The Marketization of Religion: Field, Capital, and Consumer Identity

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Certain institutions traditionally have had broad socializing influence over their members, providing templates for identity that comprehend all aspects of life from the existential and moral to the mundanely material. Marketization and detraditionalization undermine that socializing role. This study examines the consequences when, for some members, such an institution loses its authority to structure identity. With a hermeneutical method and a perspective grounded in Bourdieu's theories of fields and capital, this research investigates the experiences of disaffected members of a religious institution and consumption field. Consumers face severe crises of identity and the need to rebuild their self-understandings in an unfamiliar marketplace of identity resources. Unable to remain comfortably in the field of their primary socialization, they are nevertheless bound to it by investments in field-specific capital. In negotiating this dilemma, they demonstrate the inseparability and co-constitutive nature of ideology and consumption.

> Vital insights into the socio-cultural dynamics of modern societies are probably only to be gained through an exploration of relationships between spheres, such as religion and economics, which are normally considered unrelated. (Campbell 1987/2005, 9)

An ad campaign, quietly begun in several test markets—including Tucson, Minneapolis, and Colorado Springs—was released with a splash in New York City in 2011. It showed diverse and wholesomely attractive men and women with the catchphrase "I'm a Mormon." The ABC News web site ran a report with the title "Mormon NYC Ad Campaign Very Savvy Branding" (Riparbelli 2011). "I'm a Mormon" advertisements ran on a Times Square electronic billboard and also appeared on taxis and buses and in the subways. They created buzz and served to broaden the church's appeal, diminish stereotypes of its membership, and provide some control over the church's message. The marketing appeared to countermand some of the biting satire aimed toward the church in the concurrently running Broadway play *The Book of Mormon*. The campaign also coincided with the run-up to the 2012 US presidential election, in which two candidates for the Republican Party nomination were active members of the Mormon Church.

The sponsorship of advertising campaigns by religious institutions, including the "I'm a Mormon" campaign and the "Inspired by Mohammad" campaign for Islam, clearly mirror the popular refrains of identity campaigns such as "I'm a Mac" or "I am Jeep" in the marketplace for consumer goods (Einstein 2007). If market logic pervades even religion, it begs the question of what aspects of consumers' lives could possibly be immune to it. The answer to Kozinets's (2002) question "Can consumers escape the market?" would appear to be no, not even in the most traditionally sacred of spaces. Ample evidence points to the marketization of many, if not most of society's traditional institutions. Increasingly marketized fields include, but are

not limited to, medicine (Thompson 2004), education (Bartlett et al. 2002), and government services (Massey 1997).

Marketization empowers consumers, affording increased agency in arenas of social life where previously meaning and identity were more given and stable (Firat and Venkatesh 1995; Holt 2002; Thompson 2005). This newfound freedom can also come with unanticipated and perhaps unwanted obligations and consequences, forcing consumers to assemble identities from a wide assortment of sometimes disparate resources (Slater 1997). This study explores the consequences to consumer identity in the face of the marketization of traditional institutions that once could be counted on to supply consumers with templates for normative identity. More specifically we address this research question: How do consumers manage identity reconstruction in the fragmented space that remains when a former institutional pillar of identity no longer carries the legitimacy and authority it once had to structure their lives and self-understandings?

A key aspect of widespread marketization is the detraditionalization of bedrock social institutions. According to Boeve (2005), "Detraditionalization as a term hints at the socio-cultural interruption of traditions . . . which are no longer able to hand themselves on from one generation to the next. . . . On the structural level, every individual is charged with the task of constructing his or her personal identity. Traditions no longer automatically steer this construction process, but are only possibilities together with other choices from which an individual must choose" (104–5). Traditional institutions cast people into relatively defined roles, hierarchies, and power relations. Infused, however, with market logic, these institutions have seen a weakening of their power vis-à-vis the consumer. Thompson (2004, 172) discusses consumer behavior in the face of certain detraditionalized building blocks of society, namely, "family, professional work, education and medicine." In the field of medicine, for example, a market consciousness has comparatively leveled the power structure between doctors and patients who now see themselves as consumers empowered and expected to make choices regarding their own health care (Thompson 2004).

Certain religious institutions have traditionally served as pillars of identity for their adherents, socializing them and defining them across the widest possible range of concerns. Religious institutions settle existential questions, define morality, organize social and family relations, provide mechanisms for gaining social status, and, importantly for this study, can regulate the most mundane of consumption behaviors including diet, clothing, entertainment and other aspects of lifestyle and identity in a totalizing fashion (Goffman 1968). If the marketization of religion follows a similar path as that of other traditional institutions, and ample evidence suggests that it does (Gauthier and Martikainen 2013), then it would seem that such a change would have meaningful consequences both for the institutions and for their member consumers. Important research questions arise but remain unanswered in the literatures on consumption and

on religion. If a central pillar of identity, such as a traditional religious institution, loses its legitimacy for certain consumers, then what are the consequences to the identities that once depended on that institution for their meaning and integrity? If institutionally defined identities disintegrate and consumers are faced with constructing new ones in a marketplace of identity resources, how do they manage it?

This study explores these questions among disaffected members and former members of the Mormon Church, a traditional institution with broad influence over members' identities, consumption, and lifestyles. From a theoretical foundation based on Bourdieu's constructs of field and capital (Bourdieu 1977, 1984, 1986; Bourdieu and Wacquant 1992) we will show that the Mormon religion constitutes —that is, continually organizes and reproduces—a distinctive consumption field and habitus replete with embedded social relations and field-specific capital. For devout members it provides socialization that reaches into all areas of their lives, and it enforces that socialization with a formal authority structure. We will show that, for different reasons related to marketization and to detraditionalization, some members of the church come to reject the church's authority, leading them to question fundamental aspects of their own beliefs, practices, and identities. No longer trusting the church's answers to key identity questions, they face a bewildering marketplace of alternatives, and they must construct a logic by which to assemble their choices into a meaningful understanding of self in the world. We will show that, in attempting to reconstruct shattered identities, they confront the possible loss of important field-specific social, cultural, and economic capital, making exit from the field especially difficult. Identity reconstruction becomes a problematic process wherein consumers must manage field-specific capital from fields they once felt they knew and trusted at the same time as they are amassing capital in fields they may scarcely understand. The process, which we elaborate, can be confusing, difficult, and painful, as well as exhilarating and liberating.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

To lay the theoretical groundwork for this study we first discuss the marketization of religion in general and of Mormonism specifically. We then discuss religious institutions as consumption fields, again with a focus on the Mormon Church. Next we examine the consumer culture literature for its insights into the identity challenges of consumers at odds with their habitus and consumption fields. Recent research in this area leaves many unanswered questions regarding the identity-reconstruction challenges of individuals caught between crumbling field-dependent identities and a marketplace that is rich with identity-building resources but provides few templates for their assembly.

The Marketization of Religion

At least since the publication of Kotler and Levy's (1969) "Broadening the Concept of Marketing," scholars and pro-

fessionals have acknowledged that religions, like hospitals, schools, and other culturally embedded institutions, are experienced and consumed and can be branded and marketed (cf. Miller 2003). Religious leaders increasingly understand that congregants are consumers of religion, and churches therefore invest significantly in marketing activities, believing the investments pay dividends in decision processes and commitment (Einstein 2007; O'Guinn and Belk 1989; Twitchell 2004). Twitchell (2004) shows that the marketing of religion includes applications of sophisticated market research, segmentation schemes, well-funded promotional campaigns, and aggressive personal selling efforts. Programmatic messaging that occurs within a church is tailored toward recruiting and retaining members. The economic rewards for successful marketers of faith and church are substantial for those in power, as exhibited by celebrity ministers and their megachurches, with congregations that can number in the thousands (Thumma and Travis 2007). These organizations protect their income with attentive application of tax laws and astute investment strategies.

The Mormon Church is no less marketized than any other. Speaking about the "I'm a Mormon" ad campaign, Scott Swofford, director of the church's website, was quoted as saying: "Web traffic is up tremendously, two to three hundred percent in some cases on Mormon.org, especially in the test market . . . so we're pleased with all those numbers" (Green 2010). News outlets picked up the story of the rapid expansion of the Mormon Church: "Romney's Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints reported 2 million new adherents and new congregations in 295 counties where they didn't exist a decade ago, making them the fastest-growing group in the U.S." (Eckstrom 2012). From such stories it appears that the Mormon Church views its identity as a brand to be managed, with market share clearly figuring into the management calculus.

