In the corporate backstage, the taste of revenge: Misbehaviour and humor as form of resistance and subversion

Cintia Rodrigues de Oliveira Medeiros
Universidade Federal de Uberlândia – Uberlândia/MG, Brasil

Rafael Alcapadipani
Fundação Getulio Vargas – São Paulo/SP, Brasil

RESUMO

Nos bastidores corporativos, o sabor da vingança: *Misbehaviour* e humor como forma de resistência e subversão

Recentemente, foram divulgados vários casos de funcionários de corporações que adotaram postura inadequada em relação aos clientes, sinalizando que esses eventos são comuns e não raros. Neste artigo, foram entrevistados funcionários e ex-funcionários de redes de *fast-food* e de *call centers* com o objetivo de conhecer suas narrativas sobre os bastidores corporativos, focalizando a literatura sobre mau comportamento (*misbehaviour*) e humor como forma de resistência nas organizações. A análise aponta para duas narrativas principais: "a vingança é um prato que se serve frio" e "o cliente não é o rei".

Palavras-chave: mau comportamento, humor, resistência.

Cintia Rodrigues de Oliveira Medeiros, Professora Adjunta da Universidade Federal de Uberlândia (CEP 38400-000 – Uberlândia/MG, Brasil).
E-mail: cintia@ufu.br
Address:
Universidade Federal de Uberlândia
Faculdade de Gestão e Negócios
Avenida Segismundo Pereira
Santa Monica
38400-000 – Uberlândia, MG – Brasil

Rafael Alcapadipani, Professor Adjunto da Fundação Getulio Vargas (CEP 013332-000 – São Paulo/SP, Brasil).
E-mail: rafael.alcapadipani@fgv.br

1. INTRODUCTION

In this research, we focus our analysis on organizational situations that occur in corporate scenes that have become public recently, raising discussions that these situations do not consist of isolated events, but rather frequent. We do not bring here prescriptions on what to do to avoid this, but rather we seek to contribute to the study of bad behavior and humor in organizations as a form of subversion and resistance.

Bad behavior or misconduct organizational and organizational misbehavior are terms used to refer to a set of intentional conduct of employees that contradict to what is prescribed by the organization, as well as social standards (Vardi & Wiener, 1996) and dysfunctional attitudes, or the conduct that can be expected when the stated organizational values are not a decisive factor (Sagie

et al., 2003). In this research, we agree with the definition of Thompson and Ackroyd (1995, p. 2), to whom misbehavior is "anything you do at work that should not do". It is important to make clear that, for these authors, the subject of misbehavior is not part of the management team neither directory, but rather is the common employee.

Humor in the workplace has been discussed from different perspectives (Carrieri, 2004; Fineman, Gabriel, & Sims, 2010; Furtado, Carrieri, & Bretas, 2014; Irigaray, Saraiva, & Carrieri, 2010; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006; Westwood & Johnston, 2013; Wood, Beckmann, & Pavlakis, 2007) and among them, it has been used for the discussion of this research, the prospect of Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) that humor can be an expression of dissatisfaction with work or with the organization, especially when other forms of resistance can cause retaliation if these forms were adopted.

Thus, we assume in this research, being the humor a form of resistance when other forms are not available, since there may be reprisals, the average employee in the work behind the scenes, acts in a way it should not act. Still, we assume that, to subvert the order or the organizational standards, the ordinary employee often acts in a creative way, causing laughter among his co-workers behind the scenes. To illustrate, we mention the publication of *Exame* magazine, in its online version (see Melo, 2014) on "8 business crisis caused by pranksters employees", in which the most recently video shows the Burger King employees having fun inside the water tank of one of the restaurants of the corporation in the city of São Paulo.

Our goal with this research is to know the stories of employees on corporate scenarios, to contribute to the discussion of bad behavior (misbehavior) and humor in organizations as a form of resistance. We adopted as a technical procedure to gather empirical material interviews with employees and former employees of fast-food and calls centers chains and as analysis technique, we use the narratives analysis, specifically thematic analysis.

We began the article promoting a dialogue between the study of organizational misbehavior and humor in organizations as a form of resistance and subversion. We then describe the technical procedures of the research, the stories told by the interviewees and our analysis of those events. We ended the article with our concluding remarks, presenting a research agenda on the issue.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL MISBEHAVIOR AND HUMOR IN ORGANIZATIONS: RESISTANCE AND SUBVERSION

The object of study of the field of organizational behavior has focused on questions like how to develop and maintain employee's behaviors according to the expectations of accomplishment of organizational goals. On the other hand, the bad organizational behavior (organizational misbehavior) or poor organizational conduct (misconduct) is defined by negative conduct in the workplace, and although it is a common phenomenon in everyday life of organizations, it was marginally approached in organizational studies by social scientists and administration experts (Freitas, 2005; Thompson & Ackroyd, 1995). However, since the first studies on the operation of organizations, this phenomenon has been present as part of the dark side of the organizations. Taylor (1903), for example, noted some workers practice that he described such as goldbricking (when the worker performs less than he could perform) and this is also a kind of a practice that is present in the scope of the definition of that term.

It´s possible to say that organizational misbehavior is an opposition to organizational behavior according to some authors of this field of study. For example, Vardi and Weitz (2004, p. 3) refer to organizational misbehavior as "intentionally actions in the workplace that are considered a violation of the rules of these type of behaviors". Similarly, Giacalone and Greenberg (1997) argues that these are actions of employees that contradict expectations and organizational standards. According to Sagie *et al*. (2003), they refer to behaviors that can be expected when the stated organizational values are not a decisive factor. Likewise, Sprouse (1992) mention that these are actions which employees should not do while at work and Thompson and Ackroyd (1995, p. 2), similarly to Sprouse (1992), describe this situation as "anything that you do at work that you should not do".

According to Vardi and Wiener (1996) literature review of organizational misbehavior (OMB), this phenomenon is an intentional behavior in most of the research. These authors define OMB as "any members of organizations´ intentional action that defy and violate (a) organizational rules and expectations, and/or (b) values, moral and standards of social conducts" (Vardi & Wiener, 1996, p. 153). Therefore, we emphasize that the definition of these authors considers three important aspects: (1) the term organization, in this context, does not refer to an organization in all, but a unit, a sector or a specific area; (2) errors, failures, mistakes, unconscious negligence do not constitute OMB; and (3) the level of analysis is individual and it is not focused on a group or organization.

The term chosen by Griffin and Lopes (2005, p. 988) is "bad behavior", and refers to "any form of intentional behavior (in opposition of accidental behavior) which is potentially harmful to the organization and/or individuals who belong to the organization". These authors also review the literature on organizational misbehavior, but focusing on four types: deviant, aggression, antisocial behavior and violence, once these points have received more attention from the researchers overall.

The set of behaviors described as organizational misbehavior comprises those that threaten the interests and welfare of the co-workers, the organization as a whole and the stakeholders: arson, fraud, sabotage, discrimination, bullying and sexual harassment, corruption, substance abuse (narcotics), threats, violation of privacy, espionage, revenge, robbery, withholding

information (Ivancevich, Konopaske, & Matteson, 2013) and other similar things. Ackroyd and Thompson (1999), however, by exploring the organizational misbehavior, delimit what they consider as part of this phenomenon. According to the authors, the term refers to the ordinary employees behavior and not to the management team and directors ones, once the authors consider the difference of sources of resources available between these two groups.

