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The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion among Professions and Professionals

Abstract

The study of professions and professionals can shed valuable light issues of inclusion and exclusion in organizing. Professions and professionals define and ascribe types of work as professional and others as amateur, establish the relevance and irrelevance of knowledge and ways of knowing, and exercise authority over how societal problems get solved, and who is deserves and controls of organizational resources. This review centers on four boundaries inherent to professional work along which important issues of inclusion and exclusion are negotiated: (1) Membership – who can claim to be a professional and who cannot? (2) Work – what counts as meaningful, professional work? (3) Organization – how are professionals at once members of organizational and occupational groups? (4) Knowing – who can know what professionals know and how do professionals negotiate interdisciplinarity? Through this review, we argue that professionals and professions perform, defend, and can remake these boundaries through their communication.

The Politics of Inclusion and Exclusion among Professions and Professionals

Professionals and professions navigate multiple dimensions of inclusion and exclusion in the conduct of their work. Professionals name and adjudicate who may be considered members of professions, who gets access to services, and what sorts of work and expertise count. Professionals exercise authority over others that stems from their education and certification, legal and cultural standing, relationships with other professionals, and the material conduct of their work. Professions develop, defend, and institutionalize domains of work (Ashcraft, 2013; Meisenbach, 2008). Communication scholarship focused on professions and professionals has demonstrated that the study of professions can shed valuable light on the politics of expert and expertise difference, which center on issues of inclusion and exclusion (Ashcraft, 2013; Barbour & Lammers, 2015; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Meisenbach, 2008; Mitra, 2015). Such politics include efforts to define and ascribe types of work as professional and others as amateur, expertise as more or less relevant to or encumbering of problems, and people as more or less deserving of and in control of organizational resources (Barbour, Sommer, & Gill, 2016b).

Negotiating competing rationales for action is at the center of professional work. Professionals as experts are those who have distinctive capacities for solving particular organizational problems (or at least those individuals thought to have such capacities) (Kuhn & Jackson, 2008; Treem, 2012), and professional work revolves around deciding whose expertise ought to be legitimate or authoritative in any given moment (Barbour et al., 2016b; Kuhn & Rennstam, 2016). Cheney and Ashcraft (2007) underscored expertise, division of labor, and the normative-ethical obligation as key in the study of professions. Lammers and Garcia (2009) explicated how the concept of “profession” has developed in communication research, detailing emotional neutrality, a body of knowledge, formal standards of conduct, service orientation,

social status, self-control, social control, formal associations, and professional identity as all characteristic of professionalism. Cheney and Ashcraft contended that although ethical obligation, akin to the service orientation highlighted by Lammers and Garcia, is an integral characteristic of professionalization, professionals simultaneously elevate and downplay ethical commitments, which Cheney and Ashcraft argued “may function, deliberately or unwittingly, to naturalize the exclusion of particular social groups” (p. 152). Central to exclusion is the creation, development, and exercise of “both material and symbolic boundaries — that is, barriers to Othered bodies as well as the norms, values, practices, aesthetics, and so forth, associated with them” (Ashcraft, Muhr, Rennstam, & Sullivan, 2012, p. 470). For example, negotiating expertise difference is essential in interdisciplinary problem solving and innovation, and at the same time, it can also involve wars of faith that degrade and exclude (Barbour & James, 2015b; Thompson, 2009). Communication research and theory can and should offer insights for professionals’ and professions’ more enlightened negotiation of dynamics of inclusion and exclusion.

In this chapter, we review communication scholarship focused on professions, professionals, and professionalization. Two questions guide this review: First, how has communication scholarship on professionals and professional work examined issues of inclusion and exclusion? Second, what strategies for negotiating inclusion and exclusion does this scholarship forward? This review centers on four boundaries inherent to professional work along which important issues of inclusion and exclusion are negotiated: (1) Membership – who can claim to be a professional and who cannot? (2) Work – what counts as meaningful, professional work? (3) Organization – how are professionals at once members of organizational and occupational groups? (4) Knowing – who can know what professionals know and how do professionals negotiate interdisciplinarity? Through this review, we argue that professionals and

professions perform, defend, and can remake these boundaries. We highlight the stakeholders affected by issues of inclusion and exclusion at these boundaries and forward an agenda for future scholarship focused on (a) the types of data and methods valuable for investigating these phenomena and (b) how communication scholarship focused on professions and professionals can contribute.

