"SHOW TALK": CULTURAL COMMUNICATION WITHIN ONE US AMERICAN SPEECH COMMUNITY, DEADHEADS

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This study takes seriously the notion of group identity within a particular United States (US) speech community. More specifically, this article demonstrates how members of one US speech community use communication to create and affirm their shared identity. In so doing, these speakers do not compromise their individual identity. Members, known as Deadheads, engage in "show talk," a community-specific speech event, to tell individualized versions of cultural myths. Deadheads draw on a body of cultural knowledge, "the world according to shows," to render this talk meaningful and to affirm their shared identity.

While a number of studies exist demonstrating the relevance of individualism for many US Americans, studies of US co-cultures (e.g., domestic, ethnic and social cultures) are calling attention to the value of group membership and community for many US Americans (see for example Braithwaite, 1990; Dollar & Zimmers, 1998; Orbe, 1994). Given the growing evidence for each of these values, it is important to be open to the expression of both when studying US American speakers.

One context where group identities are salient is in our daily interactions with other US Americans. I am suggesting that it is our memberships in social groups (e.g., religious, work, ethnic, gender, etc.) more so than being a US American that is important in interactions with other US Americans. Such a claim arises from the belief that cultures are organized diversity (Schneider, 1976); the national culture shared by US Americans is composed of diverse co-cultures. As such, it is not surprising that many of our interactions with other

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US Americans either emphasize or reveal our membership in social groups.

Scholars have begun to consider how members create, enact, and negotiate a shared identity, a group or social identity within US American speech communities (see for example Braithwaite, 1997; Ray, 1987; Philipsen, 1992). This study contributes to that general line of research. More specifically, the article presents a cultural analysis of one US American speech community's use of a type of group talk, "show talk," as a means of enacting a shared identity. The study is grounded in the *ethnography of communication* (Hymes, 1972; Philipsen, 1989a), a theoretical and methodological enterprise discussed in the following section. I begin with a description of the speech community of focus before discussing my theoretical and interpretive framework. The analysis section contains two parts; the first demonstrates that members of the speech community rely on a set of group symbols and norms guiding their use in speech, the second describes the speech event or context giving shape to this speaking, namely "show talk." The analysis illustrates how members use this speech event to create, enact and affirm their shared identity.

THEORETICAL AND INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK

Speech Community

Any ethnography of communication (Hymes, 1962, 1972) begins with the identification of a speech community, or a group whose members share (1) rules for interpreting a linguistic variety (e.g., Standard English) and (2) rules for speaking and interpreting speech. Speaking is a social act, situated within a particular context at a specific time. Membership in a speech community requires competency in both the community's language and the situated act of speaking (e.g., when to speak, to whom, about what, in what form, to what extent, etc.).

Over the last couple of decades ethnographers of communication have explored US American speech communities with a variety of interests. Most of these have considered the creation, enactment, and/or negotiation of social identities (Braithwaite, 1997; Carbaugh, 1985; Dollar & Zimmers, 1998; Katriel & Philipsen, 1985; Philipsen,

1975, 1976, 1992; Ray, 1987; Rudd, 1995; Sequeira, 1993) while a few have considered ethnic and/or national group identity (Carbaugh, 1997, 1993; Fitch, 1989/90; Fong, 1998). All have explored the communication issue pursued in this study: How do members of groups create and affirm a shared identity?

The speech community featured in this study is referred to by both members and nonmembers as "Deadheads" or "Dead Heads." Previous research (Dollar, 1988, 1991; Dollar, Morgan, & Crabtree, 1997, 1998) and the following analysis support the claim that Deadheads are a speech community.

Deadheads are devout fans of the Grateful Dead (GD), a rock and roll band that disbanded in late 1995 with the death of their lead guitarist, Jerry Garcia, but recently reformed as The Other Ones. The Deadhead community continues to grow although The Other Ones is on a very limited touring, or concert, schedule compared to the GD. The community consists of different types of members ranging from "tour heads" who literally follow the band from town to town to those members who have never seen an actual GD concert but collect "tapes" of live GD performances. Between these two extremes are a range of membership types.

