STORYTELLING AND VALUES IN A FAMILY BUSINESS

AN ETHNONARRATIVE STUDY OF THE HOTEL QUEEN SOPHIA

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

at the University of Leicester

by

Nicolas Jacquemot

School of Business

University of Leicester

2019

Abstract

Storytelling and Values in a Family Business – An Ethnonarrative Study of the Hotel Queen Sophia

Nicolas Jacquemot

Values are the bedrock of family business culture and have great power to shape behaviours, decisions and priorities in these companies. Notwithstanding this, previous research has been unable to fully explain, how values are perceived and passed on in family firms. Additionally, scholars have not yet thoroughly explored the role of storytelling, for values transmission in family companies. Research in this area is important to better understand how values affect ownership, management and work in family firms.

This thesis, based on an ethnographic case study of a Swedish hotel, investigates how values are conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business. It also examines how storytelling uncovers different perceptions of values – and how the notion of "family" occurs within the stories. Fieldwork was carried out during a six-month period and included participant observation and thirty-three semi-structured interviews. Narrative analysis was used to interpret the findings, which reveal that the family and their firm are closely intertwined; the company's values are strongly linked to the family. It also shows how storytelling plays an important role in transmitting values in the family business.

This research makes a substantial contribution to existing knowledge. Firstly, it shows how values are disclosed and passed on in a family business. This increases knowledge of the process through which values are conveyed through storytelling and offers a thorough understanding of the complexity of this process. Secondly, this research reveals how the values of the organisation are embraced and exhibited – i.e. personified – in different ways. It suggests that this personification of values is linked to autonomy, which adds important knowledge to family business, and hospitality, research. Thirdly, this study makes a vital methodological contribution. The ethnonarrative approach and its focus on storytelling allowed for a deeper understanding of how values are conveyed, perceived and personified in family business.

Acknowledgements

It requires a great deal of self-motivation and inner drive to carry out a research project and to write a thesis – but no man is an island. It would not have been possible for me to have done this without the encouragement of others. I would like to thank everyone who has supported me in the creation of this thesis.

First, a special thank you to the Hotel Queen Sophia: its employees; managers; and the owner family, who generously invited me to explore the organisation, the people and the stories.

Working on this thesis has felt inspiring, developing, stressful, and – not least – it has been a lot of fun. Those who have contributed to this positive energy are my supervisors: Professor Carl Rhodes and Doctor Valerie Fournier. I am grateful for their invaluable help in providing guidance and encouragement throughout the PhD process. I have appreciated our constructive and lively discussions, during the academic journey, and which I will miss.

I am especially grateful to my partner Mathias, and to my parents Anitha and Jean-Pierre. They have always given me creative, intellectual and emotional support; not only during this process, but in life as a whole. I also feel blessed to have friends who have supported me along the way: Fredrik, Jenny, Claes, Joseffa and Anders. Thank you, Kate, for helping me to develop my academic writing and grammatical know-how *en route*.

Finally, a huge thank you to University of Leicester, for giving me the opportunity to study for a PhD at the School of Business. I have enjoyed every minute of it.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

I sometimes get the question: “How did you choose your thesis topic?” I did not. It chose me.

I grew up with parents who ran a family business together. In fact, they continued to do so, well into their seventies. Let me tell you the story.

Everything started with a second hand store in the south Swedish coastal town of Sölvesborg, where I was born. During my childhood years, I often heard the anecdote of how – when decorating the store for Christmas – my parents constantly had to blow up the leaking, inflatable Santa Claus in the window so that the shop looked presentable. My mother is Swedish and my father is French, which came in handy when, a couple of years later, they established a language centre, offering courses and travel to different European countries. During the winter season, they were also ski trip organisers, with my father as the tour guide. In the summer, dad would replace the skiers with a group of women, whom he would drive through Denmark, Germany and Switzerland, in a small, old, Disneyesque Volkswagen bus. They travelled all the way down to the Lake Annecy area, in France, where my father then gave French lessons (yes, this was the 1970's). Mom was the one who had sold the courses. Later, they were sales representatives for Danish design furniture, as well as agents for French and Spanish fabric manufacturers. If my memories do not deceive me, my mother even managed to squeeze in an assignment as a saleswoman for awnings and blinds during these years, as well. Even while they were running any one company, my parents would often have other business ideas in mind. On the weekends, we would go on road-trips to look at dilapidated mansions that, after renovations, might house a health retreat; or premises that would function as showroom for a new business. By the time I moved away from home to attend university, they were running an au pair agency and a small publishing house, which they continued with for many years. Although the businesses were not all run at the same time (thank goodness), it was not uncommon for my parents to have at least two different firms going in parallel, especially during the transition phases. All these entrepreneurial activities had nothing in common other than they were family firms. I guess another child might

have found the milieu of my upbringing slightly overwhelming, but I thought it was very exciting. I liked to help out in the office: copying, stapling, enveloping, cleaning, and accompanying mom and dad on their daily adventures. Even though I did not realise it at the time, I experienced some of the aspects that makes family businesses special, early on: the engagement, the dreams, the dinner table conversations, and not least of all: the stories.

I was born into a family business. Nowadays I study what makes them unique.

1.1 Why Are Family Firms Important to Study?

Family businesses are more than just family affairs. They constitute the most common global form of business entity (De Massis *et al.*, 2018). Family firms play a crucial role in the European economy and make up more than 60% of all companies in Europe (Botero *et al.*, 2015). The EU federation of national associations that represents family enterprises, European Family Businesses, reports that there are more than 14 million family businesses in the EU, providing more than 60 million jobs in the private sector, and generating around 50% of Europe's GDP (European Family Businesses, 2019). In Sweden, where this study is situated, family business is a notable organisational form, and is responsible for over one third of all employment and GDP (Andersson *et al.*, 2018). In fact, some of Sweden's best-known corporations, internationally, such as furniture manufacturer IKEA and fashion company H&M, are family-controlled businesses. In addition, Sweden's famous music export, pop group ABBA, was a two-family affair. Family companies come in all shapes and sizes. They range from small two-person operations to large multinational corporations with thousands of employees (European Family Businesses and KPMG Enterprise, 2018). Regardless of their size, all family businesses and all families that own businesses need to relate to the same issues that the ownership of these firms entails. The fact that family businesses are a vital part of the economy and the employment market is the reason they are important to study. They are also unique, in the sense that they are the point where two social systems – those of the company and those of the family – overlap and interact (Arregle *et al.*, 2007). What does this mean for family members, managers and employees in these companies? How does it affect

business choices and decisions? How does it influence the organisation? How is it reflected in the company's culture and values? All these questions interest me.

As the term suggests, a family business is a company that is owned and operated within the family circle. There is no one definition that covers all types of family businesses (Diaz-Moriana *et al.*, 2019). However, I share the definition from the Family Firm Institute (2014), which says that, in the broadest sense, these are firms that "have two or more members of a family involved in the ownership and business of an enterprise" (2014, p. 3). In this thesis, I use the term *family business* and *family firm* synonymously. They may be family-*owned*, a concept that emphasises the ownership aspect, but this does not reveal a great deal about how the firm is managed, or whether the family members are engaged in the business, and if so, to what extent. For example, in a family-owned business, the owners may be passive and neither involved in the management nor the daily operations. Family firms can also be family-*run*, which is a concept that reveals more about the nature of the business. Here, the owners play a more active role in managing and operating the firm; they are visible (cf. Karlsson, 2013).