Membership

Navigating issues of inclusion and exclusion requires problematizing the notion of the “professional” in the first place. Professional identity is a distinctive subset of occupational identity, which Meisenbach (2008) defined as a “shifting, material, and discursive framing of image and practices associated with a particular type of work” (p. 263), drawing on Ashcraft (2007) and Alvesson and Willmott (2002). Per this scholarship, we conceptualize all occupations as professionalized to varying degrees. A “professional” is typically seen as a worker in an occupation that has achieved a measure of status and formal organization, but this scholarship emphasizes that occupational identity is at once constituted through interaction in the day-to-day lives of workers and informed by and constructed in historical and cultural action (Ashcraft, 2007; Barrett & Dailey, 2018; Kuhn et al., 2008; Mitra, 2015). The category “professional” tends to align with elite status, studies of professionals tend to focus on the privileged, and this convergence should be interrogated (e.g., Agarwal & Buzzanell, 2015; Novak, 2016).

Membership is a boundary that by definition ascribes who is included and who is excluded in practice and in the macrodiscursive construction of the occupation (Allen, 2010; Ashcraft, 2013; Barbour & Lammers, 2015). Professions organize to make contrasts among those who are legitimate members and those who are not (Ashcraft et al., 2012; Meisenbach, 2008). Membership in a profession has benefits, such as insulation from organizational

instability, expertise, access to clients, social status, and networking. Professionalization, a category of institutionalization, involves an ongoing defense of the profession that is intertwined with the processes of identification and produces socially constructed and agreed upon notions of who is in and who is out (Ashcraft, 2013; Garcia & Barbour, 2018; Meisenbach, 2008).

All occupations can be understood as professionalizing or rejecting professionalization to some degree. In professionalizing, workers lay claim to specific jurisdictions of practice. The ongoing dispute of those jurisdictional boundaries constitute the history of professions and determines their futures (Abbott, 1988). To gain social status, occupations formalize, which enables a profession to develop and adjudicate criteria that members must meet to become and remain members (Ashcraft et al., 2012). Determining the hurdles to, and standards of, membership makes it easier for a profession to decide those who are rightfully in and those who are appropriately out (Lammers & Garcia, 2009). The development and protection of those barriers may not sit well with all professions, especially those focused on serving the public good or committed to egalitarianism (Garcia & Barbour, 2018).

Efforts to define, protect, and defend professions manifest in the negotiation of who may be a member. Abbott (1988) recounted psychiatry's battle in the early 20th century to infiltrate work otherwise dominated by lawyers, clergy, and social workers. Psychiatry prevailed until the 1970's when psychotherapy erupted in popularity and social workers, once again, infiltrated psychiatry's jurisdictional space. More recently, Norander, Mazer, and Bates (2011) documented osteopathic students' fight to keep their Doctor of Osteopathy (OD) degree designation. Despite the prestige of the allopathic MD degree, OD students saw themselves as something more, and they highly identified with the distinct work practices that an OD manages. Garcia and Barbour (2018) found that librarians managed threats to their profession by privileging work practices as

“librarian-related” and requiring “The Degree,” the masters of library science. Over time, specialization within a profession can also become fragmented, which redistributes the locus of control and rekindles efforts to define the boundaries of membership (Scott, 2008).

These examples elucidate the communicative work involved in carving out categories of work and workers, and how being a professional involves a broader constitution and negotiation of identity. The principal identity work of the professional may be making it clear that they are the professionals and that others are not—who may access the powers of membership and who may not. Individuals construct professional selves that originate in the early socialization phases of professional training and are further developed as they are immersed in the rules, language, skills, and work of the profession. The construction of the professional self can involve identification with degrees, certifications, and experiences that set them apart and offer useful proof of their affiliation, expertise, and educational background (Garcia & Barbour, 2018; Norander et al., 2011). In doing so, professionals signal their superiority and reinforce boundaries between insiders and outsiders (Ashcraft, 2013).

These boundaries are bound up with history and culture (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007). Macrodiscursive constructions of gender, race, social class, sexuality, (dis)ability, national-origin, and age shape and are shaped by who can be a professional (Allen, 2010; Ashcraft, 2013). For example, Ashcraft (2007) analyzed concerted efforts to define the nature of flying, in which the airlines and pilot union worked together to construct the expert, male, professional “pilot” we know today while excluding the casual, hobbyist “ladyflier.” Such constructions can persist despite efforts to deconstruct or reconstruct them, as can be seen, for example, in efforts to recruit women and underrepresented groups into science, technology, engineering, and math (Jahn & Myers, 2014; Kisselburgh, Berkelaar, & Buzzanell, 2009). In a study of efforts to

diversify information technology industries, McDonald and Kuhn (2016) found contradictions among official occupational branding that cast the work as welcoming to women and unofficial occupational branding that cast it as hostile. They argued the contradictions could be managed by broadening concerns beyond just increasing the number of women in IT to also include challenging the culture of hostility itself and by focusing less on occupational branding interventions and more on interventions into the material conditions of the work.

