# Curry in Surrey: Living with 'my' people

## A Study of Migrant Communities of Practice in a British Bank

Amrita Ramanath
Lancaster University Management School
Email: a.ramanath@lancaster.ac.uk

and

Steve Fox
School of Management,
Faculty of Business,
University of Technology, Sydney.

*This is the first of two papers where we report from an ethnographic study of two communities of practice formed by Indian migrant bankers in the UK. The two major findings which emerged from fieldwork were that one; the Indian bankers consciously exclude 'White' co-workers from the communities of practice as a consequence of personal experiences with racism, experienced either personally or vicariously. Two, the communities of practice are gendered i.e. the male members convey expectations of appropriate behaviours for women, and withhold resources, ensuring that female co-workers remain 'legitimately peripheral' members.*

*Due to the complexity and sizable volume of data, we present the first here, in the form of two narratives. One of the authors (who is Indian) spent eight days living at the home of the bankers and engaging in routine activities with them. The narratives that emerged in talk, whilst engaged in mundane activities with participants, for instance, cooking dinner or waiting for a bus, are interlaced with words from English and Hindi and references to popular culture. Such data was interpretable by the researcher; the commonality of race, citizenship, language and culture with the researcher, afforded her 'insider' status. We argue that this insider status allowed for an intersubjectivity, which gives us a deep and multi-faceted insight into migrants' lives.*

# Introduction

'Communities of practice' (henceforth known as CoP) has become an approach to understanding learning and knowledge management in the workplace. The term and approach first appeared in Lave and Wenger (1991) as a new way of characterising a form of situated learning amongst five

apprenticeships; Yucatec Mayan midwives in Mexico, Vai and Gola tailors in Liberia, US navy quartermasters, butchers in US supermarkets and non-drinking alcoholics.. The social diversity of these studies has to some extent faded into the background as the approach has been developed and promoted as a way of analysing and cultivating organizational learning (Wenger & Snyder, 2000, Wenger, 1998).

In this paper, we report from an ethnographic study of migrant Indian bankers that demonstrates the socially diverse character of two CoPs. Since community of practice theory has also been criticised for its lack of attention to power in such 'communities' (Contu & Willmott, 2003; Fox, 2000; Hughes, 2007), we pay particular attention to the social diversity of communities of practice in the bank in ways that will focus on issues of race (and gender).

We argue that these issues of race and gender, and our method and analysis are important not only in our study, but in organization studies in general. Communities of practice can emerge anywhere, and have implications for performance, employee relations and human resources departments.

This paper will proceed in the following way. First, we briefly introduce the CoP approach as it forms the basis of our work. Then we describe the background of our study so as to have a clear context before moving on to describe the methodology and data collection. We will present two narratives which demonstrate our findings, demonstrating that insider status allowed the researcher to understand nuances that outsiders or non-natives would be hard-pressed to do. The narratives have been presented here in their original form (with translations) to reflect the vibrancy of the data and preserve the authenticity of the participants' experiences. Finally, we conclude with two main points; one, that in some cases, race is a crucial factor in the creation and maintenance of CoPs, which has implications for migrants' experiences of a host country. Two, the insider status that the researcher was accorded, by virtue of being Indian like the migrant bankers, allowed us access to

data that an outsider would be hard-pressed to find. As Hammersely and Atkinson (1983) suggest, in ethnography, the researcher is the research instrument par excellence.

## *Communities of Practice*

Lave and Wenger (1991) refrain from a strict definition of the term 'CoP', saying that the concept 'is left largely as an intuitive notion' (p.42) adding that:

*'A community of practice is a set of relations among persons, activity, and world, over time and in relation with other tangential and overlapping communities of practice. A community of practice is an intrinsic condition for the existence of knowledge, not least because it provides the interpretive support necessary for making sense of its heritage.'* (p. 98)

Fuller (2007) considers this definition to be insufficient, giving '...others the latitude to use the concept flexibly' (p.20), adding that the authors focus on 'temporal delineation' which makes the concept difficult to put into practice and study. To remedy this, Wenger (1998)  proposed that while , 'a community of practice need not be reified as such in the discourse of its participants' (p.125), there are certain characteristics which help identity a CoP, such as local lore and inside jokes  which can be categorized into three dimensions; mutual engagement, joint enterprise and a shared repertoire. CoPs are different, moreover, from formal work groups, teams or informal networks (see Wenger and Snyder, 2000). Based on Wenger's (1998) dimensions, which we applied to the participants, we can conclude that the group being studied is in fact a CoP and not an informal network.[1]

Once articulated as an approach for understanding socially situated learning practices, the concepts relating to communities of practice were quickly incorporated into other forms of

---

[1] For the sake of brevity, we do not discuss this in the paper, but we will briefly discuss it in the presentation.

theorising, for example, on 'organizational learning' where claims were made that communities of practice could help the process of innovation and add to our understanding of work (J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1991). In the process, new distinctions were added to the approach, such as that between canonical and non-canonical communities of practice (Brown and Duguid, 1991), i.e. ones that are official and ones that are unofficial. This strand of theory development pursued the idea that communities of practice existed naturally and independently of the formal organization yet within the organization often in interstitial and invisible spaces between formal units and departments. Brown and Duguid also claimed that these non-canonical communities of practice could be found, harnessed and developed to become functionally useful in managing innovation and knowledge management. Wenger et al (2000), for example, compiled data indicating how organizations such as Shell, Hewlett-Packard, IBM and Daimler Chrysler have successfully incorporated CoPs into the organization, keeping in line with company strategy. The CoPs we study are non-canonical and informal, much like the photocopy technicians in Orr's (1987, 1990; 1996) study. As we will see, they flourish and thrive, even with the lack of support and encouragement from the organization.

## *Background Information about the Field Site: Why, Where, Who and How?*

The idea of this research project has its roots in the simple curiosity about the work lives of Indian migrant bankers in the UK. The researcher had often heard anecdotes about the world of banking from friends, particularly, Ali[2], who worked at a global banking and financial services company, International Assets[3], in Rubyshire in Surrey.

---

[2] For the sake of confidentiality, all participants have been anonymized and pseudonyms used.
[3] For the sake of confidentiality, the name of the bank, city and borough where participants live, have been changed.

The researcher and Ali had studied at the same University in Mumbai (albeit different courses), were good friends, and part of a small cohort that left, after graduation, to study in the UK. Whilst in the UK, they kept in touch briefly; especially when the researcher worked in a bank.

As a consequence of a personal reference from Ali to the bank manager, I had permission to observe and interview employees at a single branch in Surrey. Additionally, I was invited to stay with Ali who shared a large house with four friends (all Indian migrant bankers) in Garford, in Surrey.

