Original Paper

Fighting in Agricultural Areas of the Southeastern United States

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Abstract

*In the scientific literature, interest in male aggression is driven by views that consuming alcohol increases the likelihood of fighting. This literature mostly focuses on barrooms. Ethnographic research generally stays clear of associating bars with fighting by exploring the expressive dimensions of drunken comportment and/or (less often) the antecedents to fighting, which may take place in a variety of settings. Based on long-term fieldwork among farm laborers across the Eastern and Midwestern United States, and an analysis of field data from one agricultural home-base community, this article examines implications of fighting among farmworkers who spend time in bars and taverns (*la cantina*) and/or the street (*la calle*). Street settings were found to be more volatile than bars and taverns in agricultural areas in relation to "scrapping" among men, and, thus, more likely to end in fight-related injury. Nonetheless, men often engaged in forms of impression management that expressed their masculinity, as well as effectively avoided potential violence and possible injury.*

Keywords

agricultural communities, street settings, bars and taverns, inter-personal violence, alcohol, and Southeastern United States

1. Introduction

Fighting behavior is embodied. Its unfolding may follow one of several paths available to men for maintaining an image of manhood appropriate to a particular socio-cultural setting. The framework proposed by Erving Goffman (1990/1959) for *presentation of self* by "impression management" (Giddens, 2009) is sometimes followed in the academic literature (often without citation) on fighting among men. Thus, men in socio-cultural settings where fighting takes place, engage purposively in sustaining an image of manhood, by enacting an embodied masculinity in male-dominated settings. These settings may be places where sports are enacted (Ripley, 2018), as well as barrooms and taverns as places associated with a potential for aggressive behavior among men (Leary, 1976; Dyck, 1980;

Tomsen, 1997; Wells et al., 2011). The literature on fighting often considers aspects of alcohol consumption as a predisposition to involvement in fighting among men (Leary, 1976; du Plessis, Corney, & Burnside, 2013), also known as "scrapping", as it is sometimes called in places where I have conducted fieldwork.

Actions and counter-responses that precede "scrapping" (fighting) are communicative styles (Tannen, 2009) that take place as a co-production that men often view with post-event chagrin and awe. Men readily recognize the potential for escalation and likelihood of harm to another, and possible injury to self. Scrapping is a *figured world* peopled in a co-authored arena where "particular outcomes are valued over others" (Holland et al., 1998, pp. 49-65). At the same time, fighting is imbued with an image of control gone awry, excessive aggression, and self-celebratory likelihood of harm and injury to self and/or another person. All this makes the prelude to scrapping open to the public gaze of observers and later reportable among local people, where it is amenable to their interpretations for how witnessed events promote authored masculinities, which eventually may become accessible to field research and analysis that increases knowledge of public aggression among men.

Another genre for generating an image of masculinity is drunken comportment. Each of these behaviors appears possible with limitations on protagonists, with the first (scrapping) enacted by a pair of individuals and the second (drunkenness) performed by one individual. Although both share in common the important role of a co-present audience, which leads back to Goffman's postulation on "impression management" and "co-presence" (Giddens, 2009), it is its dyadic composition by which a fight differs from the drunken comportment of one person.

Writing more than two decades apart, MacAndrew and Edgerton (1969) and Pernanen (1991) provide further ideas to the study of masculinity and adversity when each set forth respective models that drunken behavior and violence associated with alcohol are patterned by culture. Assumed variable across settings, *drunken comportment* (MacAndrew & Edgerton, 1969) is a learned behavior. Otherwise, predisposition to drunkenness is often viewed more as a "disease" that requires treatment. Aggression in the form of "inter-personal violence" (Pernanen, 1991) in contrast ranges from scenarios of abusive relationships within domestic households to fighting in commercialized venues in sport arenas. Aggression manifested as violence has spawned distinct literatures that sometimes merge with a circumscribed literature on consumption of alcohol. Because alcohol consumption is viewed as a contributing factor to fighting in settings where male co-presence is mediated and fluid, the barroom is suitable for investigation.

How do sequential actions take place in each of these models? The drunken comportment model proposed by MacAndrew and Edgerton is multi-directional. It allows for moderation in consumption, variation in personal response(s) to alcohol, and situational control whereby imbibing is not inevitably linked to alcoholic inebriation. To borrow an analogy credited to Clifford Geertz (1973, pp. 6-7), actions that precede a fight between two men are closer to a controlled wink (volitional, learned) than an occurrence of blinking (involuntary, biological). Culture not bio-chemistry guides public behavior.