What constitutes professionalism is also defined through cultural discourse intertwined with constructions of gender, race, social class, sexuality, (dis)ability, national-origin, and age (Allen, 2010; Ashcraft, 2013). Professional membership is enforced through cultural designations of who can do what work (Mitra, 2015). The gender, race, social class, sexuality, (dis)ability, national-origin, and age of professions are evident in the “image” of the profession, the public discourse associated with the profession, and marketed and constructed to evoke identity attributes (Ashcraft, 2013). Ashcraft (2007) found that despite an early push of female celebrity pilots, the historical predominance of masculine characteristics attributed to pilots was accomplished through advertising campaigns that suggested that men belong in the cockpit and women belong in the cabin or on the pilot’s arm. Women may be excluded from male-dominated professions and simultaneously included as semi-professional counterparts. Women in Tsetura’s (2010) study of public relations found that gendered professional identities derived, in part, from contrasting definitions of what “real work” and “women’s work” looked like.

The notion of profession converges with other forms of elite privilege as well. Novak’s (2016) study of Streetwise vendors, for example, shows how the societal construction of professional work excludes forms of work from professional status even though it may be professionalized (see also, Garcia & Barbour, 2018; Meisenbach, 2008). The construction of who

can do what work have implications not just for systemic differences in wages but also the “distribution of voice, risk, opportunity, sleep, mental and physical health and health care, exposure to violence, access to quality food and housing, to resources of all kinds, experiences of dignity and shame, of authority and deference, intergenerational and community thriving, security and precarity, even life expectancy, and more” (Kuhn, Ashcraft, & Cooren, 2017, pp. 163-4).

The fragmented and multifaceted nature of social identities complicate efforts to deconstruct and reconstruct who ought to be included or excluded (Allen, 2010; Mease, 2016). Intersectionality involves the compounding and transformation of societal privilege and disadvantage inherent to overlapping social identities (Holvino, 2010). Research at the nexus of identity and professional membership have tended to focus on particular social identities or categories of identity related to professional work (e.g., Barbour, Gill, & Dean, 2016a; Barbour & James, 2015a; Chinn & Barbour, 2013; Garcia & Barbour, 2018) while sidestepping the complexities of intersectionality that are inescapable for the humans that inhabit them (Masri, 2019). This critique notwithstanding, a rich array of communication scholarship tackles intersectionality in the defining, navigating, and changing professional membership (e.g., Allen, 2010; Linabary, Long, Mouton, Rao, & Buzzanell, 2016; Malvini Redden & Scarduzio, 2018; McDonald, 2015; Mitra, 2015; Wells, Gill, & McDonald, 2015).

The communication literature’s notion of a “third space” is another important site for the negotiation of professional membership (Ganesh & McAllum, 2012). The third space is an ill-defined organizational position that refers to roles individuals inhabit beyond their primary work, including clubs, choirs, and religious groups, and it has been particularly well-studied in communication research on volunteering (McNamee & Peterson, 2014). Ganesh and McAllum

(2012) argued that holding professionalism and volunteerism in tension enables scholars to examine their “gendered, discursive, and contingent” performances (p. 153). Doing so can reveal important contrasts: Volunteers receive limited training and tend to engage in low-status, unpaid, para-professional labor. Moreover, volunteers operate in a third space literally, in that they perform work in locations removed from paid employees (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002), and figuratively, in that their volunteer work role is complemented with other life roles, jobs, and personal responsibilities. To underscore the tension here, volunteering can be excluding in that the volunteer is understood in opposition to the worker or working professional (Barbour & Manly, 2016), and yet having the freedom, resources, and time to volunteer involves its own sorts of privilege (Chinn & Barbour, 2013). Nonprofit organizations rely on the work of volunteers, and yet volunteers typically have no legal obligation to or financial dependence on the organization. Membership boundaries are fluid, and individuals can decide their membership in terms of how participation serves their higher-order identities (Meisenbach & Kramer, 2014). These forms of privilege notwithstanding, to be a volunteer is also to be understood as an amateur (Agarwal & Buzzanell, 2015; Chinn & Barbour, 2013; Ganesh & McAllum, 2012).

