SIX

Integrated Marketing Communication and Social Media

"Coordinated Management of Meaning" and Entrepreneurship

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This chapter presents a study of a young entrepreneur who created a new business using integrated marketing communication (IMC) principles without any formal training in IMC. The study is based on the communication theory, Coordinated Management of Meaning (CMM). That theory, as extended here, can be used to show the interdependence of aesthetics, social media, and face–to–face talk within the umbrella of IMC principles. Included in this case study is a brief overview of CMM theory and its application in two specific episodes of communication. The study concludes with a discussion of how CMM can inform IMC and the ethical and personal implications of social media use for personal and professional branding.

This chapter is a case study of a young female entrepreneur, hereafter identified by the pseudonym "Raquel." She created a new business selling antiques and accessories at the site of a former flea market. Raquel was 22 years old at the time of this study. She worked consciously to produce a re-visioning and rebranding of the store, including new, different merchandise and new means of advertising. She stressed the use of social media and attention to the internal organization of the store. She was also attentive to creating a style of face-to-face communication that is consistent with other features of her marketing. She said that her youth

obligated her to work hard at producing a professional image that is integrated with other aspects of her marketing efforts. Most IMC studies address larger scale businesses; this study presents a microcosm of IMC in action. Moreover, it illuminates the special problems and opportunities for a single entrepreneur of adhering to IMC principles in the age of social media. Her closely integrated sense of who she is and her now flourishing store is a continuing project. Raquel said it is inconceivable today to achieve the rebranding of self and store without the use of social media. We are particularly interested in Raquel's rebranding process because it requires close attention to social media use, aesthetic dimensions of communication, and face–to–face contact with customers. The store and Raquel's relationship to it are being created, as she said, by "her own artistic vision." This raises our curiosity about whether commitment to IMC has particular consequences for the single entrepreneur in the age of social media. This became an increasingly significant question as our work developed.

Some IMC studies are not theory-based (Torp, 2009). However, Persuit (2013) calls for exploration of how communication theory can inform IMC and for greater attention to social media in IMC research. Using CMM theory (Pearce & Cronen, 1980; Cronen & Pearce, 1981; Cronen & Chetro-Szivos, 2002; Cronen, Lang & Lang 2009) is consistent with IMC's focus on communication strategy, not attitudes (Schultz and Kitchens, 2000; Persuit, 2013; and Schultz et al. 1993). CMM is also appropriate because it focuses on multiple contexts including, as we will show, the salience of multiple contexts in a single encounter. By applying the theory to this case we also extend its application. CMM has most frequently been applied to situations of face–to–face communication. Here, it will be used to understand situations in which social media platforms play a crucial role. This extension is important because of the ubiquitous use of social media, especially by the Millennial generation. Of course, the use of social media is certainly not limited to any one age cohort. However, Raquel was very much aware that the use of particular platforms varies across generations. Raquel's emphasis on her "aesthetic vision" also required extension of CMM. Before introducing the main features of CMM theory, we need a short caveat to explain what we mean by "aesthetics." Interest in aesthetics has taken many directions, including efforts to define what is "beautiful," identify the faculty of "taste," explain the non-instrumental value of art, and many more (Schusterman, 2000). CMM takes none of these directions.

THE AESTHETIC DIMENSION OF COMMUNICATION: A SHORT CAVEAT

CMM is a theory in the tradition of American Philosophical Pragmatism. It follows Dewey's (1925, 1934) focus on the aesthetics of everyday life. All communication has both an instrumental and a consummatory [artistic] dimension. Experience comes from our human somatic experience of life in nature and within human community. The aesthetic dimension of experience refers to experience that has a unity of form, feeling, sound, and rhythm. Not all of these need to be unified at any one time for a consummatory moment. An aesthetic experience is a syndrome, not a fixed set of constituent parts.

Having a particular aesthetic experience is a learned ability to recognize a unity and the ability to respond to it. That means learning to have an aesthetic experience is also learning a set of skills. To appreciate a kind of music, for example, we must learn how to listen to it. Typically, we do not have language labels for kinds of aesthetic experiences as we do for labeling our emotions. That is the case with our young store owner. When asked if she had a word or phrase for the kind of feeling she wants her store to evoke, she said she could not think of a specific word or phrase. However, she said that when creating content, for example, she knew when the image she created fit the kind of image she wanted. She knew when a conversation had the kind of interactive feel that she highly valued. What has been said about aesthetics so far carries another implication. Objects and events have an aesthetic quality when they are experienced in public. Such experiences are social constructions, not strictly internal mental events. There can be no wholly private aesthetic, just as there cannot be an entirely private language. While all experience has an aesthetic dimension, not all experiences are particularly moving. These are situations in which elements of experience are not highly unified. Like all meaningful experiences, aesthetic experiences point into the future opening and closing possibilities. Suppose a group of civil engineers work together on a problem. Their discussions begin to take on a kind of sound and rhythm. There is growing enthusiasm and mutual respect. This makes continued team work desirable and the team may join together on other projects.

In his discussion of aesthetics, Dewey (1925; 1934) repeatedly uses the phrase "consummatory experience" and does so in in two ways. He sometimes used it for all aesthetic experience because all such experience has a unifying quality. He also used it for particularly powerful and clearly punctuated bits of experience that he calls having "an experience." In this restricted usage, a consummatory moment entails a powerful integration of hitherto discordant but important elements of experience. Because they integrate very important elements of experience, their consequentiality can be far reaching. In this study confusion will be

avoided by reserving the phrase, "consummatory moment" for such powerful and discriminable events within the broader scope of aesthetic experience. In this study we stretch the idea of consummatory moments a little—applying the idea to situations that do not include highly discordant features of experience, but do bring harmony to elements that are fragile and require support.