Family business research has flourished in recent decades, as demonstrated by the total number of studies published, their impact and the number of conferences and journals dedicated to the field (Evert *et al.*, 2016). However, much of the research focuses on succession and its related issues (Short *et al.*, 2016) and, to a wide extent, family business studies still rely on quantitative methods (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009; Dawson and Hjorth, 2012). Important research topics remain to be explored and better understood, in particular, the "how" and "why" of family businesses (Payne, 2018). Such questions can be successfully explored through qualitative approaches.

1.2 Understanding Storytelling and Values in Family Business

The fact that an enterprise is owned and operated by a family is reflected in the business. Research shows that family businesses are different (Karlsson, 2013), and they distinguish themselves in several ways (Payne, 1984; Tagiuri and Davis, 1996; Westhead and Cowling, 1998; Brundin, Florin Samuelsson and Melin, 2014).

They have a distinct culture (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004), which may be stronger than in other forms of ownership (Hall, Melin and Nordqvist, 2001). The culture of family business is considered a key factor in its competitiveness (Vallejo-Martos, 2011), and the majority of family businesses report that their stronger culture and values give them an advantage over non-family firms (PwC, 2018). However, family influence affects not only performance but also what it is like to work in these companies. Family members, managers and employees all need to relate to the circumstance that the company is a family firm, which also raises many interesting questions. How are values manifested among owners, managers and employees? What is the role of values in everyday life at work? How are values transmitted within the organisation? Understanding the values in play is important in order to gain insight into the basic characteristics of an organisation's culture (Meyer, 1995). My interest lies in understanding people's own perceptions of their daily work experiences. Listening to *what* people tell, and *how* they tell it – is a good way to gain knowledge about the everyday life, culture and values in organisations (Czarniawska, 2010). For researchers, stories and storytelling may enhance their understanding of family firms, by allowing them to grasp the nuances and multiplicity of the underlying processes behind the creation and management of family businesses (Hamilton, Discua Cruz and Jack, 2017). My research focuses on storytelling and values in family business. As I will show in the next chapter, it is a largely unexplored area. Nevertheless, let me briefly introduce you to the field, here.

On a general level, storytelling is considered the primary method of *sensemaking* in organisations (Weick, 1995; Boje, 2008, 2014). Stories perform a variety of functions in shaping organisational reality for the members of that organisation (Brown, 1990; Schwabenland, 2006), and they are particularly viable instruments for social negotiation (Bruner, 1990). Stories play a vital role in conveying values and complex messages across organisational boundaries (McCarthy, 2008). Storytelling is a relational activity (Riessman, 2012) that can help organisations to pass on values, as well as a moral and cultural heritage between generations (Gabriel, 2000). Organisational stories can also shape and sustain corporate culture (McLellan, 2006; Anderson, 2010; Marshall and Adamic, 2010), of which values are a natural component. They may also offer people a way to communicate

the logics of action and interaction (Czarniawska, 1997; Polletta *et al.*, 2011). There is little research on storytelling within the context of family business (Johansson, Li and Tsai, 2014). Narrative contributions focus on such topics as succession (Dawson and Hjorth, 2012; Dalpiaz, Tracey and Phillips, 2014; Mussolino *et al.*, 2019), entrepreneurial behaviour (Peters and Kallmuenzer, 2015), commitment (Barker *et al.*, 2004), motivation (Johansson, 2004), and identity creation and sensemaking (Parada and Viladás, 2010). Only a few works highlight storytelling or narratives in relation to values in family business (e.g. Narva, 2001; Zwack *et al.*, 2016), which suggests that there is room for further research into the topic.

If we turn our attention to organisational values, the term is commonly used to refer to the small number of values that jointly make up a value system (Bourne and Jenkins, 2013). Organisational values constitute a way for the members to agree on what is important, and they provide a basis for expected social behaviour (Sorenson, 2013). They are considered a key component of organisational culture (Schein, 2004; Dempsey, 2015; Garcia *et al.*, 2017), and are central to socialisation (Dose, 1997; Choi and Chung, 2017), and commitment (Ostroff, Shin and Kinicki, 2005; Nygaard *et al.*, 2017; Krajcsák, 2018). In family firms, values have also been found to play a vital role (Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008, 2013). They may be central in shaping family business organisations (Bertrand and Schoar, 2006), where they affect behaviour, relationships and priorities (Ward, 1987). Although values are salient in family firms, their importance has not been examined empirically in any thorough way (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004) and, generally, researchers have not made values the central focus of their explorations into the philosophy, culture and attitudes of family businesses (Simon *et al.*, 2012). Even if some do consider values in family business (e.g. Vallejo, 2008; Parada, Nordqvist and Gimeno, 2010; Sánchez Marín *et al.*, 2016; Camfield and Franco, 2019), limited research exists on *how* values are conveyed in family firms (Parada and Viladás, 2010; Zwack *et al.*, 2016). This leads us to the *raison d'être* of this study.

In summary, family businesses matter and family matters in family businesses. Research to date also demonstrates that values are vital in family firms, however their significance has not yet been studied in any detailed way, nor how values are transmitted. Some research exists concerning storytelling in family businesses;

however, it offers few concrete scientific contributions to the link between storytelling and values in family businesses. Scholars have not yet managed to explain, thoroughly, how family values are embedded in family companies (Sorenson, 2013), and the research does not focus explicitly on values transmission through storytelling (Zwack *et al*., 2016). Thus, the potential remains for conducting in-depth, focused studies in order to gain more knowledge about storytelling's role in transmitting values in family businesses. I hope to add a missing piece of puzzle, with my research. A narrative approach is useful for exploring values in family businesses, since these organisations offer a plethora of stories about families and family firms (Simon *et al.*, 2012), told from the owners', managers' and employees' perspective. Let me tell you about the aim of this study, and how I intend to carry out the research.

1.3 Research Focus and Research Subject

My objective is to explore values in family firms and, more specifically, how values and storytelling are related. There is room for more rigorous interrogation and methodology, in the field of family business; for example, qualitative and sophisticated case studies (Smyrnios, Poutziouris and Goel, 2013). Selecting one company for study is a sound way to conduct research on storytelling in organisations (Myers, 2013). For this reason, I have chosen one business, including its owners, managers and employees, as the subject of my research. The company is the Hotel Queen Sophia, a four-star family-run hotel, located in Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. The case study approach in family business research may provide insight through rich detail (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009), and by using the hotel as the empirical context, I explore the role of storytelling for organisational members' perception and transmission of values. More specifically, this study sets out to answer the following research questions:

- How are organisational and personal values conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business?
- How does storytelling uncover different perceptions of values?
- How is the notion of "family" present in the stories?

Research in this area is important if we are to better understand how values affect ownership, management and work in family firms, and the research subject has been chosen with care. As my purpose is to investigate what stories can reveal about values, and also the family's influence, it is important that the business is not too big. The hospitality industry is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses and family firms are particularly prominent therein (Getz, Carlsen and Morrison, 2004). In fact, there does not seem to be a major European city without a well-known family-owned hotel, small or big: *The Goring* in London; *Hotel Sacher* in Vienna; *Hassler* in Rome; and *Le Negresco* in Nice, on the French Riviera – family-owned until recently when famed hotelier Jeanne Augier passed away (Barelli, 2019). According to European Commission's standardised definitions, a small business has up to 50 employees, and a medium-sized one has up to 250 employees (European Commission, 2019). I have selected a small business that is part of a medium-sized family-owned hotel group. Moreover, hospitality is an area where the approaches of qualitative research may generate new knowledge about behaviour and different aspects of culture (Laerdal, 2017). It also permits researchers to explore the elements of hospitality that are not always tangible (Lynch, 2005a). Family hotel businesses are especially interesting to investigate when it comes to their stories, as well as values and management practices (Peters and Buhalis, 2004). Not least, hotels are fascinating, since they comprise various professions and multiple types of work. They are often vibrant and dynamic places, where people meet and things happen – they are "vertical cities" (Heynickx, 2015, p. 138). The Queen Sophia is no exception.