In sum, professionals and professions draw the membership boundaries to protect and defend the profession. They navigate this boundary in their communication by advocating for the profession, claiming jurisdiction, indicating their credentials, and framing work as specialized and elite. At the same time, communication research has demonstrated that professions and professionals can transcend and remake such boundaries also while making clear that the agency for doing so itself bound up with constructions of gender, race, social class, sexuality, (dis)ability, national-origin, and age and the material realities of difference (Allen, 2010; Kuhn et al., 2017; Mitra, 2015). Journalists can carve out fluid, entrepreneurial career trajectories where

they rely on individual resources rather than occupational consciousness (Davidson & Meyers, 2016). Volunteer disaster responders can resist and shift professional logics of preparedness (Barbour & Manly, 2016), and move beyond the professional/amateur dichotomy by drawing on “network identification connections—familial, ideological, and spiritual—that empower individuals to construct their identities in transformative ways” (Agarwal & Buzzanell, 2015, p. 422). Workers can assign meaning to what they do through egalitarian work structures and cultural discourse, rather than occupational distinctions (Barrett & Dailey, 2018). These examples suggest that the macrolevel constructions of professions can be altered even as they are constrained by differing access to the privileges of professional status. As professions seek to define membership, the boundary for what constitutes membership can be transformed.

Work

Entwined with negotiating professional membership is the negotiation of what counts as professional work and how it comes to have meaning. Professionals and professions help define what counts as meaningful work. As such, professions are also bound by the meanings attributed to the type of work that the professional performs. Disentangling tasks that professionals perform from tasks that non-professionals perform can highlight inclusionary and exclusionary work practices. Professional work can be called “real work” in opposition to other forms of work, such as volunteering (Ganesh & McAllum, 2012; McNamee & Peterson, 2014); restaurant work that is considered “art” or “manual labor” (Kuhn et al., 2008); or work that is helpful or related to the profession but not professional (Ashcraft, 2007; Ganesh & McAllum, 2012; Tsetsura, 2010).

Central to being a professional is defending the work that only professionals can do. For example, in their study of volunteer preparedness organizing, Barbour and Manly (2016) found that volunteer coordinators designed and developed a majority of the planning associated with

disaster preparedness response with little input from volunteers even as they acknowledge the need and importance of volunteer engagement and input. In this context, plans required expertise, knowledge, training, and certification. At the same time, volunteers and coordinators rhetorically shifted what counted as volunteer work to accomplish locally important tasks while attending to macrolevel logics of preparation and profession. Along these lines, Barbour and Garcia (2018) found that librarians leveraged specific work practices to communicate expertise and delineate librarian and staff roles. Librarian work included building, curating, teaching, and programming; non-librarian work included routine questions and checking out books, tasks that support staff were allowed to handle. Support staff reinforced these associations with librarian professionalism when they deferred to librarians for help when asked by patrons to perform work outside of their domain. In this example, professionals and paraprofessionals enacted the boundaries ascribed to professional work.

Professionals carve out particular types of work as belonging to the profession in part to make it meaningful. Barrett and Dailey (2018) examined professional identity management and meaningful work in relation to national cultural discourses in Norway. They found that workers in Norway were undergoing significant cultural professional change at the intersection of meaningful work defined by (a) their historical commitment to workers' rights and collective values and (b) masculine work performances aligned with an economic era of oil. Workers transitioning to strict hierarchies, less autonomy, and more competition drew on macro-discourses of meaningful work as other-oriented, less superficial, and including time for personal reflection to delineate the scope of their work. Individuals expressed professional identities that were intertwined with traditional Norwegian values and culture rather than specific occupations

or organizations. The cultural discourse surrounding the changing of the social landscape informed their professional identities.

The definition of professional work, like membership, interacts with additional lines of difference. Professional identity is, in part, shaped by region (Gill & Larson, 2014). Identity work is enmeshed in professional status, and so too is the perception of work status. Leonardi and Rodriguez-Lluesma (2013) found that engineers in Mexico were perceived as lower-status by counterparts in India and the United States. Mexican engineers did similar work, and sought to alter how they were perceived. They did so by behaving in ways stereotypical to engineers, which counter-productively reinforced a low-status perception. The geographical and the cultural-communicative divides between Mexico, India, and the United States influenced the ability to claim work as professional. Against the backdrop of the immigration debate in the U.S., Wells, Gill, and McDonald's (2015) study of scientists on H-1B visas also found that national identity drove the scientists experience of what Wells et al. termed an intersectional "netting," "a patterned weave that can be intermittently basic and/or complex; capable of folding in on itself, becoming tangled, and also providing order and familiarity" (p. 549). The meaning of what it meant to do scientific work, a key element of professional identity, depended on the weave of gender, national origin, and body.

