

LOOKING AWAY: DENIAL AND EMOTIONS IN INSTITUTIONAL STABILITY AND CHANGE

Giuseppe Delmestri and Elizabeth Goodrick

ABSTRACT

While there has been increased attention to emotions and institutions, the role of denial and repression of emotions has been overlooked. We argue that not only the expression and the feeling of emotions, but also their control through denial contribute to stabilize institutional orders. The role denial plays is that of avoiding the emergence of disruptive emotions that might motivate a challenge to the status quo. Reflecting on the example of the livestock industry, we propose a theoretical model that identifies seeds for change in denied emotional contradictions in an integration of the cultural-relational and issue-based conceptions of organizational fields.

Keywords: Emotions; denial; institutional stability; organizational field; environmental sustainability; livestock industry

How Institutions Matter!

Research in the Sociology of Organizations, Volume 48A, 233–271

Copyright © 2017 by Emerald Group Publishing Limited

All rights of reproduction in any form reserved

ISSN: 0733-558X/doi:10.1108/S0733-558X201600048A008

Yes, the planet is in dire shape. I'd advise us to follow the Italians. If we're all going down, we may as well do it well.

—Donadio commenting the EXPO 2015 “Feeding the planet. Energy for life” in Milan (*The New York Times*, August 10th 2015)

The development of neo-institutional theory reflected a cognitive turn in social theory that privileged the cognitive aspects of institutions to the neglect of affect (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). The permanence of institution was explained by their taken-for-granted character (Zucker, 1991). The question of how institutions can change emerged more as a quandary, and considerable effort in the last two decades has been devoted to explicating the role played by organizations and/or individuals in change processes (Beckert, 1999; DiMaggio, 1988; Hardy & Maguire, 2010). But until very recently, there was no consideration of how emotions can influence either the stability or transformation of institutions.

Scholars have argued that negative and positive emotions play an *active* role in the *ongoing* stabilization and disruption of institutional arrangements. Protest groups have been studied that attempted to induce anger and fear to motivate institutional change (Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). Both shame and pride have been linked to the reproduction of institutions (Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen, & Smith-Crowe, 2014; Scott, 2008). Others have argued that the extent to which people are emotionally invested in an institutional order influences the likelihood that they will engage in the maintenance work essential to reproduction (Voronov & Vince, 2012). The new assumption in the developing emotions and institutions literature is that without such ongoing emotional maintenance taken-for-grantedness would not “automatically” sustain itself.

We argue in this paper that the relationship between emotions and cognitions is more deep and complex than has been recognized so far in neo-institutionalism. To date, emotions have been considered as necessary in addition to cognition and as institutionally conditioned (Voronov, 2014). Taken-for-grantedness, however, not only requires the ongoing support of appropriate emotions to be sustained, but, we argue, also *the suppression of potentially disruptive emotions*. While recent institutional literature has recognized that emotions are critical to change (Voronov & Vince, 2012), the obvious extension of the argument has not been considered: the suppression of the upsurge of disruptive emotions can by itself produce stability. Our focus is therefore directed toward the simultaneously cognitive

and emotional process of denial, so far only addressed in institutional literature with regard to its more strategic impression management aspect (Elsbach, 1994), and not to its reality-maintenance and cultural forms (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Cohen, 2001; Turner, 2006). We propose here, through the investigation of the concept of denial and its various aspects, to conceive the stability of institutions as based in a complex relationship between emotions and cognition that does not allow for the two constructs to be treated separately but as mutually constituted. We also highlight how such mutuality differs when looking either at members of the mainstream or at deviants to the institutional order, and what role powerful elites play in sustaining ideologies and rationalizations. To illustrate our arguments about how emotions and cognition interact to sustain both stability and institutional change, we analyze a series of case vignettes built on examples from the field of production and consumption of food (particularly the live-stock industry) in ways that highlight the link between denial, emotion, and institutional durability. We also propose a way of integrating two different conceptions of institutional fields, that is, a cultural-relational one emphasizing common meanings and an issue-based one focusing on struggles over meanings. The theoretical model we propose identifies in denied field-contradictions the seeds for the emergence of an issue-based field.

EMOTIONS AND INSTITUTIONS

Institutions are commonly understood as enduring social patterns that are relatively resistant to change (Hughes, 1936; Jepperson, 1991). Early neo-institutional work suggested that institutions were automatically self-reproducing since the very definition of institutionalization implied that alternatives to existing institutions are literally “unthinkable” (Zucker, 1991, p. 5). Reflecting the cognitive turn in social theory, the assumption of the self-activating nature of institutions was rooted in the taken-for-granted quality of knowledge and practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1991). This presented a dilemma of how to account for institutional change when actors were “conditioned by the very institution they wish to change” (Holm, 1995). Since the 1990s, neo-institutionalists have taken up that challenge and have focused on explicating different ways in which both individuals and organizations contribute to institutional change (Dacin, Goodstein, & Scott, 2002). More recently, the assumption that institutions are self-reproducing has been challenged by neo-institutionalists who have brought

attention to how institutions are maintained and reproduced by actors and actions (Currie, Lockett, Finn, Martin, & Waring, 2012; Dacin, Munir, & Tracey, 2010; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lok & De Rond, 2013; Zilber, 2009).

In considering how institutions are reproduced or changed, scholars have tended to overlook or downplay the affective dimensions of institutions in favor of cognitive ones. This lack of attention to emotional processes has resulted in institutional theory privileging the cognitive aspect of human agency and discounting the important role emotional processes play in shaping human behavior (Voronov & Vince, 2012). In the last few years, however, there has been concerted attention to explicating how emotions are intertwined with institutions.

Emotions have been viewed as a critical link between macro institutional arrangements and people's participation in institutional processes (Creed et al., 2014; Voronov, 2014). There has been interest in understanding the part emotions play in how social actors experience institutions (Cascio & Luthans, 2014; Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010) as well as the relationship between emotions and the durability of institutions (Creed et al., 2014; Goodrick, Jarvis, & Reay, 2015; Scott, 2008; Voronov, 2014; Voronov & Vince, 2012).

Emotions have been linked to both reproduction and change in institutions. Scott (2008, p. 56) noted that felt emotions provide "a powerful inducement to compliance" with existing institutions. He argues that both the sense of shame and disgrace from trespassing norms and pride and honor accompanying exemplary behavior contribute to the reproduction of institutions. Focusing specifically on shame, Creed and colleagues (2014) argue that emotions are key in preserving institutions. Drawing on Sayer (2005) and Scheff (2000), they argue that a sense of shame is important for social control and the reproduction of social order. By regulating themselves to anticipate and avoid felt shame, social actors reproduce existing institutions. At the same time, institutional guardians can enforce and reinforce institutional prescriptions by strategically shaming deviants. Voronov and Vince (2012) point to the importance of emotional investment in institutions in their reproduction. They argue that emotional investment may be more important than cognitive investment in predicting maintenance work. Without emotional investment, social actors may not be willing to "go the extra mile" in conducting maintenance work essential to reproduction (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006).

Emotions also are thought to play an important role in triggering institutional change. The ability to frame the current institutional order as

suboptimal may not be sufficient to motivate institutional change (Voronov & Vince, 2012). In fact, strong emotional commitment may make it difficult for individuals to even be cognizant that their interests are not being served. Emotions, consequently, are important in institutional change (Voronov, 2014) as much of what motivates people to transform institutions comes from feelings (Scott, 2008). Creed and colleagues (2010), for example, discuss how strong emotions influenced some LGBT ministers to work to change the institutions in which they were embedded. Others have alluded to how emotions can be used strategically to make a case for institutional change (Brown, Ainsworth, & Grant, 2012; Green, 2004) and to motivate others to embrace it (Goodrick et al., 2015). There is even some suggestion in Voronov (2014, p. 182) that emotions may be sufficient to motivate people to change institutional arrangements without cognition.

In addition to explaining durability, emotions have been proposed as critical to understanding the micro foundations of institutions (Creed et al., 2014; Voronov, 2014). In this view, emotions are an important way through which people experience institutions (Voronov, 2014; Voronov & Weber, 2015). Voronov (2014) argued that emotions are conditioned by institutions in that institutions not only prescribe the display of appropriate emotions but also influence which emotions are felt under what circumstances. Voronov and Weber (2015) argue that institutions construct emotionally competent actors who are able to experience and express emotions in ways that are appropriate.

While this developing literature on emotions has begun to redress the bias toward cognition in the neo-institutional literature, it has not yet considered the mutuality of emotions and cognition. In the next section, we address this oversight by drawing on the work of Berger and Luckman (1966). We discuss the phenomenon of repression through denial as a way to address a theoretical blind spot in institutional theory with the potential of offering a powerful entry point to understand the mutuality between emotions and cognitions.

SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE AND EMOTIONS

The recent work by Voronov (2014) and Voronov and Weber (2015) is positioned in the tradition of Berger and Luckman's (1966) sociology of knowledge. Berger and Luckman (1966) discussed the mutuality between institutions and emotions as expressed in a continuum from emotionally

charged identification to instrumental manipulation. The acquisition of a “base-world” in primary socialization through emotionally charged identification with significant others is at the center of their theorization (p. 158). In this deepest form of institutionalization, individuals’ identities as members of an institutional order are “created” and categories of roles, phenomena and beings become taken-for-granted as natural and necessary elements of the world. Secondary socialization involves learning specific roles by being “initiated into the various cognitive and even affective layers of knowledge” relative to this role (p. 94). Berger and Luckman argue that some forms of secondary socialization are eminently emotional. In “radical” socialization there is a “near-total transformation ... in which the individual ‘switches worlds’” (p. 176). In such situations, individuals need the support of a community of relevant others to help maintain the “new world” in the face of the “base-world” dominant in society. In contrast, the more typical secondary socialization into occupational “sub-worlds” involves lower levels of emotionality. Regardless, the ongoing effective performance of a role requires reality-maintenance, that is, not only its implicit confirmation supplied by casual everyday contacts, but also the “explicit and emotionally charged confirmation” by significant others (p. 170).

