UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

Measuring Flourishing in the Narratives U.S. Emerging Adults: Results and Reflections from a Mixed-Methods Sociological Study

Nicolette D. Manglos-Weber

This is an unpublished conference paper for the 3rd Annual Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues conference at Oriel College, Oxford University, Thursday 8th – Saturday 10th January 2015.
These papers are works in progress and should not be cited without author's prior permission.

Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues
University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham, B15 2TT United Kingdom
T: +44 (0) 121 414 3602 F: +44 (0) 121 414 4865
E: jubileecentre@contacts.bham.ac.uk W: www.jubileecentre.ac.uk

Measuring Flourishing in the Narratives U.S. Emerging Adults: Results and Reflections from a Mixed-Methods Sociological Study

Nicolette D. Manglos-Weber
Notre Dame University
Department of Sociology
Center for the Study of Religion and Society

Introduction

What does it mean for young adults today to "do well"? It seems increasingly difficult to tell. The expansion of inequality and loosening of prescriptive cultural models for employment, marriage, and family make it more and more difficult to assess whether certain young adults are flourishing in life in relation to their diverse cultural and socioeconomic starting points. An already difficult task—measuring flourishing—is made even more challenging in the modern era, when handed-down models and scripts no longer work as easily or fit as readily to young adults' lived experiences. If we are to assess flourishing in this context, we must recognize its variability while still maintaining some sense of its core common characteristics.

In order to discuss possible answers to this larger question, in this paper I combine both survey data and interviews with a subset of a panel of American young adults to show how sociological research can attend to the multifaceted nature of flourishing and its dependence on group narratives, as a virtue ethics perspective would prescribe, while still taking advantage of existing datasets and meeting some of the criteria for generalizability. I share frankly about the challenges involved, both those I and my colleagues expected and those we came across in the process of research.

I then suggest based on this research that the best strategy is indeed one that combines listening to personal narratives with evaluating questionnaire responses; and that the ability to recognize patterns in one's own history and spin them into a satisfying narrative—one that is both personal and collective—is something young adults who are flourishing on multiple dimensions seem to share. Thus, not only does human activity only make sense within the context of larger narratives, but also those who are able to tell their own story in relation to a larger narrative effectively are able to flourish in spite of—or at times because of—pain and suffering. For scholars, this means we should pay attention to the characteristics that make living narratives more or less "effective" or "satisfying." For those engaged in institutions such as religion, family, and education, the implication is we can support flourishing in part by feeding the narrative sensitivity of emerging adults today, whether that be through telling stories or providing young people opportunities to identify and tell their own.

Virtue Ethics, Sociology, and Narrative Identity

Although MacIntyre's work *After Virtue* (1984) is one of moral philosophy, it also presents a distinct social theory in opposition to several predominant social science perspectives. Notably he takes on two of sociology's most lauded voices, Max Weber and Erving Goffman. The errors in their work stem from the emotivist problem: the view of the human person as a "democratized self which has no necessary social content and no necessary social identity," which "can then be anything…because it is in and for itself nothing" (p. 32). These and other sociologists attempt to explain human behavior while leaving aside the question of human nature, and this does not bode well for good explanation.

This critique is still highly relevant to sociology today, where those who study culture mostly swing between poles of situationalist pragmatism,[1] on the one hand, and a Weberian analysis of subjective personal dispositions, on the other hand.[2] Although these two sides disagree on whether emphasis should be placed on how actors shape culture or how culture shapes action—and cultural sociology tends to be quite consumed with that question—from a virtue ethics perspective they both suffer from the same fundamental error. They both refuse to connect questions of personal values with questions of human nature. They stubbornly hold onto the assumption that even if there *is* such a thing as human nature, we cannot rationally determine what it is, and therefore we cannot scientifically evaluate human behavior in relation to whether it is good for humans or

[1] For some heavily cited and applauded recent examples see Martin 2009; Gross 2009; Mizrachi, Anspach, and Drori 2007; Tavory and Eliasoph 2003; and Swidler 1986.
[2] See Longest, Hitlin, and Vaisey 2013; Stets and Carter 2012.

not.[3] We can only report on the "facts" and leave the value questions for each individual to answer for his or her self.[4]

There is thus a significant gap between the Virtue Ethics perspective and the way sociological analysis is practiced today.[5] Thankfully for those of us hoping to bridge this gap, MacIntyre explicitly outlines an alternative method of sociological analysis in chapter 15, based in the concepts of intelligibility and narrative. His premise is that there is no social action apart from the context that gives it intelligibility, and there is no context that does not have a narrative history. The implication for understanding social action—which is currently the favored definition of what sociologists do, and one I do not quibble with—is that it involves the following: "We place the agent's intentions in causal and temporal order with reference to their role in his or her history; and we also place them with reference to their role in the history of the setting or settings to which they belong…narrative history of a certain kind turns out to be the basic and essential genre for the characterization of human actions." (p. 208).