At first, the acceptance of the invitation was purely to reduce the inconvenience of travelling to Surrey on the tube, train and bus from potential lodgings in Central London, plodding to Garford after work, and then trudging back to Central London at night; the time, money and effort spent on such endeavours would have been considerable. What the acceptance of lodgings allowed me to do was immerse myself in the lives of these migrants, live like they do, shop for groceries with them, go to and fro work and gain an understanding of their world.

## *Sub Communities of Practice and Data Collection:*

There were in practice, a constellation of CoPs that the participants belong to. As Wenger (1998) noted, an individual can 'participate in multiple communities of practice at once' (p. 105), creating what he called a 'constellation of practice' (p. 127). The researcher primarily interacted with two CoPs, one each in Garford and in Rubyshire.

In Garford, there were five men - Ali, Anu, Mohit, Raj and Sahil - they initially came to England to pursue an MBA, stayed on for work and ended up working for different banks (Ali, Mohit and Raj work for International Assets, at different branches whilst Anu and Sahil work at different branches for Union Bank). These five bankers are members of a CoP which they formed as banking colleagues

first, and now, they are also housemates. They are also members of CoPs that they have formed with work colleagues; for instance, Ali works at the Rubyshire branch in Rubyshire, and this CoP comprising of six colleagues, was investigated.

In Rubyshire, there were twenty employees; twelve men and ten women (including Maya, the branch manager), of which six individuals belong to minority groups i.e. three men are Indian, Ali, Adi and Kunal, three women are British Indian, Maya, Neha and Fatima and one woman, Sheri, is British-African. Five of these (with the exclusion of Maya) comprise the second CoP investigated.

## *Methodology*

In this paper, we draw on ethnography as a methodology where ethnography is the '…written representation of a culture (or selected aspects of a culture' (Van Maanen, 1988, p.1).

Today, not only is ethnography a popular method in social sciences and the arts, it has also found its way into management and business studies. In the management literature, ethnographers have investigated typical workplace situations (See Hodson, 2004), and occupations ranging from doctors and lawyers (Becker, 1961; Granfield, 1992 respectively) to bouncers (Calvey, 2000), cooks (Fine, 1996) to factory workers (Halle, 1984), the police force (Manning, 2001) to bank middle managers (Smith, 1990) and from a military unit (Sullivan et al., 1958) to barbers (Wright & Calhoun, 2001). Hodson (2004), having meta-analysed 149 workplace ethnographies, concluded that, 'workplace ethnographies have generated many insights about the different work life experiences of men and women and majority and minority workers' (p. 7) as it allows researchers to study organizations across different levels in the hierarchy and does '…a better job of capturing actual behaviours than surveys, which rely on self-reports that may differ significantly from actual events' (p.21).

Moreover, it is not uncommon in recent times, in management studies, for ethnographers to study what is familiar, rather than an unknown group. Authors such as Vickers and Fox (2010), Ali (1993, 1995), Bodur and Cavasgil (1985), Hayashi (1988), Karra et al (2006),  Kondo (1990)and Puwar (2004), amongst others, carried out their ethnographic investigations as locals, in their own locale. Ethnography is well suited to the study of CoPs (J.  Orr, 1987, 1990; 1996; Vickers & Fox, 2010) as the methods 'encourage sensitivity to the 'lived experience' of those who are being studied' (Brannan, 2007, p. 120).

### *"Insider" Status*

Following Alvesson (2003) our approach is a variation on self-ethnographic research, which refers to a situation where 'the researcher-author describes a cultural setting to which s/he has a "natural access", is an active participant, more or less on equal terms with other participants. The researcher then works and or lives in the setting and then uses the experiences, knowledge and access to empirical material for research purposes' (Alvesson, 2003, p. 174). In our case, whether or not the researcher had natural access is arguable; an acquaintanceship with Ali did not warrant unrestricted access to his home to observe the residents.

Alvesson (2003) construes a situation where research is not the main focus; 'participation comes first but is only occasionally complemented with observation in a research focused sense' (p. 174). However, he acknowledges that there may be versions of self-ethnography where the researcher is oriented primarily to studying the research setting through participant observation. This is the case in our study.

Additionally, he states that '...the idea of self –ethnography is to utilize the position one is in for other, secondary purposes, i.e. doing research on the setting of which one is a part', and '...to carry

out cultural analysis, not introspection'(p. 175). Whilst we acknowledge that the researcher was not naturally a part of the setting, she did capitalize on her position as Ali's friend, a position that helped her gain access to the bank, to Ali's friends and to accommodation in his house. Moreover, the authors were interested in how migrants negotiate meaning in a CoP in a foreign country.

Whilst Alvesson considers that home-culture-ethnography or insider ethnography may be alternative terms for self-ethnography, others such as (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007) characterize insider research as research where the researcher is 'native' and as such, has full membership.

However, we maintain that our research has characteristics of self-ethnography and that sharing a linguistic, cultural and national identity offered the researcher the status of 'insider'. We contend that this worked as an advantage, because as Aguilar (1981)found, an 'insider' has the advantage of being similar to the participants, and hence may find it easier to blend in, establish a rapport, be more attuned to cultural nuances and better able to draw from personal experience. The insider status was accorded primarily due to the friendship with Ali that was based on a shared history.

Using the CoP approach, we maintain that the researcher was a legitimate peripheral participant in the group. Lave and Wenger's (1991) concept of LPP arose from their investigation of apprenticeship, and considers how members are initiated into a CoP. They propose that 'learners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community' (p.29). The idea is that members in a CoP move from legitimate peripheral participation to full participation as their skills improve and they develop expertise. Members, who participate fully and are experts in their field, have more power than new members situated in the periphery.

The researcher had 'legitimacy' by virtue of being a trusted friend of one of the full members of the both CoPs being studied (Ali), enhanced by the fact of sharing a cultural identity. The 'peripherality' was because she was a new member (and new members initially remain on the

fringes); her background in banking gave her a position on the periphery and she was well versed with financial terminology, both in Hindi and English. For this study, she would remain on the periphery, as one cannot become a full legitimate member without being a personal banker.

Further, we argue that as an insider, who shared a cultural, linguistic and national identity with the participants, the researcher was more attuned to nuances of language and gestures than a non-Indian would be, allowing for a rich representation of the lives of migrant bankers. Such ethnographic data yielded, to borrow from Geertz (1973) a 'thick description' which is influenced by culture (a term he borrows from Ryle, 1949). We will say more about this in the Discussion section.

## *Methods of Data Collection*

Participant observation was the main method of data collection. In the course of the eight days, the researcher simultaneously occupied several roles. She was, in both Garford and Rubyshire (i) an ethnographer interested in investigating workplace dynamics and the CoPs, (ii) a legitimate peripheral member being taught the norms of the CoPs, (iii) a friend of Ali, and (iv), in Garford, she was also a housemate.