For the question of aggression in relation to violence, some theoretical models assume fairly quick progression to fighting, once the impulsive force of aggression begins to take over, and internal control begins to slowly or instantly erode (Tomsen, 1997; Beale et al., 1998; Quigley, Leonard, & Collins, 2003; Miller et al., 2016; Miller et al., 2017). Alcohol is assumed to be one spark that can ignite the aggression tinderbox, which has led to numerous studies focused on barroom settings. Within this research, escalation to scrapping often follows an "instigating event" (Beale et al., 1998; Leonard, Collins, & Quigley, 2003) or "trigger" (Graham & Wells, 2001), where alcohol plays a major role (e.g., Graham & Wells, 2003; Leonard, Collins, & Quigley, 2003; Graham et al., 2006a; Graham et al., 2006b), or it becomes a necessary co-present factor in barroom settings (Benson & Archer, 2002; Quigley, Leonard, & Collins, 2003), or acts as a mediator as certain actions escalate into inter-personal violence (e.g., Beale et al., 1997; Graham et al., 2006a; Graham et al., 2006b). Rarely acknowledged is the behavioral potential for an individual to exercise control through personal agency, wherein individuals can learn alternative actions by observing others when they fight, and listening when they describe past episodes of inter-personal violence.

Finally, an innovative direction for this focus on aggression is geographic predisposition of certain areas that provide alcohol (i.e., barrooms, take-out liquor stores, convenience stores, hotels), which generate greater likelihood of aggressive behaviors, such as fighting and assaults. Using a research design that disaggregated block groups in a Southern city, "resource deprived" areas had higher average counts of aggravated and strongarm assault, and they had twice as many liquor and convenience stores than "resource enriched" block groups (Berthelot et al., 2015). Most all, if not all, previous studies of barrooms (primarily in the United States, Australia, and Canada) were located in neighborhoods that were residentially established. For my research across agricultural areas of the Eastern and Midwestern United States, many if not most people were migratory farmworkers (newcomers, regular/sporadic returnees). That is, they were housed temporarily and seasonally in areas near their worksites. Even those who were residents of the farm town where field data were collected for this analysis, were men and women who migrated seasonally to other agricultural areas, and then returned ("come back down") at the end of the season.

2. Method

Before presenting numerical data and analysis of a sequential model for inter-personal violence in farming communities where migrant men predominate, I summarize fieldwork in rural settings that were male-dominated. A common ground in agricultural settings is spoken Spanish and/or English. My long-term fieldwork took place in rural areas of nine states of the Eastern and Midwestern United States that employ farmworkers for mostly outdoor tasks by which small communities depend economically on agriculture. Visitation to these nine states varied. Some was cursory, some was extensive. My field research emphasized participation in settings where farmworkers would gather when not working, such as unoccupied space around convenience stores and bars/taverns, shaded areas

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on rental properties, behind abandoned houses and under bridges, and near wooded areas in and around small towns. Data analyzed in this article were collected during time that I spent inside and outside two taverns a short distance apart within a four-block area in a farming town of the Southeastern United States. My analysis focuses on men, as they comprise a larger proportion of the migratory and seasonal farmworker population than women who perform farm labor in the United States.

2.1 Field Settings

I use "nested sites" to refer to chosen "spots" within common places where migrants gather and position themselves outdoors in small groups. During fieldwork, these nested sites included, among others, occulted west side of a convenience store where the east side faced a town's main street, shaded area of a hibiscus hedge encircling a convenience store at the limits of a rural town where Spanish-predominant Latinos spent time during vegetable planting, and occasionally off-season, before they returned for harvesting, and several instances where a spot behind or to one side of a convenience store, or laundry room, provided trees and/or awnings for shade, respectively.

Structured by the architectural design of single-level buildings that house workers or provide venues for business (typically convenience stores), "nested sites" were welcomed by migrants whenever they chose to gather as a cluster. Serving as a place where contractors could encounter workers, the wider area adjacent to a gathering spot often served as a "staging area", where farmworkers were recruited informally and workers by pre-arrangement came to secure transportation (mostly by vans, trucks and converted buses) to their agricultural worksites.

Settings where I spent most of my time in agricultural areas observing and interacting with migrant men and women provided instances to observe socio-cultural practices that migrants may occasionally share with local residents in adjoining neighborhoods. Generalizations for the process of inter-personal violence are based on materials from a rural town in the Southeastern United States (shortened herein to rural South) against a backdrop of long-term ethnography across multiple sites in nine states of the Eastern and Midwestern United States. Occasionally, my approach for entrée into local settings resembles what Margarethe Kusenbach (2003) describes as Go-Along, wherein a field researcher accompanies someone to places within a community. Although she claims this technique is under-utilized, it was common in classic studies of street corners (Whyte, 1955/1943; Liebow, 1967), homeboys and homegirls (Moore, 1991), crack-dispensing game room (Bourgois, 1995), and bar/lounge (Anderson, 1996), among others. These fieldworkers often accompanied people to apartments and elsewhere as well. I too visited men and women where they lived. Otherwise, fieldwork in rural areas emphasized my co-presence and collaborative participation (O'Reilly, 2011, pp. 116-140) in small-group clusters at gathering sites, enhanced by occasional but brief Go-Along (accompany someone) and Wander-About (walking alone from one local site to another).