My chosen family-run enterprise is one where the owning family is deeply involved in the day-to-day operations. They share the physical space with their employees and managers, and interact with guests and visitors. My research is ethnographic and the methods used are participant observation and semi-structured interviews. I conducted fieldwork at the Queen Sophia, during a six-month period. I helped out in different parts of the organisation and I also conducted thirty-three interviews with employees, managers and owners. Approaching family business through its members' stories, is a promising way to contribute new and important knowledge about how values are conveyed in family firms. This form of "single-site ethnography" (Neyland, 2008, p. 63), provides rich

insights and allows comparisons of the different stories told by employees, managers and owners, as well as between the stories told by family and non-family members, working in the organisation (McCollom, 1992). This is something I will develop in this thesis.

1.4 An Ethnographic Journey through the Hotel Queen Sophia

This study can best be described as a journey through the hotel Queen Sophia, where events, encounters, and people are presented, and stories and values are explored. However, before I open the doors to Hotel Queen Sophia, I would like to explain how this thesis is outlined.

In this first chapter, *Introduction*, my aim is to explain the rationale of the research, my motivations, and what has inspired me to take on this difficult and at the same time exciting project.

Chapter 2 introduces the *Literature Review.* Here, I immerse myself in research that is relevant to my study. My research spans several fields, which is reflected in a triadic review. Firstly, I present the body of research on storytelling in organisations. I also engage in a discussion about the concepts of storytelling, story and narrative. Secondly, I review the research on personal and organisational values and problematise the concepts of organisational values versus core values, and I explain how I understand them and will use them. Thirdly, I discuss the existing research on family businesses and highlight what characterises them. I also make an in-depth review of storytelling as well as values in family firms. The literature review reveals that there is room for further contributions within the field. I discuss the relevance of carrying out my research, its potential contributions and explain how I arrived at my research questions. Lastly, I present my main research question and my two sub-questions.

Chapter 3 presents the *Research Methodology and Method*. My philosophical grounding is in hermeneutics and this research is centrally informed by social constructionism and narrative approaches. Herein, I consider the qualitative techniques that I employ in my research: participant observation and semi-

structured interviews. A detailed discussion of the choice of research subject is also carried out in this chapter, as well as a description of how I gained access to and entered the research site. Moreover, I discuss and problematise field relations, including aspects of integrity and ethics in ethnographic fieldwork. Following this, I explain the process of the organisation of the data, and introduce narrative analysis. I also reflect on "leaving the field".

Chapter 4, *The Staff Meeting*, is the first presentation of findings chapter. Meetings are excellent opportunities to explore organisational culture, in general, and storytelling and values, in particular. Here, I introduce the organisation of the Hotel Queen Sophia, as well as its staff, management and owners, through their stories, talk and discussions at the annual staff meeting. I introduce the five most prevalent values within the organisation; all expressed, in some manner, at the staff meeting. These values constitute the organisational values and are: *joy*, *cooperation*, *consideration*, *flexibility* and *commitment*. I exemplify these values, explore them and highlight their complexity – something I continue to do in subsequent chapters.

In chapter 5, *The Family*, I focus on the family who own and run Hotel Queen Sophia: the Anderssons. I present the six family members through their stories and their own words about themselves and the hotel, and I explain their present and previous roles in the business. I also show how the five most prevalent values of the organisation are expressed in the stories the family members tell. I explore a recurring theme in the family's stories that is closely linked to values; i.e., the importance they attribute to "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch". I also highlight how these concepts are used and discuss how they relate to values.

In chapter 6, *The Lobby*, I introduce the scene, events and people in the lobby area of the Queen Sophia. I explore everyday life and talk in reception and the back office, using the concepts of "front region" and "back region". I also present several employees who work there, more closely, through their stories and their descriptions of their work. Most importantly, I highlight two values that appear, in an especially clear way, in this part of the hotel: joy and consideration. I immerse myself in a discussion of these two values and set them in context. I also explain

how these values are manifested in this particular setting, and reflect on the importance that the staff put on "familiness".

In chapter 7, *The Restaurant*, I delve into everyday life in the restaurant and kitchen of the Queen Sophia. I immerse myself in the stories of the waiters, chefs, managers and the other people working in the restaurant and the kitchen. I continue to explore the front and back regions, as I introduce the restaurant and the kitchen. I also show how the values of cooperation and flexibility become particularly clear in this part of the hotel, when expressed through the employees' stories. I expand the understanding of these two values and discuss them further, in relation to aspects such as conflict and freedom. I also explore the manner in which the staff in the restaurant and kitchen talks about the family who own the hotel.

Chapter 8, *Life in the Corridors*, is the final presentation of findings chapter. Here, I explore the last of the five most prominent values at Hotel Queen Sophia: commitment. Through the stories of various organisational members, I strive to give a picture of them, as well as their tasks and activities. I describe life in the corridors by taking a closer look at cleaning and housekeeping. I also present the daily work and the stories of the caretakers, and of the people working at the end of the corridors: the office. In this chapter, I also discuss commitment within the context of criticism, as well as in relation to "emotional labour" and "dirty work".

Lastly, in chapter 9, *Discussion and Conclusion*, I discuss my findings in relation to existing knowledge. I answer my three research questions and present how values are conveyed and perceived at the Hotel Queen Sophia, as well as how the notion of family is present in the stories. I demonstrate my original contribution to theory and discuss the implications for practice. Every academic study is unique, with specific circumstances, challenges and limitations. Therefore, I also make some concluding reflections on my work. I provide recommendations for future research and, finally, I summarise the study and present my conclusion.

But, before we get there, I believe we have a promising journey ahead. However, we are still at the beginning. Let us start as it should be – by placing this study within the existent research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

In chapter one, I introduced this thesis. The goal of this chapter is to establish the significance of the general field of study and to identify how a contribution can be made. I situate this study, of storytelling in a family-run business, within an existing body of literature, as a way of narrowing the focus and arriving at my research questions. These questions will then be tackled in the forthcoming five presentation of findings chapters (chapter four, five, six, seven and eight).

The literature review contains three main sections and focuses on: 1) storytelling in organisations 2) personal and organisational values and 3) family businesses. This triadic review is a useful way to cover the research area because it spans several fields. In order to place this research project into its relevant context, this review includes sections on presentation, analysis and discussion.

The chapter is organised as follows: section 2.2 covers research on storytelling in organisations, as well as a discussion about the concepts of story, narrative and storytelling. Section 2.3 reviews research on personal and organisational values. I also immerse myself in the discussion of organisational values versus core values and explain how the different definitions may be understood. Section 2.4 introduces and discusses research on family businesses and investigates their distinguishing features. It also deals with research on storytelling and values in family businesses. In section 2.5, I conclude with a discussion about the literature review and explain how I arrived at my research questions. In section 2.6, I present my main research question and my sub-questions. Finally – in section 2.7 – I summarise this chapter.

2.2 Storytelling in Organisations

Stories are everywhere; they can be oral or written (Boje, 1991; Maggio, 2014). They may occur, in different forms, in books, films, newspapers, radio, television and social media. Above all, they make an appearance in everyday situations and conversations – at home and away, with family and friends and, not least, at work.

