The hair salon: An ethnography employing still photography as a methodological tool.

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THE HAIR SALON: AN ETHNOGRAPHY EMPLOYING STILL PHOTOGRAPHY AS A METHODOLOGICAL TOOL

By

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research through the Department of Sociology and Anthropology in Partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts at the University of Windsor

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examined an occupational group, hair stylists, and in doing so used a visual methodological orientation to collect, analyze, and present data. The first purpose of this study was to examine and describe the social world of the hair salon from the point of view of the hair stylist. The second purpose of this study was its visual orientation. The researcher used still photography in conjunction with participant observation to collect, analyze and present data.

Hair stylists take precautionary strategies to minimize customer disappointment: a) tearing down, b) guilt by appearance, c) shifting responsibility, d) training the client, e) complimenting, and f) forecasting. In the beginning stages of the hair cutting process the client appearance is degraded physically and verbally by the stylist. However, the client is then "eased into" the new appearance by the stylists. This transformation of identity or appearance is facilitated by the stylist throughout the hair cutting process. In the course of carrying out the hair cutting process the stylist typifies clients: new customers, walk-ins, regulars, infrequents, and troublesome customers. Teamwork and props help with minimizing customer disappointment.

The visual method enables the reader to see some of the strategies that stylists use to minimize customer disappointment. The photo-elicitative interviews allowed the stylists to describe

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elements that were in the photograph and from this customer
typifications were compiled. The photo-elicitative interviews
provided information to confirm or invalidate information that was
previously thought to be true. The photographs also provided data
that was missed by the researcher while in the setting. A description
of the environment, props, costumes and decor was provided by the
photographs in a way that words cannot describe.

The examples given above were some of the positive benefits that
the researcher found. The drawback in using this type of method is
that the photographs could not stand on their own within this setting.
It was found that a detailed knowledge of the participants' lives must
be known while taking, analyzing and presenting the photographs. A
technical knowledge of the camera and photographic developing was
found to be beneficial to the process. If this was not learned
crucial photographs could be lost.

What was concluded from the research was that stylists utilize
strategies for minimizing customer disappointment and as a result
maintain a loyal clientele. The photographs incorporated into into
the findings and analysis were used to document and illustrate events
and behavior that were common within the salon.
Many people have contributed to this thesis, and deserve thanks. Thank you to my committee members: Dr. Mary Lou Dietz for her encouragement, support and direction. Dr. Vito Signorile who taught me to learn from my mistakes. Prof. James Linton for his continued interest and suggestions in reading of this thesis. Dr. Robert Whitehurst for several helpful suggestions during the course of this research. Marjo Callaghan and Marion Keith, who provided me with friendship and support along the way. Evanne Lorenz Dietz for editing the material. A very special thanks goes to the stylists and customers who participated in this study.

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INTRODUCTION

The Hair Stylist

This thesis will examine an occupational group, hair stylists, and in doing so use a visual methodological orientation to collect, analyze and present data. The first section will introduce the social focus of the thesis, followed by the methodological orientation of the thesis. The first purpose of this study is to examine and describe the social world of the hair salon from the point of view of the hair stylist. This area has been largely unexamined by sociologists, surprisingly, as hair salons are part of most people's common experience. For some, it is an important part of their weekly routine.

Much media attention has been given to the end product, the hair style, and with reason, hair styles have been part of social movements. Recent examples of the effects of a movement on hair styles are the hippie movement and the punk scene. Perhaps hair has been so important in both of these movements because, like clothing, hair is visible. Hair styles are a basic part of a person's perception and expression of self. Hair styles in the hippie and punk movements have also served to identify people as members of the movement to others, thus the hair style becomes in effect a political statement.

The hair stylist provides a service which, as one fashion journalist notes "can make you feel like a million bucks or ruin you just by the way they cut your hair" (Wilkerson, 1984:3J). For many
people "it's a ritual often more faithfully adhered to than checkups, flossing and mass" (Wilkerson, 1984: 3J). The hair stylist styles and cuts hair but that is not the only role he or she plays on the job; other roles include that of confidante, psychologist, gossip, etc. Little is known of the people who work as professional hair stylists or how they work as a group within the salon. Their social world is still somewhat shrouded in mystery and often, the brunt of malicious stereotypes. The hair salon is one of many businesses within the marketplace that serves people but that has, up until now, not been examined by social scientists.

The hair salon, as part of the marketplace, provides a service like so many others we deal with as part of our everyday routine. Cab drivers, clothing store owners, doctors and restaurant workers just to name a few, are all within the realm of marketplace study. Questions asked have been: what makes people purchase the item? Does the packaging incline someone to purchase a piece of merchandise or service? and many other questions of particular importance to industrial management and business scholars. The marketplace, viewed as "fundamentally social activity", has largely been neglected by sociologists (Prus, 1985a:2).

The trend in hair salons has changed over time. Beauty salons for women and barbershops for men traditionally showed the sex-role divisions or gender domains of this marketplace. Within the past twenty years there has been a change to unisex hair salons frequented by both sexes. These shops may cater to people within the neighborhood, trend-setters and children, as well as those people who were once patrons of the beauty salons or barbershops. This new type
of hair salon may have come about as a result of the women's liberation, or due to a movement which promoted equal opportunity and treatment for both sexes or a movement toward an androgynous appearance. With this in mind it is even more surprising that there is little known about the social world of the hair salon, other than the lay knowledge gained in the brief encounters we all have with them on the occasion of a hair cut.

This brings us to the first or initial aim of this thesis which is to examine and report on the social world of hair stylists. More importantly, to examine how the stylists interact with the customers to achieve and maintain a loyal clientele. Prus (1985b:16) points out that the repeat or loyal customer is the backbone of any business. How do hair stylists influence their customers into returning for their service again and again? One way may involve the negotiation of the hair cut, or in effect, the influencing of the customer's perception of his or her appearance. It is possible that hair stylists have developed complex ways of defining what counts as beauty, and thereby influencing the attitudes about beauty that their clients have, thus they develop a large enough clientele to keep the business alive. Other strategies that stylists have in developing a clientele will be discussed in the analysis and discussion.

**Methodological Orientation**

The second focus of this study is the visual orientation. A small but growing number of sociologists are recognizing the importance of visual information in their research (Plummer, 1983:28). This may be a result of the proliferation of mass media and, more specifically, the growth and impact of television. Sociologists like
Curry (1984:16) state that we can use these new visual technologies to develop new techniques to add to traditional visual methodologies and in the end create a visual sociology. The focus of this section is an examination of visual sociology as a methodology rather than as a theoretical perspective. Although sociologists, such as Signorile (1983, 1984) and Curry (1984) are in the process of developing a theory of the visual, as yet none has been developed.

It takes time for any technology to be integrated into a social system, especially one that has been as heavily dependent on the written language as sociology. The natural sciences have also been reluctant to accept new technology. After the invention of the microscope it took many years before its capabilities were realized as a method for analyzing minute objects (Capra, 1982:110). This is hard to imagine since the microscope is now a common apparatus in any science lab. In the future, the same may be true for visual sociology.

Cheatwood and Stasz (1979:64) point out that the social sciences have been modeled after the natural sciences. The natural sciences have used visual methods extensively in their research. Despite this fact, as can be readily seen in any journal of science, sociologists have ignored this cue (Lewis, 1983:14). Curry (1984:2) examined the use of visual methods in both sociology and in biology journals and found that, in comparison, biologists use visual data twenty-five times more than do sociologists in their publications. Among the many explanations as to why the visual has not been exploited by sociologists is their reliance upon the verbal which Arnheim (1969:11-12) attributes to the mind/body distinction, which promotes the
distrust of the senses. Barndt (1974:5) is more straightforward for she boils it down to ignorance on the part of sociologists of the importance of the visual in the profession. In any study, the methodology must be amenable to the questions asked or areas of exploration; otherwise, difficulties may arise as well as results which are questionable. Certain sociological concepts and theories are not amenable to being studied visually. Concepts such as alienation or attitudes about sex would be very difficult if not impossible to study visually. Nevertheless other areas of sociological interest can be studied effectively via visual media.

Much qualitative sociological research is done by observing behavior. Whyte's (1943) *Street Corner Society* is a seminal example of this. The appropriateness of the use of media for data collection is unquestioned where audio or acoustic phenomenon are concerned.

We take for granted the fact that the musicologist and linguist use sound recording as the basis for their work, and we would be astonished if either of them returned to 'pre-mechanized ways', scrapping his/her tape recorder and endeavouring to record sounds he/she hears with some sort of notation. (Jablonko, 1964:2)

It would make very little sense to record something verbally if it could be better recorded photographically. Jablonko (1964:3) notes that "we should rather use a recording technique which has a more definable relationship to the visual aspects of phenomenon and a much greater capacity to record visual aspects than any notational system".

This thesis will use still photography to examine the social world of the hair salon. By doing so we will attempt to answer the questions that Barndt (1974:7) poses, which are: "what do pictures do well? what are their special qualities? and how do we use them?" In addition, there will be an examination of the hair stylist's culture.
and negotiations with clients within the context of a hair salon.
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

An interactionist approach using the dramaturgical framework of Erving Goffman is being used in the analysis of the occupation of hair stylist. Hair stylists, like many other service occupations, must rely upon presenting themselves in the best possible light if they are to stay in business. One of Goffman's guiding concepts that deals with the presentation of self is his theory of people as impression managers (Meltzer et al., 1975: 69). Although there have been those who criticize Goffman for portraying people as social chameleons his perspective does have a great deal of relevance to this study.

On a more general level the dramaturgical framework is used as "a simile, a frame of reference invoked by the analyst to segregate and permit him or her to analyze one of the multiple functions of interaction: its impressive function" (Messinger et al., 1968:16).

"In any interaction individuals seek to acquire information about each other" (Goffman, 1959:1). Information is used to define the situation, enabling the participants to know what to expect of others and what others expect of them (Goffman, 1959:1). It is then that each participant knows how to behave in order to elicit desired responses from others (Goffman, 1959:1). The impressions that others receive from the actor is important in impression management. If the actors are not able to express themselves sufficiently then the desired response from others won't be achieved.

When individuals appear before others they usually have motives for trying to control the impressions others receive within the
situation (Goffman, 1959:15). They are impression managers. This information is communicated through performances (Lauer & Handel, 1983: 134) as well as through fronts which include props, appearance and manner, regions and team work. "The expressiveness of the individuals (and therefore their ability to give impressions) appears to involve two radically different sign activities" (Goffman, 1959:2): expressions given and expressions given off. Expressions "given" involve verbal symbols (words) or other expressions which are intentionally given such as a wink of the eye or a wave of the arm. Expressions "given off" are the unintended expressions of the individual, "the expectation being that the action was performed for reasons other than the information conveyed in this way" (Goffman, 1959:2). Examples of expressions "given off" may be body odor or a person's accent.

Goffman's concepts of performances, encounters, props, regions and teams will be used as "sensitizing concepts". Sensitizing concepts as described by Blumer (1969:148) give the researcher general guidance or "directions along which to work". For the purposes of this study an examination of the dramaturgical devices actors (stylists) employ during a "focused encounter" is the main area of theoretical interest.

Establishing Frame

The occupation of the stylists will be used to "frame", as Goffman uses the term, the social setting of the hair salon in an attempt to focus the area of analysis. By "framing", we refer to those "definitions of a situation which are built up in accordance
with principles of organization which govern events—at least social ones—and our subjective involvement in them..." (Goffman, 1974: 10-11). The active "framing" of an event, on the part of the researcher in this case, is done by bracketing the hair salon and looking at it as an occupational group and bringing into relief certain features that are considered important.

There are possibly two frames involved in the occupation of the hair stylist, one embedded in the other. The outer frame may be the task of the stylist and the frame in which they wish to have consensus. This frame would be that of the function of the hair salon and the concomitant work roles of the stylists. The inner frame may be the socio-emotional attributes that emerge because of the behavior that is a part of the service the hairstylists provide. The situation within the hair salon is essentially socio-emotional. Stylists are at times the recipients of intimate knowledge as well as the givers of intimacy. Clients allow the stylists to manipulate and touch their body, possibly in ways they would allow no one else to do. Touching and talking are part of the process in which stylists and clients engage, and are usually framed as socio-emotional activity.

It is the frame that establishes what is relevant in performance. There are actions which are irrelevant and therefore ignored. Among those which are relevant are those which can destroy the frame. The stylist must be able to take into account the client's definition of the situation and either accept or reject it. Clients who disagree with the stylist are in effect challenging or breaking the existing frame. The stylist must find ways of restoring the frame. This may be done during an encounter in the staging of the
performance and the concomitant strategies which may at times involve
regions, props and team-work.

Self and Appearance

The stylists are in a sense changing or adjusting the client’s
self identity. Stone (1970a: 399) contends that “identity establishes
what and where a person is in social terms.” Hair styles are very much
a part of an individual’s social and personal identity. Whole
cultures have been associated with the style of hair they have. The
hairstyle was intended to symbolize social meaning and affiliation.
Examples of this are the Rastafarians, hippies, punks, etc. People
have also used hairstyles to emulate important role models, i.e.,
Farrah Fawcett, Princess Di and Dorothy Hamil.