The realization of a church as a marketing institution can result in consumers understanding religion as a constellation of products and services in a marketplace offering many alternatives. This in turn may shift the church from the realm of the sacred to that of the profane (Durkheim 1915/2008; O'Guinn and Belk 1989). The detraditionalization of sacred occasions and products (e.g., Christmas, Hanukkah, Halal) has profaned them in ways that make them more accessible and marketer friendly (Izberk-Bilgin 2013; O'Guinn and Belk 1989). For example, O'Guinn and Belk (1989) find that televangelism can detraditionalize and profane the sacred. This phenomenon is reflected in Christian television broadcasts appearing in Kenya. As Dolan (2012) observes: "charismatic scenes unfold daily in a nation where crusades, radio revivals, and celebrity evangelists pervade all facets of public life, and where the boundaries among religion, commerce, and entertainment are often impossible to discern" (145). In yielding to the logic of the marketplace, religious institutions are becoming increasingly detraditionalized, the consequences for some adherents being that any given church no longer holds a privileged role in providing spiritual and moral guidance. As we shall see next, this marketization of religion also has deep implications for consumption practices.

Religion as Consumption Field

Bourdieu (1991) conceptualized a religious field as one in which those individuals with symbolic capital or status —which for him meant the clergy—compete for relative position. Subsequent work in sociology establishes religion as a field wherein cultural capital is accumulated and traded among laic church members as well (Rey 2004; Swartz 1996; Verter 2003). Verter identified the religious competencies and preferences of lay church members as a form of cultural capital in "the economy of symbolic goods" (2003, 152). A peculiar characteristic of Mormonism is that the clergy consists almost entirely of unpaid lay church members who serve voluntarily in ecclesiastical callings. These callings, embedded in the strict leadership hierarchy of the institution, are an institutionalized form of symbolic capital. By any standard, Mormonism constitutes a religious field as conceptualized by Bourdieu.

Holt (1998) brought Bourdieu into the consumer culture literature, demonstrating ways in which cultural capital structures consumption and establishing the existence of consumption fields and field-specific cultural capital. Arsel and Thompson (2011, 792) defined consumption fields as "[networks] of interrelated consumption activities, brand and product constellations, and embedded social networks" and demonstrated the potential "stickiness" of cultural and social capital specific to such fields. Consumer research has not yet examined consumption fields organized around religion. Holt (1998) acknowledges both religious fields and consumption fields but distinguishes between them:

> Like other capital resources, cultural capital exists only as it is articulated in particular institutional domains. According to Bourdieu (as well as many other theorists of modernity), the social world consists of many distinctive, autonomous, but similarly structured (i.e., "homologous") fields such as politics, the arts, religion, education, and business. Fields are the key arenas in which actors compete for placement in the social hierarchy through acquisition of the statuses distinctive to the field. . . . Although cultural capital is articulated in all social fields as an important status resource, it operates in consumption fields through a particular conversion into tastes and consumption practices. (4)

We will argue that not only do certain religious fields, including Mormonism, constitute consumption fields but that in such fields religion and consumption are completely interwoven and not at all distinct.

Research draws strong links between ideology and consumption. Consumer research acknowledges both the importance of ideologies of consumption (Schouten and McAlexander 1995; Thompson and Coskuner-Balli 2007) and of religious ideologies to consumption (Bailey and Sood 1993; Fischer 2008; Hirschman 1981; Izberk-Bilgin 2012; Sandikci and Ger 2010). Üstüner and Holt (2007, 43) refer

to religious ideologies as "taken-for-granted existential anchors." Religious dogma often includes explicit prescriptions and proscriptions regarding the consumption of such things as food, clothing, and entertainment, and faithful adherents regard transgressions as having spiritual, if not eternal, consequences (Jacobs 2007; McDannell 1995). Religious communities also create taste regimes that, although not doctrinally prescribed, establish norms for certain kinds and styles of consumption (Arsel and Bean 2013; Sandikci and Ger 2010, Üstüner and Holt 2007).

Previous research related to Mormonism highlights relationships between religion and consumption (Belk 1992, 1994; Ozanne 1992; Wright and Larson 1992). Mormon ideology directly impacts many common and well-known consumption behaviors, and requires abstention from coffee, tea, tobacco, alcohol, and recreational drugs; abstention from all extramarital or same-sex sexual activity; abstention from pornography and, in many cases, adult-rated mainstream films; and wearing clothing cut to conceal undergarments that cover the shoulders and thighs. Dogma regarding procreation discourages contraception and forbids abortion, leading to large families, which in turn influence housing and transportation choices. Apocalyptic doctrines have led to institutional decrees regarding the caching of survival items and a two years' supply of food. These are all instances of a religious field translating ideology into tastes and consumption practices. The tastes and practices are field specific, and understanding and practicing them yield field-specific cultural capital. Long-term food storage is a case in point. The church's official website hosts a page dedicated to food storage that includes related doctrinal pronouncements, thorough how-to instructions, and a link to the church's own online store from which individuals can purchase items such as "A case of six #10 cans of hard red winter wheat" or other food products and storage paraphernalia branded "Family Home Storage." The simple phrase "two years' supply" is enough to evoke the entire subsystem of ideology and material practice for any Mormon with a modicum of field-specific cultural capital.

Habitus, Field-Dependent Capital, and Identity

Two phenomena theorized by Bourdieu contribute to the stability of a religious consumption field: habitus and field-specific capital. A religious field (or any other field) can cohere for its members through its habitus—the deeply socialized norms that guide how people in the field think and behave (Bourdieu 1977, 1984). Habitus, although constantly (but slowly) evolving between the structures of the field and the will of its members, reproduces itself through traditions and narratives handed down from generation to generation. For this reason detraditionalization might be expected to pose risks to the stability of the field. Habitus reproduces the logic of social relations and authority structures in the field. Habitus is unreflective, or largely taken for granted, such that the rightness of "normal" social relations and behaviors as defined by the field is continually reinforced by the complicity of its members. The coherence of the field

is not the result of deliberate action so much as a function of its seeming rightness to everyone involved.

One visible manifestation of Mormon habitus is the expectation that church members will attend church services every Sunday and that they will wear their "best dress" attire. For men this has traditionally and widely been interpreted as suits with white shirts and neckties; for women it has meant modest dresses or skirts and tops. Modest women's wear means a neckline not too far below the collarbone, loose fit, and covered shoulders with knee-length skirts. A dramatic example of agency pushing against structure is the recent organization of "Wear Pants to Church Day" (http://pantstochurch.com) by women self-identifying as both faithful Mormons and feminists. By challenging the habitus of appropriate attire, they may act as a potential detraditionalizing force.

Research into the habitus of morality suggests that not only conscious morality but also embodied practices and emotions guide behaviors, including consumption (Ignatow 2009; Saatcioglu and Ozanne 2013; Winchester 2008). Winchester (2008) in particular also finds that embodied behaviors, including religious rituals and modes of dress, can help individuals reshape their cognitions of morality and develop new habitus. Winchester's findings raise the possibility that, in a religious field, not only does ideology shape behavior but also that behavior shapes ideology. In the lives of people reconstructing moral or religious identities after breaking with a religion and its habitus, the possibility exists that new consumption behaviors might lead to newly embodied practices and feelings and, thereby, to new moral cognitions or ideologies. If so, this would add significantly to our understandings of identity construction and the interplay between ideology and consumption.

The importance of field-specific capital also contributes to a field's stability. As Arsel and Thompson (2011) find, certain cultural and social capital are not only specific to a field; they may be dependent on it, such that departing the field would constitute a loss of hard-won capital that is not transferable to other fields. Field-dependent capital is a source of status, competency, and social relevance within the field, and its accumulation by an individual makes the field sticky for that individual, especially if that capital is not valued in other fields. Verter (2003) establishes the existence of field-specific symbolic capital in religious congregations, which may contribute to the institutions' stickiness for members.

Arsel and Thompson (2011, 798) note that in accumulating field-dependent capital people also "forge weak and sometimes strong social ties . . . to other consumers in the field who not only share their aesthetic tastes but also continuously validate the status value of their capital." Strong social ties should make a consumption field especially sticky. An example would be a marriage and a family that formed its traditions in the context of the field. In a religious consumption field such strong social ties are especially likely. We expect that interpersonal relationships formed within a religious consumption field may create significant

exit barriers for members that might feel at odds with its teachings or expectations.

Arsel and Thompson's theorization of the stickiness of field-dependent capital nicely explains why "hipsters" elect not to leave their chosen consumption field in the face of stigma but choose instead to reframe the field as "indie." However, the effects of field stickiness are far from universal. Even sizable accumulations of field-dependent capital may fail to hold members in place in the face of detraditionalization. This is exemplified in Üstüner and Holt's (2007) study of Turkish squatter residents aspiring to the lifestyle of the Batici. Socialized from birth into the modern village of the squatter with its translation of traditional, rural Islamic habitus, the women have substantial field-dependent capital in terms of strong social ties and lifelong exposure to field-specific tastes and expertise. The Batici lifestyle, in contrast, is one of modern consumerism and market logic, which acts to detraditionalize Turkish village life. Unlike the hipsters in Arsel and Thompson's study, the squatter women devalue the tastes and skills that characterize their prior socialization. They turn their backs on their familiar, traditional consumption field and strive for a mythic ideal they can never reach, apparently for a lack of generalized social, economic, and cultural capital. Even when they have fully acknowledged their failures to achieve the Batici lifestyle, none of the women in question, with one exception, return to the modern village to avail themselves of their field-dependent capital. Instead they suffer thwarted identity projects. The one who does return to squatter life reframes the modern village in the context of modern Islam, much as the hipsters reframed their consumption field as indie, in order to embrace it without stigma. Unfortunately for our purposes, Üstüner and Holt do not explore the consequences to women's family and social relationships as they leave the squatter, the complications those relationships might have posed to the process of exit, or the strategies the women used to rebuild shattered identities.