Professionals draw a boundary around what constitutes professional work versus non-professional work. Professional work may be altered by changes in practice including routinization, standardization, and mechanization (Scott, 2008). At the same time, professionals govern what is considered work only they can do and work that is subordinate, for example, what sort of work can be automated and work cannot (Bailey & Leonardi, 2015). They privilege some work practices as high-status and exercise dominion over them, and they follow stereotypical

perceptions about what professional work looks like. However, much like the negotiation of membership, communication scholars have identified ways in which this boundary is traversed. For example, Meisenbach (2008) found that fundraisers used discursive frames (i.e. mission, coordinating, magical framing) to accommodate but also resist stigmatized meanings and practices of their work. Treem (2012, 2016) found that public relations professionals could cultivate perceptions of expertise. These examples show that the boundary of what constitutes professional work may be reinforced and also contested through communication.

Organization

Professions are distinct from the organizations in which professionals work in that they are substantiated by specialized activities, distinct knowledge, and enduring influence that continues to exist beyond particular organizations (Lammers & Garcia, 2009). This knowledge and technical ability becomes institutionalized through its transcendence beyond the work groups and organizations in which it is performed (Freidson, 1986; Scott, 2008), as does the identity associated with being a professional and its influence on organizational members' expectations of each other, behavior, work conditions, and emotions (Lammers & Garcia, 2009). However, even as professional work is distinct from an organizational context, professionals often conduct their work within specific organizations, and professions cannot easily be disentangled from the particular organizational forms they take. Professionals must situate themselves in networks of complementary roles, as purpose and meaning cannot be established in work without viewing it against the broader context in which it is embedded (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007).

Within organizational spaces, professionals form groups to coordinate knowledge and skill; these groups hold distinctive organizational *and* professional characteristics. The collaboration involved in professional work can blur professional and organizational boundaries.

Collaborative work hinges on the ways in which professionals negotiate their membership of interorganizational groups, as well as how those groups negotiate and utilize knowledge in the midst of barriers and opportunities posed by their interdisciplinarity (Barley, 2015; Barley, Leonardi, & Bailey, 2012). Although collaboration necessitates inclusion of others' efforts and ideas, groups must also exercise exclusion by establishing role-related boundaries to manage threats to the professional identities nested within them (Barbour & James, 2015b; Harrison, Smith, Greenwell, & Stephens, 2018; McNeil, Mitchell, & Parker, 2013).

Workers' attachments to professions demand an intensive and exclusive socialization process distinct from but related to the organizations in which they work (Lammers, Atouba, & Carlson, 2013). The socialization process may rely on standards of conduct, appearance, and discourse established by the nature of the work, while simultaneously being bound by the reality that professions hold implicit and explicit expectations associated with gender, race, and class (Ashcraft, 2013; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007). For example, the ability of healthcare professionals to coordinate their knowledge and practice is further complicated by the extensive profession-specific socialization process they endure, which often results in fundamentally different understandings of patient-care and the roles and processes necessary for effective collaboration.

Professionals form and negotiate their identity in tandem with other targets of identification (Scott, 1997, 1999). Professional and organizational goals are distinct and may not be commensurate (Gossett, 2002). Workers may identify strongly with their profession as a source of pride and co-workers as a source of emotional support, and not define themselves in terms of the organization in which they work. Scott (1997) found that although more local targets tended to be associated with higher identification, occupational identifications were comparatively resistant to the effects of geographic dispersion. Russo (1998) found that

journalists reported significantly higher identification with the profession of journalism than with their employing newspaper. Lammers and colleagues (2013) found that veterinarians working in a poison control center reported varying degrees of attachment with their organization, group, and profession, and that the veterinarians were able to draw on their professional identity to buffer against workplace stress and burnout.

Professionals form work-related identities based on the tasks they perform and responsibilities they hold. Workers might be excluded from certain professional duties when they are promoted to management or when they must meet the demands of other related work (Garcia & Barbour, 2018). Such exclusion may degrade their attachment to the profession in favor of the organization (Lammers et al., 2013). In contrast, members may actually wish to be excluded from certain domains of work, and in an effort to do so, strategically present themselves in a negative fashion to deter their inclusion (Leonardi & Treem, 2012). Frandsen (2012) found that financial professionals managed the stigma associated with working at a firm with a very poor reputation by “cynically distancing” themselves, at once bolstering their identity as professionals and sustaining the firm’s negative image. Professionals may heighten the boundary between the profession and the organization when working in organizations whose purpose does not reflect the nature of the profession or when they do not identify with the organization’s mission.