When clients come before a hair stylist they are doing so to have
their appearance and identity maintained, modified or changed. Their
sense of self identity is in the hands of the hair stylist. What is
theoretically important from the perspective of this thesis is not the
client’s perception of self through appearance, although this is an
important area of concern that ideally could be dealt with on its own,
but the processual aspects of the performance and negotiations that
take place during an encounter and how the stylist can use the
clients’ appearance-based self-perception to control the situation.

Performance

Goffman (1959: 22) defines performance as “all activity of an
individual which occurs during a period marked by his (her) continuous
presence before a particular set of observers and which has some
influence on the observers.” The actor in this performance is the
stylist and the observer is the client. In a performance a person cannot adopt one role, such as stylist, without someone adopting the other role, that of the client (Lauer and Handel, 1983: 305). Each role is dependent upon the other for the social performance to be sustained. Some actors are more sophisticated at playing a role than others and it is here that the consideration of how stylists control the definition of the situation comes into play.

Actors in a role relationship, especially regular performers of a role who deal with a changing population of others, guide those others to keep the work (performance) flowing smoothly (Lauer and Handel, 1983: 350). A smoothly flowing performance is crucial to the actor and group. The audience can disrupt the flow of the performance by criticizing it or by not taking the performance seriously. In the hair salon a customer may criticize the hair-cut or not want the hair-cut the stylist feels the client should have. These are disruptions to the flow of activity and are an attack upon the stylist's performance. In a situation such as this, a client enters a frame with a pre-established definition of the situation; the client and stylist then interact with others to validate or challenge that definition (Stryker, 1980: 57). An example of this could be that the client wants a particular hair-cut, but the stylist doesn't think that the style is suitable for the client. If we take for granted that the stylist is the expert then it is possible to conclude that the client is challenging the stylist's existing frame and role credibility.

In order to maintain control over the definition of the situation
the stylists must have a smooth performance so that he or she can be seen as having competence during the encounter (Lyman and Scott, 1968: 94). For the performance is a fragile one and smoothness of the performance can be interrupted by prop failures (Scott and Lyman, 1968: 97), as well as other factors which can either help or hinder the impression that is being fostered.

Encounters

Encounters, as defined by Goffman (1961:17-18), occur when persons are in one another’s immediate physical presence and involve ceremonies of entrance and departure, acknowledgement of initiation and termination.

Encounters are distinguished from other elements of social organization, in that their order pertain largely to what shall be attended and disattended and through this to what shall be accepted as the definition of the situation...What definition of the situation the encounter will be obliged to maintain is often determined by the social occasion or affair in which the domain the encounter takes place. (Goffman,1961:19)

Dominance and Control

Part of a smooth running performance involves the stylist initiating action. Whyte (1946: 132) clearly points out in his study of restaurant workers and their customers, that control of the encounter lies with whomever initiates action. In his study of restaurants, Whyte found that waitresses who initiated action first or seized the initiative in the customer relationship tended to set the pattern for the relationship. In stylist-client encounters the initiating process may at first come from the client when the appointment is made, but it is up to the stylist to initiate, in the
performance, the type of hairstyle he or she feels is appropriate for the client during the encounter.

Simmel (1961: 391) states that superordination and subordination requires spontaneous cooperation by the subordinate. The client in the hair salon is normally willing to take a subordinate role. A person, or in this case a group of persons (hair stylists), create an impression that reflects and sustains the ongoing definition of the situation by using dominance tactics to obtain the cooperation that is required. Although dominance strategies may be the method of gaining control, the client must still be willing to give control in one way or another to the stylist.

Persons in a working environment usually have more control over its particular rules of placing, spacing, and ritual etiquettes than do those who pass through it (Carlen, 1978:336). The conclusion drawn from this is that the stylists are generally in control over the definition of the situation.

Regions

Regions also play an important part in the performance within the hair salon. A region is any place that is bounded to some degree by barriers to perception; specialized conduct may take place in certain regions (Goffman, 1959: 106). The front region is where a performance is given (Goffman, 1959: 107). Here "that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance takes place" (Goffman, 1959: 22). A place which is not open or accessible to the audience is the back region. It is in the back region where the
impressions fostered by the performance can be knowingly contradicted (Goffman, 1959: 112). The different regions also define who is part of the in-group. Those who are allowed into the back region can be considered to be part of the team and those who are not allowed into this region are part of the out-group or in this case the clients.

**Team and Small Group Behavior**

Teams play an important part in maintaining the definition of the situation. In teams there is a co-operative maintenance of the definition of the situation (Goffman, 1959: 105). This is accomplished by the staging of a routine in front of the audience (Goffman, 1959: 79). Also, teams that are in control of the setting are considered the performing team (Goffman, 1959: 93). Teams will usually have a star or a leader who is given the right to direct or lead the performance (Goffman, 1959: 99-100). This star may have achieved his or her role by virtue of his or her ability to play the role better than others, or have it ascribed to him or her. A team also shares the privacy of the back region which is normally out of bounds for non-team members. The back region brings to the surface the recognition of who is part of the in-group and who is not. Small groups theory may also contribute to an understanding of team behavior.

According to Crosbie (1975: 2) a small group is "a collection of people who meet more or less regularly in face to face interaction, who possess a common identity or exclusiveness of purpose and who share a set of standards governing their activities". The hair stylists form a task type group in that "the acknowledged function of
A task group is to provide products or services that are valued by some segment of society" (Steiner, 1974: 2). Although their task may involve a socio-emotional aspect, this definition generally fits the description of the hair stylists as a task group in that they provide a service of improving someone's appearance. It also suggests that the activities and roles are oriented toward an explicit goal rather than the group members' socio-emotional needs (Nixon, 1979: 290). Task groups inevitably develop socio-emotional or primary group characteristics over time (Nixon, 1979:18).

The type of task that a group has plays an important role as to what characteristics a group will display. Hare (1976: 234) has suggested that "the definition of the task is the definition of the situation and differences in behavior which appear between situations are the most general indications of the differences in task." Hare (1976: 233) states further:

Since the task in the most pertinent sense, is what the group members subjectively define it to be as they respond to the situation in which they find themselves, all the internal features of the social system are likely sooner or later to become relevant to task specification.

The type of task held by a group may result in a specified performance that is staged to meet the goals of the group. In the hair salon the presumed goal is a satisfied client who will return in the future. If, as we shall see from the literature, one aspect of this task involves catering to the client's socio-emotional wants, which then will become part of the task, the hair stylists' effort will not be confined just to the job of cutting hair.
"Furniture, stage props and scenic devices are used to index social meaning" (Carlen, 1978: 332). In a hair salon, costume and appearance of the actors, mirrors, special chairs, basins, clippers, etc. help establish the definition of the situation. These props act as signs which "dramatically highlight and portray confirmatory facts..." about the ongoing activity within the setting (Goffman, 1959: 30). Their arrangement within the shop reveals the impression of efficiency and cleanliness that the stylists want to convey. The arrangement of furniture, props and other paraphernalia are symbols that are attached to the environment; they have meaning and are cues to behavior and also organize behavior (Stryker, 1980: 56). McCall and Simmons (1978: 17) also state that the geographic area within which one interacts limits interactions.

The costume of the actors are part the actor's personal front. The clothing is part of the presentation of self that plays an important role in impression management. If the actor is dressed slovenly, the expressions given off will break the frame of the performance. Props are used not only to manipulate the definition of the situation but also to influence how both actor and audience view and interact with each other.

The individual hair stylist must be able to manage the impressions others receive if he or she is to elicit the desired responses from the client. The performance of the hair stylists is crucial to their staying in existence. Props, staging, regions and team work contribute to the effectiveness of the performance or impression being conveyed. In the following section a description of
how other occupations stage their performances will be examined to aid in the analysis of the hair stylists.
Abstract Generalizations

Little sociological research has been done on hair stylists so other occupational research areas will be examined that may have some bearing on our understanding of hair stylists. An examination of other occupational research will be used as "abstract characteristics" (Goffman, 1959: 26) in order to understand and make comparisons pertinent to our understanding of the hair salons, and more specifically of the hair stylists. "Abstract characteristics" are generalizations that "can be associated with other professions and tend to be associated with them in an abstract and general way" (Goffman, 1959: 26). Prus (1985c: 7), promotes the same approach as Goffman in that he believes that "one can, learn something about any group by examining similar processes in any other setting". An examination of the history of the hair occupation and other relevant literature on the topic also will be discussed.

A setting with similarities to that of the hair salon is the doctor's office. It is a particularly appropriate comparison as the two professions have common historical roots. Emerson studied the gynecological examination, which is a situation different from other medical experiences in that the demeanor and cooperation of the patient can be difficult to maintain (Emerson, 1970a,b). The doctor and medical staff try to defuse a sexually intimidating experience by using a strictly instrumental approach, thereby making the situation impersonal without undermining the dignity of the patient.
This is accomplished by appropriate behavior on the part of the doctor and medical staff, decor, language which is laden with medical terminology, equipment and by having a nurse present acting as a buffer or chaperone. Also, the patient’s body is covered so that only the medically relevant areas are exposed which is to emphasize that the interest is restricted to medical matters.

The hair stylist employs many of the same types of tactical procedures as the doctor. The situation may be as intimidating and anxiety producing for the client in a hair salon as it is for the woman in the gynecological examination room. In the hair salon clients are covered except for their head, equipment is displayed, the decor is relaxing, and conversation is encouraged to ease tension as well as to gather information from the client as to the desired hair style. Both the doctor and the hair stylist would seem to have situational control partly because they are regular performers and partly by the power people give to them. The patient and client in both situations have passive roles. The hair stylist’s clients do possess and exert power within the relationships. The clients influence what hair style they want as well as whether they will return for further hair cuts.

Another relevant study, one that deals with the typification of others is Davis’ (1959) study of cab drivers. Davis found that cab drivers identified potential customers on the basis of how much they perceived the fare would tip. Cab drivers made character judgements that were based upon the time, location and dress of the fare (Davis, 1959). They have a short period of time prior to making the pick-up to make the decision determining the amount of a tip the fare will
give. The similarity between the cab driver and the hair stylist is that both assign identities to others and make character judgements about others that will affect, for the cab driver, how much of a tip they receive, and for the hair stylist whether or not the client will like their hair cut enough to come back again. Unlike the cabbie, a hair stylist relies upon building up a regular clientele. A client who is pleased with the haircut and service is likely to return and recommend the salon to others, whereas one who is displeased is unlikely to return. Identities are informally assigned, for the hairdresser depends upon his or her ability to accurately judge what constitutes a suitable haircut, taking into account a client's social status, personality, facial features, and lifestyle, as well what the client indicates he or she wants. If the hair stylist can accurately do this he or she will have accomplished the task of adding one more person to the client list.

Whyte (1949:302) studied structural differences within the restaurant industry. The focus was on structural differences as dependent on the comparative size of the restaurant, or more specifically, how size creates division of labour. Whyte identified five structural stages that restaurants exhibited as they become larger and more complex. A restaurant which had a small staff, little division of labour and an informal structure was classified as "stage one." The bigger the restaurant, the more structurally complex and formalized it became and the higher the assignment in the stage level. For the purposes of this study, stage one and possibly stage two are applicable because they are characteristic of the structure of most hair salons. Most neighborhood hair salons don't become as large and
formalized as do some restaurants although some salons do reach much higher levels.

Prus (1982) examined how vendors set prices, an area also of particular importance to hair stylists. If a price is too high, they lose customers no matter how good they are. Hair stylists also may set prices according to the customer, depending on their feelings and attitudes toward that customer. Prus (1982:14) found that vendors set their prices so that they would appear reasonable but not too inexpensive. If a price was too low customers felt that the product was inferior (1982:14). Prices may be marked up to symbolize the value and quality of the product. This is likely also to be a factor in how and why hair stylists set their prices. They may price the hair cut according to the stylist who is cutting the hair, hairstyle, client and many other factors.

Historical Review

The hair occupation has a long history dating back to 2,000-1,800 B.C. (Cooper, 1971:152). The Greeks (323 B.C.) forbade soldiers to wear beards, and as a result, barber shops emerged to meet the soldiers' needs (Cooper, 1971:154). Women, on the other hand, had slaves that served as hair stylists. During the "Middle Ages" monks practiced barbering, along with medicine and surgery. At this period of time upper class women had permanent maids as hair dressers. Barbering and medicine formally merged during the reign of Henry VIII with the founding of the Barbers-Surgeons Company. Rivalry within the profession grew so strong that by 1821 the two became separate professional occupations. Barber shops were male institutions and there were no female counterparts until the 17th century in France.
where the artist-hair stylist emerged (Cooper, 1971:164). The role of the hair stylist has changed dramatically over the ages. Today we have the phenomenon of superstardom within the profession—the likes of Vidal Sassoon, Alexandre and Carte. The hair stylists who work in neighborhood shops carry on within this tradition which shapes the way they handle their day-to-day affairs.

There has been relatively little written on hairdressers or barbers. William Andrew’s (1904) book, At the Sign of the Barber’s Pole, described life in the barber shop. Wendy Cooper’s (1971) book, Hair, examines hair from a sexual, sociological and symbolic perspective. Most literature about hair excludes the people who actually work with and influence the hair styles of the customer. Most of the literature up to the present has looked at changes in hair style, new trends and technologies.