As Thompson and Ackroyd (1995) admit, organizational misbehavior is similar to the definition of Sprouse (1992) who understands the meaning of the term as sabotage. This is a rational behavior resulting from the reaction of an individual to its environment and it is defined, according to Crino (1994, p. 312), as a behavior that is intended to cause "damage, to disrupt or subvert the organization's operations in order to give priority to personal purposes of the saboteur, while generating unfavorable publicity, embarrassment, production delays, damage to property, destruction of the labor relations or harming employees and/or customers''. The literature about sabotage points five possible reasons to explain why the workers engage in such practice: impotence (lack of power, therefore the workers use sabotage to take the control); frustration (to intervene in achieving or maintaining the goal); facilitating the work (to make the activity easier to perform); boredom/fun (the workers generate excitement or fun in order to eliminate boredom); and injustice, (once they believe they have been treated unfairly, they seek for advantage that benefits themselves), by the way, this last reason is the most common factor to explain this phenomenon (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminkec, 2002; Schrijver, Delbeke, Maesschalck, & Pleysier, 2010).

However Bies and Tripp (1998) and Bies, Tripp and Kramer (1997) that will associate revenge as a reason for the individual to engage in organizational misbehavior and sabotage or retaliation (Greenberg, 1996). These authors suggest that individuals engage in misbehavior as a form of revenge against someone, that somehow has mistreated them. McLean Parks (1997) deepened the studies about revenge in organizations, exploring it in a perspective of internal justice and the standards of reciprocity in which organizational evaluation of justice and injustice are based. According this author, the consideration includes revenge as "a justice mechanism available to the relatively powerless", and has the ability to "restore justice due to a variety of source of injustices: obtaining less than expected or deserved (distributive justice), being a victim to unfair rules (procedural justice), or be mistreated (interpersonal justice)" (McLean Parks, 1997, p.114).

Harris and Ogbonna (2006) approached the sabotage services, tracing the differences of sabotage in the manufacturing sector and therefore advocate that the studies cannot be generalized for both sectors, once the antecedents and consequences should be searched considering characteristics of each. They argue, for example, that in the manufacturing sector, sabotage aims to affect the company or co-workers, while in the service sector,

the target is the customer/consumer. All that because, in the manufacturing sector, sabotage stops production, negatively affecting the operations and performance of the organization; in the service sector, however, negatively affects the customer/consumer.

The antecedents of organizational misbehavior was also study object of Vardi and Wiener (1996), which classify them into individual factors (personality congruence between personal and organizational values, strong sense of loyalty, personal circumstances and dissatisfaction of the needs by the organization) and organizational (opportunity, repressive control system or not, organizational culture, organizational cohesion and organizational goals). However, the authors admit that because of organizations differentiate themselves in terms of contextual conditions, task and levels, the propensity of individuals to engage in misbehavior may be affected according to such elements.

Resume these definitions is important for the fact that, although the bad organizational behavior has not received deserved attention from researchers and prankster, there were a proliferation of concepts, constructs and definitions that might prevent a more solid empirical and theoretical development (Griffin & Lopez, 2005). Furthermore, many words are ambiguous, which can result in inadequate or inconsistent theoretical arguments and empirical findings. In this sense, we assume, in this article, as Thompson and Ackroyd (1995), the organizational misbehavior refers to something that ordinary employees should not do at work, individually or in groups, excluding illegal and criminal conduct.

Another aspect that deserves further development is the association between misbehavior and resistance. While Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) distinguish the two terms, arguing that the misbehavior is included in a different behavioral structure in workplace if compared to the resistance, Hodson (2001), Vardi and Weitz (2004), Collinson and Ackroyd (2005), Contu (2008) and Karlsson (2012) make a connection between misbehavior and resistance. As stated by these authors, organizational misbehavior can manifest as resistance mechanism against management practices that hurt the dignity at work and cause employee dissatisfaction, or as a form of power performed by subordinates (Collinson, 1994) or when the control of the work process is in evidence (Spicer & Böhm, 2007). These mechanisms assume the form of sabotage, standard operation, and other practices that make daily life a bearable work (McNay, 1996).

The organizational misbehavior as a resistance form can still manifest humorously, as shown in Taylor and Bain (2003)'s research, in which humor was used by the employees of two call centers, as a deliberate strategy to ridicule the way of management in order to undermine his authority. Although the humor is defined as something or someone that makes a person smile or as any message that is created with the intention of being funny (Pearce & Hajizada, 2014), Holmes and Marra (2002) and

Ostrower (2015) note that there is no general theory about humor and there isn't even an agreement on its definition. However the specific literature about this theme agree that humor is a common element in human interactions and it is usually associated with intelligence and creativity (Romero & Cruthirds, 2006; Teehan, 2008), once it is a type of lubricant or glue for social interactions and contributes to social processes, reduces stress, creates a positive atmosphere and enhances group cohesion (Holmes & Marra, 2002; Ostrower, 2015; Westwood & Johnston, 2013) and also humor can be useful for creating identity and a sense of control (Pearce & Hajizada, 2014; Westwood & Johnston, 2013). The social nature of humor is comforting because through this, at the same time, you can accept and reject the situations which the person must deal (Hodgson, 2005).

The idea of humor as resistance is a popular theme in studies about humor, for example, the description of the carnival culture in the Middle Age written by Bakhtin is an example of the theory of humor as resistance (Weaver, 2010). Bryant (2006) describes the humor as an ideal form of symbolic resistance because the joke, with its ironic tone and ambiguous messages, become dismal and it is also difficult to discover its content, therefore it is harder to occur retaliation considering this situation. Politically, Pearce and Hajizada (2014) have researched how political opposition groups have used humor as a tool on the internet in Azerbaijan. The internet is a fertile field for dissidents that use humor as a tool, once they create cartoons, videos, memes and others. Ostrower (2015) analyzes narratives of Holocaust survivors and identifies their ability to use many types of humor as a defense mechanism to deal with the atrocities that they suffered. This author discusses the functions of humor, classifying them into: aggressive function of humor, sexual or scatological function, social function, defensive function and intellectual function. About the social function of humor, Ostrower (2015) points that every expression of humor is unique and it depends on the socio-cultural background of the group members, therefore all the analysis about humor should consider the socio-cultural context.

On the other hand, studies make a connection between humor and pranks and forms of resistance, focusing on the humor generated by the employees while they develop their work in order to subvert the order (Collinson, 1988; Collinson, 2002; Contu, 2008; Holmes & Marra, 2002; Linstead, 1985; Rodrigues & Collinson, 1995, Schoneboom, 2007; Taylor & Bain, 2003; Westwood, 1984;Westwood & Johnston, 2013), thus when the organizations context is considered, "humor is not joke" (Wood *et al.*, 2007). Holmes and Marra (2002) note that humor can also be used to attenuate the threat deriving from an order, a challenge or a criticism, moreover, in the workplace, where differences of power and authority are part of the interactions, humor constitutes a useful strategy to criticize someone or to challenge an order in an acceptable way. Korczynski (2013), for example, when researching the frontline work in hotels, found that managers used to advert employees to

take care when they deal with abusive and harassing customers in order not to offend them. The author also found that many employees, especially women, used humor to mediate the tensions in these kind of situations because they felt unable to directly confront with the inequalities and disrespects that they were submitted. Thus, it is in this sense that we emphasize the association between humor and organizational misbehavior as forms of resistance and subversion in organizations. This association is possible, once humor is a "double-edged sword" (Malone, 1980), therefore, it exposes inconsistencies, contradictions and paradoxes (Hatch & Ehrlich, 1993).

