"It's only a problem if she wants it to be"

An Ethnographic Exploration of Gender in the Maritime Sector

by © Heather L. Elliott

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Abstract

This thesis explores how gender identity and presentation shape people's experience of physical and sonic environments in a workplace, with a specific focus on male-dominated professions in the maritime sector. Men continue to outnumber women in these professional spaces, despite training and recruiting programs encouraging women to join. Why women choose this line of work, and how they create room for themselves in professional spaces not designed for them, are the primary foci of this work. Original research centres on interviews with 19 participants from fishing, fish processing, marine engineering, naval architecture, and the oil and gas industry, supplemented by participant observation. Feminist standpoint theory frames the analysis, with Ruth Frankenburg's work on positionality and perspective and Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss' work on gender consciousness and gender awareness offering insight into how gender shapes physical space in historically male-dominated spaces. Rebecca Lentjes' work on sonic patriarchy and Robin E. Sheriff's concept of cultural censorship are used to investigate how sonic spaces are shaped by the gender of those speaking and those who are silenced. The narratives included in this work, and the analysis used to explore them, suggest that the challenges and barriers these women face are part of a larger cultural pattern within the maritime sector that must be that must be addressed in order to achieve gender equity in the workplace.

General Summary

In my professional life of the past several years, I have been fortunate enough to tour a variety of ocean-going vessels during their brief stays in St. John's Harbour. Often, these tours involved conversations with captains and crew alike, where I was one of the only – or *the* only – woman aboard. This thesis seeks to understand why women are such a small minority in these spaces and explores how gender presentation impacts the experiences of both the physical and sonic environments of the workplace. Spaces historically designed by and for men, such as the male-dominated maritime sector, view male bodies and voices as the industry-defined "gender neutral" default. Using feminist standpoint theory in addition to theories of positionality, gender consciousness, sonic patriarchy, and cultural censorship, I explore how gender impacts not only the physical space participants occupy, but also how they speak and are spoken (or not spoken) to. This work explores how these workplaces shape the behaviour, speech, and overall actions of those who work inside them, and how people account narratively for their experiences and attempts to change things from within.

Acknowledgements

To any future students reading this, know that it is okay if your every waking moment is not consumed with your coursework, your research, or your thesis. To my fellow mature students, this type of program is not designed for those of us with families, passions, or pursuits which extend beyond the departmental walls. You may be told that taking a vacation, attending a protest, or participating in anything "non-academic" is an impediment to completing your program. Maybe it is, but so what? Some things are more important than your thesis. This period of time is not just an academic exercise, but a chapter in your life and a continuation of your development as a person. Never forget that.

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Preface

I boarded the DSSV *Pressure Drop* on a dreary June afternoon in 2019. The commanding officer – Captain Stu – invited me aboard after reading an article I had published about the ship the previous year. I was excited not only because this vessel was a top-of-the-line technological marvel, but it had just returned from a major expedition of the mid-Atlantic charting deep ocean geological sites, some for the first time. I couldn't wait to get on board.

While touring the bridge, the captain asked about my graduate research. I gave a synopsis of my work – that I was studying gender in the maritime sector and how someone's gender affects their experiences at work. He nodded and immediately said "Oh, it's too bad Abby and Rebecca aren't on board anymore. You could have talked to them!" Abby and Rebecca were marine scientists and had been the only two women on the recent voyage – the rest of the operational and science crews on board were male. Captain Stu immediately correlated "gender" with "women", as though the men on board, including himself, did not have gender to consider.

This was not a surprise to me. Since 2014, I have toured dozens of ships, frequently finding myself to be the only woman on board. The women who I did encounter were often in public-facing positions, such as communications, or worked in housekeeping or catering. In fact, from 2014 to 2019 (when my fieldwork began) I had only interviewed four women – two media professionals, a training cadet, and a marine scientist (Elliott 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017).[1] This often struck me as noteworthy, so much so that when I started my graduate research it was with the intention of combining my two passions – anthropology and maritime studies – and answering the question "where are all the women?" in a systematic way.

Once I "entered the field", I uncovered other patterns and trends that I had not expected, shifting the focus of my research. Instead of trying to answer, "where are all the women?", I found myself asking "what role does gender play in the maritime sector?" I

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[1] These were interviews for my professional work; the numbers do not reflect women interviewed for this research.

decided to interview both men and women from a variety of fields in an effort to unpack how the gender presentation of these individuals shaped their day-to-day professional lives as well as their views on the role gender occupied in their fields, if any at all. These participants came from a variety of maritime professions, including marine engineering, naval architecture and design, fishing and fish processing, and government seafaring organizations such as the Canadian Coast Guard. I also interviewed professionals from the Fish, Food, and Allied Workers Union (FFAW-Unifor) and the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB) to examine the administrative side of the issue and look at barriers that exist for people attempting to enter that sector. These perspectives helped me understand how those who advocate for fish harvesters and plant workers try to address gender-related issues in the workplace. Additionally, I participated in two women's regional union meetings during the summer of 2019. These women-led, women-focused workshops brought participants together from across the island of Newfoundland and discussed issues including domestic violence, confidence building, and pursuing leadership roles not only professionally, but within their broader lives at home and in community.[2]

All of these elements combined to provide a multi-faceted look at how issues of gender can hinder or advance individual opportunities in these spaces. When I began this research, my intention was to interview men and women within the maritime sector and compare their experiences; it did not occur to me to seek out narratives from transgender or non-binary individuals. The conversation around gender and identity has shifted considerably in the few years since I began this research, and on reflection I understand that these groups would experience distinctive challenges around gender and presentation. My own positionality as a cis-woman who has occupied space in these male-dominated spheres attributed to my cultural blindness in this circumstance, where my question began as why others who were not like myself were absent from this space. I did not consider how those who do not conform to the gender binary may experience this professional environment. As such, future work seeking to expand on this thesis' topic may gain

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[2] This was the second year of the workshops and they had not expanded to Labrador.

valuable insights through the inclusion of these perspectives, especially given the rich research that is being undertaken on the social and cultural constructions of gender.

While I conducted participant observation during the women's regional meetings, my primary method of data collection was interviews. I used these first-person narratives as a window into how individuals experienced and expressed gender and gendered behaviour in their workplace. It is true that interviews only reveal the participant's version of events, and that what someone says and what someone does are often different (Reinhartz 1992). As Aldred and Gillies discuss, "the account an individual provides in an interview is seen as a snapshot of their perspective. The expectation is that they are responsibly reflexive and can 'represent' themselves to us" (2014, 4). It is helpful to consider these narratives as recalibrated to express the participant's best articulation of what they experienced, rather than assuming that what they say is a "true", unbiased reflection of the whole experience. Even though there are differences between how an individual talks about an event and how it actually unfolded, these reinterpretations offer perspectives that serve to highlight issues that may otherwise go unnoticed. They also often served as platforms for individuals to parse through their memories with new insight, moving from a prior belief of "that's how it is" to something more nuanced; for example, while certain behaviour may be viewed as acceptable, that does not make it right. These reflections, through their telling, offer a window into how the participant perceives their reality.

In the context of this work, these first-hand expressions of experience were important in demonstrating how individuals perceive and reflect on their gender within a professional environment. Speaking directly with my participants meant I was able to hear about any behaviours or trends they identified at their workplace, what occurrences they felt were worth highlighting or downplaying, and the reasonings or rationales they applied to their explanations for these behaviours or events (for example, why a male coworker was explosive in a meeting, or why a female coworker filed a complaint). I could then compare these narratives with each other across a variety of workplaces, noting repeated topics and identifying outlying perspectives. Some participants identified certain trends in real time during our interview, remarking that they had never taken an opportunity to consider gender in the context of their workplace. As we navigated our

conversation, they challenged previously held beliefs and arrived at new conclusions around their situations. In this way, our interviews became a coproduction, where the conversation developed new perspectives. Other participants acknowledged openly that what they described as appropriate work for particular genders was a reflection of personal bias and in direct contradiction to what they witnessed in their workplace. For instance, that a woman is unsuited for a particular type of work, but then the speaker provides examples of women who are exemplary at the same work. In these circumstances, a gendered binary exists when referring to "women" in the abstract, existing separately from the reality of particular women in the workplace.

The diversity of my participant's professions was a deliberate choice. Interviewing individuals from different professional spaces revealed not only how these individuals understand gender and how gender does or does not affect their professional lives in the day-to-day, but also clarified themes and trends that repeat across professional spaces. Understanding everyday inequalities and experiences is beneficial when investigating the perpetuation of racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism and other inequities with an environment (Beagan 2001). These "microlevel occurrences", when examined individually, may appear to be trivial – a sexist joke in the lunchroom or a coworker calling a woman "sweetie" – but they compound over time to create an environment that normalizes this sort of behaviour, often in contrast to official policies of inclusion and equality (2001, 229). Disguised as banter or "just a joke", these types of actions often result in the othering or excluding of individuals who are outside the dominant population (and often members of the group that are the subject of the "joke") (Benokraitis 1997). The normalization of this kind of subtle sexism within a workplace creates an unspoken culture of acceptance, where these behaviours exist unchecked, hiding in plain sight because they are not considered to be particularly violent (unlike more explicit displays of sexism, racism, etc.). By discussing gender in the workplace, this research will provide a window into how certain individuals feel gender impacts their lives, where inequalities lie, how these boundaries may be challenged or eliminated entirely.

Within this thesis, I discuss how my participants understand gender in the workplace and its impacts (if any) on their professional lives, in both physical and sonic

contexts. The first chapter provides context for this research by addressing the history of maritime work – specifically fishing and processing – in Newfoundland and Labrador. It also outlines the methodology and theoretical frameworks used within the work. The second chapter analyses gender and physical space, looking at how someone's gender presentation impacts the spaces they occupy and, in turn, how this shapes the professional work environment. Finally, the third chapter looks at gender and sound, diving into how sound and silence are gendered spaces, and how individuals navigate these spaces when speaking in professional arenas. The conclusion summarizes these key points and examines activism and advocacy in the workplace, including how some individuals push for change.

This project explores not just how gender shapes individual lives, but also how it shapes the spaces that those individuals occupy. By examining both the physical and sonic impacts of gender, it is possible to find solutions to existing barriers that limit women's success in the maritime trades. This work focuses on a small sample drawn from a variety of professions. As such, it offers insight into how particular people negotiated particular situations and explores those specific circumstances while opening up questions for future research.

Chapter 1: History, Theory, and Methodology

There is extensive research on gender in the maritime sector, especially in Newfoundland and Labrador. Researchers have previously investigated the lives of fishers, the impact of the 1992 cod moratorium, gendered divisions of labour, and women in the fishery within the Newfoundland and Labrador context (Caicedo 2004; Glavine 2001; House 1985; Kealey 1986; Lewis et al. 1988; McCarthy 2006; Neis et al. 2013; Porter 1985; Power 1997, 2002, 2005a, 2005b, 2008; Robinson 1995; Williams 1996). I sought to contribute to, rather than to repeat, the work that came before mine. As a result, following the submission of my proposal I decided to widen my net and examine a variety of maritime-related trades rather than limiting myself to ship building and fish harvesting. This meant I could look for any recurring themes around gender that emerged across the broader workforce. In order to achieve this, I first had to understand the history of gendered work and gender roles within the maritime sector of this province. Using this as my foundation, I then explored additional literature in an effort to understand why some women chose to enter professions that traditionally favoured men. From this position, I could conduct my interviews and place my participants responses within both a historical and cultural context.

This chapter contains three sections. The first is a brief and by no means exhaustive review of the history of ocean-going work in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, with a focus on gender roles and women's involvement in the fishery. Following that, I review my research methodology, discussing data collection (including the use of some methods and abandonment of others) and the coding, analysis, compilation of the resulting data. Finally, I discuss the theoretical framework that gives this thesis its structure, bringing the pillars of gender consciousness, unmarked spaces, sonic patriarchy, and cultural censorship together under the roof of feminist standpoint theory.

Under this historical and theoretical umbrella, this work explores gender within select trades, as described in an interview setting by some people working in these professions. While this approach limits the understanding of behaviour in context (since participants

were not at work), it provides important insight into how people narratively render their experiences when discussing gender in their professional lives.

History

Early Years to Moratorium

Ocean-going and ocean-adjacent work – including fishing, shipbuilding, and oil and gas production – has always been important to the economy of Newfoundland and Labrador. For many young men prior to the mid-20th Century, "going to sea" was a rite of passage where they participated in labour intensive forms of fishing (such as hook-and-line and cod-trapping) and worked onboard schooners and other vessels (Power 2005b; Simonton 1998). While some young women went to sea as cooks or maids, they would usually return ashore to marry to take work on land; those women who remained on land were responsible for gardening, child and elder care, domestic duties, and aiding other members of the community (CIDA 1993; Davis 1988; Hole 1967; Kaplan 1988; Power 2005b; Williams 1996). In addition to these responsibilities, women also handled many aspects of the fishing business, including processing and salting the catch when it landed, bookkeeping and recordkeeping, mending nets, and baiting lines (Gerrard 2008; Power 2005b; Williams 1996). Despite their integral role within their family's fishing business, merchants on shore would refuse to contract with the women of the household, forcing them to wait until the men returned home to purchase supplies or negotiate further credit, thus reinforcing the gendered labour divide of the fishery (Power 2005b, 35). Women's work was often uncredited or attributed to their husbands or male family members (who were the public-facing side of operations), pushing them behind-the-scenes and leaving their hard work unpaid and unrecognized. This "shore crew" was vital to the kin-based operations of the cod fishery, but the divide was often not so clear as "land and sea, between women and men" (Power 2005b, 159). As Nicole Power describes, "a history of poverty and exploitation by merchants, and later by processing companies… necessitated the economic participation of all household members to survive… [M]en and women are likely to have crossed the land/sea and work/home divides to ensure that the required work got done" (2005b, 159). While many regarded the sea as a male-dominated space,

the land was not exclusively a women's domain, because "patrilineal inheritance of property and knowledge, patrilocal residence, male preference, and local and state-produced patriarchal ideologies have not only denied women access to fishery resources but have shaped the sort of work women do on land" (Power 2005b, 159). Although women managed the "shore crew", they did not have full control of the operations; those lay with the (male) head of the household.

During the 1950s and 60s, the introduction of government support programs combined with an increase in the sale of fish meant many fishery families had more disposable income and were able to purchase items they had previously made themselves (such as clothing). This began a shift for women moving into the home and away from working *for* the home. The government resettlement program – terminating services to rural and remote communities – forced many families into urban growth centres, separating women from their gardens and from the relatives with whom they'd shared their work (McCay 1988; Williams 1996). Slowly, women found their roles in the family whittled down, changing their sense of identity: "most women had considered themselves, in addition to mothers and wives, to be weavers and spinners, gardeners and berry pickers, and less frequently, midwives and herbalists. Now, however, they increasingly saw themselves as 'just housewives' …" (Williams 1996, 11).

The industrialization of the fishing industry in the mid-1900s saw processing plants open in population centres. In another shift, many men and women found employment in these plants, with men on the dock, offloading the catch or working with heavy machinery, and women inside the factory processing the catch. The increase in demand for fish also impacted the inshore fishery, and many family-owned enterprises expanded. Most trawling operations had male-only crews, and young men would work seasonally on the family vessel before taking over the enterprise when they were old enough (Neis et al. 2013, 64). In some instances, wives joined their husbands on board their vessels (McCay 1988; Williams 1996). This made it easier for families to keep costs low, since having two members of the household working on deck meant one less deckhand to pay (Williams 1996), perpetuating the belief that women's work – even on the water – was cheaper (or free) compared to male labour.

Moratorium and Impact

In 1992, following years of decreasing fish stocks and warnings from scientists and fishers alike, the Canadian federal government announced a moratorium on northern codfish (Power 2005b; Roberts & Robbins 1995; Williams 1996). Though the fishery was in a state of crisis because of systemic changes and diminishing catch numbers over the preceding decade, this closure – and the Atlantic-wide groundfish moratorium the next year – impacted tens of thousands of individuals and their families. These effects were felt not just within the fishery but in associated industries as well, such as transportation and retail, affecting an estimated 97,000 people (Rowe 1991; Williams 1996, 1).

The government sought to provide support for those impacted individuals and families, but the programs often fell short of their goals and affected men and women differently "in terms of their incomes, their job prospects, and their home and community responsibilities" (1996, 1). The short-term or interrupted nature of women's work lives due to domestic responsibilities meant they had to fight for the same benefits men received for similar work (Roberts & Robbins 1995; Williams 1996). Overall, the government programs sought to shrink the workforce that relied on fishing by shifting labour to other industries, however, retraining came with the expectation of relocation, which many (especially women, with domestic responsibilities and community connections) were reluctant to do (Power 2005b; Williams 1996). Some women sought out training in fish plants, but these opportunities were not available to everyone. Other training opportunities were on set schedules and often required commuting, which excluded women who had childcare and family responsibilities during the day and were unable to take time away to attend classes. As a result, these women took courses that offered flexible schedules so they could balance training with their domestic lives (Williams 1996, 31-34). This meant many women trained in similar professions, often saturating the small communities where they lived with specific skillsets, such as hairdressing (Glavine 2001; Williams 1996).

Most men, on the other hand, waited longer to seek retraining, hoping the fishery would reopen and they could return to their boats. Many had invested money and time

into vessels, property, and gear, so they were less inclined to move away from home to seek alternative employment due to the financial loss that would entail; riding out the moratorium was, for many, the only viable option (Power 2005b; Williams 1996). This often resulted in a restructuring of the domestic sphere, where men stayed at home and women set out to find paid work.

This sudden change to the structure of many homes had an immediate impact on both men and women. In her book *What Do They Call a Fisherman?*, Nicole Power (2005b) explores how the closure of the cod fishery changed more than just the economic prospects of the population. An individual often shapes their understanding of masculinity and femininity using the lens of their cultural context; when significant changes to that context (such as the moratoria) occur, they impact the configuration and practice of gender (Power 2005b, 27). However, "culturally specific gender practice and ideas provide the tools with which men and women are able to respond," allowing them to adapt, reject, and reconfigure their identities in real time (2005b, 27). When facing unemployment and economic uncertainty, Power argues that no one reacts as an individual, but "in social contexts and relations, and as part of social groups, … possibilities in both the formal and informal sectors of the economy are enabled and constrained by accepted ideas and practice" (2005b, 27). The post-moratorium economic shift meant men and women faced financial uncertainty and economic precarity in different ways. Those differences changed maritime work in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Focusing on the construction of masculinity, Power states that when a major event occurs – such as the crisis in work following the moratoria – the sudden and dramatic shift of the cultural landscape affects the construction and practice of masculinity (Power 2005b, 21). Crises in production relations, including "mass unemployment or reorganization of male-dominated industries, may create a number of obstacles for men to live their lives as men in culturally prescribed ways … encourag[ing] men to question their identities and engage in negative behaviour" (2005b, 21). Individuals employ coping strategies – "ways… to make sure all the necessary productive and reproductive work gets done… using the material and ideational resources available to them, including or

perhaps especially those that configure practice by gender" (2005b, 24) – to create meaning and a sense of self or identity, especially in times of disruption and displacement. Though traditional gender beliefs may shape these strategies – beliefs that assign women to the domestic and men to the role of breadwinner – they can also become sites of resistance and accommodation. In an effort to meet material needs, women may move from the home into paid work while men take on more unpaid, domestic labour, challenging the ideological constructions of gender (2005b, 183). When coping strategies are no longer just about meeting physical needs but about access to and distribution and control of resources and ideas, changes can occur within the gendered ideology that see women working outside the home and men supporting at home (2005b, 27). These changes may look different depending on whether the family lives in a more populated centre compared to rural or remote areas where traditional concepts of gender may determine the ways in which men and women participate in the household. In rural settings like many of the fishing communities in Newfoundland, the lack of opportunities for paid work for women and expectation of men as the breadwinner reproduced rather than modified these gendered beliefs (Power 2005b). This additional pressure did not prevent all women from pursuing work, but in some cases exacerbated tensions within their domestic lives.

As men spent more time in the home following the moratoria, women also experienced a dramatic shift in identity. While some women reported they were happy to spend more time with their male partners, many expressed dissatisfactions and felt a "loss of independence, and an increased workload due to the heightened financial insecurity and the additional caring duties associated with having an unemployed fisher husband at home" (Power 2005b, 26; Robbins & Roberts 1995). For those women who had lost work in the fishery or fish plants, the gendered and unequal access to support and "their unequal status in the fishing industry, inadequate adjustment measures, cuts in social spending, and exclusionary changes in employment insurance" meant they returned to their homes (2005b, 31-32; Roberts & Robbins 1995). Many threw themselves into domestic and caring work, either to establish new meaning and identity or because they felt that was the expectation of their family and friends (Roberts & Robbins 1995, 12).

Rather than seeing the increased presence of their male partners as an opportunity to share household work, they committed to domesticity in an effort to not sacrifice their sense of self (Power 2005b).

When evaluating their options for the future, many women saw retraining as useless unless the family planned to relocate; the surplus number of women taking the same programs meant there were too few jobs to go around in small communities (1995, 12). Many women shifted into "pink-collar" work, often receiving funding to retain as hairdressers or similar professions. Paul Lawrence Glavine (2001) investigated this phenomenon and determined there was no overt sexism at play when retraining men and women, but his analysis failed to take into consideration the lack of options available to women outside of what their case officer presented to them. Structured sexism, in this case, continued to support stereotypical understandings of gender and work.

Many parents from fishing families dissuaded their children from seeing the fishery as a viable source of work (Kate, Interview 2019); other children expressed shame in their familial fishing history and turned away from the field entirely (Nina, Interview 2019; Roberts & Robbins 1995). While reasons varied from family to family, with some believing there was no future in the fishery and others feeling shame from being on government support during the moratoria, the message was the same: find stable work elsewhere. [3] This meant an entire generation sought to find well-paying employment in other industries.

Post-Moratoria and This Work

Beyond the moratoria, the marine industry was changing. As marine work transitioned into more automated and industrial operations, the workforce changed as well, with women moving into roles that were previously inaccessible due to changing dynamics within the home and the search for financial independence (Kaplan 1988).

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[3] In 1990, William Walker of the Toronto Star interviewed my father-in-law, Glenn Critch, a fifth-generation fisherman from St. John's. He told Walker that his one wish was that my husband, then 10-years old, never rely on the fishery to support a family. In what is now family lore and a favourite story around the dinner table, he followed up with "I'll break his kneecaps before he goes aboard a fishing boat. I don't see no future for the young people in fishing. I want him to go to school and learn a trade" ("Depressing time on The Rock", *Toronto Star*, 1990). Though he gave this quote pre-moratorium, it was something he stood by throughout my husband's youth. My husband became a lawyer and his sister became a teacher.

Educational institutions and training programs adapted to this new reality, promoting equal opportunity for all students regardless of age, gender, or sexual orientation. This shift in messaging saw women moving towards 'skilled' trades, not only in search of economic stability but to follow their interests into fields they previously could not access. Other women were fortunate enough to work in plants that pivoted to processing other product, such as shrimp and crab, which helped them remain employed (Diane, Interview 2019).

In spite of these overtures, the trades – including the fisheries – have significantly fewer women than other fields of employment (Statistics Canada 2018). On a national level, the number of women in the trades has increased to 6.9 % in 2019, up from 6.5% in 2018, though their numbers in comparison to other fields such as sales and service (54.9%), health occupations (79.9%), and social, community, government, and education services (70.3%) remain low (Statistics Canada 2022).[4] In Newfoundland and Labrador, the number of women in the trades has increased to 5.2% in 2019, up from 5.0% in 2018; however, the number of women in sales and service (57.0%), health occupations (80.1%), and social, community, government, and educational services (73.3%) continues to outnumber those in the trades by a substantial margin (Statistics Canada 2022).[5]

In the maritime sector, men are numerically dominant in professional and entrepreneurial positions in engineering, technology, and manufacturing, while women primarily occupy lower-wage production jobs (Ocean Allies Project 2020, 7). In a report on diversity and inclusion in the ocean sector, the Ocean Allies Project reported that women held 25% of jobs in aquaculture, 15% in fishing, 14% in heavy engineering and civil construction, 31% in navigational, 12% in ship and boat building, and 43.9% in fish processing (2020, 18 [Table 9]). These professions still have remarkably low employment rates for women despite the number of women entering the trades continuing to increase.

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[4] These percentages are based on Canada-wide data from the year 2019. This data reflects the reality of the trades pre-COVID-19. The selection of 2019 data was deliberate, as it reflected the professional environment of my participants at the time of these interviews.

[5] The number of women in Newfoundland and Labrador who are employed in natural resources and agriculture has decreased (11.3% in 2019, down from 12.4% in 2018). These numbers have risen post-2020, to 14.5% in 2021, though the reason for this is unclear and not within the scope of this research.

Why do these numbers continue to remain lower? What prevents women from entering, or remaining within, the trades as a whole? Despite years of efforts to recruit women into the field, the maritime sector remains largely male-dominated. This suggests that women experience distinctive barriers compared to their male peers. The Ocean Allies Project list several factors that may deter women from entering the sector. These include:

- A male-dominated culture, common in industries like shipbuilding, which often presents a significant social deterrent.
- The perception that marine trade work is physically demanding in harsh working environments.
- Career and academic counseling continuing to under-promote entrepreneurship and non-academic pathways.
- They have expectations of workplace discrimination and harassment.
- The absence of female role models in STEM, trades, and other industrial marine careers.[6]

The women I interviewed discussed some, if not all, of these points as factors that initially kept them away from or concerned them about the maritime sector. Despite the variety of these women's career paths, they all identified similar concerns around their chosen professional field, indicating a larger systemic problem within the sector.

In Canada, women are more likely to occupy economically subordinate positions, lacking seniority relative to their male peers and facing challenges when attempting to enter certain spaces, especially those which were, historically, male-dominated (Acker 1990; Beagan 2001; Nelson 2006; Ortner 1974; Reskin 1988). Due to their historically gendered domestic and caregiving roles, women's labour frequently appears more elastic than that of their male counterparts; women's perceived tendency to move between their professional and domestic lives creates the illusion that they are dispensable or less committed to paid work (Acker 1990; Power 2005b; Preston et al. 2000, Williams 1996). This often places women in positions where they must negotiate the boundaries within their workplace in order to receive similar treatment to their male counterparts (Gerson &

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[6] Institute for Ocean Research Enterprise. 2015. *Marine People Partnership: The Challenges, Needs and Opportunities for Strategic Workforce Development in the Greater Marine Industry*, 58; as cited in Ocean Allies Project 2022, 7.

Peiss 1985). This can include anything from putting off having children to, in the case of one participant, returning to work two days after giving birth (Linda, Interview 2019). These unnecessary pressures and reproduced stereotypes have resulted in a push by women's activists across all sectors to call out systemic misogyny, sexism, gender bias, and to demand change (Blades 2018; Cave 2016; Merlan 2018; Paquette 2018; Roberts 2017). Although major changes continue to move at a glacial pace, there have been efforts by marketing and communication professionals in these industries to rehabilitate the image of the male-dominant maritime sector. These approaches are an attempt from within the field to demonstrate that the environment is changing.

Methodology

For me, the fun part of anthropological research is the opportunity to talk to people about their lives. As I shaped my research plan, I knew from the beginning that interviews would play a large part in my data collection. I hoped to inform these interviews with participant observation through attending programs that specifically targeted women interested in the maritime sector. I did not explore fieldwork opportunities on vessels (fishing boats, Coast Guard ships, etc.) as I wanted to speak with individuals from a variety of professions, and with the fishing season in full swing and many other industries in peak operation time, access to vessels (especially those with mixed-gender crews) would have pushed me outside of my four-month fieldwork window. Therefore, initially, my plan was to examine how individuals interacted in particular spaces through a combination of interviews, participant observation, and media analysis using the lens of gender consciousness to analyse the data collected. *Gender consciousness* takes an individual's everyday awareness of gender one step further, reflecting the processes of their gendered social negotiation and domination, as well as an individual's location within a social structure and how these concepts shape relations between men and women (Luttrell 1988, 88-89). I developed a plan that would combine participation in marine-themed community programming specifically targeted at women with interviews from professionals in the maritime field, with a particular focus on fishing and fish processing. First, I wanted to understand how my participants perceived their

own gender within their work environment. Second, I wanted to see what programming was available to women in male-dominated spaces; what were the intended outcomes, what themes did they focus on, and how did they stand apart from similar programming (if it existed) for men? I submitted my proposal, including my interview guide (Appendix A) to the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research (ICEHR) at Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador and after receiving approval in June 2019, I began my fieldwork.

