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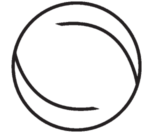

Article

Heart, Mind and Body: #NoMorePage3 and the Replenishment of Emotional Energy

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Abstract

Emotional energy is key to disruptive institutional work, but we still know little about what it is, and importantly, how it is refuelled. This empirical paper presents an in-depth case study of 'No More Page 3' (#NMP3), an Internet-based feminist organization which fought for the removal of sexualized images of women from a UK newspaper. Facing online misogyny, actors engage in 'emotional energy replenishment' to sustain this disruptive institutional work amid emotional highs and lows. We introduce 'affective embodiment' – the corporeal and emotional experiences of the institution – as providing emotional energy in relation to disruptive institutional work. Affective embodiment is surfaced through alignment or misalignment with others' embodied experiences, and this mediates how actors replenish emotional energy. Alignment with others' embodied experiences, often connected to online abuse, means emotional energy is replenished through 'affective solidarity' (movement towards the collective). Misalignment, surfaced through tensions within the movement, means actors seek replenishment through 'sensory retreat' (movement away from the collective). This study contributes to theorization on institutional work and emotional energy by recentring the importance of the body alongside emotions, as well as offering important lessons for online organizing.

Keywords

embodiment, emotional energy, emotions, feminism, institutional work, social media

> When she started [#NMP3] last year, Holmes was so convinced of her arguments that she expected Page 3 to have stopped by the end of 2012. . . Instead, she experienced a burn-out after constant campaigning, 18-hour stints on Twitter and being subjected to death threats and a stream of misogynistic messages. The

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> classic? 'Fuck off, you've got shit tits.' Now she's working in a group of eight, all volunteers like her, tweeting and organising from their homes, and seems highly upbeat again. (Cochrane, 2013, in *The Guardian*, commenting on #NoMorePage3 founder and feminist activist Lucy Anne-Holmes)

Introduction

What is it that refuels the emotional energy of actors working to disrupt an institution? For those actors working to dismantle institutionalized sexism, this is a poignant question. They experience disproportionate levels of abuse and harassment, particularly online, fending off trolling, abuse, and rape and death threats (Busch, Chee, & Harvey, 2016; Lewis, Rowe, & Wiper, 2016). For Lucy-Anne Holmes (see quotation above), the founder of social media-led feminist organization #NoMorePage3 (hereafter #NMP3), feminist institutional work (Karam & Jamali, 2013) was characterized by stress, anger and burnout. #NMP3 sought the removal of a photograph of a nude woman on 'Page 3' of the UK's *The Sun* daily newspaper, considered symbolic of institutionalized sexism in British mass media (Loncraine, 2007) and a visual artefact of the gender institution (McCarthy & Moon, 2018; Yancey-Martin, 2004). In response to #NMP3 disruptive institutional work, Page 3 supporters mobilized and viciously attacked #NMP3 actors. Yet, as the quote above suggests, while painful, abuse and angst were punctuated by excitement, passion and joy (Holmes, 2015). Within cycles of gut-wrenching lows and palpitating highs, what was it that kept these feminist actors going?

Taking #NMP3 as our case study, we address this very puzzle, exploring not only *how* actors refuel emotional energy needed for institutional change efforts through what we term 'emotional energy replenishment', but also *what* animates actors to do so. Emotional energy, characterized by gushing emotions of excitement, enthusiasm and passion (Fan & Zietsma, 2017) when individuals become 'caught up in a common emotional rhythm' (Collins, 1993, p. 208), provides our theoretical focus. Emotional energy is a concept that is receiving increased attention within institutional theorization (e.g. Barberá-Tomás, Castello, de Bakker, & Zietsma, 2019; Ruebottom & Auster, 2018). Yet, we are missing further insight into 'what fosters, maintains, fuels, defines, and diminishes emotional energy' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 434), and indeed what *re*fuels emotional energy in the face of adversity.

Our findings extend theorization on emotions and institutional work twofold. Our first contribution is to develop the construct 'affective embodiment' (Fotaki & Pullen, 2019), which we define as the corporeal and emotional experiences of the institution, building theory on *what* (re)fuels emotional energy. Embodiment is 'the physical and mental experience of existence – the condition of possibility for our relating to other people and to the world' (Cregan, 2006, p. 3). Affective embodiment emphasizes: the materiality of bodies in relation to institutions; relationality (bodies and subjectivities in relation to one another (Fotaki, Kenny, & Vachhani, 2017); and the feelings and emotions connected to both. Actors *feel*, think and activate institutions through their bodies, being shaped by, but also reshaping institutional norms (Bordo, 1993; Young, 1990). In our case the actors are women, living within socially prescribed norms around gender; norms that affect heart, mind and body, and while they can't be escaped, can be resisted (Butler, 1993). Affective embodiment 'binds us' to the institution (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 437) being 'worked' upon (in our context, gender), offering an answer to *what* connects emotional energy, institutional work and 'institutional substance' (Friedland, 2018, p. 536). It is not just co-present bodies that energize action, but a deeper experiential and emotional relationship with our own embodiment. We thus build upon insight into new materialism and the body as a source of knowledge and agency in organizational contexts (Bell & Vachhani, 2019), particularly regarding gendered experiences of embodiment (Fotaki & Pullen, 2019).

Affective embodiment offers an answer to the 'energizing potential that substance provides' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 437), because it captures the various affective experiences of actors, as individuals as well as collectives, vis-à-vis the institution. Actors either 'align' (Ahmed, 2017) their own embodied experiences of the institution with those of others engaged in feminist institutional work (e.g. shared experiences of extra-communal trolling, often aimed at ridiculing women's bodies) or 'misalign' embodied experiences (e.g. intra-communal bodily differences surfaced during in-fighting). It is this (mis)alignment that mediates how actors replenish emotional energy, detailed below. We thus contribute to structural approaches to institutions and emotions (Zietsma, Toubiana, Voronov, & Roberts, 2019) by reasserting the importance of the body alongside emotional energy and institutional work (Stowell & Warren, 2018).

Our second contribution is in outlining *how* actors refuel emotional energy to sustain disruptive institutional work, describing the process of what we term 'emotional energy replenishment'. First, actors replenish through 'affective solidarity' (a movement *towards* the collective) when bodily experiences are 'aligned' (see Collins, 2004; Moisander, Hirsto, & Fahy, 2016; Vachhani & Pullen, 2018). Second, actors engage in 'sensory retreat' (a movement *away* from the collective) following 'misaligned' embodied experiences. While the notion of affective solidarity is well established, we introduce 'sensory retreat' to empirically flesh out the strategic use of emotional energy within disruptive institutional work efforts (Zietsma et al., 2019). Sensory retreat reveals how actors effectively 'self-manage', rather than suppress, painful emotions (Jarvis, Goodrick, & Hudson, 2018), activating 'protective agency' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 31) – not of the institution or of the collective (Barberá-Tomás et al., 2019) – but of the self. This new construct pushes us to rethink what it means to 'leave' online spaces as an institutional – and particularly feminist – actor, as temporary cessation of institutional work provides a powerful remedy to emotional energy depletion.

We now present our theoretical background before introducing the #NMP3 case and our methods. The findings ensue, followed by a discussion and conclusion.

Theoretical Framework

Emotions, defined as relational, 'not simply individual, psychological reactions but intersubjective, collective experiences' (Goodwin & Pfaff, 2001, p. 283), are central to institutional work efforts (Lawrence, Leca, & Zilber, 2013; Voronov & Vince, 2012).[1] They are both motivations and outcomes (Farny, Kibler, & Down, 2019). They have been found to energize and mobilize individuals and groups to disrupt institutionalized norms (Barberá-Tomás et al., 2019; Moisander et al., 2016), particularly in the context of gender (in)equality (McCarthy & Moon, 2018). Building upon a strategic and structural approach to emotions (Zietsma et al., 2019), our literature review covers (1) how emotional energy – and its refuelling– supports institutional work and (2) the complexities of this in the context of a large-scale institution such as gender.