When Westwood and Johnston (2013) discuss the state of the art and impressions of humor in organizations and in the workplace, they claim that researching and theorizing about the humor in organizations was not a priority on their agenda in the Management field and Organizational Studies and its production has been limited. The authors point out that the rationalist and functionalist assumptions that dominate the field of study may have facilitated the negligence of humor as a phenomenon of study. However, this view has been questioned by interpretive and criticism approaches, and, in recent years, there is an emerging interest in humor and comedy as part of organizational life.

Analyzing the field of Organizational Studies, Carrieri (2004), Westwood and Johnston (2013) distinguish the work on humor and highlight two approaches. The functionalist perspective, prevailing in the countryside, which contains analysis with the "aim of promoting humor as another administrative tool to increase control of the job satisfaction" (Carrieri, 2004, p. 31). This approach exploits the advantages that the use of humor promotes to the achievement of the organization's results, leading it to its engagement as a management tool, particularly in the areas of marketing, advertising and communication (Westwood & Johnston, 2013). Within the functionalist perspective, Westwood and Johnston (2013) distinguish studies that are guided by the benefits of humor on health and well-being as well as to the effectiveness of group work, through the use of humor in the constitution of organizational subcultures, in the processes change, and also by its influence on the social structure. That's because humor is also used to reinforce power relations, and, through this point of view, Holmes (2000) notes that humor is also used to decrease power differentials between groups, and so, equalize or erode power relations and hierarchical structures.

The second approach has a critical character centered on the idea that the power of the humor is related to its ability to reveal contradictions, absurdities and consequently, the ambiguities" (Carrieri, 2004, p.31), or, according to Westwood and Johnston (2013), it is a perspective that recognizes the subversive potential of humor. Westwood and Johnston (2013) understand that the humor in the interactions between organizational members cannot be contained, despite the intentions and management interventions to control it.

Representatives of the functionalist view of humor, Malone (1980), Dandridge, Mitroff and Joyce (1980), Duncan (1982; 1985), Linstead (1985), Romero and Cruthirds (2006), among others, recognize a mutual relationship between organizational culture and humor, pointing to the role it plays as a reinforcement mechanism of culture. Duarte and Duarte (2009) illustrate the functionalist view of the humor by researching its influence on customer services and on the satisfaction of the hotel industry client, pointing to a direct relationship between good humor, job satisfaction and quality.

The requirements of functionalist view ignore that humor in organizational behavior is negative most of the time, influencing negatively on the daily work of individuals and groups (Wood *et al*., 2007). All of that because there is an ambiguity inherent in the humor that helps to subvert the resistance that people often feel when they are criticized because the person that has being criticized can laugh with the individual, making a joke or a funny comment (Holmes & Marra, 2002; Romero & Cruthirds, 2006). Westwood and Johnston (2011) illustrate the ambiguity of humor and their ability to contribute both to the maintenance of social order and power performance, and at the same time, for resistance and subversion. Carrieri (2004) explains that a person's ability to embrace the humor to highlight contradictions and ambiguities enhances the strength of the actors involved, protecting them from possible retaliations.

Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) challenge the functionalist perspective that humor is an enabler for productivity and show that humor can be used as a way of expressing dissatisfaction with work, especially when other forms of resistance can provoke retaliation by the managers. From this perspective, just as Ackroyd and Thompson (1999) designate the misbehavior, the authors refer to the humor expressed by the operational level workers, not management level. Studies indicate to the direct humor contributions to the explicit forms of collective resistance in organizations when the hierarchy and the official corporate discourse are object of deep and constant satire (e. g. Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999; Rodrigues & Collinson, 1995) and to the implicit forms when the forms of humor are also based on an implicit criticism of the hierarchical social order (Korczynski, 2011; Westwood & Rhodes, 2007).

Also in this direction, Sorenson (2008) states that the use of humor in oppressive situations can have large influence the perceptions of the public. Pearce and Hajizada (2014) note that humor has been used long ago as a tool against oppression. To Clery (2014), humor is performed by subversion of realities, gender limits and power relations, and the satire and parody are types commonly used. Furtado *et al*. (2014) associated resistance and humor analyzing videos posted on the internet by employees to express their hostility to the company's conduct in dismissing employees and adopt outsourcing. In the case studied, the authors of the videos were able to give new meaning to the company discourse, ridiculing it in a disguised form, thus reducing the potential confrontation. Outside the organizational

environment, Andreasson and Johansson (2013) analyze blogs where women with expertise in fitness share their knowledge, identifying that humor and irony are used as a way to question the normative constructions of masculinity, and thus enable female athletes, which is characterized as resistance.

Without associating the humor with the resistance, Wood *et al*. (2007) classify the humor in four categories, one of them is approached in a negative way and is addressed to the other, not to himself, which is called aggressive humor or rude humor. According to the author, in this situation, the person shows a lack of preoccupation or respect to the others exhibiting rude and vulgar behavior or through miserly and sarcastic comments. These authors understand that humor thereby classified represents an attack on the identity of the individuals who are members of target groups of jokes, for example, the ones with ethnic nature, and it can be used to include and exclude members of certain groups. This kind of humor and its consequences have received little attention by the organizations' literature (Wood *et al*., 2007), therefore it implies an unawareness of a common organizational phenomenon that causes impacts on individual, groups and organizations.

A gap indicated in the field of Organizational Studies related to humor is pointed out by Wood Jr. and Caldas (2005): the people's reactions to the jokes and humor. These authors approach the appreciation of humor, illustrating "how humor can be used to generate meaning to a specific professional category and understand how the members of this category react and respond to such criticism" (Wood Jr. & Caldas, 2005, p. 90). Considering the research, the professionals was consultants and, in general, the results indicated that they realize the jokes addressed to them as an illegitimate source of criticism, which leads to reactions of frustration, impotence and denial.

The relationship between organizational misbehavior and the other different types of humor such as irony, sarcasm and satire, was established by Ackroyd and Thompson (1999). According to these authors, these forms of humor are organizational misbehavior that can criticize management initiatives. Anyway, considering the meanings of resistance of the humor, the main point to be considered is if the humor helps workers to fight against the effects of the alienation, while they also articulate the knowledge of alienation. Thus, the association between organizational misbehavior, resistance and humor, in organizations field, not only expands the understanding of the organizational context but also enhances the discussion of interrelated topics such as culture and power.

3. THE RESEARCH: DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS OF THE EMPIRICAL MATERIAL

Technically, this is a qualitative research, once we deal with social realities of interpretations (Bauer & Gaskel, 2002) and as we use the interview mediated by electronic form to join empirical material. As the theme of this research is a taboo, in

other words, it is not often present on the agenda of academic discussions, it requires some attention when joining material for analysis because the respondents will be exposed and it could compromise them or even the company, which they have worked.