As tends to happen, the focus of my project shifted once I started my fieldwork. I began with community outreach, setting up participant observation sites for the summer and connecting with professionals for interviews. For my participant observation, I contacted a local group specifically aimed at training women in small-boat fishing. Summaries posted online advertised the program as a safe space for women to experience the outdoors while developing skills such as boating and handlining.[7] Participants learned water safety, how to fish, how to prep the catch once ashore, net-mending, and a variety of other skills that they may not otherwise have exposure to. The intention of the program was to empower women and build confidence, allowing participants to channel that newly discovered strength into other areas of their lives. It seemed like a great place to kick off my research; I would start out as a participant observer and build relationships that could develop into possible interviews. I contacted the coordinator, who was thrilled to have me attend, and the first couple of sessions went well. However, as time passed, it became clear that my research agenda and that of the coordinator were quite different. After a month of trying to negotiate a one-on-one interview about the program and establish the parameters of my participation, I decided it would be better to move my research in a different direction. There were no other summertime marine programs for women in the area, which limited my site options. Fortunately, I had started scheduling interviews with professionals in other maritime fields, so I pivoted to focus primarily on individual narratives. Later in the summer, a union-affiliated participant invited me to two

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[7] Handline fishing, handlining, or locally "jigging", is a form of fishing where the fisher drops a single line with a weighted lure over the side of a boat and uses their hand to move the line up and down to attract fish (Story 2013, 277).

women's regional meetings (discussed below); this provided me with the opportunity for both interview recruiting and participant observation. After my fieldwork concluded, I realized that by relying primarily on interviews and supplementing them with field visits, I was able to develop a rich understanding of how individuals see themselves (or don't see themselves) within their profession.

These interview sessions provided participants with the opportunity to articulate their experiences in their own terms. However, relying exclusively on interviews has its drawbacks. As Pam Aldred and Val Gillies discuss in their article *Eliciting Research Accounts: Re/Producing Modern Subjects?* (2012), "the interaction in the research interview tends to elicit presentations of self that largely conform to dominant cultural forms because of the implicit expectations that shape the interview process" (2012, 2). Throughout this process, Aldred and Gillies argue, the researcher is expecting a particular type of rapport between themselves and the participant; primarily, that the informant is reflexive and self-conscious when answering the questions posed, providing a complete and honest retelling of their views and experiences (2012, 9). The interview, therefore, shapes what the authors call a "modernist subject", making particular assumptions of the informant and potentially narrowing the experiences articulated in the final text (2012, 9-10). Further, "the telling of a narrative also requires a belief that this account is worthy of a researcher's interest", which may limit what an informant shares with the researcher (2012, 10).

These were important considerations that shaped my interview process. I acknowledged that the information a participant shared with me was not going to be the full story and may omit some information that they felt was unnecessary, unimportant, or that they preferred not to share in the larger context of my questions. With this in mind, I focused my attention on what my participants felt *was* important enough to share and what else came up over the course of the conversation; in many instances, the subtext of the conversation was as important as the conversation itself.

These interviews served as a chance for each individual to share their unique interpretations and understandings of the behaviours and environments they worked in. Throughout the transcription process, I was able to track emerging themes and similar

narratives across a variety of workspaces, identifying patterns that may not have appeared using other field methods such as participant observation. While I was unable to compare what someone said to what they did in a professional setting, I was able to hear directly from both men and women how they understood and described gender and its impacts on their professional lives, in their own terms. Using these individual's standpoints as research locations meant I was able to draw similarities across genders and professions, especially when women and men repeated similar encounters or views despite working in different fields.

Interview recruitment involved online posts (Facebook, Twitter, and my website), cold contacts (by e-mail and by phone), and network recommendations (following up on leads provided by professional connections and interview participants). The online posts involved a short summary of my research and encouraged anyone interested to contact me directly (Appendix B). Then, I began assembling my list of cold contact targets. I researched maritime businesses and organizations in the province, visiting their websites and reviewing any published listings of staff and personnel. I excluded individuals who did not work in industry-facing positions or who were less likely to have spent time at sea (marketing, communications, administration, etc.). Of those remaining, I selected men and women from a range of positions and experiences. Contacts included professionals working in the Fish, Food, and Allied Workers Union (FFAW-Unifor), the Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB), the Marine Institute in St. John's (MI), the Canadian Sealers Association, the Federation of Independent Sea Harvesters Newfoundland and Labrador (FISH-NL, now dissolved), the Canadian Coast Guard, local naval architecture and design firms, and others. I collected and stored the contact information for all prospective participants in a spreadsheet, and tracked all emails, phone calls, and other correspondence in the same. Initial emails (Appendix C) provided a brief introduction of myself and my research, with a one-page summary attached for my contacts to review. Of the 30 e-mails sent, I received 25 responses, and of those responses, I was able to successfully schedule and complete interviews with 19 participants. 13 of those individuals identified as women and six identified as men. There were no questions included in the interview around sexual orientation, but using context

clues I determined 18 were in heterosexual relationships, while one suggested they were homosexual. I completed 15 interviews in person, either at the participant's place of work (at their request) or in one of several coffee shops in the St. John's area. I completed two interviews over virtual videoconference (Skype) due to geographic constraints and travelled to Central Newfoundland for an interview with two participants who were friends and asked to do their interviews together. My participants included maritime engineers, ship's captains and officers, naval architects, oil and gas workers, union representatives and employees, fishers and fish plant workers, and former industry professionals who had moved into teaching later in their career.

Initial contact with FFAW-Unifor secured me three interviews and an invitation to attend their women's regional meetings that autumn in Clarenville and Deer Lake, NL. These meetings brought together female FFAW-Unifor members from across the island of Newfoundland, providing them with an environment designed to encourage them to speak and share their thoughts.[8] According to the coordinators, they had surveyed mixed-gender meetings and found that women were less likely to speak up in a room where men were present. At their annual meeting in 2018, FFAW-Unifor passed a motion to create these women's regional meetings to empower the women both within the union and in their workplaces.

The session in Clarenville had 44 attendees, while Deer Lake had 23. These sessions provided me with an opportunity to hear what issues were most important to the women who attended. Participants were primarily fish harvesters and processors, with a handful of individuals attending from associated workplaces, including fishery technology firms and the union's head office. Topics ranged from how to be involved in local politics and getting involved with the union to addressing domestic violence in the workplace and boosting confidence at work. Each workshop was a full day, broken into morning and afternoon sessions with a networking lunch in between. I introduced myself at the beginning of each morning session and sat apart from the group so I could make

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[8] At the time of my research, the women's regional meetings were a brand-new program. These first sessions did not include participants from Labrador, though the organizers indicated this was something they would consider in the future with an expression of interest.

notes and survey the entire room as the programming unfolded. I drew seating charts of the meeting room and assigned each participant a number according to their position. This allowed me to keep track of who said what during each session while ensuring anonymity of the participants. During lunch, I was able to sit and speak with the participants in smaller groups, discussing their experiences in a more informal setting. From these two sessions I received five expressions of interest for interviews. Of those initial five, I was able to secure two – a harvester and a processor – which I conducted a couple of weeks after the final regional session.

In addition to interviews and participant observation, I conducted a document review of media coverage and journal articles related to women in male-dominated sectors, women in maritime professions, sexism and maritime work, and general literature around gender and male-dominated workplaces. These provided insight into the environments I was studying, revealing both areas of progress and issues which continue to persist. These sources further expanded upon observations from my participants and brought new concepts to my attention which I had not considered.

My fieldwork concluded in November 2019, at which point I started reviewing my stacks of fieldnotes and transcribing my interviews. I used ExpressScribe to record my transcriptions and transferred the completed documents into a Microsoft OneNote notebook. This meant when I began writing, I was able to easily search all my transcripts for keywords and phrases simultaneously, rather than switching between individual interview documents. As I reviewed my transcripts, I coded major themes within the text, pulling out several strings that connected these narratives together. Weaving those strings across a theoretical framework created the chapters of this thesis. This next section reviews the construction of that framework.

Theory

As I reviewed my fieldnotes and began analysing my data, I noted how gender shaped not only physical space, but sonic space as well. Participants described the accommodations (or lack of accommodations) made for their physical bodies in their workplace, which I had anticipated, but they also discussed their observations around

vocal volume and tone, uses of silence over speech, and language and communication. These insights began to broaden my analysis to consider not only how these individuals interpreted their gender, but how gender shaped the spaces surrounding an individual and/or a group.

In order to analyse the narratives of those on the periphery, I used feminist standpoint theory as my core approach throughout my work. This theory applies a feminist lens to understanding the differences in the experiences and perspectives of multiple parties within a particular space.[9] By using the 'standpoints' of a specific group at a particular social location, it is possible to investigate how certain arrangements and assumptions are reproduced and how they contribute to the oppression or marginalization of the group. Focusing my analysis on the individual narratives of my participants and identifying shared themes or concepts from across their diverse workplaces meant I could discuss gender and its impact on professional lives in the maritime sector.

My initial proposal sought to understand how people viewed their gendered selves in the context of their professional surroundings, particularly in workplaces regarded as traditionally masculine. As women enter these male-dominated and non-traditional spheres, it can call into question what it means to be a woman, to be a professional, and how to combine the two (Luttrell 1988, 147). Moving out of one sphere and into a space where they do not 'belong' means these women appear as not only out of place but as disrupting the hegemonic order (Acker 1990; Douglas 1966; Sanday 1990; Yanagisako & Delaney 1995). As Mary Douglas (1966) discussed in her work *Purity and Danger*, 'matter out of place' – or in the case of this research, women seen as out of place in male-dominated professions – results in a feeling of unease, driving society to restore order and appropriately categorize this 'matter'. As Robbie Duschinsky explains, Douglas' main assertion was:

> *"Dirt is essentially disorder. There is no such thing as absolute dirt… eliminating it is not a negative movement, but a positive effort to organize the environment"* through the 'mutual exhortation' by the community and its members" ([1966]2002: 2-3). This exhortation operates on the cognitive

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[9] In this context, I define a feminist lens as one that views social phenomenon through the experiences of those not represented in dominant discourse (women, marginalized populations, oppressed groups, etc.).

perceptions of the individuals, making these mental categories conform to the social consensus on how to understand social, physical and moral reality: "Their main function is to impose system on an inherently untidy experience" ([1966]2002: 5) (Duschinsky 2016, 3, quoting Douglas).

Douglas' work was ground-breaking in 1966, pushing back against many conventions that existed within the social sciences at the time. Fifty years later, a new collection titled *Purity and Danger Now: New Perspectives* (2016) provides contemporary insights into Douglas' theory and demonstrates that as society changes and shifts, so does the understanding of what, exactly, makes "matter out of place". Dirt refers not only to physical pollution, but to people or groups that cause disruption in a particular social context. Eveline Dürr and Gordon M. Winder (2016) suggest that "pollution serve[s] as a lens through which to examine the politics and social construction of difference, helping us understand the complex web of social relations through which individuals constitute their daily lives" (52). Pollution, the social, and the symbolic are inseparable, with pollution possessing a "materiality that *engages with and impacts in wider context*. Dirt is not just a passive material out of place, but actually does something with the place that it is in" (2016, 55, emphasis added). While their field study was on litter in a *barrio* of Mexico City, this concept is applicable to my work. Some men interviewed discussed how women "didn't belong" in certain spaces, like the engine room of a vessel (Charlie, Interview 2019), while women spoke about modifying their bodies – through menstruation management, clothing, or physical gait – in order to minimize friction between themselves and their coworkers. To some, these women were out of place in their professions, but to these women they were making a career for themselves (Geri, Interview 2019), pushing boundaries set on them by their families (Melanie, Interview 2019), or simply following a lifelong dream (Kate, Interview 2019). In these circumstances, the object or person is disrupting a previously settled order (Dürr and Winder 2016; Duschinsky 2016; Fardon 2016). It is at these intersecting points of friction that we can untangle how 'dirt' shapes a space, often provoking change purely through its presence.

Gender relations at these intersections can reflect social change or provide a window into where a system falls short in accommodating some as others move between areas designated for the 'other side' (Gerson & Peiss 1985, 85). When/if historic conceptualizations of male and female roles exist in a workplace, and how the boundaries between 'feminine' and 'masculine' spaces are challenged (if at all) are crucial perspectives to consider when examining these relations. Historically, women attempting to move into areas of marine work that are male-dominated (shipping, fishing, enterprise management, or other oceangoing work) faced various types of resistance ranging from subtle push-back to outright ridicule from their own families, friends, community members, and other fishers and skippers (Davis 1988; Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019; Glavine 2001; Williams 1996).[10] This resistance continues to exist in several forms today. Certain labour forces appear to have unspoken expectations that both the men and women within a space will participate in the dominant, masculine culture (Beagan 2001; Benokraitis 1997; Glavine 2001; Hancock 2012; Power 2005a; Preston et al. 2000; Wheaton 2008). This is largely because to those male-presenting individuals in the field, the lack of changes required to accommodate their presence means the space is already gender neutral (Acker 1990, 262; Luttrell, 1988). Historically, considering a space "gender neutral" has meant "male", and a very specific understanding of what that means; anything that falls outside of that expectation serves as a reminder of the unequal structure of the environment and is considered a disruption by those who already exist within the space. Managers and coworkers will often label individuals as "making gender a problem" when requesting (or demanding) change (Benokraitis 1997, 36-38; Oliver, Interview 2019), further ostracizing those pushing for more accommodations and reinforcing the idea that those outside of the gender neutral/masculine norm should either conform or move along. Therefore, those who find themselves "out of place" and outside the norm are often most aware and thus best positioned to observe, analyse, and articulate their understanding of the environment that placed them there.

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[10] A skipper is "the master of a small… vessel; head man on board a fishing boat" (Story 2013, 487). I use the term here instead of "captain" because it was the one most frequently used by my participants.

Two key themes – gender and physical space, and gender and sonic space – emerged as primary areas of interest for me to stage my analysis. This allowed me to expand my scope beyond the physical, considering other intersecting ways that an individual's professional life may be impacted by their gender. In order to do this effectively, I introduce other theoretical frameworks alongside feminist standpoint theory within each chapter to better support the content of each section.

In my second chapter, I use Ruth Frankenburg's (1993) work on whiteness and unmarked spaces and Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss' (1985) concept of gender awareness to explore gender's impact on physical spaces. Frankenburg's discussion of the social construction of whiteness and of a dominant group's blindness to the oppression of others closely mirrored the narratives I collected around gender and social dynamics at work. Gerson & Peiss' discussions of an individual's experience of gender awareness and gender consciousness highlighted how participants discussed whether or not they felt gender was an issue within their work. Both of these theories, anchored in the narratives of my participants, created the framework on which to explore gender and physical space.

Throughout my third chapter, I seek to dissect gender in sonic spaces using Rebecca Lentjes' theory of sonic patriarchy (2019; 2021) and Robin E. Sherrif's concept of cultural censorship (2000; 2006). Many of my participants discussed voice, silence, volume, and vocal modulation; some even changed their tone or style of speech when sharing personal stories or describing situations to me during our interviews. Rebecca Lentjes' sonic patriarchy – the audio companion of the male gaze – provided a launchpad from which to begin exploring how the male voice is often heard as the default soundtrack of certain professional spaces. Sherrif's exploration of cultural censorship – defined as the communal use of silence to protect the collective emotional well-being of its members (2006, 121) where certain experiences and observations are left unspoken as "a form of forgetting" (2006, 118) – came up over and over again as participants discussed things they did not report, did not discuss, or did not think were "a big deal" (Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019). Altogether, these four pillars, under the roof of feminist standpoint theory, provide the theoretical framework for this thesis. I explore these in more detail throughout the rest of this section.

Feminist Standpoint Theory

Standpoint theories – the positioning of research from a specific experience or space of knowledge – exist throughout the social sciences as "[an] interpretive framework dedicated to how knowledge remains central to maintaining and changing unjust systems of power" (Harding 2004a, 3; Collins in Harding 2004d, 247). Standpoints refer to historically shared, group-based experiences that centre those within the collective as sites of knowledge (Collins in Harding 2004d). Feminist standpoint theory, also known as standpoint feminism or simply standpoint theory, was a response to women seeking knowledge that was *for* them by applying a feminist lens to projects that already used standpoint theory to reflect specific knowledge systems (Harding 2004c, 29).[11] With its roots in the works of Hegel, Marx, and the second-wave feminist movement, feminist standpoint theory entered academic discussion during the 1970s and 1980s, (Collins 1997 4; Hekman, 1997; Rouse 2009, 200-201). It was Sandra Harding, however, who coined the term "standpoint theory", with feminist scholars such as Dorothy Smith (1974), Patricia Hill Collins (1986), Donna Haraway (1988), Nancy Hartsock (1983), and others contributing to the importance of standpoints as a site of knowledge (Bowell 2020; Collins 1997). The approaches formulated by these scholars provided women, who had long been the object of study, with the ability to ask whether they "as culturally diverse collectivities could produce knowledge that answered their specific questions about nature and social relations" (Harding 2004a, 1-4). As Sandra Harding explains, "the implied 'speaker' of scientific (sociological, economic, philosophic, etc.) sentences was never women. It was supposed to be humanity in general… [but] was an idealized agent who performed the 'God trick' of speaking authoritatively about everything in the world from no particular location or human perspective at all" (Harding 2004a, 4). The space created by feminist standpoint theory was one that allowed women to find the knowledge

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[11] Some authors write "standpoint theory", with the "feminist" assumed and unspoken. Throughout this section, I use both standpoint theory and feminist standpoint theory in reference to this concept, unless otherwise indicated by quotation or note.

they needed when they could not see themselves in the world described by existing works.

Originally designed to explain how to effectively organize feminist research, standpoint theory has spread across disciplines as a way for scholars to investigate how gender, race, and sexuality matter in a variety of contexts (Harding 2009, 193). Donna Haraway used standpoint theory to successfully demonstrate how particular disciplines reproduce biases and uphold existing power structures within their work. She revealed that certain natural sciences, "such as primatology, constituted their hypotheses and methods to meet the sexist and androcentric (and often racist and Eurocentric) needs of dominant social groups, thereby providing distorted and partial accounts of nature's regularities and underlying causal tendencies and revealing otherwise hidden features of dominant ways of thinking" (Harding 2004d, 26). These partial accounts involved producing knowledge using the 'God trick' to describe a supposedly neutral representation of the world, removing the speaker and external influences and appearing to describe phenomenon in its 'natural' state. This resulted in the continued reproduction of the researcher's biases and assumptions, since there was no accounting for the social environment where knowledge was situated. By challenging this perceived neutrality, feminist standpoint theorists position women as not just viable, but *vital* sites of knowledge and of radical and political power. They also challenge the idea that any knowledge is truly neutral, drawing attention to the positionality and particularity of previously produced knowledge.

Feminist standpoint theory makes three claims: (1) knowledge is socially situated; (2) marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of phenomena and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized; and (3) research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized (Bowell 2020). This theory provides a way for researchers to empower oppressed groups, valuing their experiences and developing a type of "oppositional consciousness" while asking researchers to consider that every attempt at knowing is socially situated (Harding 2004). Tracy Bowell explains:

The social situation of an epistemic agent—her gender, class, race, ethnicity, sexuality and physical capacities—plays a role in forming what we know and limiting what we are able to know. They can affect what we are capable of knowing and what we are permitted to know. The influence of social location on epistemic content and capacity can be felt throughout our epistemic practices, shaping not only the way in which we understand the world, but also the way in which it is presented to us via experience (2020, Sec. 3).

Understanding the ways that the experiences of an oppressed group differ from the dominant culture enables the production of unique types of knowledge (Harding 2004a, 7); a "distinctive kind of collective consciousness, which can be achieved through the group's struggles to gain the kind of knowledge that they need for their projects." (Harding 2004c, 36). Both the dominant and peripheral groups of a particular society or culture develop these distinctive consciousnesses, influenced by histories and activities which both enable and restrict what they can know. When women do not see themselves reflected in the history or present-day environment of their workplace, they can use this consciousness to not only understand how they fit into this space, but in some circumstances what changes need to occur in order for other women to follow behind them. When women enter male-dominated workplaces, they inhabit a unique position that places them both and inside and outside their environment. This means that they are able to produce knowledge that the men within their workplaces cannot; they see flaws and encounter barriers and hurdles that are invisible to their peers. When that knowledge appears in different environments, it binds these women to a social location – occupying space not designed for them. This allows for an examination of how their gender impacts their day-to-day lives, especially when contrasted with their male peers' narratives from the same space. In these circumstances, feminist standpoint theory is a tool to understand and change the status quo by pushing the boundaries of academia into the political. It not only highlights narratives of particular groups, but points to specific social locations and power intersections where these inequalities exist, mapping "how a social and political disadvantage can be turned into an epistemic, scientific and political advantage" (Harding 2004a, 7-8). These advantages equip researchers and community members alike with the knowledge necessary to put thought into concrete and meaningful action when addressing inequalities within our society, demonstrating clearly and directly how a group

experiences the world because of their position within that social location. However, the politics that shape these experiences often impact a project's development and reception; standpoint theory's political engagement does not stop at the idea that "knowledge is power", but also pushes to understand the ways that knowledge and power relations unfold in other social locations (workplaces, households, communities, etc.) and public agendas. It is also, as Harding (2009) claims, "anti-disciplinary", in that it challenges directly how research activities are complicit in social power, often boiling situations down to the most specific answers rather than considering the larger networks they are a part of. Standpoint theory rejects this approach by positioning the experiences of those it studies front and centre within a project, revealing ways of knowing as articulated by those groups and then contextualizing them within the larger social context.

Feminist standpoint theory does not consider individual narrative experiences, on their own, as representative of a group; instead, it stitches together multiple voices into one structural position. It identifies the processes that form locations of shared history among women with scholars, such as Patricia Hill Collins, asserting that spaces occupied by marginalized individuals are epistemically rich and provide insight and revelation on subjects that researchers have previously ignored or not investigated (1997, 248). Key to this approach is active engagement with what is learned from these collective experiences, as "it is one thing to gesture toward including the excluded in our thinking and social projects. It is quite another to engage seriously not only with their ways of understanding themselves and their social relations, but also with their ways of understanding us and our social relations" (Harding 2009b, 193). By rooting analysis of gender in traditionally male-dominated spaces in feminist standpoint theory, it becomes possible to understand how marginalized individuals navigate this environment differently than those for whom it was designed. As a result of their gender, women in these spaces are positioned to observe where the existing systems fall short in accounting for or accommodating their presence. Though their individual accounts may differ as a result of numerous intersecting factors (ex: age, physical appearance as being more feminine or masculine, etc.), common narratives still emerge, constructing a shared social history for women within this specific social location. Using this disruption to the

dominant discourse, it becomes possible to tackle specific cultural issues and, if not correct them, highlight that they exist for the larger population.

Within their interviews, Charlie and Martin both said they did not believe gender was an issue in their fields because there were no explicit barriers to women entering the workplace and technological innovations had made the need for brute strength obsolete (Interviews 2019). However, when speaking with Linda, who works in the same field, she highlighted procedures that had limited not only her professional development, but that of the other women in her department (Interview 2019). During a review of staff compensation levels, Linda realized that all of the women in her department, including herself, were missing a pay classification that their male peers with identical experience and education had received. When she brought it to the attention of human resources, they insisted it did not have to do with gender; an argument that faltered, she said, when she presented them with the itemized list of everyone's classifications. By challenging the pay structure, Linda ensured that everyone within her department received the same amount of compensation for their experience, regardless of their gender. Her unique position as a woman within her department and knowing what to look for, better positioned for her to fight for change. Male coworkers, on the other hand, may not have noticed or thought anything of the discrepancy in classifications, or viewed it as a reflection of credentials and skill rather than discriminatory.

Some scholars have suggested that feminist standpoint theory does not have sufficient scope to engage in lasting, long-term academic critique, or that the claims it presents are false or absurd (Hekman 1997a; Hekman 1997b; Rouse 2009). Sandra Harding argues that rather than damaging its credibility or discouraging its use, the decades of debate indicate "strengths and powers of the theory that [critical interpretations] fail to identify or confront" (Harding 2004c, 28). She asserts that the continuing debate around feminist standpoint theory suggests a discomfort with the manner in which it challenges deeply held beliefs and assumptions of the dominant culture, as well as the way it articulates the most significant ethical, epistemological, and political challenges of the present (Harding 2004c, 28). This ongoing discussion pushes scholars and readers alike to reformulate their understandings, often shifting their inner narratives to account for this new information.

No workplace, classroom, or social location is static, and an approach that results in such vibrant analysis is one that can remain relevant through moments of change.

Within my own work, this sort of shifting landscape of understanding was crucial, with some of my participants challenging their assumptions and beliefs in real time, making these interviews not only information gathering opportunities, but generative interactions. This was especially evident with male participants, who would assert something about women (in general) in their professions and follow it up with examples of women who did not fit that mold. This sometimes resulted in a pause, or even a verbal reflection of "maybe I'm being biased and sexist and old school in saying that that's an issue. I don't know. Maybe it's not an issue" (Kyle, Interview 2019). Positioning these interviews within a standpoint theory framework meant these contrasts came to the forefront during my analysis, providing me with a new way of piecing them together.

In her article "Truth and Method: Feminist Standpoint Theory Revisited", Susan Hekman (1997) offers several critiques of feminist standpoint theory, suggesting that many scholars do not go far enough in justifying that the standpoint occupied by women offers a privileged vantage point for knowledge, revealing the truth of the social reality (Hekman 1997a, 227). Hekman argues that this claim neglects to account for the differences of women's experiences, and therefore "if the differences among women are taken seriously and we accept the conclusion that women occupy many standpoints and thus inhabit many realities" it becomes impossible to complete meaningful feminist work (1997a, 227). She critiques the work of American feminist Nancy Hartsock and Canadian sociologist Dorothy E. Smith, both of whom wrote papers supporting the use of feminist standpoint theory. In Harstock's work "Rethinking Modernism" (1987), she argues that "white ruling class, Eurocentric men" occupy the centre of society, with all those who exist elsewhere occupying the periphery. These experiences, Hartsock claims, are heterogeneous, marked with a diversity of experience and knowledge (228). Through shifting the perspective and amplifying other voices, feminist standpoint theory can move others towards the centre, changing its makeup and creating a more representative space that also includes men and women of colour (Hartsock 1987, 192; 201 as cited by Hekman 1997a, 228). Hekman argues that this approach creates a system of inquiry

where no matter how large the centre grows and no matter who occupies it, there will always be individuals who exist on the periphery – a societal "other" that lacks representation (228). She continues, "if there are multiple feminist standpoints, then there must be multiple truths and multiple realities. This is a difficult position for those who want to change the world according to a new image" (229). Overall, Hekman rejects the idea that any perspective should be privileged, given the need for systemic understanding in order to enact change.

As previously mentioned, feminist standpoint theory does not perceive individual narratives on their own as representative of a standpoint. Instead, this theoretical lens considers the shared histories of a group occupying a similar social location (Hartsock 1997). While many women will have individual standpoints, identifying the similarities between their experiences in particular contexts is what standpoint theory rests on; the shared narratives of a defined group which point to systemic issues within a specific space or place. Using women's experiences as research sites creates knowledge that reflects "the actualities of our lives as we live them in the local particularities of the everyday/everynight worlds in which our bodily being anchors us" (Smith 1997, 264). Rather than using the abstract, arms-length approach of sociology, feminist standpoint theory works actively with other women to undermine "the standpoint of white men as hidden agent and subject"; the disembodied voice that determines what knowledge is valid and what is not (265). Spaces with white, male standpoints as the default prioritize those voices, from policy and procedure to the availability of safety equipment and what body types can fit into it. Immersion suits are an apt example. This vital piece of equipment, necessary for workers at sea, is often the only thing standing between a person and certain death should an accident find them thrown into the ocean. However, a study done by the website *Practical Sailor* found that even the smallest size of most suits available were ill-fitted to the average female body type (Nicholson 2007). In my own research, some women commented on the difficulty of finding suits that fit them properly (Margot, Interview 2019; Sarah, Interview 2019). In this case, acknowledging the difference between women's experiential knowledge and the systemic treatment of male bodies as "standard" could mean the difference between life and death.

Overall, these criticisms are an effort to minimize standpoint theory, something not easily done due to the very nature of the approach (Harding, 2009). Hekman and others take issue with feminist standpoint theorists seeking to use lived experience as sites of research, but the fluidity and limitations of knowledge from these positions creates a more complex understanding of a social order. This leads us to the development of a convincing, objective knowledge, since "the ideas that are validated by different standpoints… produce the most objective truths" (Collins cited by Hekman 1997a, 230).

I agree that the mosaic of knowledge that feminist standpoint theory produces, rooted in the narratives of historically marginalized groups, creates a fractured, varied, and incomplete understanding of the world as a whole and denies a researcher an in-depth explanation of why things are the way they are. However, what it does offer are different perspectives; perspectives that were historically unheard or not considered important enough for further inquiry. Further, it explores those perspectives from the site of their occurrence rather than arms-length, accounting for the social and political influences that shape the knowledge it uncovers. It is particularly useful for research that intends not just to describe, but to challenge the status quo of a particular social location and accommodate or acknowledge those around its periphery. When paired with other theoretical approaches, such as how marginalized individuals navigate a world not built for them (unmarked spaces) or the social mechanisms used by specific groups (sonic patriarchy, cultural censorship), we produce knowledge that better reflects the day-to-day realities of a society as a whole.