In two prior CMM-based studies the aesthetic dimension has been a major focus of analysis. One was a study of a police department (Cronen & Chetro-Szivos, 2002). The second was a study of communication practices in the Acadian-American community (Chetro-Szivos, 2006). The first was limited to one kind of aesthetic experience, "consummatory moments." These moments are very important but they do not exhaust Dewey's position or fully comprehend the aesthetic dimension of everyday communication. The later study included the broad somatic feel of experience that permeates the Acadian experience of work, community, and religion, but it did not require analyzing the creation of "art objects."
In neither of these studies, nor in others, do the special conditions of social media use play a significant role in the analysis. However, work in CMM has from its earliest years treated the technology of communication as inseparable from thought and content. In what follows the reader can observe and assess our effort to use CMM's basic model of communication to examine the unity of social media and aesthetics.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In this paper we address the following research questions:

RQ1: What does CMM offer to IMC?

RQ1a: Can CMM illuminate the relationship of interpersonal communication and social media use for IMC practitioners?
RQ 1b: Is CMM useful to explore the aesthetic dimension of communication for IMC practitioners?

RQ2: Does CMM identify unique problems for the single entrepreneur with an IMC perspective in the age of social media?

In the remainder of this chapter we first present a brief overview of the CMM heuristic model and the method of Circular Questions for gathering and organizing data. Next, we offer an account of the important emerging stories that the store owner, Raquel, brings to many of her conversations. These developing stories provide context for episodes of action. In the third section we present illustrative analyses of two episodes in which her stories are used, maintained, and developed. In the final section we return to the research questions and discuss further implications of the case study for IMC and for CMM theory.

THEORY AND METHOD

The theory Coordinated Management of Meaning has a view of meaning that comes from Dewey (1925), Wittgenstein (1953), and Bakhtin (1973). In CMM theory, the meaning of an utterance, behavior, or image is a co-construction. A person acts into an immediate physical situation including another person's prior act. The action one person takes sets conditions for making the next act coherent. Therefore, no action is entirely individual. The way we learn to think and feel is created in joint action. All experience is between people, not an intra-psychic phenomenon. Even if a person is behaving or reflecting with no one else present, their understanding of what they see, read or think is within contexts developed with others. Each of one's own ideas or behaviors also sets conditions for the next. You know the meaning when "you know how to go on" (Wittgenstein, 1953; Harre and Tissaw, 2005). In CMM, meaning is never finished because responsive action points into the future.

The CMM Diagram

The CMM diagram is used to suggest questions and organize data. Diagrams and partial diagrams are revised as new information is obtained by interview and observation. The diagrams are heuristic devices to help us understand how persons create experience together.

The Hierarchy of Stories

In CMM applications we describe experience as a hierarchically organized set of stories. There is no set list of stories and no universal organization. There are many ways that stories are organized for situated use. We highlight hierarchical organization for practical purposes. The hierarchy is a partial hypothesis about which story contains information another story needs to made sense. These contextual stories are not fixed. They evolve in the course of communication where they are created, developed, and/or changed. We think of experience as organized stories because a story has both detail and a temporal dimension, including a projection into the future. Beliefs are important but only as they have roles in stories. To illustrate, a participant in communication may at one moment be informed by stories about the organization in which she works, her identity, a particular relationship, and a story about the immediate episode in which she is engaged. These stories carry with them their own aesthetic possibilities. However, a particular aesthetic can only be achieved in joint action. Figure 6.1 is a hypothetical shorthand account of a person whose career story must be understood in light of his relationship to his boss. His identity story can be understood best in the context of his career. Finally, how he understands a particular ongoing episode

depends on the other stories. These broader stories inform the three short stories that make up a speech act. For such a hypothetical employee the stories of who he is and his career would be highly threatened by a change in relationship to his boss.

The Three-Part Speech Act

CMM's account of a speech act includes 3 short stories within the hierarchy of contexts in figure 6.1. Here, CMM is consistent with the idea of Mead (1938). The three parts are: (1) A person's account of the immediate circumstances into which she or he is acting. Often, this is an interpretation of what another person says. (2) An actor's account of what he or she says she is doing in response. (3) A short account of what the actor desires or expects will happen next. All of these are interpretations and choices made within the broader contexts of figure 6.1. These interpretations may or may not be close to the other person's understanding.

The Interactive Diagram

CMM analysis usually (but not always) includes at least two persons in conversation. They are linked together as each takes account of what the other says and acts into that immediate condition as shown in figure 6.2. In the figure 6.2 hypothetical episode, the boss's utterance is interpreted by the employee as disrespect. The employee's act is meant, hopefully, to elicit guilt in the boss and get an apology, but he does not expect that. The boss interpreted what the employee says as irrelevant talk about the past and hopes that putting the employee in touch with present reality will induce him to resign. However, the boss does not actually expect that to happen. The employee only understood the comment as an insult. We used this model to interpret crucial moments in real episodes.

Relationship to my boss.
My Career
My identity
The current episode.

Figure 6.1.   Example of a Hierarchical Arrangement of Four Stories. Note: Figure created by Cassandra Vinhateiro and Vernon E. Cronen

Exploring Connections in the Diagram

Using the CMM model we looked for the "logical forces" that connect elements of the model and assess their power. We looked for 5 such connections in each act.

1. Prefiguring Force: The degree to which contexts and interpretation of immediate circumstances constrain or open possibilities for interpretations, acts, and expectations.
2. Practical Force: The degree to which desire to get a particular response constrains or opens possibilities for interpretations, acts, and expectations.
3. Substantializing Force: How the process of acting affects contexts by using them in a new situation.
4. Reflexive Needs: How much a person needs a kind of response from another to develop or maintain contextualizing stories.
5. Reflexive Effects: How the responses one understands from the other sustain, develop, or change stories.