The Deadhead community began to formally take shape when the GD printed a call to "freaks" in their 1971 live album, *Skull and Roses*, asking them to "unite" by sending their names and addresses to the GD for a mailing list. This list still exists today and is used to distribute the *Grateful Dead Almanac*, a newsletter. While some believe this is a community in crisis, in decline, most of those interviewed for this and related studies feel the community is very much alive, different, but alive and changing all the time. For example, many Deadheads recently attended a ritual that had been discontinued for numerous reasons even before Garcia's death, the New Year's Eve show. On December 31, 1998 at Kaiser Auditorium in Oakland, California, Deadheads reunited to celebrate their connection, their shared identity, by participating in a cultural communication situation, "the New Year's show."

Since the original call, Deadheads have taken it upon themselves to unite. They have creatively managed the challenges posed to the community by not being located in a single geographical area; Deadheads live all over the world. They have also come together to

mourn the loss of their leader, Garcia, and the transitions this brought the community. Like the GD, Deadheads have always embraced developing communication technologies and are credited by many as playing influential roles in the development of the Internet (Rheingold, 1993). Deadheads have relied on electronic media such as the email and the Internet, as well as print media, to communicate with Deadheads. Magazines such as *Relix*, *Golden Road*, and *Dupree's Diamond News* are common artifacts for many Deadheads. In addition to these means of connecting members, Deadheads can still call West Coast and East Coast hotlines 24 hours a day for the most up to date information on The Other Ones and GD members' other bands such as Ratdog and Planet Drum.

As can be inferred from this brief introduction to Deadheads, they are a community whose members take communication seriously. For a more in-depth understanding of this speech community, I recommend consulting both academic writings (e.g., Pearson, 1987; Sardiello, 1994) and works written by and for members (e.g., Brandelius, 1989; Grushkin, Bassett & Grushkin, 1983; Shenk & Silberman, 1994). In the following two sections I discuss my interpretive framework for collecting and analyzing data.

Communicative Forms as Heuristic Devices

The usefulness of form as a methodological construct rests on the assumption that cultural life, group life, is displayed through the enactment of cultural and social forms within a given community (Chaney, 1982). It is important to note that by cultural life I am referring to a shared life that is socially constructed and historically transmitted using a system of symbols and meanings, rules and premises (Philipsen, 1992). Social groups often have a cultural life, as do ethnic groups, national groups, political groups, community groups, and speech communities. It is through these forms that members of particular groups publicly and discursively play out their shared identities.

Chaney (1982) argued that communities create and sustain cultural forms, which enable members to make sense of aspects of their social reality, which are meaningful and essential to their community. Ethnographers of communication have supported this claim. Braithwaite (1997), for instance, illustrates how members of a Viet-

nam veterans group gather informally, always engaging in the legiti-
macy ritual in which each member must communicatively demon-
strate their claim to membership in the group. It is their membership
in this group, Vietnam veterans, which is emphasized problemati-
cally in interactions with non-member US speakers. It is within the
context of other legitimate members, other Nam Vets, that these US
American speakers make sense of their shared identity and their in-
teraction with non-members.

While engaging in communicative cultural forms, members
both implicitly and explicitly display their shared identity. As a situ-
ated enactment, a social act, each use of cultural forms may vary in
the dimensions of cultural life called forth and emphasized. Philipsen
(1989b) noted two ways the use of communicative cultural forms
can be a source of identification: As members speak competently
within the speech community they are heard by other members to be
a member, as well as by themselves to be members. Philipsen (1987)
proposed that members of speech communities rely on communica-
tive rituals, myths and social dramas as means of creating, affirming,
and negotiating their shared identity, or accomplishing what he calls
the *cultural function of communication*.