In spaces designed by other men, the accounts of my male participants often did not include how their gender impacted their work. Since women were not part of the original construction of these professional spaces, they were more aware of how their gender did and/or did not impact their work, their relationships, and their way of life. While men did not discuss gendered impacts directly, there were moments that made it clear that this was something at play for them as well, whether they were aware of it or not. For instance, when one participant insisted that the pink

highlighter he was using wasn't because he liked the colour,[12] or another described the end of an altercation as "a pissing contest and he realized I could piss further than him"[13], they made it clear that gendered expectations impacted them as well. Through my conversations with men, I came to understand that gendered practices or expectations affect both groups, but they do not always have the vocabulary available or gender awareness required to articulate these concepts. It was participants who had experienced barriers or negative behaviour as result of their gender who were forced to be aware of how gender impacted their work.

Positioning these narratives side-by-side created larger understandings of how each group operated within their chosen field and within the sector as a whole. Some female participants felt their gender mattered at work, others did not. Some men understood the barriers their female counterparts faced, others insisted that because women could enter the field, these issues no longer existed. Using feminist standpoint theory, I was able to use my participants' narratives as the site of my research, exploring the sonic and physical structures of these workplaces through their narratives. Each individual had unique experiences and made their own personal decisions, but the knowledge gained outlined a broader understanding of what life was like in these spaces.

As discussed, feminist standpoint theory considers a group's position, history, and experience as their particular "standpoint" and marks this as a rich and unique site for epistemological exploration. While this research reveals a variety of perspectives, these perspectives are, in turn, woven together to create a broader, more robust understanding of how power dynamics and social relations interact. I incorporate Ruth Frankenburg's work on whiteness and unmarked spaces and Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss' concept of gender awareness to tackle the

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[12] Charlie, Interview 2019. This was in response to the question "Can you describe a typical day at work?". He pointed to his calendar and talked about how he x's off each day, a practice he started to keep track of time when he was at sea. He mentioned that the highlighter he used that day was pink, "not that I've got something for pink or nothing like that. Coulda been blue or purple" and changed his tone while doing so.
[13] Chad, Interview 2019.

question of how gender shapes, marks, and impacts the experiences of those in these workplaces.

Positionality and Perspective

As I listened to my participants describe their physical workplace and how they move within it, I picked up on themes that closely mirrored Ruth Frankenburg's work on whiteness and unmarked spaces. Although her work focused on how race shapes white women's lives and my work focuses on gender, I found that her insights into concepts around unmarked spaces and unspoken rules particularly relevant. Similar to feminist standpoint theory, Frankenburg's work examines how the positionality of white, feminist women results in a form of cultural blindness to the issues experienced by women of colour.

Frankenburg began her work in the 1980s, during a time when she and her white, feminist colleagues could no longer ignore the criticisms leveled at white feminism by women of colour (1993, 2). Her book *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (1993) examines the social construction of whiteness through the collection and analysis of white, feminist women's life histories, specifically examining their experiences with race and racism and rooting her analysis in a form of standpoint theory (1993, 3-4;8-9). As she explains, "whiteness is a location of structural advantage… it is a 'standpoint,' a place from which white people look at ourselves, at others, and at society… [and] it refers to a set of cultural practices that are usually unmarked and unnamed (1993, 1)". Frankenburg suggests that marginalized individuals "can see with the greatest clarity not only their own position but also that of the oppressor/privileged, and indeed the shape of social systems as a whole" (1993, 8). While her work centred the experiences of white feminists, Frankenburg looked beyond the everyday narratives of her informants. Instead, she decided to tackle how white women missed the "racialness" of their experiences, "lack[ing] an awareness of how our positions in society were constructed in relation to those of women – and men – of colour" (1993, 9). She wanted to see how race was lived, seen, and in many cases,

not seen within her networks, arguing that "the extent to which white women were "missing" … the significance of race in either our or anyone else's experience had everything to do with standpoint: because we were race privileged… we were not in a structural position to see the effects of racism on our lives…" (1993, 9, emphasis in original).

This lack of awareness was similarly present in my participants' discussions around gender and its impact on their professional lives. Many male participants acknowledged that their fields were traditionally difficult for women to enter and occupy, and some understood that challenges still existed for their colleagues. Most of them felt gender was an issue of the past because women were now able to enter these spaces and they, personally, did not have a problem with them being there. However, there was still evidence that because individuals who had looked like them (male, white) were responsible for shaping the professional spaces, the nuances and present challenges were often not of note to them. Women, on the other hand, often expressed varying interpretations of gender and its impact on their own experiences and the frameworks available to them when describing their views. Some participants who had experienced sexist or "othering" behaviour were quick to point out why it was problematic and how they tried to address (or ignore) it, while others shrugged off their own experiences as just part of the job. Those who occupied positions of social power (often male) or institutional power (managers or commanding officers) were not as aware of how gender was at play, whereas those who were newer employees or experienced it towards the beginning of their career could paint a more detailed picture of the cracks in the structure. It was through this lens that I was able to better understand how gender shapes physical space, especially as it pertains to learning the rules of an environment you are not initially a part of.

Frankenburg found that the women she interviewed felt cultures were discrete and bounded spaces, separate from their material day-to-day lives (1993, 192). While many of her white informants said that they felt they had "no culture" because of their whiteness, or viewed other groups as "more cultural", Frankenburg argued that "we need to analyse the social and political contexts in which, like race privilege, white cultural

practices mark out a normative space and set of identities, which those who inhabit them, however, frequently cannot see or name" (1993, 192). Through this lens, white individuals are the "nondefined definers of other people" (1993, 197), seeing themselves as lacking culture when compared to those who, they feel, have cultural background; "for a seemingly formless entity... white culture had a great deal of power, difficult to dislodge from its place in white consciousness *as a point of reference for measuring others*" (1993, 197, emphasis added). Furthermore, Frankenburg found that when her white informants claimed colour blindness, or that they "don't see colour", they were engaging in colour evasiveness, which is "deployed against essentialist racism and… leads white women back into complicity with structural and institutional dimensions of inequality" (1993, 143).

Throughout her book, Frankenburg discusses how white women are able to exist in spaces where people of colour may encounter resistance or outright hostility, often without realizing that privilege. Discussion around the narratives of people of colour in these spaces often neglects the additional emotional labour required to learn the rules. Specifically, Frankenburg states, "whiteness refers to a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination" (1993, 6). Whiteness connects these locations, and those who can move through them because they are white have an advantage in knowing the social expectations of others. With no rules posted on the wall on acceptable behaviour or expectations, it is often a task of trial and error for those who are different to understand how these spaces function. When drawing attention to these gaps of access it often falls to the individual, rather than a group or organization, to resolve the issue; failure to fit into the existing structure is a personal problem (or personal failing). There is very little conversation around the structures' failure to accommodate the individual.

During the transcription and analysis process, I noted that male participants frequently based their assessment of whether or not gender was an issue in terms of the impact it had on others. From discussions around changes to vessels (adding washrooms, additional sleeping quarters, etc.) to sharing perceptions of women making gender "an

issue", the litmus test for how gender impacted their profession was often how much a workspace was modified to accommodate other bodies. For Frankenburg, "as much as white women are located in – and speak from – physical environments shaped by race, we are also located in, and perceive our environments by means of, a set of discourses on race, culture, and society whose history spans this century…" (Frankenburg 1993, 2). Similarly, individuals who are located within physical environments shaped by gender will perceive those environments through a set of discourses on gender, history, and culture. Many of my participants commented that they did not think gender was a problem, or that it was but in abstract ways, with a few suggesting that any attention brought to gender-based workplace issues resulted in more division than resolution (Martin Interview, 2019). They saw their workplace, unmodified for their arrival, as already gender neutral. If they could move within it without accommodation, why couldn't everyone else? It was others who were difficult or problematic due to their needs; even those who insisted that there was no difference because "we're all shipmates" were in a way erasing the experiences of those who experienced problems at work (Renée, Interview 2019). This, in turn, perpetuates the status quo and makes it very difficult for those who cannot, or will not, conform to exist in their profession for the long term. When speaking with women who successfully learned to navigate these spaces, they often minimized the impact they made on the space around them or said they managed their behaviour at work in a way that prevented them from standing out (something explored more in Chapter 3 on sonic spaces and gender). By placing my analysis within the narratives of my participants and encouraging them to speak on their personal views and opinions (as well as they could articulate them), I was able to understand the path that led them to seeing their work in a particular way and identify intersections or points of friction that challenged their beliefs around gender in their workplace. Frankenburg's insight on whiteness and unmarked spaces provided a way to explain how individuals shape physical space using gender, including the influence of their unconscious bias that they acquire over their lives. It also demonstrates the disadvantage those outside the dominant culture experience when adjusting in order to fit into this new environment.

Gender Consciousness/Awareness

In order to look more closely at the gender component of this analysis, I turned to Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss' work on *gender awareness*, *gender consciousness*, and *negotiation*. In their article "Boundaries, Negotiation and Consciousness: Reconceptualizing Gender Relations", Gerson and Peiss define 'gender awareness' as a non-critical description of existing gender relation systems, whereby people 'see' gender but accept that not only are the current definitions of gender natural and inevitable, but dissatisfaction with the status quo is a personal problem rather than a systemic issue (1985, 86-87). For instance, "a woman's failure to gain a job in the skilled trades is perceived as a result of her personal shortcomings, not an outcome of sexist hiring practices", and while small expressions of dissatisfaction in the workplace may arise, they never amount to any substantial changes (88). This gender awareness fosters an acceptance of things as they are with an assumption that particular genders will exhibit particular behaviours or characteristics, regardless of any evidence that exists to the contrary. In these instances, someone outside of these expectations is considered an exception to the rule rather than an indication that the rule should be re-evaluated. For example, Charlie discussed how he, personally, did not think that the engine room was an appropriate place for a woman, but then sang the praises of a female Second Engineer he worked with previously. Despite having a personal example of a successful female engineer he still felt that women, in general, did not belong in the engine room (Charlie, Interview 2019).

Gerson and Peiss wrote this work in 1985, and conversations around gender roles and gender as a spectrum have developed and changed since then. I use gender consciousness as a way to acknowledge that people of all genders may attribute certain rights, privileges, and expectations to other individuals based on their gender presentation. Gerson and Peiss' provide me with a useful framework for examining how individuals speak about themselves and their peers in terms of their gender and how it shapes the space around them, rather than forcing their views into "male" and "female" consciousnesses. When participant conversations reproduce these binaries, they are noted

and contextualized; however, I use this view as an exploration of the duality of thinking that exists within individuals as they reflect on their lives in a particular social location.

Women who enter male-dominated spaces immediately find themselves on the periphery of the dominant ways of thinking and doing and, as a result, must negotiate their position in these spaces (Gerson and Peiss 1985, 85-86). This negotiation occurs both at the obvious boundaries between genders as well as more discrete boundaries of space. Boundary, according to Gerson and Peiss, allows us to see specific commonalities and discern actual differences in both current and historical patterns of gender-based experiences. It eliminates the assignment of men and women to separate spheres, placing them instead on a map over regions which overlap in some places and stand apart in others. It is important to note that these boundaries are not the same for each person, nor does an individual only possess the boundary of private/public life as what structures their day-to-day existence. In the workplace, these boundaries are often a division of space and privilege (for example, separate eating spaces within the same building for those working on a shop floor and those working in an office) rather than a hard and fast example of "men only" and "women only" spaces. During her interview, Geri described the lunchroom arrangement in the naval design firm where she works where the entirely female office staff has a separate lunchroom from the male-dominated shop floor. Geri stated that she had no desire to eat in the shop lunchroom because there were pinup magazines on the wall, adult magazines strewn around, and she felt uncomfortable in the space (Geri, Interview 2019). While there was no strict rule that said this space was exclusively for the use of the men on the floor, the environment was such that it prevented many of the women in the office from feeling comfortable passing their lunch hour there.

When the negotiation for space happens, "men seem to do most of the inviting, [while] women [do] the asking and ma[ke] demands" (1985, 86). However, these negotiations assume an equal division of resources and power, which is not the case. Oftentimes, women negotiating entrance into male-dominated spaces will encounter a restructuring of gender consciousness to accommodate for their presence, rather than impactful, lasting systemic change to encourage other women to follow behind them

(1985, 86-87). Gerson and Peiss argue that for women entering traditionally male spaces, their inclusion strengthens existing systems rather than undermining and changing them, stating "by insisting that women be 'male' in their job performance… while retaining their 'femaleness', the rules ensure that women will remain outsiders" (1985, 87). The authors use rhetoric around "dressing for success" or "assertiveness training" as forms of negotiation that "may lead to a change in some women's behaviours and consciousness, but not to lasting changes in the structure of opportunity, achievement, and power for all women" (1985, 87). The shifted boundaries change how the individual understands themselves and their gender within the larger work environment but does nothing to actually encourage more women to enter, and remain, in these spaces.

In addition to gender awareness and negotiation, the concept of gender consciousness offers a useful tool for examining gender within particular environments. Gender consciousness moves a step beyond basic gender awareness (as defined above), assuming that particular rights and obligations are associated with being male or female (1985, 88). This consciousness, which Gerson and Peiss divide and define as "female consciousness" and "male consciousness", depict a person's specific location in a system of gender arrangements. "Female consciousness", according to the authors, is "the outcome of processes of negotiation and domination, and their reciprocal interaction, as well as the result of women's structural location… female consciousness influences processes of negotiation and domination, and ultimately, the boundaries shaping gender relations" (1985, 89). Women, historically viewed as responsible for everyday life, "are more apt to apprehend phenomena concretely rather than abstractly" (89) because they see the immediate, real-world implications of those phenomena. Women who challenge or disrupt the social order challenge existing power arrangements, which can – depending on larger social contexts – result in either lasting change *or* a rejection by others to maintain the status quo (1985, 89, emphasis added). On the other hand, Gerson and Peiss suggest that male consciousness "is characterized by the value placed on an individual's autonomy, a sense of entitlement, and a relative superiority to women" (1985, 89). This manifested in Charlie's comment about women not belonging in the engine room and Martin referencing how acceptance in the workplace came "once you displayed your

work ethic the fact you were not 'superior'" (Elliott, Fieldnotes, 2019). When asked whether gender was "an issue" in their workplace, men often referred to how well women integrated themselves into the existing social fabric and how proficient they were in their role as examples of how gender presented in their workplace. Gender was not an issue if women did not stand out. However, this male consciousness may also result in a lack of understanding of the power men truly hold in these spaces, and how that power impacts others who enter into these spheres. Chad, who suggested a female coworker inaccurately attributed her challenges on the fact she was a woman, openly admitted "I've not seen at any time, when because that person's a female they were judged differently… and again, as a male, I probably wouldn't – but I certainly don't see it as a problem" (Chad, Interview 2019). Both male and female consciousness can exist within a particular individual; they may understand the larger gendered systems at play, in theory or with specific examples, but in some circumstances remain unaware of the implications of those systems on their lives as a result of their gender.

Individuals contribute to the physical spaces they occupy. Their understanding of how they affect that space, or how those around them react to their presence is an important place to begin any analysis of how social phenomenon affect an area. This is especially true for women who enter male-dominated workplaces, as they arrive in spaces not designed for their bodies and needs. This results in forms of negotiation and reconfiguration of gender consciousness on all sides, often redefining the expectations of what is acceptable on an individual level without any direct, concrete change on the institutional or structural levels. However, physical space is not the only aspect of an environment modified by gender. Sonic spaces shaped by speech, volume, and silence are another example of where gender modifies, challenges, and negotiates existing boundaries.

Sonic Patriarchy

As I transcribed my field interviews, I found myself coding references to sound over and over again. "Voice/s", "tone/s", and "volume" were all words I highlighted. I made notes when male participants changed their behaviour or tone when describing

events, or when female participants described interactions with coworkers that involved emotional outbursts or instances of code-switching.[14] With every keyword I added to my list, it became clear that this piece of the larger spatial puzzle was one I could not ignore. I looked for a way to articulate how sound shapes space within my work. Then, I stumbled across "sonic patriarchy", a term coined by Rebecca Lentjes during her 2016 work on anti-abortion protestors. This was exactly what I had been seeking to shape my argument.

During her fieldwork, Lentjes found herself seeking to understand the mechanisms that feminized ears develop to defend against gendered sonic violence. As she observed abortion clinics and the groups outside, she heard protestors "shout, chant, sing, preach, sermonize, and plead whenever patients approached the reproductive health clinic where I volunteered" (Lentjes 2019). She realized that this audio bombardment was another way that individuals try to police and control female bodies. From these observations came the framework of *sonic patriarchy*, described as "the domination of a sound world in gendered ways, as well as [the] control of gendered bodies via sound" (2019). Lentjes considers sonic patriarchy as the sound companion of the widely understood "male gaze", where both concepts "are misogynist and objectifying forces that shape and control space" (2019). Sonic patriarchy is the catcalls, mansplaining, whistles, and pitch stereotypes "that grope their way into the aural space of feminized bodies" (Lentjes 2021) and, in turn, change and shape how those bodies respond to sound and move through the space.[15] Lentjes argues,

> *These forces demarcate boundaries of safety, mobility, and accessibility for many female and gender-nonconforming bodies. And while many feminist and queer theorists have explored visual economies of surveillance, it is less common to hear about the ways in which sound is similarly used to control and penetrate and punish bodies* (Lentjes 2019).

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[14] Code switching "broadly … involves adjusting one's style of speech, appearance, behavior, and expression in ways that will optimize the comfort of others in exchange for fair treatment, quality service, and employment opportunities" (McCluney et al. 2019).
[15] An example of pitch stereotyping is the belief that higher, female voices sound "shrill" whereas deeper, often male voices are "authoritative" (Lentjes 2021).

In her self-published presentation *Sonic Patriarchy in the Neoliberal University*, Lentjes (2019) states that male-founded spaces (in her case, academia) view white, male bodies as the default, making it difficult for those with female and gender non-binary bodies to find and occupy space. She suggests that because men's bodies are *seen* to belong, their voices are also *heard* to belong (2019, emphasis in original). This plays out in a variety of ways within the workplace: a man receiving praise for repeating a woman's idea; the perception of a woman "dominating a conversation" when she only speaks 30% of the total time; the acceptance of a male coworker yelling or having emotional outbursts while women in the same workplace are expected to respond to issues in a way that does not lead to them being labelled as "emotional" (2019). This means that women face barriers not only in the physical workplace, but the sonic environment surrounding them as well.

Sonic spaces are constantly in a state of flux, meaning "the subjects and objects of patriarchy do not necessarily pre-exist their sonic encounters"; they may, however, "be reconstituted or left undone by them" (Thorkelson 2020, 3). In his work on sonic patriarchy in a French university setting, Eli Thorkelson discovered that spaces shaped by male voices often drown out or silence other voices who try to contribute. For example, Thorkelson observed in a department meeting that "one male voice followed another… to the point of banality and tedium," making it appear that "this noise was ambient or environmental, as if patriarchy had become an infrastructure, generally taken for granted" (2020, 6). As such, "masculinity was a composite project here, beginning with male-dominated demographics and incorporating a masculine philosophical canon, male-dominated habits of social interaction, and male-coded sounds and affects" which created a space that was impenetrable by the voices of women or non-binary people (2020). This "complex medley" of sonic patriarchy "consigned others to silence or exteriority", effectively excluding "two very different kinds of Others: women and political conservatives" in the process of "ratify[ing] certain masculine selves" (2020, 7). Although this department was traditionally left-wing and progressive, it "did not merely presume women's exclusions [from meetings]; it actively worked to produce it, for instance, by ignoring women, by stereotyping them, or by giving them bit parts or marked positions" (2020, 8). Thorkelson refers to the description of a female professor as

"difficult to work with" by a male colleague and the noted silence that followed as no one questioned or challenged this assertion; it stood as a known fact (2020, 8). As he suggests, "it was not that women were absolutely excluded from this space, but gendered processes of 'inclusion' left them as partial outsiders" (2020, 8). The auditory behaviour of the men in the meeting room, and the department as a whole, was one of establishing dominance and authority with one another. The inclusion of women's voices was not necessary unless they were intermediaries reinforcing a male point or argument (2020). This trend of inclusion without equality is common in male-dominated spaces but does not end at the physical allocation of work or space. It continues into the sonic environment that surrounds the actors, making it difficult for women to contribute or, in many cases, to be heard at all.

Thorkelson's phrase "masculinity as a composite project" struck a chord with me, because it conveyed a type of behaviour I recorded again and again in my interviews and fieldnotes. Women and men, both implicitly and explicitly, described and validated certain norms, actions, and behaviours through a lens of expectation, using phrases such as "it's always been this way" or "it comes with the work" (Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019). The values and voices used to construct these spaces installed a patriarchal structure into the work environment, which was as unnoteworthy as the air within the space, but as integral as the steel girders holding the building up. This structure holds the voices that match its acceptable criteria – white, male, and cisgender – to a higher level of importance while minimizing or silencing any that exist outside the masculine composite. In Lentjes' own words, "in public space, feminized ears exist as gendered and sexualized organs … in which female bodily identity is reduced to open ears and silenced voices" (Lentjes 2021). When those silenced voices speak up and demand inclusion, the responses are often similar to those who demand physical change to a space; it is an individual issue that may result in small accommodations rather than lasting change.

As Thorkelson explains, from a "thunderous masculinity" emerges another sonic space: silence (2020, 2). Silence can also reflect power, or lack thereof, depending on who is speaking and who is silent (Achino-Loeb 2006). This silence can also have a gender, especially when those in positions of power focus on "putting a door on the

female mouth" (Carson 1995, as quoted in Thorkelson 2020, 2).[16] However, most ethnographic studies of silence explore the macro- or micro-level, analysing silence that stems from a type of coercion on the political, state, or self-censorship level (Sheriff 2000, 117). As Thorkelson discussed, silence makes clear who designed the space and who it endeavours to exclude; the silenced voices become as important as those who speak (2020). This sonic spatial construction, acknowledging some sounds and disregarding others, results in the construction of a particular way of understanding which shapes our world view (Achino-Leob 2006, 12). The process of hearing and ignoring makes it easier in certain contexts to repress certain sounds, tuning them out to the point where they seem not to exist at all (2006, 12).

Cultural Censorship

Robin E. Sheriff's work on cultural censorship seeks to move beyond the "obvious and explicit forms of coercion or enforcement [of silence]," exploring instead "silence that is culturally codified" (Sheriff, 2000, 114). Here, silence becomes the work of the collective, purposefully enacted by members rather than enforced by an institution or state. In these circumstances, silence becomes an avenue to manage knowledge, maintain the status quo, and protect the communal emotional well-being of a group.

Sheriff defines *cultural censorship* as "a conscious practice directed toward the communal management of emotion" (2006, 121) where certain experiences and observations are left unspoken as "a form of forgetting" (2006, 118). However, "silence – if it is truly constitutive of cultural censorship – becomes immediately recognizable once it is broken", shattering illusions of well-being and equality when a member shares the internal, unspoken narrative (2006, 127). This communal management, while acted out by individuals of a particular group, often reflects the beliefs and expectations of the dominant narrative. Sheriff explains:

> *"Unlike [other work] which suggests that counter-hegemonic, subversive discourses are the ubiquitous and inevitable products of the experience of oppression, I argue that their opposite – relative silence – may be a common*

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[16] Carson, Anne. 1995. "The Gender of Sound." In *Glass, Irony and God*, 119-41. New York: New Directions.

response to the "loudness" of dominant ideologies and the power-producing and maintaining practices with which they are associated" (115).

Sheriff's research in Brazil sought to investigate "how the contemporary meanings associated with race, racism, and *democracia racial* are culturally constituted" (2000, 116).[17] During her fieldwork, she observed a dramatic difference in how her informants discussed (or didn't discuss) racism in their day-to-day lives compared to how they articulated their feelings and experiences in one-on-one interviews. She realized that most individuals did not discuss their experiences with racism with those close to them; in fact, "many of the stories about racism that informants narrated… had not been previously recounted to spouses, friends, or kin" (2000, 117). The silence around the topic kept those impacted by racism from speaking out about the issues, continuing to carry the burden while stating that other issues, such as economic disparity, were more important. However, when Sheriff interviewed her white, middle-class neighbours, she heard similar views asserted as fact: not only that racism wasn't a problem in Brazil, but that the silence from those impacted (their Black Brazilian neighbours) indicated there was no problem at all. These silences "[mean] culturally dominant groups remain subject to the belief that their vision of their society is one that is universally shared and correct" (2006, 131). The cultural censorship enacted by the poorer neighbours as a way to maintain their communal emotional health was used by their white peers as an indication that everything was fine.

Analysing this "set of analytically neglected but nevertheless explicable behaviours" (2000, 115) meant Sheriff revealed a form of censorship apart from direct political or state influence; a force used by a community to informally manage discussion and knowledge. She continues:

> *Unlike the activity of speech, which does not require more than a single actor, silence demands collaboration and the tacit communal understandings that such collaboration presupposes. … a critical feature of this type of silence is that it is both a consequence and an index of an unequal distribution of power, if not actual knowledge. Through it, various forms of power may be partly, although often incompletely, concealed, denied, or naturalized* (2000, 114).

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[17] "*Democracia racial*, or racial democracy, [is] a set of beliefs and discourses that maintain that racialized prejudice and discrimination are especially mild or non-existant in Brazil" (Sheriff 2000, 116).

Though this silence may be a constant, cultural presence, "it is constituted through, and circumscribed by, the political interests of dominant groups" (2000, 114). These collaborative silences are the result of the repetition and reproduction of particular beliefs or behaviours, but their implications differ across socioeconomic, cultural, and racial spaces. As a result, "silence, like discourse, must be deconstructed in such a way that these interests are explicitly located within a range of differentiated and opposed social positions…" (2000, 114). Through deconstructing this silence from the perspective of those enacting it, it is possible to clarify who is being silenced and who benefits from their silence.

In interviews, female participants often discussed difficulty around communicating with their supervisors or senior management when gender-based issues arose in their workplace. The overarching theme of 'you pick your battles' was referenced frequently, with participants outlining their own personal processes of deciding what comment, what outburst, or what interaction to bring to management and what to let go. In one particular instance, I interviewed men and women from the same office. The women described an environment where they felt management minimized or dismissed entirely any concerns they brought forward. This resulted in an increase in emotional labour as they completed their professional tasks, modifying their way of engaging with their coworkers so they could get through their day. The men in this office, however, commented that gender was "not an issue" because none of the women ever commented on it; in fact, one male participant stated that the presence of women in the space was proof gender was no longer an issue at all (Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019). This perspective clearly demonstrates a particular form of cultural censorship in action. The systemic issues are present and active but unspoken in an effort to preserve the emotional well-being of those affected. Those individuals, in turn, maintain their silence so as not to draw further attention to themselves or experience further consequences. As a result, the silence and dominant discourse obfuscates the issue (Sheriff 2000, 120). By identifying the sites of these cultural silences, it becomes possible to unpack the systems that hold those groups in that silence and shift the larger dialogue to include their experiences.

Gender in the Maritime Sector Today

Using the methodology and theoretical frameworks outlined in this chapter, the remainder of this thesis investigates gender in the current context of the maritime sector. Although my participants came from a variety of professions, the themes they discussed with me during our interviews made it clear that commonalities exist across workplaces. The following chapters further unpack these themes. I have changed the names of participants, coworkers, and business to pseudonyms in order to maintain the anonymity of those involved. The next chapter explores not just how the gender of an individual (or individuals) shapes a physical space, but how some individuals – often women – face expectations to mould their physical appearance to fit certain spaces. Chapter 3 focuses on the sonic space surrounding these individuals and how gender impacts the sound and silence of a workplace. Through these two avenues, I hope to demonstrate how various professional environments, when created with a particular gender in mind, replicate and reinforce systems that can impede and oppress others who attempt to enter. Until employers address these systemic issues – both within individual workplaces and at a broader, cultural level – no ad campaign or recruiting drive will solve the problem around retention of women in the trades.

Chapter 2: Gender and Physical Space

In this chapter, I use feminist standpoint theory, in conjunction with Ruth Frankenburg's work on perception, positionality, and unmarked spaces and Judith Gerson and Kathy Peiss' work on gender consciousness, as a framework for examining if, when, and how a person's gender presentation affects their professional life, specifically in terms of the physical modifications or barriers they encounter at work. The data in this and the following chapters is the product of field interviews conducted from June to November 2019, with supplementary information from document analyses during my post-fieldwork phase. While I acknowledge that these accounts are subjective and only speak to the participant's narrated perception of any events discussed, these "inside looks" provide crucial information for researchers who examine how social systems operate. These narratives also reveal the ways available to my participants to "make sense" of what is happening around them. Regardless of their profession, the men and women who participated in these interviews shared insights and themes that I then saw repeated over and over throughout other conversations. The replication of these themes referenced larger cultural trends within the sector, highlighting systems which uplift some while continuing to oppress others.