Therefore, our respondents are anonymous, persons nominated by colleagues and students, who answered only two questions by filling an online form, which an accessible link was sent by email. We received 48 nominations and we establish contact with 28 people. Of those people, 12 said witness such stories, but refused to expose them; 3 never witnessed or staged situations like these, and 13 agreed to participate on the research. The first part of the form contains a summary of ten cases (Figure 1) recently made public the following question: (1) Can you tell us behaviors like these that you have seen or performed at work? And the second part include an issue in order to know the reasons that could be considered for that event to happen: (2) Could you tell us the reasons that led people to adopt such conduct? We chose to ask the 13 interviewed only the company's field of activity in which they work without any concern for socio-demographic characteristics, considering the nature and purpose of this research.

1		**"Mattress" of buns at Burger King** Turn a pile of buns for burger in a kind of mattress also cost a warning to an employee of the Burger King in Japan. Last August, the boy would have published the photo on Twitter by the user @inotayuta. The account has been deleted, but the image remained circulating in the social network. The network argued that the buns were discarded and the employee received a "severe reprimand" by the post (Melo, 2014).
2		**"Loser and whiner" from Claro TV** A bad prank that also caused two officials of Claro TV their jobs. Last November, they had to leave the company after changing the name of one of client from the state of *Mato Grosso do Sul* to "loser and whiner" in his account. Shortly before receiving the account with the "nickname", the customer had called asking the operator to reduce his monthly payment (Melo, 2014).
3		**Licked dish at Taco Bell** Taco Bell also had to fire another employee who published a photo in which he licked tacos at restaurants of the corporation in the United States. The image was massively broadcast to the web and caused a reputation crisis in the company. In a statement, Taco Bell said the tacos had been used for training of a new plate and had been discarded. The picture would have been made for an internal competition, in which employees should show what the customer reaction to try the dish for the first time. Licking food, however, went beyond the rules (Melo, 2014).
4		**Lettuce trampled at Burger King** In the United States, Burger King also had image reputation problems caused by employees "pranksters". In 2012, one of the restaurant's employees posted on the Internet a photo that appeared she stepping on lettuce that would be served in sandwiches. The image was followed by the caption: "This is the lettuce you eat at Burger King". In response, the company fire three people involved in the incident (Melo, 2014).
5		**Food contaminated at Subway** Two employees of Subway in Columbus, in United States, were fired for posting photos of food contaminated on Twitter last July. One of them appears putting his penis in the bread at cafeteria and the other displays a bottle with a yellow content with the caption: "Today at work I froze my pee." In an interview with the Huffington Post, Ian Jett admitted the incident but said he made a "joke" to put their private parts on bread, in his house, not at Subway. As for the frozen urine, the author of the action said he did that in the store (Melo, 2014).
6		**Mashed potatoes licked at KFC** In February of last year, an employee of a KFC restaurant in Louisville in the United States also wanted to "play a joke" on customers of the fast-food chain. She posted a picture licking a bowl of mashed potatoes on Facebook, but ended up in a bad situation. The clerk was just fired, along with the colleague who made the picture. The KFC claimed that the food was not served, according to the Huffington Post (Melo, 2014).

Continued...

... continuation

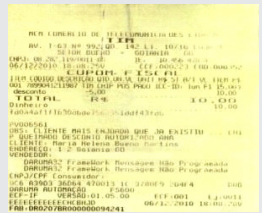|		
7		**Woman asks snacks and receives note with observation "picky client" in Brasilia** The executive secretary Daniele Sampaio had a surprised to receive two snacks that called for telefood in Brasilia. The request came with a stapled note on cardboard bag with the following observation: "Pay close attention to the order: picky customer". The restaurant owner sent a message to Daniele through social networks apologizing for what happened and offering courtesy for her to return to the restaurant. Jeremias César Neto said he felt embarrassed, but are sure the clerk, who worked for about eight months in the restaurant, did not intend to offend her (Morais, 2014).
8		**Swimming pool at Burger King** This week, a video circulated on the Internet of Burger King employees having fun in the water tank of one of the restaurants of the corporation in Sao Paulo. The "bath" was a procedure (outside the standards, of course) of washing of the tank, the company said. Those responsible for the "joke" was fired (Melo, 2014).
9		**Domino's Pizza: Adulterated food** Two former employees of fast-food Domino's Pizza chain were arrested on Wednesday (15) in the United States on charges of appearing in a video on YouTube, messing the food before giving it to customers. They were charged with distributing adulterated food [...] In the video, Michael Anthony Setzer, 32, appears putting the cheese of a sandwich in the nose and sneezing on a meal, among other eschatological actions. A colleague Kristy Lynn Hammonds, 31, filmed the scene (Folha.com, 2009).
10		**TIM: The most annoying customer who ever lived** TIM's employees also made a "joke" with one of their customers. The case occurred in November 2010, but had only judicial settlement last Friday 29 where Maria Helena Bueno had to buy a new sim card, due to the malfunction of her own, but had to go back to exchange it some other times. A bad joke was played, when consumers noticed on the cash receipt an observation rather unpleasant, "the most annoying customer who ever lived." TIM, after a contact made by the UOL website said that repudiates such conduct and offers training to employees (Tudo em Tecnologia, 2013).

Figure 1: Summary of Conduct Characterized by Misbehavior and Humor

Source: Folha.com (2009), Tudo em Tecnologia (2013), Melo (2014) e Morais (2014).

For the analysis of gathered empirical data, we conducted the analysis of narratives, as Mishler (1995). This analysis was guided by the following elements: (1) the event; (2) the players; and (3) the reasons, resulting in two themes that reflect the reasons why the misbehavior is adopted by employees: (a) revenge; and (b) take control. When we analyze the issues, we find two main narratives that present the next session.

4. THE CORPORATE BACKSTAGE: THE STAGE, THE ACTORS AND THEIR STORIES

We assume, in this research, the theatrical metaphor for the analysis of organizations. This metaphor is used to emphasize the similarity between organizations and plays, mainly because both are characterized by the interaction between actors and their audience, when inspired by Goffman (1959). In this research, we use this metaphor because we consider that people engage in social experiences and develop scripts and alternative characterizations once they are not passive spectators and therefore they can change the spectacle. It is based on this idea that we analyze the narratives of respondents, who we attribute common names, once they have not been identified.

4.1. Revenge is a dish best served cold

An important aspect in the definition of organizational misbehavior (Ackroyd & Thompson, 1999) is the subject who is not in the managerial structure of the company. Similarly, the narratives that have been demonstrated here refer to ordinary workers, who do not perform a managerial position. This aspect may indicate that the reasons why employees engage in this kind of behavior are, in fact, revenge or retaliation because they feel they have been treated unfairly, as well as Bies and Tripp (1998) and Bies *et al*. (1997) associate revenge to the reasons of the adoption of bad organizational behavior. Considering the stories told by the respondents of this survey, revenge is a recurrent theme that is present in the responses about the reasons why people engage in bad organizational behavior in both types of companies: fast food and call center.

Darci, research participant, was not a protagonist of any event as such, but he witnessed a situation that he considers interesting:

> I've never been protagonist of anything like this, however, an interesting situation occurred and I witnessed it. Once, my co-worker attended a woman customer who was angry because she didn't want to receive telemarketing phone calls offering changing of telephony plans. She said he were extremely boring and she advised him to find out a dignified profession and stop importuning people. The employee began to discuss with the customer saying that he was just working and claiming that it was his job... After a few minutes of quarrel between them, the employee got angry and hung up the phone. To revenge from the ignorant customer, the employee started to call her again, for 5 in 5 minutes, and whenever she answered he hung up the phone and started the process again and again. He kept this attitude over 2 weeks. To make matters worse, the employee changed the customer's plan, which used to cost R$40 a month, for another one that used to cost R$180 a month. He did everything without the permission of the customer. After two months, he canceled the customer's telephone line so she could not even use the same number again.