"Through narrative, we construct, reconstruct, in some ways reinvent yesterday and tomorrow. Memory and imagination fuse in the process." (Bruner, 2003, p. 93) Narratives are a reflection of the all-embracing human experience of time and connect the past, present and future (Richardson, 1990). The strength and influence of stories, both those that are told within and without organisations, has not gone unnoticed (Anderson, 2010). According to Czarniawska (2010), people tell stories "to entertain, to teach and to learn, to ask for an interpretation, and to give one". (2010, p. 59) Storytelling is a process of making sense of actions, events and objects (Weick, 1995). It is a relational activity and practice, where people gather to listen and empathise (Riessman, 2012). Additionally, as well as the storyteller, recipient collaboration is central to the production of storytelling (Mandelbaum, 2013).

Narrative applications have flourished over the past decades and almost every research discipline has a stream of narrative work (Riessman, 2012). Research on organisational storytelling includes work conducted by anthropologists, sociologists, communication and organisation theorists, philosophers and critical theorists (Boyce, 1996). Collecting stories from organisations began, as early as the 1970s, with Clark (1972), who explored sagas in academic organisations and closely followed by Mitroff and Kilmann (1975) who studied managerial autobiographies, conducted interviews and carried out behavioural exercises with managers, in order to evolve a technique for eliciting organisational myths and stories. However, it was not until the 1980s that organisational stories became a legitimate topic of organisation studies (Czarniawska, 1998).

The role of organisational storytelling has been explored in research on commitment (McCarthy, 2008; Nayir and Uzunçarsili, 2008); identity (Humphreys and Brown, 2002); sensemaking (Boje, 1991; Weick, 1995; Landau and Drori, 2008; Collins, 2013; Dawson and Sykes, 2019); socialisation of employees (Brown, 1985; O'Gorman and Gillespie, 2010); gender (Olsson, 2000; Adib and Guerrier, 2003; Murgia and Poggio, 2009; Rindfleish, Sheridan and Kjeldal, 2009); strategy (Fenton and Langley, 2011; Spear and Roper, 2016); strategic communication (Barker and Gower, 2010; Johansen, 2012); innovation (Buckler and Zien, 1996;

Sergeeva and Trifilova, 2018); business practices (Shapiro, 2016); and building brand identity (Ryu *et al.*, 2018).

Research suggests that storytelling is far from value neutral and has been found to serve many purposes. In organisations, stories perform a variety of functions that work towards shaping an organisational reality for its members (Brown, 1990; Schwabenland, 2006). According to Bruner (1990), stories are particularly viable instruments for social negotiation. Gabriel (2000) suggests that storytelling can help organisations to pass on values, as well as moral and cultural heritage between generations. Stories also play an important role in conveying values and complex messages across organisational boundaries (McCarthy, 2008). Meyer (1995) elicits organisational values from narratives and finds that these values not only uncover characteristic unifying values, but also highlight inconsistent values that clash with one another. His study is interesting and important and I will delve into it later in this chapter. Organisational stories can also shape and sustain corporate culture (McLellan, 2006; Anderson, 2010; Marshall and Adamic, 2010), of which values are a natural component, as well as facilitating strategic change (Adamson *et al.*, 2006; Rossetti and Wall, 2017). Stories can trigger change, but they can also block change and define the elements that constitute change (Brown, Gabriel and Gherardi, 2009). According to Boyce (1996), stories told in organisations can describe and sustain the current power structure, fuel creativity and foster the development of new meanings of work and personhood in individuals and groups. They may also be a way for people to communicate the logics of action and interaction (Czarniawska, 1997; Polletta *et al.*, 2011). Storytelling may also empower and support leadership (Driscoll and McKee, 2007; Auvinen, Aaltio and Blomqvist, 2013; Hutchinson, 2018).

David Boje – an influential researcher in the area of organisational storytelling – claims that storytelling is, and has always been, the primary sensemaking way of communication in organisations (Boje, 2014). The term "organisational storytelling" denotes the way people and organisations make sense of the world through story (Boje, 2008). For him, all people in organisations are storytellers engaged in storytelling, and in this practice *listening* and then *interpreting* to an audience are the two most important storytelling skills (2014). Nonetheless,

storytelling also has a dark side: "storytelling in organisations is also gossip, rumours, lies, purposive distortions, exaggerations, cons, and witch hunts" (Boje, 2014, p. xviii). In his book *Storytelling Organizations*, Boje concludes that very little is known about how storytelling organisations work, their response to the environment, how to change them and how to survive them; and that "even less is known about the insider's view of the storytelling organisation" (Boje, 2008, p. 4). I believe that my research can provide this requested insight "from within".

Barbara Czarniawska is another prominent scholar in the field of organisational storytelling. In *Narrating the Organization* (1997) she uses a narrative approach to uncover the hidden workings of organisations and explores the daily drama of bureaucratic life. She has also developed a systematic framework for the application of narrative methodology in qualitative research (Czarniawska, 2004). Researchers are interested in – and use – stories in different ways to understand organisational life and culture. In the monograph *A Narrative Approach to Organization Studies*, Czarniawska (1998) states that narrative enters organisation studies in at least four forms. Firstly, organisational research that is written in a story-like fashion; secondly, organisational research that collects organisational stories (tales of the field); thirdly, organisational research that conceptualises organisational life as story making and organisational theory as story reading; and fourthly, a disciplinary reflection that takes the form of literary critique. These are not necessarily mutually exclusive and research usually falls into more than one category. Notwithstanding this, I believe that my own research falls into the second form of organisational study, as I set out to collect stories from the organisation and its members in order to understand values in a family business. Long-lived narratives may tell a lot about the everyday life, culture and values in organisations – they are "sediments composed of norms and practices" (Czarniawska, 2010, p. 63). Moreover, they are also a way to approach the emotional life of organisations (Fineman, 2000).

Mandelbaum (2013) claims the rich body of literature on storytelling has focused predominantly on the *story.* She highlights conversation analysts' focus on the *telling*, which shows that stories are "*interactive* productions, co-constructed by teller and recipient and tailored to the occasions of their production" (2013, p.

492). Similarly, Gubrium and Holstein (2008) emphasise the importance of investigating the storying process – what they refer to as "narrative ethnography". This is especially relevant to my study since stories which are told in everyday situations at work, as well as in interviews, are always created in a context where two or more persons participate. Hence, telling may reveal "the stable set of features that interactants deploy to produce storytelling as a recognisable activity and through which they implement a variety of social actions" (Mandelbaum, 2013, p. 492). Therefore, I adopt a setting-sensitive approach (van Hulst and Ybema, 2019), and actively discuss and reflect on the "telling perspective" of storytelling throughout this thesis, as part of my constructionist perspective.

It would be easy to believe that stories usually occur in a particular form with characters and a plot, but this is not the case. Narrators may structure their stories temporally and spatially, but the stories can also be organised thematically and episodically (Riessman, 2012). Boje (1991) taped everyday conversations in a large office-supply firm in order to capture spontaneous storytelling episodes. He found that storytelling in organisations did not follow a conventional pattern in which a narrator tells a story to a person or a group of people from the beginning to the end. Instead, the stories were lively and vital, varied by context and were sometimes brief, requiring the listener to fill in bits and pieces of the story line. According to Boje, stories were often interrupted, challenged, reinterpreted and adjusted by the hearers during the conversation. His findings underscore the importance of considering stories as dynamic and having different guises; a story is not just a story. "Narratives mix together humans with non-humans, causes with reasons, explanations with interpretations", according to Czarniawska (2010, p. 64), who emphasises that this is what makes them difficult – but nonetheless interesting – to interpret.

