avoid that possibility.

Additionally, I identified two main frames for harassment in discourse: normative and feminist. I observed that while women who subscribed to the normative frame tended to minimize harassment's effect and frequency and attributed harassment to personal behavior that women could control, women who

subscribed to the feminist frame for harassment in discourse saw harassment as a significant problem that affected their choices and those of other women. Moving from harassment to community practices and how they may impact the gender composition of a community, my observation of Emerge Miami and interviews with participants indicated that invitational, non-hierarchical community practices do likely have a positive correlation with women's involvement in the community.

The significance of Chapter Three's analysis of women's discourse around harassment and how they frame it illuminated the usefulness of applied a Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis to problems of social inequality and power asymmetry. Feminist Critical Discourse Analysis, coupled with micro-linguistic analysis of the significance of specific words and phrases and how they are used to amplify or minimize interviewer thoughts on harassment, provides insight into how speakers situate themselves in relation to harassment.

The interview transcripts clearly show that harassment is something women reflect on, and take steps to avoid using a variety of strategies that are usually centered on changing their personal behavior or altering their clothing choice. These avoidance strategies had mixed results, since harassment still occurred, although some women felt that the frequency was reduced. More importantly, though, their discourse indicated a sense that they needed to change their behaviors and orientations toward public mobility. It was also indicative of the double bind women find themselves in with regards to harassment; there is little recourse for women in preventing harassment, so personal, individual attempts at prevention predominated their discussion of harassment despite the dubious or limited efficacy of such strategies. Also, of significance was that women participated in both the normative and the feminist discourse frame, producing a more complex picture of how women contextualize, view, and experience harassment that needs further consideration to fully understand.

Viewing the community group Emerge Miami through the lens of Communities of Practice with an eye toward gender as a salient factor was illuminating. The practices of the community were unique and significant, especially when considered with other research on gender and inequality. The analysis indicated that a community's practices produce a climate that is invitational in nature, which is more conducive to encouraging marginalized groups, like women, to participate. Specifically of note were the practices around the structure of meetings, event planning and conception, and the way events and actions were conducted. Emerge's practices during mutual engagement reflected an intentional concern for inviting peripheral or new participants to engage in core activities, such as planning monthly rides or facilitating meetings. Communication practices were of special interest. Non-hierarchical communication practices at meetings were a hallmark of Emerge: core and peripheral members facilitated meetings, new-comers were invited to speak first, and care was taken to welcome new people into informal socializing after meetings.

Overall an ethos of care and attention to listening to all voices characterized Emerge Miami's practices; these choices and reification of such invitational practices and attitudes disrupts implicit social power dynamics which are gendered, making the group more accessible to women. These practices begin to "level the playing field" of the public sphere by reducing and removing barriers to access that women and other marginalized groups from fully participating in their local publics. Taken together, we can begin to see that women's mobility - that is access to the public sphere in terms of discourse and space - is deeply impacted by their gender. Inclusionary and invitational practices have a positive impact on women's ability to participate in their local publics (i.e. community). Meanwhile, experiences of harassment, such as sexualized evaluative judgments on their appearance, and the threat of violence curtail or alter women's travel habits. This has significance for both advocates and researchers. For advocates, this project points to the need for

comprehensive approaches to increasing gender equity in cycling and in transportation choices more broadly, and provides the beginnings of solutions in communities through a thorough examination of a community of practice.

IMPLEMENTATION

In Chapter One I talk about my stance as a researcher and an activist, and how integral making this project accessible to and available to my community is integral to my work. I will be taking what I have learned through this thesis about the Miami cycling community and female cyclist's experiences to write a report that includes recommendations for best practices for organizations that want to create an invitational atmosphere for women. Additionally, I will provide a summary of what I have discovered about harassment frames and how the threat of harassment impacts women. In conjunction with the summary I will make recommendations of possible steps the local cycling community and government can take to begin changing the climate of public space for women, to one where the threat of harassment is no longer an issue.