Knowing

Boundaries between domains of knowledge offer a fourth site of professional inclusion and exclusion. Professional work is frequently associated with claims of expertise, as these groups may hold the power to determine who has the legitimacy to operate in various domains of work (Lammers & Garcia, 2009). Professional membership is at times treated as tantamount to holding a given body of knowledge (Jarvenpaa & Majchrzak, 2008; Lammers & Krikorian,

1997; Majchrzak, Jarvenpaa, & Hollingshead, 2007). The variety of professions has grown significantly since their initial rise in the early nineteenth century due to the progressive differentiation of knowledge in society and the bureaucratic expansion of the state's power and functions necessitating the professionalization of these functions (Larson, 1979). At the same time, the rise of the professions has included and excluded different sorts of work as work knowing (e.g., paid work done by elites) or not (e.g., unpaid work, women's work, craft work, slave labor)—boundaries reflected in the professional groups most often studied.

Professionals enact performances to communicate that their work is distinctive to the profession that center on what they know that others do not (Treem, 2012, 2016). Lammers and Garcia (2009) argued that professionals provide, seek, and share knowledge to be regarded as professionals. Communicating domain knowledge to others reinforces and substantiates boundaries of professional inclusion. Professional status is secured not only by the appropriation of specific knowledge as an exclusive area of work, but also the designation of that knowledge as legitimate (Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Treem, 2012).

Professionals' expertise is communicatively performed and negotiated (Treem & Leonardi, 2016). Professionals' knowing centers on distinctive capacities for solving particular organizational problems (or at least those individuals thought to have such capacities) (Kuhn & Jackson, 2008; Kuhn & Rennstam, 2016). At the same time, professionals' ability to claim what they know as known is grounded in institutionalized, macrolevel structures (Ashcraft, 2013; Barbour & Lammers, 2015; Cheney & Ashcraft, 2007; Lammers & Barbour, 2006).

Professionals must negotiate boundaries in knowing between who can legitimately claim to know what and who has expertise (Barbour et al., 2016b). Professional work centers on deciding whose expertise ought to be legitimate, encumbering, or authoritative in any given moment.

Navigating the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion related to knowing has to do with answering questions of who can claim what they know as legitimate; who can encumber the actions of others by virtue of that knowledge and its enshrinement in laws, professional standards, regulatory frameworks and policies, and organizational rules; and who has authority in and across organizations (Barbour et al., 2016b).

Associations of knowledge with specific professions provide expectations about who does what work (Barley, 1996; Lammers & Krikorian, 1997). Professionals claim identity in part through efforts to exclude others from accessing an area of knowledge or expertise (see blackboxing in, Reed, 1996). At the same time, professionals can create objects such as graphs, charts, figures to manage communication across different knowledge domains (Barley, 2015; Barley et al., 2012). The negotiation of different forms, claims, and commitments to knowing are central to successful interprofessional communication (Apker, Propp, & Zabava Ford, 2005; Apker, Ptacek, Beach, & Wears, 2016) and interdisciplinary collaboration (Barbour & James, 2015b; Barley & Weickum, 2017; Thompson, 2009).

Negotiating Inclusion and Exclusion

Looking across research at these boundaries, professionals and professions negotiate inclusion and exclusion in multiple ways. Professionals (re)construct their work and the profession as they explain and frame the field for others. They can maintain but also correct stereotypes and taken-for-granted notions of difference, and they preview issues of inclusion and exclusion in giving newcomers a sense of what a domain of work entails. They include and exclude as they construct and perform the identity of the good worker, professional, and the work worth knowing. Though at times constrained by local organizational rules and requirements, they can exercise a degree of autonomy over the work they do and where they

spend their time. They have some ability to redesign work and its related domains of knowing expressed along or apart from power, status, and embodied forms of difference.

Salient Organizational Stakeholders

The management of difference at these boundaries of inclusion and exclusion have implications for the professionals themselves; their managers and leaders; professional societies and trade associations; apprentices, residents, trainees, and students joining the profession; allied occupations and voluntary groups; the organizations in which they work; and the clients who rely on professional services and expertise. Relationships considered in the literature described above include the professional and volunteer, professionals and managers, the doctor and the nurse, the librarian and the staff, the engineer and the craft, and situations that bring together multiple professions (e.g., scientists, regulators, engineers, and project managers, Barbour & James, 2015b). The key is that thinking in terms of these relationships brings the boundaries and dynamics of inclusion and exclusion into relief.