Elsewhere MacIntyre makes it clear that movement towards flourishing, which is my preferred translation of the concept of *eudaemonia*, is constituted by virtuous behavior in the relevant social contexts (p. 148). Based in this insight and those above, we see first that understanding what people are doing cannot be separated from the question of whether what they are doing is to a positive end. There is no real understanding of social action without placing it in relation to virtue and human nature. Second, we see that to assess whether a given person or group of people are doing well in

---

[3] As discussed in Smith 2015:62-66.
[4] The problem of this fact-value distinction is also discussed in Gorski 2014.
[5] For more on the parallel implications of this in social sciences generally and psychology in particular see Fowers 2012; Richardson and Manglos 2012.

a holistic sense, we must be able to truthfully characterize the general trend of their behavior as exemplifying virtue, and in order to do that we must understand the causal and temporal order of their intentions, how those intentions relate to the unity of their personal narrative, and how those intentions relate to the grand narratives of the social contexts in which they are embedded.

Within social-psychological literature, and particularly studies of resilience, the idea that persons' self-understandings take narrative form has received some attention. Scholars have used the concept of a *narrative identity* to argue that people tell stories to themselves about themselves, and that doing so effectively enables them to achieve higher levels of psychological wellbeing and resist falling into pathologies like anxiety and depression.[6] However, this insight has limited use in and of itself, for without a naturalist conception of virtue and intention one could easily view this process as an act of skillful self-deception, i.e. a tendency to "look on the bright side" regardless of the suffering or evil inherent in the situation. Yet when we see behavior as MacIntyre does, and when we recognize elements of storytelling when we engage with people in the interview situation, our intent is to do much more than to identify patterns of storytelling within personal narratives and connect them to indicators mental health. Our intent is to access the person's understanding of their own behavior in relation to the unity of their history and in relation to the history of the relevant social settings; and from there to examine whether their intentions reveal movement towards virtue. Indicators of mental health—specifically concepts like life satisfaction or sense of purpose—have some utility, but they are decidedly not the end point of the social scientist's analysis. Rather,

---

[6] A good summary of this concept and its usage is found in McAdams and McLean 2012.

they are indirect indications at a single point in time of a potential movement towards virtue going on at a deeper level, much like a ripple on the surface of the water hints at the movement of an animal underneath.

One good contribution of this literature on narrative identity is its recognition that different people exemplify varying degrees of what we might call storytelling skill. In other words, some people seem better able to communicate a self-understanding weaving their pasts, their presents, and their futures together in a coherent and satisfying way. When this takes place in the context of the interview situation, when the interviewer and the interviewee engage in a conversation to bring out the interviewee's self-understanding, this sense of the interviewee's answers being "satisfying" to both parties is crucial, but rarely investigated. Again, because of its over-reliance on mental health indicators as the hoped-for outcomes, many scholars seem content to conclude that a person's narrative is satisfying to them if it provides them emotional and mental ease. Yet this cannot explain why, within an interview situation, the interviewer also comes to a sense of satisfaction with an interviewee's account, or why those in the middle of suffering—who are consistently feeling troubling emotions and experiencing anxiety—can nevertheless at times confidently present a narrative account of their lives that includes and interprets the meanings of the suffering they are undergoing.

In this paper I can only scratch the surface of the question of what makes a satisfying or effective personal narrative. What I aim to do more thoroughly, however, is argue for the importance of this question as both a theoretical and a methodological linchpin connecting MacIntyre's social theory to the mechanics of social science as it is practiced today. As big as the gap is between what MacIntyre convincingly argues about

social explanation and what most mainstream sociologists think they are doing, I believe there are a few ready points of connection that, if properly reframed, can be used to develop new models for Virtue Ethics Sociology. One of these is the interview situation in which a social scientist and a person of interest together construct a reflexive conversation, and through that conversation the social scientist gains an understanding of the interviewee's narrative identity and its relationship to human goods.