I will also be returning to this community after graduation and I will be active as an advocate through Emerge Miami again. This; this will provide additional opportunities to implement what I have found through my research on women and the public sphere. I will have access to public officials and the ability to work with others who care about women's equal access to the public sphere being equal to that of a man's. This means that the possibilities for implementation are endless – especially as others adopt my work for their own purposes, hopefully building on it and adding to our knowledge of women's access to the public sphere and practices that will have a positive impact on it.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This project barely brushed the surface of looking at the intersection of mobility and gender through community practices and harassment frames; there is much more work to be done. A few areas that were underdeveloped or beyond the scope of this project are included below in my recommendations for others interested in pursuing this as a topic of study.

My initial project proposal included an anonymous survey for Miamians who were part of the cycling community that would have added important quantitative information about cycling habits and everyday experiences of cyclists, but, because of time and length constraints, that portion of my project was dropped. I was also not able to pursue a more long-term study that would have included more in-depth observation, cross-group and cross-gender comparisons of experience, and additional interviews.

Including Quantitative Data with Qualitative Data

Future research can be done that takes this qualitative analysis further by combining quantitative and qualitative techniques to observe and document a more long-term study of women's cycling mobility. The effect of a community's practices in relation to gender dynamics and composition, especially by comparing them to similar communities could also be examined. Also, including additional points of comparison such as gender, sexual orientation, income, etc. would provide a more accurate analysis of participant choices and constraints.

Quantitative data could be beneficial in illuminating the significance of how harassment is framed in discourse by combining quantitative data on the frequency and magnitude of harassment women (and men) experience with qualitative interviews. Quantitative information on harassment, coupled with a focus on how women and men frame harassment in discourse may provide insight into what affects men's and women's uptake of messages on harassment and on how they

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respond to harassment. Additionally, it could provide important insights into relationships between frequency, framing and impact of harassment in terms of psychological resilience and response. Cross-gender comparisons of harassment framing in discourse and frequency and magnitude of harassment experienced could also reveal important relationships between experience and perception framed through discourse.

Additional Comparison Points

Examining Emerge Miami as a Community of Practice in relation to other communities would strengthen knowledge on how practices affect initial group participation and membership, as well as how those practices influence retention. Future research on community practices would benefit from looking at multiple interrelated communities simultaneously so they can be compared effectively. This would make claims of the relationship between specific practices and gender balance or imbalance stronger, and it would provide a more full account of the constellation of communities that a singular Community of Practice is embedded within.

Cross-gender analysis of participants in multiple communities would also aid in better understanding how community practices and gender are related to involvement in local publics. For example, interviews, surveys, and observation of men and women in their respective communities would provide more definitive information on gender distribution in relation to different communities and whether those communities implicitly or explicitly attract or rebuff potential members based on gender.

Another lack, only briefly touched on above, in this project is considering additional variables to participant experiences, such as race, sexuality, and socio-economic status. It is almost a certainty that these factors, in addition to gender, do influence participant involvement and decisions about which communities

participants choose for core or peripheral membership. These factors also influence how, when, and with what frequency harassment occurs. Research shows that visibly queer and people of color (POC) experience unique forms of harassment and that harassment is more frequent for female POC than it is for white women (Stop Street Harassment, 2014). Including additional salient variables of sexuality, race, and socioeconomic status will provide more nuanced insight into both harassment and community practices and their relation to gender.

Long-term Study

When considering an issue as broad and far reaching as women's access to the public sphere, even when narrowed to cycling, a long-term study is desirable. Looking at a constellation of cycling communities for an extended period of time would allow for more rigorous assessment of how practices influence participation in the long-term and whether groups shift practices over time and how that is done. A long-term study on the harassment experienced by cyclists would deepen and broaden knowledge of different forms of harassment, whether harassment changes frequency based on time of year, how it impacts cyclists over time, and how frames of harassment influence those experiencing harassment.