Relevant Literature

Ewen, in The Beauty Ritual (1979), has done the only visual sociological analyses of the hair salon. The photographs that accompany her text serve to illustrate rather than document her analysis. Her approach is feminist in orientation. She sees women as being influenced by how others perceive and treat them and thus the need to look as best physically as they can in order to be seen in a positive light. For her, the hair salon is a female domain. It is a place where the customer shares the burden of choice with the hair stylist. The hair stylist according to Ewen (1979: 50) holds considerable power as an expert who knows how to make people’s images better than they themselves do.

Ewen (1979: 50) points out that our appearance is tied into self
and the giving of control to the stylist is potentially threatening. The customer upon entering the hair salon is stripped of the trappings of the outside identity (Ewen, 1979: 53). Street clothes are covered and replaced by the costumes of the shop (Ewen, 1979: 53). Not only are clients threatened by the loss of control over physical appearance, they are also stripped of trappings which identify other aspects of the self.

Ewen’s analysis of the hair salon is quite detailed. She points out many of the important rituals that take place in the hair salon: the loss of control and of self on the part of the client, negotiation, power, as well as societal influences upon women as to what counts as beauty. The stylist is supposed to know and keep up to date on what is considered "in" in hair fashion. She does not, however, explore how the stylist goes about keeping a loyal clientele, how a client and stylist negotiate a hair style, and nor how the client may subtly be manipulated into liking his or her haircut. These are all factors that will be explored in the present study.

Cowen et al (1979), a group of community psychologists, interviewed hair stylists to determine the topics of conversation that they engaged in with their clients. They found that about a third of the time was spent in talking about moderate to serious personal problems that the client was experiencing (Cowen et al, 1979: 633). They concluded that part of the role of the hair stylist was that of caregiver. The hairstylist was in fact helping the client by listening and talking to him or her about his or her personal problems.

Hair styling as an occupation deals with and is characterized by
many of the same issues and interactions as other occupations. Utilizing the abstract characteristics of other occupations makes the task of detailing this occupation somewhat easier, especially since there is little literature on the hair styling occupation itself. It also demonstrates how we can begin to understand a particular occupation by studying others. How this occupation was studied and analyzed will be the subject of the next section.
METHODOLOGY

Many methodological discussions only address the procedures used and concerns of reliability and validity. This methodological section will be more elaborate as Visual Sociology is relatively unknown to most sociologists. For this reason a historical review and an analysis of the function and role of the visual in sociology will be addressed. As with any method, issues of reliability and validity will be discussed. The assurance of anonymity, and the concern and respect for the subjects in the study are of major importance in any study. How this can be done using a visual method is one of the perennial problematics of visual research. Ethical concerns will be discussed as they relate to this particular study and more generally how they have entered the concerns of other visual researchers. Finally, the procedures and strategies used to gather, record and analyze the data will be discussed.

Photography and Sociology

In the late 1830's the still camera and sociology were both being developed, each taking as their primary focus of study, the human being (Becker, 1974:30). It would only seem natural that the two disciplines would contribute and combine their knowledge in order to understand human behavior. And for a short time this did take place. From the period of 1896 to 1916 the American Journal of Sociology published thirty-one articles in which they used 244 photographs (Lewis, 1983:14). This practice was short-lived and the printed word became the favoured mode of communication. "This omission reflects
the view now prevalent among sociologists (were one to go by publication) that visual data have no important role in understanding society" (Stasz, 1979:120). Cicourel (1964:36) also points out that "the control of scientific activities and thought may set limits upon certain kinds of theories, methods and discoveries because of prevailing methods of control and the imperfect organization of science as a self-correcting and open system of thought". Sociology has set limits upon the use of photography almost unconsciously by omitting photographs from journals, by not making much use of the medium for data collection, and by not teaching it as a method in most methodology classes.

It was not until 1972 that sociologists began to seriously reconsider the role of visual media, and more specifically still photography, in sociological research (Curry, 1983:1). Howard Becker, most widely known among these sociologists, noted the historical connection between sociology and photography. Becker (1981) also edited Exploring Society Photographically, a book which used photographs and sociology to further illustrate that the two fields could be used effectively together in revealing and detailing sociological information. From much of the work that has been done we see that photography in sociology has four main areas of usage.

The four types of photographic usages are as data, documents, illustration and narration. Photographs employed as data can be illustrated in Mead and Byers' "The Small Conference" (1968). Mead and Byers used the photographic method to record small group behavior in a conference setting. The photographs were reviewed and analyzed for proxemic and spatial arrangement, communication patterns, dress, etc.
They looked at structural relationships through photography and audio recording (Mead and Byers, 1968:69). The aim of this type of photograph is to record an event to generate data just as a questionnaire is so used.

Rieger (1983:215), a rural sociologist, documented the "change that has taken place in rural America over the past century—the enormous shift in the proportion of the population classified as 'farm' and 'nonfarm'". His research took him through the back roads of the mid-West where he photographically documented cases which showed the shift of farmers moving out of their aging and decrepit houses into trailers or newly built suburban-styled houses (Rieger, 1983:217).

Employing photographs merely for illustrative purposes seems to be their most common use in sociology. Introductory textbooks abound with photographs of one sort or another. Illustrative photographs in textbooks serve a function of enhancing the text aesthetically and not necessarily sociologically. Harper (1982:145-46), on the other hand, used his photographs to bridge ideas that are difficult to communicate in words and to place the viewer more in the position of the people he has photographed. His book, Good Company, is a participant observational study of the tramps he encountered and the settings where these people lived. Harper (1982:147) does say in his study that the camera had to be put away because he felt it was hurting his relationship with his informants. As a result of this he felt that he had to change the methodological orientation of his fieldwork and focus mainly on collecting fieldnotes. In this instance the relationship with his informant was more important to him than
doing the photography. Byers (1964: 83) would argue that the researcher had not been able to put his camera actively and effectively into the social situation with ease and comfort. In Byers' opinion it is the researcher's problem rather than the presence of the camera interfering with the field research. This points out one major methodological problem that one is faced with when doing this kind of research and that is whether the method of photography is the appropriate method (strategically, ethically, etc.) to use under the particular circumstances.

The final type of photographic usage is the narrative photograph. This type of photograph attempts to communicate sociological ideas through visual images rather than words. An example of this is Aron's (1981:46-53) photographic study of Venice, California. Although he initially gives a written history of Venice, his aim is to visually describe the two sides of Venice. Venice I is composed of elderly Jews and Venice II "is the roller skating capital of the world, a circus, a wonderland of entertainment" (Aron, 1981:47). By employing a comparative technique Aron is able to describe metaphorically by using photographs the two sides of Venice, California.

The categories that were outlined in this section are not necessarily discrete or mutually exclusive. In many visually-oriented studies, as is the case with this study, the photographs can be used to illustrate the text, as raw data, in photo-elicitative interviews, etc. It is my intention to show that photographs are not just pretty pictures or to be viewed as one does family photographs, but that their potential can only be reached when sociologists begin to view photographs differently than they have up till now.
Research Procedure

Qualitative ethnography was the general methodological approach for this thesis. The visual sociological method was used to gather, analyze and communicate information. Rationales for using photography as a method are:

1) The occupation under study is one that deals with, and merchandizes in, physical beauty. The signs of physical beauty or what counts as physical beauty are the visible elements of the objects. Since the product of this occupation is visual, a visual method seems an appropriate one to use.

2) The use of photographs in the interview, or as it is otherwise known, the photo-elicitative interview, are used to verify field notes. Photographs in the interview situation encourage and facilitate discussion (Collier, 1967:46). The researcher is able to bring the photographs back to the informants and involve them in the analysis, thus giving the study more of an ethnographic grounding. The photographs were used to elicit responses about customers, the stylist's role and concomitant job, what strategies they use with different types of customers that they work on, etc.

3) The photographs are used to illustrate, document, provide data and in some instances narrate sociological findings dealing with negotiation strategies during an encounter in the research report.

The data on the hair stylists were collected through field notes, photographic recording and interviews over a three month period. The researcher was immersed in the environment of the hair salon for the period of the study. Audio-tapes were made of the photo-elicitative interviews with the hair stylists. Photographic records and field
notes were kept of various encounters and negotiations in the hair salon. Informal time was spent with the members of the staff as well as their customers.

The following is a data collection schedule that was undertaken for the period of this research.

Week 1) - observation
- record field notes

Week 2) - photographic recordings following photographic schedule
- field notes

Week 3) - follow same procedure as week two

The subsequent weeks were guided by the procedures established in week three of the data collection schedule. The photographic schedule contained information as to what was to be photographed. The nature of the schedule for this study was as follows:

1) photograph every client who enters the salon.
2) photograph different activities within the salon.
3) photograph the props that were used in day-to-day activity.

One to two rolls of film were shot for each day spent in the salon. As the research progressed additional amendments were made to the photo-schedule because of new insights and information.

Interviews were done using Collier's (1967:46) photo-elicitative technique in which the informant and the interviewer discuss photographs the researcher has made of the actors and setting, thus giving the interviewer a concrete point of reference (Harper, 1983:4). This style fits into the ethnographic framework because the informants explain what the objects in the photographs mean for them and what might be missing from them (Harper, 1983:4). From this the researcher is able to go back into the environment to capture missing images that are relevant to the social world of the informants. The field notes are descriptions which the researcher recorded of daily events that
took place while in the hair salon. The notes also contained thoughts and strategies pertinent to the research. Finally, analysis of the field notes, photographs and the interviews addressed the question of meaning in a more general way (Harper, 1983:10).

Although other visual media such as film and video are available for research purposes, this study was limited to the use of the still camera as a visual method. There are two rationales for using the still camera in this research:

1) The still camera is inexpensive, portable, and technically easier to use in terms of obtaining useful images as compared to video-taping and motion picture filming.+

2) The photograph enables the researcher to see relationships that are, in real time, too fleeting to be recognized (Lewis, 1983:15). Unless one has a very good, and often expensive, video-tape recorder or movie projector, analysis is at times very difficult and time-consuming because of the volume of frames that have to be analyzed.

An important reason for choosing this particular hair salon was that it is a common type of salon for this city, in that it is a neighborhood salon (i.e., its clients are attracted from the immediate area rather than from greater distances). The salon is like many others in terms of clientele, location, staff and size. Also, access was granted by all the hair stylists. They were informed as to what the research involved, i.e., photographing and interviewing.

When taking photographs in the salon, the clients were informed that the photographs were for research and for that purpose only. When customers did not consent to having their photograph taken it was noted and kept for reference purposes. Only two customers refused to
have their pictures taken. The request of a client who did not wish to have his or her picture taken was honoured. If a photograph was needed to illustrate a part of the thesis the client was contacted for permission. If he or she refused to give permission the photograph was not used and if possible an appropriate photograph of a consenting client was substituted in its place.

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are always of concern in any piece of research. Validity takes into account the difficulty of gaining a truthful and accurate impression of the behavior under study (Shaffir, et al, 1980:11). Reliability centers on the replicability of one’s findings (Shaffir, et al, 1980:12). One main element that concerns the validity of this study is how the presence of a photographer affected the behavior in the hair salon. It is Weick’s (1968:375) argument that the more engrossed subjects are in their activity, the less likely they are to behave in an artificial manner when being observed. In this case the hair stylist’s work is one of extreme concentration upon their work as well as their interaction with their customer. Customers do not have an opportunity to change their behavior because they are confined to the chair, required to sit still, have a cloth protecting and binding them, and thus have little if any mobility. During the photographic observation period very little obvious attention was paid to the researcher. Customers were initially curious as to what my reasons for being in the salon were. Once this was conveyed to the customer, however, conversation resumed its normal pattern and content.

The photo-elicitative interview technique validates the
observations of the researcher. This point is also stressed by Collier and Harper. Denzin (1978:291) advocates "triangulation", which is a technique of combining methods, to alleviate problems of establishing the validity of the data. In this case a combination of field observations, photographic recording and group interviews were done. Group interviews are most productive where knowledge is public and not particularly embarrassing (Lofland & Lofland, 1984:14) as was the case here.

Reliability is much more problematic in this study. Most observational methods have fewer controls and these controls are placed on the observer (Weick, 1968:358). Therefore, systematic observation was established to place constraints on the observer in order to increase the accuracy and reliability of the observations. Birdwhistell (1970: 153) stresses the fact that knowledge or expertise in photography in no way makes one an expert. It is through systematic training that one is able to get reliable and valid data (Birdwhistell, 1970: 153). This was accomplished by developing a photographic schedule which was adhered to during the weeks of observation. Wagner (1979:147) speaks for the whole profession when he states that the act of photographing is subjective in nature. He also subscribes to a systematic format, such as a photographic schedule, to counteract the subjectivity involved in taking photographs (Wagner, 1979:148).

This section has tried to address the problem of gaining reliability and validity within the visual context. In certain cases where recording may interfere with and affect the social process, concealment may be better in getting information. This is a problem
that must be addressed by any researcher; whether to conceal or be visible in the setting.++ Also activities which are either illegal or a matter of privacy may be felt to be important to the study but hurt the people under study. Two questions had to be addressed, how this will affect the validity and reliability of the work, and how it will affect the behavior of the subjects under observation. Having discussed the former question we must now must consider the latter.

Ethical Concerns

The topic of research ethics is too large and intricate to deal with as adequately as one would like in this section. The aim here is to discuss the ethical dilemmas that were most salient in this study. "Many ethical dilemmas are matters of conscience not only for the individual researcher—who must weigh both the potential harm to subject and the potential value of new knowledge to be gleaned—but for the profession as well" (Riley & Nelson, 1974:119).

