**Whatever you are, be a good one: The influence of occupational identity on emotional experience**

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**Word Count: 11,066**

**Abstract:** How does occupational identity shape emotional experience? Prior work has largely framed occupation and emotion either in terms of how differences in occupational status structure the experience of powerful, negative emotions or explicating how cultural norms enforce types of acceptable emotional expression in workplaces. Complementing and building on this work by using an identity-centered approach informed by Affect Control Theory, this paper asks how being in one occupational identity versus another influences the emotions one is likely to experience in everyday life. I argue that one’s occupational identity generates daily interaction sets with typical others, which create opportunities for identity maintenance and confirmation. Affect Control Theory predicts that when individuals confirm identities within an interaction, they will experience the characteristic emotion of the identity. Using the emotions module from Affect Control Theory, I test and find support for the hypothesis that individuals will report experiencing emotions that are closer in cultural meaning to the characteristic emotion of their occupational identity more often than emotions that are more different in cultural meaning. I additionally explore how this relationship depends on the social location of the individual. Because higher status individuals may be more likely to make an occupational identity salient to their sense of self, have more interactional resources to be effective in enacting their identity, and have that identity supported by their network ties and cultural environments, I argue that this relationship is stronger for men, those with higher income, more educational credentials, and middle-age individuals.

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**Acknowledgments:** I thank Lynn Smith-Lovin, Stephen Vaisey, Scott Lynch, and the members of the Duke Second Year Paper Workshop for their helpful feedback and suggestions to improve this manuscript.

**Funding:** This research was supported by an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship #DGE-1644868.