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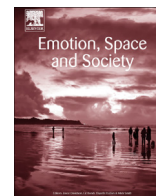
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Overcoming Arlie Hochschild's concepts of the 'real' and 'false' self by drawing on Pierre Bourdieu's concept of habitus



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ABSTRACT

This article theoretically discusses Arlie Hochschild's (1983, 1998) concept of the 'real' and 'false' self (1983: 194) and how this holds together her model about how it is we manage our emotions. Hochschild draws on ideas about surface acting, deep acting and authenticity to support her theory of emotion management. In this discussion I argue that these ideas undermine the clarity of the theoretical model Hochschild tries to develop to explain emotion management. The first aim here is to demonstrate that this concept of the real and false self acts as an unnecessary conceptual linchpin making Hochschild's ideas about emotion management opaque. The second aim in this article is to theoretically engage with Pierre Bourdieu's (1984, 1990) concept of *habitus* as a way of overcoming Hochschild's idea of the real and false self.

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1. Introduction

This article discusses Arlie Hochschild's model of emotion management (1983: 35) and identifies inherent problems with her use of the 'real' and 'false' self as a conceptual linchpin (Hochschild, 1983: 194–195). My intention is to explain these problems with this emotion management model and offer an alternative for the 'self' that Hochschild describes by drawing on Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* (1984, 1990). The real self is considered by Hochschild to be the very core, or essence, of who we are as a person, and in contrast, the false self is 'a part of "me" that is not really "me"' (Hochschild, 1983: 194). My contention here is that there is no such thing as the real or false self, nor is it important to make such a distinction.

Hochschild (1983) wanted to explain how it is that we can act differently in certain social settings by managing our emotions. She suggests that by managing our emotions we are able to work on the self and present to the world a persona that is expected, and fits in. Her model of emotion management was ground-breaking because it helped to open up debate about the invisible and unrecognised work people do in order to fit in with social expectations (see Mann, 2004; Bolton, 2005). In this article I want to undo the dependency on the concepts of the 'real' and 'false' self that is complexly bound

up in this model. In the first part of this article I deal with this by showing how Hochschild repeatedly draws on the real and false self as a conceptual linchpin in her research (1979, 1983, 1997, 1998) and how this makes her ideas inconsistent and opaque. In the second part of this article I engage with Pierre Bourdieu's (1984, 1990) concept of *habitus* as a way of overcoming Hochschild's idea of the real and false self.

2. The inner self: real and authentic?

Hochschild developed a model (1979, 1983, 1998) to explain how we manage emotion in certain social settings and around certain people. This arose out of her research into flight attendants working for Delta Airlines in the United States of America (1983). Her research looks at how employees become who they are expected to be at work. Hochschild revealed that these flight attendants were expected to act in a particular way at work to fit in with the organizational expectations of the ideal female employee. For these female employees this included being perceived as caring, mildly flirtatious, and impervious to rude customers, as well as dressing in a particularly feminised way that included a certain way of wearing make-up, uniform and hair (Hochschild, 1983: 101–103). This finding in itself was revealing of constraints on female employees in particular (1983: 127–128). However, what made Hochschild's work distinctive at this time was that she

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offered an insight into how it is these female employees were managing to do all these things and become the right kind of employee (105–106).

Before scrutinising Hochschild's emotion management model, it is worth briefly signalling how Goffman has influenced her early work. Hochschild wanted to depart from Goffman's construction of an individual that she argued is made passive to rules governing interactions (1959; Hochschild, 1983: 225–227). She departs from Goffman's ideas about the self as a collection of many roles and performances because she is concerned with what she sees as a lack of continuity. She argues that Goffman's account of reality provides 'no structural bridge between all situations' (1983: 225). That is – an explanation of how a person is the 'same' from one moment to the next. She finds this problematic for two reasons: firstly, because this would suggest that a person is governed by social roles as a passive individual who has a lack of interiority. She notes how Goffman seems to ignore times when an 'individual introspects or dwells on outer reality without a sense of watchers' (1983: 226). Even though Goffman later explored to some extent a person's inner world and their social context in 'Asylum' (1961), by mainly focusing on the emotion of embarrassment, he does not discuss the internalised feeling rules or capacity for agency which Hochschild sees as being "inside" the actor' (1983: 226) and fundamental to the management of emotion (1983: 228). For Hochschild, then, it is this interiority and agency that is the 'bridge between all situations' (1983: 225), and this brings her to the notion of an inner essence – or *real* self. Secondly, she does not think that Goffman properly accounts for how people are able to use prior expectations to help navigate new situations. She criticises him saying that there is 'no overarching pattern that would connect the "collections"' (1983: 225). For her, 'the idea of prior expectation implies the existence of a prior self that does the expecting,' (Hochschild, 1983: 231). She provides this example:

When we feel afraid, the fear signals danger. The realization of danger impinges on our sense of self that is there to be endangered, a self we expect to persist in a relatively continuous way. Without this prior expectation of a continuous self, information about danger would be signalled in fundamentally different ways (Hochschild, 1983: 231).

Hochschild (1983) is uncomfortable with the idea that a person may be different depending on the stage setting and context. For her, there is continuity in terms of how a person acts and feels and that this is only possible because of an inner 'real self' (1983: 34). She writes, 'To develop the idea of deep acting we need a prior notion of the self with a developed inner life. This, in Goffman's account, is generally missing' (1983, 227).

For Goffman, there is no such thing as real or false performances signalling a true self. According to Goffman, all of our performances are *real* in the sense that they simply take place – there is no unchanging core that is the 'real' self, only an ongoing and increasing personal portfolio of roles (see 1959: 252–253). However, Hochschild (1983) identifies that an explanation of continuity between moments is under developed in Goffman's work. Goffman did not write in detail about a reflexive or agentic self as such, but the need to explain continuity between situations (as Hochschild tries to do) is not, in my view, achieved through the 'real self' as a conceptual linchpin, which I will now discuss further.

3. Hochschild's emotion management model (1983)

Hochschild's '*Managed Heart*' model of emotions (1983) quickly developed into a typology to explain how it is that emotions are performed or concealed in certain social settings. She identified

two different types of emotion management: emotion work and emotional labour. Hochschild describes emotional labour as: 'the management of feeling to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display; emotional labour is sold for a wage and therefore has *exchange value*' (1983: 7). Emotion work is slightly different to emotional labour; as Hochschild states: 'I use the synonymous terms *emotion work* or *emotion management* to refer to these same acts done in a private context where they have *use value*' (italics in original, Hochschild, 1983: 7; see page 181 in book for further discussion). Hochschild suggests that we may undertake emotion work in our day-to-day lives in order to present feelings in a more agreeable way to friends, family and acquaintances, for example, by hiding anger or embarrassment to preserve social relations (1983: 19–20).

Hochschild develops her model by outlining the mechanisms that make emotion work and emotional labour possible. She focuses on surface and deep acting (1983: 48–49). According to Hochschild (1979, 1983), surface acting is a practice in which an individual offers a performance that displays the expected feelings they sense are in keeping with the feeling rules structuring that particular social interaction, regardless of whether this is how they feel or not. This surface acting of expected feelings, Hochschild suggests, is an insincere performance that the individual hopes is convincing to others, nonetheless (1983: 49). For instance, the flight attendant smiles to show happiness; whether she actually feels happy or not does not matter (1983: 127–128). To put it another way, we portray or mimic what we think is expected of us and conceal undesirable feelings. In short, Hochschild suggests that what we are doing is acting out or mimicking the 'shoulds' accorded by feeling rules that structure interactions, but we are not obliged to internalise these feeling rules as our own (1983: 118).

Surface acting then is about *knowing* how to act in a given situation (1983: 48). This means knowing the implicit feeling rules structuring workplace interactions. Knowing how to display emotions is essential to being able to fit in within the workplace. To get surface acting right requires some attention to the audience, usually a customer or co-worker, in order to discern whether the emotional performance has been convincing to them. This is very similar to how Goffman (1959) describes the dynamics of performing a role during social interactions. The employee interacts with the other person whilst trying to pick up clues that their performance may possibly be viewed as unconvincing. The crux of surface acting is to offer a performance that leaves the other person convinced that they had a meaningful interaction. This person tries to conceal from the other person that they were performing emotional displays that were simply expected of them.