2.2.1 Definitions of Story, Narrative and Storytelling

There is some disagreement– and even confusion – over terms, in approaches to narrative. Hyvärinen claims that "social scientists have seldom considered definitions of narrative" (2008, p. 448), which is a statement I disagree with. I will show, in the following pages, that contrary to Hyvärinen's statement, the discussion is lively and fruitful. However, the terms *story* and *narrative* are defined

regularly but used differently, in social science research. For this reason, I will make an attempt to clarify the differences and to discuss the relevance of the distinctions. Additionally, I will explain how I understand and use the concepts.

Two of the most influential scholars in the field are also those who can be said to represent the different concepts. Boje mostly uses the term "story" in his research and Czarniawska is a proponent of the term "narrative". So, what do they have to say on this matter? According to Boje (2001), stories are everywhere in organisations and people are constantly in the middle of living and tracing their storied lives. He defines story as "an oral or written performance involving two or more people interpreting past or anticipated experience" (Boje, 1991, p. 111). Boje claims that the main difference between story and narrative is that narrative is a complete telling, with a linear sequence of beginning, middle and end; and, for the most part, it uses a retrospective perspective.

> Story, in contrast to narrative (that is centering or about control) is more apt to be dispersive (unravelling coherence, asserting differences). Narrative cohesion seeks a grip on the emergent present, which story is re-dispersing. (Boje, 2008, p. 7)

According to Boje (2001), story has been considered less than narrative, as narrative attempts to stand as elite and somewhat above story, requiring a plot and coherence. Story is viewed as "folksy, without emplotment, a simple telling of chronology" (Boje, 2001, p. 1). He suggests the concept "antenarrative", which is the fragmented, non-linear, incoherent, collective and improper storytelling that lacks emplotment (Boje, 2001). Boje understands story as an account of incidents or events; however, narrative comes after and adds plot and coherence to the story line (Boje, 2001).

> Story is therefore "ante" to story and narrative is post-story. Story is an "ante" state of affairs existing previously to narrative; it is an advance of narrative. Used as an adverb, "ante" combined with "narrative" means earlier than narrative. (Boje, 2001, p. 1)

Let us now explore the definition and use of narrative. According to Czarniawska (1998) a narrative, in its most basic form, involves at least three elements. These are: an original state of affairs, an action or an event and a consequent state of

affairs. The elements also need a *plot* in order to become a narrative; they must be brought into a meaningful unity which is usually done by introducing *chronology* (Czarniawska, 1998). Czarniawska (2004) provides a basic definition of narrative as "a spoken or written text giving an account of an event/action or series of events/actions, chronologically connected" (2004, p. 17). According to Czarniawska (2014), a narrative has been constructed once the characters and plot are in place. Plot is essential, since narratives based on utter chronology are of limited use in interpretation (Czarniawska, 2014). Others have also defined narrative. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) list such things as emplotment, character, scene, place, time and point-of-view as common central ideas of narrative. William Labov, one of the pioneers within the study of narrative, highlights the "temporal sequence of narrative" as an important defining property (Labov and Waletsky, 1967, p. 20), thus underscoring narrative as an account of a sequence of events in the order in which they occurred to make a point (Labov and Waletsky, 1967; Smith, 2009; Polletta *et al.*, 2011).

Czarniawska (1997) stresses that a story usually has several stages, as well as a clear chronological structure that has a beginning and an end. It consists of a plot that contains "causally related episodes that culminate in a solution to a problem" (1997, p. 78). According to her, stories can be seen as "the basic unit of almost any narrative" (1997, p. 79), a view that I believe is in line with Boje's (2001) reasoning on antenarrative. However, Boje (2001, p. 2) disagrees with Czarniawska's opinion that a story consists of a plot that comprises "causally related episodes that culminate in a solution to a problem". He claims that this is more the definition of a narrative and not a story (2001). Instead, he relies on Ricoeur's definition of story from *Time and Narrative*:

> A story describes a sequence of actions and experiences done or undergone by a certain number of people, whether real or imaginary. (Ricoeur, 1984, p. 150)

I think that this disagreement about terminology uncovers something more interesting than just the use and meanings of words. I interpret Boje's and Czarniawska's various inputs as their ways of justifying what they value most. Throughout her research, Czarniawska has emphasised narrative and Boje story.

Maybe this conveys what they both consider worth studying? Does a story really have to have a plot, chronology and coherence – that is, be a *narrative* – to make it interesting and worth studying? Not from my point of view. I am interested in the everyday talk, dialogues, gossip, stories and, well, *everything* that people tell that may reflect their values. This can be stories or narratives. Boje pinpoints something vital when he claims that, instead of reified plots, "there are fragments of stories, bits and pieces told here and there, to varying audiences, so that no one knows a whole story and there are no whole stories anyway" (Boje, 2001, p. 5). Similarly, I believe that stories are interesting and may carry important information – with or without plot, chronology and coherence – whether they appear as complete or as parts. Stories are not rational statements that follow a certain template or form. On the contrary, and as mentioned earlier, they come in different guises, and the same is true for narratives. As a consequence, I would avoid labelling the one or the other as "less" or "more". Both are interesting and important – and they interact. According to Boje (2008), treating story and narrative as the same serves to erase the understanding of their interaction – "the ways their dance creates transformative dynamics that work to change organisations" (2008, p. 7).

2.2.1.1 Is There Really a Need for Distinction?

Not all would approve of the definitions of story and narrative discussed above – or that distinctions should be made at all. Boje (2014) sees an extensive problem in working out the relation between story and narrative, and he highlights that the concepts "change meaning from age to age and philosophy to philosophy" (Boje, 2014, p. 65). Polletta *et al.* (2011) use the terms story and narrative interchangeably, giving as their motive the fact that many scholars have distinguished between the two in so many different ways. Riessman (2012) stresses that the concept of narrative has ambiguous uses and that "there is considerable diversity in the operational definition of personal narrative in social research and, consequently, large methodological variation" (2012, p. 370). Brown, Gabriel and Gherardi (2009) emphasise the heterogeneity of the field of narrative inquiry and highlight its embracing of pluralism and its tolerance of epistemological, ontological, ideological and methodological differences. According

to them, there are "no hard and fast rules for distinguishing between stories and narratives or storytelling and narrativisation" and, furthermore, they claim that there is a lack of consensus on "how stories and narratives may be distinguished from definitions, proverbs, myths, chronologies and other forms of oral and written texts" (Brown, Gabriel and Gherardi, 2009, p. 324). Similarly, Anderson (2010) points out that it is not a simple task to define storytelling and that there is no consensus among scholars about the definition of storytelling. However, according to Anderson, there is agreement that storytelling is "the act of communicating an event (or sequence of events) to an audience" (2010, p. 277). She remarks that this boiled-down explanation does not seize the cultural, interactive and living essence of storytelling and she stresses the importance of the origin of the story, the performance and the type of story, as well as the emotional and cultural implications of the storytelling event. Musacchio Adorisio (2009) avoids the use of the terms story and narrative and instead insists on storytelling or narrating, highlighting storytelling as "a practice inscribed in social relations" (2009, p. 10). Hence, it becomes evident that storytelling is usually regarded as – and thereby treated as – a *practical* activity (Gubrium and Holstein, 1998). As for the *storytelling organisation*, Boje defines it as a "collective storytelling system in which the performance of stories is a key part of members' sensemaking and a means to allow them to supplement individual memories with institutional memory" (Boje, 1991, p. 106).

To summarise this section, it seems that the term "agree to disagree" is the best way to capture the discussion and debate on story and narrative. Notwithstanding this, it is important to be aware of the use and different meanings of the concepts. This brings us to an important and relevant question: How will I use the concepts? I use them in this way, and with the following distinctions: *Story* is a sequence of events. *Narrative* is an account of an event, or series of events, using plot, characterisation, chronology, sequencing etc. *Storytelling* is the practice of telling a story or constructing a narrative out of a story.