Hammersely and Atkinson (1983) acknowledge that though the ethnographer may take on several roles in the course of fieldwork, he/she should occupy a 'more or less marginal position' (1983, p. 100). The very fact of taking on several roles often put the researcher in a central position, especially when she was in the house in Garford.

For example, when physically making banana pancakes that none of them had ever eaten, they stood around me, watching the researcher, waiting to eat them hot from the pan. Whilst this put her

in a more or less central role, it also afforded the opportunity to talk about, for instance, women's roles at home, work, and in their CoP. Thus, the researcher capitalized on the situation she was in, to have meaningful conversations with participants.

Another conversation inadvertently occurred during the evening, when the five men, in Garford, decided to go to the park five minutes from their house, to play cricket. The researcher sportingly joined in (having played innumerable times in her childhood). Throughout the game, the men bantered with each other and the researcher, and the debate about who invented cricket (made popular since the film, Lagaan, about British India, when the two factions compete in a game of cricket) began, leading to a heated discussion about British people, their values and work styles in contrast to Indians.

As regards the recording of material, some conversations were recorded, others noted down in a field journal, depending on the situation. Additionally, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with individuals and CoPs as whole groups.

## *Daily Routine*

My routine consisted of waking up, helping with breakfast in the house, and going to Rubyshire with Ali. I conducted semi-structured interviews, shadowed and observed the participants whenever possible, or simply sat in the reception area, watching the bankers interact with each other and with clients. I made copious notes in shorthand.

We would return to Garford by 6pm, and then begin making dinner; usually rice with vegetables and a meat-based curry. Usually, Mohit cooked, acknowledged as he was, as the best cook! Ali helped out with chopping. The others lounged on chairs in the backyard, guzzling beers and smoking

a hookah or shisha as it is known in the UK. The kitchen opened out into the backyard, allowing me to chat with everyone, whether I was helping in the kitchen or sitting outside.

A lot of conversations about women, racism, co-workers and bosses took place at these times, when the men were relaxed after work. They swapped stories from the day, reminisced about Indian food, films and women, sang Bollywood songs and made silly jokes. I noted these whenever I could in shorthand; chopping chillies whilst making sure the curry didn't boil over didn't always allow for note-taking, which as I will discuss later, was one of the disadvantages of being treated as one of the group.

Conversations at work and in the house took place primarily in English and Hindi, with the occasional smattering of Marathi. They were peppered with references to popular culture, as will be noted in the excerpts below.

## *Use of the data*

This paper uses as data, the narratives and stories which arose effortlessly during conversations with the participants.

Brown et al (2009) staunchly argue that,

'*There are, in particular, no hard and fast rules for distinguishing between stories and narratives or storytelling and narrativisation. Nor is there consensus on how stories and narratives may be distinguished from definitions, proverbs, myths, chronologies and other forms of oral and written texts*' (p.324).

Boje(2001) describes narratives as 'something that is related i.e. 'story'; where a story is an account of incidents or events, but narrative comes after and adds 'plot' and 'coherence' to the story line' (p. 1). This is the definition we adhere to.

Narratives have been used in research in different ways. According to Rhodes and Brown (2005) narratives are perceived as data(Mitroff & Kilmann, 1978) , a theoretical lens (Pentland, 1999), a methodological approach(Boje, 2001) or a blend of all these. Narrative research may be conducted in various ways (See Brunt, 2001; C. K. Riessman, 1993, 2003) and narrative analysis can involve a line-by-line analyses of transcriptions used by researchers like Boje (1991a, 1991b), Fraser (2004), Georgakopoulou (2006) and Stubbs (1983) among others or thematic analysis like Clark (1972) , Martin et al (1983), Orr (1987, 1990) and more recently, by women ethnographers such as Etter-Lewis(1991) and Mavin (2006a, 2006b) to study gender.

Narrative analysis may be conducted in various ways (See Riessman, 2008). Our analysis is thematic, much like Orr's (1987, 1990, 1996). He demonstrated the practices of the photocopier technicians by presenting stories that he terms as 'war stories' i.e. stories that are archetypal, repetitive, boring but tolerated. The participants in our study narrated similar kinds of stories, explicitly stating that these are 'ekdam classic' i.e. really classic, or legendary (much like technicians in Orr's study). This validates Boje's (1991) claim that narratives are a form of communication used to describe past, present and future events, failures and triumphs.

What we found most often were what we term 'group narratives' where a member began a story which triggered another to add or modify a detail, and then another would chip in, creating a story where a part had been contributed by each member.  Classic stories were usually recounted as group narratives.

Since these narratives were abounding with personal opinions and characteristics, and fit in beautifully with the discussions, I have used them here in their original style. They not only enlighten us about participants' experiences, but animate their arguments.

## Narratives and Discussion

Observation and interviews (both individual and group) indicated that the two groups we studied were, indeed, two individual CoPs. Our main findings that have been categorized into two main themes, raced practices, and gendered practices.

We will present here two narratives that demonstrate the first finding i.e. Indian migrants create CoPs, consciously excluding members who are White-British, because of their personal or vicarious experiences of discrimination. Each narrative will be followed by a brief explanation of the words and terms used in the narrative, and then both will be discussed together.

### A Race Perspective on CoPs: If you're Indian, you're in!

***Experience with racism:***

The members of the CoPs confessed to me, at some point or the other, they couldn't completely trust a *firangi* (i.e. a pejorative term commonly used in India to denote anyone who is 'White') due to their experiences of racism, personal and vicarious. They recounted to me what they call ' ekdam classic' stories, known to all members and narrated by the group.

One evening, the five men and the researcher were seated in the backyard on folding chairs. It was a balmy evening, with little breeze. The men were in shorts, t-shirts and flip flops. They each had a beer, the researcher had a glass of juice, her note-book tucked in the side of her chair; it was usually within grabbing distance.

She casually mentioned that she would enjoy working in the sun, in the backyard, if she had one.

Researcher:  *'I would love to have a backyard like this…read in the sunshine. Ghar jaise'* (like home)

Ali:  *'Dhoop mein?* (In the sun?) [He laughs] *You wouldn't sit too long coz' then you'd complain you're going to tan! You have to be fair and lovely!'*

Researcher:  *'Hmpff! I don't use it! I wouldn't use that! Hmmm, but I'd sit in the shade, or in the sun with an umbrella! Hmmm, but it's the temperature, you know? I miss the sun! Here, it feels like a nice summer day, some nimboo pani* (lemonade)*, my books…God, I miss the weather*!'