Another aspect of Hochschild's emotion management model relates to deep acting. This involves a person trying to sincerely embody an emotion so that displaying it for the other person is no longer a fake but convincing performance and becomes 'real' (1983: 194). Hochschild describes deep acting as deciding 'what it is that we want to feel and on what we must do to induce the feeling' (1983: 47). The person tries to make their emotional displays seem authentic to *themselves* as well as the other person.

Hochschild goes further and describes the practice of deep acting as working hard trying to feel a particular emotion. This involves using emotional recall of memories of a situation where the individual *really* had felt happy: this memory is then re-visualised, invoked and attached to their present circumstances to shape the mind and bodily behaviour. Hochschild states that by,

trying to feel what we sense we ought to feel or want to feel (Hochschild, 1983: 43) we must undertake deep acting, this activity of working on emotions at a 'deep level' so that they are felt as 'real' is accomplished via a process of imagining, that is, to

think about a desired emotion we wish to feel and imagine it as if this were true (1983: 43).

Hochschild suggests that by inducing an imagined emotion via deep acting, the self will come to accept it as authentic and part of the *real self*. Deep acting requires that the individual suspends their 'usual reality testing' and instead 'allow a make-believe situation to seem real' (Hochschild, 1983: 42), in the hope that it will take on the qualities of being real at a later stage.

Deep acting is not only used to theorise the inducement of imaginary feelings in Hochschild's framework, but it is also used to refer to how an individual might prevent a real feeling from emerging from the depths of the real self and mis-fitting the situation. Hochschild uses her concept of deep acting to explain how the individual attempts to convince themselves that they really feel something else other than what they are feeling, or else 'block or weaken a feeling we wish we did not have' (Hochschild, 1983: 43). Deep acting then involves 'bad faith' (Hochschild, 1983: 47), which is a problematic concept that suggests that individuals can intentionally deceive themselves. A person would have to know that they were trying to forget something that they know. For Hochschild, deep acting is also about lying to ourselves, but the lie is suppressed in the hope that the lie will disintegrate and the deception we began with will take the form of something real.

Whilst Hochschild describes the practice of deep acting she is not clear or convincing about the *purpose* of deep acting. Hochschild tries to convince us that the point of deep acting is to make a feeling that is imagined seem real, so that it *becomes* real.

4. Confusing concepts

Hochschild presents an array of interesting concepts as part of her model of emotion management (1998, 2003). She offers a way to theorise deep acting but is never quite clear about what it is, what the purpose of deep acting is, or how it is done. Instead, she offers numerous examples that she suggests demonstrate deep acting and often relies upon the reader to intuitively *know* what deep acting is, how it is done, and why.

Deep acting is necessitated in Hochschild's study because she senses that there are times when people do not feel as though they fit in as they *are* in certain situations. People are motivated to do deep acting to bring mis-fitting feelings more in line with what is expected in a given social situation and transforming them. Deep acting is unnecessarily complicated, however, by Hochschild's discussion of *real* feelings and *false* feelings. Deep acting tries to explain how a person can knowingly hold two (or more) contradictory feelings in place – neither has to be real or false. This perception of real or false feelings, I would suggest, arises out of a calculation the person makes about some feelings 'fitting in' with the social space they are in, and other feelings being viewed as mis-fitting. These mis-fitting feelings are concealed, although not forgotten, because they do not fit in case they might incur a social sanction. Holding these contradictions in place can be painful for an individual. We do deep acting because we *want* to fit in within the dominating structures of feeling. The desire to fit in is what I would suggest motivates deep acting, despite it being a painful thing to do. Therefore, the idea of real or false feelings is rather a distinction a person makes about the kind of feelings that fit in and those that do not.

Deep acting is painful precisely because it is work on the self that forces an adjustment to who we are told we 'ought' to be or how we 'should' feel, and recognition that we do not presently embody this already. It feels strange also to act in a way that we are not used to. Put another way, taking on someone else's rules to

govern our own emotions and behaviour makes us feel odd, ill at ease, and it feels wrong when we try to convince ourselves that this is our normal, everyday behaviour and way of feeling. Deep acting can make us feel anxious because it is hard to do, and yet oddly enough it can also help to reassure us that at least we fit in better in certain social spaces by doing it.