Another realm of institution undergoing detraditionalization is that of family (McNay 1999; Thompson 2004). Aided by forces such as gay pride activism, detraditionalization has begun in some cultures to loosen the grip of heteronormativity. In the case of closeted gays, the possibility of losing social capital developed while passing for straight may be a deterrent to coming out; however, as Kates (2002) finds, many gay men opt over time to begin building new, openly gay identities, which they achieve by accumulating field-dependent capital in one or more of various gay subcultures. One thing that makes the phenomenon of coming out interesting for understanding issues of field-dependent capital and identity is the choice to move from lesser to greater social stigma. Coming out may be a long and labored process, wherein field-dependent capital is held in one's former "straight" field while the individual selectively experiments with gay lifestyles, and then only within certain social circles. Lest we seem cavalier by proposing that the loss of field-dependent capital may have bearing on even such profound experiences as coming out, it is important to remember that social, cultural, and economic capital are accrued in institutions that can be as small as the dyad of a marriage or a nuclear family (cf. Furstenberg 2005). Field-dependent capital in such institutions may include resources such as love, support, approval, and care, which a person might be loath to risk losing. We expect that people migrating to new consumption fields will attempt to transfer valued social capital, such as relationships, with them as they go. They may also find themselves operating back and forth between fields that are generally incompatible or even oppositional. Kates (2002) doesn't examine the stickiness of straightness in his study, which leaves us wondering what effects it may have had on his informants' identity-reconstruction processes.

The relationships among existing field-dependent capital and a desire to construct a new identity are clearly more complicated than is apparent from existing research. Arsel and Thompson's informants resist stigma by reframing the field in which they hold valued field-dependent capital, but that field is arguably not as traditional or totalizing as others that we have considered here. Üstüner and Holt's informants abandon significant field-dependent capital to flee a traditional but destabilized field, and most of them resist returning to it even when they are unable to break into their desired field. Kates's informants brave stigma to begin amassing field-dependent capital within gay consumption fields, but the consequences for their social capital in the straight world are unclear. From these studies we learn that people value field-dependent capital, even in fields that may be stigmatized, but perhaps only to the extent that the field itself is consistent with their changing identities or life goals. In cases where the field of prior socialization ceases to fit, in part perhaps because of detraditionalization and marketization, people may feel compelled to leave it. We expect that in such times and circumstances the former field may suddenly appear less as a unified life-world than as a confusing blend of components, some of which remain valued and others that are viewed with distaste.

Certain institutions, such as churches, villages, and even families, have traditionally served their members as pillars of personal identity, governing virtually every aspect of their lives from the private to the public and from the immaterial to the most bodily material of behaviors. Marketization and detraditionalization are eroding the authority of such institutions in the face of consumer feelings of sovereignty (Arsel and Thompson 2011; Korczynski and Ott 2004). When individual consumers reject that institutional authority, it falls to them to take responsibility for their own identity construction, piecing together new selves from shattered wholes. How they do that, and what difficulties they face, are the problems this research tackles.

RESEARCH METHODS

We conduct our study in the context of a religious institution that governs nearly every aspect of its members' lives. As a field in which the member is deeply embedded, the Mormon Church provides sources of personal identity bound

up in ideology, practices, and relationships—in short, the stuff of daily life—which, as habitus, faithful Mormons view as right and natural in a God-given way. To better theorize consumer behavior in the wake of the loss of an institutional pillar of identity, we have chosen to study the experiences of people who no longer recognize the authority of the Mormon Church to answer their important existential questions, to dictate the terms of their consumption and lifestyles, or, in short, to structure their identities in a fairly comprehensive way. As we have previously established, the Mormon Church is a traditional religious institution that socializes its members in many of the most basic categories of private and public consumption. Its consumption practices are sufficiently distinctive that identifying them and identifying changes in them are relatively straightforward research tasks, and the connections between Mormon religious ideology and consumption practices are explicit. Finally, there exist numerous forums, both online and off-line, where disaffected Mormons gather to discuss the reasons for and difficulties of extricating themselves from the field. This combination of characteristics makes the Mormon field an especially suitable context for our research purposes.

We expect our findings to be translatable to other contexts in which institutions provide broad consumer socialization and templates for identity construction, but even if the findings were restricted to members of religious institutions, they would cut across a wide swath of society. According to the Pew Research Center (2012), all but 16.3% of the global population is affiliated with some religion. Given this figure and the effect religion has on consumer behavior and consumption activities, it is not surprising that religion has been central in some consumer research (e.g., Einstein 2007; Izberk-Bilgin 2012; O'Guinn and Belk 1989). The Mormon Church alone claims a global following of more than 15 million members and nearly 30,000 congregations (http://www.mormonnewsroom.org/facts-and-stats).

Ultimately this study is not strictly about Mormonism or even religion generally. It is about the experience of the marketization and detraditionalization of a key socializing institution and the roles of consumption behaviors and marketplace resources in the "Now what?" process of rebuilding an identity when such an institution suddenly loses the legitimacy and authority to structure identity wholesale. It is about consumers being plunged, ready or not, into a complex marketplace of ideas and all of the variations of goods, services, and experiences to be found there. It is about choice and the limits of choice as consumers confront the possible loss of field-specific cultural, social, and economic capital that has been the source of their status and meaning as members of a totalizing field.

Hermeneutical Research

We approached this research with methods based on hermeneutic philosophy as originating with Heidegger (1962) and interpreted by Arnold and Fischer (1994) for use in consumer research. The key principles guiding the data col-

lection and analysis include preunderstanding, the dialogic community, and the hermeneutic circle.

Preunderstanding reflects the extent to which "the interpreter and that which is interpreted are linked by a context of tradition—the accumulation of the beliefs, theories, codes, metaphors, myths, events, practices, institutions, and ideologies (as apprehended through language) that precede the interpretation" (Arnold and Fischer 1994, 56). The context of Mormonism is exceedingly rich with culturally specific beliefs, myths, codes, practices, traditions, and one looming and powerful institution. Preunderstanding of these elements was embodied in two members of the research team who had been practicing Mormons and had left the church. Their tacit knowledge of the field provided insider understanding of the data, empathy with informant experiences, and improved access to and rapport with informants.

In fielding and analyzing data, the research team formed a dialogic community. As Arnold and Fischer (1994) explain, "a dialogic community shares [pre]understanding mediated through language. The community is characterized by a sense of collective identity and by voluntary participation in purposive social action." Further, they note that "the community plays both a constitutive and a regulative role" (57) in the research process. Assisting in the regulative function was the fact that two members of the research team had very limited prior understanding of Mormon ideology and culture. They brought usefully naive perspectives to the analysis, which enriched the overall dialogue and the co-constitution of interpretation.

The principle of the hermeneutic circle, well known in interpretive research, turned out to be indispensable to the task of integrating quite varied sources of data into a coherent theoretical map. Our experience as a dialogic community—which also included an editor, an associate editor and three reviewers—very closely matched the description of Arnold and Fischer (1994), wherein "specific elements are examined again and again, each time with a slightly different conception of the global whole. Gradually, an ever more integrated and comprehensive account of the specific elements, as well as of the text as a whole, emerges." Arnold and Fischer also contend that "the objective of hermeneutic circling is to achieve an understanding free of contradictions" (63). This criterion proved both challenging and useful. We began our data analysis using Bourdieu's field-dependent capitals only after rejecting several other theoretical frameworks as less robust fits with our data.