This first part of this chapter reviewed research on organisational storytelling until today, and discussed the use of terminology and concepts inside narrative research. I will return to the research on storytelling a little later in this chapter, in

my review of the research on family business. However, let me first present and discuss the diverse research on values.

2.3 Personal and Organisational Values

If stories are said to be everywhere – the same goes for values. They permeate human life. Both individuals and groups develop value systems – altogether consistent arrangements of values that place greater importance on certain values than others – through learning and experience (Schwartz, 1992). Understanding values is about understanding people, organisations, culture and society. At this point, I will review the research on personal and organisational values, and I will also discuss the terms "organisational values" versus "core values" and the meanings of both. The purpose of this is to highlight and problematise the literature relevant for my own research.

2.3.1 Personal Values

Research on personal values is multidisciplinary with various orientations. In psychology, and social psychology, values are considered to be aspects of personality that influence and incite both attitudes and behaviour (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). Values are crucial since they are cognitive representations of personal needs and desires, but also because they represent societal demands (Grube, Mayton and Ball-Rokeach, 1994). Values are beliefs and serve as standards to guide people's behaviour, actions and events (Smith and Schwartz, 1997; Lichtenstein, Lichtenstein and Higgs, 2017). What they have in common is that they are inherently positive, a feature that separates them from other constructs, according to Sagiv and Roccas (2017). Personal values are aimed at upholding the individual's well-being (Sagie and Elizur, 1996); and, as a guide to people's behaviour and actions (Thome, 2015), values may occasionally be a stronger motivation than self-interest (Karp, 2000). Three theories, in particular, have emerged from the history of the social psychology of values and which have had significant influence on empirical research (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). For that reason, I will highlight them here.

Firstly, Allport and colleagues adopted a concept of values that synthesised two different meanings – values as an *interest* and values as an *evaluative attitude.* They

also developed a list of values, as well as a tool for measuring them – the *Study of Values* (Vernon and Allport, 1931; Allport, Vernon and Lindzey, 1970). They suggested that people may make six possible kinds of evaluations that correspond to their personality types: theoretical, economic, aesthetic, religious, social or political (Vernon and Allport, 1931). These were rooted in Spranger's (1928) typology of six personality types, each characterised by its own distinguished values, which could explain the variety of human personality such as general beliefs, ways of thinking and preferred patterns of living (Oles and Hermans, 2010). The Allport, Vernon and Lindzey Study of Values (SOV) had a major impact on psychological research and practice for many decades (Kopelman, Rovenpor and Guan, 2003). According to their view, an individual's personality is seen as a combination, or blend, of the different personality types, with one being superior and the others being subordinate (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015).

Secondly, in contrast to Allport and colleagues, the influential scholar, Rokeach (1973), adopted a cognitive approach. However, he still put the understanding of values within the framework of personality theory. Based on Kluckhohn's (1951) view of values, as explicit or implicit conceptions of what is desirable, he associated the psychological approach to values with its sociological origin. In *Understanding Human Values*, he emphasised that values are the resultants of both societal and psychological needs (Rokeach, 1979). Even though Rokeach defined values as "enduring beliefs" (1973, p. 5) and underscored their relative persistence over time, he also held that values are changeable and that "they are capable of undergoing change as a result of changes in society, situation, self-conceptions, and self-awareness" (Rokeach, 1979, pp. 2-3). Rokeach conceptualised values as forming a hierarchical system. He criticised Allport, claiming that his list of values was too general (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). He did not believe that each individual had a unique combination of values, but that they vary in the relative importance they ascribe to the same limited set of values. This means that the same values guide all people, but that people make different priorities, a fact that brings forth a hierarchy of values. The focus of Rokeach's work was to develop a tool for measuring values – the *Rokeach Value Survey* (RVS) – an instrument widely used in the measurement of values (Mayton, Ball-Rokeach and Loges, 1994). In *The Nature of Human Values* (1973) Rokeach proposed a list of 36 values

divided into two sets: *instrumental* and *terminal*. The 18 instrumental values reflect modes of conduct such as independence, logic, politeness and self-control. These are means of achieving the terminal values. The 18 terminal values reflect desired end states, such as equality, freedom, salvation and wisdom. These are the goals an individual wants to achieve during his or her lifetime. In the Rokeach Value Survey, respondents rank the value of items, according to their importance as guiding principles in their lives, which forces them to rank competing values. The fact that values are rank-ordered helps to shed light on a person's value priorities (Karp, 2000). It may reveal even slight differences in value hierarchies between individuals, which is a strength when compared to the value surveys set down in the Allport tradition (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). Rokeach's theory of values has been influential in the study of values for many decades (Karp, 2000).

Thirdly, as part of my coverage of the research on personal values, I would like to highlight the contributions of Schwartz, because his theory of values, integrating earlier approaches, is predominant in current sociology and psychology (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). His research represents an important development of Rokeach's survey in cross-cultural research. Like Rokeach, he is interested in measuring universal values (Karp, 2000), and similarly he comprehends values as cognitive transformations of needs and drives into goals (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). Schwartz (1992) considers values to be transsituational goals that differ in importance and which serve as guiding principles for individuals or groups. This view incorporates the cognitive understanding of goals as stated by Rokeach, as well as the motivational content of values from Allport, who consider values as both interests and evaluative attitudes (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015).

Schwartz's theory of basic human values identifies ten basic personal values: universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation and self-direction (Schwartz, 1992). At the core of Schwartz's theory is the notion that these basic values form a circular structure that reflects the motivation each value expresses; hence values form a continuum of related motivations (Schwartz, 2012). One implication of this structure is that if

a value becomes more important, other values adjacent to it in the circle also increases in importance (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). Indeed, there seems to be no theory of value without a measuring instrument. The *Schwartz Value Survey* (SVS) – a non-symmetrical scale – was created to measure values based on his theory (Schwartz, 1992, 2006). It presents two lists of value items, with the first one describing potentially desirable end states and the second one listing potentially desirable ways of acting. Each item indicates an aspect of the motivational goal of one value (Schwartz, 2012). Unlike Rokeach's instrument, the respondents do not have to rank-order the items. Instead, the respondents indicate the importance of each value item on 9-grade scale. What is usually considered a great merit of Schwartz's theory is its applicability for distinguishing values at both individual and cultural levels, as well as its reappearing in various cultures; the system of values is almost the same over the world, however with different emphasis on different domains (Karp, 2000). Empirical evidence that supports Schwartz's circular model of values comes from over 75 countries (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015), and his theory of values is widely used. In a review of the roots of contemporary social psychology of values, Schwartz and colleagues provide a useful definition of personal values:

> Values serve as socially acceptable terms that people use to communicate with others about their goals and to coordinate in pursuing them. Every person must cope with the universal requirements that underlie values. However, each person's unique biological heritage and social experiences combine to influence the relative importance assigned to each value, the person's own value hierarchy. Thus, values are characteristic adaptions shaped by the interplay of basic personality traits and the stimuli of the social and natural world. (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015, p. 45)

I share this definition since it integrates different important aspects of how personal values work. This view is interdisciplinary and regards humans as individuals who are influenced by their biology, their social context and their culture.

As this section shows, the research has mainly been of a quantitative nature, involving the development and use of a variety of measuring tools, surveys and questionnaires. It has not been common to examine values qualitatively. My

research, which uses qualitative methods, will demonstrate how personal values relate to storytelling, as well as to organisational values, in a family business, and hopefully it may contribute to a deeper and more complex understanding of values.