While these early intuitions of Berger and Luckman’s (1966) have been integrated in the developing literature on the interconnection between emotions and institutions, there has not yet been explicit consideration of how repression, denial, or suppression of emotions, that is, forms of avoidance of emotions ranging from unconscious to strategic, influences the durability of institutions. As emotions are crucial to providing motivation to disrupt the institutional order, it would seem that their suppression and control could perpetuate prevailing institutions. Consequently, we argue that not only the expression and the feeling of emotions, but also their suppression and more or less conscious control contribute to stabilize institutional orders. Accordingly, we shed light on an unrecognized phenomenon: the institutional suppression and control of emotion through collective processes of denial.

To date, the tendency has been to consider emotions as either necessary in addition to cognition or sufficient in the absence of cognition in relation to institutional change and stability (Voronov & Vince, 2012). While Voronov (2014) and Voronov and Yorks (2015) argued that emotions are more foundational to institutions, their focus is confined to how people’s feelings are conditioned by the institutional order. However, Berger and Luckman (1966) also suggest that emotions shape institutional orders. They observed that existential emotions, like the fear of death or the

“meta-physical terrors” of one’s social identity being not confirmed by others, condition the very existence of an institutional order: “On the level of meaning the institutional order represents a shield against terror” (p. 119). Institutional orders serve “as an emotional refuge” (p. 144) that protect individuals from “anomic terror” (p. 121), that is, the meaninglessness of the symbolic universe to which they have been socialized. Consequently, symbolic universes, “sheltering canopies over the institutional order” (p. 120), are themselves emotionally conditioned. The relationship between cognitions and emotions is therefore mutual (see also Barbalet, 1998). Institutional arrangements not only condition emotions, they also are the response to fundamental existential emotions, they have an “existential origin” (Berger & Luckman, 1966, p. 104) and, using Powell’s words (1991, p. 194), “provide psychological security.” Such mutuality can be seen in the phenomenon of repression through denial which we address in the next section.

DENIAL AND EMOTIONS

Understanding the complex process implied by denial has the potential to enrich our understanding of the relationship between emotions and cognition in sustaining institutionalization, cultural persistence, and change. On the one hand, we argue, stability is produced when the consequences of an institutional arrangement are denied, whose recognition might produce the emotions necessary to motivate change: “After all, social life presupposes leaving certain things unsaid, and breaking the silence surrounding those things may therefore ‘rock the boat’ destabilizing it” (Zerubavel, 2006, p. 16). On the other hand, denial of potential consequences could also facilitate change by protecting potential opponents of institutional arrangements from emotions that might paralyze them like fear – in Berger and Luckman’s terms (1966, p. 144) revolutionary intellectuals need others to assist them in confirming and “maintaining [their] deviant definitions of reality as reality.”

Denial is a complex phenomenon which involves cognition, emotion, morality, and action (Cohen, 2001) which has been conceptualized both as a strategic choice and a somewhat unconscious reaction to potentially disturbing issues and events. Cohen (2001, p. 24) defined denial as “A statement about the world or the self (or about your knowledge of the world or yourself) which is neither literally true nor a lie intended to deceive others

but allows for the strange possibility of simultaneously knowing and not-knowing. The existence of what is denied must be ‘somehow’ known and statements expressing this denial must be ‘somehow’ believed in.” In this case, denial is an unconscious or semiconscious defense mechanism for coping with disturbing or potentially disturbing thoughts, information or events, stemming from our human need to avoid pain (Zerubavel, 2006) and, particularly, the “pain of anxiety associated with an object or event” (Turner, 2006, p. 278). The desire to avoid unpleasant emotions, such as fear, shame, guilt, and embarrassment plays a key role in denial processes, providing much of the reason why people prefer to not consider certain types of issues, like climate change (Norgaard, 2011).

Denial has also been considered as deliberate and strategic rather than “somehow knowing and not knowing” (Cohen, 2001; Zerubavel, 2006). In this conception, denial is a type of strategic accounting (Scott & Lyman, 1968) that social actors engage in to explain untoward behavior. Elsbach (1994), for example, compared the effectiveness of verbal accounts of denials compared to acknowledgments following controversial events in the California cattle industry. As a strategic tool, denial can involve an account that is less than the whole truth.

Denial then is located between strategic deception and cultural blindness. In the absence of some level of awareness there can be no denial; denial requires both an active avoidance of specific events or issues and a deliberate effort to not notice (Zerubavel, 2006). At times, social actors may not notice or comprehend a particular reality because it is part of their taken-for-granted social world (Cohen, 2001). The categories of material and symbolic action which organize the social world are often perceived as “natural” components and thus not questioned. To the extent that the reality of everyday life appears as already objectified, as social facts (Berger & Luckman, 1966), then people may not perceive a specific reality as anything but what is. A certain degree of awareness and reflexivity is consequently implicated by denial.

Cohen (2001) argues that there are three different ways denial is manifested. “Literal denial” is based in cognition; something is or is not true. The facts, or knowledge of the facts, are denied. This can be both because of professed ignorance or because a person does not want to know. In the latter case, facts alone are not sufficient to explain people’s unchanged behavior. “Interpretive denial” refers to situations where there is no disagreement about facts but rather about their meaning. For example, there may be agreement that the climate has been getting progressively warmer but disagreement about what that is at work – a human caused

phenomenon versus a natural cycle. The denial is not around what has happened but what we label it. So is it a “population exchange” or “ethnic cleansing”? There also can be “implicatory denial” which is focused not on facts, or interpretation of facts, but the implications of them. Here, the denial is around what to do with the knowledge and the demands it may create. For example, some have criticized the measures undertaken by countries to reduce carbon dioxide emissions (like the recent Paris Cop21 2015 agreement) as not addressing the role of the neoliberal capitalist system in fostering economic dependence on fossil fuels (Klein, 2014). Consequently, implicatory denial has a moral basis that avoids responsibility for action or lack thereof.

FORMS OF DENIAL

In Fig. 1, we combine two relevant dimensions for understanding denial, the degree of reflexivity implied by the observed processes and the level in which it occurs, to present a typology of forms of denial. While these two dimensions have been separately introduced in the literature, they have not yet been put in relationship to each other. The level of analysis includes

Level of analysis	Macro	Cultural categories	Ideology	Political legitimation
	Meso	Organizational culture	Groupthink	Organizational hypocrisy
	Micro	Repression	Personal denial	Deception
		Lowest	Intermediate	Highest
		Degree of reflexivity		

Fig. 1. Forms of Denial.

micro (individual), meso (organizational), and macro (organizational field and society) (Cohen, 2001, p. 51; see also Turner, 2006). The degree of reflexivity stretches from lowest (taken-for-granted categorizations), intermediate (knowing and not knowing), to highest (the more strategic or deceptive forms of denial).

At the individual level, denial ranges from banishing disturbing perceptions to the unconscious so as to protect oneself from painful emotions, to looking away and “purposefully” forgetting (denial in strictest sense), to pure interpersonal deception. According to Freudian tradition, denial is linked to processes related to the self. Self exists by reconciling three processes, *id*, *ego*, and *superego*: *id* is the channeling of impulses and energy; *ego* processes represent the reality principle; *superego* processes invoke cultural codes often internalized via socialization (Turner, 2006, p. 277). When the self has difficulty reconciling these different processes, it attempts to reduce the resulting anxiety by either *repression* or ego defenses such as denial. At the lowest level of reflexivity is repression which is “the expulsion of painful cognitions from consciousness, making them a part of the unconscious and, hence, not directly accessible to reflective thought” (Turner, 2006, p. 278). Denial at the individual level is a semiconscious form of displacement of unbearable psychic energy. According to Freud, repressed or denied emotions do not disappear but remain as psychic energy that gets transmuted into new emotions which may “distort worldview and actions of an individual” (Turner, 2006, pp. 278, 291). According to the psychoanalyst, Gruen (1987, p. 142, our transl.) such repressed or denied emotions lead to a *reduction of thinking* as “a consequence of emotional processes that are directly related to ... the flight from pain.” On the more strategic side of the denial spectrum, individuals deliberately try to deceive others. For example, Zerubavel (2006, p. 12) discusses President Bill Clinton’s “surreal ability” not to mention the sex scandal that had erupted just a week before in his State of the Union address. And, in a radically different context, Rudolf Höss, the SS Commander at Auschwitz, deliberately justified in his autobiography his actions by technical rationality in executing orders (Höss, 1992).

At the meso level, denial is a phenomenon produced in interaction with others under socially patterned circumstances (Cohen, 2001; Norgaard, 2011) and ranges from deep seated cultural understandings and categories to more deceptive attempts to project a favorable image through PR and marketing. The taken-for-granted cultural understandings and categories have the lowest degree of reflexivity. At the meso level, denial in its “in between” sense involves cognitive tendencies to prioritize positive

information that conforms to socially constructed categories (Cerulo, 2010). Categories organizing social reality can be both derived from broader society and somewhat uniquely part of an organization's culture. Cohen (2001, p. 66) discusses denial at this level by referring to Janis's notion of "groupthink" (Janis, 1971). He interprets the latter concept as "a collective mind-set that protects illusions from uncomfortable truths and disconfirming information ... [whereas] accounts are circulated to bolster the members' sense that whatever they do must be justified ... and strategic myths are crafted about the organization's high morality" (see also Brown, 1997). Denial, then, has a collective or shared character in which a group can censor itself to protect against uncomfortable truths or disconfirming information (Cohen, 2001). Vaughan's (1996) study of the Challenger disaster which discusses how the reversal of the burden of proof regarding safety issues for engineers became part of a culture of risk denial is an example of how taken-for-granted categories can be constructed at an organizational level. Similarly, the "culture of silence" that "led senior tobacco company executives to suppress the findings of studies showing the incontrovertible health risks involved in smoking" (Zerubavel, 2006, p. 27) illustrates this type of denial at the meso level. At the highest degree of reflexivity, meso-level denial assumes a more instrumental form to give accounts and justifications. "Corporate identity" is for instance a social technology that attempts to mold the internal and external perception of the organization despite organizational hypocrisy characterizing the loose coupling of rhetoric and action (Brunsson, 1989).