Fitch's (1990/91) analysis of a Colombian leave-taking ritual
and Sequeria's (1993) study of the use of address terms within a US
charismatic church illustrate the heuristic value of considering com-
municative forms and shared identity, or more particularly, the cul-
tural function of communication. Eastman (1985) demonstrated the
use of group talk and culturally loaded vocabulary, terms and phrases
created by the community to speak about cultural life, to achieve a
"subjective social identity and community membership" (p. 5). In
the present study I explore the question of communicating shared
membership through the location and analysis of Deadhead cultural
communication forms.

Collecting and Interpreting Data

The data collected for this study spans 10 years of participa-
tion in the Deadhead speech community. For the analysis presented
here I revisited a large body of data including written field notes,
audio-recorded field notes, and transcripts of interaction. The data
set used in this study contains naturally occurring interaction and

field notes related to the naturally occurring interaction. In listening to and reading these data I applied Carbaugh's (1985, 1986) framework for analyzing cultural communication codes as a means of locating the communication of shared identity. *Cultural communication* is communication that is deeply felt, commonly intelligible, and widely accessible (Carbaugh, 1988). As deeply felt, these instances of cultural communication evoke an ethos felt intensely by member speakers, an ethos rendering shared identity.

Carbaugh's (1985, 1986) framework involves five phases of analysis: (1) discovering recurring symbols; (2) locating symbols associated with these recurring symbols; (3) describing opposing symbols, when relevant; (4) exploring the data for sequential use of terms and systematically recurring if/then patterns of expression; and (5) organizing the symbols in order of the speakers' assessment of their moral weight.

In addition, I relied on Hymes' (1972) SPEAKING heuristic to locate the communication event that gives shape to the systematic expression of cultural communication revealed using Carbaugh's (1985, 1986) framework. Once I had located the relevant symbols ("show" and other culturally loaded vocabulary discussed below) and their patterned expression (norms for using this group talk) I was able to identify their moral ranking. Still I had not located the cultural form providing discursive shape for members' use of these cultural communication resources.

Hymes' heuristic framework is intended as means of discovering and describing the communicative events comprising a speech community's ways of communicating. The framework directs researchers' focus to the scene, participants, ends, act sequence, key or tone, instrumentalities, norms for communicating and interpreting communication, and genre as critical components of communicative events. Once I located the cultural communication symbols I continued my analysis by searching for the cultural communication form(s), event(s), giving shape to Deadheads' use of the cultural symbols and phrases identified using Carbaugh's framework (1985, 1986).

Finally, I used Schegloff's (1972) notion of a *common sense geography* as a basis for understanding the *culturally shared knowledge* (Gumperz, 1984) that is implied but not explicitly stated in sociocultural communication. Combining these interpretive concepts

provided a means of articulating the folk logic that renders this way of speaking a cultural accomplishment.

The combination of these devices allowed me to develop an interpretive framework for these data concentrating on the structure/function relationship of a particular form for communicating. This approach takes seriously the notion of context, offering researchers a means of discovering situated moments of communication. The enactment of any cultural communication form is a situated act, relying on both the culturally coded aspects of the form and contextual features. Each situated act is distinct yet formulaic. In the analysis below, I do not present all the data but exemplar cases that display the essential features of this cultural form of communicating.

"SHOW," "SHOW TALK," AND CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

The symbol that features most prominently across these data is "show," a GD concert. Show is an example of what Eastman (1985) refers to as *culturally loaded vocabulary*, terms and phrases constructed by group members to represent experiences or ideas previously unidentified. As an instance of culturally loaded vocabulary, show is part of Deadhead *group talk* — the competent use of culturally specific vocabulary revealing the speakers' knowledge and use of shared attitudes (Eastman). I argue below that Deadheads' use show and show talk as cultural communication resources for creating and affirming shared identity.

Culturally Loaded Symbols, Phrases, and Norms of Use

Although the topic of much Deadhead communication is concerts, GD concerts, these terms and this phrasing rarely appear in Deadheads' interaction. Rather Deadheads tend to use city/town names, venue names, or show when talking about GD concerts. Consider the following segment drawn from a single speech event, a conversation in a Deadhead's apartment. These interlocutors were discussing "break plans," time off from work and/or school, when they started some "Deadhead talk" (field notes including transcriptions, 11/28/89).