The cumulative effect of the logical forces created constraints and affordances for action. We are interested in whether a behavior or interpretation.
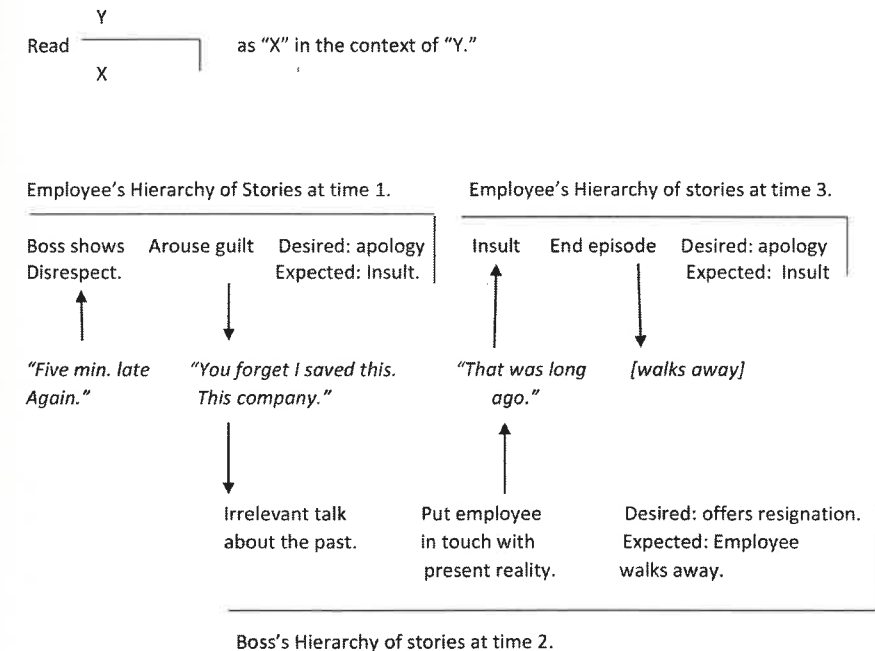

Figure 6.2.   CMM interactive Diagram of a Hypothetical Episode. Note: Figure created by Cassandra Vinhateiro and Vernon E. Cronen

tion is constrained by the contexts as used. We are also interested in whether connections are conscious, that is, whether a person can report the connections to themselves or to another.

Person Position

In CMM work we also considered "person position" for each overt act and interpretation. Person position includes for whom a social actor speaks (themselves, a business, their community, etc.). It also includes whether a person is speaking or listening from a fully immersed first- or second-person position or a more removed, reflective third-person position.

Data Collection

To obtain the data, we used a method of inquiry called Circular Questions developed by the Milan Associates (Palazzoli, Boscolo, Cecchin & Prata, 1975) adapted to CMM (Cronen, Lang & Lang, 2014).[1] The interview was conducted on April 15, 2015, by the authors acting as co-inquirers. The interview lasted about one hour and thirty minutes and was conducted at the home of the second author. The first author was a friend of the interviewee, although they had not been in frequent contact for over two months. The second author had not met the interviewee prior to the interview. Permission for the interview was obtained five days prior. The interview was recorded with the interviewee's permission.

CASE BACKGROUND AND RAQUEL'S CONTEXTUAL STORIES

Two years before the interview Raquel left the community college to which she transferred from a four-year university. Her intention had been to transfer again to a four-year university. While attending community college she had worked part-time at a small second hand store. Raquel came to enjoy learning about and working in the business more than she enjoyed formal education. She enjoyed going to antique stores with her mother and looking at one-of-a-kind items since was a young girl. When the business at which she worked was put up for sale, Raquel contacted her parents who helped her to buy the business. The business was located in a small town on the outskirts of a larger city of about 100,000 inhabitants in the southeastern United States. With the financial backing of her parents, and only about a year of experience in the business, she became manager, marketer, sales person, and owner. Guided by CMM theory, we explored the crucial stories she has about her life as a young entrepreneur. From our interview data we identified five important stories:

Intertwined Stories: Raquel's Self, Store, and Mother-Daughter Relationship

Typically, our data allows us to distinguish between stories of personal identity, family relationships, and the business in which that person works. These stories are usually related, but distinguishable. Most frequently, someone's identity story has elements in it that are necessary to understand the story of the business. For example, an identity story might have been the higher order for understanding how to be an entrepreneur and run this particular business. In this case we think making a clear distinction between Raquel's story of the business and who she is would obscure the data. They have become one intertwined, very high-level story.

Raquel at a Crossroad: Becoming an Entrepreneur

We asked time-oriented questions about how she came to be a store owner. She said that two years ago she was "at a crossroads." She said she had "zero plans for where my life was going." She did enjoy her part-time job at a local second-hand store. Like her personal life she said the store was in "[r]eally bad shape." When the store was put up for sale she decided to buy it with some financial help from her family. Realizing what a big undertaking it was, she dropped out of school. Raquel said it was "[n]othing more than a leap of faith . . . sounds cheesy to say, but I always go with my heart. I really get passionate about something. . . . Fortunately, it worked out." Raquel said she started out with just a general idea. She was nineteen years old when she purchased the business. She discussed a future in which the store may move to a larger city and after that perhaps a second location.

The Challenges of Youth

This was a major theme in the interview. At many points Raquel referred to her age as a problem. Asked about "the most difficult obstacles she had to overcome," she said, "managing the expectations of others." When asked "in what specific situations was managing expectations of others an obstacle" she discussed the problems of being taken seriously by customers and by the vendors with whom she worked. She looked young and obviously had little experience. "Being young," said Raquel, "hinders what other people think you are capable of doing, and prevents them from taking you seriously."

We asked if youth gave her any advantages. She answered that it gives her a "dual perspective." She and her mother shared an interest in antiques and hand-made items since her childhood. They went to antique shops and secondhand stores together. So "I know what someone my age wants and what someone my mother's age wants." At many points in the

interview Raquel referred to her mother and their trips to secondhand and antique stores.

The Transformation of Raquel

Raquel said, "I am nothing like who I was two years ago." She described the effort she makes to be respected. In IMC terms, she strived to integrate her ways of communicating with the identity of her new store:

> It is the small things, ya know. The average person has normal expectations and can very casually act themselves. [I must be careful about] little things, speech habits , not saying "like" all of the time. Looking really nice. I have to stretch a little bit to not only make myself comfortable but, but to make others comfortable around me.