Emotional energy for institutional work

Literature related to the purposive use of emotions by institutional actors can be roughly categorized into, first, how actors elicit emotions in others for strategic ends, as a form of institutional work (Creed, Hudson, Okhuysen, & Smith-Crowe, 2014; DeJordy & Barrett, 2014; Gill & Burrow, 2018; Jarvis et al., 2018), and second, how actors may be energized or 'sparked' into institutional work action by an emotional reaction (Zietsma et al., 2019, p. 8). We contribute to the second aspect of the literature, joining work that emphasizes the sociological nature of emotions in transforming raw affect into a response (Voronov & Weber, 2016), in this case, focused on the 'emotional energy' that works behind the scenes of institutional work.

It is first important to clarify what is meant by 'emotional energy'. Collins (1993) likened the concept to a positive and energizing feeling that stems from co-present individuals becoming engaged in interaction rituals. Associated with a 'sort of electricity' and 'heightened excitement' (Collins, 2004, p. 9), a common emotional rhythm is shaped by: group assembly through physical presence; barriers to outsiders; an aligned focus/goal; and a common emotional experience (Collins, 2004, p. 48). Such markers of community connect to Durkheim's (1906/1974) notion of 'collective effervescence', where emotional energy is generated through in-group dynamics. It is perhaps not surprising that this idea has been heavily utilized in the social movements literature to explain how affective solidarity binds individuals together, giving them a shared sense of purpose, confidence and resolve (Kemper, 2001). Emotions of warmth (Mendes, Keller, & Ringrose, 2018), belonging and relief (Clark-Parsons, 2018) promote enduring affective allegiances (Jasper, 2012). For instance, rock concerts provoke reflexivity and affective solidarity among teenagers, sparking commitment to the institutional work of combating poverty (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018). Relevant to our context, feminist activists engage in 'online participatory communities' through hashtags such as #BeenRapedNeverReported to solidify identity among like-minded individuals (Maloney, 2013; Mendes et al., 2018).

Institutional scholars have revealed how the dynamics between emotional 'lows' (e.g. frustration, disappointment and upset), as well as 'highs' (e.g. excitement, passion and enthusiasm) provoke emotional energy (Fan & Zietsma, 2017). Jasper (2012) likens this to an emotional battery: it is the 'shock' or 'contrast' between positive and negative states that propels action, encourages imagination and gives a sense of urgency. Animal welfare activists, for instance, suppress painful emotions to offer persuasive, rational arguments to external 'others' (Jarvis et al., 2018). Catholic workers open themselves up to vulnerability and uncertainty to heighten emotions and connect more deeply to the group ethos (Summers-Effler, 2005). Further, feminist activists channel anger into collective action to help cope with negative responses to their feminist identities (Hemmings, 2012; Hercus, 1999).

However, what happens when emotional energy flounders? How might actors' emotional energy be 'revivified' (Durkheim, 1906/1974) in the face of adversity? The 'strategic agency' of individual actors (Jasper, 2012) to keep regenerating the emotional energy needed for disruptive institutional work remains a core gap in our knowledge; particularly in the context of 'networked misogyny' (Banet-Weiser & Miltner, 2016, p. 171), where actors frequently face extreme levels of gendered vitriol. For feminist actors, social media can generate emotions of fear, anger, sadness and shame (Sundén & Paasonen, 2018), emotions that significantly diminish emotional energy (Wijaya & Heugens, 2018; Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017). But beyond cataloguing which emotions 'pump up' or 'depress' (Kemper, 2001, p. 33) emotional energy, here we wish to further interrogate how emotional energy can be *re*fuelled. Not only has this emotive context yet to be explored within literature on emotions and institutional work, but theoretically speaking, it may offer a rich avenue for exploring the little understood relationships between emotional energy, institutions and 'some substance, ethos, or value that binds us to the institution' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 437). As we search for an explanation of exactly what facilitates emotional energy refuelling, our attention now turns to unpacking the connections between emotional energy and the institution in which actors are deeply and inextricably embedded (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018; Wijaya & Heugens, 2018): in this case, the gender institution.

Disrupting the gender institution

Gender can be conceptualized as an institution because, as a social construction, it has a history and is largely taken-for-granted, omnipresent and collective (Yancey-Martin, 2004). Connell (1987) describes the gender institution as nested: manifest at the micro-level in our everyday

lives through practice, performance, text, language and thought, in organizational 'regimes' of tangible and intangible rules (Acker, 1992), and in broader societal orders of regulations and laws (Risman, 2004). The gender institution and its affects are experienced emotionally (Ahmed, 2004, 2017) and bodily (Grosz, 1994). Feminist scholars have drawn on the work of Descartes, Merleau-Ponty and Foucault, among others, to further the study of gendered embodiment (Cregan, 2006). Bordo (1993), for example, writes how cultural expectations of the gendered body, such as slimness, are internalized with material impacts. Young (1990) famously demonstrated this with her explanation of how girls' and boys' bodies and movements are policed, shaping women's self-confidence in later life.

The gender institution is one of the hardest to change, precisely because we all live within its nested, dynamic influence (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004). As an exemplar of actors' 'embedded agency' (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009), many studies show how difficult it is for individuals to disrupt gendered norms and values (Zilber, 2002) and the gender inequality that is a by-product of the gender institution itself (Risman, 2004). The gender institution is, however, not a static phenomenon, but amenable to actor agency and institutional change (Butler, 1993; Karam & Jamali, 2013; McCarthy & Moon, 2018). Yet we believe the role of emotional energy involved in these institutional work efforts to be under-conceptualized in organization studies.

Further, structural approaches to institutions and emotions are still scant (Zietsma et al., 2019). Here we believe there is an important contribution to be made with regard to the gender institution (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018). While gender has been identified as a future research area for emotions and institutional work theorization (Gill & Burrow, 2018), such calls focus on the differences between men and women's use of, and experiences of, emotions in institutional work (see Jarvis et al., 2018). This, to our mind, would not explicate gender as much as (supposed) differences between the sexes. Rather, a more nuanced gendered lens on institutional change and 'embedded action' in the context of emotional energy (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018) would contribute to recent literature that looks at the emotive challenges of disrupting institutions within which actors are deeply embedded (Wijaya & Heugens, 2018) and where 'to change the institution means to change oneself' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 433). 'It is as affected beings that institutions make sense, that codes become comprehensible by being alive, felt in our bodies' (Friedland, 2018, p. 532). We believe that by positioning gender as the institution undergoing purposive institutional work, this allows us to study the relationships between emotional energy, institutions and bodies. While the role of emotion in institutional change has been gaining ground, there is less work that explores the nexus of the 'heart, mind and body' (Zietsma et al., 2019, p. 13).

It is against this backdrop that we provide insight into the lived experiences of emotional energy at the micro-level, while commenting on the structural nature of emotions and institutions. Specifically, our research question is: 'How do actors engaged in disruptive institutional work refuel emotional energy and what animates them to do so?' We now introduce #NMP3 and our research design.

Methodology

Our in-depth case study focuses on actors at 'No More Page 3' (#NMP3); an organization which campaigned to remove a sexualized semi-nude photograph of a woman from *The Sun*, a UK national newspaper and –by proxy – challenge entrenched gender norms in society. #NMP3 was selected because it offered an exemplary, time-bounded case (Yin, 2009) of how actors' emotional energy intersected with their disruptive institutional work. Our research design captures the online/offline worlds of our actors through triangulated data.

Research context

Page 3, launched in 1970, was described as a 'British institution', 'part of British society' (Monahan, in *The Sunday Times*, 2015). Yet it was also a notorious symbol of the sexual objectification of women within the media (Loncraine, 2007), and a target for feminist activism since its inception (Bingham, 2014). #NMP3 was founded by journalist Lucy-Anne Holmes through an e-petition in 2012, joined by invited activists in the closed-to-outsiders online 'HQ', and supported by thousands more who actively engaged in debate across Facebook and Twitter (Holmes, 2015). While the organization was boundaryless and offered fluid membership, activists would wait for direction from the #NMP3 social media channels and then 'click on whatever they told you to click on and share it' (Priya, 2016) or 'email and tweet directly and regularly' (Kristy, 2016). Offline events, such as protests, stunts and workshops, also took place (Holmes, 2015).

In 2015, *The Sun* quietly removed the nude Page 3 'girl', replacing her with a model in lingerie. While the move signalled the persistence of women's sexual objectification in the media, and the true scale of the work required to disrupt deeply entrenched gender norms in society, to #NMP3 this was a partial 'win' for online feminist activism:

> No other campaign has done as much to inspire a new generation of young feminists as No More Page 3. . .. [it] became the gateway issue for women finding the courage to speak out on issues they care about. . . .. [they] took on an institution and made a change – it is a remarkable victory. (Sladdern, in *The Guardian*, 2015)

Data collection

Formal data gathering involved semi-structured interviews, archival data and naturalistic observation, and ran over a six-year period between 2012 and 2018.