The customer mentioned in this situation accuses the employee to have a not dignified profession, ignoring the importance of this kind of job for the society. When he heard words that belittle the work he performs, injuring his dignity, the employee engaged the bad organizational behavior because he was treated badly, provoking the customer with attitudes that could make her even angrier. Not always, the choice of work is free, but the customer did not consider this point, blaming the employee for being in that function. According to Darci's point of view, that fact was remarkable because the employee was engaged in bad behavior for two months, showing that he took the control of the situation. In this case, revenge was used as an interpersonal justice mechanism (McLean Parks, 1997), in other words, the employee acted like that because he was mistreated.

In Darci's words, "I understand this reaction as a form of 'revenge' indeed". Many reasons are consider explaining why employees engage in such behavior. Revenge, a reason found in several studies (Bies *et al.*, 1997; Bies & Tripp, 1998; Skarlicki & Folger, 2004), emerges as a need for subject's response that feels, somehow, wronged, and then, even behind the scenes, or we could say, in a non-visible place for those who could take reprisals against him, acts causing laughter in the audience, who are the co-workers who share and, in some way, are colluding, perhaps because they wanted to do the same. Collinson (2002)

uses the term "comedians community" to refer to employees that, to make work tolerable, laugh at the colleagues behavior.

The stories told by Ariel, Edmar and Darly also characterize the organizational misbehavior associated with humor and resistance. The humor in this context shows another sense of organizational misbehavior, which is not the deviation from the norm, but the possibility of revenge, payback for the treatment received. In Ariel's narrative, the misbehavior occurred when customers complained "more aggressively", which makes explicit the revenge against what the protagonists consider mistreatment (McLean Parks, 1997).

> A friend who was a waitress in a period that she has lived in the US, has gone through this situation. A customer treated her badly because of her accent, and said the fish was raw. She returned the order to the kitchen and could not help but crying. The rest of the staff in an "automatic" way grabbed the fish and threw it on the floor. They played soccer with the food and then they heated it up in "old fat." The customer did not notice anything wrong (Edmar).

Cases like these are recurrent in the food sector, which is revealed both in the reports that was served to illustrate the research and also in the interviews. The waiter, upon receiving the complaint, "warns" the kitchen staff, so, there is an established code signaling when this type of revenge must be used. And undoubtedly, it provokes laughter in the audience watching in accomplice way the revenge, because it is an implicit resistance to hierarchical social order (Korczynski, 2011; Westwood & Rhodes, 2007), both as the client in the case of narrative Edmar, or even the manager, as Ariel's narrative.

> A friend who was a waitress in a period that she has lived in the US, has gone through this situation. A customer treated her badly because of her accent, and said the fish was raw. She returned the order to the kitchen and could not help but crying. The rest of the staff in an "automatic" way grabbed the fish and threw it on the floor. They played soccer with the food and then they heated it up in "old fat". The customer did not notice anything wrong (Edmar).

Edmar emphasizes, "The customer does not notice anything wrong", which makes the situation funnier, in the spectators' point of view. The customer was ridiculed just among employees, which reduces the potential confrontation (Carrieri, 2004).

> When I have worked at (company name), it happened with a salad sold to a customer! When the customer was eating the salad, there was a whole insect on a lettuce. There was a complaint and the

customer turned out to sue the company. The salad is already packed and the staff just put it in the container to be served!! However, they served with the insect (laughter) ... (Darly).

Darly tells the case that witnessed laughing. In this case, the salad served with an insect does not seem to be by chance because Darly even says that the salad comes already packed.

Rosimar, research participant also understands that this is for revenge, "one of the main causes is the job dissatisfaction. That kind of attitude seems to me as a 'revenge'". Moreover, the other respondents also have the same view as, for example, Ariel explanation:

> On regard to what causes a person to do such thing, I believe it is a revolt (feeling of injustice, bad salary) that people have when they feel undervalued in the workplace, either by their superiors or direct customers (Josimar).

Both customers and managers and the company itself are target of such behavior. That is because employees use humor as a strategy to resist the sense of alienation that the type of work causes, and not only managers, but also the customers contribute to such behavior, according to the respondents.

Revenge is manifested in the organizational context for several reasons, particularly when another type of protest is not possible. McLean Parks (1997), on the study of the art of vengeance in organizations, pointed out that this is always seen as a negative and destructive act committed by deviant, what he does not agree, because, for the author, revenge and misbehavior, are not always dysfunctional, by contrast, can be constructive. This research is centered on the idea that this is one of the mechanisms available for those who have fewer resources of power, therefore, the constructive character of revenge lies in the possibility of the avenger be considered powerful and a winner.

5. THE CUSTOMER IS NOT THE KING

Another recurring narrative in interviews is the phrase "the customer is NOT the King", which is present in the story told by Juraci.

> I work in a call center, and, once, my co-worker said bad works to a customer, like "fucXX yoXX". We laughed the customer because he got angry (Juraci).

In the services sector, as in this research, the impact is not on the production, but on the customer (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006). The aggressive treatment performed by the employee, as reported by Juraci, caused laughter in the audience, even not being a joke, but an aggression. Moreover, this is because, in

this case, humor is not consequence of the aggressive behavior of the employee (Wood *et al.*, 2007), but the customer reaction.

The protagonist employee of Juraci's narrative caused laughter in her co-workers, expressing hostility against the premise of the company: the customer is the king. This characterizes that such official discourse is object of satire and as a form of resistance to this discourse, the workers seek to develop a new meaning to the discourse (Furtado *et al.*, 2014), that is: the customer is not always right.

In addition, according to the story told by Dagmar, customers also are not kings, being called boring and treated with bad words. It reflects that the dissatisfaction of employees takes place both by working conditions and the way customers behave.

> The supervisors of the organization that I jobs are always doing nothing. They do not help with the operation and leave the work to the operation's helpers who are very overworked. Yes, they say that customers are boring people and sometimes they say bad words to them (of course, without the presence of the customer). All the administrative workers, who work within the operation, complain about the annoying customers, especially when this one want to talk to the supervisors. Then these supervisors make "angry face", claiming that the operation's employees does not know how to solve customer's problems. They use the cell phone all the time and when someone ask for information, they do not know how to inform (Dagmar).

According to the respondents of this survey, employees adopt this type of behavior because they are trying to subvert the established order (Westwood & Johnston, 2011; Westwood & Johnston, 2013), even in the backstage: "I believe it is an 'overturn'. The customer is not the king. He never was it" (Juraci). Dagmar has ever worked in a call center and in a fast-food chain and recognizes that "many times, the employee is treated by customers as 'someone who has nothing to do' or 'someone who is there to perform as a machine', therefore the customer forget that they are dealing with workers who are performing functions" (Dagmar).

> Many times, the employees receive mistreatment by the companies where they work because of negative qualities and these attitudes, though incorrect and reprehensible reflect, in fact, the extreme, the last straw of indignation and revolt against their customers or even against their employer (Lucimar).