2.3.1.1 The Sociocultural Approach

"Our ideas, our values, our acts, even our emotions, are, like our nervous system itself, cultural products", Geertz states in *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973, p. 50). Turning our attention to sociocultural approaches – values are usually considered an aspect of culture that influence individuals and groups, and here I would like to mention a few significant contributions. Researchers in the anthropology domain early manifested a concern with values (Firth, 1953; Spates, 1983), and prominent figures stressed that the key to understanding culture is to study the motives, emotions and values that are institutionalised in that culture (Benedict, 1934). Cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead claimed that once a culture has embraced its values, based on what most people hold high, it continues to embody these values strongly in the construction of its community, as well as in political and religious systems, art and literature (Mead, 1935). Furthermore, she believed that each new generation was shaped firmly and definitively, according to these dominant guidelines (1935). Thus, the idea that values have a strong influence on people in a society or culture has a long tradition within sociocultural research. Kluckhohn (1951) drew up a systematic definition that has been influential on research and the understanding of values:

> A value is a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action. (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 395)

Kluckhohn considered humans as having common biological traits and characteristics that form the basis for the development of culture and he believed that people generally feel that their own beliefs and practices are natural, while those of others are seen as unusual and strange (Hills, 2002). Under the sociocultural approach, there is an interest in distinct cultural variations of values' priorities, for example individualism versus collectivism (Triandis, 1990). The association of economic development and how this is reflected in value priorities is

another area of research; it is a research tradition that emanates from Max Weber's classic link between Protestantism and the rise of capitalism in the West (Karp, 2000). Inglehart is one of the most prominent contemporary researchers in this branch and the founding president of the *World Values Survey*. Inglehart and Baker (2000) used the first three waves of the World Values Survey to test the thesis that economic development is linked with systematic changes in basic values. They found evidence of both significant cultural change and the persistence of cultural traditions with a shift toward more trust, tolerance, well-being and postmaterialist values in post-industrial society. According to Inglehart (1997), each society can be located on a global map of cross-cultural variation, based on two dimensions: traditional versus secular-rational and survival versus self-expression. After analysing the data, Inglehart and Baker (2000), found that the Nordic countries exemplified "the cutting edge of cultural change" (2000, p. 49), with Sweden registering extremely high measures for both secularity-rationality and self-expression. In the sixth wave of the World Values Survey (2014), Sweden stood out even more in this area, also when compared to the other Nordic countries.

By this point, the critical reader may be wondering: Is it really relevant to review how economical, societal and cultural factors influence values and value systems? My firm belief is yes, it is. Values differ between cultures and societies, which, in turn, affect the values and value systems of citizens, families, companies, employees and business-owners. As Dolfsma (2009) points out, sociocultural values "live" in a society and they "denote strong underlying convictions that are held by many people in a group or in society, consciously as well as unconsciously, most of which would be considered to be of an ethical, cultural or philosophical nature" (Dolfsma, 2009, p. 40). For example, research shows that there is a relationship between an individual's country culture and his or her values (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). Sweden is regarded as a secular, individual-centred welfare state with a high standard of living, personal freedom and gender equality (cf. Danielsson Malmros, 2012). The labour market is characterised by a tradition of strong union representation and high levels of social protection (Eurofound, 2018). Doubtless, these circumstances are something that can be identified at both macro and micro levels and they affect people, both individually and collectively. Organisations and companies are part of society and, according to Czarniawska

(1997, 2004), we have to discover a society's repertoire of legitimate stories in order to understand it, or part of it. Similarly, Vaara, Sonenshein and Boje (2016) emphasise that narratives are part of multifaceted structures and that organisational narratives should be contextualised so as to be able to understand their role in stability and change. Narratives are always part of the nature of the social, cultural and political world (Bruner, 1991; Gergen and Gergen, 1993; Hyvärinen, 2008).

As we have seen, a society's culture is formed by its economic and historical heritage (Inglehart and Baker, 2000), but values are also age and generation dependent. On an individual level, basic values are generally fixed by the time a person reaches adulthood, remaining firm throughout life (Rokeach, 1973; Baker, Dalton and Hildebrandt, 1981; Schuman and Scott, 1989; Inglehart, 1997). However, significant differences can be found between the young and old, in societies that have experienced a rising sense of security (Inglehart, 1997). For example, young people are noticeably less traditional than older people in advanced industrial democracies (Inglehart, 2000). Therefore, the manner in which people prioritise values is a way of describing and comparing, not only different societies and cultures (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015), but also generations. Values also offer a way to understand organisations, something I will elaborate on, next.

2.3.2 Organisational Values

The term, organisational values, commonly refers to the small number of values that jointly make up a value system (Bourne and Jenkins, 2013). Enz (1988) defines organisational values as "the beliefs held by an individual or group regarding the means and ends organisations 'ought to' or 'should' identify in the running of the enterprise, in choosing what business actions or objectives are preferable to alternate actions, or in establishing organisational objectives" (1988, p. 287). In organisations, values are a way for the members to agree on what is important, and they "provide a basis for policies, practices, and expected social behaviour" (Sorenson, 2013, p. 117). They are considered a factor in organisational culture (Schein, 2004; Dempsey, 2015; Garcia *et al.*, 2017), and have a central place in socialisation (Dose, 1997; Choi and Chung, 2017), employee loyalty (Dermol and

Trunk Širca, 2018), and commitment (Ostroff, Shin and Kinicki, 2005; Nygaard *et al.*, 2017; Krajcsák, 2018).

The study of organisational values is well-established in management and business research; however, the research is fragmented and mainly deploys quantitative methods. A number of studies focus on the interrelationship between personal and organisational values (Arieli, Sagiv and Roccas, 2019). Hyde and Weathington (2006) examined the congruence between an individual's personal life values and work attitudes, and Abbott, White and Charles (2005) showed that pro-social values such as vision, self-direction and humanity may enhance organisational commitment and performance. Sullivan, Sullivan and Buffton (2002) claim rapid change can be brought about by aligning the values of the people in the organisation and those of the organisation itself. Naus, van Iterson and Roe (2007) investigated value incongruence, job autonomy and organisation-based self-esteem among employees. Their results highlight organisational cynicism as a self-defensive response to problematic events and circumstances in the work environment. In a study on the relationship between personal values and the perception of a corporation's code of ethics, Finegan and Theriault (1997) found that the more similar the values of the code were to the person's values, the more favourable was the evaluation of the code. Illes and Vogell (2018) studied how employees relate to organisational values and found that values cannot be expected to be followed unreservedly. They must be worth striving for, and their successful embedding requires a "culture of sharing values" (2018, p. 363). This is how they can permeate the organisation and have meaningful impact on behaviour, according to the authors.

There are also some contributions on organisational and employee values in the hospitality and tourism industry, the majority of which come from research in non-Western cultures. Wong and Chung (2003) investigated values among food service managers, and Mok, Pine and Pizam (1998) explored work values and leadership preferences amid hotel managers. There is a body of research within the hospitality domain that is focused on generational differences. Chen and Choi (2008) explored the structure of hospitality management work values and found generational differences among three generations of managers and supervisors in

the hospitality industry. Also, Gursoy, Maier and Chi (2008) found significant generational differences in world views, attitudes toward authority and perspectives on work, in their study on work values and generational gaps in the hospitality workforce. Na and Duckitt (2003) investigated consensus in and diversity between generations and genders in basic values and found that younger people are more open to change than older people, although the difference is considerably greater for females.