At the macro level, denial in its least reflexive form is closely tied to cultural categories revealing what is central and hiding what is peripheral in society. Cultural denial represents the inevitable consequence of the existence of cultural-cognitive institutions (Scott, 2008), as any culture is a "way of seeing that is simultaneously a way of not seeing" (Vaughan, 1996, p. 394). At the macro level, the categories themselves are embedded in society and perpetuate existing institutions. According to Berger and Luckman (1966, p. 53), it is language that "typifies experiences," allowing them to be subsumed "under broad categories in terms of which they have meaning" in society. For example, until very recently, marriage was a taken-for-granted category that included a man and a woman. At the macro level, the intermediate reflexive denial can assume the form of ideology, that is, value-loaded symbolic constructions about what is important in society, and, by the same token, what is unimportant and should be overlooked or even devalued. While ideology helps "people make sense of everyday experience" in a way that "discourages them from thinking

thoughts that might challenge the status quo” (Eliasoph, 1998, p. 232), it involves more awareness than do taken-for-granted cultural categories. For example, referring to Gramsci’s (1971) work on ideology and hegemony, Voronov and Yorks (2015, p. 570) argue that apprehension gets thwarted because it “would potentially destabilize the institutional arrangements.” Finally, at the highest degree of reflexivity are societal-level strategic denials such as official government denials organized by the state as purposefully deployed ideological weapons (Cohen, 2001). These can be on a continuum from a complete rewriting of history to spin doctoring and glossing over the truth. At the societal level, political denial involves a “legitimation machinery” which purposefully reproduces the status quo (Berger & Luckman, 1966, p. 105).

DENIAL AND FIELD STABILITY

To link denial, lack of emotions, and institutional stability requires showing how the boxes in Fig. 1 are connected. To do this we focus on an intermediate level, the organizational field, which allows us to highlight the nestedness of forms of denial and their connection to processes of cognitive institutionalization. For this reason, we need first to flesh out the main concepts that define an organizational field and to go beyond a simple classification of forms of denial, to ask two questions: “reflexivity of whom?” and “in the interest of whom?”

Organizational fields are legitimated within a web of acceptable meanings and practices (Scott & Meyer, 1991) and its community of organizations constitutes “a recognized area of institutional life” (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 148) that “partakes of a common meaning system” (Scott, 2001, p. 84). In such a cultural-relational conception of a field, meaning is core to what is necessary to be considered an institutional field. Moreover, products and services have to be recognizable by audiences, which imply that categories have to be built, and audiences themselves have to be created that appreciate industry’s outputs (Navis & Glynn, 2010). Industries also have to find their place within the broader society in cognitive, normative, and regulative ways (Scott, 2008). For sustained existence, all industries need customers to be continuously socialized to its products and practices (Rosa, Porac, Runser-Spanjol, & Saxon, 1999) and challengers neutralized or accommodated whenever issues emerge.

Hoffman (1999) builds on the idea of issues emerging to propose an alternative to the cultural-relational concept of a field. He argues that institutional fields can be considered as issue-fields, that is, “centers of debates in which competing interests negotiate over issue interpretation” (Hoffman, 1999, p. 351). Thus, the cultural-relational conception of a field emphasizes common meaning, while the issues-based conception emphasizes struggles over meaning. These distinctions have meant that the two conceptions have tended to be conceived as alternatives (see, for instance, Hardy & Maguire, 2010).

The context of institutions, emotions, and denial provides an opportunity to offer an additional interpretation of field dynamics that facilitates viewing these two different conceptions of a field as complementary. Some time ago, Scott and Meyer (1991) pointed to the hierarchical nature of field relationships. They argued that field actors “are not created equal;” rather they are more or less central and powerful. Central actors represent the governing elites and the mainstream that for various reasons accept the status quo. Peripheral actors are both powerless deviants, but also can be emerging elites that challenge the status quo (van Wijk, Stam, Elfring, Zietsma, & den Hond, 2013). We portray the two dimensions and type of actors in Fig. 2.

We now turn back to address our two questions: “reflexivity of whom?” and “in the interest of whom?” Reflexivity tends to be concentrated among

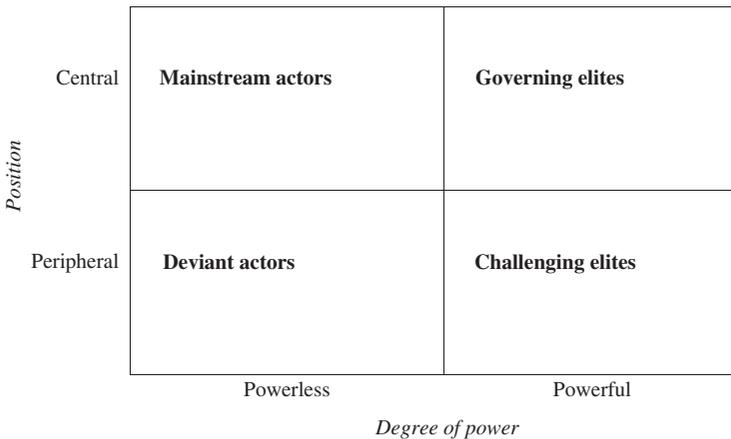


Fig. 2. Types of Actors in Institutional Fields and Society (Both Individuals and Organizations).

the elites, who may engage in maintaining or disruptive actions depending on their centrality within the field. Reflexivity, however, also resides among peripheral deviants, who due to their position can very clearly see how the system works despite not having the power to change it (Leblebici, Salancik, Gopay, & King, 1991). Mainstream actors, in contrast, have less reflexivity.

The stability of an institutional field rests therefore on different conditions and processes. On the one hand, stability within an institutional field belongs to its very definition: a field exists when it is sufficiently institutionalized, and this leads to resilience because actors tend to reproduce institutions especially when these are culturally and cognitively established (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009; Scott, 2001). Institutions, "when chronically reproduced, owe their survival to relatively self-activating social processes" (Jepperson, 1991, p. 145) such that mainstream individuals are almost "automatically" on track. However, as Jepperson (1991, p. 145) also noted, those departing from standardized social patterns (in our model peripheral deviants) "are counteracted in a regulated fashion, by repetitively activated, and socially constructed controls." Institutional scholars of emotions have deepened our view by showing that self-activating processes usually need emotions to work: pride in complying with the dominant values in the field and, more generally, the extent of emotional investment in an institutional order influences the likelihood that mainstream individuals will engage in maintenance work necessary for reproduction (Voronov, 2014; Voronov & Vince, 2012). These scholars have also highlighted how socially constructed controls can work through emotions like shame or through emotional work like shaming to hold in check deviants and protect the institutional order (Creed et al., 2014). Our own above discussion of denial allows an enrichment of these insights: the investment in suppressing the perception of value contradictions and disturbing facts inscribed in the institutional order permits mainstream individuals to go on pursuing their daily activities.

Fig. 2 also allows us to qualify the blind spot we identified in the literature when we advanced the idea that the suppression of the upsurge of disruptive emotions can by itself produce stability. Our discussion of denial begs the question of what motivates mainstream powerless actors to confront deviant ones. It is not clear why powerless actors should defend the status quo, and from where they derive the energy to enact social controls like shaming. Our discussion of denial at the individual level suggests that self-activating social processes are not simply grounded in cognitive habituation but that they are also motivated by psychic energy derived from

denied emotions. According to Freud, such psychic energy is transmuted into different emotions, often anger, fear, or sadness, and the processes of denial and transmutation also affect cognition in that deniers' worldviews on the matter are "codified into prejudicial belief" in a way that makes it difficult for them to comprehend deviants' reasoning (Turner, 2006, p. 291). We argue that this anger can be directed toward challengers to the social order because "if the shame is denied ... it leads to hostility towards others" (Turner, 2006, p. 280). Moreover, emotion and cognition are mutually constituted according to Freud. Deniers' worldviews on that matter can result both in them being unavailable to deviants' arguments and them making distorted justifications for the status quo.

In the next section, we introduce the multilayered example of the field of production and consumption of food (focusing on the livestock industry) to both illustrate denial of various types and to offer an empirical referent for further theorizing on the relationship between denial, institutions, and emotions. One peculiarity of the field of food production and consumption is that cuisine is a particularly emotionally laden and cultural sensitive set of products and practices (Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005; van Bommel & Spicer, 2011). Its customers get socialized as children within families but more broadly food security is a basic human need that is often framed as a political right. Consequently, this industry touches upon deep strata and nested levels of society and polity and issues frequently emerge.

Our aim is to dig into the processes of denial we have theoretically identified so far, and especially concentrating on the mechanisms that sustain the day-to-day denial of mainstream actors, and on those that sustain the maintenance of denial itself as a precondition of institutional stability. First, we briefly introduce the empirical quandary of an industry on which there is broad agreement regarding its social and environmental unsustainability, but, despite this, continues to thrive. We then present the material we collected (see note 1) referring both to day-to-day functioning of the field and to responses to challengers.

AN APPLICATION: THE FOOD PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION FIELD

There currently is scientific consensus on the detrimental effects of the current level of livestock production and consumption. Research has documented the difficulties that present practices pose for alleviating global

hunger (FAO, 2006, 2012; Sabaté & Soret, 2014; Tilman & Clark, 2014), and reducing carbon emissions (Goodland & Anhang, 2009; Joyce, Dixon, Comfort, & Hallett, 2012). As well, there is evidence that current consumption practices have negative effects on human health (Key et al., 2014; Tilman & Clark, 2014). Disagreement exists on how to solve these disparate problems, that is, whether through drastic reduction in consumption or through less drastic decreases coupled with more sustainable production methods, but in the scientific community the existence of these problems is not questioned. Livestock production accounts for at least 18% of the global greenhouse gases emissions (FAO, 2006) – some have even calculated 51% (Goodland & Anhang, 2009) – food security and food sustainability “will require extreme downward shifts in meat and dairy consumption by large segments of the world’s population” (Sabaté & Soret, 2014, p. 476S). In addition, vegetarian and vegans have, respectively, a 11% and 19% “lower risk than did meat eaters for all cancers combined” in a recent British study confirming results of previous studies (Key et al., 2014, p. 381S). The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics states that “[w]ell-planned vegan ... diets are appropriate for all stages of the life cycle, including during pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, and adolescence” (American Dietetic Association, 2003, p. 748). Moreover, current practices have moral implications. Industrialized intensive livestock farming has dramatically worsened the living conditions of farm animals which conflicts both with widespread modern moral beliefs about equality, compassion, and violence avoidance (Fischer, 2001; Nussbaum, 1996; see also Elsbach, 1994), and with statements by leaders of major religions (see, for instance, Francis, 2015; Patriarch Bartholomew, 2012). At the same time, while not all animal rights philosophers are against the use of animals for food and other purposes, there is consensus that the treatment of animals in contemporary concentrated animal feeding operations and industrialized slaughterhouses is unacceptable ethically (Caffo, 2013; Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011; Regan, 1983; Schmitz, 2014; Singer, 1977). Indeed, the majority of people, when directly asked in polls, are against intensive industrial livestock production because the practice does not grant animals with at least some protection from harm and exploitation (96% of American according to a 2003 Gallup poll; cit. by Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 3).