Semi-structured interviews. In order to explore emotional energy at the micro-level, we interviewed six #NMP3 activists twice; in August 2016 and August 2018. The focus of the first set of interviews was to learn about emotional energy in relation to disruptive institutional work. The second set of interviews sought to sense-check emerging findings by encouraging 'reflexive openness' (Vachhani & Pullen, 2018). All interviews took place online, lasting between 40 and 70 minutes, and were recorded and transcribed.

Given our focus on #NMP3 actors, our sample was purposive (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The first author recruited participants through three feminist Facebook groups (including #NMP3 itself) of which she was a member, inviting those who identified themselves as a #NMP3 'activist' or 'campaigner' to participate. We enjoyed a good rapport with interviewees, but also ensured informed consent (Morrow, Hawkins, & Kern, 2015) to uphold high standards of research ethics.

Archival analysis. To provide wider, sociocultural context and overcome the limitations of relying solely on human recollection (Levina & Vaast, 2016), we collected secondary materials related to #NMP3, particularly its history, motivations and tactics. #NMP3 actors had been both villainized and praised within the UK media, further exemplifying the inherently emotive nature of institutional work. Using LexisNexis we searched for electronic versions of British newspaper articles written between 2012 and 2015 using the keywords 'No More Page 3' and '#NMP3'. Our initial search resulted in a corpus of 498 items, filtered down as we removed duplications and cursory references. We also collected background information through the #NMP3 website, e-petition, and an autobiographical account and YouTube videos from founder Lucy-Anne Holmes (2015). The final 87 coded and analysed documents provided vital testimonials, anecdotes and commentary related to #NMP3 (Table 1).

Table 1. Documents Analysed.

Document type	Document source	Quantity
Newspaper articles	Daily Star (2019): Waterson	1
	The Daily Mail (2015): Duell, M.	1
	The Express (2015): Anon.	1
	The Guardian (2012): Campbell, C., Cochrane, K. (×2), Greenslade, R. (×4), Topping, A.	8
	The Guardian (2013): Baxter, H., Cochrane, K. (×3), Greenslade, R. (×4), Halliday, J., Kerr, E., Martinson, J. (×2), O'Carroll, L.	13
	The Guardian (2014): Cochrane, K., Greenslade, R. (×6), Media Monkey, Orme, J.	9
	The Guardian (2015): Addley, E., Ellen, B. & Boniface, S., Greenslade, R. (×4), Hinsliff, G., Holmes, L., O'Carroll, L. Sweney, M. & Greenslade, R., Quinn, B. & O'Carroll, L., Smith, J., Sweney, M., Sweney, M. & Quinn, B., Editorial, The Women's Blog	16
	The Huffington Post (2016): Ridley	1
	The i (2015): Orr, J., Smith, L.	2
	The Independent (2013): Merrick, J.	1
	The Independent (2014): Burrell, I., Brown, J.	2
	The Independent (2015): Aston, C., Goodman, C., Merrick, J., Nianias, H., Editorial., Usborne, S.	6
	The Observer (2014): Bennett, C.	1
	The Sunday Times (2015): Anon.	1
	The Telegraph (2014): Daubney, M.	1
	The Telegraph (2015): Bayley, S., Goldhill, O., Holmes, L., Myers, R., Pearson, A., Reid, R., Sanghani, R., Ward, V., Ward, V. & Watt, H.	9
	The Times (2014): Line, H.	1
	The Times (2015): Spence, A., Kidd, P.	2
NMP3 webpages	NMP3 E-Petition: David Dinsmore: Take The Bare Boobs Out Of The Sun #nomorepage3. At: https://www.change.org/p/david-dinsmore-take-the-bare-boobs-out-of-the-sun-nomorepage3	1
	NMP3 FAQs: https://nomorepage3.wordpress.com/faqs/	1
	NMP3 (2012) No More Page 3 https://nomorepage3.wordpress.com/ NMP3	6
	NMP3 Tumblr Archive http://nomorepage3.tumblr.com/archive	1
	Sexist News (2016) About NMP3. http://sexistnews.co.uk/about-nmp3/	1
Autobiography	Holmes, L. (2015). *How to start a revolution*. London, UK: Transworld.	1
	Total documents	*87*

Naturalistic observation. Finally, we gained access to real-time, 'live' interactions through immersing ourselves within #NMP3 social media sites (Ghobadi & Clegg, 2015), complementing our retrospective data. While the benefits of online data are well established (Levina & Vaast, 2016), for us, naturalistic observation provided a window into the emotive discourse surrounding #NMP3 actors – and detractors – first-hand. It is also a technique that has successfully unearthed tensions within feminist research contexts (Vachhani, 2019) given that it not only reveals lived experience, but also acts as a social phenomenon in itself (Kozinets, 2015); in our context presenting an 'artefact' of women fighting sexual exploitation and gender objectification. Adopting principles

of non-participatory 'netnography' (Kozinets, 2015), we 'lurked' on the #NMP3 Facebook[2] and Twitter[3] pages, observing posts, photographs, videos and links. Between December 2012 and December 2013 we visited the #NMP3 sites daily, and thereafter on a more ad-hoc basis when key events occurred (e.g. when Page 3 was removed), or when particularly emotive threads were activated. This resulted in the collection of 517 posts. Following the removal of nude women from Page 3 in 2015, and the disbanding of the organization, the #NMP3 social media channels grew quiet, and it was at this point that our online data collection reached saturation.

Importantly, our online data came only from public sources, ensuring that we upheld high standards of Internet research ethics (Whiting & Pritchard, 2017). Data provided for analysis has been anonymized by removing identifying information and providing pseudonyms. While data was analysed in its raw form, we 'cloaked' comments for publication through a subtle alteration of the text, ensuring participant anonymity while retaining the analytic interpretation of discourse (Glozer, Caruana, & Hibbert, 2019). Through these data sources, a rich case of emotional energy replenishment emerged.

Data analysis

We developed a customized analytical approach (see Gehman et al., 2018; Reay, Zafar, Monteiro, & Glaser, 2019), reflecting on methodologies used in studies of emotions and institutional work (e.g. Barberá-Tomás et al., 2019, Moisander et al., 2016) as well as feminist studies which have connected the micro experience of actors to structural systems of inequality in novel ways (Calás & Smircich, 2006; Özkazanç-Pan, 2020). Our approach blended inductive theory generation, well attuned to interpretive data, with the narrative-based method of vignettes, to enable the emotional and embodied lives of actors to surface. Vignettes are 'stories generated from a range of sources' (Hughes, 1998, p. 381) and are particularly favoured for providing complex insights into the 'messiness' (McCarthy, 2017, p. 611) of people's inner life-worlds and the ways in which structures impact on individuals (Özkazanç-Pan, 2020). The process of data analysis was shared between the authors – and respondents – as an iterative process of constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

Similar to Ruebottom and Auster (2018), we created personal stories of emotional energy replenishment, involving data and existing theory (Kreiner, 2016). This involved three steps. First, we mapped actors' experiences of the institution, and their disruptive institutional work, in relation to our 'sensitising' construct (Kreiner, 2016) of emotional energy. We identified data that illuminated *why* actors were energized to 'work' on #NMP3 activities; both the emotional 'highs' (e.g. a passion to make a difference) and the 'lows' (e.g. feeling shocked by incessant trolling). We found that we could not organize these codes by the valence of the emotion they reference (see Jarvis et al., 2018) as feelings of disheartenment fuelled emotional energy, just as a passion to make a difference could diminish it. Beyond simple 'highs' and 'lows' (Jasper, 2012; Kemper, 2001), we discovered that emotional energy was inherently tied to bodily experiences of the institution, and shaped emotional energy replenishment therein.

As a second step, we identified six emergent story 'themes' in our data, examining how people represent, give meaning to and narrate their personal (bodily) experiences of the institution, then collated these into three common 'storylines' (Tables 2, 3 and 4). Storylines are represented by illustrative vignettes in the findings. Our vignettes draw on all data but focus on one interviewee or character to better encapsulate each storyline and capture the ebbs and flows of #NMP3 actors' emotional energy – and bodily experiences therein – in ways a simple presentation of raw data on its own could not.