Example 1:

```
1: Rob can you tell it's starting to upset me it's been about      1
      a year=                                                       2
2: =yeah hahahaha (laughing)                                        3
1: cause really I do (.) you know                                   4
2: we::ll I (breathes out loud slowly) I don't know if there's     5
      an Irvine I might seriously consider going there=             6
1: =ycah Irvine                                                     7
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Example 2:
```
1: =skiing with Lisa and them it'll be cheap and fun OR if I       20
      want to go to=                                                21
2: =shows?                                                          22
1: there are no shows then that I know of (.) when's March         23
      end of late March (.) early March is all                     24
2: Nassau then Atlanta (.) April   first through third             25
                            [           ]
1:                              yeah                                26
      see so spring break by then=                                  27
2: =well Irvine usually isn't til the end of uh:: April=           28
1: =right right                                                     29
2: anyway Frost'll come up                                          30
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As mentioned above, the topic of the conversation is GD concerts. Interestingly, the interlocutors in this example never say "concert." Rather, they refer to (1) individual Grateful Dead concerts by stating the location of the concert (lines 6, 7, 25, 28, 30), or, (2) GD concerts in general as shows (lines 22 & 23). Initial analyses of print and electronic communication suggests that these norms are also used by Deadheads in written communication, both in magazines/newsletters and computer email groups. The focus here, however, is limited to face-to-face interaction among Deadheads.

When Deadheads want to call attention to specific GD concerts, they use either (1) name of venue, such as the Frost (line 30) and Nassau (line 25) or (2) city/town name (lines 6, 7, 25, 28). If venues become shared favorites, usually because of size (small is preferred) and/or setting (e.g., architecture, grass lawn, room to dance, vision lines, acoustics), then venue names become commonly recog-

nized *location formulations*, terms and phrases shared by a group of interlocutors for discursively formulating location (Schegloff, 1972). "The Frost" referred to in Example 2 (line 30) is an example of a venue treated by Deadheads as both a favorite venue and a location formulation. As noted by many Deadheads in these data, The Frost is held in high esteem because it is small, an outdoor venue with a grass lawn, "family friendly" (i.e., conducive environment for Deadheads with children) and located near San Francisco, an area where many Deadheads live. When the GD has played in only one venue in a particular town, and that venue is not a communi ty-shared favorite, then town/city name is preferred.

The patterning of venue and town/city name to refer to GD concerts has been documented in other settings, particularly at shows, local gatherings of Deadheads, and in a variety of musical settings. The following, for example, is excerpted from a conversation be-tween Deadheads at a New Orleans show (field notes including tran-scripts, 10/18/88):

Example 3

1: you headed to Houston and Dallas?	1
2: yeah I was able to get some time off for this tour	2
1: so you went to the Florida shows too?	3
2: saw all three, the second St. Petersburg was IT for me,	4
sometimes a show is such a clear reminder that I never	5
got off the bus you know what I mean?	6
1: sure and I remember the show I actually got on the bus (.)	7
was the Shrine Auditorium January 11, 1978.	8
2: the Shrine, Fillmore East, and the Greek are three venues	9
I never saw the boyz in and I regret they weren't part	10
of my long strange trip	11
1: I'm with you there I never saw any of the intimate venues	12
they used play on on the East coast	13

These Deadheads display their knowledge of the above noted norms for talking about GD concerts. First, the interlocutors use city names (lines 1, 4) and venue names (lines 8, 9) to refer to GD concerts. Second, the interlocutors use venue names when speaking of venues they consider to be special, in terms of becoming a Deadhead ("the

show I actually got on the bus," line 7) and as "intimate venues" (line 12), for example.