In this case the concern with anonymity is of great interest. Since the camera is visually recording the interaction within a semi-private setting one must decide, what, when and where to take a photograph of someone. One must also consider if this visual record will harm a customer or hair stylist in any way. First, permission must be granted. This was requested when a customer sat in the chair. He or she was informed, by the stylists, as to the intent of the research in that it was a study of the hair salon and the information was to be used for a thesis. All but a few people gave their permission to have photographs taken of them while they were in the process of getting their hair cut. The camera was always in full view of all persons in the salon.
Selltiz, et al (1965:240) state that anonymity provides a greater feeling of confidence on the part of the subject to give accurate information for they might fear disapproval or getting into some kind of trouble. On the other hand, they do state that if an understanding and permissive manner is presented on the part of the interviewer one will be more successful in eliciting frank responses (Selltiz, et al, 1965:240). The decision was made to be honest in divulging information about the nature of the study without being too detailed about its purpose, and let the clients make the decision to take part in the study.

A visually oriented study runs into many of the same procedural problems as other methods, in that they have and should consider the questions of reliability and validity, ethical concerns as well as procedural accounts. Visual researchers have had to defend their visual bent by being detailed and descriptive in their methodology if they are to be received by the profession as a valid area within sociology. This is because many sociologists view visual sociology with some cynicism and skepticism or are not willing to accept a new way of conceptualizing the social world around them. Another reason for this discussion is to add to the existing visual methodology so that others interested in the area will be able to use and learn from this study.

Notes
+. Biere (1983) also acknowledges this fact by referring to the still camera as a "grass roots" medium in which the ordinary person can purchase an inexpensive camera, take pictures and develop them him or herself and as a result present his or her ideas to others.

++. See Linton (1983) for a more detailed analysis of the ethical problems that one must deal with when doing visual research.
VISUAL METHODOLOGICAL DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

The strategy for this thesis included the use of the photograph as part of the methodology. The following will attempt to describe how the three hundred photographs were used and to what extent they were useful for gathering, analyzing and communicating sociological data as they pertained to this research. The research used three kinds of data-gathering techniques—two involving the camera directly and one relying upon recorded notes. An analysis of the two visual methods will be detailed below.

The following is not a experimental procedure that was developed to compare visual methods to more common and accepted methods, such as structured interviews or survey questionnaires. The visual method was incorporated into all aspects of the data gathering and was not in itself a separate and distinct method. This section will detail what the researcher considered to be the benefits and drawbacks of using a visual method, in particular still photography, in doing social research in a natural setting.

Findings Regarding Photo-elicitative Interviews

Photo-elicitation involves taking the pictures back to the persons being observed and having them describe events, objects and people within the photograph. The interviews were done in groups to minimize the amount of work and to get group comments. Information from these interviews was extremely useful, for the photographs provided concrete points of reference for the interviewer as well as the interviewees. Seventy of the three hundred photographs were used in the
photo-elicitative interviews. These photographs were chosen based on their different contents. As many of the photographs were the same. The photograph that was considered, by the researcher, to be the best was used.

The photographs seemed to enhance the interview process greatly (see interviews in appendix for examples). Information about people in the photographs could easily be translated by the stylists verbally with the researcher. It was much like taking photographs of a party and showing them to people weeks later. It sparked attention and sometimes excitement. When interviews were done over a period of time one could review information from previous interviews and formulate another approach or use different pictures for the next interview.

The photo-elicitative interviews were not focused interviews. The photographs structured the interview but did not impose ideas or questions upon the informants. The same pictures were used in the second interview and yet different and useful information was gained. Information gained from photographs in this manner yields more qualitative data than photographs used on their own.

Findings Regarding Photo-analysis

Photo-analysis was useful for documenting and illustrating events within the salon. Other uses of photo-analysis involve such possibilities as keeping an inventory of things and people, illustrating what the setting and people looked like, how the interaction was staged, clothing worn, how people spaced themselves, what jobs were performed during a given period of time, etc. Over a period of time one could document, for example, the relative number of people stylists had serviced or whether more women were clients than men in this particular
salon. Photo-analysis would not provide sufficient data for this particular research. More must be known about the participant's life on a day-to-day basis. This information is necessary to understand what was taking place in the photographs.

The photographs provided a way of sparking the researcher's recall about certain events. Things that were forgotten or felt to be unimportant became salient when viewing the photographs. An example of this was the costumes that the stylists assigned to clients in their encounters. In certain photographs, the props were shown to illustrate how the stylists give off impressions. An example of this is photograph #15 in appendix. When the stylists were asked whether the props were intentionally arranged for the customers' benefit the stylists replied that they did it for the sake of convenience. To the researcher, the impression given off by this prop was one of tidiness and orderliness which reflects upon the stylists.

The photographs also made awareness of events much more critical. An example of this was the assignment of costumes to clients. The capes which were put over the clients can illustrate what props are used in status degradation ceremonies (see photographs #2 & #6 in appendix). Photographing was made systematic by outlining and waiting for certain events to take place that were determined to be regular parts of the stylist's performance. Examples of this were negotiations over hair styles using fashion magazines, (see photograph #5 in appendix) and stylists' tasks. However, after a period of time other events that were felt to be important but not part of the regular routine were recorded. An example of this was a stylist lighting a client's cigarette (see photograph #10 in appendix).
The method of photographing people is something that sociologists must be made aware of. The participants must be able to feel comfortable in the presence of the camera. In the salon it took about two weeks before the stylists were accustomed to having their pictures taken. During this period of time they would complain about being photographed and turn their heads when they knew they were being photographed. This soon passed as the researcher became more familiar with, and gained the trust of, the stylists.

Taking pictures of clients was even more difficult, since there are so many people coming into the salon on a daily basis one must be careful to avoid suspicion, and to appear pleasant and nonthreatening. This was accomplished by the stylists vaguely informing their clients as to the reason for the researcher being there and the researcher not startling clients when taking photographs. I was also afraid of taking pictures of some customers, mainly men, for fear of reprisals. Few customers were put off by having their pictures taken. In fact after the study was completed many customer asked where the photographer was. They came to take the researcher for granted as a fixture within the salon.

Gaining a vantage point within the salon was important. Since there were so many mirrors within the salon it was quite easy to photograph anything without having to move from one central location. The mirrors were serendipitous props for they allowed the researcher to photograph through the mirror at many angles. Many times several sides of the action could be seen because of the mirrors. The researcher did not have to move around a great deal and therefore the amount of impingement upon behavior was minimized. In fact, when the researcher
interviewed the stylists, they were asked if his presence disturbed the normal routine. The stylists said that they did not notice any change in the behavior of their clients. This fact was further backed up during the photographic recordings. Clients would be curious as to what the researcher was doing, but after they were told, the conversation resumed its normal topic.

The visual method also has its drawbacks. Film is difficult to manipulate throughout the process. If light levels and focus are not taken into account many of the photographs will be useless for analysis. Also developing the photographs takes some skill. Two weeks of film were destroyed because chemicals were not mixed properly. Some technical knowledge of photography must be known before taking pictures and even then, mistakes can happen. One must also feel comfortable taking photographs of others. If one feels embarrassed in taking a picture, an opportunity to capture something significant may be lost. On some occasions photographs were not taken in order to protect or to avoid embarrassing the subjects. It was the researcher's feeling of obligation to not in any way harm the subjects. If a particular photograph was potentially harmful it was not used.

A final point to be made is that the researcher used black and white photographs. This was done so that he could develop the photographs himself and save time and money. The obvious drawback to using black and white photographs is that they are not capable of showing colour. This salon had teal blue walls and richly stained mahogany wood partitions. The set could not be adequately represented using black and white photographs.
What photographs do well is enable the researcher to analyze them for content that may have been overlooked while in the setting. They are useful tools in the interview situation. They can be used to spark the memories of the informant better than trying to describe an event and have them recall it. It is a way of keying the informant in or jogging the memory with something tangible.

Photographs can be used in a number of ways. As was detailed in the methodology section they can be used as data, illustration, documentation and narration. Narration is the most problematic of the four. In this research the photographs were mainly used to illustrate or document a point. As data, the photographs can be used to list the number of clients the stylists serve, different activities, and the props used. One photograph can be used to detail many points as is demonstrated in the findings and analysis. The photograph still needs some concrete theory to guide and direct the photographic recording. There must be a knowledge base about the social world being researched otherwise the photographs cannot be considered sociologically sound.

The question must be asked: can photographs be used on their own to convey sociological data? The answer is that it depends upon the particular setting that is under study. If one is examining proxemics and how people place themselves then photographs can stand on their own. When we are trying to explain things, such as why people manage impressions, photographs are of little value. Photographs can illustrate impression management but not explain it.

A factor about using photography in a social setting is that, for many people, being photographed is a part of daily life. Parties, weddings, and daily events are the substance of most photographs. They
can document a particular point in time that can be viewed again and again and still yield information.

In the salon a certain amount of reciprocity went on. Since I was the taker most of the time an imbalance emerged in my relationship with the stylists. To offset this the stylists took photographs of me. However, if I had not formed a strong relationship with these people I do not think I could have taken good sociological and intimate photographs of them. There must be respect for the stylists' intimacy with clients. Concentration is very important to people in the salon and if they are being constantly made aware of the camera and researcher's presence, concentration and behavior can be broken or changed.

In summary, photography as a sociological tool is very useful. It is not able to do everything that field notes do but it does illustrate some points better than notes. In the photo-elicitative interview, photographs allow the informants to view themselves and talk about what is taking place in the photograph, as well as why and when it took place. This information is extremely useful because photographs can confirm or invalidate information that was previously thought to be true. Photographs as documents of a particular social group can be used to illustrate and document events that are theoretically useful. However, within certain settings, this one included, they cannot be used on their own; the behavior is too complex. Intimacy with the people is one way of alleviating this problem. Some knowledge of what is taking place within the environment must be developed before taking any pictures and analyzing them within a piece of research.
FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

To reiterate some of Goffman’s (1961: 17) main premises, encounters are marked by a person’s continuous presence before another in face-to-face interaction. Both actors gain information about each other in order to define the situation and with this information the actors will know how to interact in order to get the desired responses from the other (Goffman, 1959: 1). Strategies are developed for gaining this information for both functional purposes (to get the job done) and for egotistic reasons (role credibility). These strategies involve expressions that a person sends to the other which are meant to influence others’ impressions of the actor and performance, thus having some control over the definition of the situation. Other factors that are present are typification of clients, presentation of self and use of the stage, set and props.

The hair stylists’ performance is marked by entrance of the client who is in the salon to be serviced. The hair stylist is not only dealing with another person’s sense of self but is expressing self through the performance. This is expressed by one stylist who said he was “selling himself” to clients. Stylists are not only selling their hair-cut but themselves, as people. The hair style is the product of this performance and is an expression of the stylist’s self. If the hair cut is seen as bad or not the style wanted by the customer, the customer sees the stylist’s performance as bad. The stylist is ridiculed for performing badly because the style was wrong or poorly cut. As a result of this the stylist loses role credibility.
If we assume that any change in self attitude takes time to get used to then we can see that a swift change in appearance will almost always come as a shock to most clients. The hair stylist, as said many times before, will have to develop strategies to alleviate this traumatic shock clients feel. If they can not do so they stand a very good chance of losing role credibility and subsequently customers.

The following description and analysis attempts to understand the hair stylist's social world and concommitant interaction strategies for maximizing role credibility.

Social Structure of the Hair Salon

Within many small group situations ideo-cultures evolve as a result of the group members, their interaction, and the group function (Fine, 1979). Through face-to-face encounters, the small group or team evolves new habits of speech, shared beliefs and ways of acting (Ridgeway, 1983: 252). Whyte (1949) pointed out that size influences group structure in his study of the restaurant. The smaller the group, the less complex and homogeneous its social structure. Tasks can be done by anyone within the group. The hair stylist group within the salon was comprised of three full-time members (Guy, Bev and Paul) and two part-time members (Steve and Gina). The three-full time members were accredited hair stylists. Of the two part-time members, one was a trainee and the other was a receptionist for the busy days, who occasionally helped with the styling when the other stylists were busy.

Guy was the team star or leader of the salon. He had the most customers and as a result was the busiest. Since he was the busiest he was given the most help by the others (see photograph #1 in appendix). In this instance Guy is in the checked shirt putting perm rods in a
woman's hair while Paul is assisting him by handing him rods, papers and straws. Guy did not have to shampoo peoples' hair but rather had Bev or Paul do this. This arrangement was also manifested during perming sessions which were usually lengthy. Guy would usually have Paul help him with placing the perm rods, papers and straws in the hair. This helping took place even when Bev was very busy. Paul rarely helped Bev other than occasionally with shampoos (although Bev did most of her own shampoos, see photograph #2 in appendix). In this photograph Paul is helping Bev adjust the cape of a client.

As team star Guy would check out, give advice, and help with a client's hair-cut on which Bev was working. Bev did not advise Guy, however. This behavior was one of the facts that distinguished the hierarchy within the salon. In fact Guy never helped Bev out with her more mundane jobs like perms and sweeping the floor.