Table 2. Supporting Data for Affective Embodiment.

Construct	Storyline	Themes	Supporting data
Affective embodiment *The corporeal and emotional experience of the institution* Supporting literature: Baer (2016); Creed et al., (2020); McCarthy & Moon (2018); Ruebottom & Auster (2018); Stowell & Warren, (2018); Zietsma et al. (2019)	'Heart, Mind & Body'	Alignment	Newspapers/Documents: I'm not sure a man can ever truly understand what it's like to be sitting on the London Underground opposite a bloke who is checking out bouncy Hayley from Hayling Island on Page 3, then staring with frank interest at your boobs. It makes you feel deeply uncomfortable. I hate how it makes you feel. (Pearson, 2015, *The Telegraph*) Social media: Danielle Porter: I have been on the receiving end of male attention linked to Page 3 (everything from suggestive comments to assault as they said I looked like a P3 girl – so therefore it must be fine to assault me!) (*Facebook Post*, 2012) Interviews: For me personally it was about the representation of women, so growing up as a teenager I literally woke up one morning with really big boobs! And then had to go through men staring at my breasts, my stepdad's friends commenting on my breasts and I'm talking as a 14, 15-year-old. (Kristy, 2016) I love being a woman, I love, I absolutely *love* being a woman. I totally love women, I want to support women, I want to be a cheerleader for women. It [NMP3] can be exhilarating, it can be very frustrating and, but I still feel quite positive. But sometimes, yeah, so I get frustrated. . .so it's frustration, disappointment, sadness, grief but also, you know, exhilaration. . . I love being a woman and I love being, *feeling* free. (Helen, 2018)
		Misalignment	Newspapers/Documents: Some of the anti-woman vitriol in those tweets – by other women – was so acidic it moved me to tears. The debate had turned spectacularly ugly. (Daubney, 2014, *The Telegraph*) Social media: Liz Yeats: We absolutely CANNOT pick and choose our supporters. Half the beauty of this organisation is that it's united people under one cause who may never have had anything at all in common or even thought about feminism before. It has got people talking, and not just about page 3, but about the wider issues surrounding sexism in the media. That can only be a good thing. (*Facebook Post*, 2014) Interviews: Feminist infighting.. that's part of the main reason that I don't engage in online activism to quite [the same extent]. It just feels like there is no point. . .because it's just some of the stuff around the trans, you know, the trans stuff as well as the sex work, it's just, I don't want to go anywhere near it. (Priya, 2018) I have to say I've distanced myself a bit from certain groups since the campaign again because of the things I cited earlier with you know, the very right wing feminism and the very much you know, anti-men, and the kind of you know, cattiness between women and unable to kind of agree on one thing or another. . . (Louisa, 2016)

Table 3. Supporting Data for Affective Solidarity.

Construct	Storyline	Themes	Supporting data
Affective Solidarity *Movement towards the collective to replenish emotional energy* Supporting literature: Ahmed (2004; 2017); Collins (2004); Hemmings (2012); Jasper (2012); Vachanni & Pullen (2018)	'Strength in numbers'	Sharing spaces, Sharing stories	Newspapers/Documents: Yet the dedicated efforts of hundreds of campaigners have brought the No More Page 3 campaign into prominence – starting conversations about the media representation of women, and just what that highlights about our society. These conversations haven't stopped. Indeed, many are just beginning, as people around the world get drawn into the Page 3 debate. (Aston, 2015, *The Independent*) Social media: Georgia Proud: it has been cathartic to say to all the P3 defending trolls that appeared here what I couldn't say to the P3 bullies in the past. . . One 16-yr-old being bullied with P3 didn't have a voice. But here I finally did!! Another thing you gave so many of us. A voice and courage to use it. (*Facebook post*, 2015) Interviews: It was like a Victorian room in my head. . . Like a dining room-type space but it'd got knackered old office desks all around it and general chaos and then in the middle of it was a big squashy sofa that you could sit on with a big cup of tea or a giant gin or something. . . That's what it was in my head, this space, [laughs] . . .We often used to say to each other, 'What on earth do people do without a HQ?' because. . .it was, that space was. . .somewhere we could go and feel completely confident, we could share anything with each other, and work out what we thought about things. (Sally, 2016) There was this feeling that you're not alone, that there's loads of other women that feel the same and actually it's okay to have those conversations so I think it definitely changed how confident I was to share those opinions with people and not feel like I was going to be judged as much. (Louisa, 2016)
		Networked support	Newspapers/Documents: The Internet provided me with all of these amazing, free tools that I could use to find out if I was the only one who felt this way. (Holmes, 2014 at *TEDxSWPS*) Social media: Sending so much of our love to those getting a hard time for speaking up. Look after yourselves. #solidarity. (@nomorepage3, *Twitter post*) Interviews: We started tagging each other if we were having a debate online and you'd need some help, so I would tag Sally and say 'help out' and they would do the same. I think it wasn't long after that that we got a group. . . . if you were having a particularly nasty debate you could call on them and they would all kind of help out. (Kristy, 2016) I think it was about support, and it was about feeling that people have got your back and everyone wants to feel part of something don't they and that's why people join churches, you know, it's about having. . . And I think what they thought they created was a community, it was feeling part of a community. (Kristy, 2016)

Table 4. Supporting Data for Sensory Retreat.

Construct	Storyline	Themes	Supporting data
Sensory Retreat *Movement away from the collective to replenish emotional energy* Supporting literature: Barberá-Tomás et al., (2019); Cole (2015); Jarvis et al., (2018); Scheff (2013); Zietsma & Toubiana, (2018)	'Solace through Solitude'	Escaping cyberspace	Newspapers/Documents: It is with this extraordinary energy and unswerving optimism that we are now planning to take a break before we come back to start on the next bit. We hope that all of you will stay with us for whatever that will be. In a few days we will close down the Facebook page temporarily and go quiet while we recharge our batteries, rest and reform. (*NMP3 blog*, 2015) Social media: Kevin Melvin: Really good idea to take a break, it's always important, recharge and look for fresh vision. (*Facebook post*, 2015) Katie Peterson: You deserve the break. . . Campaigning is difficult, and exhausting. (*Facebook Post*, 2015) Interviews: There's a side of me that still wants to get involved but I think probably just I'm still in my rest period at the moment, I'm hoping that next year I can, you know, kind of refocus my mind as well. (Helen, 2018) Once you've gotten into it, once you're in an argument and once you're in the conversation, you're constantly checking, and it's really hard to step away. . . and that's. . .why I deleted everything from my phone, because I just thought, I need a proper break, I need a break, where I'm not constantly checking things. . . And it is 24/7. . .I think you can become really obsessive about it. (Priya, 2018)
		Silence as agency	Newspapers/Documents: For a surprising number of people, someone they don't know discussing the issue of female objectification or women's representation in the media will upset them so much they want you to die. Sometimes they even offer to help you. Obviously you don't have to respond at all. (Holmes, 2015, *The Guardian*) Social media: Abigail Platt: 'Playing the devil's advocate', as you put it, Simon, has got us *bored*. I know you *think* you're the first clever man ever to put these points to us, but I'm going to have to shatter your illusions and break it to you that you're not. Sorry. In fact, we've been having the same conversations day in, day out, for TWO YEARS. Arguing about models' choices, censorship, and 'banning' things and the diet coke advert shows only that you've *completely missed the point* of the whole campaign. Until you have grasped said point, there is little point in continuing! (*Facebook Post*, 2013) Interviews: I've got quite good in feminism at just avoiding certain things and groups and backing away. (Sally, 2016) I mean they're trolls aren't they, they're simply there to. . . And there's no point debating with those people, there's no point speaking to them. . .some of them are just stupid teenagers in their bedroom but they're not interested in debating with you. (Kristy, 2016)

Our first storyline was one of ‘heart, body and mind’ which captured two themes: alignment (cohort with others’ embodied experiences of the institution) and misalignment (discord with others’ embodied experiences of the institution). We borrowed the term ‘alignment’ from Ahmed (2004), who expresses that feminism is ‘the alignment of the “we” with the “I”, the feminist subject with the feminist collective’ (p. 188). We related these phenomena to *affective embodiment*, connecting to literature that has examined emotions in the context of institutional embeddedness (e.g. Fotaki & Pullen, 2019; Ruebottom & Auster, 2018; Wijaya & Heugens, 2018) and the body in relation to institutional substance (Friedland, 2018) (Table 2). We began to see that affective embodiment ran so deeply through our story that we theorized it as providing emotional energy through connection to institutional substance – in our context gender.