As noted in the beginning of this section, Deadheads use the term show to refer to Grateful Dead concerts. That these concerts are a unique experience and part of a cultural lifestyle has been argued by other researchers (see for example Pearson, 1987; & Sardiello, 1994). Deadheads choice to refer to these experiences as "shows" while non-members call them "Grateful Dead concerts" is one type of evidence that Deadheads are aware of their uniqueness. As such, these concert experiences are prime candidates for culturally loaded vocabulary. A second empirical observation that can be drawn from Examples 1-3 and other talk featuring show in these data is: "Show" and other culturally recognized location formulations co-occur with situationally-appropriate culturally loaded vocabulary. Examples include "tour,""on the bus," and"the fat man."

Example 3 illustrates this patterned expression and its cultural relevance. When the second Deadhead uses the phrase "this tour" (line 2) she displays the frame or context that she is using to interpret the phrase "Houston and Dallas," the current GD concert tour not a previous or upcoming GD concert tour. That the first Deadhead is using the same frame becomes evident with his ease in continuing the conversation using a question that both displays his knowledge of this tour sequence (i.e., there were three GD concerts in Florida immediately preceding this New Orleans show on this tour) and his ability to use this frame efficaciously.

IT" (line 4), "on/off the bus" (lines 6, 7), "long strange trip" (line 11), and "the boyz" (lines 10), like the above instances of culturally loaded vocabulary, have recently appeared as entries in a Deadhead dictionary, *Skeleton Key* (Shenk & Silberman, 1994) written by and for Deadheads. As I have argued elsewhere (Dollar, forthcoming; Dollar, Morgan & Crabtree, 1997, 1998), Deadheads use the phrase "on the bus" as means of expressing their Deadhead identity. The phrase, adopted from Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters of the 1960s/70s, is heard by Deadheads to be a self-ascription, translated by other Deadheads to mean 'I am a Deadhead.' Long strange trip is a phrase recognized as cultural vocabulary by even the most peripheral members of this community. The phrase comes from a popular Grateful Dead song, "Truckin'." Members hear the phrase

to refer to the history of the community, a history in which strangeness is embraced. Finally, the boyz is heard as a reference to the members of the Grateful Dead. Deadheads use this nickname, so to speak, as an affectionate reference to the members of the band.

Examples 1- 3 have been used here to demonstrate three norms of interaction Deadheads use when talking about GD concerts. First, Deadheads rely on a set of culturally loaded vocabulary terms and phrases when talking about this cultural ritual, GD concerts. Second, when referencing GD concerts, Deadheads use city/town names, venue names, or show rather than concert or Grateful Dead concert. Third, their use of show and other culturally recognized location formulations co-occur with the situated use of other culturally loaded terms and phrases. In order to demonstrate the use of these cultural symbols and phrases to create and affirm shared identity, I turn to the second stage of analysis which considers the context and structure in which such speaking occurs.

"Show Talk" and Cultural Communication

When Deadheads engage in talk featuring the symbol show, their interaction often takes the shape of show talk, a communally recognized speech event for talking about GD concerts and Deadheads' experience of, at, and around these concerts. The shape and structure of this event is sketched below using relevant components from Hymes' (1972) descriptive framework described earlier. This description is based on the same data set utilized in the previous stage of analysis.

Scene: "Talking about shows," "show talk," and "Dead/Deadhead talk," refer to a culturally recognized event for talking about GD concerts and related experiences. This event is not limited to any particular context. Within these data the event has been noted at shows, other musical concerts, Dead family events, and according to preliminary analyses in Deadhead printed media and electronic communication.

Participants: While participants do not have to be Deadheads, they must at least have specialized knowledge of Grateful Dead concerts and be familiar with the norms of interaction described in the previous section. I say at least because as noted by Eastman (1985)

and Hymes (1962, 1972), competent group talkers must be able to use their cultural knowledge socially with other community members in situated performances. Each performance calls on a the set of cultural symbols and phrases relevant to that situation. Finally, participants are not required to have pre-existing relations. Any participant who meets the above two requirements should be able to engage in successful show talk with any other participant sharing the same resources, norms and vocabulary.

Ends: The goals of this event vary across participants but if performed correctly the event necessarily links the individual to the group. As members participate in this talk, they locate their individual experiences within the cultural history of this community. In this sense, show talk allows members to accomplish Philipsen's (1987) cultural function through creating or affirming shared identity.