This process of 'becoming' who we sense we *should* be, by making painful adjustments, is rife with tension and anxiety. Deep acting is painful and invokes tensions because we harbour thoughts that we should already be that person we are trying to become. What is more, there is an on-going debasement directed at the self for having to undergo deep acting in the first place. A painful tension arises when we undertake deep acting because we think we shouldn't have to try so hard to feel a certain way, to be a certain kind of person, we want to be that person *already* to feel a certain way already. Having to labour at it is a clear sign that we are not the person we feel we ought to be, we do not know what to feel. The pain of doing deep acting may ease over time though as one way of feeling is replaced by another perhaps more socially desirable way, and is assimilated as if it were *already* our own way of thinking and feeling.

Tonkens (2012) also makes a similar argument, suggesting that Hochschild does not sufficiently clarify what she means by particular concepts and what they are supposed to do. Tonkens too is critical of Hochschild's lack of connections between her concepts and how they are supposed to relate to each other in this emotion management model. In Hochschild's explanations of deep acting, for instance, she tends to jump from talking about deep acting as being about making false performances of feelings feel authentic (1983: 35–36), then to how deep acting is also about suppressing real feelings, and then she moves to a different theme altogether within deep acting in which the individual is also trying to preserve the real self (an inner jewel) (1983: 34) and manage the false self (1983: 195). Even after this extensive use of deep acting as a form of emotional labour/work, she theorises deep acting as also including the practice of conscious and continuous self-deception in which the real self is fooled by an illusion which they have deceived themselves into believing (1983: 40–42). It is difficult to untangle what Hochschild means exactly by deep acting and what it is supposed to do precisely, and the reason for this is because she tries to make the concept account for too much within her theoretical framework.

Hochschild is trying to use deep acting as a conceptual device that explains how we try to make 'who we are not' (what she sees as the false performances) become 'who we are' (part of the real self). Deep acting is a mechanism that she uses to explain how we try to *become* a person with particular feelings because of a sense that this is who we *ought* to be and how we ought to feel. Deep acting then is a form of emotional labour/work that has the purpose of *becoming* someone else in order to *fit in* with already structured expectations and rules. It is necessary to her theoretical framework that she is able to justify a distinction between the real and false self because she argues that it is the *real* self that is being exploited by capitalist organizations (1983: 34; see also Fineman, 2008). I discuss this separation of the real and false self shortly and how it is particularly problematic in her work, and hence why I bring in Bourdieu's idea of the *habitus* (1984) to resolve it.

5. The 'real' and 'false' self: a misleading conceptual linchpin

When Hochschild talks about a real self she is describing a self that has honest and true feelings that are not subject to pretence or acting. For her, the real self constitutes a continuity, an embodied way of being and doing that is predictable and recognisable to others. Possessing a 'real self' tells others what we are like as a

thinking and feeling individual. Hochschild compares her idea of a real self to an inner jewel or essence that makes us who we are. To do this, she sets up an agentic, choosing individual with an internalised sense of continuity: a real self. The real self is a formed identity that is reliably the same, from day-to-day, and it is in our possession to control.

In this sense then, I would argue that Hochschild mistakenly interprets the anxiety that arises out of trying to become someone we sense we 'should' be as evidence of a separation between a real and false self – for example, 'I wasn't really being myself' (Hochschild, 1983: 262). And yet, this is based on the person's perception of what is real and false, and a sense of a core self. She uses these dispositions to evidence a 'real self' and 'an inner jewel that remains our unique possession no matter whose billboard is on our back [...] we push this "real self" further inside, making it more inaccessible' (1983: 34). What is missing then is a distinction and reflection made between how the individual sees themselves, and how the self is being socially constructed in these narratives through dispositional histories.