Our second and third storylines emerged as we explored *how* actors refuelled their emotional energy. Storyline two, ‘strength in numbers’ resonated with the *affective solidarity* literature (e.g. Hemmings, 2012; Summers-Effler, 2005) and was present in themes of ‘sharing space, sharing stories’ and ‘networked support’. Emotional energy was replenished by ‘being’ with others online (Table 3). Our third storyline, ‘solace through solitude’ suggested that emotional energy was replenished through purposeful withdrawal on the part of the actors – not just to support the organization (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018), but also to protect and sustain the self. This was achieved through themes of ‘escaping cyberspace’ and ‘silence as agency’. We term this *sensory retreat*; a movement away from other bodies and a more individualized method of emotional energy replenishment (Table 4).

A final step of abductive coding (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007) examined the relationships between constructs. Exploring similarities and differences in emotional energy replenishment across the storylines, we identified how mis/alignment of embodied experiences mediates how actors replenish emotional energy. In cases of alignment, actors were more likely to default to the collective (affective solidarity). Yet when misalignment was experienced, actors moved away from the collective (sensory retreat). Of course this is far from a simple cause and effect relationship as the actors may have engaged in affective solidarity and sensory retreat in a cyclical fashion (see discussion of Priya below). In aiming to capture the rich dynamics of our data, this final step, however, further solidified our construct of affective embodiment in providing the core around which actors replenished their emotional energy.

Findings: Affective Embodiment and Emotional Energy Replenishment

We find that *affective embodiment* provides the emotional energy that fuels institutional work. When emotional energy is depleted to a low enough level to threaten institutional work, through extra-communal harassment, trolling and intimidation (Holmes, 2015; all interviewees) and/or intra-communal tensions and infighting, actors replenish their emotional energy through *affective solidarity* and ‘revivify’ (Durkheim, 1906/1974) their institutional work through ‘aligned’ embodied experiences. There are, however, limits to what affective solidarity can achieve, particularly when actors perceive embodied difference between themselves and the group (misalignment). When affective solidarity fails to provide, sensory retreat offers a path to healing, enabling increased emotional energy and a return to institutional work. This overall narrative is captured in Figure 1. Our findings are presented in relation to two sections: (1) we introduce ‘affective embodiment’ as *what* provides emotional energy replenishment, detailing how (mis) aligning with others’ embodied experiences mediates (2) *how* actors replenish through affective solidarity and sensory retreat.

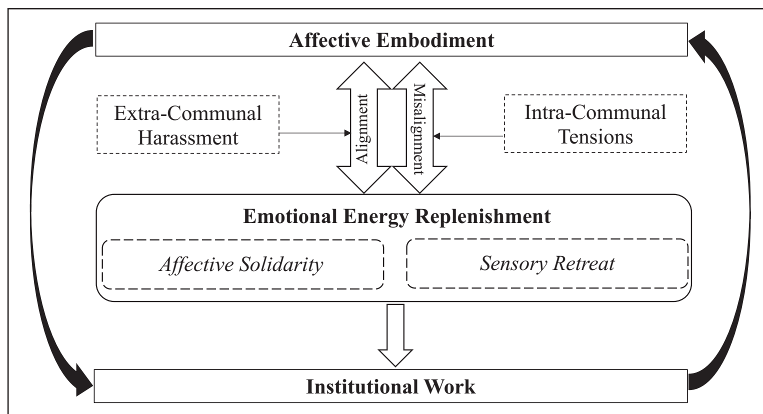

Figure 1. Affective Embodiment and the Replenishment of Emotional Energy.

'Heart, mind and body': Affective embodiment

> Helen's fingers pause above the keyboard. She feels torn. It's not the first time that she has felt like this, but today feels worse than usual. Her heart is deeply committed to #NMP3 and she loves the women she engages with each day. There is a shared energy, a shared feeling; something powerful about this group. Probably because their bodies have experienced the same damaging objectification as hers: catcalls in the street, trolls online, and the darker stories of sexual violence. She desperately wants to keep the fight alive, but today it feels like wasted energy. Why is there so much in-fighting? They can't seem to agree on anything. . . Today there is a bitter row about how white and middle class #NMP3 is. Helen's head pounds and her heart beats fast as she re-reads the latest thread that amplifies the divisions within the group. She feels sick. Helen sighs and lets out a deep breath. She feels compelled to post a reply, to keep going, to not give up, but why?

Our first construct is that of 'affective embodiment', the term we give to actors' emotional and corporeal experience of the institution (see Table 2). These experiences are often expressed as 'feeling-perceptions' (Weik, 2019a, p. 324): subjective observations, sensations and emotions related to the gender institution. In this case, and as is hinted at in Helen's vignette, actors both embody the gender institution, and are embodied by it, as they work to disrupt the inequality that resides therein; a complex experience we expand upon in the discussion. Here we outline how affective embodiment is articulated through themes of (mis)alignment of one's own embodied experience with others'.

Our first theme of alignment was present through shared recounts of body-image anxieties and objectification related to Page 3. As seen in Helen's vignette, actors' sense of alignment was enhanced through shared experiences of women's embodied experiences of sexual harassment and unwanted sexual attention and abuse, (re)fuelling emotional energy:

> So many people have sent us messages of kind support or explained some truly terrible things that have happened to them that they feel happened as a result of the normalization of sexual objectification of women. So many women have confided how these images directly affected their self-esteem growing up and beyond. We've had BEAUTIFUL protest poems recorded in the name of No More Page 3. This campaign has sparked so much truth and creativity. Thank you. IT FUELS US. (#NMP3 website, 2016)

Actors divulged, and others read and 'related' to (Louisa, 2016), personal experiences of gendered violence and objectification, connecting these to a seemingly 'micro' issue of an image in a newspaper:

> Katy Harris: Paul- This is not stupid. You being male wouldn't have had attention because of Page 3. I have. Lots of it. Lots of disgusting comments and suggestions. Molestation by strangers who have read the paper on the train on their way home from a drunken night out. . . (Facebook Post, 2012)

Alignment was reinforced through the constant visceral, sensational threats actors received in the form of trolling. Comments directly related to women's bodies like 'you're a fat, ugly lesbian' or 'why don't you wear some make-up?' (Louisa, 2016) unified actors:

> I burnt out after six months, but then reached out to people to start a team, which was when the magic really started. Together we weathered the responses of 'you're frigid/ugly/jealous' or 'you're only doing this because you've got shit tits' and being wished dead. (Holmes in *The Guardian*, 2017)

Much of actors' institutional work was characterized by the often painful, sometimes joyful, experiences of the body:

> The feminist stuff still remains the thing that really lights me up. . .I feel it's personal, it's maternal, because I have a daughter, and a son, who's affected by toxic masculinity. . . it's in my experience of abuse in relationships. . . I'm angry about it and passionate about it because it's personal to me and people that I love. (Sally, 2018)

The quote above exemplifies why affective embodiment provides emotional energy, as 'heart, body and mind' are all engaged in institutional work. Affective embodiment is profoundly 'personal' because it is lived viscerally and emotionally, leveraging emotions of love, anger, passion and fear; experienced individually but shared collectively. Others' bodies, and how they are shaped by the gender institution ('toxic masculinity'), are also important.

Our second theme of misalignment saw actors feeling outside of shared embodied experience: 'the "we" of feminism is shaped by some bodies, more than others' (Ahmed, 2004, p. 189). While the goal of #NMP3 was to 'unite women under one cause who many never have anything at all in common' (Facebook post, 2014), social media threads were littered with disagreements, which we interpret as contestation about the nature of the gendered body and feminist stances toward it. As referred to in Helen's vignette, 'in-fighting' (Kristy, 2016) and 'being unable to agree on one thing or another' (Louisa, 2016), was considered by many as 'part of again what we do' (Kristy, 2018) and reveals how not all actors considered themselves as a homogeneous mono-body of gendered experience, but more a diverse collective of various bodies and feelings. This reveals the complexity of how actors connect to the institution and heterogeneity in how emotional energy is replenished.