Show talk relies on cultural symbols and phrases. These expressions, while interpretable to nonmembers, do not evoke the deeply felt level of meaning described by Deadheads when asked about these data. One member in particular captures the essence of others' response to Example 2: "This one here (pointing to Example 2) for example should make some sense to anyone who speaks English, but for a Deadhead it's the painful recognition that your work schedule doesn't fit with the Dead tour schedule. And we HATE when that happens. That's what I identify with when I read it" (interview transcript, 1/16/92). This Deadhead points to the connection that occurs, the connection of one Deadhead to a theme shared by many Deadheads. Other Deadheads hear the story in Example 2 to be painful, deeply felt. For them, it achieves this cultural level of meaning in the frame of a shared Deadhead myth, touring (see Dollar, 1988, 1989, 1991; Pearson, 1987; Sardiello, 1994 for more on touring).

All three examples contain a number of instances of culturally loaded vocabulary. What holds these individual instances together is *culturally shared knowledge* (Gumperz, 1984) implied but not explicitly stated in the communication. One aspect of such knowledge is the meaning of Deadhead myths giving shape to their shared world (Pearson, 1987, Sardiello, 1994). Further, the situated use of these terms is highly dependent on what Shenk & Silberman (1994) call "the world according to shows" (pp. 332-33), Deadheads' commonly shared knowledge of Grateful Dead concerts and tours more gener-

ally. Given these conditions, it is not surprising that non-members cite the use of these culturally loaded terms and phrases as problematic when asked to make sense of these examples.

When members enact and perform show talk they rely on each of these types of knowledge to tell their individual version of shared Deadhead myths. The emphasis of common cultural myths is heard by the members to be an expression of shared identity, the accomplishment of cultural communication. In Philipsen's (1989b, 1992) terms, Deadheads hear show talk to be instances of *membering*, or instances of speech in which the member is both heard by other members and by her/himself to be speaking like a community member.

Act Sequence: The topic and general focus of show talk is GD concerts. This event is often nestled subtlety in an ongoing conversation. The shift from another speech event, such as "talking music," can occur with one member's utterance of a culturally recognized location formulation or location-relevant vocabulary that is taken up by another competent participant. The shift is comparable to a shift I have noted among members of a sports community, from "talking sports," to "sports talk" (Dollar, 1992a&b). While important, the shift may go unnoticed by one or more participant. Consider the following example taken from a conversation among Deadheads in one of the interlocutor's apartment (field notes including transcripts, 5/24/92).