Outdoors > Worker Living Sites: Fieldwork included time I spent outside buildings that housed workers. Sometimes this was a structured dormitory in town or a set of trailers or rented rooms lining hallways in a single building, or labor camps on rural farms. Some sites were built specifically as

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worker barracks (e.g., one was renovated from a former tavern/dance hall). When a living site attracted people beyond its occupants, resulting space was considered an aspect of the street for places where clusters of men aggregated in the late afternoon or evening and on weekends. I mixed field observations of social interactions in the farming town I call Oakton with visits to agricultural areas in other fieldwork states, to "hang-with" men and sometimes women outdoors, and to spend time inside trailers and rented rooms, by invitation, with occupants. Term "hang-with" acknowledges an insider perspective of those who cluster together, whereas "hang-out" is commentary that implies interactions devalued by outsiders (Erzinger, 1994).

Outdoors > Convenience Stores: As sites of contrasting movement (patrons come and go; those who gather spend extended time), convenience stores were ubiquitous in small towns. At least one existed in each town I visited that attracted men and sometimes women to one side or at the rear of the store, where they formed "clusters". Gathering sites might be fashioned near laundry rooms as well as sundry convenience stores. An area overgrown with weeds, such as an empty parcel of land or an abandoned building, might attract small aggregations of farmworkers, when they were not working. These covered sites occasionally permitted activities linked to alcohol and illicit drug use for those who were inclined to this behavior.

Clusters grew and dwindled in size, dependent on the time of day. Music from a radio or jukebox or recorder was uncommon, which meant that conversation was the main hold for time at the site. Frequent clusters were common during the agricultural season, where a site might double as a staging area, and on weekends, when the population of rural towns increased, as farmworkers arrived for on-the-season employment (some returning, some newly arrived). Public visibility of "being seen" and "seeing others" led to choosing cluster sites as a factor that brings people together. Generally, shade was a potential luxury, not a necessity for aggregating in clusters.

Indoors > Bars and Taverns: Bars and taverns of the rural South encourage an indoor clientele, although a few where I conducted observations were equally conducive to outdoor gatherings. This was the case for communities heavily dependent on agriculture, where rental housing was found mostly in a nearby town, rather than on a local farm. Typically, store management was tolerant of the unintended outcome of adjoining store property becoming a gathering site, which took place outside the store and occasionally included (except where town ordinances were enforced) imbibing alcoholic beverages purchased in the store, or brought on-site.

The game area of a bar or tavern provides visibility for most or all portions of the interior. Stools and table booths in contrast selectively channel one's vision. Booths permit social intimacy for couples seated across from each other, whereas stools encourage interaction, as one was able to move freely, amplifying or renewing contact to either side, as well as in the front and to the rear of the stool. Passing beyond 180 degrees was inappropriate. "Dipping" or meddling (inquisitively seeking information on others) was discourteous, but inter-personal concern for well-being was valued. Given sound levels of conversations in a drinking establishment mixed with music (one instance of television), there was no

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obligation to greet anyone, except at close range. As people enter or leave a tavern, patrons might acknowledge those they knew, usually seated by the door.

Transgression of space occurred infrequently on bar stools. Women were approached at tables, occasionally, despite an unspoken norm that table occupation signals a desire for privacy. As a last resort, a female patron might call the bartender, since both male and female bartenders were adept at correcting behavior, which included potentially "bouncing" (exiting) individuals guilty of norm transgression, which I witnessed on rare occasions at bars and taverns where I conducted observations. One female bartender in Oakton, for example, was effective at diffusing problems, when she was alone. Nonetheless, she was accompanied some evenings by her large-framed son, who was an equally effective deterrent to potential problems.

In this article, bars and taverns are indoor sites, and the street is any place located outdoors, where migrant men and sometimes women might gather and spend time. I identify two Taverns a short distance apart and Street (capitalized) to refer specifically to sites within a four-block area where I collected field data that are analyzed for this article.

3. Cultural Amenities and Social Pleasantries

Civil inattention is an unspoken rule for those patronizing a bar or tavern in contrast to an expected greeting to persons whom one knows when approaching and joining an outdoor cluster. Regular patrons in Oakton bars and taverns formed segmented networks temporarily visible but not acknowledged, whereas cluster participation outdoors required acknowledgement upon approaching and joining a cluster. Inattention to those at a distance permits focused interaction inside a bar or tavern with those in close proximity. Outdoors, anyone visible to a cluster of individuals is open to a public greeting as well as private commentary within the group.