Implications for the clients and subjects of professional work have received less attention in communicative study of the professions; although, the study of professional work is often grounded in improving it to benefit them. It can be difficult to study professions and professionals while at the same studying the implications for those who they serve. This difficulty notwithstanding communication research has demonstrated the value of doing so. For example, this boundary can be seen in work on interprofessional communication in healthcare contexts wherein models of more effective collaborative work among multiple medical specialties and occupational groups can improve patient care and reduce medical errors (Apker et al., 2005; Apker et al., 2016; Dean, Gill, & Barbour, 2016; Eisenberg et al., 2005; Harrison et al., 2018; Real, Bardach, & Bardach, 2016). Treem's (2012, 2016) work provides another example,

of how, in this case, public relations workers communicate their expertise to clients, client-focused advocacy for work that lacks strong ties to an institutionalized occupation. This work shows how these professionals make their work visible for clients in practices such as repurposing previously perfected work.

These exemplars suggest a few takeaways for considering the organizational stakeholders of the study of professions and professionals for issues of inclusion and inclusion. Research should continue to explore and practice must grapple with the relational and power-laden nature of the dynamics among stakeholders. In considering who can access and benefit from professional services and expertise, although it can be difficult to do so, existing research provides a warrant for considering the implications of how professionals and professions negotiate issues of inclusion and exclusion for those they serve, including how professionals reveal or conceal work from those they serve.

Data, Methods, and Research Foci

Investigating issues of inclusion and exclusion can reveal the role and power of professions and professionals in controlling the permeability of the boundaries of membership, work, organization, and knowing. Data particularly useful to communication scholars includes research focused on professional work practices (Bailey & Leonardi, 2015; Leonardi, 2015; Treem, 2012), which can reveal not just the nature of the professional work but also what is at stake as professionals negotiate how work ought to be done and by whom. Likewise data about professionals' efforts to design and discipline their communication may reveal how dynamics of inclusion and exclusion scale up from micro to macrolevel patterns and offer a site for intervention (Barbour & Gill, 2017; Barbour, Gill, & Barge, 2018). Previous scholarship has also tried to understand the multilevel nature of professions and professional work (Ashcraft, 2013;

Ashforth, Rogers, & Corley, 2011; Barbour & Lammers, 2007), which requires a focus on the actual work of a profession and its macrolevel construction (Ashcraft, 2007). Longitudinal, historical, multiorganizational research should be of particular value for doing so (Lammers & Barbour, 2006) as well as research focused on occupations in times of change (Meisenbach, 2008) or disruption (Garcia & Barbour, 2018). In the communicative study of professions and professionals, survey-based scholarship has also emphasized understanding professionals' attachment to various targets of identification (Barbour & Lammers, 2007; Lammers et al., 2013; Scott, 1997; Scott & Timmerman, 1999). Research should not conflate attachment to the profession with the internalization of external constructions of a profession or the holding of beliefs typical for most professionals (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998). Instead, research should consider how membership in, attachment to, and beliefs about a profession and professional work are related but independent constructs (Barbour & Lammers, 2015).

The Contributions of the Communicative Study of Professions and Professionals to Problems of Exclusion and Inclusion

The communicative study of professions, professionals, professional work, and the efforts of professionals to negotiate membership, work, organizational, and knowledge boundaries can provide useful strategies. First, we should acknowledge that the nature of professional work grounded in institutionalized organizational arrangements may make reconstruction more difficult. Institutions resist change (Lammers & Barbour, 2006). By focusing on the tensions and contradictions inherent to institutionalized work, including issues of inclusion and exclusion (Creed, DeJordy, & Lok, 2010), communication research can identify strategies for more adaptively navigating those tensions and the efficacy of communication

efforts for reimagining established professional boundaries (Barbour & Manly, 2016; Bisel, Kramer, & Banas, 2016).

Communication research focused on professions, professionals and professionalism already demonstrates the possibilities along these lines. For example, funding and policy guidance may constrain the work of professionals and volunteers in disaster preparation and response, but organizers can nonetheless reconstruct volunteer work, volunteering, and who can volunteer (Ganesh & McAllum, 2012) and in part by drawing on the very institutional logics that constrain (Barbour & Manly, 2016). Who counts as a volunteer and who counts as a professional can be shifting by riffing on institutional contradictions to redraw membership boundaries. Legal mandates for interdisciplinary collaboration in, for example, environmental protection and waste management, can make collaborative problem solving more difficult. Legal and regulatory frameworks may sublimate conflicts between domains of knowing, and yet communicative strategies such as meta-communicating about competing premises for action can ameliorate the difficulties (Barbour & James, 2015b). The historical construction or image of profession may constrain what seems like legitimate professional work and who seems a legitimate professional (Ashcraft, 2007), and these constraints may be built into the very spaces in which professionals work (Dean et al., 2016), but they are constructed and so can be deconstructed and reconstructed (Allen, 2010; Ashcraft, 2000; Ashcraft, 2013; Mease, 2016). Who gets to work and speak where can be challenged by reimagining spaces hand in hand with understandings of the professional role expectations ascribed to them (Barbour et al., 2016a).