Anu:  *'And I miss my life. India yaar, it's the best.'*

Ali:  *'It's getting better, na? Job hai, ghar hai, hum hain…ladki bhi milegi. Don't worry yaar*! (It's getting better, isn't it? You have a job, a house, us…you'll get a girl too. Don't worry mate)

Anu:  *'Ladki? Nahi re baba, ladki matlab trouble!'* (A girl? No way, a girl means trouble)

Researcher:  *'Hey! We're not that bad*!'

Sahil:  [raising his beer] '*I know…but right now, Anu's off women'*

Anu downed his beer and reached for another.

Mohit:  *'Aaramse yaar…'* (Slowly mate)

The researcher raised her right hand in the 'alapadma' gesture, usually meant as a questioning gesture. Anu was concentrated on inhaling from the pipe.

Ali:  *'Arey…I'd told you, na, about that Lithuanian chick…'*

Anu:  *'I lost my job because of her. He* [pointing to Ali] *lost his job!'*

Sahil:  *'It's not about her! It's the firangs! They just want to prove we're not good enough. They always try to fool me with wrong advice. Uloo banate hai!* (They make a fool out of us). *They will say 'haan haan* (Yes yes) *come, we can talk' and then* [gesture of shooting oneself in the head] *Stab me! You know what Joe did, right?*

[Turning to the researcher])*To Ali? And Anu?'*

Anu:     [Sighing] '*Haan haan, bol de'* (Yes, yes, tell it (the story)).

Ali:      '*Yaad hai, Anu ki girlfriend? Arey, they were together for 2 years, they were living together. She was working in some hotel as a waitress, studying part-time…Anu paid for everything, yaar! The rent, bills, her phone…even clothes and make up! But she was sweet, na.. I've seen Anu around the campus, they were a cute couple. I didn't know his name, but you know, sab Indian log hi bolte hai*!' (All Indians say hello (to each other)).

Researcher:   'Yeah, *how are you, bye!'*

Ali:      '*Arey, they were going to get married. She had some visa problems…Anu ne bola who sab kuch sambhal lega* (Anu said he would sort everything out) *and then one day she left, yaar. Just disappeared. Wallet, cards, laptop, IPod, Blackberry. Rolex bhi*! (Even the Rolex!)'

Researcher:   '*Phir?'* (Then?)

Mohit:    '*Phir kya?* (Then what?) *No money, depression, lots of beer! Dost, dost na raha…'* (Friends aren't friends anymore…)

This whole time, Anu was alternatively sipping his beer, and inhaling the hookah, expressionless. Suddenly, he said.

Anu:     '*Everyone helped me. My friends, family, even guys that didn't know me. Man, that's India for you. Sab bhai-bhai.'* (Everyone's 'brother-brother' literally)

Ali took up the thread again, and the pipe that Anu passed him.

Ali:      '*I was offered a position in June 2007.  Anu joined in July 2007. I didn't know him well. I just knew his love-life situation. After the credit check was done, Joe, my superior asked me if I knew a man called Anu, to whom I had loaned £2000 and who worked here. I was so surprised! I admitted that I knew him vaguely, and as far as I was aware, he was in Cardiff.'* (He puffed three times)

Anu:     '*And then they grilled me na! Wanted to know what that money was for…Like I wanted to tell them that my girlfriend stole everything she could, dumped me and ran away! Chudel!*

Ali:      [Angrily, his voice rising] '*They thought we might have been involved in terrorist attacks. Apparently we are dangerous. Because I loaned him 5 chips'*

The other three in the room moved their heads.

Anu:     '*Did they have any proof? No!'*

Ali:      '*They made me feel like s***'*

Anu:     '*We were made to clear out our desks that very afternoon.'*

| | |
|---|---|
| Mohit: | *'Tell her what Joe said.'* |
| Ali: | *'Oh yea...that anyone who isn't White is untrustworthy, and might be working for Al-Qaeda. How narrow minded and stupid can you be? Paagal firangi!* (Mad foreigner!)' |
| Ali: | *'Arey yaar, ghar jaanewale thay'* (We were going to go home) |
| Anu: | *'Mohit convinced us to stay na. And I've just blotted that time out in my CV. Jobcentre suggested that to Ali and me. I like my job; I just don't want to mix with the people. I'm still so angry.'* |
| Ali: | *'Yeah, that was bad. Really bad. It took me a while to find a job again; I had to work in a bar for 7 months. Having a gap like that on your CV, it's just not good. Career suicide!'* |
| Raj: | *'Man, I hear this and remind myself to be careful. Not to tell anyone about my life, just keep my head down and work.'* |
| Sahil: | *'You bet. I don't want to end up like those two did.'* |
| Mohit | *'I've always had a great work life, like my bosses and the people are not bad. But seeing these two…I just work and come home. Simpler that way… better to be careful…'* |

### *Discussion of Narrative 1*

The narrative, which rose spontaneously during a lazy evening in the sun gives us an insight about how Indian migrants communicate amongst themselves and feel about the British people, based on their individual experiences or their friends'.

On a linguistic level, we can see how the rhythm of talk incorporates English and Hindi and the influence of popular culture. We will mention these in sequence, as they appear in the narrative.

For instance, words such as 'firang' or 'firangi' (a derogatory term for a White person), 'yaar' (meaning friend, literally), 'na' (a much used syllable in Hindi, used at the end of a statement to mean 'isn't it?' or for emphasis) and 'bhai bhai' (meaning 'brother-brother' literally, to denote close

male friendship) are common in speech, used by people from all classes, across the country. Other words, such as 'chips' are more localised, tended to be used by the higher classes in Mumbai in reference to money, while 'chudel' is a very offensive term, used primarily in the north, meaning 'witch' – Anu is from North India).

There is also the use of 'Hi, how are you, bye' - a standard monologue used in conversational speech and popular culture in the way of enforced politeness i.e. a greeting, formality and a goodbye. It will also feature in the next narrative, used by Neha, who is British Indian, and obviously well versed with colloquial phrases, used by Indians.

With regards to references from the media, Fair and Lovely refers to a leading skin-lightening cream, whose sales have been increasing in India every year. In 2010, the company, Hindustan Unilever Ltd even launched a product range for men. Indians are very concerned about their skin, and the 'Fair and Lovely' adverts proliferate in the media. Women, who are fair, or concerned about their skin, are referred to as 'fair and lovely' in popular culture.

'Dost-Dost na raha' is the first line of a very popular song from the ----, which continues with 'pyaar pyaar na raha' i.e. friends don't remain, neither does love. The song, featured on ------, is sung even today, during break ups.

Finally, we have two common gestures which occur in daily parlance.

One, is the head shake, though bobbled might be a better term. This gesture is a classic Indian one, often misread and misinterpreted by non-Indians; it is neither a nod nor a shake, and often confuses! It can mean agreement, or disagreement, or neither, merely acknowledgement, but the differences are imperceptible to the untrained eye. What it meant in the narrative was silent agreement.