Conversation is limited inside bars and taverns when a jukebox is playing (patron activated) and/or the television in one bar is turned on (patron requested, bartender activated), and talk is extended to the perimeter of nested sites when neither is playing. Normative speaking and occasional rise in tone are acceptable. Shouting is infrequent but more common outdoors. Sound transgression is rare indoors, mostly as extreme moments when one can audibly acknowledge their admiration of another patron. For example, I often observed Sable, a Sun Beam regular, acknowledged at short range by female patrons as well as across the room by Bob the bartender (corollary outcome was making public his continual oversight of behavior inside the bar). In contrast, men who spent time in groups around downtown convenience stores would call to persons a short distance from their cluster, as a ploy to mix or shift composition of groups or to reinforce a point in conversation.

Social skills generally were aligned to willingness to talk to selected individuals who passed through the immediate area. Occasionally, a cluster member might call-out to someone at a distance from the cluster. Shouting to people outdoors, although infrequent, was tolerated. The repartee back to the caller animated further talk within the cluster. Forest, one of my contacts in Oakton, was skilled at

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spontaneous interaction. Her voice was audible at a distance, which generally brought attention to her cluster, when she was co-present. Otherwise, her loud repartee to a clustered group would enliven its members, as she passed them from a distance.

Social interaction is generally the main activity in which one participates inside a bar/tavern or within a street cluster in any number of agricultural communities of the rural South. Gathering sites are places where one renews contact at the end of the work week for those whom one has not seen regularly during the week. Cultural amenities lead to social pleasantries in outdoor and indoor settings. A potential for violence – which occurred infrequently – was more likely to take place in the Street than in Taverns.

So widespread is this tension between street and drinking site that it appears elaborated as a sub-text in narrative life stories collected by Marilyn Davis for *Mexican Voices, American Dreams* (1990), which depict the pull of economic opportunity in the United States and the resultant immigrant experience with life in the United States. Through an elaboration of interview excerpts with comments on drinking, her view of life subtly distinguishes *La Calle* (street) as a place of risk and danger with *La Cantina* (tavern) as a haven for conviviality. At the same time, social acceptance of drinking across the border from the United States is contrasted this side of the border, with drinking-exacerbated problems in goal-oriented U.S. culture. Highlighting these features of the narratives collected by Davis reveals that problems outlined by their narrators are magnified by imputed dangers from a Generalized Other in North American cities, where the immigrants quoted in *Mexican Voices* are living. Within scattered images that recall experience in Mexico versus immigrant experience in the United States, these narratives collected by Davis contrast what is accepted from what is disvalued, and what is socially appropriate from what is not.

As Davis extends her discussion from social drinking to illicit substances (marijuana is named; nameless drugs are implied), she shifts from first-person accounts of former migrants in Mexico to immigrant stories told by men and women on both sides of the border. These narratives depict Generalized Others who, among other things, smuggle illicit drugs for lucrative rewards, or lose their property and forfeit personal ties, typically owing to immoderate inebriation. Her first case of drinking across the border establishes the cultural practice of male drinking as a cherished reward for an active life, and an accepted outlet for expression of male emotion (1990, p. 32, p. 43, p. 45, *passim*). Running the full course of 18 drug-related snippets, her last mention returns to drinking, as a man named Juan (fictitious), while living in the Midwestern United States, describes problems with alcohol which, he says, "did not help me grow" (p. 392), for which he later sought treatment. In contrast to cities represented in her data, my field data were collected in rural agricultural areas, where farmworkers typically enacted geographic mobility.

4. Inter-Personal Violence

Bars and taverns in the ethnographic literature often figure as places of fighting. This is evident for those mentioned in northern South America by Wade (1994), and for Dominican immigrants in New York City described by Gordon (1978), and El Cielo Azul Dance Hall in South Texas for tensions that are dramatized in Limón (1994). Thus, it is expected that themes and descriptions of scrapping (two persons) and brawling (more than two individuals) would appear among the events associated with bars and taverns in the life stories I collected. Narratives recounted fights in spaces that typically were indeterminate ("unmarked") and unnamed. When named, the place was typically a bar or tavern ("marked") across my life story interviews. Two examples follow of a narrated experience that describes inter-personal violence from separate sides of the border:

United States: One of my contacts (age 40s), the son of immigrant parents, told a story of his early drinking years when he was called downtown to an Oakton tavern where his brother had been attacked: "One of them guys hit my brother with a machete, and cut his finger in half". The ensuing fight included nearly a dozen men and, in the process, the brother coming to the rescue was shot. Telling me, "It wasn't my fight", he lifted his shirt to show entrance and exit scars from a bullet he received across the front of his abdomen. He summarized his tale, quietly, by saying, "A lot of people got hurt that day".