Despite the contradiction existing between the institutionalized reality of contemporary livestock farming and the described positions in culture, philosophy, and religion, and despite the existence since the 19th century of social movements against the mistreatment of animals, the livestock

industry (with the associated food industry) has still an unquestioned position in world economy and society. Reduction of livestock farming was not on the agenda of the COP21 United Nations conference on climate change in Paris (personal communication of one Austrian governmental delegate), meat and poultry consumption is growing worldwide and is expected to double by 2050 after having tripled since 1980 (FAO, 2006; the growth of carbon-intensive farmed fish production is excluded from this calculations), and the recent world exposition EXPO 2015 in Milan dedicated to “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life” has, surprisingly, silenced the academically established relationship between livestock farming, climate change, and food security. Media reports and statements by international organizations have increased in the last 20 years (like the recent WHO report that made the front page of the *Times* magazine) but their effect has been negligible so far in affecting a more than marginal change in consumption habits and production methods: “the system itself endures, and indeed expands and deepens all the time, with remarkably little public discussion” (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 2). This case seems, therefore, a perfect suspect of the multilayered denial processes discussed in the previous section.

The next part of this section deals with the question of what accounts for this remarkable stability of institutions and behaviors. We present examples to cover, at least partly, the dimensions discussed in relation to Figs. 1 and 2, that is, the level at which denials occurs, the degree of reflexivity inherent to the described processes and the power and position of the actors in the field. The examples are illustrative and based on different types of sources and data.¹ We then present a theoretical model that links field stability and change to emotional, cognitive, and political dynamics.

Children and Meat

Most children are socialized to eat meat very early in their life, before they can freely choose. Meat becomes for the majority of children a normal and natural food to find in the home refrigerator and on the table (Joy, 2009). Children living in cities sometimes do not even know that pieces of meat come from animals raised in farms; they believe that meat and poultry just comes from grocery stores (Christina, 2012; Haley, 2013). When some children make the connection between pork and the pig or beef and the cow,

they may refuse to eat. They are usually pressed by parents to do so for purported health reasons.

Not only parents, but also organizations participate in socializing kids to eating meat, fish, and poultry. In restaurants kids are socialized into eating meat by coloring food pyramids that contain animal products (see Fig. 3). Or they are socialized through TV shows. For instance, the morning children's program *Schmatzo* on Austrian television shows children learning to cook diverse recipes which often highlight poultry and pork (accessible in YouTube). The moderator of the program introduces the food with sentences like "We all like sausages and therefore we have to know how they are done." In one episode dealing with a whole chicken, one girl doesn't want to put her hand into the cavity of the

FOOD PYRAMID

Below is the food pyramid. Each section shows the name of the food type and the number of servings to eat each day. Color each food and draw a line to connect it to the appropriate food type on the pyramid.

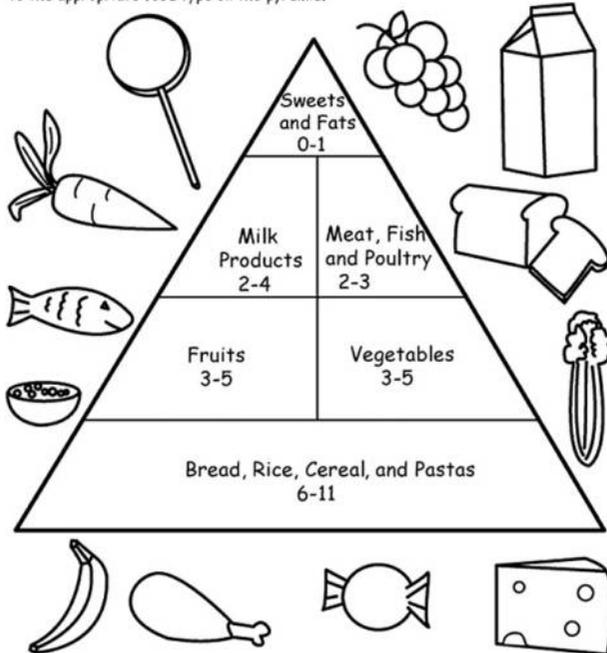


Fig. 3. The Food Pyramid for Kids. Source: [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)

chicken and the moderator answers that it is perfectly clean and she should not fear it.

These examples of primary socialization happen within an institutional order with clear categories of meaning (Berger & Luckman, 1966). The relationship of children with their parents is highly emotionally charged and constitutes the relational setting in which the “imprinting” of the social world takes place. The highly emotional parent child relationship creates the first setting in which the child is socialized not to feel and express emotions in relationship to the animal used as food. The emotions that are expected are those related to taste and to being grateful to the cook (being the father, the mother, or the aunt), or, in religious families, to God. Such apparent de-emotionalization of the relationship with “the animal behind the food” is reinforced in the TV show where emotions of compassion or disgust in relation to handling animal products are not sanctioned and positive emotions related to taste and creativity in cooking are emphasized. In this way, children internalize a world in which some animals are classified as sources of food and distinct from other types of animals which are not eaten as food (e.g., dogs and cats). In this process, however, children have to deny any connection they make between food and the animal behind – setting the stage for emotional reactions should they be later confronted by challengers as the first author describes in his account of his decision to become vegetarian and then vegan:

My family had already started to eat only organic meat when my sister gave me as a gift the book by J.M. Masson – *The Face on Your Plate* (2009). My wife soon became vegetarian as did I after reading the first two chapters on meat production and its environmental impact, continuing to eat fish, however. When my sister, soon after, turned vegan I remember thinking and saying to my wife: Vegetarian is ok, but vegan is extreme. I felt angry towards her and I did not know why. When we met I insisted: Did you really stopped eating *talleggio*? *Talleggio* is the traditional cheese from a beautiful valley close to where we lived as kids. Our father bought it directly from the farmer. She gave me a leaflet on the milk industry, but I didn't want to believe what was in it. For a year I avoided reading information on the milk industry. I looked away, I was conscious of looking away, but I also managed to forget that I had decided to look away.

Categorization is critical to naturalization; there are cultural categories existing in society classifying animals as food, pets, pests, or entertainment that agents of socialization draw upon (mostly unconsciously) (Bratanova, Loughnan, & Bastian, 2011; Rozin, 2007; Rozin & Fallon, 1986; Rozin, Markwith, & Stoess, 1997). The distance between the food

derived from livestock and poultry and the animal as household companion in industrialized countries makes it easier for children to not see animals as members of a single category. While traditional markets often display meat and poultry in ways that resemble their source (side of beef, chickens with feathers), the typical grocery store does not (below we discuss different practices of the grass-fed meat movement). While some children might be startled and even upset if their family visits a farm and they make the connection between the food they eat and the animals on a farm, parents typically will try to naturalize animals as sources of food (see Haley, 2013).

Bratanova and colleagues (2011) showed how the categorization of an animal as food (as opposed to pet or wild animal) changes the relevant attributes of the category. The category “food animal” acts as a conceptual frame and once an animal is categorized in this way, food-relevant attributes (like tastiness, flavor, nutritional value) are more salient than food-irrelevant attributes (like the capacity to suffer). Their experiment shows that “categorization as food reduces the animal’s perceived capacity to suffer, ... diminishing ... moral concern.” They conclude that categorization is “a more basic, non-motivational, cognitive process” (p. 194) that, in our words, has a blinding effect. Categorization, in its purest expression, acts to counter the emergence of threatening emotions, or, at least, in allowing only transmuted denied emotions such as satisfaction to surface (satisfaction related to taste or anticipation of taste, like the taste of *taleggio*, in the example above).

The strength of naturalizing as a mechanism that supports denial becomes also evident when challengers try to question the position of the mainstream. One approach challengers take is to activate compassion toward animals eaten as food by re-categorizing them as similar to ourselves or to pets, in a kind of *robust emotional design* (modeled after Hargadon & Douglas, 2001), because the “good of others means nothing to us in the abstract or antecedently. Only when it is brought into relation with that which we already understand – with our intense love of a parent, our passionate need for comfort and security – does such a thing start to matter deeply” (Nussbaum, 1996, p. 48). After questioning the distinctions between farm animal and pets, many challengers then turn to distinctions between “non-human animal” and “human animals,” which potentially awakens long denied emotions and makes them the motor for change. Such “border crossing” is supported by challenging elites such as the philosopher Deridda (2008), who problematized the distinction between human beings and all other species by using only one category “the animal,” and Pope Francis (2015), who uses the term “creatures”

for all living beings to advocate for treating animals as not simply means for our ends (see also Barbalet, 1998, p. 33).