Working on an emotion so that it fits in with the social space the individual is in can be painful. Hochschild argues the more we have to work on ourselves to *become* comfortable with representing an emotion we think we ought to feel, the more *inauthentic* the emotions we are trying hard to embody become, and therefore we find ourselves getting further away from our *real* selves. She writes that 'subtracting credibility from the parts that are in commercial hands, we turn to what is left to find out who we "really" are' (1983: 34). Hochschild further argues that backstage is where the 'real self' can supposedly relax and emerge, and that it is in this space that more authentic performances occur rather than during front stage performances, which tend to be around customers and clients (1983: 192). Erickson (2011:121) notes how there has been increased attention around the idea of authenticity and 'the real thing' in a post-industrial climate. Cain's research (2012) looks at authenticity and the emotional labour of workers in practice at a care hospice in North America and it challenges Hochschild's idea of a split real and false self. Cain argues that this was not the case in her research and instead shows how workers felt that how they act around their patients is just as authentic and real as their behaviour in the staff room. These workers felt that they presented a more formalised and different 'hospice identity', rather than a 'false self' which Hochschild would suggest. In Cain's research this worker identity was important to how the participants' felt they should manage their own emotions at work.

Hochschild is engaging in a phenomenological debate about a person's state of being in the world. She is advocating the notion of a real person, with real feelings, that possesses an alter ego which she describes as the 'false self' (1983: 194), which creates illusions and make believe that fool the real self. This false self is described as 'a disbelieved, unclaimed self, a part of "me" that is not "really me"' (1983: 194). According to Hochschild, the difference between what is the real self and what is false depends on what aspects of it we claim, so for instance, we may say 'I wasn't really being myself at that party'. For Hochschild, we each possess a real self, or inner essence that we know to be true (1983: 34): the critique I am making here is that Hochschild's concept of the real/false self requires more critical engagement with why a person might feel that way about their identity.

6. Exploitation of the 'real' self: autonomy and agency

Hochschild needs the concept of a 'real self' with a 'real life' (1983: 47) in her theoretical framework to explain what she sees as the exploitation of a person's inner essence by capitalist organizations. Hochschild is suggesting that being made to become

someone else who is 'other' to us at work, and being told how to feel according to structured feeling rules, is a suppression of an individual's core self and their agency. So, feeling pressured to *change* because of feeling rules makes us shape our sense of self in a way that we do not necessarily do out of choice in the workplace, and in ways we are not necessarily accustomed to or feel comfortable with. Hochschild says, 'The airline passenger may choose not to smile, but the flight attendant is obliged not only to smile but to try to work up some warmth behind it' (1983: 19). Hochschild is concerned with how the transmutation of emotion work, that is, a personal choice to work on the self to become someone we feel we ought to be for others in our private lives, is *exploited* by capitalist organization and given an exchange value. This exploitation amounts to a suppression of the real self. Hochschild therefore needs to set up this construct of the authentic, agentic individual to justify her argument that capitalist organizations are exploitative of emotional labour and emotion work.

Many workers have little choice but to work on themselves it would seem, although this is not true of all workers who can exercise power to negotiate workplace feeling rules (1983: 19, 89). For the most part, it is concerning to Hochschild that workers potentially lose their capacity to freely display how they feel. This capacity to show feelings is relinquished by the employee as part of the expectations of their contract and instead they must internalise workplace feeling rules if they want to get paid.

She constructs the exploitation of a person's emotional system by capitalism, that is, the transmutation of emotion work into emotional labour, as an immoral act that infringes on the nobility and sanctity of a 'real self' (1983: 34). Referring to a real self, Hochschild draws upon Rousseau's 'Noble Savage' (1983: 192) to describe a person who is not subjected to any feeling rules, who feels spontaneously and without calculation. This real self is to be valued, protected and preserved, according to Hochschild, from the onset of capitalism and the demands of emotional labour, lest we become a 'faceless soul beneath the mask' (1983: 194). Hochschild needs to explain this act of exploitation, specifically of emotion, via an idea of valuing a real self (1983:192) which she sees as increasingly constricted by rules, deeply entwined in the matrix of capitalism, with little choice but to exchange an inner self and emotions for a wage.