Lucimar admits that bad behavior is an improper and reprehensible conduct, however, it reflects the resistance against the premise imposed by the company that indicates that the customer is always right. It happened in the research

of Korczynski (2013) about the front-line work in hotels, where workers used humor to deal with situations involving abuse and harassment by customers, because their managers used to guide them not to offend the customers. According to the following report, Iris reaffirms the pressures suffered by workers in call center companies, which can be understood as an explanation for the recurrence of bad behavior. Thus, it is possible to recognize that misbehavior is derived from individual and organizational background (Vardi & Wiener, 1996).

> I would like to affirm that I don't recommend this kind of work [call center]. Although these are decent professions, of course, they expose the worker to many physical, psychological and emotional pressures that, in many cases, end in negative episodes for the company, the customers and the person involved (Iris).

This justification pointed out by respondents was also found in the researched literature, for example, Vardi and Wiener (1996) recognized the dissatisfaction of personal needs realized by the organization as an antecedent to misbehavior. As Holmes and Marra (2002) pointed out, humor is used to attenuate the threat of an order in the workplace, where hierarchical differences are part of social relations. When individuals realize the mistreatment performed by their managers, and including by the customers, their expectations for their future in the organization deteriorate, therefore the engagement in bad behavior is potential.

Harris and Ogbonna (2006) understand that the sabotage in services can be an employee's secret way for equalization against the actions of management team. Sabotage is not represented in the stories told by Iris, Lucimar, Dagmar and Juraci, however, when someone refers to a customers using bad words in the backstage it characterizes a similar action, which has the same nature, once the discourse that affirm that "the customer is the king" is a form of management manipulation directed to employees in order to make them feel disqualified and have a sensation that they are vassals of the client. The effects of the utilization of humor, when it generate bad behavior, can impact the perceptions of the general public about the organization (Sorenson, 2008). Research about sabotage activities suggest that the need for approval and compliance with the group is related to deviant behavior (Harris & Ogbonna, 2006), which also occurs with other types of misbehavior, for example, when employees bad-mouth the customers and say them bad words.

The resistance in the organizations context, takes on a multidimensional feature, emerging in different ways in various contexts, having become familiar in the contemporary workplace. In this study's case, the resistance is configured as a creative way to reduce stress at work (Holmes & Marra, 2002; Ostrower, 2015; Westwood & Johnston, 2013), to revenge the injustices and bad perceived treatment, not as a legitimate means of challenging managerial authority.

The narrative "The customer is not king" illustrates how bad organizational behavior may be motivated by the desire for power and control. Vardi and Wiener (1996) point out that information and communication technologies creates opportunities for misbehavior, emphasizing that hackers use computers for fun, to satisfy curiosity, to gain control, among other reasons. Nadir tells a story whose plot features misbehavior adopted in order to take control, to deny helplessness or powerlessness, with the use of computers and information technology.

> In a training program of a credit card company, employees accessed the card of an influential client, worldwide. Because it is a very important person, it was found that his card was accessed, where was accessed and by whom. A few days later, a committee of this important person was at the credit card company to have it out about what happened. After that, several information security policies were strengthened, and the entire team that was in training was fired (Nadir).

Nadir explained that in this case the employees engaged in this type of behavior in order to show that they were in control, although they were motivated by curiosity and the ease of access.

> In this case it was the curiosity associated with ease of access to important people information. Even if we have to sign a customer information confidentiality agreement, people are curious to know more about famous or well-known people, like, to show they are in control. This company, in particular, has a specific area to address these most important credit cards, however, everyone has access to credit cards [...] (Nadir).

Therefore, "the official, who was in 'state of submission', use these devices to 'take back control' and 'impose himself or herself'" (Valdeci), reversing the hierarchical positions of the subjects who feel unhappy and wronged, at least, in the corporate backstage. Still, achieving this feat cause excitement in those involved, which, in addition to overcome the feeling of helplessness, it also eliminates the work boredom and, above all, entertains the audience applauding the actors that transform the spectacle more interesting than the script. Moreover, this way of dealing with these situations protects the individuals against possible retaliations (Carrieri, 2004). After all, these actors have challenged the masters of the stage and changed their experiences, producing a show that subverts the hierarchy of power (Westwood & Johnston, 2013).

In general, employees have adopted the organizational misbehavior intentionally (Crino, 1994; Vardi & Wiener, 1996) and humorously as resistance mechanisms, against the central propositions of Rodrigues and Collinson (1995) and other authors (see Westwood & Johnston, 2013) that humor is common in contemporary workplace and is used as a form of subversion of the established order. That is because, in the respondents' point of view, working conditions are unfair: "Overworked, low pay, over-charging, little rest" (Iris); because they feel powerless to react against oppressive orders: "A lot of pressure, which ends up leaving most employees stressed" (Edmar) and "superior orders to work very fast, thus losing the quality of the products!!" (Nair), and also as a form of revenge against the company, "I believe that maybe (the cause) may be the way to how the company treats its employees" and against customers: "The customer is king? So let's see what the king eats" (Lucimar).

The conducts expressed in the respondents' narratives oppose the functionalist view of humor, which ignores humor as a negative influence on the individuals and groups daily work (Wood *et al*., 2007), and this presents a way of subverting the order (Westwood & Johnston, 2013). The expressions of humor according to the respondents' narratives are unique, and as such, are linked to socio-cultural context in which they occurred (Ostrower, 2015).

Overall, the humorous way in which employees reacted, both in the reports of respondents and in the announced reports, enhanced the resistance against the standards and pressures in the workplace, not caring about those that suffered retaliations that in many cases was dismissed from their job. This finding is constituted in an interesting aspect that should be further studied in the literature that relates bad behavior, humor and endurance.

6. FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT MISBEHAVIOR AND HUMOR AS A FORM OF RESISTANCE IN ORGANIZATIONS

The dialogue proposed between the studies of the organizational misbehavior, humor and resistance, in this research, allowed the analysis of social experiences of actors who, motivated by a desire for revenge or to have the situation under their control, they engaged in modify the scheduled entertainment according to corporate objectives, even for a restricted audience. Given the results of the research, we made some considerations presented below.

In this article, we present narratives of employees on corporate background of fast-food and call center chains in an effort to contribute to the discussion of misbehavior and humor in organizations as a form of resistance. In corporate background, a non-visible place to the public and even to management, employees engage in misbehavior for various reasons, the most frequent being revenge against the company, or against the client and the desire to take control. Other

researchers can find the same result, which leads us to think in corporate background as an area that needs greater attention and, especially, that it is done by considering alternative perspectives to those whose assumptions support the management.

The association between organizational misbehavior and humor at work was recurrent, challenging the idea that humor has a positive function in the workplace. Employees engage in misbehavior in a humorous way, in order to provoke laughter in the audience, which is made up of employees who potentially nourish the same desire and, for various reasons, preferred the place of the audience rather than the stage. However, even in the audience, the humor involve them with a sense of victory or triumph.

In fact, the engagement in the humorous misbehavior has multiple intentions, one of them the resistance and subversion. For the organizational analysis, the resistance depends on the context, hence the need to understand it as a response to the exercise of power attempts on the part that resists. In this sense, engaging in organizational misbehavior can be associated with resistance and subversion. Yet, as it happens behind the scenes and not on stage, the actors use humor, often displaying aggressive and vulgar behavior, so that the audience can watch revenge and control taking, which implies to counter the order that "the customer is king".