For example, Priya discusses how her cultural heritage came up against the 'sometimes very White Feminist' (Sally, 2018) experiences of the collective: 'For me, I think the biggest kind of risk. . . on Facebook you've got all this distant family, which, in my case, can sometimes be really conservative. . . I feel like there's different versions of me'. Priya felt she had to 'play' at fitting in with others' (largely White and British) embodied experiences of gender, meaning it could be challenging 'to talk across difference' (Priya, 2018). Others contested a shared experience around motherhood: 'For me it [#NMP3] was never about protecting the children' (Louisa, 2016); 'Some women want kids, I don't' (Helen, 2018). Misalignment is therefore a recognition

of these differences between individuals' embodied experiences of the gender institution. As Sally (2018) laments:

> One of the most difficult things about feminist activism in the last year has been the number of women who I adore, who I respect massively, who appear to have taken such an – extremist? – absolutely adamant stance [on transgender issues]. . . I know that their scepticism comes from a place of fear that is because of horrible things that have happened to them.

Perceptions of difference in embodied experiences are as important as material, bodily differences during misalignment.

In sum, affective embodiment provides emotional energy due to its connection to the 'substance' (Friedland, 2018, p. 536) of the institution under attack – gender. Embodiment remains a dualistic process: institutions shape how we think, feel and act, but we are also shaped by those very same actions. Misalignment is therefore more than just being in disagreement with others performing institutional work. It is a deeper, experiential and relational perception of, and material difference in, individuals' embodiment of institutions, and experiences therein. We next discuss *how* actors replenish emotional energy.

'Strength in numbers': Affective solidarity

> What a buzz! What started as a bit of a nightmare day for Sally – given the particularly nasty batch of trolling she encountered this morning – has got a lot better since she logged into the online 'HQ' safe space. Sally's fellow NMP3 comrades are sharing their strategies for dealing with the trolls. The comments about being 'an ugly lesbian' and 'having shit tits' seem humorous in this space. Sally almost can't contain her laughter as she reads through the thread. She feels that warm feeling in her stomach – a little bit like butterflies – when you know someone is thinking exactly the same as you. Sally quickly types out a response; her fingers furiously hitting the keys as she shares a similar experience. What a release! As she wipes the tears of laughter from her cheeks, she releases how much more confident she is at not only surviving, but also tackling the trolls with this collective support behind her. 'What do people do without a HQ?' she wonders.

'Affective solidarity' replenishes emotional energy when actors emotionally and physically move towards the collective, placing emphasis on affective embodiment and aligned experiences. In line with studies of feminist activism (Hemmings, 2012; Vachhani & Pullen, 2018) and institutional work (Farny et al., 2019; Ruebottom & Auster, 2018), we find that this replenishes emotional energy in two ways (Table 3).

First, movement towards the 'collective effervescence' (Durkheim, 1906/1974) of other actors replenished emotional energy through a theme of 'sharing space, sharing stories'. Feminism offers a community to feel at home within; a safe space for battle-worn bodies to move in and out of (Ahmed, 2017). As well as the very popular public #NMP3 Facebook page and Twitter account – 'which allowed a new generation of women to articulate their opposition to Page 3 and support each other in the face of a backlash' (Smith in *The Guardian*, 2015) – there was a private Facebook 'SOS' messenger thread (Kristy, 2016) and the secret 'HQ' (a closed Facebook page), where Sally and others could 'meet' and let off steam in a woman-only space. These 'online safe spaces' (Clark-Parsons, 2018) were more than just spaces to strategize, but environs where institutional work actors could perform what has been called 'relational work' (Roestone Collective, 2014, p. 1348 in Clark-Parsons, 2018); 'supporting' (Priya, 2018) each other and bolstering emotional energy:

> HQ. . .wasn't [just] for the campaign, you see, we used HQ as a supportive space for life in general, you know, we've helped each other through all sorts of things. . .relationship issues and grief and death and marriage, all sorts, having babies and all sorts of things have happened in that space. . . it's been quite something. (Sally, 2016)

Care was also visible in the public Facebook page, where women congregated to share emotive and aligned experiences of sexual harassment, underscored by affective embodiment. For example, an emotional poem published anonymously not only offered the poet catharsis, but also solidified the experiences of like-minded, similarly-bodied individuals (Maloney, 2013; Mendes et al., 2018), strengthening affective solidarity:

> **Comments:**
>
> Liz Reed: <3 I'm sorry you went through this, it's not an uncommon experience.
>
> Jane McDuff: Great poem. Most women I speak to have had something like this happen to them. So sad.
>
> Rebecca Amos: Exactly! And that feeling stays with you for ever
>
> Gina Rodgers: Thatss so sad ☹ xxx
>
> Rachel Jones: I remember a very similar event in my childhood. This poem is extremely powerful. We'll never move on if we don't take action to change for the next generation
>
> Vanessa Peters: Thank you. Incredible poem. Brought back all those feelings of being a young girl. Self conscious, scared and ashamed. (Facebook Post, 2013)

Replenishing emotional energy through the ability to voice, listen and share amongst a collective with whom one felt an embodied and affective alignment, was key.

Second, affective solidarity was also activated on a more one-to-one basis through the theme of 'networked support', distancing from recent work that has explored the group dynamics of emotional energy (e.g. Ruebottom & Auster, 2018). Actors exploited the constant connectivity of social media to 'tag someone else in' (Kristy, 2016), to request help from other actors in heated social media exchanges, or simply to ask someone else to take over 'if you're trying to cook tea for the kids' (Kristy, 2016). Premised upon trust – largely because these women were aligned in their haunting experiences of objectification – actors 'passed the baton' (Sally, 2018) to replenish emotional energy; dipping in and out of institutional work as needed:

> [The online safe space]. . .thankfully was really reassuring because you knew that as soon as it got to a certain level of abuse and people were starting to sort of comment on your general appearance and your kids need to be raped and those sort of stupid comments, you just literally clicked on this thing and there was always somebody willing to drop in and help you out, or you just drop out of the conversation. . . So I felt quite supported. (Kristy, 2016)

In sum, affective solidarity replenished emotional energy through actors engaging in safer, collective places, characterized as so because of the feeling of embodied alignment. It enabled a crucial transformation from feelings of burnout, apathy and isolation, towards positivity and strength (see Hercus, 1999).

'Solace in solitude': Sensory retreat

> She slams the laptop lid down with such force that the lady sat next to her jumps and stares. If she wasn't in public Priya could have screamed. Or cried. She didn't really know which. All she knew right now was that it was all too much. Too many ignorant comments from the trolls and too many prying family eyes in her personal social media space. Priya felt exhausted and realized it was time to take a step away. She wouldn't stop the NMP3 work; no way! It was in her blood. But the relentless nature of it all meant that she needed to be by herself for a while; to heal. On the bus home she suspended her Facebook account. It felt great. It was like a weight had been lifted from her shoulders! She spent the evening reading a book, without a constant eye on the never-ending arguments. But later that week, her desire for 'time-out' dissipated and she began to miss the community; she missed having a voice. As she drifted off to sleep that night, she started rehearsing a new post she would write the next morning. . .

'Sensory retreat' replenishes emotional energy through actors moving away, emotionally and physically, from the collective in response to sensory overload (Table 4). This concept connects with affective embodiment and misalignment as actors tended to turn to sensory retreat after solidarity failed to provide, chiefly through recognition of difference (both material and perceived) in embodied experiences. Priya in particular moved through cycles of affective solidarity and sensory retreat as her dissatisfaction with the collective waxed and waned. Sensory retreat thus enabled actors to dis-embed into order to *re-embed* more deeply; rather than to dis-embed to shift towards newer modes of thinking (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018): 'I just needed that self-care to take a step back' (Helen, 2018). This form of 'protective agency' (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 431) is strategic, not just benefitting the continuation of institutional work, but also enabling effective emotional regulation (Jarvis et al., 2018) and self-care. While some actors ploughed energy into new pursuits during time away, the drive to return to institutional work was omnipresent: 'I'll always come back to it. I'm a hussy for any kind of feminist protest!' (Helen, 2016).