Then, we have the alapadma gesture; the palm is bent to the right, fingers fanning out. It is common in the classical dance, Bharatnatyam, and used to denote great beauty. In common speech, it is used as a questioning gesture.

### Narrative 2: How Indians perceive themselves and 'firang' co-workers

Negative experiences with British colleagues seem to have set a precedent; the Indians made quick assumptions about an English person's work style and work ethics because of his/her ethnic origin. Besides, these experiences exacerbated differences between Indians and the English, in that the members favourably evaluated their own work styles whilst repeatedly demeaning that of the latter.

For example, in Rubyshire, the researcher had been introduced to all the members and was sitting in Adi's office. She mentioned that he had a nice view, overlooking the park, and he laughed.

Adi:  '*Nice view, nice salary, idiot firang colleagues*'.
The researcher raised an eyebrow questioningly.

Adi:  '*I don't like the people. I'm the only Indian, and they always make fun of us. All of us here. It was funny at first, but when I tried to make fun of them, you know, all firangs are so selfish about work and all, they were 'Wow mate, shut up and be grateful you have a job in our country. B\*\*\*\*\*\*\*!*'

Ali:  '*Oh I hear that, man…a lot.*'

Sheri:  *I've had so many interviews where they've been, like…openly racist. I'm British, I've been born here but I'm not White! And that's reason enough to like…not give me a job?*

Adi:  'And t*hey make jokes all the time. These firangis are so sensitive about being individualistic, but we are supposed to laugh when they say we come from a collectivist country, whatever…..We know how to work in a group, it's in our blood. Not individualistic people like here. Eh? And they don't understand it, but don't be mean…*'

Kunal:  [bobbing his head] '*It's ingrained in us! To share, to help...But they forget about developing and creating a relationship to build trust (*rolls his eyes*) and it's easy for us*

*to do that with customers. We're Indian.'*

As if on cue, they chanted, '*All Indians are my brothers and sisters*' – (laughing)

Ali:       '*Yaanchashi nishtha rakhnyachi mee pratigya kareet aahe'*

          (Marathi: to my country and my people, I pledge my devotion)

Laughing continues.

Sahil:      '*Yaad hai, jab tera goals ka chakkar tha*?'

          (Remember, when you had a problem with your goals?)

Fatima:     'Oh, that was fun!' [sarcastic tone]

Ali:       '*Pooch math*! [ looking at the researcher]  *Arey, I took some chutti when I was sick, and realized that I wouldn't meet my goal. Maya pagal ho gayi*! *She's obsessed with having a branch that meets all the goals. Tho maine Fatima ko bola and she offered her customers to me. I didn't want to take it, but it was close to appraisals and Maya doesn't care about anything but monthly goals. Maine le liya aur* sab theek ho gaya!

          (Don't ask (looking at the researcher).

          You know, I took some holidays when I was sick, and realized that I wouldn't meet my goal. Maya went mad. She's obsessed with having a branch that meets all the goals. I told Fatima and she offered her customers to me. I didn't want to take it, but it was close to appraisals and Maya doesn't care about anything but monthly goals. I took it and everything was all right.)

Ali pursed his lips and bobbled his head.

Researcher:   'Phir?' (Then?)

          [Because there seemed to be more to the story]

Ali:       '*Phir kya? Maine kuch nahi bola but Pete knew, and then I got a bollocking! Usko kya hai? Sab waise hi hai. All like that, man. Even those investment guys, never help. Ask Adi. Unko kya hai? Hamaari marzi! If I don't want an extra bonus and want to help my friend, I should be allowed to! And now Maya checks appointments to make sure we don't share them.*

          (Then what? I didn't say anything, but Pete knew, and then I got a bollocking! What's it to him? All like that, man. They are all like that. Even those investment firangis never help. Ask Adi. What's it to them? It's my right! If I don't want an extra bonus and want to help my friend, I should be allowed to! And now Maya checks appointments to make sure we don't share them)

          [Pete is the area manager, who drops in from time to time.

Fatima:     '*It's my choice, yeah? I want to help Ali, I will. Maya is just…you know, she thinks she is*

*more British than Indian. I mean, I grew up here, and I have some great British friends, but at work, I only mix with these guys. They share you know, what they learn. We British [smirking] don't share; we look for Number 1, meaning ourselves.* Firangis! Man!'

Neha: *Only 'Hi, how are you, bye'.*

Ali: *'We don't need them, we help each other. We are polite to them when we have to. Mate, you don't understand what helping your co-workers means, then we don't want you!'*

Kunal: 'Door ho jao meri nazron she!' (Stay away from me!)

## *Discussion of Narrative 2*

Again, we will point out common words and phrases, followed by references to popular culture.

First, there is a line in Marathi, said by Ali, when the other bankers' state: 'All Indians are my brothers and sisters'. This line is the first line from the Indian pledge that all students learn in school, which is printed on the first page of every text book, and recited on Independence Day, Republic Day, etc. It is symbolic of Indian values, and all students know it and learn it, at a very early age, not least because they are tested on it at school.

It is common to say the first line when expressing any patriotic sentiment. The second line, in Marathi, indicates Ali's background. Marathi is the official language of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital. School children study English, Hindi and Marathi compulsorily, and Ali has a tendency to use Marathi often, when speaking.

Secondly, the last line 'Door ho jao meri nazron she!' (Stay away from me!) refers to a very popular advertisement for stain removal by Wheel. It continues with 'I asked for a cleaner, and instead you gave me a product that burns my hands'. In the ad, the woman passionately sweeps

aside a washing powder (of a rival brand) saying the lines. Then a male voice offers Wheel, and the woman tries it and begins singing joyfully.

The first line is commonly used in any situation when an individual wants to reject something.

Finally, a note about the monthly goals that Ali referred to. Each banker has a different goal depending on his/her experience and progress at work which involves investing a certain amount of money for customers into different investment plans offered by the bank, the fulfilment of which incurs a bonus. The more money you invest over and above this goal, the quicker your bonus rises. However, not achieving this goal ensures your status as 'orange', and another unsuccessful month categorizes you as 'red', after which you are liable to be warned of an impending dismissal, or fired. A personal banker, by turn, manned the phones and booked appointments for customers. These had to be distributed amongst bankers fairly. Since Ali had been off from work, there were none scheduled for him.

## *Discussion*

The  narrative materials used in this paper, mainly come from recent migrant Indians and give us insights into migrant Indian experiences  as they learn to adapt to British culture within the constellation of communities of practice described earlier.

Firstly, we discuss the implications of the data for CoP theory, and then move on to debate the methodological implications.