Data Collection

Our data consist of depth interviews with people who self-identify as former Mormons, whether or not they have formally resigned their memberships or been excommunicated from the church. We conducted participant observation at gatherings of disaffected Mormons, including an annual conference of the organization Exmormon Foundation, where we conducted informal interviews and sat in on group discussions. We also gathered archival data from publications by and for Mormons critical of the church and from Internet-

TABLE 1

KEY INFORMANTS

	Pseudonym	Gender	Age	Marital status	Occupation	Data collection method
1	Marta	Female	23	Single	Salesperson	Phone, in-person depth interview, e-mail
2	Peter	Male	38	Married to Jane	Government official	In-person depth interview, e-mail
3	Jane	Female	32	Married to Peter	Homemaker	In-person depth interview
4	Linda	Female	25	Single	Student	In-person depth interview, e-mail
5	Mandy	Female	35	Divorced	Salesperson	Phone, in-person depth interview, e-mail
6	Megan	Female	42	Married	Copywriter	In-person depth interview, e-mail
7	Phillip	Male	58	Married	Manager	In-person depth interview, e-mail
8	Carl	Male	30	Single	Software engineer	In-person depth interview, e-mail
9	Rachel	Female	31	Married to Patrick	Student	Skype in-depth interview, e-mail
10	Patrick	Male	30	Married to Rachel	Homemaker	Skype in-depth interview, in-person depth interview, phone, e-mail
11	Mike	Male	38	Divorced	Entrepreneur	In-person depth interview, e-mail
12	Bradley	Male	36	Divorced	Contractor	In-person depth interview, e-mail
13	Jesse	Female	35	Married to Aaron	Researcher	Phone, in-person depth interview, e-mail
14	Aaron	Male	38	Married to Jesse	Professor	Phone, in-person depth interviews, e-mail
15	Caleb	Male	50	Married	Professor	In-person depth interviews
16	Ann	Female	52	Divorced	Homemaker	In-person depth interview
17	Sam	Male	42	Married	Professor	In-person depth interviews
18	Sigmund	Male	42	Married	Mental health professional	In-person depth interviews, phone, e-mail
19	Sandy	Female	53	Divorced	Business manager	In-person depth interviews, phone, e-mail
20	Bobby	Male	48	Single	Performer	In-person depth interviews
21	Winn	Male	58	Married	Journalist	Internet forum, e-mail, phone
22	Randy	Male	35	Married	Musician	Internet forum, e-mail

based sources, including blogs, posts, and discussion boards dedicated to people who have left or are attempting to leave the church and its sphere of influence.

Authors conducted multiple depth interviews with each of 22 key informants chosen for their reflexivity about their experiences as defectors from Mormonism. All key informants considered themselves former members of the Mormon Church at the time of the interviews. All were recruited organically in the course of the study through online discussion boards and extended personal networks. All interviews were unstructured. Informants were asked to reflect on their experiences in leaving the church. Issues of the rejection of church authority and doctrines and of the subsequent challenges of identity construction emerged from the interviews. Probe questions were used as needed for clarification or to dig deeper into topics broached by the informants. Informant-generated themes included family and social dynamics, criticism of church leaders and doctrines, reflections on personal faith and crises thereof, acts of transgression and resistance, and, most notably, the marketplace resources used during the experiences. All four authors participated in independent analyses of the interview data.

Some of our informants were born into the church; others converted from other beliefs. Some grew up in Utah, where Mormons are the majority population; others grew up outside of Utah, where their Mormonism put them in a minority. All were at one time deeply integrated, faithful members of the church. Table 1 summarizes the informants' characteristics. The textual archival data come from a complete collection of the periodicals *Sunstone* and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought* that cover the years 1981 to the present and 1993 to the present, respectively. Critical journalism such as Heinerman and Shupe's (1988) exposé of Mormon corporate holdings also informed the study. Other publicly available information includes church-produced documents on such topics as the founder's story, church history and doctrine, membership and growth, institutional structure and organization, and political influence within the United States. Finally, we also gathered data from a number of Internet communities.

Data collection from Internet sites began in the 1990s. One of the most productive sites, *Recovery from Mormonism* (exmormon.org), is a moderated, organized and searchable site receiving over a hundred posts per day and archiving over 6,000 posts and articles by Mormons who represent themselves as disaffected, angry, or despairing with respect to their relationships with the church. Other sites included mormoncurtain.com (a support site for ex-Mormons); mormonnomore.com (a procedural guide for terminating one's church membership); and postmormon.org (featuring personal narrative accounts of having left Mormonism). Author Jim McAlexander visited one or more of those sites daily for over a year, posted periodically on *Recovery from Mormonism* and communicated directly with the site moderator to establish a research relationship with her and with two other key informants.

We found one important difference between interview and observation data and data from archival sources. The archival online sources predominantly articulate clean, rational (although emotionally charged) and linear narratives. Stories likely were revised post hoc and essentialized to fit a nar-

rative structure. By comparison, in-person depth interviews and in-person observation of informants struggling with identity challenges revealed much more vacillation, turmoil, inner and interpersonal conflict, and, somewhat surprisingly, blatant contradictions within accounts, especially in terms of time lines and emotional states at any given point in the process of rebuilding identity. It would be possible, using only Internet sources, to construct a neat, linear understanding of institutional exit and subsequent identity construction that fits with the whole corpus of role-transition and rites-of-passage literature, but it would be a comparatively bankrupt interpretation of informants' lived experiences, the realities of which are much messier than those literatures would suggest.

FINDINGS

This report begins with our findings regarding the marketization and detraditionalization of the Mormon Church and the effects of those phenomena on certain of its members. It then moves to a fuller explication of Mormonism as a consumption field, including the identification of key forms of symbolic capital, the cultural capital that makes it distinguishable, and the social and economic capital that rest on it. Finally it presents findings regarding the identity projects of people for whom Mormonism no longer functions as a guiding superstructure for an integrated sense of self in the world.

Marketization and Detraditionalization

The infusion of market logic into religious institutions can be destabilizing for those who have significant personal investments or ties. Some faithful members laud the Mormon Church's marketing efforts, such as the advertisement mentioned in the introduction, for their capacity to "save souls." Others, however, see the market logic as incompatible with the purported spiritual nature of the enterprise. Carl (age 30), a key informant who once served as the financial clerk of his ward (the official name for a local Mormon congregation), commented, "The whole church organization exists to keep people paying tithes. It's very corporate. . . . When people pay their tithing that money is deposited into accounts on Sunday night. You can't waste the Lord's money and not get it into investments as quickly as possible." The bitterness and sarcasm in Carl's statement about "the Lord's money" made a clear statement of his displeasure with what he views as church corporatism. Several informants expressed disdain for the billions of dollars the church invested in the construction of City Creek Shopping Center, adjacent to the Mormon temple in downtown Salt Lake City. For example, one anonymous poster to *Recovery from Mormonism* wrote:

> The Mormon leadership doesn't yet realize that they have built a monumental testament against themselves! LDS [Latter-Day Saint, or Mormon] members have been cleaning toilets in their local wards while their church has used the money

it saved to build a 5 Billion Dollar Mall just down the street. . . . The church has always taken the membership for granted. It has assumed the tithing well would never go dry. But now things are obviously changing. As the church's investment numbers have gone up, so have the number of LDS resignations! As shrewd as the General Authorities (top church leadership) are, you'd think they'd notice the correlation.

Again the implication is clear: religion and commercial enterprise should not be cohabiting beneath the same literal or metaphoric roof.

The problem of marketization first struck Carl during his two-year period of work as a volunteer missionary. While earnestly trying to do the "Lord's work" in "spreading the gospel," Carl became disillusioned by the mission leadership's businesslike practices as manifested in an emphasis on quantitative performance indicators. Said Carl:

> Numbers. Having to send in your weekly mission president's letter, where you have to say how many first discussions and second discussions—and then the president would send 'em back to you with low numbers circled with an up arrow—It didn't seem to represent why I was there. I was there to teach people, not to get the best numbers possible. I just didn't like it. I didn't like the hierarchy of it. I was made a Zone Leader, but I was released [fired] after four months. I didn't like dealing with the APs [assistants to the mission president]. I didn't like the bureaucracy of it. I just wanted to be a missionary.

Marketization and detraditionalization in other institutions, such as medicine or education, certainly impact consumers and providers alike as balances of power, authority and responsibility shift toward the so-called sovereign consumer. In a religious institution the effect is more pronounced. As we see from the above examples, market logic can become a taint that profanes the sacred. Some religion scholars, such as Warner (1993), see marketization as positive in that it keeps churches healthy, innovative, and responsive to the demands of consumers. This may well be true for the institutions themselves, and for a majority of their members, but for many of our informants marketization and detraditionalization cast a cold commercial light on the core of their beliefs and shake their faith in the institution on which they have relied as their main source of meaning and identity.

Marketization is not the only force detraditionalizing Mormonism for our informants. Many of them began to question the church's rightness or authority as a result of exposure to information from secular sources that challenge or contradict key points of church history or dogma. Thanks to the Internet age, such information is readily available. Even if the unraveling of faith begins with the pulling of threads related to history or doctrine, the effects of marketization often emerge as additional forces of detraditionalization. For the understanding we seek, the exact path to disenchantment is less important than the fact that it happens. When it does, the institutional logic people once relied

on for consistency in their personal narratives disintegrates and leaves them holding fragments of identity that they must somehow sort through and figure out how to reassemble. Before we discuss the depths of identity crisis experienced by people falling out with the Mormon field or the challenges of post-Mormon identity reconstruction, we first elaborate on the nature of the field and the capital that operates within it.