The Context of U.S. Young Adulthood

Following MacIntyre's emphasis on social context, I place my argument within the setting of young adulthood as a cultural development in the modern world. Young adults in the U.S. and Europe live with the expectation of an extended period of self-discovery that seems to keep getting longer and more involved—as the saying goes, "Thirty is the new twenty." Jeffrey Arnett (2004) coined the now-popular term *emerging adulthood* to refer to the period from the late teens to the late twenties when young adults transition through diverse jobs, educational experiences, and relationships on their way to a more stable existence marked by career, financial security, and family life. He and others have pointed out that it is becoming more difficult for many to effectively make these expected life course transitions, as job markets tighten, inequality deepens, and various aspects of romantic relationships and family formation become decoupled.[7]

In her work on British youth, sociologist Margaret Archer (2012) argues that today there exists *a reflexive imperative,* where modern life demands young people contemplate their identities in relation to their social contexts and make choices about

[7] See also Smith et al 2011.

who they want to be and where they want to go in life. In other words, handed-down models of the good life are often found to be insufficient for meeting the demands of today's social and economic contexts, and young adults must consciously adapt their identities and their worldviews to adjust for this disparity. Put in terms of intentionality and narrative, the points of connection between young adults' actual circumstances and the grand narratives they have inherited and are fewer and more tenuous. We could also hypothesize young adults are now aware of a wider array of grand narratives than earlier generations, which presents them with the need to chose where to place themselves in relation to competing social histories.

Yet the idea that young adults in the modern world can or should choose their grand narratives from an array of options is clearly not a social vision MacIntyre would recognize. From the Virtue Ethics point of view, the reflexive imperative is potentially very real but it is also very misleading as a way of life. In MacIntyre's vision people do not autonomously chose whether and how their actions become meaningful. Rather, young adults pursuing new levels of self-understanding are better served by identifying the way grand narratives already shape their lives and by seeing through the modern illusion of the emotivist self.

On one level, it seems true to say that the broader awareness of competing grand narratives—for instance, the secular vs. the religious—demands that new generations be more reflective about where they fit in the broader social landscape. Yet on another level, this should not be taken so far as to reinforce the idea that modernity has brought a newfound freedom for the autonomous self. Indeed, from another perspective the reflexive imperative can be seen as a quite heavy burden to bear. At the very least, what

we know about young adulthood and the moral orientations of modernity demands that we start asking the question of how the reflexive imperative impacts flourishing, and how it can be navigated in such a way as to motivate a virtuous life.

Our Study

With these issues in mind, several years ago myself and my colleague Margarita Mooney designed a research project that would assess the common characteristics of U.S. young adults that appear to be flourishing in spite of significant amounts of suffering and stress, and to provide insight into how flourishing could properly be measured from a Virtue Ethics perspective.[8] We were particularly interested in giving young adults' relational lives and virtuous behaviors equal treatment alongside mental health indicators (i.e. life satisfaction, gratitude, etc.), and in focusing on young adults who are doing much better than their life situations would suggest. In other words, we were interested in the outlying cases of young adults who enacted the highest levels of virtue in the context of the highest levels of suffering, because we felt such strong examples of virtue could tell us something about virtuous life more generally.

To study this topic we started by analyzing data from an ongoing longitudinal panel study of U.S. young adults, called the National Study of Youth and Religion (NSYR), who were first interviewed in their early teens, then again in their late teens, early twenties, and late twenties. The benefit of starting from this survey data was that it is quite rich in terms of the questions that were asked about relationships, mental health,

[8] This project was funded by a grant from the Templeton Foundation, #34495.

and social behaviors, as well as instances of stress; and so it allowed us to use a variety of questions to identify the kinds of outlying cases we were interested in.

After much discussion, we decided to identify flourishing cases using two types of indicators: those tapping positive outlook and those tapping altruistic behaviors. Positive outlook indicators included scales of life satisfaction, sense of purpose, gratitude, and a sense of control. These are all psychometrically verified and commonly used scales. Altruistic behavior indicators included helping others, giving time and money, and formally volunteering. Throughout this process we never presumed that such indicators were the sum total of flourishing—far from it. Rather we looked to them as signs, as ripples on the surface that were likely to indicate positive movement towards flourishing underneath. If a young adult in their twenties is generally satisfied with their life, feels a strong sense of purpose and gratitude, experiences some degree of control over their life circumstances, regularly helps others, gives time and money, and volunteers, then we don't know for certain they are flourishing in an Aristotelian sense, but we have good reason to suspect that they are.