Bev occupied a middle status position within the salon. She had more clients than Paul but not as many as Guy. She had the same duties as Guy but treated Guy with more deference than he treated her. She stated during the researcher's observations that Guy should not answer the phone because it was not the proper thing to do according to his position within the salon. Her reason was that he was the owner of the shop and its star performer and it would appear inappropriate if he answered the phone. Being the owner of the salon gives status, but status as a stylist has to be maintained by having a large clientele. The gatekeeping role which Bev played regulated the status of other stylists within the salon.

Paul occupied the lowest status of the stylist's group. His responsibilities included washing the floor, vacuuming, stock, cleaning,
shampooing, braiding and assisting others within the salon. Since he did not cut hair and have a regular clientele he was not considered to hold high status. From the analysis of the photographs, interviews and observations, Paul's main jobs were the ones that held little prestige and were considered housekeeping tasks (see photograph #3 in appendix). In this photograph Paul is making sure the stations are clean and in order. Notice the cleaning cloth in his right hand.

Thus, the status of hair stylists is a result of their ability to keep a large clientele. Other stylists in the team help to support the high status stylist. However, the high status stylist must be convincing in his or her performance. In order to have a convincing performance stylists have developed strategies for dealing with clients. They also must be able to deal with all types of clients that are encountered in the salon.

Talk and Information Strategies

There are stages, types of talk, and information strategies that take place between stylists and customers. During the initial stage of the encounter it was observed that talk was more functional and formal. Initial encounters mark a critical point in the stylist-client relationships. As Goffman (1961: 18) pointed out, encounters are marked by ceremonies of entrance, interaction and departure. It is at the entrance point that the stylist must make a good impression with the client. Stylists usually initiate the encounter with salutations, then proceed to an information acquisition process marked by a number of questions. If it is the clients' first time in the salon, stylists would: 1) introduce themselves, 2) ask clients if they have any ideas as to how they want their hair cut, 3) ask who referred them to the
The latter is used as an information strategy to further determine the social group clients belong to as well as their lifestyles.

Talk almost always took place between stylists and clients while the clients were getting their hair cut. With regular clients the type of talk was usually about personal or intimate aspects of their life. With new clients the talk dealt more with and about hair. During some encounters clients or stylists did not talk but it was unusual not to see clients and stylists engaged in discussion of one form or another. Most customers were given magazines to read when they were not having their hair attended to. In some instances a client would bring the magazine to the cutting chair and try to read while being cut. This did not continue for very long because of the angle of the head necessary for reading. Generally, the only choice clients had while sitting and getting their hair cut was to talk or not talk.

The type of talk varies from person to person. When asked about the differences between the talk men and women tend to produce, the stylists contend that there are definite differences between the sexes. On the whole the stylists felt that men were braggarts. This was exemplified on one occasion in which a male was talking about the problems he had with his lover, wife, children and job. The stylist who relayed this discussion felt that the male customer was bragging about the fact that he had a lover as well as bragging about the job he had. Stylists also felt that men were more demanding and perfectionistic in their expectations of the hair style. Stylists find that women tend to talk about everything although food is quite a prevalent topic. The stylists usually can talk about anything with their clients; from food
to parties, women's clothing styles to the crisis in Lebanon. Although stylists listen and appear to be nonjudgemental they do express their feelings about their customers to fellow stylists.

Talk also deals with the hair style itself. The hair stylists will explain what they are doing, why they are doing it and how the style can be maintained. If the stylist can train the client to maintain the hair style then the client may not complain that the hair looked bad the next day. If clients can maintain the hair style according to directions then they will feel they got a good hair cut. With a regular customer the stylists felt that they no longer had to talk about hair as much. At this time they have gained a great deal of personal information about their clients and have developed a relationship in the process. The stylists have also revealed information about themselves. This is one point that Goffman does not recognize in his development of interaction strategies. That is that people have to give in order to receive if they are to sustain a relationship.

Talking is important in stylist/client relationships. Talk allows stylists to gain information that enables them to accurately assign hair styles. As will be discussed later, clients expect stylists to listen to personal life stories as well as what type of hair style they want.

Talk and Framing

It was emphasized that hair stylists engage in a great deal of talk with their clients. The amount and kind of interaction that stylists display with their clients seems to determine the degree of involvement in one of the two frames (socio-emotional or task) on the part of the stylists. This shift in frame also involves a shift in role for the stylists. The shift in role does not imply that the first role will be
lost. It implies that the stylists invest more of themselves in one role than the other role within a given frame. With new clients the stylists will be more involved in the task role than they would be with regular clients. With regular clients the stylist's role is more socio-emotional than with new clients.

At one point in the observations the researcher made reference to the fact that the stylists talk a great deal. In response, one stylist replied that they talk for a reason. It is not talk for talking's sake but for strategic purposes. The amount of talk usually depends upon the type of client the stylist is cutting. Quantitatively, there is usually less talk with regular clients than with new clients. A possible reason for this is that the stylists feel more compelled to talk to new clients because they want to appear personable and interested and, as was previously stated, customers expect this of the stylist. The new client may therefore come back for personal reasons such as liking the hair stylist's way of interacting or efficiency. With some regular customers personal relationships emerge that resemble close friendships rather than service worker/customer. The frame at this point in the relationship appears to be more socio-emotional than task-like. A similar situation occurs in bars where a customer and waitress become friends over a period of time.

Qualitatively, the type of talk that a stylist engages in with a new client is much more formal and controlled; much like when one meets a person for the first time. Here the talk deals more with hair than with personal issues. The frame is more task oriented at this point in the relationship. Stylists must make as much of an impression as possible with new customers. Customers of a higher class than the
stylist tend to shift the stylists' role behavior into the task frame as do customers who are hard to deal with. As a result, stylists keep to their task roles as much as possible. This emphasizes the effect that the client has upon interaction.

From what was stated above, the socio-emotional frame does not arise automatically. The initial frame that is operating within the salon is the task itself. The socio-emotional frame emerges after a period of time in which the stylist and client become familiar with each other. The socio-emotional frame seems to be the larger frame within which the task frame is embedded. The degree to which the frames are salient is dependent upon the different types of clients that frequent the salon. And these frames in turn, determine the role the stylist will enact.

Since stylists deal with such a changing population of customers they have to adjust themselves to each customer. This was brought out during observational recording. Stylists acted differently with each customer and it seemed dependent upon the type of customer. The type of impressions managed are a response to the type of customer.

Intimate Customer Knowledge and Gossip

Hair stylists do gain much intimate information about peoples' lives. One of the reasons that the stylists talk so much is that a lot of useful information is gleaned during these encounters. The stylists often know such things as a client's profession, marital status, children, personal preferences, friendship group, whether they have a lover, are being unfaithful, etc. In a way we can compare the role of hair stylists to that of psychologists. Hair stylists listen to their clients' problems, personal or social. They listen to details of
parties, childrens' lives and assorted other information; and often give advice or counsel.

In a neighborhood hair salon the stylist is a central person in the gossip network. Since many of the clients are related or friends, stylists become familiar with most of the gossip of other clientele, e.g., news of anniversaries, weddings, births, squabbles, etc. For a few clients it is their chance to talk to someone who will listen. And the stylists do a lot of listening. With some clients the stylist enjoys listening and talking but with others it becomes a chore. Some of the clients that the stylists don't like listening to are the "complainers" or "airheads" (clients that the stylists think are stupid) as they call them. With some clients they will already know what the gossip will be.

**Stylist Strategies**

The premise of this section is that stylists develop strategies in their encounters with clients in order to influence the client's perception of self-image. More simply, the stylist develops techniques so that the customer will like the hair style the stylist assigns to them. Strategies are intended to minimize disappointment and are processual in that they take place before, during and after the encounter. There are six general strategies that the stylists use in influencing the customer's evaluation of self appearance: tearing down, guilt by appearance, shifting responsibility, training clients, complimenting, and forecasting.
The encounter is initiated by the customers who usually make the first contact with the salon via the phone. In this conversation the stylist who answers the phone will ask who it is, phone number, if it is not a regular customer, whether they have short or long hair and if they want a perm. This information is written into the appointment book (see photograph #4 in the appendix). Also during this initial verbal contact, the stylist will ask when they had their hair cut last. If it has been over three months then they will comment on this fact. This implies that there is a need for self improvement. In the case of the hair salon studied, the normal time period for the average client to have their hair cut was every three months. There is a norm established by the hair stylists that keeps customers coming in regularly. It involves the stylists advising the client to come back within a certain length of time so that the hair style can be maintained. In some cases the researcher witnessed clients asking the stylists when they should return for a hair cut: Often this may be as a result of the time it takes for a hair cut to grow out or for a specific event such as a wedding or a party that a client is going to attend.

Identification of Client by Appearance

As was stated in the review of the literature, a person can be identified as belonging to a particular social group by their hair style. However, clothing can also be used to define and identify group affiliation and personal identity.

"You size them from their shoes up. You’re not going to do their hair if it doesn’t go with their lifestyle and their shoes will tell you their lifestyle."
Stone (1970b: 231) emphasizes what styles already do in stating that "clothing has its significance in the recognition, differentiation and reapproachment of people."

Oftentimes it is a member of the family or a close friend who has referred a client to the stylist. If the stylist knows what the other group member's hair cuts are like then they can usually expect the new customer will like a similar hair style. In fact, much of the business is generated by word of mouth by clients to relatives or close friends. Very few clients were "walk-ins" (i.e., those who spontaneously walk in off the street and ask for a hair cut and do not care who cuts their hair).

Assignment of Customer's Appearance

If the client hasn't any ideas about hair style the stylist will offer some suggestions. Often they will point out styles in trade journals or fashion magazines (see photograph #5 in appendix). In this photograph notice the client and stylist looking at a book with pictures of heads. The client is able to choose a style which is deemed suitable. Clients may also show the stylist where and how they want their hair cut by moving their hair around with their hands (see photograph #8 in the appendix). Or the stylist will choose a style based on his or her perception of the client and tell the customer how they are going to cut his or her hair. Often the stylist will explain to the client why such a cut is chosen and use technical style talk based on theoretical and methodological knowledge of hair.

The stylist often tells the client about the theory of hair cutting and at times teaches the client how to maintain the hair style. For example stylists will discuss with the client how the shape of the head,
type of hair, lifestyle, and fashion trends dictate the type of hair style the stylist can give the client. The stylist points to a higher authority that at the time is governing the types of hair styles that he or she can assign.

Hair stylists appear to be knowledgeable in front of the customer when using style language. The talk about hair is very specific and detailed. They talk about hair follicles, thickness and density, the different ways hair grows, colour temperatures, styles and theory of hair styles. The average customer does not have any of this information. This type of informational exchange is part of the impression management function. The client may be impressed if the stylist appears to be knowledgeable.

The following is a typical example of a client and stylist negotiating for a hair cut. A teenage male came in and it was his first time in the salon. The stylist introduced himself and then asked the young man to come to the hair cutting area to be shampooed and cut. While in the cutting chair the client was asked if he had an idea as to the style he wanted. It was a new wave hair cut. The stylist told him that he was going to cut it with a "masculine" flair as opposed to an "androgynous" cut which was more feminine. Although this was said in a questioning tone of voice it seemed to make a suggestion and influence the customer’s choice of hair style. The strategy was to explain to the client about the style chosen which used both the client’s choice of hair style and added the stylist’s interpretation. Other times the stylist will suggest a hair cut that is felt to be appropriate and the client will say "you must be reading my mind." This happens more often with regular clients than with new clients. Although talk is important
in determining what style of hair cut to assign a customer, talk is also a part of the stylist's role expectations. As will be described in the next section, the amount of interaction that takes place is correlated to the amount of role detachment in which the stylist engages.

1) Tearing Down

The tearing down stage is begun when the client enters the salon. The stylist has the client take off his or her coat and come to the basin to have his or her hair washed. During this process the customer is made to look terrible (see photographs #2 & #6 in appendix). In these photographs only the customer's face is in view and their hair is wet or covered. Garfinkel (1956: 420) identifies this transformation as a "status degradation ceremony" in that the client suffers a reduction of identity at the hands of another. The stylist states that they wash the clients' hair because it is easier to manage while cutting. This may be so, but this treatment of customers is similar to the treatment of prisoners or draftees. The latter's experience of status degradation consists of the shaving of the head and assignment of a uniform. All aspects of a person's previous self are taken away when this is done.

Within the salon it was found that a similar process also occurs. The bodies of the customers are taken over by the stylists. Customers are given a plastic cover that hides and protects their body, their hair is wet and a towel is placed around their head (see photographs #2 & #6). The following is a stylist's account of this status degradation process.

"Our first thing here is to knock the hype out of hair...we try to relax the people right away...You touch them...we humiliate them by getting them all wet. They are ruined. But while they are sitting up front they are going through quite a few changes. They come in huffing and puffing
from outside from any pressures and stress that happened to them at this point. Then they made this appointment. Finally, they are here, they take their coat off they sit down if they are lucky. Usually they get called right through and get shampooed so they don’t get much time to sit and dwell. Once they are wet down they forget about being crabby anymore. We put our hands on their shoulders and on their heads then we start to communicate.”

Touching and manipulation of the client’s body is a major factor in this tearing down process. The stylist’s touching of another person may be taken as an invasion of the client’s space (see photographs #7 & #9 in appendix). In each of these photographs the stylist has placed his hand on the client’s head and has physically manipulated the hair. People may only allow a few others to do this kind of body manipulation and a stylist is one of the few.