### *CoPs amongst minorities:*

Several themes emerge, from the two narratives presented above, that contribute to CoP theory and have implications for race relations. Now as a context for this discussion, note that in the UK, as

of 2001, 4.9 million of the British population are foreign born, of which 2.6 million are white, and .56 million are Indians.  So the Indians in the study (both Indian born and British born) are minorities. Research suggests that Asian and British Asian men and women form the largest ethnic minority group, and are often victims of racist attitudes and behaviours (Mason, 2003).

The two narratives emphasize two issues.  One, race is a defining feature of membership to a CoP.  Minority groups create and form CoPs around their passion for a practice, but they depend heavily on the social and collegial benefits that communities offer to their members (See Wenger, 1998); these centre around being Indian, their strong sense of identity as Indians and experiences as Indian minorities (whether first or second generation) in the UK.  The CoP theory largely overlooks the importance of 'race' in the creation and maintenance of CoPs.

In our study, the Indian migrants who have personally or vicariously experiences racism, exclude White British people from their CoP i.e. minority group members consciously disallow 'firangis' who are the dominant group in the UK, from their CoP;  they use their community not only to share knowledge but to preserve their national identities.

The finding suggests that CoPs amongst minority groups are not that straightforward; a shared passion for banking is not enough to become a member as the communities are raced.

Secondly, individuals from different cultures practice their practice differently which in turn, will affect how one shares knowledge, learns and interacts with members in the CoP.  As noted in the second narrative, Indian work practices are collectivist, whilst those of White British individuals are collectivist. There is data which supports the claim that Indians are collectivist by nature (For example, Sinha & Verma, 1987; Triandis, 1995; Verma & Triandis, 1998) which implies that individuals perceive themselves in relation to the group; their goals overlap with group goals, and

they are willing to sacrifice personal needs for the sake of others[4]. However, the participants strongly believe that their own attitudes and behaviours are 'good', for instance, sharing clients at work so that a colleague can meet his monthly targets, and that of the British colleagues i.e. looking out for one's own goals, and independently achieving them is 'bad'. Such a view has crucial implications for work relations in an organization, and for CoPs, in particular. For instance, knowledge sharing in a CoP may be very different when members belong only to a collectivist culture, an individualist culture, or belong to different kinds of cultures.

Our findings of a work- based CoP may also be related to race theories, in particular, black feminist standpoint theory (Collins, 1989) which articulates the idea that Black women, as a minority in the US, 'have a self-defined standpoint on their own oppression' (Collins, p. 747). This view comprises of two components; one, that 'Black women's political and economic status provides them with a distinctive set of experiences that offers a different view of material reality than that available to other groups' and two, 'these experiences stimulate a distinctive Black feminist consciousness concerning that material reality. In brief, a subordinate group not only experiences a different reality than a group that rules, but a subordinate group may interpret that reality differently than a dominant group' (p. 747-748).

We can apply this to our study, acknowledging of course that there is a huge socio-historical difference between Collins' work and ours, and we are not implying that there exists a direct equivalent to Black feminist thought in terms of Indian feminist consciousness, whilst it may well be worthwhile to look for this.

What we can say, is that Indian migrants not only have distinctive experiences (for instance, about work styles) that offer a certain view of English culture (that helping colleagues is unusual,

---

[4] Hofstede's (1980) classical study had revealed that Indians scored only 48 on the individualism-collectivism scale. Years later, Triandis' (1994) proposal that individualism and collectivism can co-exist, that paved the way for new research which indicated that Indians are collectivist *and* individualistic (Dumont, 1970; Paranjpe, 1998; Roland, 1998). Nonetheless, we observed that the participants demonstrated very strong collectivist ideas.

inappropriate even) but that this creates a certain mindfulness about life in the UK. It is experience, that leads them to 'interpret reality' (borrowing from Collins) from a particular perspective, (suggesting the existence of a distinct Indian consciousness worth exploring more) such that they form CoPs around their shared expertise in banking.

Another concept that we bring attention to, is that of 'whiteness'. In the second narratives, Sheri uses this term and in our data, it emerged frequently, as a point of difference, between Indians and White people (British or non-British - Sheri uses the term 'firangi' which is a Hindi word applicable to anyone who is 'white').

Dyer (1997), Frankenberg (1997) (1997), Levine-Rasky (2002)  and Roediger (1990) amongst others, posit that 'whiteness' is a doxic concept which is taken for granted, paradoxical and unstable. As a paradox, it represents a race (here, English people) but also humanity (human race) and this makes it changeable. Its very instability requires it to be maintained and reinforced. Puwar (2004) emphasizes that 'whiteness' is standard; it is the norm, and consequently, just as organizational culture is 'normal and ordinary, the culture of whiteness is not seen' (p. 135). Since whiteness is the norm, visible minority individuals are noticeably different and may be singled out as victims of prejudice or discrimination.

Further, Puwar (2004) criticizes the fact that after the publication of the MacPherson report (1991) in the UK which revealed institutional racism in the police force, and the consequent Race Relations Amendment Act (2000), the issue of institutional racism has been neglected. She points out that 'ontological denial of race and gender is part of being an insider' (p.119) i.e. in organizations, insiders who are White, male *and* the dominant group are reluctant to admit that gender and race have any influence at all.

## *Methodological advantages by virtue of being an 'insider'*

The two narratives presented in this paper, arose naturally during talk. Whilst we acknowledge the value of data obtained from interviews, we argue that narratives which occur freely and naturally, in the participants own language are more real and authentic.

The interviews were recorded and recognised by participants as structured conversations about certain topics; the researcher asks and the participant answers. They were in English usually and semi-formal.

The conversations, in contrast, occurred all the time; they were not premeditated, often artless and uncontrived, and as we have demonstrated, imbued with references to popular culture.

But this is how these men talk.

The researcher was privy to events and conversations that few are welcome to. She was trusted as Ali's friend, and this trust, we contend, was rooted not only in friendship, but in the shared cultural identity. The shared identity allowed the researcher to understand these mundane thoughts, to carry on the thread of a conversation and comprehend the references to popular culture.

Van Maanen (1988) points out, at the outset of his book, that ethnography is not neutral and the ethnographer's voice is always heard. We agree; adding that insider research is inherently subjective; by drawing on personal knowledge of language and culture, the researcher is instilling his/her own particular, idiosyncratic thought processes onto the research situation.

We draw here on Geertz (1973) who claimed that ethnography is defined by thick description, to borrow from Ryle (1949) work, to emphasize his view that culture is inextricably linked to actions.