Canteens, Restaurants, and Dinner Parties

The vast majority of food offered in canteens in companies, schools, and universities includes meat, poultry, or fish. Most visitors of canteens perceive this as perfectly normal and natural, consistent with the socialization detailed above. The fact that most offerings contain products derived from animals becomes an issue only when a visitor asks for something else. In a private high school in Austria, for instance, the request by a teenager and his parents to have vegan² food served has been rebutted twice. The case is interesting because the school has been established with the strong support of the Austrian Green party, a successful leftist party devoted to sustainable ideals including organic agriculture and humane livestock production. The first interaction occurred in December 2014:

Father: "... Thank you for the invitation, the exciting evening program and the small buffet. We only have a small request, if this is possible. And apologies if you already have provided for that. It would be great if the buffet also had some small vegan thing" (December 3rd)

School: "... On principle, we have not planned to offer vegan food in [name of school]. If our kitchen was appropriate for that, we would rather offer local regional food than vegan food. I hope you'll find anyway something you can eat." (December 11th)

A month later the issue became bigger:

Mother: "My son eats as a vegan, and he suffers, that there is no appropriate offer at lunch in the school. Is it possible to ask the catering firm, if they could also offer vegan food? ... I would feel it appropriate, if at least one vegan dish could be offered, also because more and more people want to eat vegan, and this would also be timely and proper. I am also available to come to school for a meeting ..." (January 12th)

School: "... I understand that it is not easy to find appropriate food when one follows such a narrow diet. It will be difficult for [name of the teenager] to eat vegan. We have teenagers that, apart from those with true intolerances, eat only Sushi, others who follow the Metabolic Balance diet, others who want to eat at lunch at least 1000 calories because they follow a Fitness program, or eat only according to Chinese doctrine, prefer Slow Food, do not eat deep frozen food, or only eat bright food." (January 15th)

There was no follow up to the offer of a personal meeting; the email was intended to finish the interaction.

This case is interesting in several respects. The school embraces the values of the Austrian Green party that advocates local organic agriculture and humane treatment of livestock. The first answer pointing to “local regional food” is consistent. As in the rest of the world, organic, grass-fed and humane livestock farming are supported by extensive theorizations (Weber, Heinze, & DeSoucey, 2008; on sustainable meat see Fairlie, 2010). In specialized organic grocery stores and in farmer markets, accordingly, pictures of the animals are sometimes shown as testimony of the natural and humane living conditions. In addition, information is given on how animals are treated. The US organic food chain Wholefoods, for instance, display information in front of the meat shelf on how animals were treated according to a welfare program that defines five steps of improvement above normal industry practice (see Fig. 4). Showing the picture of a free-range calf in front of a shelf selling veal represents a break with the practices of mainstream grocery stores as discussed above. The elaborate theorizations on organic and humane livestock farming effectively support the meaning associated with the market category of organic humane meat.



Fig. 4. Five-Step Animal Welfare Rating Program.
Source: www.globalanimalpartnership.org

Returning to the school example, the statement that local organic food is better than vegan food implies the superiority of a diet including meat and poultry by referring to the legitimate and high status organic category (while veganism is still at the margin of Austrian society). The availability of this category, also morally constructed but of higher legitimacy in society, supported the rebuttal and allowed to avoid the uncomfortable discussion on the different moral grounds of the two food choices (one for humane treatment of animals intended as food and the other viewing all use of animals as exploitation). Such avoidance is also apparent in the classification of veganism as a diet. The category “diet” tends to be of lower status than the “organic” category because of its association with popular magazines and with arbitrary choices. The outcome of the described interaction was the successful denial by the school of veganism as a worldview and of the consequences such a recognition would have produced, that is, to acknowledge the legitimacy of not eating meat or animal products as a potentially uncomfortable moral issue rather than a dietary preference.

Indeed, many perceive vegetarians and vegans as criticizing their choices to eat meat, poultry, and animal products even though nothing may have been said (Minson & Monin, 2012). Vegetarians are often perceived by others as presenting a “public condemnation” of their dietary choices in the form of an “implicit moral reproach,” which may explain why many meat-eaters derogate vegetarians “based on their fear of being judged” (Minson & Monin, 2012, *passim*). Vegan Trower (2014) posts on his blog the types of comments he often receives:

“You’re missing out on so much!” or “Good for you, but I could never give up bacon.” Other times, though, their face darkens and the inquisition begins: Why are you doing that? Aren’t you worried about getting enough protein? If I paid you twenty dollars, would you eat this burger? It’s not like you’re making a difference, you know that, right?

Moreover, waiters in restaurants occasionally make “funny” jokes; friends offer non-vegan food and try to push vegans to eat; even, family members have been known to limit contact if the relative does not abjure veganism. Other justifications for the status quo are phrases like “also plants suffer” (implying that that animals and plants are equivalent), “if we do not eat them, what should we do with them?,” “we evolved to eat meat,” “Hitler was a vegetarian” (implying that Hitler was bad so being a vegetarian can’t be good), “If animals weren’t meant to be eaten, why are they made of meat?” – common to all these phrases is that they are usually intended as undisputable truths but they are unable to stand up to any scrutiny of their

logic. Such justifications of the status quo are consistent with the argument that cognition is distorted by the reemergence of denied emotion (Turner, 2006).

To summarize, the role of categorization in denial emerges in these examples in a much more active way than in the socialization of children example. The presence of categories in society, and their relative status ordering, offers the backbone for more or less strategic or unknowing denial when individuals (or spokespersons of organization) are confronted in a way that bears the potential challenge of unveiling denied facts, spur uncomfortable emotions and motivate for change.

The Expo 2015 in Milan

The theme of EXPO 2015 was “Feeding the Planet, Energy for Life.” It was organized by the Italian Republic but involved the participation of many countries. Like other Expos, it was dedicated to a topic of universal interest and focused on a collective challenge facing the world. Twenty-two million people visited the world exhibition, one-third of which were foreigners. We were interested in exploring how the issue of industrial livestock production was portrayed in relation to the theme of the exposition.

We began by reading the website for the Expo (<http://www.expo2015.org>). According to the website, the Charter of Milan is a document intended to be “the cultural legacy of Expo 2015” and “a tool for global citizenship to affirm the right to food as a fundamental human right.” The Charter was produced through a participatory process involving a variety of stakeholders and calls on “every citizen, association, company and institution to assume their responsibility in ensuring that future generations can enjoy the right to food.” Interestingly enough, there is no specific mention in the document of industrial livestock production’s impact on food scarcity and climate change, even though one of the goals of the charter is to encourage policies that “ensure a *fairer and more sustainable future for the planet*” (emphasis in original). On Vegetarian Day, starred vegetarian Chef Pietro Leemann argued that “the vegetarian diet is the one that most effectively leads to a change that is positive of course from every point of view” in order to effectively enact the Milan Charter’s objectives of solving the problems of “pollution, and the unequal distribution of resources, the reckless consumption of food and energy that is rapidly being exhausted and the many degenerative diseases resulting from the choice of incorrect lifestyles” (see www.expo2015.org).

Having been acquainted with the goals of the Expo, the first author made a study visit in October. He visited the main exhibition located at the outskirts of Milan one day and three other locations in the center of Milan and in the City of Bergamo on subsequent days. The selection of 13 specific pavilions and clusters was based on consultation with Italian colleagues, friends, and newspaper reports of the event (there were 60 pavilions, of nations or organizations, and 9 thematic clusters, e.g., coffee and arid zones). Pavilion Zero was visited because it constituted the editorial statement of the organizers. The US Pavilion and Slow Food pavilion were selected because they were consistently reported as being very different in their framing of the issue of food security. During the visits, pictures and videos were taken and a few people were informally interviewed.

Walking around the Expo, the first author took note of the type of food available for purchase. Given the theme of the Expo, it seemed reasonable to expect that the food prepared for visitors would reflect the principles of sustainable agriculture. While some of the pavilions and food courts seemed to be serving food consistent with such practices, most of the food being sold was conventional. For instance, McDonalds had its huge food court on main street along with others. Moreover, on *Decumano*, a kind of main street that crossed the whole site from east to west, several artificial exhibits represented several types of food: vegetables, bread, fish, and meat (see Fig. 5).

In the main exhibition livestock production was only referred to through a banner on one of the buildings of the Fruit and Legume Cluster edited by the University *Vita-Salute San Raffaele*. The banner stated: “Food production causes 19–29% of greenhouse gas emissions. Livestock farms account for 18% of greenhouse gas emissions.” In a small exhibit display located in front of same building a text explained that “legumes are the *main form of sustenance in developing countries*, owing to their high protein content. Legumes are crucial to ensure both food security and an adequate calorie intake; they offer the hope to *reduce poverty and hunger* by improving general health and nutrition” (emphasis in original).

Pavilion Zero traces the history of humankind via its relationship with food (www.expo2015.org). The Pavilion presents a romanticization of the relationship between humanity and animals that does not include industrial farming. The first room of the pavilion is a huge installation in the form of a wooden library representing the Archives of memory where “each drawer corresponds symbolically to a food, an animal, a food practice” (<http://www.virtual.expo2015.org>). In a video introducing the pavilion in the virtual tour the curator of Pavilion Zero states that the food history of



Fig. 5. Exhibit on Main Street at Expo 2015.

mankind is prompted through “memories, symbols and metaphors” to represent also the “edible biodiversity and the one of plants and animals.” In the same video, the curator says that “world hunger [is] due to wars and natural disasters” and no mention is made to intensive livestock production, despite its paramount acknowledged contribution to the problem (see above). The next room is made of a big tree and a huge screen where the video title “The arts of man” is projected. The video is introduced by some slides of the UN Zero Hunger Challenge which is 1) “Zero stunted children less than 2 years, 2) 100% access to adequate food all year round, 3) All food systems are sustainable, 4) 100% increase in smallholder productivity and income, 5) Zero loss or waste of food.” The video is described as follows in a display next to the screen:

Against the background of an Italian landscape, a universal story comes to life in an ancient time. A family of farmers. A country cottage. Infinite stretches of fields, flocks out of pasture, gentle slopes and the eyes of a child that explores the world reaching the sea and skimming its horizon. In this rural tale, days are marked by the rhythms of nature: from the succession of the seasons to the alternation of day and night.

The narration of this distant arcadia traces the course of life both idealized and authentic. While exploring the surrounding nature during this evolution man (sic!) first became hunter, then fisherman, and finally shepherd and farmer. His need for survival was serviced by his genius, thinking and increasingly improving the four arts through which he discovered and modified the animal and vegetable universe. A collective heritage of millenary *téchnai* owing to which man discovered the world and himself.