Timing is also crucial, for the client is given very little time to sit and dwell on the situation at hand which is the actual cutting of hair. Stylists allot a half hour to cut a person’s hair. So in order to get the job done they have to control the situation to the minute. They do this by using an appointment book and in some cases such as perms and colourings they use timers.

2) Guilt by Appearance

While customers are in the salon for their appointment the stylists will tell the customers that it has been quite a while since they last got their hair cut, that their hair has grown a lot since they were last in, or that their hair style has grown out, e.g., "you’ve got quite a mop of hair there". Comments such as these are degradation strategies used by the hair stylist to instill in customers that they are somewhat imperfect when they come in and furthers the degradation ceremony. Another degradation strategy occurs after the hair-cut has taken place. At this stage of the encounter the stylists may state that the hair
style looks good on the client and that they were due for a hair-cut. Again, the strategy is to reinforce the notion that the client was in some way inferior when they first came into the hair salon but are on their way to being presentable.

3) Shifting Responsibility

The stylists know clients' preferences for hair length. Some clients will come in and ask for a shorter cut. Stylists will note the fact that they have been growing their hair for a long time and ask if they're sure they want it cut short. This is a self-protecting strategy imposed by the stylist in order not to cut too much hair. This strategy puts the emphasis on the client's decision to choose a hair style that may be regretted and relieves some of the responsibility of the stylist for unsatisfactory outcomes.

The other type of shifting strategy is identifying the style that the customer wants. If the style is one that the stylist feels would not suit that client then the stylist will use the various props at his or her disposal. Stylists also use the same technique with customers who do not have an idea for a hair style. Stylists will use the magazines so that clients can choose a style (see photograph #5 in appendix). These props are magazines or trade journals that show various hairstyles. The stylist will show the customer which style the customer wants and say "This is what your hair will look like (and physically manipulate the client's hair), are you sure you want this?" If the customer still is adament about his or her choice the stylist will assign him or her that style. Usually they will say that they will keep assigning the style to the customer until they realize that it is not suited to them. This strategy is a wait-and-see approach to hair
style negotiation. The stylists know about the different types of hair and how the hair will respond to a certain cut. If a customer wants a style that is not going to be the proper style for that head of hair, the stylist will explain to him or her the technical reasons for giving or not giving a particular style. The key here is information as a form of power. The stylists have the information about hair and hold a great deal of power as a result of their knowledge base.

4) Training the Client

During the hair cut the stylist is always talking. This is partially to put the customer at ease, fill up time and to influence the customer's liking of the hair cut. In conjunction with this the stylist will teach the client how to manage their hair-cut in between visits. This involves teaching them the techniques of washing, combing and drying their hair and as a result, giving the responsibility for the maintenance of the style to the client. The sharing of information is much like the relationship that occurs between teacher and student. Again a power relationship is set up.

5) Complimenting and Putting Down

With new clients stylists often make derogatory comments about cuts and perms that have been done in other salons. Or the stylists will tell the client that his or her hair is need of styling because it does not look good. When a customer is leaving the chair after the hair is cut one of the other stylists usually comments on how good they look with the new hair style. This behavior is part of the team work that goes on in the salon. These comments by other stylists influence the client to conform to and agree upon the notion of beauty that is held.
within the salon. Another reason for these comments is that hair stylists like to compliment each other's work. This shows that they are aware of the other stylist's work and creates a sense of cohesion in the salon.

6) Forecasting

At the end of the hair cut the stylist will tell the client that it will take approximately two weeks for the hair cut to mature and look its best. This seems to alleviate any of the fears or disappointment the client may have about the hair cut. If they are told their hair will look better in a few weeks they are usually satisfied. With certain types of hair styles such as permings the stylist will inform the customer that the style will loosen up over a period of time and that they should not worry about it being so tight and curly. The strategy on the part of the stylists is to persuade the client to believe that the hair cut will improve. They are not deceiving the client, for certain cuts do tend to take time to "mature". Since the hair style is so dramatic in its change the client has to be prepared for such a drastic change. If they are "eased into" or told that the hair style will soften and improve in appearance then they are less apt to criticize and dissolve their relationship with the stylists.

There are times when clients do not like the hair style assigned to them. When this happens stylists will negotiate with clients. They will attempt to find out what the problem is and either rectify it or explain why they cut the hair a certain way. In the latter case stylists will explain that the hair can only be cut a certain way because of its structure, the shape of the head and hair type. If this does not work they will tell unhappy clients that there is no charge for
the cut. In the extreme case when a client is being obstinate they will ask the client to go somewhere else.

Establishing Dominance

Subordination and superordination is a spontaneous act on the part of the stylists and clients (Simmel, 1961: 391). When they arrive at the salon they have to wait for a short period of time then they are taken to the wash basin to be shampooed. While being shampooed clients are touched and physically manipulated by the stylists. A covering is put over them to protect them from getting wet but this also restricts their movement. While in the chair they are again physically manipulated and do not have the ability to make direct eye contact. The restricted mobility and inability to make physical contact with another serves to put the client into a subordinate position, making the stylist the superordinate (see photographs #1, #6, & #9 in appendix). Notice the cape that is put over the clients' bodies.

One behavior that could possibly be seen as contradicting the above is stylists serving coffee and lighting cigarettes (see photograph #10 in appendix). This role could be seen by others as a servant or service role like that of waiter or waitress. Other examples of this role were putting money in the meter for clients or making phone calls to clients' families when the hair-cut was just about done so that the client could be picked up. When clients were under hair dryers they were always asked if it was too hot for them or if they would like a newspaper while they were being dried. These forms of behavior could be interpreted as servant-type roles. Perhaps the key to this seemingly contradictory behavior is that the stylists gain some control over those served by controlling the service itself.
To summarize, stylists use six basic strategies to get customers to like their finished hair style. First customers are stripped of their former self-image and made to look less attractive by having their hair wet and exposed. Secondly, attention is drawn to the fact that their hair is in need of work either because it has grown so much or because they have not been in for an appointment for quite a long time. Thirdly, responsibility for the choice of hair-cut from the stylists to the clients. Fourthly, they are told how to manage their hair. They are put into a more active role and made a part of the styling process. They are given some responsibility for the maintenance of their hair. Fifthly, the other hair stylists in the salon tell them how good their new hair style looks. This gives them that added boost. Finally they are told that the hair cut will improve over time. Two to three weeks is the time they are told that it takes for a hair style to mature. This added leverage lets the stylists off the hook for the time being. For it seems that after two weeks most people will have grown accustomed to their new hair style.

Customer Loyalty

As was mentioned in the review section of the introduction, customer loyalty is extremely important to most businesses including the hair salon. Customers are not loyal to the salon but to the people within the salon. If a stylist were to move to another salon his or her customers would follow rather than stay with the salon. This is exemplified in the want-ad section of papers where a stylist will give notice to his or her customers that the stylist has moved to a new location. It is much like physicians who have been with a family for a number of years. People make attachments and do not break them even if
the doctor does make mistakes. This brings up an important question. Do loyal customers who have been disappointed by a hair cut leave a particular stylist?

Within this salon customer loyalty was extremely important to business. What the stylists called regulars were in fact the loyal customers. These customers were well known to the stylists personally. The appointment book was one way of telling who was a regular. If the stylists did not mark a phone number next to the name this meant that it was a regular or loyal customer.

Customer Typifications

Hairstylists typify clients into several categories depending upon whether they are new, infrequent or regular, and if they are troublesome or easy to style. These typifications are part of the stylist interaction strategies. The hair stylist uses a different strategy for the encounter based on the type of client. These strategies influence the impression that they are going to give. The following are the stylist's client typifications and strategies for impression management.

1) First time clients

As was mentioned previously, with new customers the hair stylist will attempt to establish the social group that the person belongs to in order to find out what hair-cut would be appropriate for their lifestyle and social group affiliation. One stylist stated that they are not going to give an extravagant hair style that would take a great amount of maintenance if the woman had four kids to care for. If the client is new and is not familiar with the hair stylists, the hair stylist must also approach the client differently. In order to assign a hair-cut to
a new customer the stylists must find out who referred them to the stylist. From this information the stylist can usually assign a hair style that will best suit that customer. As one stylist points out, "The first time just depends on who referred them. If I know who referred them then I know where they're at and what they're like."
The first time encounters with customers are problematic and present more of a challenge to the stylists than do appointments with regulars. After finding out who referred them the stylist must then ask what style of cut they want. They have to do more work and more inquiring. The stylists must introduce themselves, identify the problem that the customers have with their hair and try to impress the new clients with their particular way of cutting hair. The following is an account of how stylists view their first encounter with new clients.

"If they are new you have to go through a song and dance. You have to start from scratch. Hello, I'm me, I'm your worker. Do you have any ideas? What's bothering you about your hair-cut right now? When was the last time you had your hair cut? In the beginning we like to trim and shape it, show them what we can do with a bad hair-cut."

On one occasion the researcher observed a new customer being cut and coloured by Guy (see photograph #9 in appendix). In this photograph he is showing her what he will do with her hair. He spent about fifteen minutes in consultation with her, asking her who referred her to him, whether her hair was grey underneath, and telling her his particular techniques for colouring. The time he spent during his initial encounter with her was quite high compared to other encounters he had with other clients with whom he deals. During this encounter Guy also used Paul as a helper. Paul brought out various props that were used to impress the new client. The fact that Guy had a helper (Paul) was seen as a impression management device for Guy. This performance was not
acted out to impress and define the situation but to gain the trust of the new client. By being thorough and attentive to the new client trust can be gained. The client is here for the first time and the stylist is aware of this. Talking and touching are used as tactics to gain the trust of the new clients. As one stylist described,

"Some of them will trust you right away...by talking and touching them and asking them what's bugging them you will begin to gain their trust."

It seems that the more information the stylist gives the client the more at ease the client feels. Goffman's (1959: 1) concept of information seeking to clarify the definition of the situation seems to be appropriate in this instance. Both the client and the customer must give and receive information (see photograph #8 in appendix). In this photograph the client is showing the stylist how and where she wants her hair cut. For the stylist it provides an opportunity to assign a hair-cut and put the customer at ease.

2) Walk-ins

Another type of first time customer is the walk-in. From time to time people walk in off the street and ask for a hair-cut without an appointment. Most of the time if no one was busy they would take the customer right away. Other times the stylists would give the walk-in an appointment because they were too busy. On these occasions the stylists would try to get the nearest and most convenient appointment possible. This policy seemed to help them establish a positive first impression which could possibly lead to a new client.
3) Regular clients

A regular client is one who regularly makes appointments with a specific hair stylist and usually keeps the same weekly, monthly or tri-monthly appointment. The stylists know more about regular clients because of their frequent visits and treat these customers better since most of these customers tell others of the stylists’ services. The stylists also know a great deal about their regular customers through gossip revealed by other customers.

Regular clients are less problematic than new clients. With this type of client the stylist can assign a hair-cut without too much negotiating. The stylists do not have to talk about hair as much with these customers as they would with new customers. The talk that was observed with these customers also indicates this. The stylists and regular customers will talk about family, vacation, clothing and fashion. With regular customers relationships can form because some have been coming to the same stylist for years.

The regular client may pose other problems, however, because regular clients expect special consideration, frequently calling for appointments at the last minute and disrupting the stylist’s schedule. Other troublesome clients are those who tend to be demanding, unsatisfied and complain a good deal of the time. Even though these troublesome clients feel dissatisfied they still come back to the salon time and time again. As one stylist said,

"Why do they come back if they act like cry babies. They are a drain on you...they aren’t pleased."

Most of the clients that were observed at this salon were career women and older women. Career women are regulars which are well-liked
by the hair stylists and are considered preferred clients. The hair 
stylists can feel more relaxed around a regular client because the 
client trusts the hair stylist. The stylist does not have to go through 
as much negotiation or status dominance as with first time customers. 
The hair stylist has already established this in the first few 
hair-cuts.

"The backbone of our business is career women...they don't want to do it 
(style their own hair) or they don't have time to do it. 
They're good people... they're individuals...you find that you can be 
fairly relaxed around them."

Regular clients also get preferential treatment. The preferred 
customer is often loyal to one hair stylist and the stylist acknowledges 
this by treating the customer in a manner different than with new 
customers. Preferred customers get priority when it comes to booking 
appointments. They are squeezed in between regular appointments and 
given complimentary hair cuts at certain times of the year, (e.g., 
Christmas). These customers also tend to give gifts to the hair 
stylists during the holidays in appreciation for the stylist's services. 
The gifts may also point out that enduring personal relationships have 
developed between stylists and clients.

4) Infrequent Customers

Infrequent customers are those customers that have been coming to 
the salon for some time but not on a scheduled basis. Therefore, they 
are not seen as loyal clients. Infrequent customers are not really what 
stylists would like to see because they are aggravating. They tend to 
make appointments at the last minute or during a busy time of the week. 
This type of client is harder to control, for they do not follow the 
norms of the salon and are not as controllable as the regular clients.
They also are not the backbone of the business and are more problematic and harder to cut because they don’t come in enough.

5) Troublesome Customers

This type of customer is not common. They are characterized as complainers, know-it-alls or they make the stylist feel uncomfortable. The know-it-all customers are those who behave as if they know more than the stylists. They will tell the stylists in what order they think things should be done. They challenge the stylists’ knowledge base. The strategy for dealing with this type of troublesome customer is to explain why they are doing what they are doing. Stylists do so by showing the customers photos of what the hair style will look like if they cut it that way, e.g., "this is what a blunt cut looks like". If the customer still persists the stylist will acquiesce to the customer’s demands even though they know that the style may not be suitable.