Mexico: As the youngest in his family, another man (age 40s) described how his father was shot and killed in a rural community dependent on ranching and agriculture. "He was asleep on a bench in the bar outside our town, when they shot him", he told me matter-of-factly. At the time, his son (narrator) was less than two-years-old. Raised by his mother, he assisted his family by initiating and operating a transport service among neighboring towns that was based on the family's horses. As a young adult, he later came to the United States.

As the first incident happened more than twenty years before my arrival in Oakton, and the second took place in Mexico more than thirty years earlier, each story presents a challenge to my premise that risk of inter-personal violence in recent years was found outside rather than inside bars and taverns. When an event is exceptional, however, it is remembered, as is evident in each of these narrated stories.

Another story I heard spontaneously illustrates how pleasantries became a desired norm in the configured world individually and collectively constructed inside Oakton bars and taverns. A woman told the story of how her father, a migrant raised in Texas, was mistaken for someone who killed a man in an Oakton bar. By a stroke of fortune for her father, the female bartender who witnessed the homicide accompanied local police to assist in making an identification, since the father was a look-alike for the man who did the shooting. I was present with both women, when the bartender re-told the tale, "I remember your family, and your father", she told the woman, "You weren't in school yet. Your brothers and sisters were older". Each woman later spoke with me individually to describe what she could recall of the earlier incident. Over my time in Oakton, I learned how this female bartender was respected for courtesies that she extended to residents and migrants alike.

At one time before the establishment of a county sheriff's sub-station in Oakton that readily responded to complaints from tavern employees or patrons, homicides were rare in Oakton bars and taverns. One bar nicknamed Grim Reaper was reported to be the place of the most homicides several decades before I began field research. It was closed during the first year of my research. Another Tavern, Sendero, was said to rank second, according to men in Oakton for having eleven homicides over its history. This Tavern (which I observed) was where the female bartender worked at time of the incident in the third story of inter-personal violence. A news article in the weekly community bulletin before my arrival (on file in local office) described a police raid on one-room cabins behind the bar, where commercial sex workers plied their trade. Cabins were removed years earlier, by the time I arrived. Thus, activities of bars and taverns in the ethnographic present that I observed differed from tales and stories in taped narratives that I collected from migrant farmworkers on incidents related to drinking and drugging, and fighting.

Four homicides within the downtown area of Oakton during fieldwork took place outside bars and taverns: woman killed behind a restaurant in the downtown area, one man shot inside and one shot behind two respective worker barracks, and one man found on pay day with his throat slit, still in work boots, floating in a small pond behind a rental house. Stories of the two dormitory shootings, and the man in the pond, were re-told in the Midwestern United States, when I visited labor camps one summer in a migrant camp two days travel from Oakton. Over time, stories of events like these become embellished. Given the emotional drama contained within local narratives and assumptions based on the indeterminacy of a bar homicide, embellishments can influence choices to seek farmwork in a locale, such as Oakton. One man I met on that Midwest visit, for example, told me that he was planning to not return to Oakton in the near future, given the unsavory image reflected in the recent homicides.

Echoing what Anderson (1999) and others describe as "Code of the Street" (act tough, exude an oppositional physicality, while minimizing emotions), a truck driver raised in Oakton explained to me the masculinity attitude that once pervaded the downtown streets: "Guys in the past would go up to someone and tell them to move" ((no intent to menace, he brings his six-foot-two frame closer to me to demonstrate, before stepping back)). "If neither moved, they'd get into a fight… I've been in big cities when I drive. Here we have fights between individuals. The gang fights of big cities we don't have here". Thus, he explained the basis for scrapping was reputation enhancement rather than vengeance. As a teenager, the man with bullet scars across his stomach participated in wager-scrapping behind local bars. This variation in reputation enhancement took place during the first years of increasing migration to Oakton and its settlement by Latino farmworkers in the community. Young men received a percentage of the betting wagers placed on them by older adults. Based on a reputation one gains by scrapping, rural fighting in Oakton is closer in intent to "Code of the Barrio" among Latinos in California that is described by Moore (1991, pp. 65-66, pp. 101-103), rather than a code of informal rules that is outlined by Fleisher (1995) for street gangs in Seattle, Washington (Northwestern United States).