The Mormon Consumption Field

As we expected from our review of the literature, we found that the Mormon Church constitutes a religious field complete with its own logic, status structures, and relevant capital. Less predictable from the literature was the finding that, in this field, religion and consumption are intertwined to the point of inseparability. We now discuss the nature of key symbolic, cultural, and social capitals that are specific to this field and their implications for institution-based identity among its members.

Worthiness: The Coin of the Realm. The most important form of symbolic capital in Mormonism, indeed the distillation of all other forms of capital, is something Mormons construct as worthiness. Worthiness is shorthand for personal rightness with God, which in turn means rightness with the institution. Like all symbolic capital, worthiness is interpreted, discerned, and judged by members of the field who have the cultural capital to do so. In extending Bourdieu's conception of the religious field to include lay members, Verter (2003) discusses something he calls spiritual capital. Based on our research, we find this distinction to be unnecessary. The reason is not that spirituality is unimportant to Mormons—quite the contrary. It is that the inference of an individual's spirituality is based entirely on that person's speech and behaviors, many of which are directly related to the consumption of goods and services. What Verter calls spiritual capital is simply symbolic capital derived from field-specific cultural and social capital.

Some significant portion of Mormons' symbolic capital flows from the way religion itself is consumed, such as regular Sunday church attendance. Aaron (age 38) alludes to such gradations in status: "I was always, as a kid, treated a little bit differently because [ours] was the Jack Mormon family. I wasn't, like, constantly there every Sunday. We were there every once in a while, and sometimes we—I always went to Primary and Mutual—but because I wasn't at church every Sunday." As Aaron indicates, even children are acutely aware of their standing in the Mormon community. "Jack Mormon" is the common name for members of the church that are less than resolute about following the institution's rules. Common among Jack Mormons are behaviors such as irregular church attendance, nonpayment of tithes, and the consumption of substances such as tobacco, coffee, tea, or alcohol. Aaron's reference to Primary (a weekly afterschool religious training program for preteens) and Mutual (a weekly program of religious activities for teenagers) highlight two of the main institutional vehicles

for socialization. Primary has a specific, standardized curriculum including lesson manuals and pedagogical resources for teaching children from age 18 months to 11 years (http://www.lds.org/manual/primary). Practically from the cradle, Mormon children learn what worthiness is, and they learn to judge themselves and others accordingly. As we shall shortly see, worthiness is communicated far more subtly than by the mere fact of consuming religious services.

Judgments of a Mormon's worthiness are to some extent institutionalized in a ritual called the "worthiness interview," which is conducted by one of the lay leaders of the church. Linda (age 25) remarks on the importance of the ritual, "If there was a Mormon wedding, I couldn't go in [to the temple]. I'd have to sit outside. You need to have a temple recommend, so you've got to have a worthiness interview. If you don't have a recommend . . . it's kind of painful. . . . When I had my worthiness interview for [an LDS college], I just lied which isn't the greatest thing." Prior to entering a Mormon temple, serving as a missionary, or studying at a Mormon university, a church member is required to interview with her bishop, the authorized leader of the local ward, to determine that she accepts the church's authority and obeys key rules. The rules specifically mentioned in the interview include the payment of tithes, the practice of strict chastity, and the abstention from prohibited consumption acts, such as using coffee, tobacco, or alcohol. Linda discussed lying about drinking alcohol in an interview in order to preserve the appearance of worthiness to attend a school with a strict church-related honor code. Not doing so may have compromised her ability to remain in school. That would have jeopardized both social capital that depended on her school-related relationships and, ultimately, the economic capital that she might gain from the completion of her graduate degree.

Judgments of worthiness are not limited to formal interviews. They pervade Mormon society. Members feel it constantly. As Carl says, "All of these external measures are used to judge internal worthiness. Your appearance, whether or not you shave, whether or not you're wearing a white shirt, what you drink, even the music you listen to and the movies you see, all of these things are used to judge who you are as a person and what your relationship is with God." In addition to calling out some of the ways that consumption behaviors either contribute to or reduce an individual's symbolic capital, Carl makes explicit the conflation of consumption choices with worthiness and of worthiness with spirituality. He has the cultural capital to discern the sometimes subtle cues that signal worthiness, and he understands that Mormon society assigns one's status position accordingly.

Mormons also gain status through advancement in the lay clergy that governs the church. Participation comes through appointments or callings. These are the various volunteer jobs that people hold within the institution. Callings are assigned by the all-male church leadership (either the bishop of the local ward or someone higher in the church's leadership structure for positions at the level of local bishopric

or above). Each calling holds a particular place in the hierarchy of church leadership. Callings are so named because they are presumed to be God-given through revelation to church leaders. As such, a person's place in the hierarchy is interpreted as a direct reflection of that individual's spiritual worth. Winn (age 58) refers to callings while discussing his social relations with church members after he rejected the religion: "I couldn't talk to them about what they were talking about because my opinions would greatly be seen as an affront. So I just wouldn't talk about it at all. They would talk about their religion and their callings, and blah blah blah." Winn's tone was decidedly negative. His obvious disdain for Mormon symbolic capital demonstrates its field dependence.

Throughout the interview Winn was quite instructive regarding signs of worthiness. One informative insight had to do with temple garments, the undergarments Mormon men and women wear after initiation to temple ceremonies and which signify certain covenants with God: "Mormons will look to see if you are wearing garments. . . . It's kind of the signal that if you're wearing your garments, that must mean you're temple-worthy, which means you're a good person." Mandy (age 35) echoes the same theme: "You can always tell a gal who is LDS but who is edgy, too. Because she's still dressed that same way but she has that edge on it. Maybe she has a short a-line cool hair cut but she's wearing some sort of cool necklace, but you can still tell. Of course you can always tell because you can see their garments. Always. You can see their back. Look at the woman's back and 'well, there you go.'" These quotes speak to the subtlety with which members of the field discern signs of worthiness, even among strangers. The idea of knowing what kind of undergarments a person is wearing may seem odd, given that they are covered by other clothing; however, those with the necessary cultural capital can recognize the telltale outlines of seams beneath the clothing. Every wearer of temple garments knows precisely and intimately how they are shaped, how they fit, how they are trimmed, and how they may signal their presence through other layers of fabric. This is indicative of an embodied ability and, indeed, of the culturally programmed necessity of judging worthiness in other members of the field from fine-grained material cues.

Making sense of subtle material cues is especially important in the consumption realm of a taste regime. Arsel and Bean (2013), in their study of the "Apartment Therapy" taste regime, demonstrate fine-tuned abilities of material and moral discernment in a completely secular context. Through in-home interviews we saw evidence of a Mormon taste regime as well, even among ex-members of the church. Iconic pictures of temples, reproductions of a particularly popular painting of Jesus Christ, conspicuous family photos, cross-stitched or printed sayings such as "Families are Forever," and framed Brigham Young University diplomas were among the common artifacts that signaled connections to or status within the field. Even Mormons who have rejected the church's doctrines and leadership often find that cultural patterns and tastes persist. Bradley (age 36) says, "One of

the things I learned—and I still struggle with this—there are two parts to being LDS. There's the religious perspective, which is like, going to temple and stuff like that, and then there's LDS culture. You can leave the church, but you can't leave the culture. Still, a lot of the things that I do and a lot of the things I say are still. . . . It's kind of . . .. You can't change who you are in a lot of respects." Although Bradley speaks of religion and culture as a duality, the conflation of consumption and doctrine are common. To illustrate that conflation we mine a particular online conversation. A minority within the Mormon Church consider themselves "liberal Mormons," which is often associated with left-leaning politics (Passey 2012). Liberal Mormons also reject many aspects of the traditional Mormon taste regime. In a controversial (within Mormonism) article published online and then quickly taken down by pro-Mormon *Meridian Magazine* (http://ldsmag.com), author Joni Hilton expressed many of the opinions that traditional Mormons hold toward their self-proclaimed liberal counterparts. Here are some excerpts (Dehlin 2013):

> Liberal people had been to Europe and let you know it. They had Continental tastes, exposure to the latest fashions, and eagerly embraced whatever was new and exciting.
>
> [Liberal Mormons decide] which aspects of our faith to accept or reject, from honoring the Sabbath to wearing less than.
>
> [Liberal Mormon are] members of convenience. When they didn't like something the Prophet said, they felt perfectly fine skirting around that one, and writing their own rules.
>
> [Liberal Mormons] think bikinis are fine, iced tea is a tasty drink, and R-rated movies are often artistic and worth seeing.
>
> [Liberal Mormons believe that the church is merely] a smorgasbord of ideas from which we choose.
>
> [Liberal Mormons forget that] When the Prophet speaks, the debate is over. This is because the prophet is speaking for God and telling us what He would have us hear. He is not just the president of a corporation, giving us his personal views.