Chronic complainers are nuisances that the stylists feel that they could do without. What stylists call stupid people are also a nuisance. These customers have to be told things over and over. Another type of troublesome customer is one who does not take care of their hair. These customers have flaking scalps (oatmeal heads) and have unkempt or damaged hair. The reason this type of customer is troublesome is that they run contrary to the stylist’s personal notion of hygiene. A final type of bad customer are those with long hair or difficult hair. This makes the stylist’s job much more difficult and time-consuming. Troublesome customers can fall into all categories mentioned. They generally make life in the hair salon difficult.

Oftentimes the stylists will have their ways of getting back at a troublesome client for being hard to deal with. Paul would get water in
the ears of customers that he did not like because he knew this was aggravating to them. Other ways of getting back at clients were to, in extreme cases, give them a poor hair-cut or cut the hair too short, and as a final solution not charge them and tell them to find another hair salon.

The stylists had names for their customers that generally dealt with the word "head". Air-heads, knuckle-heads, and cone-heads were just a few of these insults. What is interesting about these names is their reference to the head. Their jobs revolve around heads of hair and it seems only natural that their "put downs" for people reflect the occupation.

As a result of typifying clients, the stylist is better able to meet the demands of each client with ease. Much of the typification comes through interaction with the client. Through talking they soon learn what definition of the situation the client has and they can react accordingly to either modify it or accept it.

Regions

The front region is where the actor or actors perform. Back region behavior is different than or contrary to front region behavior. The front and back regions that are part of the stylist's daily routine seem to be influenced by the presence or absence of clients in that performances always took place in the presence of a client. This much like when children are in a classroom. When the teacher is facing the class the children are displaying front region behavior but when the teacher's back is turned to the board the children will display back
region behavior. The following examines the behavior associated with front and back regions as well as personal appearance, props and set.

Front Region

Front region behavior is marked by the stylist's presence before a customer. Here they are "on" in a manner of speaking. The strategies and forms of talk mentioned above are all aspects of front region behavior. The performance tends to take on a fixed character or become routine. In making the appointment with the stylist, the client sets the time and place for the performance. Once the client enters the salon the hair stylists start their performance. The stylist tries to relax the client right away. Coffee is served. Trade magazines (magazines about hair styles) are there to read. Clients can have a cigarette and talk to one of the stylists if one is present. Then the client is asked to come to the cutting area where most of the performance and impressions management occurs.

There some aspects of the performance that the stylists do not like. One of these is the taking of money for work done. Since it is a small salon there is no receptionist to deal exclusively with appointments and payments as in larger salons. Stylists feel awkward when telling a client how much they must pay. Money is also a way of getting even with bad clients. Sometimes they overcharge a client who has been difficult to deal with or overly pushy or they will simply tell the difficult customer that the hair-cut is free and to go to another salon for their next hair-cut.

Many servant type behaviors were displayed by the stylists, for instance, offering coffee and lighting cigarettes for clients (see
photograph #10 in appendix). This did not bother the stylists. It seemed to make the occasion much less formal. Services such as these tended to promote good feelings in the customer. When the stylists were asked if the serving of coffee had anything to do with the performance they disagreed. They liked the coffee for themselves, although they did have about ten cups on the shelves in the storage room. This seemed to signify that they in fact were for the customers as well as for the stylists.

Back Region

When the client was not present or within hearing distance the impression fostered was dropped and replaced with a number of behaviors. Whether or not a customer was present was not the only criterion for determining back region behavior. Other times there were physical barriers that characterized the back region. These areas were the basement, which was off limits to most clients, as well as the stock room where the coffee machine, stereo and beauty products were stored. In these back stage areas the stylist would sleep when not busy, smoke, drink coffee, and talk with other stylists or "in" customers.

There was a tremendous amount of noise in the shop to prevent customers from hearing comments about them or other customers within the salon. Hair-dryers, fans, wash basins and the radio were the general ambient sounds of the hair salon. These noises created a sense of privacy for the stylists individually, as a group and in interaction with their customers. One could make casual or intimate remarks without being heard. This ability to keep a intimate conversation as a result of the overall sound level may foster these types of conversation.
Back region performances were characterized by general complaining about customers. Clients were sometimes called "cow", "cunt", "Mrs. Beastly", "dildo", "gossip", "macho", etc. These comments were made about customers mostly referring to female clients, although the stylists would express their disliking for their male customers too. This may be a result of there being more females frequenting hair salons than men. Contortions of the face were frequently made when customers were disliked or were difficult to deal with. In the back region the stylists would say that they did not want to cut a certain person's hair because that client's hair was too difficult to work with, the client made them nervous or they just didn't like the person. With hair that was difficult the work with the stylist did not view it as a challenge but as distasteful work. During these types of conversations the other stylists would remark that they should charge that person more because they were so hard to deal with.

The back region also functioned as a way of determining who is part of the group. Some clients were regarded as being part of the in-group. Bev, one of the stylists, pointed out why she liked her customer and how this customer is, in a sense, part of the group.

"she (customer) knows what's going on...she picks up on what's going on. she understands us. we will talk to each other and the customers won't know what we are saying or who we are saying it to but there is that communication and -----------'s hip to it."

This type of customer is intuitive as to what is taking place within the salon. The "in" customer in this case is more of a friend than a customer.

The boundaries of front and back regions of the salon are dependent upon the type of customer and whether or not a customer is within
The behavior that is exhibited in the front region is business-based. Stylists display certain characteristics that they don't display while interacting in the back region. If they displayed back region behavior while in the presence of a client they could possibly expect to lose face or role credibility. Since they are in a service occupation they have to act cordial and pleasant; their job demands it. Many people go to salons not just to get a hair-cut but to interact. Since it is so demanding, the stylist must have a place to retreat (see photographs #11 & #12 in the appendix). Thus back region behavior gives them privacy to complain, talk, sleep or relax away from their clients.

Much time is spent in the salon waiting for clients to either come in or for client's hair to dry (see photographs #13 & #14 in appendix). During these times the stylists sometimes get together and talk or read. It is obvious in listening to and interacting with the stylists during these times, that the stylists within the shop get to know about the other stylists' clientele. This knowledge about others' clients also came out during the photo-elicitative interviews. Part of the waiting time is spent cleaning and preparing for the next client to come in. Paul does most of the cleaning because he has the most free time (see photograph #3 in appendix).

The Exterior

The exterior fronts of hair salons are all quite unique. Most of the hair salons have store fronts that are eye-catching. Awnings, pictures of hair styles placed in the window and plate glass windows which displays the work done inside are all common elements of hair salons. The names that they give their business also reflect the
purpose and occupation that take place within. Such names are "The Cut Above", "Hair Schneider", "Samson and Delilah", "The Cutting Room", etc. The above descriptions of hair salons are meant to show how hair salons try to distinguish and promote the image of their particular hair salon. Also, the hair salons may be promoting the image of unisex styling by having names that do not frame their salon as catering to any particular sex.

The exterior also frames the interaction that is taking place within the salon. A person will enter the salon having a definition of the situation from the exterior presentation. Some businesses are characterized by their exterior presentation. Businesses that deal with hair have exteriors that define the situation within. There are women's beauty parlors, men's barbershops and the unisex shops and their exteriors define what sex is being catered to and what types of styles one can expect to receive.

The Set

Any actor must have a stage to perform on or some area in which to ground the performance. The stage sets the tone for, and contributes meaning, to action. The stage in which the performance takes place is for most hair stylists the hair salon. Some hair stylists do perform on other stages, for example those hair stylists who make house calls, visit people in the hospital or who do public demonstrations. The hair salon is a permanent location in which the performers meet to stage their performances in front of their clients.

Sets in hair salons are decor which reflects an atmosphere of artistry and uniqueness or any image that the stylist is trying to maintain. As one researcher has stated, "they are trying to sell much
more than a cut, they are selling an image" (Masotti, 1982: 1). The hair salon studied had walls painted teal blue, track lighting, floors were tiled in black and white checks, partitions of mahogany and the other areas filled with mirrors. Although the photographs are in black and white, one can still distinguish these elements.

The salon as a set is clean and orderly which helps to maintain an impression of tidiness and efficiency and as one stylists states,

"Cleaning, you got to clean up. You've got to have a clean shop...I've been to other places that aren't too clean and it's not much of a presentation."

The hair stylists view the stage and set as an extension and reflection of self. If the stage is not clean it reflects badly upon the stylists.

The Props

Hair salons have their own unique props. Scissors, combs and wash basins, and towels are the items that come to mind when one thinks of a hair salon. Other props include the phone, appointment book, coffee and ashtrays which are used by the stylists (see photograph #4 in appendix). Plants are also part of the salon's decor and they serve to fill space and add atmosphere to the salon. The wash basin is an important fixture in any salon. It is an area where the customers are prepared for the hair cut. Usually it is at the wash basin where the stylist asks the clients what style of hair cut they want. It also serves another purpose. Customers tend to relax when they are being shampooed in the wash basin and as a result are easier to physically manipulate. It is here where the stylists humiliate them by wetting their hair down. People who are being shampooed seem to like the feeling of having their head massaged and for some this may compensate for the humiliation of
having to look at themselves in a bedraggled state in the mirror. It is also at this particular area in the salon where some of the actors will intentionally annoy a "bad" customer by appearing to accidently put water in their ears and eyes and/or pull their ears.

Certain props become the domains of specific stylists. Chairs for instance are an example of this. On first observation it seemed that the chair closest to the intersection of the mirrors was the best working place for a hairstylist to cut because there was more mirror to use. This idea soon changed when it became clear that the busiest stylist (Guy) had a chair in this particular part of the salon because it was closest to the garbage can. In this way hair could be disposed of without too much of it being scattered around the shop.

The other tools of the trade - scissors, combs, clips, sprays, mousses, gels and creams, were always exhibited in meticulous fashion (see photograph #15 in appendix). Stations were kept clean and in arranged order. The order of the props was for a specific purpose. As one stylist stated,

"it's just there so you can grab what you need. It displays an sense of order to it. Basically the more frequently used products are close to the front...spray on the outside and mousse close to the front." The types of products or tools that they use reflected the current technology in hair styling and fashion. There were gels and sprays that were used for older women and mousses for younger people of both sexes. Mousse is a foam that is put in the hair to hold a style; much like a spray or a gel. Through information supplied by the stylists it was found that older women know how to use sprays and gels while younger people use mousses to maintain their hair style.
Other props that are used are mirrors. Mirrors are used to communicate through and to show the hair in the final stages of the hair cut. Communication is somewhat altered while the clients and stylists are in the process of cutting hair. The customers cannot move their head during a hair-cut and the stylists can not position their bodies for direct eye contact. What developed is communication between the stylist and client through the mirror; both can make direct eye contact with minimal movement (see photographs #9 & #16 in appendix). Some clients take some time to get used to this function, others cannot get used to it. For the stylist, the mirror allows him or her to judge the hair cut from a different perspective. They use the mirror to increase distance and space much like a painter does when viewing his or her work from a distance. By looking into the mirror and adjusting the hair they can see if they have balanced and cut the hair properly.

"the mirror is used so they don't move their heads around. So you can check your balance and see how your work is forming."

The full length mirror is also used by the stylist to show the customer the hair cutting process although only for a short time. When the client first sits in the chair he or she is turned around so that he or she faces the mirror and sees him or herself. All clients see themselves draped in a plastic garb with only the head exposed (see photograph #2 in appendix). Usually the head is wrapped in a towel which is taken off after a few minutes (see photograph #6 in appendix). Their hair is then combed out and the cutting starts. If they are watching in the mirror they see the transformation through the mirror. The mirror seems to be more for the client's amusement and interest than
for the stylist, although as stated above the stylist does use the mirror to check his or her work.

The hand-held mirror is another prop that the stylist uses near the end of the encounter. It is used to allow the clients to view their hair from a different angle (see photographs #16 & #17 in appendix). The client can see the hair-cut from all angles of the head if the mirror is positioned in the right way. If clients have any reservations about the hair-cut, it is at this point that they would make their feelings known. The mirror helps to alleviate or avoid any complaints. Judging from the departure of clients in a pleased and satisfied state this seems to work.

"You use the mirrors to show them the back of their heads from different angles...For them to throw their projection other than from looking head on and it lets them get an overall view. (Interviewer) Does it make them like it more? Yes, because they don't see the overall view from the front."

For regular clients, the stylists do not feel that the hand-held mirror is needed to persuade them into liking their hair. The stylist feels a sense of trust on the part of the client. When asked if people want to use the hand-held mirrors a stylist stated:

"Some do and some don't. Some say they trust you and that's a compliment. I don't usually give regular people the mirror anymore, unless they have been on a big colour or perm. If it's just a regular hair-cut, no."

Perms are expensive and time-consuming to perform. It is understandable that a stylist would want someone to be totally satisfied with this kind of service. Stylists do not want to take a chance of doing something that the customer would not want. Also, getting a perm is quite a drastic change from having straight hair. So to minimize client disappointment they use more props and stress the fact of how to
maintain a perm. Here again information sharing is important. It gives the stylist credibility, creates the right impression and reduces disappointment.