After selecting these indicators we grouped respondents in the survey into those who had experienced stressful events but exhibited many signs of flourishing, and those who had experienced stressful events and exhibited few signs of flourishing. This gave us two pools of young adults who shared some minimal level of stress in life but seemed to look very different in terms of their overall wellbeing. We then selected 25 from each group for interviewing. Myself and Prof. Mooney conducted these interviews over the summer and fall of 2013, travelling around the country to meet in-person with young

adults from an array of backgrounds and asking them questions about their relationships, their worldviews, their histories, their current life situations, and their goals for the future.

Out of the many findings emerging from this research, the one I want to highlight here is that young adults in the U.S. vary greatly in their ability to tell a satisfying personal narrative in the interview situation. At the very least, a satisfying personal narrative interprets one's past and connects it to a vision of the future. In its fuller expressions, a satisfying personal narrative does this by transforming the meaning of suffering in the past or present from something negative to something that has positive potential. Those who tell the most satisfying stories—as we might intuit from just reflecting on the stories we as people love to hear and tell—are those who have been through much pain and suffering but have engaged it and come out as better people. Further, those who tell the most satisfying stories connect their own stories with those of other people and communities. They link their stories to larger narratives. When they do so, they naturally feel gratitude for what others have given them and feel motivated to invest in the lives of others in turn. In spite of their challenges they give generously, act courageously, live reverently, and walk humbly.

This is not just "looking on the bright side" or convincing oneself of a comforting delusion. It becomes very clear in such narratives that the narrator is not running away from suffering, but is rather looking at it head on. Yet the narrator also demonstrates an awareness of the human potential to act creatively in the world, and to be responsible for how they deal with what life throws at them. They communicate a clear hope for their future, and are able to balance the knowledge that much lies outside of their control with the recognition that a good life demands they actively pursue virtue.

Among sociologists who use interviews there is much debate over what we can really learn from such a technique. Critics have argued that much of what people say in interviews is either a post-hoc rationalization of past behaviors—which they may never have thought about before being asked by the interviewer—or an act of situational self-presentation.[9] In other words, what they say can tell us something about the interaction but it cannot tell us much about how they live their lives.

When I have interviewed those who are by all indications flourishing, however, I find their stories to be too coherent, eloquent, and emotionally charged to be off-the-cuff constructions. The narratives of such young adults flow naturally, like stories they are telling every day. These stories are the rationales they give to life's daily questions: Where are you from? Why do you want to go to law school? What do you plan to do next summer? Do you want to get married and have kids? They need only a small push from the interviewer and then they are off, weaving a tale of courage, humility, generosity, reverence, and grace. I leave the conversation feeling inspired—which is, as a listener and teller of stories myself, ultimately the evidence I find most convincing.

Although in a reflective paper like this one I don't have space to go too deeply into the empirical analyses, I do want to use one example as illustration. Shelby is a young woman whose story I will never forget. The two and a half hours we spent talking stayed with me emotionally for many days. She was a 26-year-old woman of mixed white and Native American descent, who grew up on a reservation in Montana.[10] Her life was almost unimaginably full of trauma. Her parents were drug addicts who died early in her life. She and her sister then went to life with an aunt, who was abusive, and who brought

[9] Jerolmack and Kahn 2014.
[10] Names of people and places have been changed to protect privacy.

many abusive men into their home as well. Shelby was emancipated at 16 in order to escape this environment, and she was able to go on to college and get a bachelor's degree. In college, however, she suffered through an experience of sexual assault and the death of a very close friend.

Despite these enormous hurdles, Shelby has enacted important coping behaviors to address and overcome the effects of stress in her life. She took a big step in her adolescence by moving out of her abusive aunt's home, and another step in the more recent past to close off all contact with her biological family, stating that it was "very necessary" for her to cut off contact "to keep my own sanity." She has applied this strategy to other aspects of life as well, stating, "And if it's something that you can't handle, then I've just taught myself to just kinda step out of it and re-process it and even analyze whether or not it's worth it to be in that stressful situation." At another point in time, she also removed herself from a relationship with a boyfriend who had started to become abusive as well, exemplifying courage in the face of complicated emotions.

Shelby gives meaning to the pain of her past by seeking to use it as a way to connect with others. When she was in college she volunteered with a group dedicated to advancing awareness about violence against women and encouraging healthy relationships among students. During her freshman year of college, she started getting some perspective on her situation and began emotionally processing all that she had been through. For the first time in her life, she had peers with whom she could talk about her background without fear of her aunt finding out. Jordan, her closest friend from college, later welcomed her into his family, and when she and I talked they had become a primary source of support in her life.