In defending traditional Mormonism against the "smorgasbord of ideas" that is liberal Mormonism, Hilton supports the arguments we have made thus far, namely (1) that the church is being detraditionalized, (2) that a market logic has led many members to treat religion as an à la carte offering of principles and behaviors, (3) that religion and consumption are inseparably interwoven, and (4) that Mormon cultural capital allows members to make status judgments of worthiness on the basis of fairly fine distinctions of consumption behaviors.

Mormon Social Capital. The phrase "Families are Forever" is a brand and a cliché of the Mormon Church. Referring to the Mormon belief that the patriarchal family structure endures in the afterlife as the embodiment and epitome of godly existence, the statement underscores the primary importance of family relationships to members of the church. The ritual that Mormons believe will cement their family relationships is marriage "for time and eternity,"

commonly called temple marriage for the fact that the weddings are conducted strictly in temples and only among persons that have passed worthiness interviews. Mormons believe that temple marriage only retains force in the hereafter for couples that remain faithful to the church. The act of breaking with the Mormon faith, therefore, can have severe consequences for family relations. Megan (age 42) summarizes it this way: "It's been particularly difficult on marriages where one spouse has a different or a changing relationship with the faith. So if the couple got married in the temple then all of the sudden it's not just 'I'm not interested in this anymore' or 'I don't have the same level of affiliation anymore' or 'I don't want to go on Sunday because I get migraines when I go to church, because of all of the cognitive dissonance.' It's that 'my disbelieving, doubting spouse is imperiling *my* salvation and that of our children.'" Aaron and Jesse (age 35) were married in the temple. In reflecting on their decision to leave the church, Aaron captures some of the ways in which their family relationships were implicated:

> We made an appointment with her parents to sit down. "We have something to tell you. Look we are leaving the Mormon Church." The next hour was unbearable. Jesse's mother clammed up entirely. She did not speak to me for a year. For one calendar year she would not talk to me on the phone, would not talk to me at Christmas. But her father just would not shut up. He was loud. He was talking about losing our eternal salvation. . . . Jesse's sister was also impossible to deal with. She was just the most insufferable, holier-than-thou kind of person. . . . There was one day at her house when—I don't know if she knew that I was listening. I was upstairs playing with their kids—I overheard, "Well if you had just married a stronger man, a man with a testimony, then things would have been okay."

The term "testimony" refers in Mormon parlance to a vocalized, unwavering belief in Mormon doctrines and support for the institution and its leadership. Jesse's family essentially blamed Aaron for jeopardizing Jesse's salvation through his lack of religious conviction but also for preventing the family from being together with Jesse in an afterlife from which she would be excluded. To say that it strained family relationships would be an understatement.

Perhaps fearing just such family repercussions, some people go to great lengths to conceal their departures from the church. For example, Sandy (age 53) has both friends and family on Facebook. She keeps the Mormon and non-Mormon groups separate. She says, "I haven't shared [my resignation from the church] with the Mormon portion of my Facebook community. It's because of getting back to my father . . . I just don't know where the discussion would be beneficial to all of us." Not all informants' family members react to leave-taking in the way Jesse's did. Responses ranged from declarations of unconditional love to complete shunning. Disaffected Mormons can never know with certainty to what extent and for how long their family rela-

tionships might be imperiled by a choice to reject the religion.

The quality of one's relationships with Mormon friends, neighbors, and coworkers often proves to be field dependent as well. This owes partly to socialization regarding non-Mormons, which begins in early childhood. Says Carl, "My son starts school in September, and I was talking to a friend about how I was just so nervous about him being associated with bad kids because he's not a Mormon. He just kind of looked at me and was like 'What do you mean by bad kids?' and I was like 'Wow! So I used to say that same thing as a Mormon.' They aren't bad. I just sat there and . . . wow. It takes a long time to undo the brainwashing." Carl had learned as a Mormon child that the non-Mormon kids in the community were the "bad kids." It was a bias he unconsciously maintained even after having grown up and left the church. Later in the same interview Carl explains his view of social relations as a former Mormon living among Mormons: "There's the Mormons, there's the people who have never been Mormons, and there's those that have left. [Mormons] are really nice to their own, and they're usually pretty nice to people who aren't Mormon, but once you leave [the church] you're the scum of the earth." The problem, as ex-Mormon Sam (age 42) describes it, is this: "I'm not just neutral [to them]. I'm dangerous." In the eyes of members of the field, defectors are dangerous because they know the ideology and the codes, and they have found a story that allows them to reject it all. That kind of story and the person that embodies it are potentially poisonous to the institution.

Social capital can often be translated to economic capital within a particular field, especially where trust and civic norms are valued (Knack and Keefer 1997). By the same logic, leaving the field and disdaining its norms may put both social and economic capital at risk. Says Linda, who earlier mentioned lying to her bishop in order to pass her worthiness interview and protect her educational status: "My parents were very afraid that I would burn bridges to the Mormon community, which I can see *now*, especially since, like when I graduated from [an LDS college]—I was like 'never again!' you know?—But after I graduated I worked for [a Mormon employer] for a while, an independent Mormon [business], because there was a *job* and I knew a lot of people in the Mormon community." Linda's experience underscores the interrelationships among different forms of capital, especially the way social capital can be leveraged into economic capital. She also expresses the anxiety that comes from risking the loss of social and economic capital by being open with her feelings about the church. Carl also felt similar anxieties related to relations at work, where his boss and key customers were Mormon. He relates an incident when he had just begun to drink coffee publicly: "There was this one guy, and he was at my level—it's not like he was my boss or anything—we were at breakfast with a vendor, and the vendor went to the restroom and I'm sitting there drinking my coffee, and he was like 'I can't get used to you drinking coffee. You're definitely making a state-

ment.'" Carl notes that his transgressive behavior took place in the presence of a colleague, and that the colleague's response was one of judgment and perhaps veiled admonition. Later in the interview Carl reveals that he acted differently in the presence of his boss and clients. In fact he eventually sought therapy to manage his stress over the issue:

> I went to see a therapist. . . . He said, "You're drinking coffee at work. What's the worst that could happen?" and I said, "I don't know, they could confront me? I might get fired, I guess, because my boss is Mormon?" He said, ". . . You're doing what you believe is okay and right. You've never been afraid of that before, as a Mormon, why should it change now, as a non-Mormon?" and I remember I was sitting there thinking, "Okay, that was worth the eighty bucks." At the same time I was like, "I can't believe I just paid you eighty dollars to help me feel comfortable drinking coffee at work."

The above cases help illustrate the uncertainty and anxiety surrounding social relationships that individuals suspect may be field dependent. The anxiety is heightened for relationships with close family members, such as we saw with Sandy, or for relationships such as Carl's or Linda's that may be traded on for economic capital. Part of the difficulty these people have with declaring post-Mormon identities lies in their inability to know just what the consequences to important social capital will be. Phillip (age 58), talks about people who live between Mormon and post-Mormon worlds. He has communicated considerably with other disillusioned Mormons. Regarding the complexities of social capital and the barriers they can pose to people desiring to leave the church, he says:

> For all the people who find themselves disaffected with traditional doctrinal Mormonism, they're either going to leave or they're going to try to stay. Most of them begin by staying in secret . . . those that stay—it's usually because they have some reason to stay. They either have a strong believing spouse, or they have great programs for kids and want to keep their kids in it, or their parents would be dismayed if they left, or they have a job where they work for the church, or if they work someplace where their boss is a bishop. . . . There's all kinds of reasons for them to try to maintain their activity with the church or maintain their identity with the church.

Some individuals keep post-Mormon identities closeted in order to preserve social capital. In an online posting Randy (age 35) puts it this way: "I even now meet people serving in important callings, who observe what they call the hundred-mile rule, which is that once they get beyond 100 miles from Utah, they do whatever they want, drink, strip bars, whatever. They keep up the pretense at home because of their wives and kids." This evidence of protecting social capital through managing the nature, time, and place of consumption resonates with a joke commonly heard among non-Mormons or Jack Mormons in Utah. Question: Why do you always take two Mormons fishing with you? Answer: Because if you only take one he'll drink all your beer.

Summary.   The Mormon Church constitutes a consump-

tion field and a habitus that, like a Goffmanian total institution, governs its members' understandings of self in the world across a full spectrum of material and nonmaterial concerns. Within the field, cultural capital consistent with Bourdieu's theorization—embodied, material, or institutional in nature—allows members to discern from fine-grained consumption cues the relative worthiness or status of an individual within the field. Mormons who turn away from the church may sacrifice much of the symbolic capital they had as "worthy" members, but they retain their field-specific cultural capital. They can still discern the cues of field status, but they interpret those cues differently than they did when operating more fully within the Mormon habitus.

Social capital in the form of relationships with family, friends, and colleagues may be highly field dependent. The legitimate fear of losing friendships or job opportunities, or of hurting or alienating family, often leads people to engage in classic strategies of impression management by selectively hiding or revealing consumption behaviors that would be damaging to their symbolic capital (cf. Goffman 1959). In doing this they maintain access to important social and economic capital. Having contextualized our study more fully in the consumption field that is Mormonism, we now turn our attention to the identity and consumption dynamics of those that for some reason find themselves disillusioned with it.