The implications of this research have a theoretical and practical nature. The first one is directed to those who are unaware of the multidimensional nature of resistance, which implies recognizing the existence of deeper mechanisms behind the consent and obedience. Referring to theoretical implications, our research invites for deepening issues that are related to the bad organizational behavior, such as: what are the consequences of this kind of behavior and what are the implications of these consequences? We envision a strong need to expand the knowledge about this subject in order to have a wider understanding of these consequences, and also to better investigate the various reasons that may encourage such behavior. Accordingly, other contributions can be added, for example, those related to the study of power and revenge in organizations.

During the development of this research, we envision other ways, which we present here as a form of a research agenda, focusing on one of the limitations of the study: the empirical research. We had many difficulties and the people interviewed were resistant to accept talk about it. However, an ethnographic research can generate significant results for the field of organizational studies. Therefore, we suggest (1) to observe interactions in the workplace, classifying them as positive and negative, in order to associate them with misbehavior; (2) to recognize public organizations, as well as third sector organizations, as a rich field for research on this subject; (3) to use journalistic documents and files in survey which associate misbehavior with humor and resistance in corporate backstage; (4) to research the forms of revenge in

the organizational context and its implications; (5) to research about sabotage, specifically in the food industry; (6) to research the intention to use sarcasm, irony and parody by employees engaged in misconduct; (7) to expand the research that consider the use of online social networks as a way of using humor as a form of resistance.◆

REFERENCES

Ackroyd, S., & Thompson, P. (1999). *Organizational misbehaviour.* London: Sage.

Ambrose, M. L., Seabright, M. A., & Schminkec, M. (2002). Sabotage in the workplace: The role of organizational injustice. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *89*(1), 947-965.

Andreasson, J., & Johansson, T. (2013, July-September). Female fitness in the blogosphere: Gender, health, and the body. *Sage Open.* pp. 1-10. Retrieved from http://sgo.sagepub.com/content/3/3/2158244013497728

Bauer, M. W., & Gaskel, G. (2002). *Pesquisa qualitativa com texto, imagem e som*: *Um manual prático*. Petrópolis: Vozes.

Bies, R. J., Tripp, T. M., & Kramer, R. M. (1997). At the breaking point: Cognitive and social dynamics of revenge in organizations. In R. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (Eds.), *Antisocial behavior in organizations* (pp. 18-36). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Bies & Tripp (1998). Revenge in organizations: The good, the bad, and the ugly. In: R. W. Griffin, A. O'Leary-Kelly and J. M. Collins (Eds.), *Dysfunctional behavior in organizations*: *Non-violent dysfunctional behavior*. Stamford, CT, p. 49-67

Bryant, C. (2006). The language of resistance? Czech Jokes and Joke-telling under Nazi Occupation, 1943-1945. *Journal of Contemporary History, 41*(1), 133-151.

Carrieri, A. P. (2004). O humor como estratégia discursiva de resistência: As charges do SINTTEL/MG. *Organizações & Sociedade*, *11*(30), 29-48.

Clery, T. N. (2014). Masculinities, militarism, and the construction of gender in contemporary Fiji: Performances of parody and subversion as feminist resistance. *Pacific Studies*, *37*(3), 202-221.

Collinson, D. L. (1988). Engineering humour: Masculinity, joking and conflict in shop floor relations. *Organization Studies, 9*(2), 181-199.

Collinson, D. L. (1994). Strategies of resistance. In J. Jermier, D. Knights, & W. Nord (Eds.), *Resistance and power in organizations*. London: Routledge.

Collinson, D. L. (2002) Managing humour. *Journal of Management Studies, 39*(3), 269-288.

Collinson, D. L., & Ackroyd, S. (2005). Resistance, misbehavior and dissent. In R. Batt, P. Thompson, & P. S. Tolbert, *The Oxford handbook of work & organization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Contu, A. (2008). *Decaf resistance*: *On misbehavior, cynicism, and desire in liberal workplaces. Management Communication Quarterly, 21*(3), 364-379.

Crino, M. D. (1994). Employee sabotage: A random or preventable phenomenon? *Journal of Managerial Issues*, *6*(3), 311-330.

Dandridge, T. C., Mitroff, I., & Joyce, W. F. (1980). Organizational symbolism: A topic to expand organizational analysis. *Academy of Management Review*, *5*(1), 77-82.

Duarte, S. R., & Duarte, L. C. R. P. (2009). O humor nas organizações hoteleiras: Um estudo de casos múltiplos. *Revista Hospitalidade*, *6*(1), 89-104.

Duncan, W. J. (1982). Humor in management: Prospects for administrative research. *Academy of Management Review*, *7*(2), 136-142.

Duncan, W. J. (1985). The superiority theory of humor at work. *Small Group Behaviour*, *16*(4), 556-564.

Fineman, S., Gabriel, Y., & Sims, D. (2010). *Organizing and organizations*. London: Sage.

Folha.com. (2009). EUA prendem acusados de "sujar" comida e colocar no YouTube. *Folha.com*, 16/04/2009. Retrieved from http://www1.folha.uol.com.br/tec/2009/04/551672-eua-prendem-acusados-de-sujar-comida-e-colocar-no-youtube.shtml

Freitas, M. E. (2005). Existe uma saúde moral nas organizações? *O&S – Organizações e Sociedade, 12*(32), 13-22.

Furtado, R. A., & Carrieri, A. P., & Bretas, P. F. F. (2014). Humor na Internet: Trabalhadores utilizam nova estratégia para protestar contra demissões e terceirizações. *Revista de Administração* [RAUSP], *49*(1), 33-44.

Giacalone, R. A., & Greenberg, J. (1997). *Antisocial behaviour in organisations.* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Goffman, E. (1959). *The presentation of self in everyday life*. Garden City: Doubleday Anchor Books.

Greenberg, J. (1996). *The quest for justice on the job: Essays and experiments*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Griffin, R. W., & Lopez, Y. P. (2005). "Bad behavior" in organizations: A review and typology for future research. *Journal of Management, 31*(6), 988-1105.

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2006). Service sabotage: A study of antecedents and consequences. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 34*(4), 543-558.

REFERENCES

Hatch, M. J., & Ehrlich, S. B. (1993). Spontaneous humor as an indicator of paradox and ambiguity in organizations, *Organizations Studies*, *14* (4), 505-526.

Hodgson, D. (2005). Putting on a professional performance: Performativity, subversion and project management. *Organization, 12*(1), 51-68.

Hodson, R. (2001). *Dignity at work.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Holmes, J. (2000). Politeness, power and provocation: How humour functions in the workplace. *Discourse Studies*, *2*(2), 159-185.

Holmes, J., & Marra, M. (2002). Over the edge? Subversive humor between colleagues and friends. *Humor, 15*(1), 65-87.

Irigaray, H. A. R., Saraiva, L. A. S., & Carrieri, A. de P. (2010). Humor e discriminação por orientação sexual no ambiente organizacional. *Rev. Adm. Contemporânea*, *14*(5), 890-906.

Ivancevich, J., Konopaske, R., & Matteson, M. (2013). *Organizational behavior and management* (10 ed.). New York: McGraw-Hill/Irwin.