The video indeed shows men, women, and children farming, hunting, cooking, and fishing. The animals are not confined to close quarters and often are shown in pastures. The impression one has when leaving this second room is that animals were always integrated in our society as natural part of our food. This impression gets reinforced in the next room dedicated to domestic animals all represented as either stylized drawings or in white statues (see Fig. 6). The display recites:

The history of breeding is the story of an alliance. ... An animal nourishes, heats, sustains, helps. It becomes part of the rhythm of community life as a whole. It defines the outlines of the first social hierarchies: the concept of ownership was introduced with breeding. It is also a sacred figure in many cultures of the world. The extraordinary variety of animals in the worlds is one of our main suppliers of energy: the really big family that we all belong to.



Fig. 6. Domesticated Animals Room in Pavilion Zero.

Asked why Pavilion Zero does not discuss the issue of intensive livestock farming, representatives of the Caritas pavilion, a confederation of Roman Catholic relief, development and social service organizations, told us that “the relationship between land grabbing, hunger and livestock production has only been debated in restricted conferences, not a theme for the general public, because it is a political issue” (notes).

The pavilions of the United States and of Slow Food provide an interesting contrast on this matter. Slow Food is an international movement that encourages people to avoid cheap meat produced in industrial farms and to work toward a food system that is sustainable and ethical (<http://www.slowfoodusa.org/slow-meat>). While the US pavilion presented science-based intensive agriculture as a solution to world population growth, the Slow Food pavilion advocated locally adapted small-scale communitarian agriculture based on the preservation of the variety of local traditions. The slogan opening the US pavilion was “American food 2.0. United to feed the planet.” The slogan was accompanied by an explanation: “By 2050, the earth’s population will grow from seven to nine billion people. Working together, we can provide good, healthy food for every of us. Be one in nine billion!” A 860 square meter vertical farm was installed on one side of the pavilion. The vertical farm was told to “represent a sustainable approach to agriculture in both cities and the countryside.” Based on “1,494 individual ZipGrow Towers mounted in movable frames” it should allow to utilize “70% less water than conventional agriculture” without the use of actual soil. Interviews with scientists at prestigious American universities were the basis of advocating other high tech solutions, including genetically modified crops. Eating meat was presented as embedded in the United States and Native American traditions and was prominently displayed. A Thanksgiving address including a voice of a Mohawk from Akwesasne concluded that “animal life provides us with food and this gives us peace of mind.” At the same time, healthy plant-based food was included in pictures and videos, including a special address by President Obama.

The Slow Food pavilion, to the contrary, presented pictures of intensive livestock farming alongside those of animals grazing in pastures with the explanation that if

the populations of China and India begin to eat meat at the same levels as in the West, there will be not enough land in the world to feed the livestock. On intensive farms, animals live packed together, unable to move, graze or mate. On average, calves are slaughtered after just six months, having being fattened quickly on high-protein feed, in a race whose only objective is to produce the largest quantity at the lowest cost as quickly as possible, with no thought for quality, animal welfare, health or environmental impact.

Moreover, texts rejected the idea that agriculture based on genetically modified crops and animals would produce more food and use less fertilizers and pesticides than present practices.

Overall, there was little attention by mainstream exhibits at the Expo of the relationship between industrial livestock production, climate change, and food security. Only the pavilion sponsored by a social movement organization (Slow Food) focused on issues surrounding industrial livestock production. For the most part, the eating of meat and poultry was naturalized and presented in a romanticized way that ignored the dominant practice of industrial livestock production. The impact of industrial livestock production on global hunger and climate change was the elephant in the room of Expo 2015; only a few pointed to the elephant and broke what seemed to be a conspiracy of silence (Zerubavel, 2006). We are not the first to notice this discrepancy: “Is Expo part of the problem or part of the solution?” (Donadio, 2015). The marginal attention to the issue of industrial livestock production is consistent with the “legitimation machinery” Berger and Luckman (1966, p. 105) discuss. They argue that this special “machinery” devoted to large-scale political denial perpetuates the status quo by avoiding the raising of alternative viewpoints, sedating concerns, and “through various techniques of intimidation, rational and irrational propaganda (appealing to the outsiders’ interests and to their emotions).” Animal welfarism itself, one of the three established academic approaches to human-animal relationship, which accepts the right of humans to use animals for their purposes and concentrates on minimizing unnecessary suffering, has been framed itself as a denying ideology (Francione, 2008); it has been criticized for distracting “attention from the underlying system of animal exploitation” and for providing “citizens with a way to soothe their moral anxiety” (Donaldson & Kymlicka, 2011, p. 2). The criticism is that animal welfarism is based upon a contradiction inherent in its central concept, that is, avoidance of “unnecessary harm,” since it is not necessary for humans to eat animal products at all as food.

Cohen (2001) uses the term political denial to refer to strategic denial at a system level. The presence in the food courts of businesses selling the same type of food we might find in any Italian city may be due to overt choice or to the influence of the food industry. Reference made by journalists and NGOs on the role played by important corporate sponsors, and the divergent national interests represented in the different pavilions, point, however, to some level of strategic denial. All in all, Expo 2015 seems consistent with other marketing practices such as advertising milk products with happy cows pasturing in the mountains, while this situation applies to

only an insignificant minority of the ruminants. [Scruton \(2006, p. 73\)](#) goes further in arguing “By describing chickens and eggs as ‘farm fresh,’ producers effectively hide the living death upon which their profits depend. ... To some extent, of course, people are the victims of well-organised deception” (for a general discussion of deception in marketing see [Kimmel, 2001](#)).

DISCUSSION: EMOTIONAL DIALECTICS IN FIELD STABILITY

The case vignettes presented above vary on the two dimensions we discussed in the theory section, that is, the level at which denials occurs, and the degree of reflexivity implied by the observed processes. They also show how the different levels are interrelated and the role played by the governing elites, the members of the mainstreams and the deviants (vegans). In the following, we discuss the relationship between forms of denial, types of actors and institutional stability and change, and the role emotions and cognitions play in this relationship. [Fig. 7](#) summarizes these ideas in a theoretical model. In the center, fields are portrayed as having contradictions

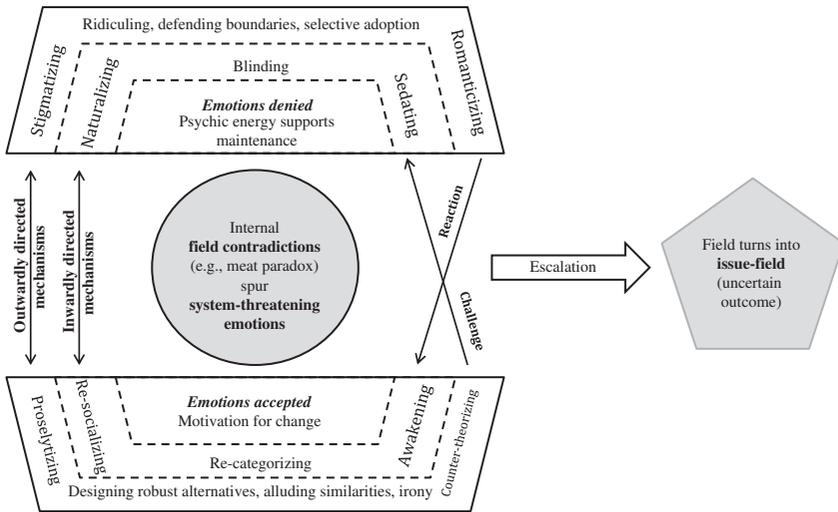


Fig. 7. Field-Contradictions, Emotions, Denial and Institutional Stability versus Change.

(Seo & Creed, 2002) which may spur system-threatening emotions. Stability is predicated on the efficacy of denial mechanisms to maintain the institution (top half of the figure), while field change is predicated both on the efficacy of counter-mechanisms to the emotional calls to action inscribed into field-level contradictions (bottom half of the figure) and on changes in the balance of power through creating an issue-field around the challenge to the established institution.

In a stable field, deviant actors are subject to shaming by mainstream actors when deviance is detected. Felt or expressed emotions play an important role in stabilizing the institutional order, both ex-ante as deviants try to hide their behavior in order not to be shamed, and ex-post when shame is felt due to shaming acts (Creed et al., 2014). Deviants, however, cannot easily shame members of the mainstream. The latter have cognitive defenses in place to impede being shamed. The stability of the institutional order is based on the premise that the members of the mainstream either do not see alternatives or deny the negative consequences of the actual order, that is, their degree of reflexivity remains low. At a base level, mainstream members are “protected” by cultural categories that impede threatening emotions to surface. For example, the internalization of naturalized categories is a mode by which individuals deny emotions related to compassion toward animals raised as food; compassionate emotions do not surface because “the animal behind” is not *seen*. In the case of cultural denial, emotions mainly operate ex-ante in inscribing institutional orders in subjectivities through socialization – if socialization is successful, individuals will only experience satisfaction when expecting or tasting meat.

Contradictions internal to the institutional order and challenges to it require denial as a stabilization mechanism. To the first, the emotions and institutions literature has shown that emotions are needed to sustain institutional orders either because they regularize deviants or because they reassure mainstream conformists. The pride felt in the occasion of exemplary behavior is a manifest emotion that sustains institutional orders (Scott, 2008). However, we argue that mainstream actors also need to be protected from the emergence of threatening emotions which may result from contradictions in institutionalized values. For example, the categorization of animals in different categories, food and pets, may be sufficient for most people in solving the so-called “meat paradox,” that is, “people both like animals and like eating animals” (Loughnan, Haslam, & Bastian, 2010, p. 159). But some “people may feel an uncomfortable tension between their moral beliefs (I should not hurt animals) and their behavior (I eat meat)” (Bratanova et al., 2011, p. 193). In other words, institutional orders are

protected from the incompleteness and inconsistency of the socializations of its mainstream members by the cognitive “lines of defense” constituted by denial, which in Fig. 7 we define as inwardly directed mechanisms. Protection is given because the cognitive lines of defense avoid the emergence of emotions and maintain reflexivity at a low level. Mainstream members are blinded, so to speak, by categorization, and sedated by readily available myths.