5. Violence in the Making

As fieldwork began, I became aware that violence might be a potential experience for migrant farmworkers in areas where they travel and work. I interviewed eleven individuals at a homeless shelter, located in a small town. Two men were recovering from gunshot wounds (ankle for one, stomach for other), and one of three women reported an incident of rape while working on-the-season. A third man told of an incident where "horseplay" in the field could have escalated into altercation, when several men threw stones at each other to pass the time. The next morning, this man found another farm labor contractor and began working for him.

Given a possible proclivity for violent encounters, as I began observations, I annotated details of incidents observed in Oakton and rural locales across the Eastern United States. To maintain a conceptual focus, when I witnessed the rare occurrence of fighting, I counted blows meted and number of ineffective punches (or a knife thrust, once), whereby I avoided phrases in notes for extremes, such as "escaped being brutally beaten" or "knocked senseless". Fortunately, I witnessed no stabbings and no shootings. Weapons were not observed in other rural agricultural settings, and I only observed a potential weapon twice (displayed, not used to menace) in downtown Oakton.

I began codding field notes to indicate when (A) two/more individuals became "Upset" with each other by rise in tone of voice, abrupt behavior and/or loud speech, accompanied by visible show of anger or enragement; (B) two or more persons came close together and positioned themselves in a posture I called 'Face-off' that usually occurred in silence (see similar conceptualization in Benson and Archer, 2002), accompanied by staring at each other and engaging in the "fierce eye", and, finally; (C) whether a "Fight" took place between two individuals or was deferred. Representing a "need for connection, belonging, and recognition" (Dolezal, 2017, p. 248), it was becoming evident that application of "face-work" (p. 239) during "Face-Off" becomes intensified within this inter-corporeal process.

Across 72 observed incidents over the period of fieldwork specific to Oakton (26 in Taverns, 46 in Street), proportion in the Street that became Fights (26 of 46 or 56.5%) was greater than the proportion of Fights in Taverns (4 of 26 or 15.4%) (P< .001) (Table 1). Incidents that never escalated beyond a "Face-off", or individuals that showed evidence of "Upset" without fighting, were closer numerically than statistically (22/26 or 84.6% for Taverns, 20/46 or 43.5% for Street).

Table 1. Escalation to Inter-Personal Violence: Tallies from Oakton Field Notes

	Tavern N=26		Street N=46		Total
Upset	18	69.2%	12	26.1%	30
Face-Off	4	15.4%	8	17.4%	12
Fight	4	15.4%	26	56.5%	30
Total	26	36.1%	46	63.9%	72

Pearson Chi Square = 14.207 (df = 2) P< .001. Likelihood ration = 14.966. Minimum expected count per cell = 4.33.

Occurring at the entrance, one of four Fights (25.0%) in an Oakton Tavern resulted in injury (downward palm thrust on another's face), followed by a concern of the bartender and patrons alike, whereas 12 of 26 Fights in the Street (46.2%) resulted in injury (mostly swollen faces, or bruises or lacerations to body; one instance of a young man knocked unconscious). Greater freedom in the street than indoors most likely is an influence on fight generation, because men learn where they may engage in scrapping and where to avoid it. Seated next to a convenience store that was as a popular site for outdoor clusters, for example, one man was explaining his bruised face to companions and his plan for retaliation, "I'd rather find him in the street. He stays at Alejandro's and that's where I live".

Differences between Street/Tavern in pre-fight escalation into a fight can be attributed to an employee in bars or taverns who can send someone from the premises, backed by a threat of calling law enforcement (7 of 16 Tavern cases or 43.8% stopped "pre-fight" involved one/more deputies). Street incidents in contrast rarely have an option of formal intervention. Most interventions by law enforcement in Taverns, and once each in barracks, store and camp within a four-block area of my observations were settled on location. No more than three arrests (transportation in a police car to the town stockade, released without arrest) were observed across all Street/Tavern incidents involving law enforcement (14/72 or 19.4%), at least for the extended time that I spent at night in downtown Oakton. A third party other than law enforcement intervened in similar proportions to observed events that stopped at "Pre-fight" (15/72 or 20.8%), deterring them at point of "Upset", by calming one or both antagonists verbally and/or spatially separating them. Bystander or street witness, and bar patron or bartender, would intervene. Whenever a bartender intervened to stop a situation from escalating, individuals involved were firmly "chased" outside without physical contact or *bounced* (physically exited), and banned temporarily from re-entry. One regular customer in lieu of banishment from a Tavern, after we watched him forcibly grab a man by the waist to push him outside, was himself held gently at his shoulders by the bartender, who escorted him to a staff-only storeroom, where he was permitted to "cool off". Besides his Tavern patronage and regular friendship with its patrons, it would have been unwise to send him outside, where the first antagonist might be lingering.