Karlsson, J. C. (2012). *Organizational misbehaviour in the workplace. Narratives of dignity and resistance.* Palgrave: MacMillan.

Korczynski, M. (2011). The dialectical sense of humour: Routine joking in a taylorized factory. *Organization Studies*, *32*(10), 1421-1439.

Korczynski, M. (2013). The customer in the sociology of work: Different ways of going beyond the management--worker dyad. *Work, Employment and Society*, E-Special Issue, 1-7. Retrieved from http://wes.sagepub.com/content/27/6/NP1.abstract

Linstead, S. (1985). Jokers wild: The importance of humour and the maintenance of organisational culture. *Sociological Review, 33*(4), 741-767.

Malone, P. B. (1980). Humor: A double-edged tool for today's managers? *Academy of Management Review*, *5*(3), 357-360.

McLean Parks, J. (1997). The fourth arm of justice: The art and science of revenge. In R. J. Lewicki, R. J. Bies, & B.H. Sheppard (Eds.), *Research on negotiation in organizations* (Vol. 6, pp. 113-144). Greenwich, CT: JAI.

McNay, L. (1996). Michel de Certeau and the ambivalent everyday. *Social Semiotics*, *6*(1), 61-81.

Melo, L. (2014). 8 crises empresariais causadas por funcionários brincalhões. *Exame.com*. 14/03/2014. Retrieved from http://exame.abril.com.br/negocios/noticias/8-crises-empresariais-causadas-por-funcionarios-brincalhoes

Mishler, E.G. (1995). Models of narrative analysis: A typology. *Journal of Narrative and Life History*, *5*(2), 87-123.

Morais, R. (2014). Mulher pede lanches e recebe nota com observação "cliente chata" em Brasília. *G1 Distrito Federal* 25/02/2014. Retrieved from http://g1.globo.com/distrito-federal/noticia/2014/02/mulher-pede-dois-sanduiches-no-df-e-nota-traz-observacao-cliente-chata.html

Ostrower, C. (2015). Humor as a defense mechanism during the Holocaust. *Interpretation*: *A Journal of Bible and Theology*, *69*(2), 183-195.

Pearce, K., & Hajizada, A. (2014). No laughing matter humor as a means of dissent in the digital era: The case of authoritarian Azerbaijan. *Demokratizatsiya*, *22*(1), 67-85.

Rodrigues, S. B., & Collinson, D. L. (1995). Having fun? Humour as resistance in Brazil. *Organization Studies, 16*(5), 739-768.

Romero, E. J., & Cruthirds, K. W. (2006). The use of humor in the workplace. *Academy of Management Perspective*, May, 58-69.

Sagie, A., Stashevsky, S., & Koslowsky, M. (2003). *Misbehavior and Dysfunctional Attitudes in Organizations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan.

Schoneboom, A. (2007). Diary of a working boy creative resistance among anonymous workbloggers. *Ethnography*, *8*(4), 403-423.

Schrijver, A. De, Delbeke, K., Maesschalck, J., & Pleysier, S. (2010). Fairness perceptions and organizational misbehavior: An empirical study. *The American Review of Public Administration, 40*(6), 691-703.

Skarlicki, D. P., & Folger, R. (2004). Broadening our understanding of organizational retaliatory behavior. In R.W. Griffin, & A. M. O'Leary-Kelly (Eds.), *The dark side of organizational behavior* (pp. 373-402). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sorenson, M. J. (2008). Humor as a serious strategy of nonviolent resistance to oppression. *Peace and Change, 33*(2), 167-190.

Spicer, A., & Böhm, S. (2007). Moving management: Theorizing struggles against the hegemony of management. *Organization Studies*, *28*(11), 1667-1698.

Sprouse, M. (1992). *Sabotage in American workplace.* San Francisco: Pressure Drop Press.

Taylor, F. W. (1903). *Shop management.* New York: Harper.

Taylor, P., & Bain, P. (2003). Subterranean worksick blues: Humour as subversion in two call centres'. *Organization Studies, 24*(9), 1487-1509.

Teehan, R. (2008). *Emotional intelligence, sense of humor, and job satisfaction.* Saarbrucken: VDM Verlag.

Thompson, P., & Ackroyd, S. (1995). All quiet on the workplace front? *A critique of recent trends in British Industrial Sociology*, *29*(4), 615-633.

REFERENCES

Tudo em Tecnologia. (2013). Loja da TIM faz brincadeira de mau gosto com cliente. Notícias, 03/12/2013. Retrieved from http://www.tudoemtecnologia.com/loja-da-tim-faz-brincadeira-de-mau-gosto-com-cliente/

Vardi, Y., & Weitz, E. (2004). *Misbehaviour in organisations: Theory, research and management.* Mahwah, New Jersey: LEA.

Vardi, Y., & Wiener, Y. (1996). Misbehaviour in organisations: A motivational framework. *Organisation Science, 7*(2), 151-165.

Weaver, S. (2010). The 'Other' laughs back: Humour and resistance in anti-racist comedy. *Sociology, 44*(1), 31-48.

Westwood, S. (1984) *All day, every day.* London: Pluto.

Westwood, R., & Johnston, A. (2011). Reclaiming authentic selves: Control, resistive humour and identity work in the office. *Organization, 19*(6), 787-808.

Westwood, R., & Johnston, A. (2013). Humor in organization: From function to resistance. *Humor, 26*(2), 219-247.

Westwood, R., & Rhodes, C. (2007). Humour and the study of organizations. In R. Westwood, & C. Rhodes (Eds.), *Humour, work and organization* (pp.1-15). New York: Routledge.

Wood, R. E., Beckmann, N., & Pavlakis, F. (2007). Humor in organizations: Laughing matter. In *Research companion to the dysfunctional workplace: Management challenges and symptoms* (pp. 216-231). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing.

Wood Jr., T., & Caldas, M. (2005). Rindo do que? Como consultores reagem ao humor crítico e à ironia sobre sua profissão. *Organizações & Sociedade, 12*(34), 83-101.

ABSTRACT

In the corporate backstage, the taste of revenge: Misbehaviour and humor as form of resistance and subversion

Recently, several cases of employees of corporations that have adopted an improper attitude toward clients were released, indicating that these events are common, not rare. In this article, we interviewed officials and former employees of fast-food and call centers in order to meet their narratives about the corporate scenes, focusing on the literature on misbehaviour and humor as a form of resistance in organizations. Our analysis points to two main narratives: revenge is a dish best served cold; and the customer is not king.

Keywords: misbehaviour, humour, resistance.

RESUMEN

Entre bastidores, el sabor de la venganza: *Misbehaviour* y humor como forma de resistencia y subversión en empresas

Se han divulgado recientemente varios casos de empleados de empresas que han adoptado una actitud inadecuada hacia los clientes, lo que indica que estos eventos no son raros, sino comunes. En este artículo, se entrevistan a empleados y ex empleados de cadenas de comida rápida y de centros de llamadas con el fin de conocer sus relatos sobre lo que ocurre detrás de la escena en las empresas. Se utiliza la bibliografía sobre la mala conducta (*misbehaviour*) y el humor como forma de resistencia en las organizaciones. El análisis señala dos ideas principales: la venganza es un plato que se sirve frío, y el cliente no es el rey.

Palabras clave: mala conducta, humor, resistencia.