The vendors with whom she works are typically about thirty-five to forty-five years old. Raquel dropped two vendors with whom she had continuing relationships. To do so she learned how take such actions, "[b]eing decisive without creating a reputation as insensitive." Responding to our questions about other ways she is different now, Raquel included:

"I changed the way I talk to my friends."

"The things that are important to me are very different now."

"I get up in the morning on time."

"What I get all depends on me."

"Always being on time."

Raquel summed up her situation and said, "I am a better person now." Raquel expects to continue maturing and becoming a well-respected business person.

Constant Self-Awareness

Raquel puts great stress on being "[s]elf-aware, extremely self-aware." Asked how she would describe herself now, her immediate response was, "[s]elf-aware, very self-aware." Indeed, she said, "It would be better if everyone was more self-aware." But she also said, "it's hard sometimes. I am so young."

Personal Continuities

There are, of course, important elements of continuity Raquel recognized in her life. Raquel described herself as always being "a really visual person." She remembered how, as a child, she enjoyed making scrapbooks and collages. She said she has, "an eye for what looks right." Her interest in antiques and one-of-a-kind second hand things was also part of her experiences with her mother. Since she was a young child she liked

to look at catalogues and still gains inspiration from them. "If it looks great, I really want to have that. I am a visual person, hands on."

The Transformation of Self and Store

About one year after taking over the business, Raquel rebranded the store and herself. The store's new name was carefully chosen to show the change from a "flea market look," to a more "sophisticated business." The building itself is not attractive. It is not an old mansion, just a 10,000-square-foot metal building; In coping with what changed, she made sure that the merchandise was attractive and the store was so organized that the building did not distract. She has been very successful. Her store changed from a marginal business just surviving to a thriving business. A typical sale used to be about five dollars. Now, it's fifty dollars.

Reflecting on how Raquel presented herself aesthetically during the interview, she was professionally dressed, seemed approachable, and not stern, rigid, or tense. She was eager to tell her story with an engaging style. When she began to talk about dealing with vendors her demeanor changed. She became more upright and had a more authoritative tone of voice. We were struck by the fact that all of the personal transformations Raquel made were in response to her new position as the store owner. The store is an extension of her and she is an extension of the store.

Raquel's Story About Her Relationship with Her Mother

The kind of entrepreneur Raquel's becoming makes her sense of being her mother's daughter more and more salient. She frequently refers back to times they used to shop together for secondhand treasures. Her mother was highly pleased with what Raquel was doing and very supportive of her. As we will explain later, Raquel saw much of her mother in the kind of older customer she wanted to attract. Raquel expects that in the future her relationship with her mother will continue to be strong as her career is based on a common interest. However, as we will show later, this story is threatened by her concern for managing her identity in the age of social media.

Raquel's Story About Her Customers

Raquel said at one point, "I am my ideal customer. If I see something I like and I want to have it, I will get it for the store." At another time she said that her mother was her ideal customer. This was no contradiction. She developed her aesthetic sense with her mother and referred to her often. She purchased an item for the store that she believed her mother would like. Raquel was making a major effort to attract more customers her mother's age because they have more financial resources. It was evi-

dent how the higher-level context of relationship to her mother informed Raquel's story about the kind of older customer she wanted.

Raquel also wanted to attract customers who shared a love for interesting, one-of-a-kind items, similarly to her and her mother. Such customers, like herself, would be "[i]nterested in where an item came from and who made it." An ideal customer would be one who comes back and has a story to tell about having the item in her home, how it is used, and how a guest commented on it. The stories need not be greatly significant. The point is having a story to tell and sharing it with Raquel. Raquel hoped to attract more such customers who will enjoy the experience at the store and tell others about it.

Raquel's Story About Social Media

Raquel recognized the importance of social media. She was also aware that social media made it very difficult to separate herself from the store and nearly impossible to have a life outside the store.

Raquel said, "Nothing is as effective as social media and you don't have to play around with it long to realize it. " It is crucial to have, "A constant on-line presence." Instagram allows for the rapid addition of an item to a page so that a customer can see the item and come right to the store before another person purchases it. "Everything has to be really fast." She had a web page but did away with it. Instagram allowed her to create a catalogue of inventory in real time. "Customers want to know what you have and how much it is, they want to see a great picture of it and then they want to come in and get it." The store has one-of-a-kind items, so there is a sense of urgency when a prospective customer sees something they like. Instagram was the platform that she said works best for creating the aesthetic she wanted to present. She can stage an item, take a picture of it on her phone, and use the photo editing features on the phone and on Instagram to create a great picture. She posts pictures on her Instagram page to Facebook. Facebook reaches an older, larger, and wealthier audience. Most of her customers are reached by Facebook.

There was a negative side to social media presence for Raquel. We asked Raquel how she kept a boundary between her business life and her social life. She said, "It's hard." This was a phrase she repeated. Her problem was not limited to having a posting on social media meant for one person being sent to others without her knowledge. Raquel was highly aware that anything she said face–to–face can be rapidly spread by social media. When that happens something she said can appear in a context she cannot control and the changed context can change the meaning. Boyd (2014) calls this the problem of "collapsing contexts." Because she is the face of the store, she feels she must be constantly aware that all of her own actions must be consistent with what IMC calls the "branding." She avoids presenting herself in a way that undermines the image

she wants to present. This is especially important to her, she said, "Because of my age." Her self-monitoring extends to all of her relationships. She said she must constantly monitor what she says face–to–face at a family dinner, to her friends, and to her boyfriend. As a result, Raquel goes to her family home less frequently and has less contact with her mother and other family members. She has little time for her boyfriend and must be careful what she says to him. Listening to Raquel's account of self-awareness and constant self-monitoring, we are keenly aware of how vulnerable she thinks her stories are.