A principal contribution of communication research on professions and professionals to problems of inclusion and exclusion should be to identify the sorts of communication strategies, practices, and interventions described above that can make for more competent professional and

interprofessional communication for the understanding and reconstruction of expertise difference. Doing so requires refining not just the practice of individuals but of collectives and not just professionals but professions (Thompson, 2009). The macrolevel construction of a profession may be marshalled to reinforce, accommodate, or resist organizational circumstances. Take, for example, the Mexican engineers who altered their own work discourses based on the perceived status they associated with their international colleagues (Leonardi & Rodriguez-Lluesma, 2013). In doing so, they challenged but also reinforced racially-driven assumptions surrounding their profession. A key risk in the rhetorical construction of a profession is to avoid bolstering one form of work at the expense of another. Elsewhere, in response to hegemonic masculinization of professions, Turner and Norwood (2014) advocated for a shift in the discourse of workplace breastfeeding, reconceptualizing it towards a public and essential need. This shift could serve to empower new mothers while at the same time pushing them to subordinate their own interests and biological needs to function as “good workers.”

Recent writing on automation has highlighted that professional work traditionally thought of beyond machines may not be much longer (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2016; Stone et al., 2016), and at the same time, the established professions have worked to construct autonomous, machine workers as augmenting rather than replacing professionals (Topol, 2019). Communication research shows that professions and professionals shape the lived reality of advances in the technologies of work; the technologies and nature of work change together (Bailey & Leonardi, 2015; Leonardi, 2012). Communication research must help ensure that the future of work does not recapitulate historical inequities of inclusion and exclusion (Lepore, 2019), and it will be in the professions where this story unfolds.

Looking beyond traditional professions, workers can empower themselves through discourse in their pursuit of legitimacy. Volunteers, service-workers, fundraisers, and educators can speak their legitimacy into existence over the course of their day-to-day work (Barbour & Manly, 2016; Treem, 2012; Meisenbach, 2008; Barrett & Dailey, 2017). These threads of research suggest that individuals and organizations must reflect on institutionalized discursive messaging if they wish to act against the exclusionary aspects of professional work. By acknowledging, discussing, and challenging how we conceptualize, discuss, and reinforce exclusionary aspects of professional practice, we may begin to remove the barriers that deprive people and work from professional legitimacy. Leaders and advocacy organizations should cultivate professional cultures that reinforce and create space for discourse that aids in democratic definition of membership. At the same time, professionals and professions need to wrestle with the tension inherent to inclusivity that runs counter to the very nature of professional status, which centers on exclusivity. Doing so may seem to risk the dilution of professional power, but elite status should not be confused with professional competence. Professionals can preserve what makes a profession special without reifying historical divides. Failure to manage the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion may be most undermining where the risks to the profession are technological or where societal trust in the profession has eroded.

Furthermore, research and practice should identify resources and strategies that may be used by the clients served by professionals. Doing so would prompt questions such as, who gets to count themselves as a client of a particular profession, what issues of inclusion and exclusion do individuals face when they seek the services of professionals, and what sort of legal, financial, and social barriers prevent access to professional services? The exclusivity of professions is itself scaffolded by a lack of research focused on the experience of the client. Medicine, the most

frequently professional domain where movements such as patient centered care and collaborative caregiving (Dean et al., 2016) are about redefining the implicated professions by redefining their relationship to each other and to those who they serve. Doing so may also serve to bolster society's trust in the profession while grappling with the changing technologies of medical work (Timmermans & Berg, 2003; Topol, 2019).

Research should take up a more explicit focus on the boundaries of inclusion and exclusion highlighted in this review—membership, work, organization, and knowing. Failing to do so may exacerbate problems of inclusion and exclusion. This research should ask how particular boundaries involve, implicate, and overlap others. It should reveal the key tensions and contradictions inherent to those boundaries as they may offer purchase for efforts aimed at reconstruction, and in doing so, it may help identify and test strategies for negotiating inclusion and exclusion.

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