She also had a rich albeit non-traditional religious faith giving her further tools for telling a transformative story about her life. Like many of her peers, she resisted taking on a strong religious affiliation but she deeply believed in and consistently interacted with God. She also talked about how "everything happens for a reason;" and when asked about whether she would want to get married in the future, she said yes, but only if "God feels that that's the person that I need in my life and I can benefit them as well." In this and other places, she revealed her reliance on the metanarrative of a loving God providing what she needs when she needs it. She also came to attend church with Jordan and his family, and the two of them regularly discussed theological issues: "two psychology majors over beers, it gets very interesting," she said, and laughed.

Towards the end of our conversation, I asked her what she hoped for herself looking into the future. Her response was a compelling mix of realism and self-confidence. She was still facing many obstacles on a daily basis, and she acknowledged this. She had just finished her Bachelor's degree against all odds, but was having trouble finding work apart from a minimum wage, convenience store job. She was also actively pursuing legal help to regain custody of her young son, who she gave birth to in a much darker period of her life, and who was living with his father. Yet she was also finding strength from her new connections and was feeling like she was moving in a positive direction. She planned to take the GRE soon to pursue a Master's degree in social work.

Her hopes thus revolved around gaining stability with her son and being settled in a career. After she described what this would look like, I asked her: "How confident do you feel about you're able to make those things happen?"

She replied, “When I lived back at home with my aunt, it was always kind of one step forward, two steps back, because I think I was so close to that, still having that right behind me, kind of feeling, that I was never going to get away from it. And not necessarily that moving has brought me away from it more, it’s just the maturity level that I’ve gained, too. Now I know, y’know, this is what I need to be doing.”

“So do you feel like your life is generally moving in a good direction?” I asked.

“Yeah, I actually put a post on Facebook the other night that said it feels good to be going in the right direction….And, I mean, that’s pretty much how I feel about it. Still not quite figuring stuff out and like I said, I’m making $7 an hour at a convenience store when I have my bachelor’s degree and I’m like, wait a second, that’s not how this is supposed to go (laughs), but at least I’m still moving forward and it’s not two steps back anymore.”

A bit later, Shelby also talked about how she felt new confidence because of the family of her college friend Jordan who took her in. She now calls them “Dad” and “Mom,” and her conversations with them have helped her to recognize new possibilities for her future. The first time she met them, the father sat down and told her his story:

“[He’s] a rough man. He’s, he’s had his hands dirty in the past, he’s made his mistakes, and he sat down and he talked to me as an adult, but also as a father figure, explaining, you know, ‘You’ve messed up, but things, you know, look at me. I have a family now. I’ve changed, things will be okay.’” She repeatedly credited their intervention in her life as a big part of why she was emotionally stable, working a steady job, and able to think about taking on the challenge of pursuing a social work career.

Shelby acknowledged she was still many steps away from the life she wanted for herself. Yet she expressed three important convictions: 1) she saw herself gaining in maturity; 2) she believed she was moving in the right direction of a good life for her and her son; and 3) she recognized how her wellbeing depended on others. Hearing about her desire to serve her son as a good mother and to serve the community as a social worker, specifically one dedicated to sufferers of domestic abuse, I believed her convictions. Hers was a story I walked away from feeling inspired. She suffered experiences no one should have to go through, but by her mid-twenties she was doing as well or better than many of her peers. Yet her narrative was not the story of a "self-made" woman. It was not a victory of the emotivist self. It was a story of being grateful for the right relationships—even in a sea of negative ones—and hoping to play that role in the future for others. She recognized the larger stories she was embedded in, both the religious metanarrative of God as a loving parent and the human story of creative transformation in the face of suffering.

The evidence of her flourishing from this conversation was also supported by her responses to the larger survey she participated in. Again, each young adult was asked a battery of questions about life satisfaction, sense of purpose, sense of control, gratitude, helping behaviors, giving time and money, and volunteering. Shelby scored higher than most on these measures overall; and more significantly, her score on these measures was higher when she was surveyed in her late twenties than when she was surveyed in her early twenties. This also indicated forward movement of the kind she described in the interview. Thus, by using the survey data in conjunction with the face-to-face conversation, I found strong evidence of a young woman flourishing in spite of huge

obstacles, whose story could inform larger questions about what it takes to flourish within the context of young adulthood in the U.S. today.