To the second, challenges to the institutional order from deviant behavior, when recognized as supported by a counter-theorization, may activate system-threatening emotions made latent and inactive through socialization. As Berger and Luckman have argued “The appearance of an alternative symbolic universe poses a threat because its very existence demonstrates empirically that one’s own universe is less than inevitable” (1966, p. 126). Mainstream actors, as in the restaurant example discussed above, often resort first to readily available justifications (“eating meat is necessary for health,” “animals eat each other and we are on top of the food pyramid”). If the challengers stop questioning, then the institutional order is safe. Such cognitive justifications are sufficient as first line of defense in avoiding the emergence of uncomfortable latent emotions. If, however, the questioning by challengers continues, persons in denial may paradoxically protect themselves from *feeling* threatening emotions by *expressing* emotions that are non-threatening for them. Irony is a common way to express ridicule and other negative emotions regarding the opponent (Colston & Gibbs, 1998) and self-righteousness expressed in anger is another typical modality to preserve denial (Cohen, 2001). According to Cohen (2001, p. 34), self-righteousness is a typical attitude of persons in a state of denial, a form of “retreat from truth to omnipotence ... that ... obsessively blames others.” Expression of self-non-threatening emotions is an outwardly directed mechanism aimed at defusing a challenge that protects the denier from self-threatening emotions that may arise when challengers question their categorical and ideological lines of defense. Other similar mechanisms are stigmatizing and ridiculing challengers, defending the boundaries of categories (e.g., the animal/human “divide”), or selectively adopting arguments of the challengers (such as the notion of humane or organic meat).

Coming back to the empirical question of why the industrial livestock industry persists, our analysis shows that denials of different types and with different degrees of reflexivity support each other in stabilizing the institution. We have argued that its embeddedness in cultural categories, a well-developed ideology sustaining denial by individuals socialized in their

childhood, and the complacency of the governing elites all conjure for this outcome. Denial contributes to this stability both through distorted cognitive justifications and through the transformation of emotions threatening to individuals into less threatening ones. The system is sustained both at a societal level through laws, rules, and rituals (like Thanksgiving), at the organizational level through marketing and practices related to food, and by individuals who enact the categories into which they were socialized: “Public memory is the storage system for social order” “operating on individual minds” (Douglas, 1986, p. 70). While the system of livestock production is so deeply ingrained that it resembles a total institution, as the pervasiveness of its rationalization creates “shadowed places in which nothing can be seen and no questions asked” (Douglas, 1986, p. 69; see also Brown, 1997), there are cracks in the institution. The philosophical field of animal rights is growing, vegetarian and vegan product categories are starting to diffuse in the market, “robust” meat alternatives are easy to find, and courses on how to cook 100% plant-based food and vegan self-help groups are spreading, offering opportunities to re-socialization.

CONCLUSIONS

We have shown in this paper that the literature on institutions and emotions has so far overlooked the role that different forms of denial play in stabilizing institutional orders. The role denial plays is that of avoiding the emergence of disruptive emotions that might motivate a challenge to the status quo. Not only do felt and expressed emotions like shame and pride stabilize institutions but also suppressed emotions. We have discussed how denial is particularly important in assuring that members of the mainstream do not “lose their faith,” while felt and expressed emotions like shame operate to control deviants. Moreover, cognitions and emotions operate in a mutual relationship, as denial needs both cultural categories and the availability of ready-made rationalizations to confront challengers without being “infected by doubts” and besieged by threatening emotions. We have also discussed the role of power and powerful elites in sustaining ideologies, rationalizations, and the socialization apparatus.

We contribute both to the literature on emotions and institutions and to neo-institutional theory more generally by showing that power is part of the equation when emotions and taken-for-granted cognitions interact in sustaining institutional orders. As well, we have sketched an attempt to

integrate the cultural-relational conception of organizational field that emphasizes common meaning with the issue-based one emphasizing struggles over meaning. Our theoretical model identifies the seeds of an issue-based field within the denied contradictions embedded in a stable field order, putting us close to the idea of institutional hotspots as “crises waiting to happen” advanced by Nicolini and colleagues (2015).

Our theoretical discussion has been supported by the case of the global food production and consumption field and, in particular, by a reflection on the livestock industry. This case was helpful because it allowed us to highlight some processes, given the high emotional and cultural value of food. Future research should therefore verify if similar denial processes operate in other types of fields. We think, however, that this is a rather common situation. The car and air transportation industries, for instance, seem to present similar processes. Children nowadays are socialized to individual and air transportation very early and the product, the car, and the service, air transport, have been successfully framed as either essential component of our individual freedom or as an individual right to happiness (when low cost air airlines, for instance, market holiday destinations as an escape from the hardships of daily life). And both have similar impacts on environmental sustainability as the livestock industry. We hope that other scholars will investigate whether denial operates in the same way in these and other fields; for example, are the strategies of the challengers and of the elites similar or different to what we have suggested for the food production and consumption field?

NOTES

1. We analyzed secondary sources, like academic literature, and industry magazines, reports of NGOs, general magazines and newspaper articles. We engaged in site visits (like the EXPO 2015 in Milan or vegetarian restaurants). And we used autoethnography (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). The first author has progressively transitioned from an organic-meat-eater, fishetarian (fish + vegetarian), ovo-lacto vegetarian, to a vegan from 2010 to 2013. This personal experience has offered access to several instances of denial by others and self. The reactions of significant others, colleagues, and society in general to these choices have offered an interesting (sometimes painful) viewpoint on denial processes. The fact that the other author is non-vegan has added an interesting balance and check in the analysis of the episodes.

2. “Ethical vegans” do not eat or use animal products out of compassion for the suffering of animals “Health vegans,” instead, are strict vegetarians because they believe this being good for health.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors wish to thank Royston Greenwood, Maxim Voronov, and Peter Walgebach for their extremely helpful comments and support.

REFERENCES

- American Dietetic Association. (2003). Position of the American dietetic association and dietitians of Canada: Vegetarian diets. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 103, 748–765.
- Barbalet, J. M. (1998). *Emotion, social theory, and social structure*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Battilana, J., & D'Aunno, T. (2009). Institutional work and the paradox of embedded agency. In T. B. Lawrence, R. Suddaby, & B. Leca (Eds.), *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations* (pp. 31–58). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Beckert, J. (1999). Agency, entrepreneurs, and institutional change. The role of strategic choice and institutionalized practices in organizations. *Organization Studies*, 20(5), 777–799.
- Berger, P., & Luckman, T. L. (1966). *The social construction of knowledge: A treatise on the sociology of knowledge*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday.
- Bratanova, B., Loughnan, S., & Bastian, B. (2011). The effect of categorization as food on the perceived moral standing of animals. *Appetite*, 57, 193–196.
- Brown, A. D. (1997). Narcissism, identity, and legitimacy. *Academy of Management Review*, 22, 643–686.
- Brown, A. D., Ainsworth, S., & Grant, D. (2012). The rhetoric of institutional change. *Organization Studies*, 33, 297–321.
- Brunsson, N. (1989). *The organization of hypocrisy: Talk, decision and actions in organizations*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Caffo, L. (2013). *Il maiale non fa la rivoluzione. Manifesto per un antispecismo debole*, Editioni Sonda, Casale Monferrato.
- Cascio, W. F., & Luthans, F. (2014). Reflections on the metamorphosis at Robben Island: The role of institutional work and positive psychological capital. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 23, 51–67.
- Cerulo, K. A. (2010). Mining the intersections of culture and cognitive science. *Poetics*, 38, 115–132.
- Christina. (2012). *Kids and factory farming: Yes, tell them the truth*. Retrieved from <http://spoonfedblog.net/2012/02/27/kids-and-factory-farming-yes-tell-them-the-truth/>
- Cohen, S. (2001). *States of denial: Knowing about atrocities and suffering*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Colston, H. L., & Gibbs, R. (1998). Metametaphorical issues, Analogy and Irony: Rebuttal to 'Rebuttal Analogy'. *Metaphor and Symbol*, 13(1), 69–75.
- Creed, W. E. D., DeJordy, R., & Lok, J. (2010). Being the change: Resolving institutional contradiction through identity work. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53, 1336–1364.

- Creed, W. E. D., Hudson, B. A., Okhuysen, G. A., & Smith-Crowe, K. (2014). Swimming in a sea of shame: Incorporating emotion into explanations of institutional reproduction and change. *Academy of Management Review*, 39, 275–301.
- Currie, G., Lockett, A., Finn, R., Martin, G., & Waring, J. (2012). Institutional work to maintain professional power: Recreating the model of medical professionalism. *Organization Studies*, 33, 937–962.
- Dacin, M. T., Munir, K., & Tracey, P. (2010). Formal dining at Cambridge colleges: Linking ritual performance and institutional maintenance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6), 1393–1418.
- Dacin, T., Goodstein, J., & Scott, W. R. (2002). Institutional theory and institutional change: Introduction to the special issue forum. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 45–56.
- Deridda, J. (2008). *The animal that therefore I am*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- DiMaggio, P. J. (1988). Interest and agency in institutional theory. In L. G. Zucker (Ed.), *Institutional Patterns and organizations: Culture and environment* (pp. 3–22). Cambridge, MA: Ballinger.
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1983). The iron cage revisited: Institutional isomorphism and collective rationality in organizational fields. *American Sociological Review*, 48, 147–160.
- DiMaggio, P. J., & Powell, W. W. (1991). Introduction. In W. W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 1–38). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Donadio, R. (2015). Milan's expo 2015 finds success, but with a muddled message. *The New York Times*, August 10 (accessed online).
- Donaldson, S., & Kymlicka, W. (2011). *Zoopolis. A political theory of animal rights*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Douglas, M. (1986). *How institutions think*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Eliasoph, N. (1998). *Avoiding politics: How Americans produce apathy in everyday life*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Ellis, C. S., & Bochner, A. (2000). Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 733–768). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Elsbach, K. (1994). Managing organizational legitimacy in the California cattle industry: The construction and effectiveness of verbal accounts. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39, 57–88.
- Fairlie, S. (2010). *Meat. A benign extravagance*. White River Junction, VT: Chelsea Green.
- FAO. (2006). *Livestock's long shadow. Environmental issues and options*.
- FAO. (2012). *Sustainable diets and biodiversity*.
- Fischer, M. (2001). Differenz, Indifferenz, Gewalt: Die Kategorie "Tier" als Prototyp sozialer Ausschließung. *Kriminologisches Journal*, 33(3), 170–188.
- Francione, G. (2008). *Animals as persons: Essays on the abolition of animal exploitation*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
- Francis. (2015). *Encyclical letter Laudato si' of the Holy Father Francis on care for our common home* (accessed online).
- Goodland, R., & Anhang, J. (2009). *Livestock and climate change. What if the key actors in climate change were pigs, Chickens and cows?* (pp. 10–19). Washington, DC: Worldwatch Institute.