Post-Mormon Identity: Collapse and Reconstruction

We have previously observed that traditional religious institutions form central pillars of identity for their adherents. We have also asserted that the loss of that pillar fractures the identity and casts the individual into a marketplace of identity resources that is potentially daunting, or liberating, or both in its abundance of choice and apparent lack of unifying ideological structure. Every informant in our study experienced a crisis of identity on rejecting Mormonism as a template for personal identity, and for each person the process of identity reconstruction was a difficult undertaking that entailed developing new consumption moralities, negotiating field-specific social capital, and building new capital in non-Mormon fields.

Identities in Crisis.   For many of our informants the experience of rejecting or losing Mormonism as a foundation for identity was very painful. Consider the words of Nancy, a forum poster, who wants to leave the church but finds it nearly impossible: "My husband feels as if I have given up, that I am refusing to see the good in the church. In tears yesterday, I told him I just don't know if I can go back to church. He told me he thinks I'm not trying anymore. . . . It's been fourteen years of my hanging on by a thread, and I am tired." Nancy's angst and exhaustion are debilitating. She has rejected Mormonism as a foundation for her identity, but because her husband and most important social capital remain tied to the field she is unable to find or even actively seek a viable alternative. The result is existential suffering.

Rachel (age 31) describes a similar state of suffering and identity ambiguity: "I feel like my soul is tied between two poles—one that continues to pretend, and the other that longs to express my true feelings. I am tearing in half. . . . I've lost my core, and I have nothing to replace it with right now. [*Voice breaking*.] I'm just floating. It's very scary." Rachel's identity has disassociated from Mormonism to the extent that she feels she is only playing at an inauthentic role in that context, and yet she clearly hasn't found an outlet for what she considers to be her true feelings. Rachel's husband Patrick (age 30) has also rejected the church. Patrick characterizes his experience this way: "It feels like the death of a baby. [Rachel's] childhood home was destroyed in the [home town] tornado two years ago, and our stuff was there, hanging out for the summer before we went, and our stuff was hit, too. We went down there. Really, this [i.e., leaving the church] has felt like a spiritual tornado. . . . Metaphorically, we are living through the same thing we did a couple years ago." Clearly there is nothing trivial in the identity challenges of these informants. The metaphors they use—hanging on by a thread, tearing in half, lost my core, death of a baby, spiritual tornado—evoke violence to the self in a way that has seldom been explored in the consumer research literature. These informants give shape and texture to what Üstüner and Holt (2007) called "shattered identity projects."

These disaffected Mormons don't characterize themselves as lost consumers. The losses they feel are metaphysical, spiritual, existential, and social. And yet consumption lies at the heart of their identity projects. Spirituality is hard to grasp in a marketplace of ideas. People whose entire place in the universe was once settled by an institution and an ideology now suddenly face questions such as, Who am I? What do I believe? How should I live? Winchester's (2008) finding that embodied behaviors can help reshape a person's morality, combined with our own observation that in the Mormon field ideology and consumption appear to be inseparable, provides insight into the ways in which people use consumption to rebuild identity. We find that disaffected Mormons use consumption in two key ways in their identity work: (1) to explore, test, and develop new moralities and (2) to amass capital in alternative fields.

New Identities, New Moralities. We found numerous cases of informants experimenting with behaviors that, although mainstream and acceptable in broader American society, were taboo in Mormon life. In their experimentation they are clearly seeking insight into new rules for moral behavior or, put differently, rules for structuring new cultural capital. For example, Jesse experimented privately with drinking coffee and then observed the consequences to her own feelings: "I think it was kind of a testing of the waters, or seeing how it felt. I remember reading one of Salman Rushdie's books about the first time he had a ham sandwich. You know, like kind of testing . . . like the first time having a cup of coffee or something, waiting, and kind of testing. 'Oh, I'm okay.' You know? Like nothing bad happened . . . like slowly crossing the Rubicon." Jesse eventually demy-

thologized coffee consumption and became a coffee drinker, having adjusted her own personal moral framework to accommodate the behavior. For Marta (age 23), part of her revised morality had to do with fashion and Mormon decrees regarding modesty: "I went in to try on dresses. I tried on all the modest dresses—the ones that have sleeves and don't show the garments. Then I tried on a green strapless dress. My friend was like, 'Oh my gosh. That's it!' She took a picture of me and said, 'Look at you in the green dress. You're glowing!' So I wore it. It was like coming out." Marta was not the only informant to refer to turning away from Mormonism as coming out. The implication of the coming-out metaphor is that she finally succeeded in accepting for herself a personal morality that was at odds with her socialization. She successfully demythologized the taboo on a strapless dress that would have been scandalous in a Mormon gathering, and her friend, also a Mormon, witnessed and shared the experience.

In their movement away from Mormonism our informants commonly used a combination of transgressive consumption and reflection to experiment with new moralities and assess them. Many of the trials involved coffee or alcoholic drinks, others involved fashion, and still others involved Sunday activities, such as playing or viewing sports, that violated Mormon Sabbath guidelines. Emphasizing the demythologizing of consumption taboos, an annual Exmormon Foundation Conference in Salt Lake City awarded as a door prize a "sin basket" containing items such as condoms, coffee, R-rated movies, and alcoholic beverages. The message was that in post-Mormon life and morality consuming such products is not sinful and can be indulged or not according to one's individual preferences.

Informants that experimented with transgressive consumption generally did so with a great deal of caution regarding who might witness them doing it. In the previous example from Marta, one revelatory moment with a Mormon friend proved to Marta that their relationship was not dependent on Marta's adherence to Mormon principles. A clear majority of our informants, however, feared that at least some of their social relationships did indeed depend on their status as faithful Mormons. Fearing negative social consequences, many informants only selectively revealed consumption transgressions to family, friends, colleagues or employers. For Linda, that meant meeting with other similarly minded students, a self-named "atheist group," in coffee shops where steadfast Mormons were unlikely to show up. Aaron took his first tastes of wine and beer while sitting alone in his car at night in the driveway outside his home. Carl's workplace coffee-drinking behavior, mentioned previously, is another example of selective public transgression. At first he would consume coffee in cafes with certain co-workers but not at work and not with clients or his boss. This behavior has analogies to the coming-out process. Cass (1979) observes that gay men often "selectively disclose a homosexual identity to significant heterosexual others" (232). We believe that to some extent these public or semipublic acts may be designed, perhaps unwittingly, to test

the field dependence of various social relationships and, where possible, extend those relationships into a post-Mormon space.

Accruing Capital in Alternative Fields.   Another way informants used consumption behaviors was to build or strengthen relationships in consumption fields outside of Mormonism. If much of their social capital has been lost or compromised on turning away from the church, then in order to feel connected and socially supported they need to develop new ties within other fields. For Linda, that meant sharing coffee and ideas with the informal "atheist group." For Sam it means entering the formerly taboo terrain of a brewpub: "[I] don't drink at all regularly. Don't get me wrong . . . but I enjoy an occasional beverage. Our neighbors across the street are the master brewer and the master marketer for [a local pub], so they're constantly telling us to come to their pub, and now we can." By allowing himself the occasional beer Sam strengthened his relationship to his non-Mormon neighbors and broadened his social environs to include their microbrewery and pub. Unlike Sam, who enjoys beer, Patrick barely tolerates the taste of most alcoholic drinks, and yet he has taught himself to drink anyway, in order to fit in better with non-Mormon society: "My first drink was wine, and I just remember that it was overwhelmingly disgusting. I thought I was going to throw up. Then I tried a beer a little bit later that night . . . and *it's* disgusting. I tried to taste it some more and then I'm just feeling like I had to gag it down. I really don't like it at all. . . . I don't want to be . . . I just want to be somebody who's just a natural, normal part of the world instead of somebody who is different." Patrick's desire for feelings of relative normalcy reflects his perception that Mormons are peculiar in ways that he no longer appreciates. For many informants, however, especially in much of the state of Utah where Mormons constitute a sizable majority, Mormonism is the norm and alternative fields may be hard to find, especially fields that might supply a suitable template for a new identity. When Rachel says, "I've lost my core, and I have nothing to replace it with," it is that lack of an alternative pillar of identity that she feels. She can't even see an alternative field in which to take comfort.

Many disaffected Mormons who seek connection in alternative (and often oppositional) fields are able to find support and build social capital in groups founded and run by others that have left the church. Online groups, such as postmormon.org, and the Exmormon Foundation, with its annual conferences, help such people find each other. What makes these groups especially welcoming is that their members still possess Mormon cultural capital and understand the subcultural codes. In some ways they function as lifeboats for people trying to come to terms with post-Mormon identity construction. The following quote from a group at meetup.com (http://www.meetup.com/postmormons/) captures this role:

> Most of us are people who have left Mormonism. When leaving Mormonism, many people lose much of their com-

munity and sometimes family. They might have trouble readjusting and feel like they need to learn a whole new world—which is where we come in, creating friendships with understanding, fun people. Whether you've recently mentally left the church, have been years out the door, or even if you were never Mormon, come join us and help us establish a sense of community in Salt Lake. This group is not affiliated with any religion or outside group. It is specifically a group for and by people who have left Mormonism and those who want to socialize with us.