Conclusion

The premise of the sociological research study I have described is that by combining the best longitudinal survey methods and in-depth, responsive interviewing, we can get a sense of who flourishes and how flourishing can be supported. While recognizing that flourishing itself must be defined by virtue in specific contexts, and thus sociological methods can only assess it indirectly, I argue that by using multiple methods to triangulate flourishing we can get a strong sense of who is likely exercising virtue in the situations of their daily lives. Specifically, I argue that those who are flourishing are more likely to respond positively to a variety of psychological indices meant to tap life satisfaction, gratitude, sense of purpose, and sense of control, as well as questions on giving behaviors; and that in their interviews they are able to craft a personal narrative that gives meaning to their lives in terms of where they came from, which larger group narratives they are a part of, how stressful events and obstacles fit into their story of flourishing, and where they hope and plan to go in the future. Finally, those who are flourishing are able to craft this narrative with conviction—their story is satisfying both to themselves and those they tell it to.

Being able to tell a satisfying narrative is not, however, something automatic. Many who have undergone the kind of stress Shelby has are clearly unable to deal with their pasts and envision a new future the way she does. Moreover, she didn't get there on her own. The right people at the right points in time came into her life as sources of support *and* as conversation partners. Young adults cannot tell a satisfying narrative

without someone to live it out with and to tell it to. In the broader study, we found that many if not most of those who are able to flourish in spite of such obstacles share several things in common: they have at least one or two touchstone relationships in their lives, and they are engaged in some way with the institutions of higher education and religion. This suggests that the ability to tell a satisfying story—which is also the ability to see the larger stories one is wrapped up in—is enhanced by positive relationships and by institutions that espouse and expose young adults to grand narratives.

Much more can and should be done to explore what it means to tell a satisfying story and how social scientific tools can be sharpened to get a better sense of how flourishing can be supported. We have a long way to go, in part because most sociologists have not to this point made it their business to understand flourishing. Doing so requires we shift the primary focus away from exclusively looking at the nature of institutions, cultures, and demographic traits towards including examinations of the nature of human persons, and many sociologists still resist making that shift. Nevertheless, it is possible with effort. I am convinced that the gap between the Virtue Ethics perspective and the sociological approach is smaller than we might think.

References

Archer, Margaret S. 2012. *The Reflexive Imperative in Late Modernity*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Fowers, Blaine. 2012. "Placing Virtue and the Human Good in Psychology." *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology* 32(1):1-9.

Gorski, Philip S. 2013. "Beyond the Fact-Value Distinction: Ethical Naturalism and the Social Sciences." *Sociology* 50:543-553.

Gross, Neil. 2009. "A Pragmatist Theory of Social Mechanisms." *American Sociological Review* 74(3):358-379.

Jerolmack, Colin and Shamus Kahn. 2014. "Talk is Cheap: Ethnography and the Attitudinal Fallacy." *Sociological Methods and Research* 43(2):178-209.

Longest, Kyle C., Steven Hitlin, and Stephen Vaisey. 2013. "Position and Disposition: The Contextual Development of Human Values." *Social Forces* 91(4):1499-1528.

MacIntyre, Alistair. 1984. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press.

Martin, John L. 2009. *Social Structures.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

McAdams, Dan P. and Kate C. McLean. 2012. "Narrative Identity." *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 22(3):233-238.

Mizrachi, Nissam, Renee R. Anspach, and Israel Drori. 2007. "Repertoires of Trust: The Practice of Trust in a Multinational Organization Amid Political Conflict." *American Sociological Review* 72(1):143-165.

Richardson, Frank and Nicolette D. Manglos. 2012. "Rethinking Instrumentalism." *Journal of Consciousness Studies* 19(5-6):177-209.

Smith, Christian, Kari Christoffersen, Hilary Davidson, and Patricia Snell Herzog. 2011. *Lost in Transition: The Dark Side of Emerging Adulthood.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Stets, Jan and Michael J. Carter. 2012. "A Theory of the Self for the Sociology of Morality." *American Sociological Review* 74:192-215.

Swidler, Ann. 1986) "Culture in Action: Symbols and Strategies." *American Sociological Review* 51(2): 273-286.

Tavory, Iddo and Nina Eliasoph. 2003. "Coordinating Futures: Toward a Theory of Anticipation." American Journal of Sociology 118(4):908-942.