Feminist standpoint theory seeks to understand differences in the perspectives and lived experiences of multiple parties within a particular social location. It achieves this by positioning research within the social location of marginalized or oppressed groups. These groups, often on the periphery of a dominant culture, occupy specific positions, or *standpoints*, which can serve as rich sites for research (Harding 2004a). The perspectives of these marginalized individuals can therefore offer important categories of analysis of the spaces they occupy by highlighting barriers they face or ways that the dominant culture fails to consider their needs (Harding 2009). In this research, I used standpoint theory to position my analysis of the narratives of men and women and their experiences at work. By exploring these narratives from historically male-dominated workplaces – including naval architecture, marine engineering, and fishing – it became possible to reveal what change, if any, is necessary to create a stronger and more inclusive

workforce. For instance, many of the women interviewed spoke about how they change (or don't change) in order to fit into their workspace. However, none of my male participants described taking such consideration when discussing their workday or career trajectory; instead, they discussed certain modifications that they felt made their workplace more accessible to women. By comparing what they believed with what some women identified as problems or barriers, it becomes possible to understand what may be overlooked by the dominant (male) workforce when working alongside their female peers.

As I developed my questions for my interviews, it did not occur to me to include questions that allowed my participants to self-identify their gender, sexual orientation, or racial/ethnic background. This is a result of my own 'standpoint' as a white cis-woman who, when in male-dominated spaces, seeks to find others who are similar to myself and notes those absences more quickly than the absence of any others. I further neglected to consider how an individual's sexual orientation or racial/ethnic background may impact their experience, as so many of my informants presented as heteronormative and white. Including this context in my analysis could have provided additional avenues of exploration, and in further research I would include it in my research plan. However, as a result of this omission, I used context clues to ascertain my participant's backgrounds. As a result, I deduced that all my participants publicly identified as either male or female, and that, with one exception, all my participants were in heterosexual relationships.[18] All my participants were white or white-passing and were from Eastern Canada. As a result, my research speaks best to how specific workplaces can be more accepting and inclusive for heterosexual-presenting, white women and contrasts these narratives against those of heterosexual-presenting, white men. The situation for racialized, immigrant, Indigenous, and other marginalized communities in these workspaces would be very different by virtue of their various intersecting identities.

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[18] These context clues included choice of pronouns used during our conversation, and references to spouses or significant others using gendered terms (boyfriend/girlfriend, husband/wife), with one participant using the more gender-neutral term of "partner".

Kate: No Future in the Fishery

Following the 1992 Atlantic groundfish moratorium, thousands of Newfoundlanders and Labradorians suddenly found themselves without employment and the means to support their families. In response, and in an effort to minimize the number of people relying on the fishing industry for work, the provincial and federal governments created specific programs to retrain affected individuals and transition them into new avenues of work (Glavine 2001; Williams 1996). While some men opted to remain at home or to refit their vessels to fish other species like crab and shrimp, some women availed of additional training or sought out new avenues of employment (Caicedo 2004; Glavine 2001; Power 2005b; Williams 1996).

Due to the economic instability of the fishing industry, many families dissuaded their children from continuing on in the fishery and encouraged them to seek employment elsewhere. This was Kate's experience. From her office in a labour union, Kate laughed when asked how she came to her career. She grew up next to the ocean, and her father grew up fishing and was a fisherman his whole life. However, even though she had an interest, it was never an option:

> *Dad didn't want me in the industry and it didn't really have anything to do with gender or anything like that it was more along the lines that he didn't see a future in it. At the time, things were kind of, they were up, and he'd seen the cycle and he says, "it's gonna come back down and I don't want you stuck in the uncertainty of that". It was a lot of "Go to university, get a university career, get a university degree because that's how you're going to get a valuable career."*

> *… [I] thought I was gonna do something along the lines of law enforcement, and then started … realizing that, you know, a lot of what I was reading, there was a lot of work that I didn't agree with that was fisheries focused, and I was like "I see this a different way, so I'd like to approach it a different way" so after speaking to a few profs, I decided that, no, I was going to go into the social sciences and I was going to look at fisheries policy and political economy, that was where I focused.*

Though her father's advice was to set her sights beyond the fishery, Kate found herself returning to her roots throughout her studies. Many others followed a similar

trajectory – starting off in one field but finding themselves drawn back to maritime work. For women, a large component of this is the increased availability of trades courses and professional training programs.

In the last three decades, post-secondary institutions and professional training and certification programs have modified their approach to recruiting prospective students, especially within the skilled trades. Many campaigns target students of any age, gender, or sexual orientation, encouraging everyone to apply to their programs. An aging workforce has meant these initiatives have increased, with women presented as the answer to the labour shortages and other work-related issues that plague many of these industries (CBC News 2022; CBC News 2021; CBTU 2021; Frank & Frenette 2019; Fudge 2017; Kong 2020; OCAS 2021). Often, women who decide on a career in the trades had a relative or parent who completed a trade certificate or vocational training in their chosen field or a similar one (Frank & Frenette 2019). This early exposure demystified the trades and provided them with a sense of familiarity when they joined the workforce. This was clear in my interviews with participants who had grown up around family members in construction (Cassidy, Sarah) and fishing (Fiona, Kate). They often included this family history in their stories of how they came to their line of work, and related their experiences growing up around that type of workplace culture to how they navigated their relationships with coworkers (Sarah, Interview 2019). Other participants (Geri, Melanie, Renée) found their way into their fields because they were passionate and interested in the work, though both Melanie and Renée started their professional journey in different fields (nursing/pharmacy and agriculture, respectively). These women's narratives often included how they learned the landscape of their chosen profession through trial and error instead of previous experience. One instructor and former marine engineer attributed a lack of previous exposure to his female student's overall success, commenting:

> *Some of the best students I've had in here have been female students, not because they started off with anything special or they were anything special, but quite often, certainly when we're introducing the beginning topics in Naval Architecture and Marine Systems, the guys … probably played with the lawn mower engine… so that, you know, mechanical things were probably more easy to understand, whereas most of the girls, not all, but most of the girls probably*

didn't have that exposure. So, when we introduce things like a 4-stroke engine or a 2-stroke engine, the boys probably have in their mind "Oh I sort of know what that is" and they're not paying attention quite the same. The girls, "This is brand new to me" so they're paying attention… and I think that gives them the strength then when we start to build on it… and get farther, in a lot of cases.

For some women, a familial connection to the trades meant a familiarity with this style of work, while for others, learning new skills meant an increased sense of dedication to their studies. Regardless of the path they took to reach that point, women entering the marine trades often spoke of a passion or interest in the work; if income came up at all, it was a secondary reason.

Once an individual enters a space, their presence affects that environment.[19] When exploring how someone's gender contributes to this impact, it's important to consider what rules may be evident for some and obscured from others. For those already immersed in the space, the rules and boundaries others could encounter may not be obvious. Spaces created by and for male-identifying individuals contain unwritten rules and expectations that others may not anticipate. Those who *do* fit the mold often consider these spaces to be gender neutral, since no changes were necessary to accommodate their masculine bodies (Acker 1990, 262; Gerson & Peiss 1985; Luttrell 1988). Women in male-dominated spaces may fit awkwardly in relation to implicit expectations, positioning them to identify issues that impact them and not their male peers. This placement means that they are able to suggest modifications for a better, more inclusive workplace. However, because these suggestions often revolve around differences in gender, those secure in (or accommodated by) the dominant group may label them as unnecessary or frame them as an individual problem rather than an organizational or systemic one. Masculine individuals who "intuitively" know the rules of the environment have an advantage over coworkers who must consciously learn and integrate any unwritten rules in order to succeed. Whether gender is perceived as a factor depends on the social location of the individual.

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[19] Here, and throughout this chapter, I use "space" to refer to the location occupied by a particular individual, either a physical space or social location.

A person's social location also shapes how they understand and contextualise social categories and issues, including gender and race. In her book *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (1993), Ruth Frankenburg discusses how someone's understanding of race is directly related to their particular social standpoint. She states that "whiteness refers to a set of locations that are historically, socially, politically, and culturally produced and moreover, are intrinsically linked to unfolding relations of domination" (Frankenburg 1993, 6). Similarly, gender links several social locations, replicating historical, social, and cultural systems of power. These reproduced patterns and practices often come into existence without the actors realizing it, remaining there until a challenge is made to the underlying issues. By addressing or subverting these practices, people are able to rewrite the cultural narrative of their social location, sketching out new rules and guidelines that accommodate all parties. The first step, however, is identifying the routine occurrences that perpetuate these inequalities within a workplace environment, investigating the microlevel processes through which individuals experience and/or perpetuate racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, and other inequities (Beagan 2001, 229). When examined individually, these occurrences may appear trivial, but they compound over time to create a workforce that entrenches sexist, gatekeeping, and exclusionary behaviours. These elements permeate all aspects of workplace life and can happen in any environment, including places that promote a message of inclusion and equality among their employees (Beagan 2001; Blades 2018; Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union 2018; Rollman 2012). By identifying similar processes within a participant's narrative, it becomes possible to uncover how individuals reproduce or reinforce gendered stereotypes at work, excluding those who do not comfortably fit the dominant modality.

Geri and Renée: Gender Presentation Dictates Type of Interaction

Towards the end of each interview, I asked all of my participants whether they felt gender was "an issue" (however they chose to interpret that term) in their workplace. At this point in the interview, there was often an established rapport between myself and the participant, as the conversation had covered their daily routine, educational background

and career path, as well as some sensitive topics such as conflict and methods of resolution. This broad ranging conversation meant participants often reflected on this question in the larger context of their personal experience as articulated in the interview. Women frequently answered "yes" that gender was an issue, following up with examples of specific phenomena that supported their assessment. Many of these women positioned their observations of their workplace alongside their personal narratives, thereby placing themselves both within and outside the workplace environment. Some women had held these observations for years, while others said they had started seriously thinking about gender and their experiences following my interview request. I found the latter particularly interesting, as these were responses to a direct request to discuss gender within the workplace; it may not have been that these women had not thought about the subject before, but this was the first time they had sought to find the vocabulary to articulate these thoughts and observations explicitly.

Geri, a naval architect, found her field of marine vessel design via her love of sailing. She enrolled in a naval architecture program and excelled, completing several successful work terms that resulted in immediate employment with a firm, Kaleido Designs, close to her home following graduation. After a few years, she found employment with Nautica Designs on the west coast of Canada and relocated for work.[20] Nautica's work site consists of a main administration building where the design and administrative offices are located and a production plant where the firm constructs their custom vessels and components. Both are located on the grounds of a larger industrial shipyard along an ocean-accessible waterway. Geri called Nautica a "traditional workplace" with, as she put it, a "boys club" culture.[21] She described the shop floor as "a different world" from the office where she worked, with Playboy calendars and erotic pinups hanging on the walls of the lunchroom, and a staff that largely said whatever they wanted, regardless of who was around. She insisted that things were changing, but shared this story to explain how the intentions of her coworkers did not always match the language they used:

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[18]These firm names are pseudonyms.
[21] For Geri, "traditional" was synonymous with "male-dominated".

[B]efore I got hired, … the shipyard manager [said to the floor staff] "Hey we hired this really cute design engineer, so you have to respect her" and I'm like "The fact that you called me cute and like said it in that way" …, the intention is there but you need some sort of training on how you discuss these things. Like, the good intention is there but the way that it's, um, implemented is not correct (Geri, Interview 2019).

Despite Geri holding a position senior to many of those on the shop floor, the manager felt it necessary to tell the shopworkers not to disrespect Geri. Geri believed that he felt he was being proactive by taking this step and protecting her from any problematic behaviour, but the act of drawing attention to Geri's gender and appearance set her apart from the men working in the shop. This left her feeling objectified as a "cute female" rather than recognized as a competent professional, and implied the existence of a hierarchy where subordinates need protection (Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019; Geri, Interview 2019).

At the time of her interview, Geri was celebrating three years with Nautica. She said that she had gained the respect of her coworkers both in the office and on the shop floor and had a strong working relationship with many of them. She felt this respect required the continuous reassertion and maintenance of boundaries between herself and those on the floor. For example, every Friday the shop crew has a barbecue behind the shipyard. While she has a standing invitation to attend, she rarely takes advantage of it, concerned that it will blur the line between professional and social in the eyes of her coworkers. She said:

I try not to get too friendly, number one because I'm so young, and I also look young, that I feel like I need to purposely keep this divide if I'm going to have any sort of, like, leadership or, not resp- yeah, like respect almost (Geri, Interview 2019).

As a young woman in a position of authority, Geri felt pressure to maintain these boundaries. For her, the line between social and professional was necessary in order to receive respect from her coworkers. This extra consciousness – knowing that her behaviour was different because of her gender – shaped her understanding of her place in this professional environment. This meant that she was able to provide additional insight not only into the behaviour of her coworkers, but how she and other women in the office responded to it. As one of only six women in the building (and the only one working in

the design division) she was acutely aware of how to modify her behaviour at work. Examples included shifting how she responded to requests or managed her reactions in order to maintain the respect she had negotiated with her coworkers. Geri described herself as very bubbly in her day-to-day life, but she said she toned down her personality at work:

> *Yeah [laughs] and I'm definitely not as bubbly at work. I catch myself, like, I try, I've had to teach myself not to say, "Oh I **just** mean this." I've learned to be like "I **need** this", be more direct. Like, I've actually learned to be more direct and say, point blank, what needs to happen, so my speech, I've kind of changed it a little bit, which I think everybody needs to do if you're managing people* (Geri, Interview 2019, emphasis in speech).

Geri managed her reactions and language within the confines of her office in order to keep the peace with her coworkers and get her job done. The physical space, and the culture within it, exerted a force on Geri that shaped her workplace persona as someone who was more direct and had fewer expressions of emotion (something she commented that her male coworkers did not do). When asked how this impacted her day-to-day, she responded that often her gender works to her advantage. By maintaining a softer approach than others, she experiences fewer altercations at work:

> *I think that also is in my benefit as being a female, like I'm not as threatening, I guess. Or I'm not as abrasive? So, I have a softer way of bringing things up and I think it actually works to my benefit at times as well, yeah... [laughs]... it's hard to explain but I can tell in certain instances that it is because I'm like, I come across as more friendly, I'm not as, like, overbearing [as some of the men]* (Geri, Interview 2019).

This type of self-management in search of respect was a repeated theme among the women I spoke to. When entering male-dominated spaces, some women will adopt behaviour – speech patterns, physical postures, and other behaviours – that mark them as "social males" (Acker 1990) who are seen as 'one of the boys' (Beagan 2001), or they may model more feminine behaviours in an action of resistance towards the masculinization of the workforce and/or assertion of femininity (Acker 1990, 261; Beagan 2001; Ranson 2005; Ross & Shinew 2007). In Geri's case, she blended the two together, moving between them depending on the situation she found herself in. Whatever techniques they use, these women work to integrate themselves as well as they can into

their work environment, though never fully becoming a member as a result of their gender. Renée, a navigation officer, described her time at sea as an exercise in constantly leveling the playing field for herself.

> *Sometimes the guys are like "Oh here, let me do that for you" and I say "No, don't do it, I'm doing it" like 'back off.' ... I always make a point like, **I'm not a woman or you're not a man, we're shipmates, and that's what it is.** When it was time to go in the boats or do things, I've never passed [up a job], "Oh, if you don't want to go…" "No, I'm gonna go, I'm gonna take my turn. **I'm going to do the same thing as anybody else**"* (Renée, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Both Geri and Renée described situations where they felt their coworkers had good intentions but did not understand why their behaviour was inappropriate. Renée acknowledged that her shipmates likely thought they were helping but did not stop to consider that, at the very least, she would not learn to do her job if they kept doing it for her. More than that, however, was the pride she took in doing her work. Renée felt that demonstrating she was capable in her role of navigation officer was of the utmost importance, and having other coworkers step in to "do [her job]" was frustrating; it implied she was either not able or not needed to complete the task at hand.

Renée indicated that she did not have as much difficulty as some of her female shipmates, something she attributed to her appearance: "[M]ost of the time, because of the way I look - I don't like long hair and I'm a little bit more square - usually if people see me from the back, they'll call me 'Sir', right? So, because of the way I look, I probably have less challenge[s]" (Renée, Interview 2019). Renée's awareness that her non-conventional physical presentation affected how her shipmates treated her meant she understood not only the difference in treatment between her and her male peers, but the difference between how they treated her versus other women on board. Renée said she did not consider gender – hers or that of her shipmates – unless a situation arose that drew attention to it. As far as she was concerned, she and her peers were crewmates first and foremost. However, many women who served with her experienced male coworkers stepping in and 'helping' more frequently than she did. One day, early in her career, Renée stepped in on behalf of another young female cadet:

[W]hen I was a cadet, we had a girl who really looked like a girl, like she was tiny and small, you know? And the boys always would to do things for her too, because she was a pretty, tiny girl, right? And at one point she was like "My god, they're frickin' annoying! They want to do everything for me!" And I said "Well, I don't really have that problem" because I was not the pretty, small girl. … At one point one of the boys came up and I was standing in the area, and she was saying "No, no, that's okay, I want to do it." and I turned around and I said…"Well, will you leave her alone" and I said something a little more dramatic, and I said, "How the hell is she gonna learn if she doesn't do it" and then it clicked…. And it's like "Okay, she can't lift like, 200 pounds, help her with that, but let her do the technical things she can do" and they're like "Oh yeah it makes sense" (Renée, Interview 2019).

In her description, Renée touches on the fact that this crewmate, a "pretty, tiny girl", experienced different treatment from their male colleagues because of her appearance. When Renée faced similar situations, her first refusal was often enough to end the conversation. This was likely because the men did categorize her as either masculine or feminine but unsexed her into the category of 'crewmate' (Weston 2002). Renée then used her position as someone who did not cleanly fit into a "masculine" or "feminine" category to intervene on her crewmate's behalf, explaining to their male peers why their behaviour was a problem. Renée's position meant she was able to act as a bridge between these two sides, as her physicality allowed for fluidity in certain circumstances (like this one). She illustrates that there are different modalities for being a woman and a ship's officer. On the other hand, Geri maintained her boundaries in a continued effort to gain respect from her coworkers, modifying her behaviour while acknowledging that her feminine categorization impacted on her work life. These two women, occupying different standpoints in their professional spheres, still encountered moments where they had to reassert boundaries or insist that they did not require assistance to do their jobs – they were fully capable and sought to assert that.

Kurt, Charlie, and Oliver: Viewing Gender through a Male Lens

Many of the women interviewed also described a pressure to assert themselves as full members of a team, just as willing and able as their male counterparts. This expectation, often unspoken, places an additional strain on women throughout their

workday, adding another obstacle to their professional lives. The men interviewed did not reference feeling pressure to prove themselves on a regular basis, though some spoke about tactics they used in the search for (and acquisition of) respect early on in their careers (Chad, Interview 2019; Kurt, Interview 2019). One male participant commented that seeing women as a part of the team was important to him. A woman's ability to blend in with her male coworkers without creating disruption proved, to him, her competence in the workplace (Charlie, Interview 2019). This demonstrates that men often do not experience the same scrutiny of their competence through the lens of their gender. Women, on the other hand, are both directly and indirectly reminded that they are different through the actions and behaviour of their male coworkers. They are treated both as coworkers and representatives of their gender; if a woman makes a mistake, it is viewed as evidence of women being unsuitable for the task, whereas a man making a mistake would not receive the same treatment.

The majority of men interviewed responded that they did not feel gender was an "issue" in their field. When asked why, they identified mechanical and physical changes that, over time, made these spaces easier (they felt) for women to occupy. As the need for brute strength onboard a ship decreased, more body types could enter the marine trades. According to these participants, these changes nulled any argument that someone's gender could be an issue. For example, Kurt stated:

> *...well, the way things are done on ships today, it doesn't matter if you're a man or a woman, in my opinion, because we have equipment in place ... it doesn't matter, like, we're not tying up ships by hand anymore, we're using equipment, right? And we're not lifting cargo, we're using cranes, we're not... it's not as physical, I suppose, as it once was, so I mean, it's more, especially on the officer's side, it's more mentally based... I don't think [gender] is a major issue, yeah* (Kurt, Interview 2019).

Oliver described similar changes to the physical demands of marine engineers, saying:

> *On the ship... there's still a lot of people that say, may not think a woman can do the same job, right? ... [I]n some cases, like, the women are not physically built, that's just nature, to do the heavy lifting, but the mentality should be 'Okay, I'm here to help as well' cuz you shouldn't be lifting 90 [pound] things on your own, regardless, right? But there's still a lot of people, you know, kinda looking down on that* (Oliver, Interview 2019).

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Of all my participants, Charlie was the most direct with his views on women in the engine room. While he said gender was not an issue in his field, he also felt the engine room was not "a place for a girl to be working… that's just my take on it. On the bridge? Fine and dandy. Working on deck? Fine and dandy. … Now, maybe I'm a bit of a male chauvinist or something, I don't know, but like, machinery space, not really?" Charlie worked as a marine engineer on several ships and he asserted that, in his experience, women who were Chief Engineers were not good at their jobs, saying "[I] haven't worked with any female Chief Engineers that I thought were good at it, *but there's only one that I've ever worked with, and I wasn't too impressed with her*" (emphasis added). Charlie based his entire opinion on whether or not women should work as Chief Engineers on his encounter with one individual; because of this single negative experience, he drew the conclusion that women Chief Engineers could not do their jobs effectively. In the next breath, however, he said:

> *Now, that being said, I did work with a Second Engineer who was a lady, and she was very efficient. She was only a smaller person, but she knew how to get stuff done and the heavier stuff, she got the guys to do it, and you know, everyone appreciated her for who she was and she had a lot respect for the guys and it was just a good team effort, right? It worked out good* (Charlie, Interview 2019).

His experience with one female Chief Engineer had convinced him that all women in that role were not capable, however his experience with a female Second Engineer – one rank below Chief – was largely positive. While I do not know what specific issues he had with the Chief Engineer, Charlie described the Second Engineer as having "a lot of respect for the guys," acting as a part of the team and asking for assistance when she needed it. As he continued on, he described two female students who had gone into successful careers in marine engineering:

> *One of them is doing offshore supply right now ... She's got a Third Engineer's job right now, and she's doing really well. And she's smart. There's another girl, not so smart, she's working, I think, with [another company] ... She seems like she's doing pretty good with it. Other than those **guys** right there, I can't think of anybody else* (Charlie, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Despite his assertion that women did not belong in the engine room, Charlie immediately had three examples of women who were successful in that space. This may be because he does not see them as women first; he has, like Renée's crewmates did, and as Kath Weston would suggest, unsexed them. In her book *Gender in Real Time* (2002), Weston suggests that individuals become 'unsexed' when they are not cleanly categorized as masculine or feminine. To be unsexed is not to experience "a loss of womanhood or manhood in the face of transgression. Unsexed is what you will become in the moment of doubt before reclassification" (2002, 28). Jessica Smith Rolston describes a similar type of recategorization in her ethnography on coal mining in the American Midwest, *Mining Coal and Undermining Gender* (2014). According to Rolston, though Weston emphasizes that these moments of ambiguity are brief and fleeting, they are, in fact, "built into more durable dispositions in the [mines] by virtue of particular historical, cultural, and institutional contexts" (2014, 143). Rolston continues,

> *People can comfortably position themselves, their relationships, and the issues at stake in them outside of dominant norms of masculinity and femininity. Though this gender-neutral positioning is common, it does not represent a simple transcendence of gender, since dominant notions of gender difference remain present in the background, waiting to be activated* (Rolston 2014, 143).

In these situations, the observer still sees a person as either male or female. However, that individual exists outside of the *specific categories* that the observer uses to define those terms. This provides an illusion of gender-neutrality – the assertion that gender is not an issue and they see the person as beyond that classification – but those markers and their implications still exist in the background. If the person exhibits behaviours that fall within the observer's understanding of what is male and female, they are classified as belonging to a particular category and the observer will respond to them accordingly. In this case, Charlie did not see the Second Engineer immediately as a woman, but rather as someone who was efficient, showed respect for her coworkers, and made "a good team effort". His physical description of her – that she was "small", that she asked for help when she needed it – also did not challenge his sense of masculinity. She worked with the men, fitting in as a member of the team, but since she did not match the stereotypical woman in the engine room, her expressed gender was a contradiction to his expectations. Thus, she

existed independent of the dominant notions of gender that he used to classify other women in the field. When discussing his former students, he attributed their success initially to their intelligence and was unable to support his claim that women did not belong in the engine room because both women were successful on their respective ships. His language to describe them – calling them "guys" instead of "ladies" or "girls", terms other men used when describing women in these spaces – further suggests that they fell outside his classification of the type of woman who would not be successful in this setting. In fact, what he was saying was that gender *did* matter, because he noted it did not matter to *him* in some instances but did in others.

Oliver, as an instructor, demonstrated a similar view when discussing a female student. Earlier in our conversation, Oliver had expressed dismay with some female students who arrived in his class with manicures, freshly done hair, and, he suggested, used these practices as excuses not to do the same work as their male classmates. However, he then gave an example of a recent female graduate who impressed him during her time in his classroom. This student, he remarked, was "the abnormality when I talk about the $200 nails. She's still working at sea, but she could have been a supermodel. She was a beautiful looking girl, very nice, really friendly, very smart… as far as I know, she's still working at sea" (Oliver, Interview 2019). Oliver had specifically said earlier that he felt women with long, manicured nails or long hair were trying to "make gender a problem", however this young woman was a star student who went on to have a successful career at sea. He had developed a specific idea of what a woman at sea looked like and suspected that a woman who fell outside that description would be unsuccessful. His suggestion seemed to encourage an unsexing of the women who fell outside his definition – if they presented as "feminine", they would be a problem. However, similar to Charlie, Oliver asserted one belief and immediately provided evidence that contradicted it. Though both Charlie and Oliver classified these individuals' as women during the interview, their characteristics lay outside of the norms these men used to classify women in their fields. They frequently described women in terms of their physical characteristics and self-presentation first, only elaborating on their skills or professional abilities when they defied their predetermined expectations. When

confronted with women who fit in and worked hard, they reclassified them, placing them in a category that appeared as 'woman plus'; someone who is female but not in the classic sense as they perceive it.

This act of "unsexing" an individual is also evident in Renée's comments from the previous section, and not only from those who work alongside her. By making a point to insist "I'm not a woman or you're not a man, we're shipmates", Renée effectively unsexes herself. While she discusses that her gender is not often a challenge for her, she does acknowledge that other women may not have the same experience. To her crewmates, Renée presents neither as traditionally masculine nor traditionally feminine, with crew often calling her "Sir" if she isn't facing them. Thus, she is already recategorized as someone who falls outside of the definition of "woman" in this space. Occupying this liminal space also places her in the position of disrupting the gap between men and women on her crew, sometimes as a Commanding Officer and sometimes as a peer. However, when explaining why her male shipmates may behave a certain way, she was clear that, in her opinion, it wasn't intentional gender-based discrimination.

> *[If something inappropriate happens,] first, of course, support the immediate reaction because if she's upset, she's upset. Once she calms down and is ready to talk, have her side of the story, then talk to the gentlemen in question… then get the two, because no matter how thin the pancake, there is always two sides… Most of the time [pauses, peers into the hall, lowers her voice] I don't want to talk too loud but, guys are a bit dumb. Most of the time they don't even realize what they're doing. That's not an excuse! But I would say 80% of the time they have no clue what they did because they're just too dumb in that sense* (Renée, Interview 2019).

Depending on the severity of the accusation, Renée often encourages the two sides to explain how the incident impacted them. She insisted that "nine times out of ten, the behaviour is corrected, and it stops there." Her position as someone who exists outside of the masculine/feminine performance binary means she is able to communicate both with women and men, diffusing incidents among her crew efficiently and productively. However, the suggestion that men behave a particular way because "they're too dumb" in certain situations, is itself a loaded statement; it suggests that men will behave in a particular way because of their gender. It also suggests that they are oblivious to these

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issues because they can be. These men, operating within the culture they designed, are presumed to be unaware of how their behaviour could impact others because it never occurred to them; they have never thought about it, and thus never had the need to correct it. In these circumstances, women exhibit a gender consciousness that first identifies the differences in behaviour between themselves and their male peers, and then explains (though, for Renée, does not excuse) why men continue to behave or speak in terms that are problematic. This emphasizes the additional emotional labour expected from women who possess this level of consciousness; they must manage their own behaviour within their workplace and be ready to educate the men around them if they fail to understand how their actions impact others. Women like Renée have a consciousness of why this is so, but also reinforce their perspectives and gender awareness by assuming the behaviour of particular men is an emotional intelligence issue rather than a systemic issue.