STORIES IN ACTION: TWO EPISODES

Having insight into someone's stories is important. However, stories are created in joint action and are developed, changed, and amplified in joint action. Raquel was well aware of that so she monitored carefully how she responded in all conversations. In this part of our paper we show how Raquel's stories are used and developed in two episodes. Both of the episodes are related to the aesthetic dimension of communication. The first episode includes what Dewey (1934) calls a consummatory moment. It explores a conversation that Raquel identified as one of the kind that gives her "the most joy." The second is selected because it offers a theory-based account of constructing an art object. This entails communication without a live respondent.

Episode 1: A Consummatory Moment in Experience: Making More Than a Sale

In Raquel's stories about her customers, she emphasized episodes in her store in which stories were exchanged about a purchased item. The story itself need not be remarkable. What was important to Raquel was to join in telling a story about the item that makes the episode more than just a simple business transaction. This kind of episode has an aesthetic feel that she desired and that feeling is intrinsic to the episode going as she wanted: Raquel and her older customer created a conversation about where the item came from, who made it, how Raquel came to have it, how the customer will use it, and what they both liked about it. Aesthetically, this episode has much of the visceral feel Raquel remembered from many episodes talking to her mother about an item they came across together years ago in a secondhand store. This episode also has the comfortable feeling of being competent and respected while conversing with this older customer.

Nearing the end of the episode, Raquel experienced a "moment of joy" that Dewey called "a consummatory moment." In Dewey's words, that kind of moment was identifiable as "an experience." It a part of the episode having a beginning and an end. In Bateson's (1972, 1979) termi-

nology, the moment of joy is a punctuation within the episode. A second feature of a consummatory moment is that it harmonizes various stories. In this case the stories are not discordant, but they are very much in-process, vulnerable, and vital to her. Their integration means that the vulnerability of the highest level context creates vulnerability for all. Their harmony needs reconfirmation and development for this young entrepreneur and her new store. Raquel must show in this episode that she is knowledgeable, mature, and shares the older customer's interests and can talk in a way they both find comfortable. In other words, her self-presentation must be integrated with the look of the store, the merchandise, and the social media posting. The harmony she needs to create is not simply a matter of logical fit. It is deeply felt. An important feature of a consummatory moment is that the harmony points into the future, creating and possibly closing opportunities (Dewey,1925). Here, the future is hopefully one in which Raquel and the store are successful. The episode is one in which the older customer acted very much like her mother. That mother-daughter relationship is maintained and harmonized with other stories in that consummatory moment. For the more immediate future, the customer may return and will tell her friends about the store and Raquel.

Now, we look at this episode in detail using the CMM heuristic to organize our data. The diagram in figure 6.3 is a "systemic hypothesis" that can be modified by later research. A middle-aged customer came into the store and told Raquel that she was interested in buying a cabinet Raquel posted on Instagram and Facebook earlier that day. After examining the cabinet the customer came to the store counter and told Raquel that she wanted to buy it. She handed Raquel her credit card and the episode began like this:

Customer:	"I just love this cabinet. I am so happy it is still here. I saw it on Facebook. [Tentatively] Do you know where it came from?
Raquel:	"Yes. It came from a nineteenth century mansion in rural Indiana."
Customer:	[Excited] "Do you know who made it? I have never seen one like it."
Raquel:	" [feeling a moment of joy]. Yes, I do. It was made by. . . ."

Hierarchy of Contexts

In figure 6.3 the fragment of dialogue appears in italics running horizontally between the context indicators for Raquel and for the customer.

Raquel's contexts are above and the customer's below. We will start with Raquel's contexts at the top. (See figure 6.3.) As Raquel joined in the conversation, her highest context is her intertwined story of the store and who she is. In figure 6.3 we refer to this highest context by the shorthand reference: "Evolving Store—Identity Story." The next level of context is Raquel's story about her relationship to her mother and then in descending order, stories about ideal customers, this customer, choice of media platform, and the emerging episode. The episode evolved with their conversation in a way Raquel desired it to. It moves into the right aesthetic feel. It involved the content and embodied responsiveness that Raquel wanted. It did not start that way, but it rapidly evolved as Raquel and the customer created both the episodic content and ambiance in responsive joint action.

Speech Acts

Next consider the particular speech acts. Look at Raquel's "short stories" in figure 6.3. These data are the result of taking Raquel through the conversation, asking how she interpreted each act, her own and those of the customer. Raquel interpreted the customer's first question and tentative style as both a request for information and a test of her competence. In Raquel's responsive act she said she provided information, showed her knowledge, interest, and maturity. The response Raquel desired is for the customer to show confidence in her by asking more about the cabinet and no longer being tentative. The customer's next act was, according to Raquel, a show of confidence in her knowledge as much as it was a request for more information.
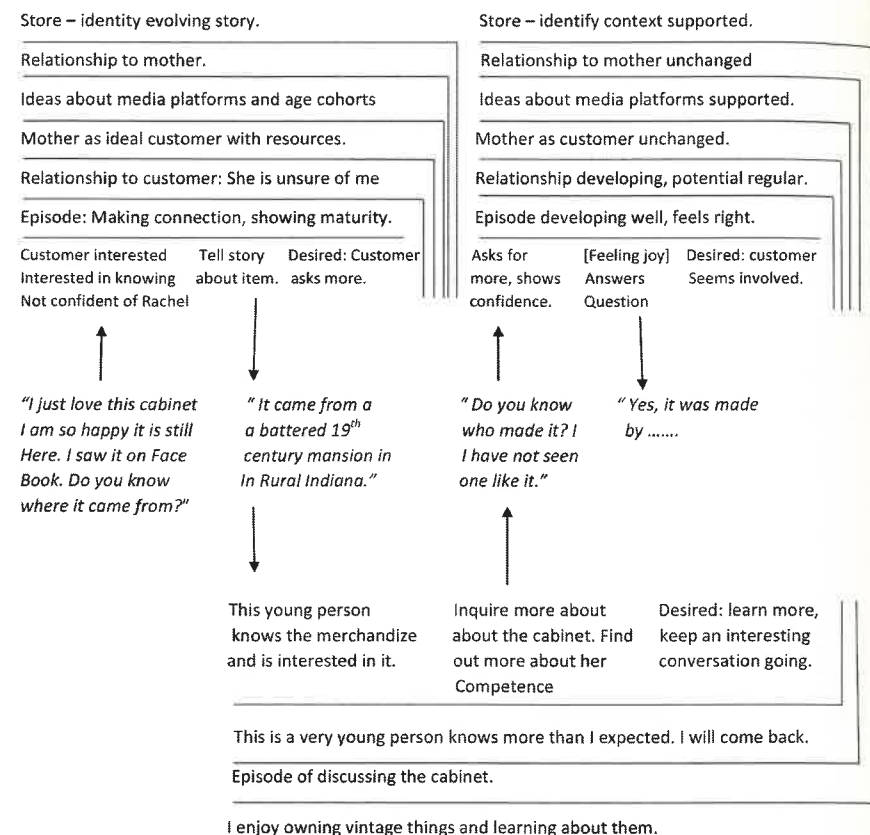
| Store – identity evolving story. |
| Relationship to mother. |
| Ideas about media platforms and age cohorts |
| Mother as ideal customer with resources. |
| Relationship to customer: She is unsure of me |
| Episode: Making connection, showing maturity. |