Let us first understand Ryle. Ryle (1949) discussed the concept of 'thick description' in two essays that tackle what 'Le Penseur' (The Thinker) is doing, 'Thinking and Reflecting' and the 'The Thinking of Thoughts'. In order to elaborate on the concept, he uses the example of two boys briskly contracting their right eyelids; for one, this is an involuntary twitch whilst for the other, it is a signal much like a wink. Ryle describes the movements in detail, pointing out that whilst the difference in the actions is hardly discernable for a viewer, in reality, there is a huge difference between a twitch and a wink. The boy who winks is communicating in a particular way which has four aspects: the action is deliberate, is intended to convey something, the recipient is someone specific, the boy winking is not mindful of anyone else noticing the gesture and this action of winking conforms to a certain social code where winking means something. These aspects are tangible expressions of culture.

Ryle goes on to consider the situation if a third boy arrives on the scene, to ridicule the first whose eye twitches by imitating him in a nasty way, to amuse his friends. This boy does what the other two were doing – contracting his right eyelids. However, he is neither twitching involuntarily, nor is he winking. He is mocking the first boy, and his exaggerated clumsy action is part of another social code, that of derision.  If the third boy's friends mistakenly assume that he is in fact, winking, then the whole exercise has been pointless!

Ryle plays with this scene, hypothesizing that there could be many possibilities in this situation. For example, the third boy might be practicing the gesture at home before the mirror, thus, his action wouldn't be a twitch, wink or a parody, but a rehearsal. Or the boy, who was winking, might have been faking the gesture to mislead the others.

Geertz (1973) maintains that one cannot wink without knowing what action constitutes a wink i.e. contracting an eyelid. And that knowing how to wink is not winking i.e. eyelid contractions does not necessarily mean a wink. Thus, knowing cultural codes is not sufficient, as there are different layers of meaning, which is what comprises thick description. Geertz goes on to say that

26

ethnographic analysis warrants organizing the structures or what Ryle called 'established codes'. So using the aforementioned example, this would entail interpreting what the winks meant, the context, the social significance of the gesture, etc.

We apply this reasoning to the interactions between the researcher and the researched. Words, gestures and phrases have particular connotations when used in certain ways, that non-Indians or non-Hindi speaking individuals would be unable to comprehend. For instance, saying that a woman doesn't want to stay in the sun, as she wants to remain 'fair and lovely' may be interpreted as simply a woman who doesn't want to get dark. Knowledge of cultural codes would, however, lead an Indian to make (correctly) the assumption that the other person is referring to a popular ad. Similarly, simply knowing the language i.e. Hindi, words such as 'Dost dost na raha' might be assumed to mean that Anu lost some friends during his breakup, whereas what was actually being referred to, was a popular Hindi song.

This knowledge of cultural codes meant that the researcher was attuned to cultural codes, able to interpret the communication occurring around her, and directed at her. The shared subjective information then, was key to communication, and an inherent part of the ethnographic fieldwork. Thus, we argue that intersubjectivity which is intrinsic to insider knowledge allowed for a profound understanding and interpretation. We conclude that whilst we may have gained some knowledge about CoPs among minorities in England, it would be far from comprehensive and multi-faceted.

## *Conclusion*

Our paper aims to demonstrate two things.

One, research on CoPs, as aforementioned, has overlooked how minorities feel and behave in organizational situations, and racism can be a serious issue at work. We recognize that not all

migrant workers from minority groups may be, or feel, marginalized or victimized, but the problem exists. What the findings indicate, is that CoPs that initially formed voluntarily, due to a shared passion for banking, subsequently also became refuges; protected spaces where one can safely express feelings, concerns, and doubts, learn and teach each other about what it is a as a migrant Indian worker in a British bank to fit in with the local culture and it's working methods while simultaneously resisting aspects of it (e.g. it's individualism) and preserving an Indian way of doing things that works for the members of this COP. Without such a non-canonical CoP, it is doubtful that these 'Indian' ways of working would have been preserved in this context. To a large extent, these CoPs became not simply about the occupational practice of banking but also about the practice of an Indian way of life, in the midst of a British bank; existing alongside but in some degree of tension with the local HR policies, customs and practices. The extent to which these 'local' 'practices' were *professionally* rational or simply *culturally* customary and normative, is a question raised by the study. The difficulty of this question, demonstrates that 'practices' as understood by COPT, are rarely independent of 'practices' found in wider organizational and societal 'communities' and this has a number of potential implications for HRM and diversity policies and practices, which space prevents us from exploring in detail here. But we suggest that the' implications for Human Resource departments are is manifold; recognizing the need for employee integration, identifying instances of racist behaviour and encouraging CoPs in the organization as knowledge sharing benefits members and organizations (See Wenger and Snyder, 2000).

Two, insider research allows for an in-depth and multi-layered understanding of migrants' lives. We maintain that the position of an insider allows for a glimpse into a world that an outsider would struggle to enter. We hope, also, that the narratives presented in their original form create an appreciation of participants' worries, fears and lives.

## *Bibliography:*

Ali, A. J. (1993). Decision Making Style, Individualism, and Attitude toward Risk of Arab Executives. *International Studies of Management and Organization, 23*(3), 53-73.

Ali, A. J. (1995). Cultural Discontinuity and Arab Management Thought. *International Studies of Management and Organization, 25*(3), 7-30.

Alvesson, M. (2003). Methodology for Close Up Studies - Struggling with Closeness and Closure. *Higher Education, 46*, 167-193.

Becker, H. S., Blanche, G., Everett, C. H. & Anselm, S. (1961). *Boy in White: Student Culture in Medical School*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Bodur, M., & Cavusgil, T. (1985). Export Market Research Orientation of Turkish Firms. . *European Journal of Marketing, 19*(2), 5-16.

Boje, D. M. (1991a). Consulting and Change in the Storytelling Organization. *Journal of Organizational Change Management, 4*(3), 7-17.

Boje, D. M. (1991b). The Storytelling Organization: A Study of Story Performance in an Office- Supply Firm. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 36*(1), 106-126.

Boje, D. M. (2001). *Narrative Methods for Organizational and Communication Research*. London: Sage.

Brannan, M. J. (2007). Sexuality, Gender and Legitimate Peripheral Participation: an Ethnographic Study of a Call Centre. In J. Hughes, N. Jewson & L. Unwin (Eds.), *Communities of practice: Critical perspectives.* Oxon: Routledge.

Brannick, T., & Coghlan, D. (2007). In Defence of Being "Native": The Case for Insider Academic Research. *Organizational Research Methods, 10*(59), 59-74.

Brown, A. D., Gabriel, Y., & Gherardi, S. (2009). Storytelling and Change: An Unfolding Story. *Organization, 16*, 323-333.

Brown, J. S., & Duguid, P. (1991). Organizational Learning and Communities-of-Practice: Toward a Unified View of Working, Learning and Innovation. *Organization Science, 2*(1), 40-57.