There are publications, symposia, and organizations for questioning Mormons that serve similar lifeboat functions. Phillip says, "[They are] kind of a way station for some who are on their way out. They may stop [there] for six months or a year, or two years." In trying to support the accrual of post-Mormon cultural capital, the Exmormon Foundation has developed a 12-step program. Their eighth through eleventh steps deal with problems of field-specific social and cultural capital. Step 10 reads: "I continue to take personal inventory, and where I find artifacts of Mormonism, I carefully consider whether they should continue to be a part of my life, or whether I should discard them" (Packham and Packham 2014). The importance of materiality to ideology and identity is clear. The Exmormon Foundation's awarding of a "sin basket" door prize at their conference is indicative of instruction in post-Mormon cultural capital provided by the group. The online community Life After Mormonism (http://www.lifeaftermormonism.net) supports the building of post-Mormon cultural capital with groups such as Alcohol for Beginners, described as "A group to offer helpful drink tips to those of us first venturing into alcohol after leaving Mormonism," and Mature Discussions, "for discussing adult sexual topics that are an important part of exploring and adjusting to the new world after Mormonism." The thriving existence of such communities is testimony that, for individuals trying to build post-Mormon cultural and social capital, the marketplace of identity resources can seem like a brave new world.

Summary.   The marketization and detraditionalization of the Mormon Church, which contributes to many members' loss of faith, also forces them to face the task of constructing new identities from a relatively unfamiliar marketplace of identity resources. Moving away from the Mormon field is complicated by potential damage to important relationships with family, friends, and work groups. Not all disaffected members choose to leave, but those that do appear to use two strategies. First, they begin constructing new moral understandings through a process of reflective transgression of Mormon consumption codes. By experimenting with and selectively embodying certain taboo practices they learn to demythologize those practices and develop moral understandings that are at odds with Mormonism but that make personal sense. Successfully embodying new moralities makes staying in the Mormon field even less tenable that it was before. The second strategy is to begin building social and cultural capital in non-Mormon fields. Although Mor-

mon symbolic capital, comprehended as worthiness, doesn't transfer to other fields, it can be traded for social capital within post-Mormon fields where members understand the disaffected Mormons' backgrounds and identity challenges and are often eager to help them identify and accrue cultural capital in the world beyond Mormonism.

DISCUSSION

Reach and Transferability

From our findings we are able to theorize more broadly about the phenomena of marketization and detraditionalization and their consequences for individual consumer identity projects. Prior research reveals increasing marketization throughout contemporary society and the related detraditionalization of institutions such as the family, education, and religion, which have in the past played primary roles in socialization. These forces have shifted both power and responsibility to increasingly sovereign consumers. Our research suggests that marketization and detraditionalization may also be undermining the authority of major socializing institutions to prescribe broad templates for individual identity. For individuals that reject such authority after having been deeply socialized, the loss of institutional pillars of identity results in crises of self-understanding at the deepest moral and existential levels.

What we observe in a North American and religious context may play out analogously in non-Western and nonreligious contexts as well. For example, research on the marketization of post-Soviet states seems to indicate crises of consumer identity among people previously socialized into systems of Soviet-style communism. Zhurzhenko (2001, 29) finds that marketization in the Ukraine has a "profound impact on women's identity formation," and Ger, Belk, and Lascu (1993, 102) document "rapidly escalating consumer desires, confusions, and frustrations" among consumers in post-Communist Romania. These studies are more suggestive than conclusive regarding the loss of institutional pillars of identity, but additional research into other cases of post-institutional identity construction could be fruitful for increasing our understanding of detraditionalization and identity.

Co-constitution of Ideology and Consumption

We approached our analysis from a perspective grounded in Bourdieu's theories of fields and capital. Prior research establishes the existence and nature of both religious fields and consumption fields. What our findings show is that, at least in the case of the Mormon Church, religion and consumption are inseparable. Considerable prior research shows that ideology guides and informs consumer behavior—see, for example, Crockett and Wallendorf (2004) on political ideology, Üstüner and Holt (2007) on religious ideology, and Schouten and McAlexander (1995) on subcultural ideologies of consumption—but we find that the opposite is also true: consumption shapes ideology. Reflexive experi-

mentation with and the eventual embodiment of new (and formerly taboo) consumption behaviors can help people develop new moralities of consumption. This finding is consistent with those of Winchester (2008) in the context of new converts to Islam, and with neomaterialist views of the social, which accord agency to material actors and collapse dualities such as mind/body, nature/culture, and science/humanities (Dolphijn and van der Tuin 2012; Scott, Martin and Schouten 2014). We suggest that our findings lend support to the proposition that ideology and consumption are co-constitutive, with neither idealist nor materialist perspectives telling the whole story. Consumer research has inadequately explored the effects of embodied consumption on morality or ideology, especially as it relates to rebuilding or repairing fragmented identities. Such research would make a welcome contribution to the consumer behavior literature.

Crossing between Fields

Recent consumer research owes much to the theories of Pierre Bourdieu and their elaboration by Doug Holt, Craig Thompson, their collaborators, and others. This study contributes to that growing corpus in its examination of consumers crossing between fields, especially when those fields are perceived as oppositional. We find that when consumers become disaffected with a field's ideology or its practices it becomes difficult for them to remain comfortably in that field. At the same time, the fear of losing field-dependent symbolic, social, and economic capital can also make leaving the field very difficult. The former finding is consistent with Üstüner and Holt's (2007) work among Turkish women that reject their field of primary socialization, and the latter is consistent with Arsel and Thompson's (2011) findings regarding the stickiness of field-dependent capital. This study fills a gap between the two by examining the identity constructions of individuals that both reject their field of primary socialization and yet find themselves bound to it by field-dependent capital.

This study also reveals more nuanced dynamics of the transfer of field-specific capital between oppositional fields. In it we learn that field-specific symbolic capital (status) predictably loses its value outside its field of origin. Interestingly, field-specific cultural capital can be migrated to an oppositional field, but its meaning and usefulness change. For example, when outmigration from a field occurs in numbers, leavers or refugees may form new oppositional communities, thereby creating spaces for the development of new and meaningful social relationships. These relationships may actually benefit from sharing cultural capital from the departed field (in the form of mutual understanding and commiseration), suggesting that migrated cultural capital can be converted at least partially to social capital in the new consumption field.

Social capital can be very difficult to migrate from one field to another, oppositional consumption field, especially when the other members in social relationships have their capital deeply invested in the original field. We find that

individuals locked in the space between a rejected field and an oppositional consumption field may use transgressive consumption in selective contexts in order to test the field dependence of important social relationships. This proposition merits additional research.

On Leaving

Finally, this research also suggests important implications for understanding processes of transition from one role or life stage to another. The difficult and often futile attempts of some disaffected Mormons to leave the church call attention to serious gaps in the consumer role-transition literature. Drawing on van Gennep's (1960) and Turner's (1969) theorizations of rites of passage and other linear stage models (see, e.g., Schouten 1991), much consumer research takes leaving or separation as an unproblematic fait accompli. This research shows that leaving a consumption community or field can be far more difficult and disruptive than previously assumed. The systematic bias in consumer research toward forward-facing aspects of joining, acculturating, assimilating, and accumulating status and social capital has left the acts and processes of leaving, by comparison, seriously undertheorized.

CONCLUSION

Our examination of the consequences of the marketization and detraditionalization of what has been, for our informants, a powerful pillar of identity, points to the importance of seeking a keener understanding of the ways in which cultural and social change can create turmoil in the lives of consumers. In our research we found considerable family strife, career disruption, and people suffering acute depression as they sought to reconstruct identities outside an institution and a field that, once vital to their self-understandings, had, for them, become corrupt. As the logic of the marketplace continues to exert itself in and among other traditional institutions it will be important to study the implications both for consumers and for the institutions on which they rely for important identity resources. Clearly, our research has many limitations typical to consumer research. Our research methods, theoretical framing, prior experiences, and research context influence our analysis and interpretations. We encourage additional research using other methods, theoretical framings, and contexts in order to amplify awareness and understanding of these important issues.

DATA COLLECTION INFORMATION

All data were collected by the authors through interviews, observation, and archival sources, including Internet postings. Fieldwork occurred in Corvallis, Oregon; Irvine, California; and Salt Lake City, Utah, from 2011 to 2014. Key informants and those interviewed informally during participant observation all gave their consent to be quoted confidentially by pseudonym.

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