Customer interested	Tell story	Desired: Customer
Interested in knowing	about item.	asks more.
Not confident of Rachel		

"I just love this cabinet   *" It came from a*
I am so happy it is still   *a battered 19th*
Here. I saw it on Face   *century mansion in*
Book. Do you know   *In Rural Indiana."*
where it came from?"

This young person   Inquire more about   Desired: learn more,
knows the merchandize   about the cabinet. Find   keep an interesting
and is interested in it.   out more about her   conversation going.
                                                    Competence

| Store – identify context supported. |
| Relationship to mother unchanged |
| Ideas about media platforms supported. |
| Mother as customer unchanged. |
| Relationship developing, potential regular. |
| Episode developing well, feels right. |

Asks for	[Feeling joy]	Desired: customer
more, shows	Answers	Seems involved.
confidence.	Question	

" Do you know   *" Yes, it was made*
who made it? I   *by ...."*
I have not seen
one like it."

| This is a very young person knows more than I expected. I will come back. |
| Episode of discussing the cabinet. |

I enjoy owning vintage things and learning about them.

Figure 6.3.   A Consummatory Moment In A Sales Episode. Note: Figure created by Cassandra Vinhateiro and Vernon E. Cronen

In a study devoted to assessing the success or failure of a sales person's participation, we wanted to interview the customer as well and examine more closely their interpretations, stories, and logical forces. Here we are inferring them from what the customer said as shown in figure 6.3.

Logical Forces

To more fully explain how the theory points us to connections, we need to describe what is happening with reference to the logical forces described earlier. Raquel's stories about herself, the store, ideal customers, this customer, and the episode at each moment "prefigured" Raquel's interpretations of the customer's immediate and desired future acts. She listened for signs that the customer had or did not have the right image of her. These connections strongly obligated the kinds of responses Raquel gave and could not give. They prohibited showing disinterest,

appearing uninformed, being tentative or showing immaturity. Raquel said she has worked diligently to "eliminate using the word 'like' so much." In her language choices it is obligatory for her to act so that she is taken seriously as someone who shares the customer's passion for the item by responding with information in a way that shows her enthusiasm. These contexts, particularly the "Identity-Store" context, prefigure the aesthetics dimension of her responses as well as their instrumental dimension. Raquel's responses were strategic. They strongly articulated to the kinds of responses she wanted to hear. This is what in CMM we call "Practical Force."

Raquel's story of herself and the store are vulnerable stories, therefore there was a strong "reflexive need" to sustain them. The customer's responses reflexively supported the development of Raquel's still vulnerable stories, especially the highest level one. That is the "reflexive effect." Raquel felt support for the evolution of her own and her store's identity. In addition, the responses supported Raquel's stories about customers and the way she hopes the episode will develop. Raquel's response to the customer's second comment provided two things. It answered the next question and, in doing so, facilitated Raquel having that "joyous [consummatory] moment." Notice that Raquel cannot have this experience unless her postings attract customers like this whose actions and responses reflexively confirm and develop important stories. The fact that this middle-aged customer learned about the store and the cabinet from Facebook supports Raquel's ideas about media platforms. It is probably the fact that responses support a vulnerable and very high-level story that facilitated the consummatory moment. As shown in figure 6.3 reflexive effects from what the customer says also facilitated Raquel's developing a story about this particular customer. The middle-aged woman may now be a future customer and store promoter as well as a pleasant conversation partner in the future.

Responding to each new customer and situation developed Raquel's abilities for participating in episodes like this. Her abilities developed as she responded to new customers. Raquel also sees herself as still developing her abilities. No two customers and no two conversations will be exactly the same. The more Raquel deals with customers, the better equipped she will be for the next situation. She learns and develops her stories in the course of using them. This is "substantializing force."

Person Position

Raquel reiterated at several points in the interview that she has learned to be "self-aware" during almost every episode. She monitored herself from a third-person position. However, to feel the aesthetic experience, she must at moments take a first- or second-person position being

fully immersed in what is going on. The movement from one position to another is a crucial skill for aesthetic experience.

Consummatory Moments and the Future

Like all events in the process of communication these moments have the quality of pointing into the future. They are distinguished from emotional experience by their lack of a clear linguistic label and by the power and scope of their consequences. In this case that future is the continuing path of development for Raquel as an entrepreneur, as an individual, and as her mother's daughter. She does this with increasing self-confidence and increasing ability to create more such moments of joy. Without these consummatory moments her work might become a regimen that is too difficult to bear.