Chad and Martin: "Gender is not an Issue," Until It Is

Situations that arise from a difference in understanding and lack of gender consciousness can also cement beliefs that an individual holds around gendered roles and behaviours. During his interview, Chad, a naval architect, insisted that gender was not an issue in his workplace. He immediately recounted a conflict he experienced with a female coworker that seemed to shape his views on gender in a professional space.

> *HE: Do you think gender is an issue in your workplace? Why or why not?*
> *C: I don't think so. Not from what I've seen. I've not seen at any time, when because that person's a female they were judged differently. One... I've gotta be careful how I say stuff but... If you spoke to one of the females that I'm thinking about here… she would say she's treated different. She would say it's considerably different for her, but the reality is that she's made that bed herself and whether she was male or female, she would be treated the same way. **I think she likes to blame it on being female** (Chad, Interview 2019, emphasis added).*

Chad firmly believed his coworker's difficulties were of her own making and suggested that she derived joy from blaming sexism for her treatment. He felt she used this as an excuse for what he perceived as overall poor professional behaviour. When

pressed on why he felt this was the case, he stated he never witnessed issues inside or outside the classroom that, in his opinion, were gender-based issues. He explained:

> *I certainly haven't seen -* **and again, as a male, I probably wouldn't** *- but I certainly don't see it as a problem. The previous school head that we had here for the School of Maritime Studies for the last 20 years or so was a female. [She] was an extremely competent manager, engineer... and obviously, she got to the school head position* (Chad, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Again, Chad provided an example of a woman who succeeded in his field as an indication that gender must not be a general issue. However, he identified a woman who worked previously as an engineer but was working as a manager in an academic environment when he knew her. This meant she held a role different to that of himself and his coworker, who were both instructors, and also suggested that her experience was unimpeded by her gender, leading to her becoming department manager. Despite this, Chad identified this manager as an example of a woman who had succeeded in his field, and thus supported his argument that gender could not be a problem, regardless of what his coworker said. When discussing his students, Chad said that issues that arose were often "asshole related issues" or "a boyfriend-girlfriend-boyfriend thing that went a bit haywire", but insisted that overall, any problems came down to individual disagreements, rather than the gender(s) of the individual(s) involved.

Martin, another marine engineer, also said he did not consider gender an issue, however he attributed this to generational change rather than personalities or logistical changes. He said:

> *Problem? No. Definitively.* **Gender only becomes a problem, number one, if the female wants it to be***, or, in some cases where, I'll say, there's older people, and older people have the premise where women, you're either into the galley or you're with housekeeping cleaning the rooms. Those days are pretty well past. So right now, the professional ability of female seafarers is acknowledged and recognized* (Martin, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Martin's reaction mirrored similar statements in other interviews; that gender was only noted as an issue in the workplace if "the female wants it to be". These statements positioned gender as a personal issue for women, with no acknowledgement of the larger cultural and social systems that may cause problems for their female crewmates. The

assumption here was that if a woman wanted to work in a particular environment, she should accommodate the status quo and not make a big deal out of elements she took issue with. It disregards the positionality of these woman to identify areas where equality is lacking and draws attention to small allowances that do not result in any lasting change; in the eyes of those who are already there, that women are included at all should be considered enough.

Judith M. Gerson and Kathy Peiss' concepts of gender consciousness and awareness are important when analysing these reactions. As discussed in their work "Boundaries, Negotiation, and Consciousness: Reconceptualizing Gender Relations" (1985), gender awareness is a non-critical description of existing gender relation systems, whereby people 'see' gender but accept the current definitions of gender as natural and inevitable (86). Further, dissatisfaction with the status quo is cast as a personal problem, not a reason to examine the larger system (1985, 87). Gender consciousness moves one step beyond this, affording individuals certain rights and obligations based on their gender identity, depicting their specific location within a series of gender arrangements (1985, 89). This location provides individuals with the ability to not only observe the cultural landscape, but to identify specific ways that they can manoeuvre within and across these gender arrangements and results in the acquisition of knowledge that is unattainable by those who already move freely through the space.

This shift from gender awareness to gender consciousness is evident in the responses of Martin in this section, and Oliver and Charlie previously. Gender is no longer a barrier to women, according to them, because brute strength is no longer a requirement in some professions. This is equal to the elimination of the barriers that previously stood between women and success in these workplaces. Further, as all these participants discussed to some degree, there are preconceived ideas of what someone is or is not capable of based on their gender. When a woman exhibits characteristics or skills beyond those expected of women generally, they are exceptional, not representative or typical of "women", the collective noun. Thus, gender is once again not a problem. However, these approaches only acknowledge the visible ways the workplace has changed (ex: through the introduction of new technology), disregarding the cultural and

systemic barriers that women experience but men do not see. The negotiation of these barriers and the boundaries therein rests on the shoulders of the women involved, as "men seem to do most of the inviting, [while] women [do] the asking and ma[ke] demands" (Gerson and Peiss 1985, 86). Again, this positions any woman who would challenge the status quo as an individual with a personal issue, rather than representative of a larger collective. Oftentimes, women negotiating entrance into male-dominated spaces will find a restructuring of the gender consciousness to accommodate their presence, creating space for them as the exception to these previously held and gendered assumptions. Unfortunately, this often results in small shifts around the arrival of one individual rather than impactful, lasting systemic changes that would encourage other women to follow behind them (1985, 86-87).

Ruth Frankenburg's work on unmarked spaces provides further insight into deciphering the reactions of male professionals when answering questions about gender being an issue. Frankenburg writes that "white cultural practices mark out a *normative space and set of identities, which those who inhabit them… frequently cannot see or name*" (1993, 192, emphasis added). Male participants viewing any requests to address the needs of others as divisive and drawing lines between men and women are examples of an inability to see (or an outright denial of) the gendered nature of their work; there were no alterations to the spaces in question when they arrived, so they are blind to accommodations that others may require. Women, when entering a space not designed or 'marked' for them, are more likely to encounter resistance or push against certain actions (for example, how they dress or wear their hair, how they speak, what they say). This also places the onus on women to push for change, since they are able to provide examples of where the problems lie. It also pressures them to alter, modify, or self-police in an effort to maintain the peace while completing their work.

Linda: Playing "the Woman Card", Privilege, and Gendered Systems

Linda's experience as an instructor offers an example of someone who pushed for changes when she noticed problems within her workplace. After spending the first half of her naval design career out of province, she and her partner discovered they were

expecting their first child and moved back to Newfoundland and Labrador to be closer to family. A successful designer, she applied for jobs with multiple firms in St. John's and Marystown as she prepared to return home, but no one would hire her. Many firms did not return her calls, but one that did was very blunt. "He said 'we don't hire women in this field'," she explained, "I never felt much prejudice on the West Coast, and when I did, it was dealt with. But I came back to the East Coast … almost 10 years later … I found that the atmosphere here for women in industry was very, very... it was like chalk and cheese" (Linda, Interview 2019).[22] Finally, she landed a job as an instructor and started her position just a few weeks after giving birth to her son, remarking "I was a trooper, a real trooper" (Linda, Interview 2019).

Linda said that she had "pulled the woman card" in certain situations "because it's the only card I've got" (Linda, Interview 2019). This comment suggests that she views her gender as a form of privilege that she can leverage in certain circumstances, but also ignores other "cards" she may "play" without realizing it (for example, educational background, racial/ethnic background, and sexuality). In her day-to-day life at work, this is the aspect of her identity which she felt placed her apart from her other coworkers and thus was a perspective only she (and other female peers) could share.

One day, she and a coworker were reviewing a union employee list and observed that many of the men in the office were on a higher payroll level than women who were equally qualified. This level was something Linda and her coworker should have attained by virtue of their additional accreditation and training. In her own words,

> *One of the other ladies who works here…she said "[Linda] did you notice a lot of the guys got [a higher level], and very few of the women have it?" So, and like, I have seventeen stray credits that I'm not allowed to put towards my education piece, plus I have a certificate and there's so many other things like "No, no-no, you're not getting this." Well, why am I not getting this?... So, this year, I said to the girls - our HR manager is gone, we have a new person - I said, "We need to pursue this, and if we don't get it, we start throwing out that woman card"; 'Why do all these men have it and not the women? Can you show me - I can show you a correlation of these things, can you show me why this is this?"* (Linda, Interview 2019).

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[22] An idiom, suggesting that two things could not be more different; that they have nothing in common (Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary & Thesaurus 2020).

The positioning of the "woman card" as a bargaining chip instead of a tool to assign blame was Linda's attempt to draw attention to alleged discriminatory practices within her department. However, this positioning and her deliberate assertion that the differences in classifications were based on gender carried the risk that Linda would be labelled as making an issue out of gender where there is none.

During her interview, Linda identified multiple times when she felt she received different or negative treatment because of her gender since returning to Newfoundland and Labrador. The primary incident involved a male coworker with whom she had difficulty for years.[23] She identified his behaviour as bullying, saying he undermined her work, ostracised her in meetings, and questioned her knowledge of the course material she was teaching, going so far as to tell students in his class that she was teaching them incorrectly. At one point, when taking an online course towards her Bachelor of Technology, Linda found herself under the instruction of this coworker. After submitting an assignment, she said "he came downstairs – he had the nerve to come down into our office area – and go to my [male friend and colleague] and say, 'Did Linda do her own assignment, or how much of it did you do?'. And this is a colleague" (Linda, Interview 2019).

When Linda brought this person's behaviour to her manager's attention, her manager immediately dismissed her complaint, insisting it was a misunderstanding. A trip to Human Resources yielded similar results. "I went to our HR guy once, and I said, "I'm being bullied" and he said, 'What do you mean 'bullied'?' and I said, 'I'm being ostracised and left out of these meetings.' He said, 'That's not bullying.'… I've done a master's thesis on workplace bullying", she said, indicating she was aware of what bullying looked like (Linda, Interview 2019). Eventually, the problematic colleague filed a grievance with the union, claiming Linda was incapable of doing her job. According to Linda, the union representative was sympathetic to her plight and sent the two for third-party mediation. Unfortunately, the emotional strain of the situation took a toll on Linda, forcing her to take a year off on stress leave. At the time of our interview, she still was unclear as to

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[23] The two still work together in the same department, but have an uneasy peace following a third-party mediation.

what was the driving force behind her colleague's behaviour – her best guess was that they had been classmates, and she had gone away for work while he had remained here. She felt perhaps he was jealous or felt threatened by her professional success (Linda, Interview 2019). His reaction toward her stung because, as she explained, "When I got hired here - because we graduated in the same class - I phoned him and said 'You know what? They're looking for another instructor. You should apply,' and he just knifed me in the back."

This is yet another example of how women within male-dominated industries are able to observe their environments from both the outside and within. Linda used her position to identify ways she felt her workplace failed to help her professionally succeed; unfortunately, the emotional strain from that experience resulted in her departure from the workplace on stress leave. Further, her experience on the West Coast meant she knew things could be different, likely driving her decision to disrupt the status quo in Newfoundland and Labrador. Often, women must decide whether to modify themselves to fit the environment or to push for the environment to accommodate them as they are. For men, the reactions to women in these professional spaces may range from seeing women as matter out of place to acknowledging things can change for the benefit of others. Identifying something as matter out of place also exposes the arbitrariness of the principles of order; the rules are challenged simply through the existence of the object within the space, which means those rules can also be changed (Dürr and Winder 2016).[24]

Oliver, Sarah, Kurt: Stereotypes vs. Reality in the Workplace

In multiple interviews, the act of marking spaces as "female" or making efforts to accommodate female bodies was something that participants identified as marking female coworkers as different and distinct from their male peers. For those outside of the dominant culture, proposing alternatives to the current state of affairs is possible because they can see the larger, shifting picture as it relates to their existence. As small changes accrue, they spark larger conversations and an overall restructuring of some members'

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[24] I use "matter out of place" as coined by Mary Douglas (1966), and as discussed in Chapter 1.

beliefs. For example, Oliver, an engineer on tanker ships for three decades, commented that he had only sailed with one female cadet in all his years at sea. When I asked why he thought that was, he responded:

> It wasn't a very good environment at that time, you know. I mean there was no separate washrooms or anything, you know, but this cadet we sailed with, the ship was designed to carry passengers, so they had their own washrooms. She stayed in one of those cabins and had her own bathroom…. We didn't carry many passengers, so she essentially had her own [space] (Oliver, Interview 2019).

By placing the female cadet in the passenger section of the ship, the company literally set her apart from the rest of the crew and identified her as being unlike her coworkers. Often, the implementation of these policies is with the safety and security of female crewmembers in mind, assuming that mixed gender spaces are automatically unsafe or unsuited for women. These policies have no deeper consideration of what risks actually exist, what this separation says about the men in this profession, or what the preference of the female crewmember may be.

The offshore industry is a site of similar gender-based divisions. When asked if gender was a problem in her workplace, Sarah, an operations engineer, paused before responding. With an outgoing and friendly personality, Sarah found offshore life enjoyable and lucrative, spending a majority of her career travelling and working on rigs all over the world. She left her last position for the stability of a shore job so she could spend more time with her family, but she spoke fondly of her time offshore. She was also quick to point out it was not for everyone, and that the industry had a way to go in making a space where women felt welcome. She said the offshore environment "probably keeps women away", continuing:

> [F]irst of all you're treated differently even because you have to have your own cabin, so then that's seen as 'luxury'. Offshore… they think they're being kind to you by saying "Oh, don't use those words, a woman is present". **It's pointed out that you are female almost in every meeting or instance. Like, you can never forget. You don't forget.** … if I'm in a meeting here in the office and I speak up like, no one says anything that would even make you think about gender, but when you're out there, someone won't be saying it directly, but there's always this "Oh, shouldn't be wearing this, there's women

present" or "shouldn't be saying this, there's women present" (Sarah, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Raised in a working-class family, Sarah found similarities between her coworkers and the family she'd grown up in. Her father worked construction, and she remarked she found it easy to get along with her coworkers because "it was like talking to the guys back home" (Sarah, Interview 2019). Even with that comfort and ability to communicate, she still found that her gender placed her on the outside, whether she wanted it to or not. "Constantly reminded of her gender" is a theme that appears across Renée, Geri, and Linda's experiences as well. These women see themselves as a worker doing a job, but they are constantly reminded that they are *women* doing a job. By contrast, no one is drawing attention to when men are present in a room or jumping in to offer unsolicited help. As women in male-dominated spaces, their position as outside of the majority means they are acutely aware that they are out of place. Though sometimes these women spoke of gaining a sense of place or belonging, they were still able to identify ways that their individual workplaces could better support and include women in the workforce.

Not confined to larger vessels and rigs, the belief that certain spaces are unsafe or risky for a woman exist aboard family-owned fishing vessels as well. Fiona started fishing with her family at the age of 12 and started spending time aboard the boat with her father at age six. Despite her years of seasonal fishery experience, she said she would never fish on another boat if she did not know the crew personally. When asked why, she cited safety as the main concern, saying "it's just not safe for a woman to go out in an enclosed place with five men. ***And I've never felt unsafe on a boat, ever, and I've never felt unsafe with a fisherman, ever****. I want to note that. But like, it's definitely, **you'd have to be pretty brave to do that**. And you'd have to be pretty tough, to live with a bunch of men that you're not related to" (Fiona, Interview 2019, emphasis added). Despite never feeling unsafe around the fishermen from her community, Fiona held the belief that this space was not suitable for women unless you were in the company of men you were related to. In fact, she explicitly indicated it would take bravery for a woman to put herself in that situation. A woman wouldn't be brave just for going to sea in the first place, but for going to sea in the company of men she didn't know. Kyle, with the

Professional Fish Harvesters Certification Board (PFHCB) voiced these same concerns during his interview when discussing barriers for women in the field, saying:

> *If you're a woman on a crew of four or five men, and you're making multiple day trips for shrimp or crab offshore, and suddenly it becomes time to sleep at night, and you've got one fo'csle[25] with six or eight bunks, and guys are down there, and there's like... that's a different, that's a barrier, I would think, ...* **in some ways it's probably different if you're the wife of the enterprise owner and it's your daughter or your son and people that you know really well**, *but if you've got a crew of 4 or 5 men that are strangers, and you're a female who just happens to be a fish harvester that doesn't have any relation or connection to that family, it would be a little bit strange* **and in some ways probably inappropriate** *for those men and that woman to be... you know* (Kyle, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Again, Kyle frames the idea of a woman sleeping in a common space with her male crewmembers as something taboo, suggesting it could be a barrier for a woman entering the fishery, and that it is inappropriate for a woman to expose themselves to that arrangement. However, he reflected on this statement during the interview, returning to it a bit later.

> **I've never, you know what? I've never even considered it much until this point with my mind just thinking about some of the, some of the challenges that a woman may have in a fishing environment**. *... And maybe, you know what? Maybe I'm being biased and sexist and old school in saying that that's an issue. I don't know.* **Maybe it's not an issue. Maybe a woman would say "sure, what difference do it make? If the men can sleep together in the forecastle, it's not like we're going down there, you know, stripping off."** *And, like, I don't know, sometimes I wonder. I'm getting older, so I wonder if I'm as progressive as I think I am.* **Maybe there would be women that say "you're making a big deal out of nothing, you know, we're all working professionals.** *We're out here working and sleeping on rotation and stuff, what difference do it make if I'm on a bunk next to three men?"* (Kyle, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Kyle landed on a key point as he reflected on his statements – perhaps to these women, the combination sleeping quarters were not a problem. Many women interviewed stated they saw no difference between themselves and their male counterparts; much of the focus on difference came from policies and procedures designed to set these groups apart,

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[25] Term: the forecastle (pronounced fo'csle or "folk sul") is the forward portion of a bow. On a sailing boat, it is the upper deck past the front mast. In smaller vessels, it is the forward hold where, usually, the sailors' or fishers' living quarters are located.

or from learned behaviour that certain language or conversation wasn't appropriate when a woman was present. However, no one had asked the women themselves if it was a problem, or if having separate sleeping quarters (like the cadet on Oliver's ship) made their lives easier on board. Perhaps drawing these lines simply served as a reminder within the crew that these individuals, strictly because of their gender presentation, were different and thus received different treatment. These workplaces, and the people within them, held the implicit belief that sailing with men you do not know is unacceptable and unsafe, despite having no supporting evidence for that position.

Geri, Fiona, Kyle: Bodies, Health, and Physical Modification for Work

Bodies shape the spaces they occupy in a variety of ways. When those bodies are primarily male, those in the space do not consider how other bodies may or may not fit, even as they make public overtures to attract women to the field. When Geri, the naval architect from earlier in this chapter, joined Nautica, she encountered this space-shaping directly. Nautica was smaller and older than many of the other firms in the area, and the office space was no exception. The building's offices were on one floor with two washrooms – a "female" washroom used by the all-female administrative staff, and a separate washroom used exclusively by the male manager of the company. He joked after her arrival that he had vouched for her hiring because "then, they wouldn't have to change the bathrooms in the office" (Geri, Interview 2019). If they had hired a male naval architect, they would have needed to install a men's washroom in the office portion of the building as the owner did not want to share his with the employees. Although she is excellent at her job and has had few issues with the staff, it was clear from the start that Geri's gender was something considered during the hiring process; her female body had an effect on the office.

Women face unique challenges around accessing hygiene facilities, managing personal hygiene, and manipulating their bodies to fit into spaces; these were recurring themes throughout the interviews. Fiona discussed an upcoming trip to Labrador with her father on their boat. After departing from their home community, a round-trip to Labrador would take six days, not including the number of active fishing days on the water. Part of

her preparation for the journey involved considering her menstrual cycle which would not be easy to accommodate on the boat. She said "I just started taking birth control pills again and … it's so if I go to [Labrador] I know I'm not going to have a period because there's no way to manage that. … it's just such a filthy environment and it takes time that you don't necessarily, like, the whole thing, to deal with the whole thing takes time that you don't necessarily have when you're fishing" (Fiona, Interview 2019). She was also researching what type of bra she could wear constantly for two weeks or longer because her physique prevented her from going without one. She pointed out that in order to go on this trip she had to "change my physicality, essentially. Wear a sports bra and not menstruate" in order shape her body to fit her chosen occupation.

Another issue my participants highlighted was how common urinary tract infections (UTIs) and bladder infections are among women in the fishing sector. Small inshore vessels do not usually have washroom facilities on board (and men are more physically capable of relieving themselves over the side) which results in women having to hold their urine until they return to port. Fiona mentioned this as another issue facing her long trip to Labrador, having told her father they would need to invest in a portable toilet rather than the standard bucket that the men travel with. Nina, an inshore fisher, also took matters into her own hands when addressing this issue; when she and her husband designed their new boat, she insisted there be a washroom on board so she would not have to wait until they went ashore. Kyle from PFHCB brought this up during his interview as well, outlining how the industry has not evolved to make the lives of anatomically female fishers easier.

Not to be crude about it, but you take something as simple as you go to work every day. … you never wonder about using the bathroom, ever. But on a lot of fishing vessels, not only is it difficult, but you have a woman who's employed on a crew [on]a fishing vessel that's at sea, and there's no toilet facilities, not only is it awkward, I mean, it's, there's health implications … [holding your pee] causes, potentially, all kinds of urinary tract issues and that sort of thing, more prevalent with women than with men… as I mentioned earlier, you will likely find that it's more prevalent for women to be involved in the near-shore fishery than the offshore fishery and, generally speaking, it's the inshore fishery that has vessels that don't have toilet facilities on board. We can try to justify it as much as we can by saying "Oh, they're small boats, they're only going out for a few hours at a time", but you tell me at 10 o'clock in the

morning, when I'm sitting at my desk and I'm trying to get off the phone to get to the washroom "Oh, don't worry, it's only gonna be another hour and we'll be in to shore", well, that's not gonna work, exactly (Kyle, Interview 2019).

That more women are joining the inshore fishery, but boats remain unlikely to have toilets on board, demonstrates very clearly how the design of this space does not accommodate female bodies. If developing these spaces with all possible accommodations was the priority, it would make for the smooth integration of women into these industries. This applies to other areas of the work, including the accessibility of necessary workplace equipment. Immersion suits are a key piece of safety equipment aboard any vessel. Usually made of neoprene or similar material, these suits provide a layer of protection between the wearer and the water in an emergency situation. Most suits are universally sized and not gender-specific, but even the smallest fit may be too big for the average-sized woman. The snug fit of these suits is the difference between life and death, and an ill-fitted suit can put a woman's life in jeopardy. The site *Practical Sailor* conducted a test in 2007 (and updated their findings in 2020) of the six most popular immersion suits on the market. They found that the "universal" categorization of these suits seemed optimistic at best. Their female tester found that with one suit "the hood seal [was] too loose … which seemed designed for men with larger heads. She discovered that the loose seal allowed air to rush in and out as she bobbed on the surface. The effect caused loss of heat and the opportunity for water to replace the purged air if she were inundated by a breaking wave" (Nicholson, 2007). While some available suits fit the average woman, those may not be the suits on board the vessel, meaning a woman will likely need to incur the expense of getting her own suit.[26] Putting the responsibility of their very survival on female crew members, rather than on the employer to make sure the equipment is available, is yet another example of the additional labour required by women to fit themselves into a professional landscape, rather than the space anticipating and accommodating their arrival. These examples demonstrate how female-bodied individuals alter their physicality – including controlling their biological functions – for their job; this reality means that a workplace policy that treats everyone the same is not

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[26] According to Statistics Canada, the average Canadian female is 163.1cm/5'3" (Statistics Canada 2009).

the same as equality for all.[27] Equality in this case would be a workspace that accommodates people regardless of gender, rather than requiring some people to change their physicality to do their jobs. Currently, this environment does not provide an equal opportunity for women.

Conclusion: Positionality, Perspective, and Gender Consciousness

The examples throughout this chapter demonstrate various that male-dominated spaces neglect to accommodate female bodies. How individuals view the spaces they occupy and what behaviour they consider "normal" affects how they interact with others in those same spaces. For example, telling an all-male shop crew not to flirt with the "cute" designer because the shop manager assumes it's going to be a problem makes assumptions about the men in the workplace and also potentially minimizes any future harassment by labelling it as flirting or another, seemingly lesser infraction. Reminding male crew members not to jump in and 'help' their female crewmates when they have asked them not to illustrates that, to some men, there are particular tasks a woman should require assistance with, and that the woman's refusal of the offer to help is not enough to end the interaction. It then falls to the woman to establish and maintain these boundaries in order to do her job. Women who draw attention to systems which seem to favour men over women, or who exhibit confidence in their professional ability run the risk of being labelled "a problem" and being ostracised from their workgroup. Finally, considering it strange if women fish with men they do not know demonstrates assumptions of gender-appropriate behaviour. All of these behaviours indicate deeper, gendered expectations in these fields. Though the actors themselves may not acknowledge these behaviours as problematic, they continue to label women and men as separate and different.

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[27] I use "female-bodied" here to draw attention to the fact that although I did not interview any transgender or gender non-binary individuals, these physical modifications are similar to those which people identifying as such undertake in their day-to-day lives. Chest binders serve similar functions to sport bras, restricting the breasts and minimizing/eliminating their appearance. Hormonal treatments are used to restrict or eliminate menstruation entirely, similar to Fiona's use of birth control. So, while this research involved cisgender women, I felt it important to highlight that these barriers do not only exist for those identifying as such but would affect anyone with a female body seeking to modify these particular elements.

Designing a workplace that accommodates all bodies would shift this behaviour dramatically, eliminating the gendered difference asserted within the existing workforce. The Canadian Coast Guard college on the east coast of Canada works to break these habits early in their cadets, placing students in 'pods' or 'clusters' made up of men and women. Each group has their own kitchen and washroom and individual sleeping quarters, regardless of gender. As one participant stated:

> *College years [were] a great experience ... because the college is set up in such a way that you learn social skills to be on a ship at the same time as you go to school. So that's why they put you in a cluster - it simulates a small boat, small cabin, how to interact and live with people... the Coast Guard cadet when he comes out, is so much more prepared to be on board a ship, in an isolated environment, in close quarters with other people, than the student coming out from a public school* (Elliott, Fieldwork Interview 2019).[28]

By focusing on team development and actively engaging men and women in similar work, this technique takes a small step towards disrupting longstanding gendered divisions. This thesis does not address all the ways gender figures into marine-faring government services like the Canadian Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Navy or the issues that reside therein. However, this is one example of a system designed to minimize gender-related divisions. While large scale cultural change and a complete dismantling of existing stereotypical beliefs takes considerable time, practices such as this one at the educational level – along with instructors who tackle those problems when they emerge – can help create a workplace where women are not reminded of their differences. Until then, women like Geri and Linda continue to push the boundaries in their chosen fields, asserting again and again that they are qualified and capable, causing their coworkers to rethink their perceptions of professional women. This form of gendered labour within the workplace in turn, challenges the standpoints of others in the same spaces, reframing individual experiences and drawing attention to barriers that may remain unremarked or unseen by others. We can see this shift when a woman calls out differential treatment and says "Yeah, I'm a woman, let's get over it" (Sarah, Interview 2019), demanding that her crewmates look past her gender. Further, when a man like Charlie or Kyle challenges

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[28] This quote remains unattributed to protect the identity of my participant.

their own beliefs in real time – saying one belief and immediately questioning it, arriving at a different conclusion or providing a counterpoint example – we see the potential for this shift (Charlie, Interview 2019; Kyle, Interview 2019). Men in these spaces, having never experienced any resistance or barriers in the workplace due to their gender, are in a position to view major changes – admitting women into the workplace, for example – as solving gender issues in their chosen field. Women, on the other hand, encounter these barriers and negotiate these spaces every day. This positions them to identify areas affected by gender and, simultaneously, helps them challenge other perceived issues which do not actually matter to them (such as separate sleeping quarters). The narratives within this chapter demonstrate the constantly shifting and evolving effect that gender has in a male-dominated workspace, but they also offer insight into how an organization that accommodates all genders as a default would help level the playing field for bodies that are not male in male-dominated workspaces.

Chapter 3: Gender and Soundscapes

As with physical space, gender influences the sonic space surrounding individuals. These soundscapes often act as sites for people to erect, reinforce, modify, or destroy structures of power and control. Methods of voice control, volume amplification, and narrative management are often employed within a particular social location, modifying the behavior and activities of the actors within that environment. This means that when individuals enter a particular space, they must learn how to move *and* how to speak in a way that is acceptable. These standards also shift according to the environment; as Cassidy explains, "[In the office, the focus is] professionalism, you've gotta be courteous, you can't be rude. Offshore… especially when there's no supervisor around, the [standards] are a little low. … There's a lot more cursing and a lot more telling it like it is when you're offshore. There's a lot more diplomacy in [the] office" (Interview 2019).