A "Face-off" differed little in demeanor: two persons posed in a close-together stance, arms held stiffly at the sides for a few moments of "fierce eye", often preceded by a firm "Don't mess with me!" (English) or "¡*No me chinga*!" (Spanish) before they dissipated. Disputes in Oakton Taverns were between men. Most involved billiards. If one or both players disagreed, one would walk away after placing his pool cue on the table, gently or firmly, but never in anger. Both usually quit the game and left the spot (billiard area) and/or left the place (Tavern).

Sometimes a 'Face-off' was prolonged by shouting (Tavern) and/or taunts (Street) before each person backed-off and refrained from further escalation. It was individuals who showed evidence of being "Upset" that sometimes escalated to fighting. No "Face-off" I observed ever resorted to fighting. Later I came to see a "Face-off" as a way to *save face*, by showing another person, and avoid transitioning mild disagreement into "Upset", for someone showing signs of anger, that one was ready to back-up a

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sense of indignation. Intervention by a third party more often took place when individuals were "Upset" (11/26 or 42.3% in Taverns, 2/46 or 4.3% in Street) than when a "Face-off" occurred (none in Street, 3/26 or 11.5% in Taverns). Self-directed separation occurred in similar proportions in Street (13 deterred) and Tavern (8 deterred) or 28.3% and 30.8%, respectively. Fights bypassing "Face-off" typically went from "Upset" to fisticuffs or pushing-scuffling on the ground, when one or both parties initiated the aggressive action (Table 2). Moving to "Face-off" rather than becoming "Upset" was a means to demonstrate masculine presentation-of-self as body-ready as well as body-under-control.

Table 2. Interventions by Self or Other: Tallies from Oakton Field Notes

	Upset		Face-Off		Fight	
Tavern (self)	7/16	43.8%	1/26	3.8%	2/26	7.7%
Tavern (other)	11/26	42.3%	3/26	11.5%	2/26	7.7%
Street (self)	10/46	21.7%	3/46	6.5%	26/46	56.5%
Street (other)	2/46	4.3%	none		none	

Visible injuries: 1 of 4 Fights in Tavern (25.0%) and 12 of 26 Fights in Street (46.2%).

Additional evidence for the meaning of "Face-off", as well as verification that field data were appropriate, was an incident in which I observed a local sex worker pass through these same stages in mock anger with her boyfriend. When she said something to him, he walked away. She loudly shouted at him ("Upset" mimicry), briskly walked alongside him and, puffing out her chest to mimic a male "Face-off", she stood her ground with a mock "fierce eye" at him. Grinning, he neither returned her stance nor moved closer. She smiled at the reversal that she brought to his momentary anger. When he tried to hug her, however, she was able to rebuff him gently without any retaliation or attempt at continuation on his part. Other commercial sex workers, and the ethnographer, were gentle targets for her theatrical representations, which I witnessed on several occasions. When they occurred, I likened them in field notes to "pantomime in motion".

The way one handles an imagined slight, such as that which occurs in billiards, is mediated by a set of unspoken but shared rules by which one may disengage with no sense of loss to self-image or affront to personal dignity. For men in Oakton, recognized rules permitted demonstration of a masculine image of readiness to perform and to uphold self-honor, and, if necessary, to fight to self-protect. Overall, these actions and counter-actions serve as a means of maintaining a boundary autonomy that assists one to avoid bodily injury. Considering fights among women in northern Mexico, Cummings (1994) outlines a set of "norms and sanctions" for street fighting in general, and for women in particular, that govern how and when a fight might ensue. She notes that weapons seldom were used, despite their availability. Bystanders mostly watched rather than intervene in a one-on-one fight viewed as "fair". Although rarely studied, fighting among women may occur in barroom settings, wherein antecedents mirror those

postulated for male fighting (i.e., rowdy behavior; excessive consumption of alcohol) to which is added potential "conflict with romantic partner" (Collins, Quigley, & Leonard, 2007, p. 308).

In Oakton, the skills to deter a fight and to protect oneself from injury, if an interaction escalates to fighting, was reflected in comments by experienced men who referred to residues of a fight (cut or swollen face), by asking directly and often disdainfully if one "had been in a fight" rather than the euphemistic expression used by policemen in the street, "Did you fall down?" Men receiving such comments from law enforcement refrained from rejoinders, and looked away embarrassed. Deputies used this phrase to build rapport, when patrolling in cars to obliterate the barrier of a vehicle, not when they were walking on street patrol, which was rare. This way they showed no intent to arrest or to ask for details. This willful negligence might shift to concern when there was evidence that weapons had been used by one or both of the combatants.