The stylist's appearance is important to the performance. The stylists observed wore clothing that were in style. For the most part, stylists' clothing is kept casual and comfortable as they have to stand long hours. Clothing did not interfere with work on hair, in fact it helped to hold some of the other props such as hair clips. Their hair was styled and kept well groomed. Usually their hair was styled by other stylists within the salon.

Prop failure can be a form of embarrassment for stylists. The salon under study experienced prop failure once while the researcher was there. Hot water was used up by the other tenants of the building in which the salon was situated and the stylists had to inform their clients that they could either have their hair washed in cold water or not washed at all. The stylists were embarrassed and angry with this occurrence because they felt it reflected badly upon themselves. What they did to alleviate their responsibility was to blame the landlord for not having a hot water tank that was big enough to supply the entire building. Nevertheless they were embarrassed by this and felt it disrupted their routine and performance. Another form of embarrassment for stylists is when they lose control of a prop. This occurs, for example, when they drop their scissors during a hair cutting encounter. Stylists feel a lack of situational control when this happens in front of a client.

The stage and its props are important to the impression the stylists want to convey. The exterior of a salon with its signs and
ornamentations index the social setting. We know that barber shops are indexed by the barber-pole, doctors' offices with their name on sign on the door. The same is true of most salons. Their exterior decor is unique to them. The interior of the salon is more socially specific. You now can see the stylists at work. The tools of the trade are there to frame the event. They are not only used for their impressive function but for utility purposes. Some of the props limit interaction as is the case with the plastic sheet they put over the client. Also the props index social meaning and the definition of the situation.

To summarize the findings, stylists use strategies for minimizing customer disappointment, and in some cases for influencing the customer's liking of the assigned hair style. Through the use of customer typifications the stylist is able to create the right impression. The impression management is both verbal and visual. Verbally the stylist must be able to keep a conversation flowing with a client. Usually these conversations are unique to that client. One reason for this is that most clients are willing to talk about themselves. But as was stated before, if the stylist wants to gain the loyalty of his customer, he or she must give information about themselves. This information tends to be in the form of defining what their particular hair cutting style is and at times personal things like if they are married, have children, and where they went on their vacation.

Visually the stylists must keep up their appearance. One of the interviews was done during a hair cutting session that one stylist was performing on another one. They are very aware of self presentation through clothes and hair style. Their salon is also an expression of
self. It always has to be kept clean and arranged. Paul's job is to do just that. Decor is also important. In a way they are selling an image. This image must be appealing to the clients. It is much different than the corner barbershop where the interior is bland and sparse. This style of hair salon expresses itself through the decor as well as through the people who work in it.
CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

This study was an examination of a particular occupational group, hair stylists, using a visual sociological orientation as an auxiliary method to collect, analyze and present data. The first goal of this study was to ethnographically describe the everyday life of hair stylists within a hair salon. The purpose in describing the working life of hair stylist was to examine interaction strategies and customer typification practices that stylists used in their performances to develop a loyal clientele.

Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach provides the general framework for the study. Hair stylists, like other occupations, must rely upon presenting themselves in the best possible light if they are to stay in business. Impression management takes on the form of a performance which involves the utilization of expressions given and given off (Goffman, 1959: 2), information seeking, props, appearance, regions and team work (Lauer & Handel, 1983: 134). These concepts were used as sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1969: 148).

A second goal of the research was to determine the usefulness of visual sociological data by the collection of some visual material. The visual methodological orientation was not only intended to provide data, but as a way of determining how this data could be analyzed and presented. Both visual and verbal data gathered on the hair stylist's occupation and setting were scrutinized for sociological content.
Comments and Recommendations Pertaining to the Hair Stylists

The overall findings that emerged from this study were as follows:

1) Hair stylists have developed strategies for minimizing client disappointment which supports the stylist’s role competence.

2) As a result of being able to minimize disappointment, stylists are able to maintain a loyal clientele.

3) These strategies emerge out of client/stylist encounters. Stylists identified several types of clients and how they must deal with each type of client in minimizing disappointment.

4) It was found that new customers are the hardest to deal with because the stylists must use more extensive strategies for gaining trust. Regular clients are not as problematic as new customers largely because trust has been developed. However, the stylists must still maintain their strategies for minimizing client disappointment with regular clients. With first time customers stylists have to provide their own favorable definition of situation, much of which is provided by the environment of the salon, and gain the new customer’s positive definition of the situation. This was revealed by the stylists role-detachment behavior. With new clients, role detachment behavior was not as great as it was with regular clients. Role detachment was determined by the topic of conversation that stylists engaged in with their clients. For example, with new clients stylists talked more about hair and with regular clients they talked about weddings, food, personal relationships; things that do not have anything to do with hair.

5) Role performance is a part in the overall interaction, but the stylist’s ability to properly identify and assign appearance to others is important as well. Also involved in this is the stylist’s ability to
minimize customer disappointment. Stylists identify and assign an ideal appearance to customers based on three types of information that is gleaned through interaction with the client— the client's initial appearance, social group and client's particular hair type. It must be noted that the stylist will never just assign a hair style to a client. The stylist will also negotiate with the client about the choice of hair style using verbal and/or visual description. The ability to assign ideal appearances to others does not naturally ensure that the others will be satisfied and agree with the outcome. To achieve this, stylists utilize process strategies in assigning haircuts to clients. At first, clients are made to look less than appealing, but are then built up visually and verbally throughout the encounter.

6) Precautions taken against customer disappointment are: a) tearing down, b) guilt by appearance, c) shifting responsibility, d) training the client, e) complimenting and f) forecasting. In the initial stages the client appearance is degraded physically and verbally by the stylist. The stylist is assigned a costume that strips him or her of self associated with appearance. The client is then told during this stage that his or her hair has grown and is in need of styling. Responsibility for maintenance of their appearance is then shifted from the stylist to the client. Once the hair is cut, they are complimented on their new appearance by the stylist and other stylists within the hair salon. As a final precaution, the stylists forecast how long it will take for the hair style to look its best. They are in effect "eased" into the new hair style.

7) In the course of carrying out the hair styling process the stylist further typifies clients. Stylists identified the following types of
clients: new customers, walk-ins, regulars, (some of whom are considered preferred clients), infrequents, and troublesome clients. As a result of these customer typifications, certain aspects of the strategies are emphasized. For example, with regular clients the stylists have developed relationships and because of this no longer need to employ forecasting or hair care techniques. The type of client will determine how much the stylist has to perform. Troublesome clients are one type that the stylists feel they could do without. These customers often challenge stylists' definitions of the situation within the salon. In doing so they make stylists' job more difficult.

8) Client's presence influences where performances take place within the salon. The performance area was identified as the front region. Regions are contingent upon the presence of clients or in some cases on physical environment, e.g., basement. If clients are present, stylists are performing in most cases in the front region. When a client is not present the stylists exhibit back region behavior. Some clients are allowed into this region. These clients are regulars to whom stylists feel close. The back region is also a place where stylists can relax and be with other members of the team. It allows them "time out" from the activities at hand.

9) Teamwork is also important in maintaining the definition of the situation. The task is multidimensional in that it involves the task of cutting hair and secondly minimizing customer disappointment. Team members assist each other with both these tasks. Stylists would occasionally help other stylists maintain the definition of the situation by, "easing in" the other stylists' clients. This was done by complimenting the other stylists' clients about their hair style. Or by
other stylists reinforcing the clients’ impression that their hair was in need of improvement.

10) Props influence and add to the performance as well. Mirrors play an important role in the “minimizing disappointment phase”. The hand-held mirror is used to further manipulate the customer into accepting his or her new style. The full length mirrors were found to facilitate communication between stylists and clients by permitting them to see each other without actually physically facing each other. Props can also be a source of embarrassment, for props may fail or not be managed properly. They may give off the impression that the stylist is not able to control an integral part of his or her performance.

11) Status in a hair salon appears dependent upon how large a clientele a stylist has and is able to maintain. It is revealed by other stylists showing deference to the higher status stylist and assisting him/her more often in his/her work. If a stylist has a small clientele he or she can be expected to hold a lower status within the salon and not receive as much help from other stylists.

Touching plays an important role in the hair salon. Future research on hair salons could explore the implications that touching has on the stylist/client relationship. It would be interesting to see if touching is part of the strategies that stylists use on their clients.

The strategies used and typifications made by stylists can be applied to other occupations. In a more generalized way, exploring how stylists maintain loyal customers can generate theories about how people maintain relationships. “By drawing comparisons and contrasts across settings, we not only arrive at a richer understanding of each setting, but of similar processes in a wide range of settings” (Prus, 1985c: 16).
And Prus (1985c: 16) states further that by developing the area of
generic sociology, we maximize conceptual development.

Two concepts that were used in this research dealt with
transformation of identity by others. The first generic concept used in
this research was cooling out. In Cooling Out the Mark, Goffman
considers "the social process by which transformations in self-concept
and social role are consciously and deliberately facilitated by others
(Goffman in Rose, 1962:482)." In it he details how the "mark" is helped
by the "confidence man" to accept a loss of self-concept or social role.
The "mark" is cooled out by the "confidence man". A somewhat similar
process occurs in the hair salon where the client is "eased into" a new
self-identity. The stylist facilitates the client’s new self identity
and does so by using strategies for minimizing customer disappointment
in the new hair style. This strategy also de-fuses potential anger
directed toward the stylist by the client as a result of assigning a
identity that was felt to be unacceptable.

The second generic concept used was Garfinkel’s status degradation
ceremonies. Status degradation ceremonies refer to transforming an
individual’s total identity into a lower identity (Garfinkel, 1956:
420). He also states that "there is no society whose social structure
does not provide, in its routine features, the conditions of identity
degradation". Within the hair salon a ritual somewhat similar to status
degradation ceremonies was referred to as "tearing down" and "guilt by
appearance". In these two stages the individual is physically and
verbally lowered in appearance, which is part of one’s self identity.
Where the similarity ends is that the client’s identity is then built up
by the stylist in the complimenting and forecasting stages. The client
does not suffer from permanent status degradation Garfinkel theorizes.

Comments and Recommendations on Visual Methods in Sociology

The visual method adds an important dimension to sociological
research. Seeing the environment that people live and work in is
important to our understanding of it. We gain insight into the working
conditions which often influence interaction, as in an auto plant. The
interaction within the hair salon could be documented and used for later
analysis and illustration. Although, the visual method could not help
to explain behavior, it could document it and be used in the interview
process.

The photographs were used as an inventory of people, places and
things. From these photographs salient elements were analyzed for their
content. The photographs were an important aspect of the interviews
that were conducted. Stylists were able to describe the elements that
were in the photograph and from this a development of customer
typification was made.

The process of taking photographs is important. Familiarity with
the actors and the setting was established and a systematic schedule was
prepared, guided by the general theoretical framework and previously
established familiarity within the setting. It was found that
photographs which were taken without any knowledge of the people and
setting were limited in their usage. For the researcher/analyst had
very little to base his interpretations on. Photographs that were
grounded in a knowledge base of the people and setting were most useful.
The researcher became aware that photographs contained information that
was unnoticed until they had been carefully examined several times. The
photographs also could be used and related to different contexts within the text.

Recommendations for further research involving the use of visual methods would include: 1) comparing photo-elicitative interviews with other types of interviews for the different kinds of content that may be extracted; 2) developing a recipe and/or standard for systematically using and analyzing photographs; and as a result of these efforts, 3) incorporate more photographs in sociological research.

What we can conclude from the research is that stylists utilize strategies for minimizing customer disappointment and as a result maintain a loyal client. Stylists also gain role credibility in this process. The photographs that were incorporated into the findings and analysis were used to document and illustrate events and behaviors that were common within the salon. It was my intention to show that photographs can contribute to sociology, by using them in the conceptualizing, analysis, interpreting, and communication of results in the sociological research process.
The following are verbatim transcripts from the photo-elicitative interviews.

**Photograph #16 in appendix**

Bev-I can see Mrs. B. Larry's working on her.

Guy-You use the mirror to show them the back of their head.

B-Yes, different angles.

G-For them to throw there projection.

B-Yeah other than from looking head on. It lets them get a different view.

Carl (interviewer)-Does it make them like it more?

L-Yes. Many times. Yeah because they don't see the overall view from the front.

B-How much hair do you have on the front?

G-This is what the image is going to show you a three dimensional view. You see the side and back.

B-Profiles are nice. People can see the back of their head.

C-Do people want to do that?

B-Some do and some don't. Some will will say they trust you and thats a compliment.

C-Are those the regulars that usually do that?

G-Yes most often. Regular people I don't give a mirror to often to anymore. Unless they have been on a big job a colour or perm a new look if its just maintenance no.

**Photograph #15 in appendix**

C-Are all the products lined up to make things look really good?
B-It's just there so you can grab what you need.

G-It displays an order of sense to it. Basically is the more frequently used products are close to the front.

C-Like the scissors and the clips.

G-Yah always.

C-And the other stuff just when you need it.

G-Yah spray on the outside the jell and the mousse as the trends.

C-These are your tools.

G-What do you mean by trends?

G-Mousse right now and jell are up front and sprays and setting lotions are further back.

C-Would that be for old ladies sprays and stuff like that.

G-Oh no not so much like that for today.

B-But still more older ladies tknow how to use that and are more used to using spray. The younger kids seem afraid to use it.
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