Bolton (2005: 39) is critical of Hochschild's theory of emotion management, saying that it 'restricts the possibility of individuals ever being active agents, who through negotiation are able to break the "chain" of power and "make their own histories"'. Furthermore, Bolton is opposed to the idea that employees are coerced to align themselves with organizational rules and lose a 'sense of self in the process' (2005: 39). Instead, Bolton argues for a model of a person who reflects the modern, reflexive individual (Bolton, 2005; Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Giddens, 1991, 1994; Urry, 2000; Beck, 1992, 1994; see Atkinson, 2010, 2012; and Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992; Du Gay, 1996). That is, someone who is able to navigate, negotiate and *overcome* feeling rules that have the capacity to constrain employees. She is suggesting then that employees can choose how to feel at work to a greater extent than which Hochschild allows for within her theoretical framework. According to Bolton, Hochschild is suggesting that capitalist organizations have:

Appropriated all of our feelings so that there is no longer any room for sentiments, moods or reactions that have not been shaped and commodified via the 'commercialization of intimate life' (Bolton, 2005: 2).

Bolton suggests that Hochschild's argument – that intimate life is increasingly commercialized through emotional labour –

inevitably positions employees as passive, or, as ‘crippled actors’ (Bolton, 2005: 48). Based on her own research into caring work, Bolton finds Hochschild’s concept of emotional labour lacking depth because she says that it only describes one particular kind of emotion management relative to the service sector (i.e. that emotions are the product that is sold). For Bolton, some emotions are freely given as part of social relations during interactions with others. Bolton identifies here then that Hochschild’s concept of emotion work is under-developed. We do not always work on emotions at work because it is exchanged for a wage – sometimes working on emotions can be *useful* as part of social relations. So for instance, some employees that Bolton studied in the care industry (Bolton, 2000, 2005; Bolton and Muzio, 2008; see also, Mann, 1999) use their emotions to facilitate their interactions with others, but their emotions are not what is being sold. Bolton sees Hochschild’s concept of emotional labour as having too narrow a focus on capitalism and puts forth her own typology of emotion management: ‘pecuniary’ with ‘prescriptive’, which relate to instrumental performances of emotion in the workplace rooted in economic and status gain and are empty of feeling; as well as ‘presentational’ emotion management, which refers to the ‘basic socialized self’ (Bolton and Boyd, 2003: 297), and ‘philanthropic’, which is an intentional and freely chosen act of giving emotion to customers and co-workers that are *not* prescribed by workplace feeling rules. In this sense, according to Bolton, workers seek these ‘unmanaged spaces’ (2005: 102) in order to express their true and ‘authentic’ selves.

I agree with Bolton when she says that there is more to emotion management at work than just exchanging emotions for a wage. But Hochschild acknowledges this, too – she just doesn’t advance this area of her research. She does write briefly about emotion work as a theoretical concept, which addresses how people manage emotion in their personal social relations, and how this act has *use* value (Hochschild, 1983: 7; see page 181 in book for further discussion). It is true that this is particularly under-developed. I suspect that Hochschild would agree with Bolton that people work on their emotions at work for the purposes of maintaining social relations but that capitalist organizations are slowly starting to encroach on this kind of emotion management, threatening the ‘real self’, to advance their own strategies and agendas.

Bolton’s assessment of Hochschild criticises her emotion management model for constructing a ‘crippled actor’ who is overly constrained by feeling rules in the workplace. Bolton instead contends that her studies show the opposite, that employees actively *choose* how to follow workplace feeling rules (2003) and retain control over managing their emotions. However Bolton’s criticism is incorrect – the actor is not ‘crippled’ yet; Hochschild is warning about this being a possibility if capitalist organizations are permitted to commodify emotion management. Hochschild is trying to preserve the idea of free will and agency, that is, the intentional and choosing individual, just as much as Bolton. What Bolton appears to be arguing is simply a matter of degree – the degree to which an individual’s agency to negotiate structured feeling rules is (un)constrained at work. Hochschild is not describing someone who is without agency, only that this agency is tightly managed in the workplace and that this could get worse.

Both Hochschild and Bolton’s approaches to emotion management still rely on the idea of an authentic, choosing individual, in short, a *true* self. Just as Bolton has criticised Hochschild for creating an individual with no agency, I too would criticise Bolton for conceptualising an individual with too much agency, drawing on the words of Brook, for ‘claiming a form of supra-autonomy for emotion work’ (Brook, 2009: 540).