Brunt, L. P. (2001). Into the Community. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Calvey, D. (2000). Getting on the Door and Staying There. In G. Lee-Treweek & S. Lingokle (Eds.), *Danger in the field: Risks and Ethics in Social Research*. London: Routledge.

Clark, B. R. (1972). The organizational saga in higher education. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 17*(2), 178-184.

Collins, P. H. (1989). The Social Construction of Black Feminist Thought. *Signs, 14*(4), 745-773.

Contu, A., & Willmott, H. (2003). Re-embedding Situatedness: The Importance of Power Relations in Learning Theory. *Organization Science, 14*(3), 283-296.

Dumont, L. (1970). *Homo Hierarchicus.* . Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Dyer, R. (1997). *White*. London: Routledge.

Etter-Lewis, G. (1991). Black Women's Life Stories: Reclaiming Self in Narrative Texts  In G. S. Berger & D. Patai (Eds.), *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*. New York: Routledge.

Fine, G. A. (1996). *Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Fox, S. (2000). Communities of Practice, Foucault and Actor-Network theory. *Journal of Management Studies, Vol.37*(No.6), 853-867.

Frankenberg, R. E. (1997). *Displacing Whiteness: Essays in Social and Cultural Criticism*. Durhamm N.C.: Duke University Press.

Fraser, H. (2004). Doing Narrative Research: Analysing Personal Stories Line by Line. *Qualitative Social Work, 3*(2), 179-201.

Fuller, A. (2007). Critiquing Theories of Learning and Communities of Practice. In J. Hughes, N. Jewson & L. Unwin (Eds.), *Communities of Practice: Critical Perspectives*. Oxon: Routledge.

Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretation of Culture*. London: Fontana Press.

Georgakopoulou, A. (2006). The Other Side of the Story: Towards a Narrative Analysis of Narratives-in-interaction. *Discourse Studies, 8*(2), 235–257.

Granfield, R. (1992). *Making Elite Lawyers: Visions of Law at Harvard and Beyond*. New York: Routledge.

Halle, D. (1984). *America's Working Man*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Hammersely, M., & Atkinson, P. (1983). *Principles in Practice*. London: Tavistock.

Hayashi, S. (1988). *Culture and Management in Japan. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press.

Hodson, R. (2004). A Meta-Analysis of Workplace Ethnographies: Race, Gender, and Employee Attitudes and Behaviours. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography, 33* (1), 4-38.

Hofstede, G. (1980). *Culture's Consequences: International Differences in Work Related Values.* . Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

Hughes, J. (2007). Lost in Translation: Communities of Practice – The Journey from Academic Model to Practitioner Tool. In J. Hughes, N. Jewson & L. Unwin (Eds.), *Communities of Practice: Critical Perspectives*. Oxon: Routledge.

Karra, N., Tracey, P., & Phillips, N. (2006). Altruism and Agency in the Family Firm: Exploring the Role of Family, Kinship and Ethnicity. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice., 30*(6), 861-878.

Kondo, D. (1990). *Crafting Selves: Power, Gender, and Discourses of Identity in a Japanese Workplace* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated Learning: Legitimate Peripheral Participation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Levine-Rasky, C. E. (2002). *Working through Whiteness: International perspectives.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

Manning, P. K. (2001). Theorizing Policing: The Drama and Myth of Crime Control in the NYPD. *Theoretical Criminology, 5*(31), 5-44.

Martin, J., Feldman, M. S., Hatch, M. J., & Sitkin, S. B. (1983). The uniqueness paradox in organizational stories. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 28*, 438-453.

Mavin, S. (2006a). Venus Envy: Problematizing Solidarity Behaviour and Queen Bees'. *Women in Management Review, 21*(4), 264-276.

Mavin, S. (2006b). Venus Envy 2: Sisterhood, Queen Bees and Misogyny in Management. *Women in Management Review, 21*(5), 349-364.

Mitroff, I. I., & Kilmann, R. H. (1978). *Methodological Approaches to Social Science*. London: Jossey-Bass.

Orr, J. (1987). Narratives at Work: Storytelling as Cooperative Diagnostic Activity. *Field Service Manager*, 47-60.

Orr, J. (1990). Sharing Knowledge, Celebrating Identity: War Stories and Community Memory in a Service Culture. In D. S. Middleton & D. Edwards (Eds.), *Collective Remembering: Memory in a Society*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Orr, J. (1996). *Talking about Machines: Ethnography of a Modern Job*. New York: Cornell University Press.

Paranjpe, A. C. (1998). *Self and Identity in Modern Psychology and Indian Thought*. New York: Plennum Press.

Pentland, B. T. (1999). Building Process Theory with Narrative: From Description to Explanation. *Academy of Management Review, 24*(4), 711–724.

Puwar, N. (2004). *Space Invaders: Race, gender and bodies out of place.* Oxford: Berg.

Rhodes, C., & Brown, A. D. (2005). Narrative, Organization and Research. *International Journal of Management Reviews, 7*(3), 167–188.

Riessman, C. K. (1993). *Narrative Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Riessman, C. K. (2003). Performing Identities in Illness Narrative. *Qualitative Research, 3*(1), 5-34.

Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*. London: Sage.

Roediger, D. (1990). *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class*. New York: Verso.

Roland, A. (1998). *In Search of Self in India and Japan: Towards a Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Princeton:NJ: Princeton University Press.

Ryle, G. (1949). *The Concept of Mind*. London: Hutchinson.

Smith, V. (1990). *Managing in the Corporate Interest: Control and Resistance in an American Bank*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Stubbs, M. (1983). *Discourse Analysis: The Sociolinguistic Analysis of Natural Language*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Sullivan, M. A., Queen, S. A., & Patrick, R. C. (1958). Participant Observation as Employed in the Study of a Military Training Program. *American Sociological Review, 23*(6), 660-667.

Triandis, H. C. (1994). Theoretical and Methodological Approaches to the Study of Collectivism and Individualism. In U. Kim, H. C. Triandis, C. Kagitsibasi, S. C. Choi & G.Yoon (Eds.), *Individualism and Collectivism: Theory, Methods and Application.* . Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Van Maanen, J. (1988). *Tales of the Field: On Writing Ethnography*. London: University of Chicago Press.

Vickers, D., & Fox, S. (2010). Towards Practice-based Studies of HRM: An Actor-Network and Communities of Practice Informed Approach. *International Journal of Human Resource Management, 21*(6), 899-914.

Wenger, & Snyder, W. (2000). Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier. *Harvard Business Review, January-February*, 139-145.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of Practice: Learning, Meaning and Identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wright, E., & Calhoun, T. (2001). From the Common Thug to the Local Businessman: An Exploration into an Urban African American Barbershop. *Deviant Behaviour, 22*(3), 267-288.