What did sensory retreat look like in practice? First, it involved 'purposive withdrawal', i.e. leaving a Facebook group or walking away from the computer; a theme we term 'escaping cyberspace'. 'Exhaustion and fatigue' (Priya, 2018) brought on by the 'overwhelming' (Holmes, 2015), 'never-ending' cycle of online discussion (Glozer et al., 2019) both inside and outside of the collective, meant that actors 'disengaged' (Priya, 2018) from some aspects of the Internet in its entirety, after experiencing misalignment with others' embodied experiences. While alone, sensory retreat enabled actors to assess the damage done to body and mind, sometimes by reflecting on the misalignment that they or others may have felt. Sally evocatively explains how this reflection is felt as much as thought:

> We needed to be more aware, be more careful about our language, educate ourselves for goodness sake, about how very white we were and how we weren't really taking account of other people's experiences. . . So those learning curves were sometimes ouch, but you learnt to realize that when you felt uncomfortable in your pit of stomach, that might be because you actually need to go away and challenge yourself and think about it harder. (Sally, 2018)

Sensory retreat helped to 'refocus the mind' (Helen, 2018) and look forward; 'I need to go and spend some time staring at the sky' (Sally, 2016). It provided remedy and allowed the body to heal:

> Rachel Stephens: I'm not going to hold my breath, but you should absolutely take a break. I think, to be honest, we could all do with one. Standing up for what is right is enough to make your legs go weak, your voice grow hoarse, and your hands shake with rage. The moment you stop. . . even if it seems to be for a very good reason like now. . . you just feel empty, utterly exhausted, and that's when the bruises start to show. When you are busy fighting for something that is bigger than you, for the welfare and rights of

> others. . . you do not stop but to put the smallest of bandages on the wounds you encountered whilst doing it. (Facebook Post, 2015)

Second, our findings also revealed sensory retreat in the form of 'silence as agency'. Here actors fell silent in online spaces, observing rather than participating, as well as actively 'not listening' to certain discussions. While often driven through a sense of frustration – 'I'm going to have to leave this because stuff like this makes me realise just how many people are unwilling to accept change!' (Facebook Post, 2013) – as opposed to seeing silence as defeat of feminism in online spaces (Cole, 2015), we consider such activities as agentic and disruptive; providing a purposive focus on self-preservation to replenish emotional energy:

> I think one thing I've learned from the campaign is don't waste your time on people whose minds you can't change . . . I'm just going to step back, watch and wait, maybe take a break and later move on to the next person and talk to them, and that's the hardest thing to do, to let go . . . (Louisa, 2016)

Kristy (2018) replenished by 'not feeding the trolls', not necessarily by being defeated by them but 'saving her emotional energy'. Here silence was used strategically to eject activists from dead-end conversations and preserve energies for more fruitful debates. We see this form of emotional energy replenishment below, which comes after a 287-comment thread between #NMP3 supporters, opponents and trolls:

> Kesha Dadzie: Clever comments! (That is sarcasm by the way). I was hoping for a minute that you may engage in some intelligent, objective debate about the issue but it seems you are just here to try to find faults with the campaign. Have a good evening guys
>
> Brian Lopez: It's all gone a bit quiet over there Harry. It looks like they have all gone back to their sheltered lives it is way past their bedtimes god only knows what they might see on tv this late my goodness
>
> Kesha Dadzie: Brian since you have said that you don't care about the issue & that you are just on here to wind people up I'm going to leave the discussion with you there.
>
> Brian Lopez: I've just put across several points and not one comeback what is wrong with u girls
>
> Vanessa Regan: Ditto, seeing as it is a self-confessed troll, I will retire also :)
>
> (Facebook Posts, 2013)

Silence and exiting are thus a form of 'wilfulness' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 38). Sensory retreat replenishes actors' emotional energy through movement away from the collective, towards time-out and personal solace. When misalignment surfaced through in-fighting or simply divergences in opinion, actors were further inclined to seek sensory retreat. However, this was not an end to disruptive institutional work, but rather a temporary form of emotional and bodily self-preservation. In the next section we detail our main contributions to theories on emotional energy and institutional change, and end reflecting on what such findings mean for a range of social activists.

Discussion

In this paper we have explored how, in the face of extra-communal abuse and intra-communal discord, #NMP3 actors replenished emotional energy to return to institutional work. Our study has important

insights not only into emotional energy replenishment, but also how emotional energy levels are connected to the very institution actors are working to disrupt: in our case, the gender institution.

Our first contribution is the identification of affective embodiment as connection to the 'substance' of institutions (Friedland, 2018, p. 536) – offering insight into what 'binds' actors to institutions and provides them with emotional energy to carry out institutional work (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018, p. 437). Our data show how the corporeal and emotional experience of an institution (affective embodiment) can provide emotional energy and how mis/alignment mediates emotional energy replenishment for institutional work. We have drawn on feminist scholarship to develop the construct of affective embodiment (Fotaki & Pullen, 2019), since within this field there is a sophisticated understanding of bodies, subjectivity, structures and emotions (Bordo, 1993; Butler, 1993; Young, 1990). Ahmed (2017) and Hemmings (2012) surface the heart-beating rage of feeling belittled, and the joy of passionate connection with others; a 'sensation' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 38) central to the experience of living within the social category of 'woman' as an 'affective inheritance' (p. 20). The body (and our thoughts and feelings towards it) is a profound element of subjectivity related to institutional work and was expressed through actors' accounts of the threat of (and experience of) sexual harassment, body image anxieties and unwanted objectification. We found that many actors were bolstered by a feeling of 'alignment' (Ahmed, 2017) in this inhabited existence, of shared bodily experiences of gender (both positive and negative), and this provoked them to replenish their emotional energy through 'affective solidarity' found in (largely) women-only online spaces. This emphasizes the possibility of feminism(s) creating 'affective atmospheres' (Bell & Vacchanni, 2019, p. 8) for digital activism.

Yet, in our digital age, feminist 'body politics' are further heightened (Baer, 2016), reflected in the angry and passionate exchanges observed not just between supporters and 'trolls', but within the #NMP3 organization itself. Debate about the gendered body, and what it means in society, produced feelings of difference, of bodies and experiences not sufficiently 'shared' with the group. This theme of 'misalignment' destabilizes the myth of shared experience, prompting actors to retreat towards 'self-care' in order to replenish emotional energy and return to institutional work. We argue that this reflects the paradox of embedded agency (Battilana & D'Aunno, 2009): the living, feeling body provides a 'god-like' driver for action and emotional energy (Friedland, 2018), yet in drawing on the very experiences and emotions related to embodiment – experiences that are often oppressive or alienating – there is a tension. Affect drives energy (Weik, 2019b) needed for institutional work, but bodies and their embodiment of institutions are grounded in material realities. This tension between affective embodiment as providing emotional energy, and as a means of control, is visible in how actors replenish their emotional energy, providing new insight into the emotions and institutional work literature. Furthermore, as affective solidarity and sensory retreat are experienced recursively, and for varying durations, we show that emotional energy replenishment is far from a standardized endeavour, but crucially mediated by (mis)alignment, which directs nourishment either through the collective or temporary isolation.

To what extent is affective embodiment unique to the gender institution? Friedland (2018) explains how embeddedness in an institution, and full commitment to it, means actors embody it in a sensory, emotional manner. He, however, doesn't specify how different institutions might affect to what extent embodiment occurs. We suggest closer attention to 'powerful' institutions (Nilsson, 2015, p. 373) such as gender, race, ethnicity, (dis)ability and sexuality may elucidate in finer detail the connections between emotions and institutional work. For example, Gill and Burrow (2018) point to the patriarchal masculinity that underscores emotions in the maintenance of haute cuisine. What if this study examined masculinity as a dynamic of the gender institution (McCarthy, Soundararajan, & Taylor, 2020)? This might help further explain the power of emotions in maintaining institutions, not of haute cuisine, but of gender itself. We believe that while institutions such as haute cuisine or environmental sustainability (Barberá-Tomás et al.,

2019) provide a sense of identity for the individuals under study, they cannot be as corporeally and emotionally *bound* to the institution in the same way. In the case of gender, we cannot escape the institution (McCarthy & Moon, 2018): we grow up with it, 'gender goes home with you. . .' and is 'a significant definer of self and other in all social relational contexts' in a way that other institutions are not (Ridgeway & Correll, 2004, p. 512). Thus, the question of 'embedded action' (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018) or embedding into new institutional logics (Fan & Zietsma, 2017) becomes much more complex when the institution is gender, with probable similar effects for ethnicity, (dis)ability and sexuality.