7. The problem with the ‘real’ self

What is missing from both Hochschild’s (1983) and Bolton’s (2005) theoretical framework is a way of explaining how the individual interacts with structured feeling rules that does not rely on a true or real self. The main criticism that is generally levelled at theories that are based on the notion of a real self with an intangible core is that it constructs a wholly agentic and reflexive individual (Bolton, 2005; Bolton and Boyd, 2003; Giddens, 1991, 1994; Urry, 2000; Beck, 1992, 1994) who is able to stand outside of social structure (Bourdieu, 1984).

What is needed to resolve the problems that arise out of centring theory on a real self is a way to overcome the antimony between the personal and the social, and structure and agency. To put it another way, a conceptual bridge between the mind and the body is needed to better explain how emotion management occurs. Tonkens (2012) also identifies this problem in Hochschild’s work (1979, 1983, 1998, 2003). Tonkens argues that, ‘There is a theoretical lacuna in Hochschild’s work on how relationships between individual emotions, social interactions, and large-scale processes like globalization and commercialization relate to one another’ (2012: 196). She suggests that Hochschild struggles to overcome the analytical gap between core micro concepts and macro level concepts.

8. Bourdieu and *habitus*

I want to suggest that Bourdieu (1984) offers a more fruitful way of explaining continuity across moments (which Hochschild attempts to do by drawing on the notion of a *real* self) in his theory of the self as *embodied* history. Bourdieu describes that a person’s embodied history is the accrual of memories and knowledge that are embedded as dispositions (1984). This conceptual device is described by Bourdieu as a person’s *habitus* (1984). A person’s *habitus* disposes a person to think, feel and act in ways that are the outcome of their ‘conditions of existence’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 52). The *habitus* then is formed out of ‘systems of durable, transposable dispositions, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 53). This means that a person will feel in a way that is shaped by ‘generative principles’ (1990: 53) that provide a structure and logic with ‘no active conscious intent’ (Addison, 2016). This means that a person is a product of history and their particular moment in time, and as such delineates relationality across structure and agency.

Using Bourdieu’s concept of the *habitus* it is possible to think about the self more as a unique set of embodied dispositions that we use to strategize our actions and our feelings. This means that there is no need to think of the self as an intangible core or a real self that can be criticised for a ‘supra-autonomy’ (Brook, 2009: 540) that exists outside of social structure (Barbalet, 2001, 2002).

Moreover, the notion of a ‘real self’ that emerges in Hochschild’s interviews with flight attendants (e.g. ‘I was not being myself’) is much better framed as a discussion about reflexivity, in two ways: firstly, on an epistemological level – this involves scholars ‘being reflexive regarding how knowledge is generated, produced, represented and legitimated’ (Addison, 2016: 18; see also Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992); and secondly, by critically engaging with how the individual is being reflexive about themselves in the world (Skeggs, 2002) and builds a narrative around this (Lawler, 2008). Whilst some individuals may *feel* they possess an inner self that is real and authentic, I argue that this is a perception that Hochschild does not sufficiently interrogate.

Hochschild used the concept of the real and false self in her model of emotions. In contrast, I want to draw on Bourdieu to argue that we use dispositions as knowledge of how to act and *feel* in

certain situations, and knowledge of how to express, and importantly *manage*, our emotions. Using this model of the self avoids the criticism directed at Hochschild that individuals are overly structured by feeling rules (Bolton, 2005), as well as the criticism levelled at Bolton (2005) by Brook (2009) that individuals are able to stand outside of structure and seek out ‘unmanaged spaces’ (Bolton, 2005: 102) as agentic and autonomous individuals.