When transcribing and coding my fieldnotes, I struggled to find a framework that I could use to discuss the various audio references that appeared throughout my notebooks. My participants frequently referenced feeling heard/unheard at work and described several types of communication styles that they and their coworkers used throughout the day. They also referenced instances where they changed how they spoke in order to achieve particular results. After deciding to discuss how gender affected physical space, these sonic references stood out as another dimension of gender-impacted space. I knew I could root my exploration of sound and verbal communication within these individual narratives, but I needed the language to explain what phenomena I was describing. Rebecca Lentjes' concept of *sonic patriarchy* and Robin E. Sheriff's *cultural censorship* provided the conceptual vocabulary required to explore these elements in detail. By examining the participants' narratives – not only what they said, but how they said it, and how they described the use of both sound and silence – it was possible to understand some of the ways gender impacts these sonic spaces.

Rebecca Lentjes describes *sonic patriarchy* as "the domination of a sound world in gendered ways, as well as … the control of gendered bodies via sound" (2017). During her 2016 work on anti-abortion protestors outside of women's health clinics, Lentjes

"became fascinated by the mechanisms that feminized ears [develop] to defend against gendered sonic violence" (2019). She noted that protestors used shouts, pleas, songs, and chants as a weaponized method of control against the women entering the clinics. Positioning sonic patriarchy as the audio variant of the "male gaze", Lentjes explored not only the gendering of sound as a method of control used against female-presenting bodies, but also how those who encountered this gendering responded to these tactics (2019). She explains:

> *In public space, sonic patriarchy manifests in the catcalls, whistles, and mansplaining that grope their way into the aural space of female and feminine bodies. Both the male gaze and sonic patriarchy are misogynist and objectifying forces that shape and control space. These forces demarcate boundaries of safety, mobility, and accessibility for many female and gender-nonconforming bodies. And while many feminist and queer theorists have explored visual economies of surveillance, it is less common to hear about the ways in which sound is similarly used to control and penetrate and punish bodies.*

In her self-published presentation *Sonic Patriarchy in the Neoliberal University* (2019), Lentjes discusses her experience with sonic patriarchy during her post-graduate research. Alongside her definition of sonic patriarchy, she uses Sara Ahmed's description of harassment – a "silencing network within [the workplace] that forces its victims to make the choice between 'getting used to it or getting out of it'" – to describe how established institutions or organizational structures pressure those outside the dominant group into compliance. Lentjes argues that this network serves as a form of institutionalized bullying, forcing victims to comply or retreat. This is especially true in spaces that are historically male dominated, such as academia or the marine trades, where male bodies and, by extension, male voices are the default for what a worker should look and sound like. Lentjes argues that a network of silence around harassment and similar issues creates an environment that prevents meaningful change from occurring, stating:

> *When individual victims ... are subjected to institutional bullying, coming up against walls at every turn, it's no wonder that many get out of it. And this means that the institution is capable not only of resisting change, but of so easily reproducing itself. ... White men as an institution means that the conduct, or misconduct, of white men ... [is] never going to be examined as carefully as the conduct of others, because **their bodies are already seen to "belong" within**

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the mechanisms of the institution. Because their bodies are seen to belong, they are also heard to belong (Lentjes 2019, emphasis added).

Viewing cis-gender, heterosexual, white male voices as those that belong has serious implications for those that do not fit that description. This deference to the dominant male standard arises in a variety of scenarios. One of the most obvious examples that appeared both in my research and in Lentjes' work was how a male coworker is allowed to yell or have an emotional outburst, while a woman expressing an opinion or asserting herself was often accused of getting "emotional". In Lentjes' own words, "in public space, feminized ears exist as gendered and sexualized organs … in which female bodily identity is reduced to open ears and silenced voices" (Lentjes 2021).

Similarly, when male-coded sounds create an environment that is resistant to the voices of women, transgender, or non-binary individuals, they perpetually drown out or silence others who wish to contribute (Thorkelson 2020, 7). This medley of sonic patriarchy pushes female, transgender, and non-binary voices to the periphery through their systemic exclusion or minimization. This exclusion means women are more attuned to notice if their peers are listening to their opinions or excluding them from conversations, forcing them to develop techniques to ensure their voices register on the wider scale. These professional sonic spaces are constantly shifting, with the actors shaping and changing them through speech and silence. When those silenced voices speak up, insisting male ears hear them, the responses from the dominant group are often similar to those made to women demanding physical change to a space; it is a personal issue or isolated incident. Though it may result in small adjustments on a case-by-case basis, it rarely ends in lasting change.

Where sonic patriarchy provides a way to explore audible sound within an environment, Robin E. Sheriff's work on *cultural censorship* offers a framework for understanding constructed, communal silences. In these instances, silence becomes the work of a collective, deliberately enacted by members rather than enforced by an institution or state. This community control transforms silence into a tool to manage knowledge, maintain the status quo, and protect the emotional well-being of the group. Sheriff uses the term *cultural censorship* to describe a communal silence that "is the

conscious practice of the communal management of emotion" (Sheriff, 2000, 121).
Rather than focusing on the "obvious and explicit forms of coercion or enforcement [of silence]," Sheriff explores silence "that is culturally codified" (Sheriff, 2000, 114). This codification of knowledge determines what is spoken and what is omitted, restructuring a communal narrative to a multi-tiered reality; the one spoken, and the one repressed. During her fieldwork in Brazil, Sheriff found that her Black Brazilian informants were unlikely to disclose experiences of racism with family members or friends because they (the individual experiencing the racism) would rather forget that it happened (118). This exercise in silence – minimizing or ignoring experiences – resulted in the erasure of these narratives from the larger, communal dialogue on race-based discrimination. Sheriff states:

> ***Unlike the activity of speech, which does not require more than a single actor, silence demands collaboration*** *and the tacit communal understandings that such collaboration presupposes. ... a critical feature of this type of silence is that it is both a consequence and an index of an unequal distribution of power, if not actual knowledge. Through it, various forms of power may be partly, although often incompletely, concealed, denied, or naturalized* (Sheriff 2000, 114, emphasis added).

These silences "[mean] culturally dominant groups remain subject to the belief that their vision of their society is one that is universally shared and correct" (Sheriff 2006, 131). The dominant group uses the silence shrouding these issues as an indicator that there is no issue at all. In Sheriff's research, the cultural censorship enacted by her Black Brazilian informants served to maintain their communal emotional health. In this case, parents avoided discussing racism with their adult children in the hopes that if they didn't acknowledge it existed, their children wouldn't recognize it; children did not discuss it with their parents because they believed (due to their parents' silence on the issue) that they either had not experienced it themselves or would not understand how it impacted their adult children (Sheriff 2000, 119-121). Many of the young adults who experienced racism did not discuss it because they did not want to risk further reprisals, or, alternatively, did not want to be reprimanded for taking an incident too seriously, resulting in the minimizing and dismissal of their experiences by their community (Sheriff 2000). This relative silence and resulting stigmatization of the subject pushed the

topic to the periphery, with many of Sheriff's participants insisting other issues, such as economic disparity, were more worthy of discussion than racism (2000). On the other hand, the white neighbours of Sheriff's participants identified the silence of their Black Brazilian neighbours as proof that everything was fine; if they had not heard about their neighbours experiencing racism, then it must not be as big an issue as some suggested (2000, 120). Thus, the dominant narrative was left unchecked, with those on the periphery (Black Brazilians) continuing a communal management of their historic narrative.

In my own interviews, multiple participants described instances of culturally constructed silence or avoidance of difficult topics when discussing gender in their workplace.[29] In particular, women often downplayed or minimized certain events or encounters with others – clients and coworkers alike – in an effort to maintain the peace at work. One woman, Cassidy, worked on an oil and gas vessel and spoke of her reticence in confiding in other women on board. She was the only women in her department and felt strange approaching other women in housekeeping or catering to speak about the struggles she experienced while at sea, so she often kept them to herself (Cassidy, Interview 2019). This did not diminish the difficulties she experienced (homesickness, guilt, fear) but forced her to maintain the illusion that everything was fine so she would not "make the guys uncomfortable" (Cassidy, Interview 2019). In another instance, interviews of men and women from the same workplace clearly outlined the impacts of this communal silence. Throughout their interviews, women described an environment where they felt management minimized or dismissed entirely any concerns they brought forward. This resulted in the modification of their behaviour and ways of engaging with their coworkers so they could navigate their day-to-day tasks at work. By comparison, the men I interviewed stated that gender was "not an issue" in their workplace because they had never heard their female peers' comment on it; in fact, one male participant stated that the presence of women in their workplace was proof gender was no longer an issue in their professional field (Elliott, Fieldnotes 2019).

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[29] My participants described these instances in their own terms; I identified them as instances of culturally constructed silence through my analysis.

When participants described feeling heard (or not), respected (or not), and belonging in their work environment (or not), they often wove descriptions of sound, voice, tone, volume, and moments of self-censorship or behaviour management into their descriptions. Women most often referenced feeling overlooked, interrupted, and unheard at work, with some changing their speech style at work in an effort to earn respect and/or recognition from their peers (Fiona, Interview 2019; Geri, Interview 2019; Sarah, Interview 2019). Some men, on the other hand, described using their voice to assert dominance or to demand respect; in two instances, they used these vocal modifications during the interview when describing situations that, in context, they felt impacted their perceived masculinity (Chad, Interview 2019; Charlie, Interview 2019). Though these discussions only reveal part of an event or encounter – I was not there to witness it, so I have to rely on my participant's version and that they are "responsively reflexive and can represent themselves" (Aldred and Gillies 2014, 4) – each narrative they chose to share, what details they expanded on, and what events they glossed over demonstrated how gender did, in fact, impact their experience of the sonic space.

In her ethnographic work on Midwest American coal mines, Jessica Smith Rolston discusses how women and men alike learn the language of their workplace. As Rolston says,

> One's social positioning—what most people call identity—emerges over the course of inter-action and only appears to solidify over repeated interactions. In other words, talk does not reflect an already existing identity, but actively constructs it. This insight holds true as well for gender, as … dominant notions of masculinity and femininity, as well as the fit between these categories and particular people, are actively constructed and renegotiated in talk (Rolston, 2014, 117).

According to Rolston, the construction of an individual's professional identity happens through the communication shared between coworkers. For women in male-dominated sectors, this means they may adjust their behaviour in order to be heard and, in turn, cultivating a professional persona that may be very different from their personal one. The standards of behaviour and responses to those outside the "norm", prescribed by sonic patriarchy, often influence these changes. However, it is worth noting that the professional personas constructed through this method are not true replicas of the

behaviour Lentjes defined as sonic patriarchy, and some women may emphasize elements of their personality to the same benefit. For example, Geri acknowledged that her identity as a woman meant she was able to avoid confrontation, having what she called a "softer" approach to situations. She emphasizes her femininity, using it to navigate the more aggressive tactics of her male peers (as discussed further in this chapter). By adapting a method of speech that was more akin to what her coworkers expected, she was able to de-escalate situations more efficiently than her peers. Whether modifying to appear more in line with the norm or to negotiate outside of it, the male voices of these spaces shape how women act, effectively maintaining the pre-existing patriarchal structures.

Throughout this chapter, I use sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship to explore how gender shapes the sonic spaces of male-dominated marine workplaces. Sonic spaces are constantly in a state of flux, meaning "the subjects and objects of patriarchy do not necessarily pre-exist their sonic encounters"; they may, however, "be reconstituted or left undone by them" (Thorkelson 2020, 3). Through the acts of creating, recreating, and undoing, sonic encounters and silence continue to shape the space that individuals occupy; how these individuals are impacted by these forces can directly correlate to their gender presentation.

Sarah, Diana: Male Dominance, Female Silence

Sarah, an operations engineer, met me for an interview one sunny afternoon at a café around the corner from her office. She had worked at the same engineering firm, Sol Logistics, for 20 years.[30] When I asked how she ended up choosing engineering as a career, she laughed. Sarah grew up surrounded by construction and tradespeople, with her father and uncles all working in the trades in some capacity; "My dad is an ironworker … I think the whole construction thing, like, my whole family is construct*ing* at something. Everyone. Like, when I say my whole family I mean, like, my 17 uncles. Everyone is in a construction trade to some degree, so I think that's what led me down the construction path" (Sarah, Interview 2019, emphasis in original). When the time came for her to apply

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[30] Not the company's real name.

for university, no one was surprised that engineering was her first choice; "it felt like the right decision" (Sarah, Interview 2019). She graduated and immediately settled into work at Sol, where she'd completed a work placement during her studies. She spent much of her career working either in the office or working offshore, travelling to oil platforms throughout North and South America. More recently, however, she was spending more time on shore as a logistics supervisor in Sol's local office. It was challenging work, but she enjoyed it, saying "I try to enjoy work 80% of the time and generally, I think that's true".

When we started discussing gender in her office, she immediately brightened, saying these were questions she had been asking herself since she received my e-mail. "It's changed a lot over the last 20 years," she said, "but there is still a ways [sic] to go". She immediately launched into a story from her first days with the firm in the early 2000s. She described the workplace at the time as an environment in flux – younger and more progressive engineers coming into an established, older workforce with its own rules and expectations. As she settled into the office, Sarah learned that some of her officemates – the "old guard", as she called them – were inclined to resist any and all changes that came forward. Loud, obnoxious behaviour and coarse language were rarely reprimanded, with some employees behaving however they liked with minimal regulation from management.

One afternoon, Sarah found herself coming to the defence of a newly hired female engineer, a situation that shifted how she handled herself in the office.

> *There was an instance of that where someone who is that old guard, 80s oil and gas person, shouting and yelling and doing all that in the office, bad language, the whole deal… I seen that person pick on a junior engineer, and that was the point when I was like "This is not happening". And I kind of like was like, "Not happening. no more", and then I got called into the office and I got in trouble for poking the cat* (Sarah, Interview 2019).

Despite the older, more experienced employee behaving aggressively towards the younger engineer, it was Sarah who received a reprimand for confronting him. This individual was known as a problem to for their coworkers, constantly picking fights, becoming argumentative, or berating younger staff when things did not go his way. Sarah

noted that senior coworkers advised that she and other employees "just let it go, let it go", and that most of the staff either ignored or worked around him in an effort to accommodate his behaviour rather than confronting it directly. His voice – and by extension, his behaviour – had become "ambient or environmental, as if patriarchy had become an infrastructure" (Thorkelson 2020, 6), and the surrounding silence forced those who encountered it to "[get] used to it or [get] out of it" (Lentjes 2019). However, by confronting her coworker, Sarah violated the unspoken expectation of communal silence, both as a woman in the workplace and as a junior engineer in the firm. This disruption, made possible by Sarah's existence outside of the male industry norm, demonstrated that the passive reaction to this type of behaviour could be challenged. As time passed and the older generation began to retire, the influx of younger engineers continued to shift the workplace environment. Sarah observed that her former coworker could not have gotten away with the same behaviour now, saying "personalities like that aren't tolerated anymore" (Interview 2019). Even this statement frames this interaction as a personality rather than environment issue; her coworker was the way he was, but it was also the office environment that permitted his actions while punishing those who stood up against them.

   In contrast, during her time offshore Sarah experienced a different reaction to a similar altercation. During a shift change, an engineer came into the control room and began angrily reprimanding the crew who was coming off shift. This was not the first time he had behaved this way, but Sarah had enough and snapped back, matching his level of aggression.[31]

> *It was shift handover time, so like, it was the point where one engineer gets off ... and is handing off the information to the other one, so you're transferring information and he was like, all up in the grill of the other one saying we missed a bunch of stuff, "you guys are horrible", "you're the worst people on the vessel" and then I, like, went straight up to him and was like, right into it, saying "Listen, like, some of that may be true but step back and like, look at these guys and sit down and have a conversation about what*

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[31] While I did not witness this interaction personally, Sarah was clear, both in her words and how she spoke of this interaction, that she matched his energy as a way of getting through to him.

we're doing wrong rather than just standing here and yelling at a bunch of people, like, that's not going to work" (Sarah Interview, 2019).

To her surprise, the other engineer relented, and from then on, they we able to work together as colleagues with no issue. She explained:

I didn't have any respect from him until that moment, and then that moment afterwards he was like, he treated me well. It was like that was his personality type was ... "If I didn't think you weren't worth fighting with, I wouldn't bother". So that's a strange personality but it's true. Like, his personality is really strong and if you don't come back with the same strong personality then he won't take you seriously, so... but, after you get past that point, he was just fine (Sarah, Interview 2019).

These examples demonstrate how sonic patriarchy shapes environments and how, in particularly high-stress positions, those environments can be challenging to change. Offshore, individuals often use language that is direct rather than employing the "diplomacy… of the office" because "you don't have time to be diplomatic when shit hits the fan" (Cassidy, Interview 2019). This context leaves little room for nuance or negotiation, and someone who is rude, emotional, or aggressive is seen by others as getting their point across or getting things done. However, this contributes to the creation of an environment where certain ways of speaking elevate certain voices and silence others. In these instances, women often fade into the background, told "you won't make it if you can't do this, you won't survive if you can't do that" whereas men do not receive the same criticisms (Sarah, Interview 2019). However, by comparison, when in an office setting it is considered breaking the social rules of engagement to confront aggression head on. In these environments, "diplomacy" is code for "permission", where the expectation is that women and men alike will just let a particular personality act out and wait for time to change what is acceptable. On a rig, however, direct communication was the only way to engage. Again, women use the norms of sonic patriarchy to cope within their workplaces, shaping their interactions to gain the attention – and in some cases, the respect – of their male colleagues. However, these changes perpetuate these networks of control, leaving them unchanged for any women coming behind them. In these circumstances, by playing into the norms of sonic patriarchy, the individual finds a way to

cope within the system but leaves the overall structure unchanged, which, in turn, means other women will need to navigate the same hurdles as well.

In many instances, individuals who are the target of abusive or restrictive behaviour can find themselves isolated within their experience, feeling that no one else understands or relates to what they are going through simply because no one is speaking about it (Sheriff 2006). Even if the incident is public and expressed in front of a group, silence of those on the sidelines can lead the victim to believe that their reaction is wrong. In Diana's case, an aggressive new floor manager at her fish plant managed to dismantle the community camaraderie of the workforce, isolating individuals as targets of harassment during the workday. It was not until this silence was shattered by one, and then several, other male voices that change began to occur.

Diana started working at the fish plant in Pebble Harbour when it first opened. Prior to the arrival of the plant, there was not much work in the community; as Diana put it, "not everyone can work in the one restaurant in town." The plant brought employment for a large portion of the town's population and meant that people who had commuted to other communities for work were now able to stay closer to home.

> *Everyone got [hired], everything was all new, so everyone was helping each other… most of them was from the community, some from the surrounding communities but we still knew each other. Yeah, we had really good coworkers to help you out and everyone got on. It was good that way* (Diana, Interview 2019).

At the plant, men mostly worked dockside, offloading catches from the boats that came in, while women mostly worked inside the plant, processing and packing product. Diana's first position was as a "trimmer", responsible for beheading and gutting the fish. After the moratorium, the plant received a crab license and she moved to the packing side of the operation, packaging the processed crabmeat for shipment. Over the years, the plant workers became more than just colleagues: "Yes, it was like a family… cuz there's lots of times it's only at work we get to see other people, people we don't see from other communities. We didn't see them 'til next year [when] we went back to work. We had a fun time" (Diana, Interview 2019). Prank pulling, joking, chatting, and socializing were

fundamental parts of the workplace culture, encouraging bonding among colleagues. Diana laughed as she told stories of pranks that she and a close friend used to pull on coworkers and managers at the plant.

> *We brought in – I'll tell you this one – the supervisor, it was his birthday. So, we done a cake, me and my friend, and we carted it into his office, we had it decorated beautiful, and we had a big box with a present, done up oh, right nice. And we said, "Blow out your candles now!" So, he blew out the candles, and then he tried to cut it. He said, "My glory, I can't get the knife through!" This was birch tree; we'd done up birch block eh?[laughs] And anyway, when he opened up the box, know what we had in there? A rooster! Buddy scared the supervisor just about to death ... We lost the rooster running through the plant and we just said, "Don't worry, you'll hear him when he crows!" [laughing]* (Diana, Interview 2019).

Diana insisted that these pranks were a part of fun, with everyone joining in. "It was just part of, you know, getting friendly to everybody. The bosses, everybody! But that was the difference back there, then" (Diana, Interview 2019).

This family-like, social environment shifted when a new floor supervisor, Phil, arrived at the plant.[32] Phil had transferred from another plant in the area, and immediately began roaming the plant floor, picking on certain female employees and, oftentimes, reducing them to tears. Diana said,

> *[Phil] used to say things to the workers ... He'd come down [from his office] and ... he'd pick on the women, and he'd pick on the ones that he knew that was going to take it, you know what I mean? To hurt, he knew the ones to pick to hurt. Because if he'd said something to me, I'd have told him just where to go, right? So, he didn't say nothing to me. But he did things to women, made them cry, said stuff to them. It was really bad. ... And we had him in the office numerous times, and it didn't seem to matter* (Diana, Interview 2019).

Although the employees filed complaints about Phil's behaviour, nothing changed. Diana said, "The company, I don't know, [they] didn't take it serious. … He was like that for years. That was the kind he was. He wasn't no management material. We went through rough times, really rough times."

Diana said many who experienced harassment appeared to ignore it or brush it off, seeking to not draw attention to themselves any more than necessary. Other coworkers

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[32] This is a pseudonym.

would not comment or speak up for fear of becoming the next target: "There's some people go there, they might not say a word for the day, right? Cuz they're not, you know what I mean, they're afraid they're gonna do something that's gonna upset the company or whatever" (Diana, Interview 2019). Some of the women in the plant were single mothers or primary caregivers for elderly family members. This level of precarity meant they maintained their silence and, by extension, stability of their employment. Even in her own descriptions, Diana refrained from getting into specific examples of the managers behaviour, simply saying he "did things" or "said things" to the women in the plant, describing the events in general terms. The employees worked together, maintaining an environment where, although everyone knew what was happening, no one spoke to it for fear of making it worse. Diana suggested that she was never the target of the manager's aggression from the manager because between her role as a shop steward and her forthright demeanor, he did not see her as a woman he could target or prey on. She was still unable to intervene in a way that could end Phil's torment of her coworkers. The additional silence of the male coworkers suggested a "conscious practice directed toward the communal management of emotion" (2006, 121) where a lack of engagement acts as risk management. However, "silence – if it is truly constitutive of cultural censorship – becomes immediately recognizable once it is broken", shattering illusions of well-being and drawing conflict and disharmony to the surface (2006, 127).

Eventually, Phil left the plant. Diana grimaced as she explained the circumstances surrounding his departure, describing a workplace at the breaking point.

We had an incident at the plant where someone tried to hit him, and were gonna hit him, and I had to go over and stand in the middle of them. Someone said, "Weren't you afraid you was gonna get hurt?" I said "Well, it never came to me mind, I was just trying to stop the worker from doing it, cuz he was gonna lose his job," [that]was what I was worried about, right? But anyway, I guess [the employee] was suspended, and then because they suspended him and they never suspended [Phil], we had an illegal walkout… God knows, 80 of them walked out. They were all suspended. And then, well, we had meetings and

things went too far, and the company got involved I guess – headquarters [got involved] (Diana, Interview 2019).[33]

In the weeks following the mass suspension, the situation between management and the employees continued to deteriorate. Finally, the company's head office in St. John's stepped in, arranging a meeting between their executives, the district manager, and Phil. Diana was shop steward at the time and met with the district manager beforehand to make her views on the situation clear:

> *I said "Listen. He's got to go." I said "there's too much going on here to keep him. He's going." And so, he went to St. John's, the manager did, and talked to the crowd in there, [and Phil left]. But from this day, now, he never did tell us what happened, like if he was fired [or transferred]* (Diana, Interview 2019).

It took threats of violence and a complete deterioration of morale for the parent company to intervene and remove Phil from the plant but once he was gone, the social environment changed immediately. Diana commented "after he went, you could see … everything in the building was completely different. Completely! People loved to come to work! But when he was there, they hated to go to work" (Diana, Interview 2019).

In this context, sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship coexisted in the plant; Phil's voice – masculine and in a position of authority – permitted him power to torment and tease the women in the plant, eliciting his desired reaction (their distress) through an endless barrage. Cultural censorship appeared as those on the plant floor sought to protect not only their personal emotional well-being, but the communal peace. It was the men on the plant floor who eventually broke this silence; while there was risk to this behaviour, they were able to confront the supervisor in a way that women on the floor could not. With the constructed silence shattered, space was made to recreate the environment of the plant and directly challenge the established norm. That the workers complaints about Phil did not elicit an immediate reaction from the company further suggests that this behaviour was not unique or noteworthy and demonstrates the normalization of certain aggressive male behaviours, where "[a] man moves through the world with the knowledge that his masculine body and voice are normative and authoritative. The terms and conditions of

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[33] The unionized nature of the fish plant meant an employee-led walkout breached the agreement between their employer and the union, classifying it as an "illegal" walk-out. Her position as a shop steward at the time prohibited her from participating.

the intimate public sphere grant him the agency to behave as he wishes, even if this means literally 'ruining someone's day'" (Lentjes 2021).

In both these examples, the acceptance of male voices and bodies as the default in these male-dominated workplaces meant that abusive and aggressive behaviour was permitted and unchallenged for a considerable period. It was not until voices spoke up in opposition and destroyed the illusion of complacency that change actually occurred. In Sarah's case, even though she got in trouble, her actions pulled to the forefront that her coworkers' behaviour was no longer acceptable. In the fish plant, the challenge of Phil's behaviour resulted in a wave of resistance that ultimately led to his removal. The "relative silence" of the community became "a common response to the "loudness" of the dominant ideologies and the power-producing and maintaining practices with which they are associated" (Sheriff 2006, 115). As a result, "silence, like discourse, must be deconstructed in such a way that these interests are explicitly located within a range of differentiated and opposed social positions…" (2000, 114). Through deconstructing this silence from the perspective of those enacting it, it is possible to clarify who is being silenced and who benefits from their silence. When these situations reach a breaking point, however, those who are silenced may shift into action, creating new space for challenge and constructing new realities.

Geri and Melanie: Cultural Censorship in the Office

From plant floors to office cubicles, cultural censorship and sonic patriarchy often operate concurrently. The environment described at Kaleido Designs, where Geri and Melanie started their careers, is no exception.[34] Both women started as recent graduates around the same time, and, in separate interviews, described a workplace with two sides. On the one hand, there was the inclusive and progressive company presented to the public, while on the other there was a hidden, more restrictive environment shaped by the traditionally male-dominant norms familiar to the sector.

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[34] This is not the company's real name.

Publicly, Kaleido promotes values of gender equity and fairness. Its social media accounts are full of posts highlighting their internal efforts to address unconscious bias,[35] as well as initiatives to empower their female employees and sponsor feminist and women-led arts programming. Behind office doors, however, the company's actual practices were less aggressive when it came to tackling the sexism and marginalization within their ranks.

During her interview, Geri (naval architect, Chapter 2, Appearance Determines Interaction) detailed her uncomfortable experience with Greg, her supervisor, that spanned almost the entire term of her employment.[36] With time and distance separating her from these events, Geri was matter-of-fact in her descriptions, at times joking while telling me her story. She was quick to point out issues and incidents that occurred during her time at Kaleido, things she acknowledged that she had either not noticed or fully appreciated when they happened. Their impact, however, did not go unrecognized as having impacted this early stage of her career.

Kaleido assigned Greg to Geri as her workplace mentor during her internship with the firm. He assisted her with her assigned projects and helped her find her feet in the professional world of vessel design. As her internship drew to a close, the Kaleido offered Geri a full-time position that she eagerly accepted. However, once she transitioned from intern to full-time employee, the dynamic between herself and Greg changed as well.

> *When I went back to work there, he was my direct supervisor. I went to give him back his data and thank him and he told me that I owed him... for the data... and this was over like, our instant messaging app there, and I said, "Oh well, unfortunately I just started [chuckle]", you know, trying to play it off, "so I don't have like, any money or anything to pay you", just like, "ha-ha", and he made like, a subtle hint at something sexual, but it was an inside thing that only I would only get... I said, "I don't know what you mean" and he said, "You're a smart girl, figure it out"* (Geri, Interview 2019).

Greg's suggestive comments continued for weeks, and Geri became progressively more uncomfortable. She saved all of the messages he sent her and emailed them to herself to ensure she had a record of his actions while continuing to work in the same department.

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[35] This is from an International Women's Day post in 2018.

[36] "Greg" is a pseudonym.

At the time, she opted not to bring the messages to her management's attention, saying she did not feel his behaviour warranted intervention at the time. A few months later, she and her boyfriend moved in together and Greg's behaviour stopped. Geri felt she could focus exclusively on her work once again and relax. However, two years later when Geri and her partner separated, Greg's behaviour started again. Geri said that this time she was "a little bit older, and less likely to put up with it", and immediately took the inappropriate messages directly to the company's CEO (Geri, Interview 2019).