We thus contribute to recent studies that have explored the emotive challenges of disrupting institutions within which actors are deeply embedded (Wijaya & Heugens, 2018) by responding to the call to 'explore further the social consequences of institutionalization of particular bodily constructions and experiences, such as race and gender' (Zietsma et al., 2019, p. 14). By recentring the body alongside emotions, we contribute to a more materialist understanding of emotions in contexts of institutional change (Creed, Taylor, & Hudson, 2020; Stowell & Warren, 2018) and 'bodies as sites of knowing and feeling in organizations' (Bell & Vachhani, 2019, p. 30). We argue that this can bolster our theoretical toolkits by considering actors as 'bringing their whole selves – heart mind and body' (Zietsma et al., 2019, p. 13) to institutional change efforts, but also how emotions, bodies and affect constitute some of the 'substance' of institutions which makes them harder to change (Weik, 2019a, 2019b). However, our findings present a caveat: while the 'body' is an important connection to the 'substance' of the institution, there is no such thing as '*the* body': a universal experience for all. Instances of misalignment underscore this fact, adding empirical colour to experiences of exclusion detailed within studies of feminist activism (Vachhani & Pullen, 2018; Vachhani, 2019). Perhaps institutions such as gender and race are only really taken-for-granted, or assumed as universal, by those that do not have the boundaries of their own embodied subjectivity frequently policed (Nkweto Simmonds, 1997). Recognizing this may encourage us to research the intersectional, contextual, material experiences of the bodies of those who are often exploited, overlooked or under-valued in organization studies.

Our second contribution is to respond to the puzzle about how actors refuel emotional energy (Zietsma & Toubiana, 2018). Emotional energy replenishment through affective solidarity (our storyline of 'strength in numbers') and sensory retreat (our storyline of 'solace through solitude') drives institutional work as the #NMP3 actors manage, rather than suppress, painful emotions (Jarvis et al., 2018). Here we provide deeper insight into the strategic use of emotional energy within disruptive institutional work efforts (Zietsma et al., 2019) as through themes of 'sharing space, sharing stories' and 'networked support', online battlegrounds are transformed into caring environs offering much needed support and respite. We also build upon studies of emotional sustenance in the context of social movements (King, 2005). Affective solidarity is crucial to institutional work – indeed the power of the group is often revered (Hemmings, 2012; Vachhani & Pullen, 2018), particularly in the context of embodied similitude – but we also find that the ability to move away from the collective and engage in sensory retreat, albeit temporarily, is necessary. This challenges the notion that emotional energy generation is always a collective endeavour (cf. Collins, 2004) and emphasizes the novelty of our new construct, sensory retreat; taking solace through the self, devoid of sensory stimulation. This is particularly important in revealing the shortcomings of affective solidarity as even ideologically aligned individuals still experience institutions in various, and often idiosyncratic, ways.

Sensory retreat is an, as of yet, under-theorized phenomenon in how actors replenish and continue their fight against institutionalized inequality. It is a construct that adds to our knowledge about emotional energy in that while affective solidarity is needed for initial energy generation (Ruebottom & Auster, 2018) and replenishment, sensory retreat is equally important in later stages of institutional work or activist activity. Thus, while feminist work employing the concept of affective solidarity does acknowledge the potential for discord and dominance of some experiences over others (Hemmings, 2012; Vachhani & Pullen, 2018), our construct offers insight into how activists

may respond to and overcome waning levels of emotional energy, caused in part by exclusion, through sensory retreat. This is because, in relation to our story themes, it provides an 'escape from cyberspace' and the opportunity for 'silence as agency' when the going gets tough in extra- and intra-communal spaces. We posit that this may be even more the case when the institution under attack is deeply connected to the individuals doing the attacking, bodily and emotionally. Affective embodiment helps explain why sensory retreat is so crucial to emotional energy replenishment: because actors can never step outside an institution such as gender, they must find ways of reconnecting with their self in order to recharge. Misalignment with others' embodied experiences means that affective solidarity on its own is not enough; actors pursue sensory retreat as individuals to connect back to their embodied subjectivity when affective solidarity fails to provide, which in turn can spark emotional energy for institutional work once more.

While withdrawing or silence in online spaces could be seen as feminist defeat (Cole, 2015; Scheff, 2013), seeking sensory retreat in our context is an empowering force of self-care and self-preservation as 'an act of political warfare' (Lorde, 1988, p. 130). This construct offers an alternative window, then, into what happens when institutional actors in an online context seem to silence others (Toubiana & Zietsma, 2017). What if we reconceptualize these exits, silences and breaks as agentic choice? Particularly for those actors who experience misalignment, sensory retreat represents purposeful care for oneself. Our study reasserts the power of the collective – the importance of shared experiences for replenishing emotional energy – but it also shines a light on the 'fragility of feminist shelters' (Ahmed, 2017, p. 175). Equally important to the collective is the time to switch off, walk away and rejoin institutional work efforts when ready. However, we do also appreciate the limits of sensory retreat and its capacity to become all-encompassing when it becomes sustained rather than temporary (e.g. when actors fully disconnect from institutional work efforts entirely); when retreat unfortunately shifts to defeat.

Conclusion and Implications

This paper provides micro-level insight into the refuelling of emotional energy in the context of disruptive institutional work. We introduce the concept of 'affective embodiment', capturing what provides emotional energy by connecting actors to the substance of the institution under attack via corporeal and emotional experiences. We also contribute to knowledge on how actors' disruptive institutional work efforts can be sustained – and emotional energy replenished – through affective solidarity (movement towards the collective) or sensory retreat (movement away from the collective). We hope that at a time when many are asking how to sustain activism in the face of emotional energy depletion, this study will provoke further analysis, reflection and ideas for action.

Of course, our case provides just a snapshot of feminist institutional work in the UK context. Our participants were those who wished to talk to us, and thus excludes absent voices whose may have totally withdrawn from institutional work. However, our study indicates that what may have previously been interpreted as total depletion, and exit from institutional work, may be seen as a temporary retreat. Thus, while the generalizable quality of our study may be limited, we believe that the #NMP3 case paints a rich picture of emotional energy replenishment in the digital age, particularly in the context of feminism, and offers a number of useful implications for practice and theory.

First, our findings point to exciting and important further research. How might the emotional energy (replenishment) rollercoaster have longer-term implications for actors' employment and personal relationships? Longitudinal analysis may shed useful light on the evolution of emotional energy over time, not only in feminist contexts, but also for other marginalized groups, such as oppressed black communities (Gabriel, 2016) and LGBTQI groups (Clark-Parsons, 2018) where emotional energy is intricately tied to specific institutions and embodied subjectivity. The construct

of affective embodiment, and themes of (mis)alignment, imply that there is more to be explored around intersectionality in social justice movements, particularly how to support the emotional energy of those who contest the mainstream.

Second, our analysis of the #NMP3 case, often heralded as an example of 'how to start a revolution' (Holmes, 2015), has important implications for how change agents in organizations and activists in social movements can be supported for sustained activism (King, 2005). That the body, and affective experiences of it, are central to institutional work means that some actors may be supported better through collective, closed, safe spaces. Others may be better supported through the freedom to temporarily exit, going silent and focusing on self-care. These tools have important spatio-temporal dimensions for institutional work and can be built into offline and online worlds to provide 'organising spaces' (Haug, 2013). Such insights may be beneficial to organizations and movements seeking to maintain morale (Creed et al., 2014), such as the Black Lives Matter movement. Facilitating space and time for sensory retreat is crucial. Ultimately, while the online age affords wonderful opportunities for institutional work on social justice issues, it remains a battleground. Further insights into how action can be sustained can only be a good thing.

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Notes

1. We focus on emotions in this research but acknowledge the overlap between these and affect (Wetherell, 2012). Feelings can be understood as emotions' expression, and 'affect' more reactive, pre-cognitive 'affective flows' that are notoriously hard to define or express (Anderson, 2006). Both emotions and affect are reliant on relationality; bodies and subjectivities in relation to one another (Fotaki et al., 2017).
2. https://www.facebook.com/NoMorePage3/
3. https://twitter.com/nomorepage3?lang=en

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