Joint Action Focus

The customer was a necessary part of this episode. Without advertising that reaches and attracts customers who share her interest in these items and can afford them, such episodes could not happen and no support for Raquel's still fragile stories would be provided. Notice that the customer's first hesitant comment containing a question creates a space for Raquel to show who she is. The aesthetic dimension of the customer's next response facilitated Raquel responding in an enthusiastic way. If the customer asked nothing, it would be harder for Raquel to respond as she does in the style she used. Of course, the customer's responses were facilitated by what Raquel said and by the contexts the customer brings to a moment of conversation. The customer's story about Raquel and the store seem to develop in the course of the conversation.

We could do an equally detailed analysis of the customer and what the customer brings to the conversation by interviewing her too. It is inferred from the customer's change in tone and continuing inquiry that her story about Raquel is changing as she hears Raquel's enthusiasm and knowledgeable responses. However, our purposes are served by the partial analysis we have presented, focusing, as it does, on Raquel.

Forms of Life

From a CMM perspective it may be important to consider multiple episodes. Sequences of episodes are what Wittgenstein (1953) called a "form of life." Raquel told us about a moment of joy when on one Saturday morning she looked out her store window and saw her very large parking lot filled with cars. Raquel told this story with excitement and enthusiasm. She called her brother and sent a picture to him on her

phone, "All these people taking time out of their Saturday mornings to come to my store!"

Episode 2: Creating Material for Social Media: The Artist and the Art Object

We included this episode to illustrate how CMM can be used to understand the creation of an art object when there is no human respondent. Dewey (1934) described creating a painting or a sculpture as a process much like any other instance of communication.

The artist acted out of a context that guides their actions and responses. These contexts may include a mental picture of the finished work, a desire to please a patron, being consistent with the product branding, identity as a great artist, and so on. Each act such as a paint brush stroke, a cut with a chisel, or a move on a computer screen takes into account the larger contexts and the mark just made. Together with the larger contexts, it creates conditions for the next act (prefiguring forces). Each move is made to facilitate the next (practical force). Each move in the artistic creation needs to facilitate the development of the object (reflexive needs). Of course, it can either develop the original plan or give the artist a wholly new vision of what to create (reflexive effects). The artist's skill developed as she worked out of and into these contexts (substantializing effects). The artist may also take a step back to look at the developing work or choose to view it from a different angle (person position).

Raquel Constructs an Art Object

Raquel had a new item to sell, a bureau. She knew that in her business success depends on rapid turnover, so she acted quickly to add a picture of it to her Instagram page and then posted it to Facebook. The following is a typical episode in which she crafted the addition to the Instagram page (see figure 6.4). She used her phone to take a picture of the cabinet. How she managed the photo before posting is influenced first by her broader contexts of experience.

The highest level of context included the integrated stories about her own and the store's identity (the brand). Also important is her story about ideal customers, who they are and what they would like. That story contained some strong prohibitions (logical force) on what can be shown. Concerned about her age, she will not take a photo that has her own image in it and her own image is absent in all previous postings. Concerned about the look of the store, her photos will show as little of the inside of the store as possible, and no image of the outside of the store. On the constructive side, Raquel brings to the moment of posting her aesthetic sense, including her self-description as an artistic person. That sensitivity is part of who she is and what the store is. Raquel did not have

a name for the aesthetic she seeks, but that is typical of aesthetic experience. Aesthetic experience is powerful but largely ineffable. The desired aesthetic must be shown more than said. Raquel understood what fits her aesthetic and what does not.

A second level of context, subordinate to the highest one, is Raquel's sense of her customers. Recall that for her, she and her mother are the ideal customers and they share an aesthetic vision. How will the photo look to them? How would her mother respond to it? Someone looking for a mass-produced item such as could be found at Target would not be attracted to the page Raquel is creating for this item.

Raquel had posted a photo many times before. She knew the order of action (the episode) with which to create the posting. These three levels of context together informed Raquel's choice of Instagram as the media platform on which she will create the image. Choosing Instagram is a crucial part of the creative episode, just as a painter's choice of oils or water colors are intrinsic to his or her creative action. In our account of Raquel's story about social media we quoted Raquel as saying that in the act of creating the image she has a feeling of power; she can create the image of the store.

Like a painter, Raquel tried different ways to sight the camera and manage the image. Her aesthetic sense guided the way she took and managed the photo of the new bureau. When she took the picture she chose the position of the cabinet and the angle of the camera. Using Instagram she has many options to choose, including lighting and cropping. The options are why she uses Instagram. Instagram is intrinsic to the kind of episode she wanted to create. It is no mere channel for moving an inner idea to an action. There could be no such episode without Instagram and her phone. Raquel's mental images of the finished product are inseparable from her experiences with Instagram, Facebook, and her phone.

Each time she looks at the image in her camera and makes a change she does so in the light of the broad contexts, how the image presently looks, what she will do, and how the image will change in response to each of her actions. A moment from this episode can be diagrammed as in figure 6.4.

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Our first general research question (RQ1) was, "What does CMM offer to IMC?" An IMC marketing plan sometimes involves representatives of an organization engaging in face–to–face conversation with clients or customers. CMM offers a way to analyze conversations in a way that explores the multiple stories that persons create and use in conversations. Such case studies can show where and how such conversations succeed
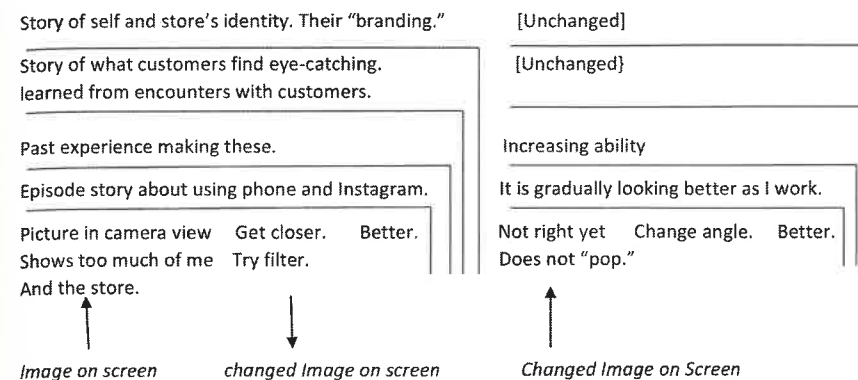
Figure 6.4.   Creating a Artistic image as Interaction. Note: Figure created by Cassandra Vinhateiro and Vernon E. Cronen