Escalation to a fight versus restrained escalation to a "Face-off", and hence the lessened likelihood of scrapping, demonstrates fighting and pre-fight behavior as configuration of a potentially multiple-outcome social event. In his model of alcohol-associated violence, Pernanen (1991) notes how acts of aggression toward another individual vary in intensity (punching and kicking when drunk, more than when sober), by the degree to which assailants knew each other. Thus, acquainted persons engaged in mild inter-personal violence (pushing, shoving, slapping). Most of the altercations that I observed were street-based. More than one-half of the cases of violence, i.e., "fighting", described by Pernanen he had observed in public places where drinking was permitted, such as bars and parks. Thirty percent of observed barroom fights ended in injury in his study. For mine, one-quarter (one of 4) resulted in visible injury in Taverns. In my analysis, injury was more common for fights in the Street (12 of 26 or 46.25%).

Reinforcing the concept of culturally configured inebriation proposed by MacAndrews and Edgerton (1969), Sexton (2001) postulates that a *within-limits clause* is an unspoken rule that accompanies drinking, which generally assures that drinking and corresponding behaviors will not lead to harm for participants. A similar process of incrementation by "within-limits" behavior appears to minimize possible inter-personal violence and/or potential for violence that I observed taking place or about to take place in Oakton. If prelude to scrapping is unspoken, the process it embodies is not unknown (for discussion of no clear beginning or ending, compare Graham & Wells, 2001). Often variable by place or setting (Beale et al., 1998), bystanders in Oakton knew when it was feasible to intervene, which is most appropriate when two individuals were "Upset", rather than engaged in "Face-off". Bystanders intervened effectively through physical separation that replicated the self-engineered de-escalation of a fight. Pantomimed incident of the commercial sex worker and her boyfriend, moreover, illustrates that the process of escalation and dissipation of inter-personal violence follows a pattern visibly discernible to those who spend time in street settings of agricultural areas of the rural South.

Recognizing their differences based on origins but sharing common status as farmworkers, situations I observed suggest a configured world, where social compatibility is desired, and, hence, the appropriate

behavior. Practices were in place to resolve volatile situations that might result in violence. These same men often work together in agricultural fields, orchards and vineyards, locally and/or seasonally, where each day their observable prowess as farmworkers attests to their masculinity (Horton, 2016, p. 18, p. 29).

6. Discussion and Conclusion

Inter-personal violence of decades past moved outside the bars and taverns of Oakton, following placement of a county police sub-station a block from the town's central business area. Fatal incidents decreased outside local rental housing, commercial stores, bars/taverns located downtown, by the time I arrived to conduct fieldwork. Most cases requiring transfer by an official vehicle of injured individuals still came from accidents at home, but more often they were vehicle accidents on nearby roads outside the community.

Unexpected but imagined/real dangers and risks exist in gathering places and favorite spots where migrants gather in agricultural areas of the rural South. Susceptible to social imagination and co-present configuration, settings and nested sites of risk and danger lead to embellished tales that generate a multiplicity of social rules and cultural rationales for normalized behavior by those who face conditions of social adversity in agricultural communities of the rural South.

Analyzing real and potential fighting scenarios in places and spots where farmworkers spend time in one home-base community provides an overview of a learned propensity, whereby migrant men within configured worlds minimize situations that may potentially escalate into inter-personal violence. Beyond street and bars/taverns as settings that allow performative embodiment of masculine identity, another dimension of everyday lifestyle identity considers the oppositional category of home-and-hearth (*La Casa*) for Latinx immigrants. This category for identity embodiment emphasizes families and includes women's personalized connection to family life (Blank, 1998; cf. De Meis, 2002). Home-and-hearth is not absent in male narratives (e.g., man who initiated a transport service to assist his mother, after his father was killed in a tavern outside the United States). To draw closure to my analysis, I end with a synopsis that one man used in his narrative interview to contrast the inter-related venues examined herein as Tavern and Street, against a context that is readily recognized, but has not been mentioned: Home-and-Hearth.

I think it is nice (*bonito*), to arrive home, to tell the wife and children, "I come from work". At home, one takes a bath and short rest, and watches television, before eating supper and talking with one's children and wife. Better than drinking or going with friends someplace out there (*por all á*) to a tavern (*cantina*) or another's house, to be drinking and wind up with problems. In one's home, one can discuss things and have supper with one's children and wife.

Noteworthy in his description is the imagined association between tavern (*cantina*) as a setting where the unsavory may take place and no mention of the street with its greater likelihood of inter-personal violence, which according to my analysis, is more likely to take place outside bars/taverns. The narrator

further refrains from speculation how likelihood of aggression is increased amidst the stressor conditions of marginality and poverty that are commonly experienced by farmworkers, especially unaccompanied men, who move about from place to place to assure their having work.

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