Moreover, Bourdieu suggests that we are all already born into social games that have started without us. We are immersed in the social world and acquire dispositions as we grow that orient us to the correct way to do things in certain social spaces and around different people. We grow accustomed to the different rules and principles that structure different spaces meaning that we ‘fit in’. By thinking of the formation of the self in this way, it also avoids the problem of the *apriori* self – where we are born with a unique essence, or as Hochschild puts it, an ‘inner jewel’ (1983: 34) that makes us who we are and enables us to be autonomous. For Bourdieu, this is unnecessary: he explains the formation of the self as being socialized into the ways of game playing from birth through our *habitus* and position in the field so that we develop a ‘feel for the game’ (Bourdieu, 1990: 67). Playing games involves fitting in with the ‘right ways of being and doing’ (Bourdieu, 1986, 1990: 511) in certain social spaces. This practice of fitting in convincingly, and having the right *habitus*, involves (amongst other things) managing our emotions. Having a feel for the game Bourdieu describes as ‘the sense of the imminent future of the game the sense of the direction (sens) of the history of the game that gives the game its sense’ (1990: 82). How well we play social games depends on our embodied history (*habitus*), the position we hold in the field, and the different resources (material and embodied capital) we have at our disposal to assist us (Bourdieu, 1984).

That said, it is important that the *habitus* is not viewed as a concept which portrays the individual as a *cultural dupe*. Whilst the individual is immersed in the social world generally partaking in practices that are familiar to their *habitus*, there are significant moments when the individual is not at ease and it is these points that produce critical reflexivity for the individual. Not being familiar with the game can lead to feelings of being out of place – like a fish out of water (Bourdieu, 1990). Put another way, this can feel like we do not know what to do, how to think or feel, in a certain situation (see Addison, 2016) and it is in these critical moments that change and agency happen. However, it is this feeling of being uneasy with our surroundings, like we don’t fit in, that Hochschild mis-identifies as a splitting of the self – a false self then where we put on a performance of what we think is expected of us (*I was not being myself*). However, this feeling of unease and conscious performance, I would argue, is connected to an awareness of a lack of knowledge of how to act and feel in a situation. This emotional dissonance then is not an argument to support the idea of a false self, but rather indicates a feeling of being out of place in a certain social space and around certain people.

9. Conclusions

It has been my intention here to show that feeling out of place, or not being ourselves in certain social situations, is *not* down to a dichotomy between a real and false self as Hochschild tries to unsuccessfully set up. Rather, I have argued here that this feeling of ‘*not being myself*’ arises because we do not possess the required knowledge dispositions or embodied practice, or have the right embodied history, in order to act comfortably in certain situations – therefore we are reflexive of our social position and feel uneasy as if we are not *ourselves*. Instead of the idea of a real self constrained by feeling rules, I have argued that individuals use their embodied histories as a way of understanding and making sense of the

prevailing dominant symbolic structures. Acquisition of this knowledge of how things ought to be done is sedimented as dispositions over time, creating a personal history, which is then drawn upon to strategize future practice. This means then that there is no need to argue, as Hochschild does, about what version of the self is ‘real’ and what is ‘false’: fundamentally all aspects of one’s self and performances are real.

Some employees sense that their embodied histories don’t fit well within social space. These people may find that they repeatedly have to adjust their practices, even when they feel uncomfortable, in order to fit in with a legitimated value system structuring how they ‘ought’ to be (see Bathmaker et al., 2013; Reay et al., 2009). Then again, those who find themselves feeling ‘out of place’ (Reay et al., 2009) may subvert structured feeling rules in the workplace, they may develop alternate ways of fitting in within or without the rules, they may collude with colleagues and share anger and humour as a strategy for dealing with exploitations of their emotional labour. The concept of embodied history works much better with these ideas of emotion management than than Hochschild’s idea of the real self. It has explanatory power without theorising performances as ‘false’. I argue that it is more appropriate to critically consider why acting a certain way, and managing emotion, in a particular space can seem odd and make us feel ill at ease. I have suggested here that our embodied histories can feel out of place in the workplace because we may be used to a different way of doing things in our day-to-day lives (see Addison, 2012; 2016). The workplace can exploit our ability to shape ourselves into someone we are told we ought to be, and this can hold us in a state of being ill at ease. And so, entering a space that has dominating structured feelings rules which are different to our own embodied feeling rules obliges us to manage and display our feelings, perhaps in uncomfortable and unfamiliar ways. However, I would again reiterate that this is not evidence of a real and false self, but rather highlights the self-conscious feelings we may have in certain situations and around certain people.

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