CONCLUSION

This project points to the importance of considering how riding a bike is a gendered experience, and how community and discursive practices affect women's participation and access to public space on their bicycle and in the local public of their cycling communities. Harassment was a factor women had to consider on a daily basis and women did not frame harassment in discourse in monolithic ways, rather, there were two main ways of framing harassment that either minimized or dismissed harassing experiences or emphasized and validated that harassment was a significant and negative experience. Additionally, this project created a blueprint of

the community collective, Emerge Miami, as a Community of Practice and pointed to the significance of community practices that are invitational and non-hierarchical in terms of developing a local public that is hospitable to women.

Overall, work on the subject of how women's gender affects their ability to freely access the public sphere would benefit from more multi-pronged approaches that consider not only infrastructure concerns but also how entry to and participation in local publics (i.e. community) is different for women. I am hopeful that my work on two areas of the public sphere in relation to cycling: women's discursive practices and community participation, will contribute to further the work of others and lead to increased access for women to the public sphere at every point of entry.

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APPENDIX A: SOLICITATION DOCUMENTS

This appendix contains sample copies of email and Facebook posts that I sent out in an effort to obtain interviewees. Below is a copy of the text of an email sent to the Emerge Miami listserv to solicit interviewees. Additionally is sample text used in Facebook posts I made on my personal Facebook page as well as cycling related Facebook pages in Miami, the sample text underwent minimal modifications to make it appropriate for different Facebook pages.

EMAIL TEXT

"Dear Emergers both known and unknown to me,

Last year when I began my graduate program I did not imagine that bicycling would factor into it at all; well, I was wrong. Now my research for my masters will be located in this very community. I am working on how community affects women's participation in cycling and how women and men perceive and interact with their cycling communities; to do this I'm taking a more local approach by looking at Miami. I have spoken to some of you about this project over the last few months but now I want to open this up to everyone on the listserv because I plan to observe Emerge this summer in order to better understand it as a community and an organization.

I have been a part of Emerge since 2010 when I moved to Miami and slowly developed a home in this group. As I became more a part of Emerge it became clear how hard this group works at supporting community and being open and welcoming to everyone. When I began to think about studying cycling during my first year of graduate school, I wasn't sure how to tackle it. I knew that fewer women were cyclists but I didn't want to only add to the research demonstrating that that was the case. Then I started to consider the organizations I was a part of in Miami that

involve cycling, and Emerge immediately came to me. Slowly over the course of the spring I began to develop a plan for my research (one I am sure will evolve, as research plans often do) - I wanted to look at an organization that did involve women at its core and see how community played into women's participation in cycling. As some of you know, this is why I chose Emerge. The goal of my observations is to build a profile of sorts through observing meetings and events Emerge puts on and is involved with; my hope is that this profile will be useful to our community (and others) in developing organizations and practices that welcome women (and other underrepresented groups) into cycling.

In addition to observing Emerge as a group, I hope to interview as many of you as are interested in speaking with me (men and women) about your experience with cycling and with cycling communities in Miami. Individual interviews will allow me to begin creating a picture of what cycling in Miami is like and what being in cycling communit(ies) here is like as well.

Once my thesis is completed (at the end of May next year) I will make my results available to anyone interested in them. I am hopeful that this project will enable Emerge and other groups and individuals to have a better understanding of the cycling climate here so that we can continue to improve our city and our respective communities.

I will be speaking about this more at the meeting tonight, but until then feel free to email me with any questions or if you are interested in being interviewed!

Sincerely,

Elsa"

FACEBOOK POST TEXT

"I'm currently working on a research project trying to better understand women's and men's cycling experience in Miami. If you are interested please fill out my survey. The results will be used to develop a better understanding of cyclists' everyday experience which can be used for advocacy and academic purposes. (Also, I am a cyclist in Miami, but am currently away in graduate school). "

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In the 16 interviews conducted I asked variants on the three main questions below as well as related follow-up questions. The questions were asked sequentially, as they appear below, during interviews.

1. When did you begin cycling?
    a. And if you began as a child, did you stop and start again as an adult? And if so, when and why?
2. What is your everyday cycling experience?
    a. What kinds of interactions do you have with your environment and people you pass?
    b. Do you feel that your gender impacts these interactions?
3. Does the cycling community play and important role for you? If it does, why?