Kaleido's CEO, who I'll call Brittany, is very visible not only within the industry but also the local community. A self-identified feminist who champions supportive spaces for women, Brittany frequently speaks at public events on the importance of feminism and gender equity in industry. Under her leadership, the company's public profile has focused heavily on its 'progressive' workplace culture, highlighting their female engineers, architects, and administrators on their social media accounts. For example, on International Women's Day in 2019, Kaleido proudly announced that women made up 30% of their workforce. Geri commented, "surprisingly for the industry they have like… I think it's like 30/70 [women to men] so, it's higher than almost everywhere else that I've ever worked".[37] The promise of a different type of workplace, one that promoted gender equity and empowerment, was what initially attracted Geri to the firm. So, when she arrived for her meeting to discuss Greg's behaviour, Geri felt confident Brittany would take her concerns seriously. According to Geri, as soon as Brittany saw the messages, "she was very upset. I cried when I handed her the messages… I didn't think I would, but it was an emotional time. She said she would do something about it." Unfortunately, for Geri, what happened next was not enough. "The most that they did was sidestep him in his position", moving him to another department within the same building (Geri, Interview 2019). Though the solution did separate the two and prevented them from working together, it did not resolve the root cause of the issue. To Geri's knowledge, there was no formal reprimand or disciplinary action, and she never received an apology.

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[37] In 2018, the company stated their labour force was 36% women, up from 34% in 2017 and similar to Geri's memory of the office. I made extensive efforts to contact Kaleido Designs in 2021 and 2022 for an updated number, but never received a response.

Additionally, she continued to see Greg every day in the building even though they were in separate departments. After getting up the courage to bring the issue to Brittany, Geri had hoped for more. Instead, she felt the company shuffled the problem away rather than addressing it head on.

Following the decision, Geri found support among her friends at work, but management was a different story: "I got support from my peers, anyone I had talked to about it. They [management] actually asked me not to mention it to anybody else, and I don't feel like they really dealt with it seriously enough. Not to say that anybody told me I was to blame, but it was kind of [pause] the conclusion was he said that wasn't his intent and that was it, right? There were no real repercussions." She also discovered she was not the only woman to complain about Greg specifically, explaining, "I complained about him, and two other women complained about him, and he still works there" (Geri, Interview 2019).

As Sheriff explains, "unlike the activity of speech, which does not require more than a single actor, silence demands collaboration and the tactic communal understandings that such collaboration presupposes… it is both a consequence and an index of an unequal distribution of power, if not knowledge" (2000, 114). Though Greg was known to behave inappropriately towards his female colleagues, this information was kept quiet within the office, with Geri only learning about it after her complaint. Furthermore, her management team requested she keep the incident to herself and not discuss it with her coworkers. The idea behind this request seems to be the maintenance of a larger silence which could disrupt the dominant belief that the office was a place of gender equity and progressive thought. Geri maintained her silence in an effort to avoid further issues, discussing her experience only with a few close peers. It was only the fact that she no longer worked for Kaleido that she felt comfortable discussing the incident with me all these years later; breaking her silence did not shatter the larger structure.

Geri eventually left the firm for her position at Nautica, and while she said her experience with Greg was not the primary reason for her departure, "obviously [it] is somewhere in [my] subconscious or in [my] mind." At the end of our interview, she said her experience continues to affect her professional life:

[That firm has] a workspace here [on the west coast of Canada] … and I've considered reapplying because I have so much experience like, directly related to what they do, and that's what I was trained in on. Every time I think about it, it kind of pings in my head and I'm like "Oh, I'll have to work with [Greg again], and probably a lot closer now that I'm in a higher position" (Geri, Interview 2019).

Geri's time at Kaleido shows how sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship can operate as complementary systems of power within an organization that claims to do things differently. Greg's position as Geri's superior meant that his initial suggestive comments placed her in the uncomfortable position of weighing whether or not to bring the issue to management's attention. The need to keep any record at all and managing her behaviour during the workday in response to any of Greg's advances, demonstrated these uneven power dynamics. For Greg, they were "jokes", but for Geri they impacted her ability to work and feel comfortable in her office.

Further, sonic patriarchy shaped the environment wherein Greg could label his behaviour as "joke" without concern that there would be consequences. This language places the focus on Geri, suggesting she is taking the situation too seriously and should have understood that he did not mean what he said. It minimizes how his actions impacted Geri and casts her as overreacting to his comments. More telling, however, was the fact he stopped these comments while Geri was in a committed relationship, starting up again when she became single. This would suggest he understood that his behaviour was inappropriate *only* in the context of Geri having a partner; she was not an "available" target for his flirtations. Once she was single his behaviour started again, suggesting he considered her sexual availability as a factor in how he interacted with her.

Geri was not the only participant whose early experiences at Kaleido Designs affected their career. Melanie, a naval architecture graduate, joined the firm soon after she completed her studies. She described an environment of teamwork turned toxic at the hands of her manager, Cody.[38] Although she worked in a different department and with an entirely different team than Geri, her experience with the company was very similar.

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[38] This is a pseudonym.

Immediately following graduation, Melanie was one of twenty-two applicants admitted to Kaleido's two-week on-boarding course. She passed with flying colours and was assigned to her first project: designing a small commercial vessel for an international client. Melanie immediately fell into a rhythm with the team and spent her workdays focused on the project, choosing not to socialize very much during the day and often taking her lunch or 15-minute breaks at her desk. She insisted during her interview that she maintained a professional demeanor with everyone on her team, especially with management, but chose to keep to herself so she could focus on her work.

Following the successful completion of the commercial vessel, management assigned Melanie's team to a new project. This time, the team was responsible for planning and designing the full refit of a government vessel.[39] The core team of designers remained the same, but a new manager, Cody, took over as their team lead. Immediately following his arrival, Melanie began having problems at work, specifically when dealing directly with Cody. She had met him briefly when she first interviewed for her job and was wary of him at the time. She said,

> *When I told a few of my friends that were [already] working there that I had an interview with this company, they asked who was interviewing me, so I told them [Cody] and they said "Oh, you should wear something a little lower cut." I was like "Is that a joke?" and they're like "well, he does tend to like the girls more." … I just remember during my interview he would say some weird things, like, I had just gotten back from vacation, I had my nails done, … and he would just like, kind of, not quite touch your hand but be close enough to your hand and say, "I like your nails", or "I like your eyeliner today". Just kind of stuff that would kind of make you, like, [a little uncomfortable] [awkward laugh]* (Melanie, Interview 2019).

Despite her apprehensions, the project continued smoothly until around four months in. The team needed additional data to continue their portion of the project, but the data was not yet available from the supplier. Cody instructed the team to redo their completed sections to keep them busy. Melanie estimated that she revisited her own section "five,

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[39] A vessel refit is the restoration, repair, or removal of fittings, equipment, and/or machinery, usually in older vessels to extend their service life. A "full refit" involves a complete overhaul of many of the ship's operational systems, as well as some adjustments to the superstructure. These refits either modernize a vessel or change the design so the vessel can complete different tasks from what it was intended to do.

six times", and the repetition began to wear her down; "Doing the same thing for four months straight and you're just repeating it, it just gets boring, so obviously I'm not going to be smiling and bubbly and super excited to do this same frame, again" (Melanie, Interview 2019).

A month later, it was time for the annual staff reviews. Melanie had no concerns going in, as she got on well with her coworkers and her designs consistently received positive feedback from the client. The review process required four reviews: one from the project lead, one from the project manager, and two from peers selected by the employee. The employee then attended a meeting with the team manager – in this case, Cody – to go over their reviews and discuss next steps. Melanie received glowing reviews from everyone and was confident going into her meeting with Cody that everything would go smoothly. Immediately as she sat down, however, she knew something was wrong.

> *He straight blank told me that [he] had the authority to change any review as [he] sees fit. [sighs] ... so I end up getting a shit review. Like, it was terrible. I got a really bad review. I did not feel like it reflected my work at all, especially considering that the last review I'd had was ... great. I was doing my job; I was doing a good job. They had no issues with my personality, they had no issues with my work. ... I couldn't understand why, so I talked to my [project] lead about it, I showed her all the gradings and ... their comments and she's like "I don't understand why [he] changed your review because I know what I gave you, I know what [the project manager] gave you, and I've seen the two peer reviews" and she said "nobody gave you below a 3 [out of 4] so I don't understand why your review got changed so much"* (Melanie, Interview 2019).

Each 'point' on the review was the percent of a raise the employee would receive. For example, an employee awarded a 4/4 would get a 4% raise the next year. Melanie had received a 1/4, meaning she would only receive a 1% pay adjustment for inflation. Her project lead suggested a meeting with Cody to sort the situation out. Melanie described this meeting as confusing and leaving her with more questions than clarity. As soon as the meeting began, Cody immediately took command of the conversation, offering criticism without any constructive feedback or suggestions for improvement.

> *[Cody said] "Well, you just don't seem passionate." And I'm like "What do you mean?" and he's like "Well, you just don't show passion." "Okay, but what do you mean?" and he's like "It just doesn't seem like you're passionate", and he just kept on repeating "You have no passion", "You are not passionate". He had*

no examples. He had no description. My lead said "Okay, but can you give her an example of how she can be more passionate?" He's like "Oh I think you're doing a pretty good job at leading her on the right path" [pause] And she was like "...so you have nothing? You have no examples? Nothing to tell her to improve, nothing?" He's like "No, I think you're doing a good job," and I was [thinking] "I don't understand." ...[I]f my lead's doing a good job at putting me on the right path of being passionate – which [throws her hands up] what is that word for the workplace? – but, if she's putting me on the right path then why did my score change? You know? ... it was brutal, cuz like I said he couldn't give me any examples. Every time I asked him "How can I?" he said, "Just show more passion" "How can I do that?" "Be more passionate". Literally, I hate that word to this day (Melanie, Interview 2019).

Cody's refusal to provide guidance on how she could be more "passionate" left Melanie frustrated. She felt that his comments on her "passion" were references to her persona at work – focused and not overly social – and that meant he was overlooking her contributions to the project. She explained, "I could be looking at my work and be dead-faced, no emotion, but it doesn't mean that I'm dead inside it's just... I'm doing my job, you know?" (Melanie, Interview 2019). From her perspective, Melanie was hitting all the benchmarks expected of someone in her position, and her individual reviews and feedback from the client supported that. However, when Cody stepped into the team manager position there was a shift in the expectations of the staff, particularly the women who were part of the time. Melanie explained that she was not the only one who had issues with Cody, and she provided examples of other women who had similar experiences and were no longer with the company.

*I know of other people who have now left ... One of these people had a review, **and he basically told her that she had all the qualifications and had met all of the criteria to get a raise, but he didn't feel that she was ready for it.** [Pause] So, she's no longer there* (Melanie, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Melanie did not offer any details on why Cody had determined this employee was not ready for a raise, but she was firm in her opinion that this experience was not unique within the company. According to her, women in the office who appeared "bubbly" or laughed off any inappropriate comments seemed to have made it through the review process fine. Melanie struggled to articulate this in our interview, at times appearing uncomfortable.

So, and he really didn't, he didn't... I don't believe that... I believe that if you, if you were someone who [pause], basically flirted back, or allowed him to flirt with you, then you were safe. If you showed any sort of, like, "Okay, you're old, you're gross", or "I have no interest in you", then you were kind of ridiculed a little bit. You were judged on a harsher scale. So, any girl who was super bubbly with him, super friendly with him, they seemed to get very high raises very quickly. Anybody who didn't flirt or wasn't super friendly with him, they didn't seem like they were "ready" for raises (Melanie, Interview 2019).

These arbitrary guidelines Cody developed for his female staff meant he rated their performance on a different scale than the male employees working on the same project, using his personal views rather than the company-wide criteria. The second set of rules, known only to Cody, meant those who worked for him had to decode and navigate the road map to success using trial-and-error. In Melanie's case, her outward behaviour at work – that she refused to engage in banter with Cody and did not laugh or, sometimes, react at all to his jokes or comments – led to her poor performance review.

Similar to Geri's experience with Greg, Melanie had to decide how to respond to this behaviour, an additional emotional burden that resulted from Cody's ambitious expectations and the limited avenues for recourse. She did her best to adjust her performance, trying to socialize more and engage in a more enthusiastic manner, but a few weeks later she was one of seventeen employees laid off from the firm. She said the day came as a complete shock to everyone, but, as their severance packages were distributed through the crowd, they were advised that there would be opportunities in the future.

Unfortunately, Melanie never received an invitation to return to the workplace. Instead, a month and a half after her layoff, she received a call from Human Resources informing her that she would not be receiving a hiring offer because she "wasn't a good fit" for the company. Melanie said she felt her open rejection of Cody's behaviour was to blame.

So... I have a feeling it's something about that because I was not having any time for [his actions]. You know, I'm not here to flirt with you, I'm here to work, you know? I'm here trying to make a career. I'm not here to boost your ego or anything like that. If you wanna [flirt], go flirt with somebody else and [if] they like it, go for it, but I don't want it (Melanie, Interview 2019).

Cody's insistence that Melanie understood what he meant by "passion", and his resulting annoyance and dismissive behaviour when she asked for clarification, demonstrated a shaping of herself and behaviour through his dialogue. Even when she attempted to meet his requirements (with little guidance on his end) she felt punished and unable to fit in. He constructed a very specific environment which he controlled through his voice, instruction, and behaviour. When Melanie and other women refused to play by his rules, he punished them by having their bonuses withheld or setting arbitrary standards that were, according to him, important to their professional development. Melanie's social persona was one that fell outside the "stereotypical female" that Cody sought to engage with – someone who was bubbly, flirtatious, and would engage with his commentary. Because of this, he used his position and deliberate choices of language to make it impossible for her to redeem her standing following her poor review.

Within Kaleido, "masculinity was a composite project here, beginning with male-dominated demographics, ... male-dominated habits of social interaction, and male-coded sounds and affects" which created a space that was impenetrable by the voices of women or non-binary people (Thorkelson 2020, 6). This "complex medley" of sonic patriarchy "consigned others to silence or exteriority", in this case pushing women who refused to 'play along' into silence and, eventually, from the workplace all together. While these were the only two women I interviewed from Kaleido, it struck me that they had such similar experiences despite working at different sites and in different departments. This speaks to a larger issue within in the organization, where certain norms are exhibited and preserved despite their impact on individuals. The requirement that Geri subscribe to a communal silence, and the perceived punishment of Melanie when she refused to comply to the expectations of her manager, mean that these women were forced to modify themselves in order to fit within the existing system. Only once they had left the firm were they able to speak about their experiences and reflect on the issues they'd experienced.

Geri: The Line Between "Emotional" and "Professional"

Workplaces can shape the behaviour of those who work within them, and sonic patriarchy has a strong hand in how some of my female informants behaved at work. In *Non-consensual Listening, Everyday Sexism, and the Mundanity of Trauma* (2021), Rebecca Lentjes discusses non-consensual listening as another piece of the complex structure of sonic patriarchy. In these instances, male voices force feminized ears to hear them in a public space by using a variety of tactics to draw attention to themselves. She explains that these sounds are distinguishable from other noise because "they have an intended target selected on the basis of bodily identity". Inside a male-dominated space, women may use similar tactics to assert their voice. For instance, by developing a form of speech that mirrors their male counterparts, women are able to force their voices into a space where they would be either ignored or omitted entirely.

As Geri spoke about her experience at Nautica Designs on the west coast of Canada, she discussed how she changed her behaviour when she arrived. When asked what she felt she had to change at work, Geri said:

> *[I'm] not emotional. I've been pushing for things sometimes where I don't feel like I'm being emotional,* **I actually know I'm not being emotional, and I've been told "Oh, we're not trying to upset you. We're not trying to get an emotional response out of you" and I've actually had to say "Hey, I'm not emotional right now. I just really believe in this and I'm just trying to drive my point home."** *... I've learned just to, just, like, not be combative, just be like "I'm not being emotional right now, I'm just driving home my point". Like, no change in tone, just, "this is what I'm doing" like, directly dealing with [the accusation of being emotional]. And* **I was so shocked when they said that, because I was, like, I literally was not feeling emotional, like, by any means. I was just being assertive** (Geri, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

Professional environments often penalize women for being "emotional" when they are assertive or firm, while male colleagues exhibiting similar behaviour often find acceptance and encouragement (Beagan 2001, 228; Benokraitis 1995, 50-51; 1997, 41). Geri discussed this difference in reception when reflecting on behaviour she noticed in the office from her male coworkers:

> *The loud talking [and] men getting emotional.* **I've had to kind of learn that [them getting emotional] just happens and not, not to get overwhelmed or get**

upset myself. *...like, that guy barging into my office, it's been that way and it's also been them just, yeah, them just being upset with a problem in front of me but like, getting overwhelmingly angry over it* (Geri, Interview 2019).

Geri's modification and control of her behaviour in the office was in large part a result of the reactions of her coworkers. Providing a specific example from just a few months into her employment, Geri candidly discussed how she consistently had to prove her competence to the staff and navigate their reactions.

> *I ... had an instance where a man came into my office, he's been there for a long time ... I sent him an email asking him if he could do a design for me, and he barged into my office and told me not to tell him what to do. And like, pretty much yelled at me and barged out. ... now we have a good working relationship, but I definitely feel like it was hard for me to gain certain people's respect in the beginning* (Geri, Interview 2019).

Further into our discussion on her experiences, I asked Geri why she thought she had received that reaction from her coworker. She replied that she felt it had "a lot to do with ego".

> *Some of these people have been around a lot longer than I have, so I think it's a little bit of "why do you get this position?" and ... "Why do you get to tell me what to do when I've been here for so long?". Um, new way of thinking, like, we're getting bigger now, they've been stuck in old school technology, kind of doing things manually, and then I'm, you know, trying to move things in a different direction and sometimes people don't like change. I'm just this new girl who's changing everything and it's hard to get buy-in sometimes* (Geri, Interview 2019).

Her male peers lashing out in the office, both at her and each other, made Geri acutely attentive of how she carried herself in social situations. In order to communicate with her male coworkers, she sought to minimize her reactions and figure out how to speak in a manner that they would receive positively, saying, "I've actually learned how to be more direct and say, point blank, what needs to happen, so in my speech, I've kind of changed a little bit" (Geri, Interview 2019). Geri crafted a form of communication that effectively used the existing sonic patriarchy structures, adapting a direct form of speech with very little emotional inflection to ensure her coworkers would hear her words rather than the her "emotional" voice. On top of that, she felt that as a woman, her male coworkers considered her "less threatening", because "I have a softer way of bringing things up and

I think it works to my benefit at times as well… I come across as more friendly. I'm not as overbearing [as some of the men]" (Geri, Interview 2019). Geri's position in the office informed her understanding of the terrain she had to navigate; by existing outside the male-dominant culture, she knew when to move between her "social male" persona and her "less threatening" feminine persona, reshaping herself as the situation required (Acker 1990; Beagan 2001). This combination used sonic patriarchy against those who benefit from it, forcing the attention of male ears and then operating in ways seen as to be acceptable "for a woman" as a strategy to avoid further confrontation.

Nina, Sarah, Cassidy: Gendered Roles and Masculine Aggression

Women who choose professions in traditionally male-dominated sectors may find that their personal and professional choices impact how others treat them. Nina, Sarah, and Cassidy all observed that women often receive more comments about their choice of profession, including questions on whether they *need* to be in a particular line of employment, than their male counterparts. The responses these women received to their choice of occupation demonstrate a clear expectation of what a woman should do from those around them. Of particular note is how some of these interactions, including with other women, demonstrate the use of language in an effort to try and shift these women back into the boxes those around them feel they should occupy. These show the subconscious biases that some women encounter while trying to make a living in their chosen profession.

Nina, a fish harvester from a small coastal town, heard plenty of comments about whether or not women should go to sea during her early years in the fishery. The daughter of two harvesters, Nina had spent much of her life hating the fishery and being ashamed that she came from a fishing family. One year, in her early 20s, her boyfriend (now husband) needed an extra hand on his boat and asked if she could help.[40] She was waiting for a callback from a job interview but agreed to help out for the weekend. She immediately fell in love with the work, describing a freedom at sea that she had never

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[40] "Hand" in this instance refers to a member of a ship's crew.

found elsewhere. When she received a call offering her the other job – a management position at a local restaurant – she declined immediately and went to work with her partner as a full-time fish harvester. When she apologized to her parents for her earlier attitude towards their work, they simply said "Now, you understand" (Nina, Interview 2019).

However, not everyone was as excited about Nina's new career path as she was. Much to her surprise, it was not the other men on the wharf who gave her a hard time; it was their wives. Nina provided this anecdote to illustrate her experience:

> *I entered into a male-dominated industry, and I mean male-dominated, too. I even had [female] friends of mine, today now is one of my best friends, looked at me coming down to the wharf and said, "You know you're making a fool of us?" and I said, "What do you mean 'Making a fool of you?'"* ***"You're going out in the boat and we're staying in. You're making a fool of us. Can't you stay home?"*** *I said [incredulous laughing]* ***"No, that's my job! … He can't do it on his own, he needs me, and it's my job."*** *"But you're making a fool of us" and I was just "What?" And I often speaks about it - it wasn't none of the men I had to impress, I had to impress the other women, you know? … I says to people, weren't none of the men I had to argue with. I had to argue with women. My own friends who said stuff to me because I actually went out in the boat with him.* (Nina, Interview 2019).

Nina faced head-on the expectations of how a woman should behave in her community, refusing to "stay home" and instead working to build a successful fishing business alongside her partner. In response, the women of her community – some her close friends – accused her of showing them up, "making fool[s]" out of them. The idea that Nina wanted to work, and was able to work, alongside her husband raised the possibility for many of the women that the rules around who could fish were not as fixed as they may have believed. By choosing to stay on shore – be it to raise the family or work in the community – these women were fulfilling the roles they thought they, as women, should occupy. Nina's decision to go to sea was an explicit rejection of those traditionally feminized roles; she refused to conform to the expectations of her community and embraced the freedom of her new career. Her choice to enter into a space these women did not occupy challenged how firm the rules around work truly were, causing discomfort and frustration among those who wanted to maintain the status quo.

Thus, her friends attempted to construct an environment that would restrict Nina's choices, suggesting that she was doing something wrong by working on a fishing boat. The reaction to Nina's profession meant she now felt she was viewed as "out of place" by the women around her; this allowed her to view the social relationships of her community through a different lens, "to examine the politics and social construction of difference" (Dürr and Winder 2016, 52). The women of the community had accepted Nina's mother, who had fished alongside her father for decades. However, Nina's refusal to conform to normative expectations forced the women of her community to rethink their own roles and views, simultaneously unsettling and reinscribing the gendered hierarchies at play. Her mother worked at sea because she had to, but these women held Nina to a different standard – possibly due to her other employment options – and criticized her choice to pursue a type of work very different from their own. By vocalizing their disapproval and suggesting Nina's actions were somehow harming the other women in her community, these comments reinforced the existing dominant rules around gender roles in an effort to guide Nina back into her assigned "box".

Unfortunately, this was not the only time that Nina encountered this sort of opposition in her career. After a decade of fishing, Nina became very involved with the fishery union. Her new role meant she spent a lot of time travelling both inside and outside of the province, attending conferences, speaking on panels, sitting at negotiating tables, and training to better support her fellow harvesters. Her absences from home, sometimes with little notice between engagements, did not go unnoticed by those within her community. She shared another story that illustrated the double standard people held her and her husband to as individuals in the same field.

I had a friend [who] looked at my husband and said, "You knows what Nina's up to?" and he said, "What do you mean? What's she up to?" "She's foolin' around on you." And he said, "What do you mean by that?" "Oh, she goes to all these meetings where there're men." And he said, "Yeah?" [HE: This is a female friend of yours?] Yeah. He said, "And what is your point?" "Yeah, but, these men. You knows what they're up to." And he said, "Don't be so effin [stupid]. Like, you know, this is in the 2000s… It's awful bad that she can't sit around a table and fight for something she loves with a crowd of men. So what? It's no different than me sitting around with a crowd of women. So, what, now I'm fooling around?" (Nina, Interview 2019).

This response – again, from someone close to Nina – demonstrates a deeper narrative around the expectations of men and heterosexual interactions in these communities. The idea that a woman could travel, advocate, and work for the betterment of her field does not seem to play into the considerations of those making the allegations of her infidelity. Similar to the previously shared views around women sharing sleeping quarters with men (Chapter 2), the impression appears that men and women, if left alone, must be intimately involved. The safest and most seemly course of action is for the separation of men and women, or, if they are mixed, to have the presence of a spouse so nothing untoward can happen. In Nina's case, there was no evidence that she was unfaithful to her husband, but she reported that the opinions remained that if she was travelling alone and meeting with men, there "must be more to the story". A woman could not simply be working on what she loves; she must be having an affair.

Nina has continued to work as a vocal advocate with the union, appearing in front of television cameras and on the radio. Her passion for her work, and support of her husband and other members of the fishing community, meant she could continue doing the work she loved. However, as she demonstrated, the expectations of men and women draw lines in the sand within a work environment around who can or should do what, and what happens when those individuals stray from the pre-ordained or traditional script. Nina's choice to deviate from that script meant she faced resistance from some of the women in her life, who used their voices to try to create and enforce boundaries on what she could do. What allowed Nina to remain in the field was the unwavering support of her husband and the encouragement of others in the field and the union; the male voice of support overrode other voices of disapproval. The question becomes how many women encountered similar resistance without similar support and turned away from their new-found callings? How can these lines be redrawn, or erased entirely, so that individuals can do their job without holding the weight of gendered expectations on their shoulders?

It is not only occupying male-dominated spaces that results in the creation of these sonic patriarchal structures; in some circumstances, women may also act in ways that reinforce the norms of sonic patriarchy. Some participants expressed that comments around their work and motherhood shaped their environments daily, especially the

assumption that working away is harder "because you're a mom". The constant reminders of their gender meant they were aware that their male coworkers could not imagine their wives doing the same job. Sarah spoke to this towards the end of our discussion. When asked what she would change about her field, she said,

> *In a perfect world - anybody could have any job that they wanted, without question, and I know a lot of it isn't malicious. People are genuinely asking me, especially offshore, they would say "You must find it a little hard with small kids at home" and I would say "Yes but it's a job, just like any other job" and they weren't malicious, ... they are concerned and they wanna know, you know, cuz maybe in their mind they can't think of their wife doing it, maybe? So, I think that in fairy tale world, if we could all have the job that we wanted without cultural pressures and that, but I don't see that happening any time soon* (Sarah, Interview 2019).

These were sentiments echoed by Charlie and Kurt, who both said that they suspected working offshore was harder for women, especially if they had children at home. Charlie remarked,

> *I'm not sure how well-suited girls are for being away for long stretches, especially when kids come along. I know, my wife, she's more involved with the kids, she knows everything that's going on. Even right now. ... when I was on the ship and didn't have control over nothing, as long as everything was good, fine and dandy. You can't go on worrying about stuff when you're gone like that, cuz you'd lose your mind, right? I don't know that the girls are gonna be so, not all girls anyway, are gonna be so good at doing that. I think that's part of being a girl. Now [raises voice, jokingly] I don't know now, cuz I'm not a girl. That's my opinion* (Charlie, Interview 2019, emphasis added).

When asked why he felt there were not many women in his field, Kurt reflected on his time at school:

> *Perhaps because of the small number of females that are in the industry. I mean, in order to get in here you need to have a Master Mariner's license, so looking back 20 years ago there were even less women in the industry… when I went to school, we did have some women in our class, but some of them have gotten out of the marine industry. Some of them stayed, but for the most part, most are … out.* **I did have one girl in my class, and she worked for quite some time [in the industry], but then she started the family life. So, she had children and unless you transition into the office, I found that most women don't stay on ship after they have children** (Kurt, Interview 2019).

Neither Charlie nor Kurt gave any additional reason why a woman would remain in the field after having children other than that women may not be well suited to spending time

away from their children. In Charlie's case, however, immediately after making that statement he went on to describe how much closer his wife is with his children, saying "I missed my kids then," before becoming emotional, shaking his head, clearing his throat, and continuing on with the conversation. While the men in these spaces may be under the impression that women would experience difficulty being away from their children, it also seemed that this was an environment where the belief was that men should find it *easier* being away from their children, suggesting they are less involved in the process of raising their families. In Charlie's case, his time away from his children appeared to have been more difficult than he was able to admit.

In Cassidy's case, she found support at work balancing the role of mother and professional through shared commiseration with her male coworkers onboard the rig. However, on shore she faced disapproving comments from others outside of her professional life. In one instance, her daughter's teacher requested a meeting to discuss her child's struggles in school that year. Cassidy was working overseas on a month on/month off rotation, and when she arrived at the meeting it was clear the teacher blamed her job for her daughter's difficulties.

> *I've had teachers ask me "Why do you have the job you do? Do you have to be working away?" and I get this little bitter thing inside me and I'm like - I never said anything cuz I don't like confrontation, but - would they have asked that of a father? Would they have asked a dad "You know, you're in the Coast Guard, do you have to have that job?" Cuz I was going back and forth [for work] and I can understand this particular time… my daughter [has anxiety], so she would cry in class. I know [the teacher had] my daughter's best interests at heart, but that compounded the guilt* (Cassidy, Interview 2019).