or fail. In CMM-based work the meaning of a brand and other aspects of the sales message are co-constructions not fully under the control of any one participant. This provides a stronger focus on the co-participation of marketers and customers in the construction of meaning called for by Finne & Gronroos (2009). The hierarchical feature of CMM invites the exploration of what stories customers may have that lead to a particular understanding of what the representatives say. It is a tool for asking whether there are high-level stories that must change before stories about a product or business can change. It also directs us to explore the processes of communication that perpetuate those stories. CMM case analyses can supplement the more general findings of survey data to assess the effectiveness of an IMC plan and can also be used to develop the plan. Within an organization the CMM approach can be used to explore what stories employees have that inhibit their willingness to come "on board" with the IMC plan.

CMM is not limited in application to interpersonal situations. In an earlier study, Cronen (2004) showed how CMM can be used to study persons watching television. It is similar to examining how Raquel created an art object, responding to something that does not talk back.

Whatever the media, whether the focus is inside the organization or outside it, CMM directs attention to the future. For example, in creating a media campaign ask what stories would you hope viewers will tell about the product after viewing advertising material? How would we want the story to be different? To whom would they tell it? How will the change in context affect the next exposure?

CMM includes the idea of "substantializing force" which, along with "reflexive effects" directs attention to how the people responsible for creating the IMC plan are changed by the experience. In our case study

the process of creating social media content involved change in the producer herself. In classroom teaching of IMC this learning is stressed as part of the educational process. However, outside of the classroom it is also important to consider how engagement in the creation of an IMC campaign functions to foster learning in the organization (Senge, 1990). Is the process of keeping everyone "onboard" the IMC plan promoting what Thorstein Veblen (1914) called, "Trained Incapacity," or does the process promote an openness to learning beyond the techniques involved in a particular campaign?

RQ1a was, "Can CMM illuminate the relationship of interpersonal communication and social media use for IMC practitioners?" The ability of CMM to do this is illustrated in both case studies. Social media can attract people to face–to–face communication as shown in Case Study 1) Ideas promoted on social media can become contexts for face–to–face talk. Of course, one–on–one communication is carried on using social media all the time. The adaptation needed is to take into account the unique features and norms of particular media platforms and how they enter into the conduct of an episode.

RQ1b was, "Is CMM useful to explore the aesthetic dimension of communication for IMC practitioners? We have demonstrated how this is done in both case studies. No one need tell marketing professionals that the aesthetic dimension of communication is important. In this paper we showed how important it can be to create consummatory moments in experience. In case study 1 we emphasized their importance for the sellers, however, we could have focused on the buyer by inquiring into the aesthetics of her conversations with friends about her purchases. Did she have some "consummatory moments" when she showed her purchase to friends? Are these moments important to her so that she will come back to the store that sold her the object? Clearly some ads do show viewers how neighbors may react when they see the new car and how they themselves may feel when they see that reaction. Concern for aesthetics and for the promotion of creativity are related. If members of an organization find work boring and repetitive, they are not engaged in stimulating, creative work. As Dewey (1925) once said, the enemy of art is not science or technology, it is the humdrum.

There is much encouragement for young people as individuals to strike out on their own as entrepreneurs. RQ2 was, "Does CMM identify any unique problems for the single entrepreneur with an IMC perspective in the age of social media? For our young entrepreneur, surely it does. When one person is the integrated face of the organization, her or his reputation and image are vulnerable to the spread of unwanted text, pictures, and so on. We worry about whether Raquel's concern for collapsing contexts—loss of control of where words and images will go—is taking the richness and joy out of life, costing her many important kinds of relationships. Hopefully, over time, she will have sufficient confidence

in the reputation of her store, herself, and their image so that a single problematic tweet or image will not be a catastrophe for her. Perhaps, over time, her new style will become second nature to her so she will need less self-monitoring. At the time of this study, however, in Raquel' own words, "it's hard." [2]

NOTES

1. An full explanation of the interview method we use is beyond the scope of this paper. However, it is available elsewhere. (See Cronen, Lang & Lang; 2014.). Circular questions are so named because they make connections among people and among their stories and acts. The user takes a stance of curiosity. In addition to generating data for CMM systemic hypotheses, these questions are used to reframe actions and thereby open spaces for creative change. For example, suppose an organization member and her colleague gets into an argument over how to develop an IMC plan. Someone using Circular Questions might try to change the negative stories they use by reframing aggressive acts of mutual criticism in the negative stories. One kind of reframing might be to describe the intensity of the disagreement as an expression of how much they both care about making a good decision. Future-oriented questions might include, "If this argument continues for a week, how will that affect the company and yourselves?" The diagrams help us identify where to focus reframing efforts. With Circular Questions the goal is making new connections, not finding out who is right and who is wrong. If a better pattern of conversation is created, the question of who is right becomes irrelevant.

2. As a joke we discussed with our colleagues the possibility that we had discovered a new "mental disorder" to which we gave the Latin name, "Ruentis Terroris Contextibus" (terror of collapsing contexts). Later we discovered anecdotally that Raquel is not the only person tightly limiting their conversation because they fear collapsing contexts. Sherry Turkel (2015) like Boyd (2014) reports a concern among many users of social media about how their social media messages may be disseminated, leading to a reluctance to communicate. Our work suggests an extension of this idea to include face-to-face communication because that too can be reported by others via social media.

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