- Goodrick, E., Jarvis, L., & Reay, T. (2015). The dream of pharmaceutical care: The role of emotions in galvanizing the rank and file. In J. Humphreys (Ed.), *Proceedings of the seventy-fifth annual meeting of the academy of management*, Online ISSN: 2151-6561.
- Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York, NY: International Publishers.
- Green, S. E. (2004). A rhetorical theory of diffusion. *Academy of Management Review*, 29, 653–669.
- Gruen, A. (1987). *Der Wahnsinn der Normalität: Realismus als Krankheit. Eine Theorie zur menschlichen Destruktivität*, Kösel, München.
- Haley. (2013). *Should kids know how their meat gets to the table?* Retrieved from <http://www.mamaandbabylove.com/2013/05/01/should-kids-know-how-their-meat-gets-to-the-table/>
- Hardy, C., & Maguire, S. (2010). Discourse, field-configuring events, and change in organizations and institutional fields: Narratives of DDT and the Stockholm convention. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6), 1365–1392.
- Hargadon, A. B., & Douglas, J. Y. (2001). When Innovations meet Institutions: Edison and the design of the electric light. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 46, 476–501.
- Hoffman, A. J. (1999). Institutional evolution and change: Environmentalism and the US chemical industry. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42, 351–371.
- Holm, P. (1995). The dynamics of institutionalization: Transformation processes in Norwegian fisheries. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 398–422.
- Höss, R. (1992). *Death dealer: The memoirs of the SS Kommandant at Auschwitz*. Buffalo, NY: Prometheus Books.
- Hughes, E. (1936). The ecological aspect of institutions. *American Sociological Review*, 1(2), 180–189.
- Janis, I. L. (1971). Groupthink. *Psychology Today*, November, pp. 43–46, 74–76.
- Jasper, J. M., & Poulsen, J. (1995). Recruiting strangers and friends: Moral shocks and social networks in animal rights and anti-nuclear protests. *Social Problems*, 42, 493–512.
- Jepperson, R. L. (1991). Institutions, institutional effects, and institutionalism. In P. DiMaggio & W. W. Powell (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 143–163). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Joy, M. (2009). *Why we love dogs, eat pigs, and wear cows*. San Francisco, CA: Conari Press.
- Joyce, A., Dixon, S., Comfort, J., & Hallett, J. (2012). Reducing the environmental impact of dietary choice: Perspectives from a behavioural and social change approach. *Journal of Environmental and Public Health*, 2012, Article ID 978672, 1–7.
- Key, T. J., Appleby, P. N., Crowe, F. L., Bradbury, K. E., Schmidt, J. A., & Travis, R. C. (2014). Cancer in British vegetarians: Updated analyses of 4998 incident cancers in a cohort of 32,491 meat eaters, 8612 fish eaters, 18,298 vegetarians, and 2246 vegans. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 100(suppl), 378–385.
- Kimmel, A. J. (2001). Deception in marketing research and practice: An introduction. *Psychology and Marketing*, 18(7), 657–661.
- Klein, N. (2014). *This changes everything: Capitalism vs. the climate*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.
- Lawrence, T. B., & Suddaby, R. (2006). Institutions and institutional work. In S. R. Clegg, C. Hardy, T. B. Lawrence, & W. R. Nord (Eds.), *Handbook of organization studies* (2nd ed., pp. 215–254). London: Sage.

- Leblebici, H., Salancik, G. R., Gopay, A., & King, T. (1991). Institutional change and the transformation of inter-organizational fields: An organizational history of the U.S. radio broadcasting industry. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36(3), 333–363.
- Lok, J., & De Rond, M. (2013). On the plasticity of institutions: Containing and restoring practice breakdowns at the Cambridge university boat club. *Academy of Management Journal*, 56, 185–207.
- Loughnan, S., Haslam, N., & Bastian, B. (2010). The role of meat consumption in the denial of moral status and mind to meat animals. *Appetite*, 55, 156–159.
- Masson, J. M. (2009). *The face on your plate: The truth about food*. New York, NY: W.W. Norton.
- Minson, J. A., & Monin, B. (2012). Do-gooder derogation: Putting down morally-motivated others to defuse implicit moral reproach. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 3(2), 200–207.
- Navis, C., & Glynn, M. A. (2010). How new market categories emerge: Temporal dynamics of legitimacy, identity, and entrepreneurship in satellite radio, 1990–2005. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 55(3), 439–471.
- Nicolini, D., Delmestri, G., Goodrick, E., Reay, T., Lindberg, K., & Adolfsson, P. (2016). Look what's back! Institutional complexity, reversibility and the knotting of logics. *British Journal of Management*, 27: 228–248.
- Norgaard, K. M. (2011). *Living in Denial: Climate change, emotions, and everyday life*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1996). Compassion: The basic social emotion. *Social Philosophy and Policy*, 13, 27–58.
- Patriarch Bartholomew. (2012). Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. On Earth as in Heaven: Ecological Vision and Initiatives of Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. In J. Chryssavgis (Ed.), *On earth as in heaven: Ecological vision and initiatives of ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*. New York, NY: Fordham University Press.
- Powell, W. W. (1991). Expanding the scope of institutional analysis. In W. W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 183–203). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Rao, H., Monin, P., & Durand, R. (2005). Institutional change in Toque Ville: Nouvelle cuisine as an identity movement in French gastronomy. *American Journal of Sociology*, 108, 795–843.
- Regan, T. (1983). *The case for animal rights*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Rosa, J. A., Porac, J. F., Runser-Spanjol, J., & Saxon, M. S. (1999). Sociocognitive dynamics in a product market. *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 64–77.
- Rozin, P. (2007). Food and eating. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *The handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 391–416). New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Rozin, P., & Fallon, A. (1986). The acquisition of likes and dislikes for food. In K. Isselbacher (Ed.), *What is America eating?* (pp. 58–71). Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- Rozin, P., Markwith, M., & Stoess, C. (1997). Moralization and becoming a vegetarian: The transformation of preferences into values and the recruitment of disgust. *Psychological Science*, 8, 67–73.
- Sabate, J., & Soret, S. (2014). Sustainability of plant-based diets: Back to the future. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, 100(Suppl), 476–482.
- Sayer, A. (2005). Class, moral worth and recognition. *Sociology*, 39, 947–963.
- Scheff, T. J. (2000). Shame and the social bond: A sociological theory. *Sociological Theory*, 18, 84–99.

- Schmitz, F. (Ed.). (2014). *Tierethik. Grundlagentexte*. Berlin: Suhrkamp Verlag.
- Scott, M. B., & Lyman, S. M. (1968). Accounts. *American Sociological Review*, 33(1), 46–62.
- Scott, W. R. (2001). *Institutions and organizations: Ideas and interests* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Scott, W. R. (2008). *Institutions and organizations: Ideas and interests* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Scott, W. R., & Meyer, J. W. (1991). The organization of societal sectors: Propositions and early evidence. In Powell & DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 108–140). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Scruton, R. (2006). *Animal rights and wrongs*. London: Demos.
- Seo, M.-G., & Creed, W. E. D. (2002). Institutional contradictions, praxis, and institutional change: A dialectical perspective. *Academy of Management Review*, 27, 222–247.
- Singer, P. (1977). *Animal liberation: A new ethic for our treatment of animals*. New York, NY: Discus.
- Tilman, D., & Clark, M. (2014). Global diets links environmental sustainability and human health. *Nature*, 515, 518–522.
- Trower, M. R. (2014). *Why are vegetarians so annoying?* Retrieved from <http://advanced-hindsight.com/2014/05/08/1964/>
- Turner, J. H. (2006). Psychoanalytic sociological theories and emotions. In J. E. Stets & J. H. Turner (Eds.), *Handbook of the sociology of emotions* (pp. 276–294). New York: Springer.
- van Bommel, K., & Spicer, A. (2011). Hail the snail: Hegemonic struggles in the slow food movement. *Organization Studies*, 32(12), 1717–1744.
- van Wijk, J., Stam, W., Elfring, T., Zietsma, C., & den Hond, F. (2013). Activists and incumbents tying for change: The interplay of agency, culture and networks in field evolution. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(2), 358–386.
- Vaughan, D. (1996). *The challenger launch decision: Risky technology, culture and deviance at NASA*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Voronov, M. (2014). Toward a toolkit for emotionalizing institutional theory. *Research on Emotion in Organizations*, 10, 167–196.
- Voronov, M., & Vince, R. (2012). Integrating emotions into the analysis of institutional work. *Academy of Management Review*, 37, 58–81.
- Voronov, M., & Weber, K. (2016). The heart of institutions: Emotional competence and institutional actorhood. *Academy of Management Journal*, 41(3), 456–478.
- Voronov, M., & Yorks, L. (2015). Did you notice that? Theorizing differences in the capacity to apprehend institutional contradictions. *Academy of Management Review*, 40(4), 563–586.
- Weber, K., Heinze, K. L., & DeSoucey, M. (2008). Forage for thought: Mobilizing codes in the movement for grass-fed meat and dairy products. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 53(3), 529–567.
- Zerubavel, E. (2006). *The elephant in the room: Silence and denial in everyday life*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Zilber, T. (2009). Institutional maintenance as narrative acts. In T. Lawrence, R. Suddaby, & B. Leca (Eds.), *Institutional work: Actors and agency in institutional studies of organizations* (pp. 205–235). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Zucker, L. G. (1991). The role of institutionalization in cultural persistence. In W. W. Powell & P. J. DiMaggio (Eds.), *The new institutionalism in organizational analysis* (pp. 59–82). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

This article has been cited by:

1. Joel Gehman Michael Lounsbury Royston Greenwood How Institutions Matter: From the Micro Foundations of Institutional Impacts to the Macro Consequences of Institutional Arrangements 1-34. [[Abstract](#)] [[Full Text](#)] [[PDF](#)] [[PDF](#)]