Both men and women face expectations around balancing parenthood and work that impact them in different ways. These subconscious biases – that women should remain closer to home after starting a family while men are expected to continue on in their profession, unbothered – demonstrate how elements of both sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship impact men and women differently. Women are expected to justify why they want to stay in their chosen profession after starting a family, while men are expected to continue to want to be at sea and not necessarily discuss missing their children.

There are also expectations around how men communicate with each other in a professional setting. In this context, sonic patriarchy shapes how men speak and react to situations, setting expectations around what it means to "be a man" in these male-dominated professions. The dominate expectation of a "man" in these spaces which marks women and other males as "other" also works to shape men's behaviour into something acceptable "for a man". During their interviews, Chad and Kurt described situations with specific reference to the type of language used. These exchanges often directly related to conflicts they experienced with other coworkers. Similar to the women challenging male behaviour, the lesson seemed to be that among these men, aggression and forcefulness yielded results.

Chad worked as a naval architect before transitioning to the role of instructor. Upon starting his new role, he immediately began experiencing conflict with a senior coworker, Paul, with whom he had a previous working relationship.[41] This boiled over into a few altercations, which Chad described as follows:

> *I believe he felt that [my position] should have belonged to him, so there was a little bit of an axe to grind and we had a couple of falling outs. Um... I think he was from a foreign country and he was used to intimidating people. I'm not confrontational or anything else but if you push me into a corner, I'm a mean, vindictive son of a bitch [laughs], and he did that, so it blew up. And I pushed back very, very hard. The funny thing was, his office was right here, across the hall. About six months after it was resolved, we became close friends – well, not close friends, but we became much better friends, and I think it was [pauses] pardon the French, a pissing contest, and when he realized I could piss as far as he could, he said [chuckles] I'm just gonna accept him at where he is. Yep* (Chad, Interview 2019).

A couple of things are noteworthy from this exchange. First, the dynamic between Chad and his former coworker – that it took the two of them pushing back and forth for Chad to gain his coworkers' respect. This environment not only favoured male voices, but "manly" ways of engaging in conflict. Second, the reference to the "pissing contest" and that when Chad's coworker saw he "could piss as far as he could" as a way of describing his coworker coming to respect him. This reference to comparable penis sizes, indicated

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[41] This is a pseudonym

by the distance one could urinate compared to another, was language specifically selected by Chad to describe this event to me in our interview. While there were other ways to discuss this, his choice to paint it as two men comparing masculinity through hypothetical penis measuring forced me, as the listener, to use that as a gauge of understanding. Chad effectively used sonic patriarchy without realizing it by selecting vividly gendered language to articulate a specific point to a female interviewer and saw no issue in doing so.[42] He understood this language to be appropriate for his environment because, from his point of view, this workspace and subsequently the sonic space shared by the two of us was designed by voices similar to his, using language similar to that which he chose. It was therefore my responsibility, as the listener, to filter through this awkward encounter and extract the necessary information.

For Kurt, the early years of his career occurred in a sonic environment he struggled to navigate. As a young engineer on an oil tanker, he found that his fellow crewmates were in no mood to offer him constructive advice when it came to teaching him the ropes.

> *Earlier on there was - I can't say conflicts but there [were] difficult situations working with captains and stuff, especially when we were starting off as younger people in the trade. They expect you to know more without telling you anything, and their way wasn't really to show you how to do stuff, it was just to kind of scream and shout and holler at you, so that was, um, that was hard. That was really hard, especially as a, you know, young officer on board ship, and having to take that kind of abuse, and you know, was either take it and put up, or quit. So, you know, I put up with it and learned from the old ways of sailors and how they treated people, and uh, got through it, but I think that was probably the hardest part in terms of conflicts and stuff. [Nothing was ever resolved], it was just managed. Yeah* (Kurt, Interview 2019).

This example is similar to the experiences detailed by the women earlier on in this chapter, but also demonstrates that this environment has negative implications for men who do not fit the preconceived definition of being "male" as well. Kurt explains very clearly that the expectation is that you "either take it and put up, or quit", a recurring theme that appeared throughout the women's interviews. In this situation, adapting to the

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[42] This was not the first or last time in the course of the interview that he used particular metaphors or descriptions that made me uncomfortable in the process of the interview, including referencing a ship design he did not like as "a floating abortion".

workplace culture was crucial, placing younger crew members in the unfortunate position of dealing with abuse from their seniors while learning their job. This was a pattern that likely predated the Chief Engineer's arrival, but that the crew continued to replicate with Kurt and other new crew members. However, because of his position of belonging (both physically and vocally) in this space, Kurt was able to push back, making the decision to end the cycle with him.

> *I think that I've learned from that, and I don't know if that's something that I learned from those experiences or subconsciously, but it's definitely something I've tried not to carry on with that type of mentality. I always thought that I would want to treat people, on ship - again, here - like to treat people the way I like to be treated* (Kurt, Interview 2019).

Directly attributing his growth to his early experiences, Kurt took on a different approach when he reached a point in his career where he managed individuals, opting to be firm but understanding and not raising his voice out of anger. It was not clear if this was also how he treated senior officers, or if he replicated the pattern of asserting himself in the name of respect when dealing with senior officers (as discussed by other male participants), while treating crew at the same level or below him in a less aggressive manner.

Conclusion: Sonic Patriarchy and Cultural Censorship

Throughout my interviews, sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship appeared repeatedly across a variety of workplaces. Sonic patriarchy shaped not only the additional forms of labour women encountered at work as they learned to filter through and manipulate their auditory environment, but it also shaped the standard used by men to relate to each other. It offered validity to certain voices over others, explaining why, when women spoke to men in similar tones and acted in similar ways, they were seen as "belonging". This belonging was often superficial, with frequent reminders of how the presence of these women was noteworthy in a male-dominated space. Furthermore, non-consensual listening was constantly at play, with women experiencing catcalls, inappropriate comments, and emotional outbursts which they then had to negotiate so as not to encounter negative repercussions or to "other" themselves. These responses ranged from complete avoidance, to laughter, to challenging the perpetrator directly. Each

approach yielded different results. However, it is evident that within these male-dominated workplaces, sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship are used by the actors within these spaces, consciously and unconsciously, in attempts to maintain the status quo. Any man who does not fit the designated definition of "masculinity" for their workplace must adapt or his peers will challenge his behaviour. Similarly, women positioned in such a way that they must assess the risk vs. reward of bringing certain behaviours to their supervisors' attention, often weighing whether or not it's worth "rocking the boat" by openly challenging someone's behaviour. With my participants, the employers often did not do anything to help defuse these issues, choosing to ignore the underlying causes and treating incidents as interpersonal conflicts rather than a reflection of larger workplace culture. Some individuals may choose to challenge these procedures, but they do so at their own professional risk. The gender of an individual directly shapes their sonic experience of a space, something which they may or may not be directly aware of, but which results in an uneven experience for both men and women in their workplace.

Conclusion

Stepping onto a shop floor or the deck of any vessel makes it clear the maritime sector is still largely male-dominated. Women are in these spaces, but often in roles such as housekeeping, catering, or processing, remaining underrepresented in other areas despite efforts by training institutions and professional organizations to boost their numbers. Women who join the industry are likely to face more barriers than their male colleagues, including pressures within both the physical and sonic spaces of their work. Men are less likely to encounter those barriers as they are moving in spaces that were designed for others like them. For many, moving through these environments and encountering these challenges is a side effect of the line of work they chose and a necessary component of the professional reality. These unmarked spaces carry with them a second set of rules and regulations that others who fit awkwardly into the "default" design must learn as they go, or risk being pushed from the space for not conforming. According to Ruth Frankenburg in her work on perception, positionality, and unmarked spaces, "as much as white women are located in – and speak from – physical environments shaped by race, we are also located in, and perceive our environments by means of, a set of discourses on race, culture, and society whose history spans this century…" (Frankenburg 1993, 2). Similarly, those who are located within spaces shaped by gender perceive those environments through their understanding of discourses on gender, history, and culture. For instance, many of my participants commented that they did not think gender was "a problem", or that it was, with a few suggesting that any attention brought to gender-based workplace issues resulted in more division than resolution (Martin Interview, 2019). However, those women who entered these spaces designed by and for men were positioned to notice and comment on how the standards of treatment were different for them compared to their male counterparts, especially when they were equipped with a gender consciousness that meant they saw gender as socially constructed and not necessary rather than prescriptive of their identities.

By moving from passive observer to challenging the status quo, individuals can enact small sets of change to their environments in an effort to make their movement

easier. However, in some cases an individual will move a step further, to political actor, becoming visible as they push for change in their chosen profession. During the time of my fieldwork and initial drafts, the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements gained momentum and shifted the public discourse around sexual assault and coercion in the entertainment industry. Stories rippled out across the globe, demonstrating that this sort of behaviour is an engrained reality for many women in many professions. With this in mind, I wanted to highlight some of the individuals from my research who made the choice to become political actors in their fields. The commonality these women share is that at some point, they decided to take on an active role in changing how their workplace treated those on the periphery, and in some cases their work was successful.

Geri: Changing Workplace Culture from Within

What constitutes a problem at work depends not only on gender identity, but individual personalities. In terms of language used at work, something that some women find uncomfortable or inappropriate may not register as problematic to men or other women. This was the case with Geri (Chapters 2 and 3), who tackled the use of colloquial diminutives towards female employees at her work.

Geri had several good things to say about her experiences at Nautica Designs. The small firm was more established than others in the industrial yard where their headquarters operated, but they were expanding every year. Geri noted that this had resulted in several "growing pains", including shifts within the office culture. For her, one of the most difficult experiences came from something that, to her, seemed simple on the surface. While the situation ended up much more complicated than she intended, the outcome was a positive one.

Early on in her time at Nautica, Geri noticed that Joseph – her boss and CEO of the company – would refer to her as "baby" or "honey" at work.[43] She said his behaviour was a "generational thing" and that because she never felt he was approaching her sexually or deliberately trying to make her uncomfortable, she did not correct him. However, when

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[43]Joseph is a pseudonym.

she noticed that some of the other men in the office replicated that behaviour with other female staff, she approached Human Resources (HR) to address it.

> *…He used to call me "honey", and "baby" and all this stuff all of the time in front of the guys, and [I] noticed some of the department managers even doing that to some of the female staff… I know that, like, one of our new receptionists – she's fairly young as well – she had a problem with one of the department managers calling her that and I was just like "This needs to stop." … if you're calling me "baby" in front of some of the younger guys … he doesn't realize it, but it takes me half a step down in their heads every single time…. So, I went to the HR manager and I told her, "I'm not trying to stir things up, but I think we should have a professionalism seminar, or meeting, or reminder." … I specifically told the HR manager "Hey, I can have the conversation with [my boss], I'm totally comfortable with that, but there's like an ongoing trend that I think needs to be dealt with, and I think that we need to have like a company-wide like, professionalism reminder."*

Unfortunately, things did not go as smoothly as Geri hoped. The firm's core management team were part of the original staff that founded the company. This meant that many of the interpersonal procedures that exist in larger businesses were absent, and that (as Geri realized) instead of Human Resources handling the issue themselves, the HR manager went directly to the yard manager, who was a close friend of Joseph's, who, in turn, went to Joseph and disclosed Geri's concerns. A far as Geri could tell, the yard manager did not mean to make the situation worse, but it seemed to her that he felt it was his role to intervene on her behalf. While he had the best intentions, his actions made the situation worse for Geri.

> *He went directly to my boss and told him, from my mouth, that I was unhappy with him calling me "baby", him calling me "honey". It was this big thing [and] I had to actually go get my boss, sit him down, tell him I respected him … I had to have a private conversation on my own then as like, "I need to fix this now." I'm the one who ended up fixing it and not somebody else.*

This escalation placed the burden of resolving the situation on Geri's shoulders. Geri hoped that by going to Human Resources, they could use her observations (that other male staff were replicating Joseph's behaviour) as a jumping off point for broader change as the company continued to grow. While her conversation with her boss resulted in a change in his behaviour towards her, it did not have the far-reaching implications that she had hoped bringing it would.

When reflecting on the yard manager's decision to get involved, Geri commented that it was the closeness of the men that led him to intervene:

> *They're buddies. He actually grew up around my boss, this is like a family business, right? So, I think it was a little bit being naïve and not realizing he really upset my boss. He felt very, very bad afterwards, and ... I don't think he trusted HR to deal with it when he should have just let it be an HR concern. ... It made me upset that then somebody just kind of went to him directly and spoke for me, and then they portrayed it completely the wrong way, and then all a sudden it sounds like this huge thing where I'm like, not like "You're sexually assaulting me" but [the yard manager] felt it was on that level.*

This type of behaviour was not new from the yard manager. [44] Despite him overstepping and the resulting conflict, Geri saw a change in how the office operated. Her relationship with her manager recovered and strengthened, to the point that they "have an amazing working relationship now." She said he had stopped using diminutives when addressing her, or when he did slip up, he corrected himself immediately. She continued, "Sometimes he'll say 'honey' and then he's like, 'Oh, I'm sorry, I didn't mean to,' and I'm like, 'It's okay, it's a part of your vocabulary. What matters is that you're trying. I've never taken offense to it.'"

For Geri, the decision to step up and say something was not just for her own comfort, but for the comfort of the other women in her office. While she had her own standard of what behaviour she found appropriate and what she would let go, seeing other women treated similarly and exhibiting clear discomfort was the prompt she needed to bring the issue to Human Resources attention. Although the resulting conflict revealed many of the other issues in the office – management not trusting each other, a lack of confidentiality, and the yard manager feeling, yet again, he needed to step in on a female employee's behalf – Joseph changed his behaviour, making Geri's work life easier. She was aware that it would be a difficult issue to address in this particular workplace, but Geri's view of the firm was that it was growing and improving with every passing year. Her actions identified behaviours that could impede this growth should more women join the workforce. Geri's work on this issue actively made a difference not only to her day-

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[44] As discussed in Appearance Determines Interaction, Chapter 2, the yard manager warned the shop staff they had to treat Geri with respect prior to her arrival at the firm.

to-day experience but served to shift the workplace culture, slowly, in a different direction.

Diana: Twenty Years to Better Safety

Every profession in the maritime sector has unique daily challenges, and processing fish and seafood is no different. Diana started working in her community's crab processing plant shortly after it opened in the mid-80s, giving her over 30 years in the industry. When she spoke with me in 2019, she was intimately familiar with the variety of safety and health issues that come from that kind of work. One of the issues that impacted her personally, and which she had advocated tirelessly around for over a decade, was the prevalence of occupational asthma among processing workers.

For processing plant workers like Diana, poor ventilation and lack of Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) resulted in numerous coworkers acquiring occupational asthma – colloquially called "shellfish asthma" or "crab asthma" (Neis et al. 2005). This condition occurs from the repeated exposure of employees to airborne particles, mites, and proteins during the processing, cooking, and packaging of shellfish and crab (SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Research 2005). Prolonged exposure to these proteins can result in inflammation of the airways and lungs and symptoms similar to those related to shellfish allergies, including difficulty breathing, irritation, red eyes, and flu-like symptoms (SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Research 2005). Once an employee begins exhibiting symptoms of "the lung", the chance is high that even if they move from the site of exposure, they will continue to have breathing problems for the rest of their lives (SafetyNet Centre for Occupational Health & Safety Research 2005). According to one plant worker, "one item is more popular in employee lunchboxes than any others: inhalers" (CBC News 2019).

Over her time in the plant, Diana saw friends and coworkers developing various respiratory illnesses. Some ended up in hospital; one woman, she said, died after years of respiratory struggles. Though the union pushed for better PPE, many employers resisted calls for them to purchase equipment for their employees. That meant paying out of pocket for anyone who wanted masks or respirators to use at work. Those who could not

afford them often went without any protection at all. As discussed in Chapter 1, processing employs both men and women, though the types of work they engage in are often gendered. Men often work dockside and with heavy equipment, while women often work inside the plant, prepping, steaming, and packing. This meant that for years, occupational asthma was regarded as "primarily a women's health problem" (Neis 2000, 289), with limited resources put towards researching or resolving the issue.

As time went on, Diana began to exhibit symptoms of occupational asthma. She refrained from getting a definitive diagnosis because, she said, she could not afford to leave her job and had no other employment options if she did.

> *There's [sic] people who can't give up. They need the job. And we're all scared at home to go to work. I used to go out there and I was never diagnosed with shellfish asthma because I didn't want to be, because if I did, I had to give up work, didn't I? So, I went, and then [I'd develop symptoms, but] ... I couldn't afford to take time off to go to the hospital. I had to wait 'til into the night, then I'd go and sit in emerg [sic] all night, cuz you know what emergency's like - you could be there for one hour you could be there for 10, right? So, I'd go sit in emerg all night, by the time I get home, it's time to go back to work again. And it was hard, I mean, it was hard on the family too because they watch me coming home, and I was mentally, I didn't want to go to work. I needed to go, but in the morning, I used to say, I'd say to my husband "Do I have to go out there today? Do I need to go out there?" and [then] I said, "Yes I gotta go, cuz if I miss one hour, it could keep me from my EI in the winter." So, I'd go in there, day after day, and when I'd come home, I'd be that tired, I couldn't even get in the shower. I'd sit down on the chesterfield, and there were many nights – I get emotional when I talk about it – there was many nights that I came home and I went to bed without supper. I didn't have the energy to sit down and eat my supper.*

Diana's story is one of many, but clearly demonstrates the struggles experienced by women in snow crab processing plants. Within the plants, the gendered nature of the work limits women's abilities to move to different positions, even after they've developed symptoms (Howse et al. 2006, 164). With limited employment options outside of the plant, many women would mask or work through their symptoms because they could not afford to lose their jobs. The stress and strain they experienced going to work then spilled into their home life, with their families forced to watch as they became sicker and worked themselves to exhaustion.

Despite all this, there remained a clear divide in knowledge around the impacts of asthma on the workforce. A study by Dana Howse et al. (2006) reported that, in a survey distributed among crab plant workers, 75% of women respondents indicated they associated specific health issues, such as "shoulder pain, chest tightness, difficulty breathing, and cough" with their occupation[45]; the same study showed that more women than men believed the risks to be higher processing snow crab than other types of catch, like cod (168). As mentioned in Chapter 1, women's labour frequently appears more elastic than that of their male counterparts, which often leads management to disregard or minimize their concerns. Diana believed that if occupational asthma impacted more men than women, authorities would have investigated the cause and implemented solutions years ago (Interview 2019). However, no matter how many of her coworkers got sick (one even removed from the shop floor by stretcher), management refused to address the situation. A lack of regulation around air circulation and workplace conditions compounded the issue, leaving workers like Diana to return to jobs that they knew were, at the very least, making them sick.

After Diana became a shop steward with her union, she became more vocal. She used her position to draw attention to occupational asthma, advocating around union tables, in management boardrooms, and in the media for better workplace conditions. No matter how many government statements (Langdon 2000) or research projects (Neis et al. 2005, for example) highlighted the issue, no changes were forthcoming from the processing companies. In 2017, FFAW supported a demonstration outside of WorkplaceNL's St. John's headquarters, where workers demanded change including better oversight and easier access to safety equipment (Bartlett 2017; FFAW 2017).[46] When it came to oversight, Diana's number one demand was for the creation of a specific safety council for the processing sector. Many other male-dominated industries, including the offshore fishery, had safety councils already. These bodies established regulations around workplace safety standards and reviewed any infractions. Diana felt the lack of a

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[45] This compared to 39% of men who responded to the same survey.

[46] WorkplaceNL is Newfoundland and Labrador's employer-funded insurance system. It provides no-fault injury insurance to employers and enforces workplace safety standards across the province

processing-specific council placed processing workers at a disadvantage as there were unique issues in processing that other industries did not experience. Without a council to set regulations and hold employers accountable, change would be unlikely to arrive to the shop floor.

In 2019, days before our interview, it looked like Diana would get her wish. WorkplaceNL announced that they would allocate $1.5 million over five years towards the creation of Made Safe NL, a manufacturing and processing specific safety council. Under this council, a specific subcommittee for fish processing would "identify a plan of action to help improve unique industry OH&S issues" (Made Safe NL N.d.). Diana expressed excitement over the announcement and hope that it meant processors concerns could be addressed and that they would receive the support – from employers covering the cost of PPE to changes to their workplace environments – they desperately needed. Without the tireless work of Diana and others like her, that change may not have been possible. Despite the precarity of her employment situation and knowing that her job was ruining her health, Diana continued to fight; the reason she got involved in the union was to support all workers and push for better conditions for everyone. The fight for a sector safety council, better ventilation and PPE, and support for employees with asthma, was in the hopes of creating an environment where no one would have to suffer silently again. However, the clearly gendered nature of this work, as well as the unionization of the workplace, meant that women were able to see the harm caused by their work conditions and protected as they pushed for change. Female voices alone held little power, while other things that also impacted men changed quickly.

Roads to Change

There are individuals in every workplace who seek change in their own ways. Whether it is publicly protesting or speaking to the media, engaging with a union or labour organization, or individually having conversations (or confrontations) about the problems they uncover, these people push for change in an effort to make lives (theirs and/or others) easier. In the case of the two examples above, these women pushed for change within their chosen professions and found varying degrees of success. Of interest

is that Diana worked for a union when she began her campaign. The protection of her labour organization likely added a degree of security that meant she could be more aggressive in her approach. Geri, by comparison, faced direct repercussions to her actions of challenging the use of diminutive language in the office. Without a larger entity to navigate the situation (something Human Resources should have done), she was forced to take corrective action and minimize the damage to her professional reputation. It is therefore important to note that many of those who encounter gender-based barriers or difficulties at work may choose not to engage due to employment precarity, lack of status, and fear of repercussions. In male-dominated spaces it is often women or other marginalized individuals who are able to make these observations, and also who are punished or pushed out for bringing issues to the surface.

When speaking with people in these workplaces, however, it becomes clear that some perceive gender to matter more than others. However, these lines are not cleanly divided between men and women. Some women may not feel their gender matters in their work life or cannot recall particular instances where they received different treatment because of their gender (Fiona, Interview 2019; Margot, Interview 2019). As discussed, instances of "subtle sex discrimination… often not noticed because most people have internalized [it] as 'normal' or 'acceptable'" may be an issue for some women while unremarkable to men and other women (Benokraitis 1997, 11).[47] These circumstances are created as individuals are conditioned by their professional environment and are often connected to their own gender consciousness (Gerson & Peiss 1985) and understanding of the role they occupy. During several of my interviews, I witnessed participants unravel their understanding of gender and its impact on their lives in real time, questioning if their beliefs were rooted in their own observations or picked up along the course of their lives. However, I was also aware that during our interview, my presence as both the interviewer and a woman influenced how my participants responded to my questions.[48]

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[47] Though Benokraitis wrote those words in 1997, they echoed throughout many discussions with my interviewees, as demonstrated throughout this work.
[48] Some participants would rephrase questions or state an option and follow it up with a qualifying statement on not intending offense or not meaning to be sexist, for example.

Gender is always at play, whether the actors are actively aware of it or not. Someone's gender presentation immediately impacts the way a space receives them, what barriers (if any) they will encounter, and how they speak, behave, and move throughout their professional environment. Though some individuals may not immediately recognize a particular experience as one influenced by gender, that does not change the power that it holds. Environments designed historically to be male-dominated will contain a second set of rules and understanding that women and men who fall outside the default definition of masculinity will have to adapt or, at the very least, decode in order to successfully navigate their profession. While points of contention or tension will arise, as long as the internal structure remains the same it will be impossible for there to be lasting, true change. It is imperative that the conversations of systemic barriers and challenges continue to occur. For examples, the more articles written about a lack of retention of women within the field, the more it becomes clear something must change. An afternoon course or week-long sensitivity and inclusion workshop will not undo deep-seated issues like sonic patriarchy and cultural censorship. Refusing to accommodate or provide flexibility for employees who also have domestic and other care responsibilities will continue to push people from their careers. These issues are systemic and must be dismantled consciously over time. The work of those who push back against these norms makes small shifts in the direction of progress, but lasting change must come from every level. As long as these structured environments continue to flourish and cultures of silence remain unquestioned, gender will continue to be a consistent issue within the maritime sector.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Guide

1. Name, age, occupation.
2. What made you decide to go into this career?
   a. Probe: Family history in field?
3. Once you decided, how did you get into the field?
   a. Probe: Educational background, other training, professional development opportunities through work?
   b. Did you find it easy to integrate into your workplace?
   c. When you first joined the workplace, was it an easy social environment to enter? Did coworkers reach out to help you? What was your onboarding experience like?
   d. Did you have any negative experiences? How were they addressed?
4. Can you describe a typical day at work/Is there a typical day?
5. What is your workplace like?
6. What are your coworkers like?
   a. Probe: Gender divide: Are there more women than men or vice versa? Views on why that is.
   b. Probe: Who are your closest friends at work? (note if they are male, female, mix. Follow up on if they have friends of the other gender?)
   c. How do you get along with your coworkers? What is your workplace environment like?
   d. Have you ever had a conflict with a coworker? How did you resolve it?
7. Do you think gender is an issue at your workplace? Why or why not? In what ways?
   a. Probe: Further investigate responses following leads made by the informant, if any.
   b. Probe: Have views around gender changed at work over time? Do you have examples?
   c. Probe: Have your views around gender changed? Why or why not?
8. Do you enjoy going to work? What do you like/not like about it?
9. Do you feel like you can be yourself at work?
   a. Are there specific ways you feel you can or should act while you're at work? Why?
   b. What kind of behaviour is expected of you, if any? How do you know? Why do you think this?
10. If someone at work acts in a way that makes someone uncomfortable, does anyone speak up? Who? How?
11. Do you feel like a different person at home? How?
12. What would make your work life better?
13. Are there any issues that aren't addressed in your workplace you think should be? What are they? How?

14. If you could change things, what would you change? Why? What do you think needs to happen for these changes to occur?

Additional questions for women's advocates and union representatives:
1. When did you become involved with this organization? Why?
2. What drove you to join the union/become a women's advocate?
3. Were you always politically minded? What changed?
4. How did your family and friends react when you became more politically active at work? What about your coworkers? How did you feel?
5. Has your advocacy at work changed how you view other aspects of your life?
6. If someone makes a complaint or faces an awkward situation at work, how is that handled?
   a. Probe: Are there instances where situations have resulted in lasting change in the workplace?
7. What is the most important work you feel you do in your position?
8. What issues are the most important to you? Are they addressed effectively in the workplace? How?
9. How do you think your work has changed the lives of your peers?
10. What programs or workshops are there to support women? Can men participate? Do they? Why do you think that is?
    a. Probe: Emotional labour division. Why are women trained in these issues? Would they like to see programs mandatory for men?

Appendix B: Call for Participants (Online)

I posted this text on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn to recruit participants for my interviews. I also attached a copy of this letter to all e-mail correspondence sent to any cold contacts. A version of this was posted to my professional website, Original Shipster, with some modifications made highlighting specific professionals I wanted to speak with.

My name is Heather Elliott, and I am a graduate student in the Anthropology Department at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am conducting a research project called "Gender in Maritime Industries" for my master's thesis, under the supervision of Dr. Robin Whitaker. The purpose of the study is to examine gender consciousness and experiences in the maritime sector.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview discussing your professional experiences in your chosen field. We will discuss topics such as why you chose to enter this career, your experiences in the workplace, and if you feel your gender has or has not affected your professional life. All responses will be confidential, and all data will be anonymized prior to publication. Participation in this interview is not an employment or union requirement, and your involvement will not be reported to your superiors or other colleagues. We will conduct the interview at a location of your choice, requiring one to three hours of your time.

If you are interested in participating in this study, or you have any questions about myself or my project, please do not hesitate to contact me by email or by phone. If you know anyone who may be interested in participating in this study, please share this information with them.

Thank you in advance for considering my request,
    Heather Elliott

The proposal for this research has been reviewed by the Interdisciplinary Committee on Ethics in Human Research and found to be in compliance with Memorial University's ethics policy. If you have ethical concerns about the research, such as your rights as a participant, you may contact the Chairperson of the ICEHR at icehr.chair@mun.ca or by telephone at (709) 864-2861. You can also contact my supervisor at robinw@mun.ca or by telephone at (709)864-7451.

Appendix C: Introductory E-mails (Cold Contacts)

Hello _____,

My name is Heather Elliott, and I am a master's candidate at Memorial University with the Anthropology Department. I am currently completing fieldwork for my thesis "Gender in Maritime Industries" and would be interested in sitting down to speak with you. We would discuss your personal career, how you ended up in this line of work and your experiences in the field, and finish on a brief description of your teaching experience, how the field has changed, and any trends you've noticed.

I have attached a one-page overview of my research for your review. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Hope to hear from you soon,

Heather