Example 4:

```
1: when's the last time you saw Zero                            1
2: I can't remember but it's been too long  Bobby Vega, Steve  2
   Kimock (.) those=                                            3
                                    [
3:                      they're so hot they get spacey          4
   in no time (.) less than five minutes into their first      5
   set and they're jammin'=                                     6
2: =guys are so tight                                           7
1: yeah I agree with both of you what about Hot Tuna            8
3: I've only seen them once and that was a while ago but I'd    9
   see 'em again                                               10
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2: Oh (starts laughing) I haven't seen them since the night   11
    Rick and I saw them at the Backstage then took off for   12
    the Cal Expo shows   13
3: that's right, there were three Expo shows and you got that   14
    double encore the last night (.) Johnny B. Goode and We   15
    Bid You Goodnight   16
2: EX:::ACTLY   17
3: and it was around that time that you heard a couple of   18
    Mighty Quinn encores too.   19
2: yeah the next two sets of shows (.) the Greek then   20
    Shoreline   21
1: Really? I never heard Tuna play those tunes   22
3: NO::: we're talking about the Dead   23
1: oh I should have known when you said Cal Expo show   24

In this example the conversation flows smoothly until the first interlocutor displays he has not followed the shift in frame from talking music to show talk (line 22). In lines 1 through 13 these Deadheads were talking music in the coordinated interaction about two bands, Zero and Hot Tuna. When the third interlocutor accurately cites songs played by the GD at the Cal Expo shows (lines 15, 16), he signals to the second Deadhead that he has shifted events, from talking music to talking shows, Grateful Dead shows. The second Deadhead's response to this move, "EX:::ACTLY" (line 17), is treated by the third Deadhead as an opportunity to continue show talk until the first interlocutor signals to them that he has not made the shift in speech events (line 22). The third interlocutor explicitly notes the shift when he says, "NO::: we're talking about the Dead" (line 23). And, finally, the first interlocutor notes his mistake in missing the subtle cue shifting the event (line 24), heard by all three Deadheads as a recognition that two different types of talk have occurred.

In this example the interlocutors demonstrate that a shift in type of talk, from talking music to talking shows can be signaled through the situated use of the term show. Once this term has been set forth, it serves as an *opening* similar to the openings Katriel (1991) discusses as potential slots for initiating a ritualized expression of conflict among Israeli children and youth. When the term show is uttered it serves as a potential opening; if taken up it initiates a patterned way of using group talk recognized by Deadheads as show

talk. When initiated, the event continues with phase two — rounds of talk organized around location-relevant themes. In Example 3, for instance, the Deadheads discuss an ongoing tour, favorite shows, and special venues. The length of this phase, the thematic discussions, varies and is determined by the participants. The phase comes to a close as the interlocutors enter the final phase of show talk, 'wrapping it up.' Members do just this. They verbally bring the communication to a close, shift to another speech event, or end their communication all together.

Norm: In each of these examples, the Deadheads rely on the frame invoked by show talk to situationally express cultural communication. In other words, when Deadheads recognize they are doing show talk, they call on a number of relevant and appropriate patterns to tell their individualized accounts of culturally shared experiences.

In addition to norms of interaction described in the previous stage of analysis, these data suggest a set of norms of interpretation Deadheads rely on for their successful performance of show talk. I noted above that some Deadheads refer to a body of knowledge called "the world according to shows" (Shenk & Silberman, 1994, p. 332) defined as the "geography lessons courtesy THE BOYS [the GD]" (p. 332). I want to combine this line of thinking with a idea suggested by Schegloff's (1972) attention to a *common sense geography*. I do not limit my use of this concept to the physical constraints imposed by Schegloff but extend it to include the situationally relevant cultural symbols it evokes (e.g., size of a venue, playing a song for the first time). Together the two concepts allow me to consider the culturally shared knowledge of being a Deadhead that arises from an individual's participation in and consumption of the GD shows and related events, more generally the cultural folk logic rendering show talk cultural communication.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

One of the problems confronted by all members of goups is how to balance their need for individual identification with that for communal or group identification (Philipsen, 1987). Ethnographers of communication have begun to document and illustrate how members of US American speech communities respond to this struggle. Their findings, as do those described in this article, provide evidence

that US American speakers value both and can achieve both, individuality and collectivity, by relying on community-specific communicative forms such as show talk.

This growing body of research provides scholars and students of cultural communication with an opportunity to begin comparing and contrasting these diverse ways of speaking like a US American. This task is facilitated by these researchers' reliance on a common theoretical and interpretive framework, namely Hymes' (1972) ethnography of communication. In a related study, for example, I have begun to explore the question: Do other US American speech communities rely on a common sense geography as a basis for understanding their cultural communication? Preliminary analysis suggests that at least some other communities do. Philipsen's (1992) analysis of Teamsterville speakers, for example, illustrates the relevance of "place" which he argues is infused in much, if not all, of their communication. My preliminary analysis of some street youths' communication indicates their use of a common sense geography when speaking culturally. And, Basso (1990) has demonstrated Apache speakers' reliance on a system of place names and associated morals when communicating culturally. These and other ethnographies of communication provide a body of research available to scholars for such comparative purposes.

Future directions include analysis of other forms of communication, namely printed media and electronic communication, in terms of cultural communication. Do Deadheads use these patterned ways of communicating about GD shows on the Internet, for example? Ethnographies of communication attempt to offer a more holistic approach for understanding a speech community's ways of speaking and this extension of the current study pursues such a goal.

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