My review of organisational values shows that a large part of the research that explores organisational values uses quantitative methods, such as surveys and questionnaires. Where the research on organisational values in the tourism and hospitality industry is concerned, much of it has been conducted in non-Western cultures. Therefore, my study of a Nordic country, using qualitative methods – participant observation and semi-structured interviews – may provide an interesting and important contribution to hospitality research.

The study of values in organisations is multifaceted, which also applies to the use of the terminology. This is something that I will discuss in the following section.

2.3.3 Organisational Values versus Core Values – A Discussion

The fact that values matter is not only reflected in research, but also in leadership practices. Values play a role in strategy (Bansal, 2003; Carlisle and Baden-Fuller, 2004), decision-making (Bruni-Bossio, 2018), change (Burnes and Jackson, 2011; Søderberg, 2015), management conversations (Aggerholm, 2010), reputation management (Sisson and Bowen, 2017), and business excellence (Malbašić, Belužic and Pasarić, 2018). No wonder a lot of organisations pay attention to and emphasise the importance of values. Today it is common for organisations to identify and establish their *core values*, also commonly called *corporate values*. These are the assumed fundamental principles that influence the way an organisation is run and the way it conducts its business. They should be shared by the people working in the organisation, from top management to employees (O'Neil and Horne, 2012). Bjørge and Whittaker (2015) stress that corporate values are used broadly "both as a means of promoting consistent behaviour within an organisation and as a means of communicating to stakeholders what the

organisation stands for." (2015, p. 347) They may also outline what, and where, the organisation wants to be in the future (Collins and Porras, 2005). Core values are often summarised in a values statement (Allison, 2018), or in the mission statement. They define what the organisation cares about and set the tone for the culture of the organisation. Organisations highlight and take pride in how they discuss, develop and implement their values, and both management and employees are involved in this process. As a consequence, values are not merely just something that "exists", but rather something that is created and re-created. Values can be worked on and used, in practice, as a way to inspire, motivate and guide employees (Mullane, 2002; Sheehan and Grant, 2014). Communication plays a vital role in the creation process of corporate values (Gróf, 2001).

However, there are objections to the use of values in companies and organisations. "Corporate values generally are feel-good statements that have almost no effect on a company's operations", according to Harvard Business Review editors Hemp and Stewart (2004). Another critic of these kinds of "worked out values" is Alvesson (2015). He believes that a statement of core values is above all "an attempt to state some ideals that can hopefully guide the operations or give the right PR effect. It is usually about manifestos from the management and/or communications departments" (2015, pp. 16-17).[1] The function of core values, according to Alvesson, is to sound good and contribute to the legitimacy and status of the business. Alvesson believes that core values are usually worthless. Instead of core values he uses "organisational culture", and although they may seem similar, Alvesson believes that these are two different phenomena. According to him, organisational culture consists of the beliefs and meanings that really permeate the organisation. "Culture is about the often un- or semi-conscious, non-explicit beliefs that guide a group." (Alvesson, 2015, p. 16) Thus, Alvesson differentiates organisational culture from core values, where he sees the latter not as a set of existing values, but as a management practice and tool, used in organisations. From his standpoint, core values are a way to influence employees' actions. My interpretation is that Alvesson considers core values as something *constructed*, and organisational culture as something *natural*. However, his distinction between

[1] Quotes from Alvesson (2015) are my own translation.

organisational culture and core values is open to discussion. As I see it, we would do better to distinguish between different outlooks on values in organisations. From a constructionist approach, values are always constructed and negotiated through social interactions. Nevertheless, I believe it is relevant to distinguish between who gets involved in the construction and negotiation of values and how widely these are shared and lived within an organisation. *Organisational values* would then refer to values where members of the organisation are involved in the creation, and re-creation, of values through their daily life at work. *Core values*, on the other hand, would refer to the values which are expressed by the management. Organisational values would then coincide reasonably well with what Alvesson calls organisational culture. From my perspective, his aforementioned definition of organisational culture ("the often un- or semi-conscious, non-explicit beliefs that guide a group") could fit well as a definition of organisational values. As an example, Smith and Schwartz (1997) highlight the fact that values are beliefs and serve as standards to guide behaviour, people and events. A more useful distinction would, thus, be between organisational values and core values. I see Alvesson's criticism mainly as an objection to actively trying to influence the ideals and virtues of an organisation.

Nonetheless, values play a prominent role in corporate discourse (Bjørge and Whittaker, 2015). Let me continue the discussion of different ways to look at values in organisations. Van Deth and Scarbrough (1995) point out the lack of a consensus on the meaning of values and draw attention to the fact that there is no consistent theoretical and/or operational definition of values. Bourne and Jenkins (2013) adopt a dynamic perspective and make the case that there are four distinct forms of organisational values: espoused (those advocated by the senior management team), attributed (those that members generally regard as representative of the organisation), shared (an aggregation of the personal values of individual members), and aspirational (the values that members believe ought to be the values of the organisation). Cornellisen (2011) emphasises that values can be understood in different ways. On the one hand, they are inherent traits of an organisation – the enduring values shared by people working in the organisation – that make the organisation unique. On the other hand, they are the outward presentation of those values. Collins and Porras (2005) make a similar distinction

presenting their dichotomy of tacit (implicit) values and articulated (explicit) ones, which I find relevant. Commonly, it is the articulated values that are used as a communicative tool in leadership, in order to help managers prioritise what matters the most (Post and Berman, 2001), and to engage and motivate employees to work towards the organisation's objectives (Brabet and Klemm, 1994). These are also the values that are presented to external stakeholders as elements of corporate branding (Schein, 2004; Bjørge and Whittaker 2015). Articulated values also play a vital role in building a corporate identity (Agerholm Andersen, 2010; Bjørge and Whittaker, 2015; Collins and Porras, 2015). Articulated corporate values can also enhance a common corporate culture (Bjørge and Whittaker, 2015; Allison, 2018). Not least, they may also have a significant impact on the company's profitability (Jonsen *et al.*, 2015).

According to Bourne, Jenkins and Parry (2017), previous research has been somewhat confused about the *kind* of organisational values that were investigated. So, in the light of the discussion above about how values are used and defined in research and management practice, I intend to use the concepts in the following sense: *Organisational values* will refer to implicit enduring values that are the inherent traits of an organisation. They are the shared un-, or semi-conscious values that guide and motivate employees. *Core values* will refer to explicit values, used as a communicative tool and as an outward presentation of the organisation's values. I consider core values to be the conscious values that the organisation has defined as guiding principles for the employees and the organisation. This automatically raises the question, which sort of these values are relevant to explore. My position is firm: *both*. That said, my focus is on organisational values – and of course how they interrelate with personal ones. Researching storytelling at Hotel Queen Sophia provides valuable insights into what the staff, managers and owners value and care about. Values have a wide and complex influence on the processes and characteristics of organisations (Bourne and Jenkins, 2013), something that makes them important to explore.

Let me recap quickly, before I continue. Section one of this literature review chapter focused on storytelling in organisations and this second part has highlighted values, both personal and organisational. As I turn towards the third

and final part of my triadic review, I will concentrate, now, on family business research, a section where I will also discuss storytelling and values.

2.4 Family Businesses

What makes family businesses unique? Arregle *et al*. (2007) argue that family firms are special in that two forms of social entities coexist: those of the family and those of the firm. Family involvement, family ownership, family management, and intergenerational ownership transition are key characteristics used to define family firms according to Westhead and Cowling (1998). Payne (1984) distinguishes typical features such as the restriction of capital ownership to family members, closeness between ownership and control, informal leadership structures, direction by inheritance and an absence of non-family employees in positions of true authority. Brundin, Florin Samuelsson and Melin (2014) identify seven core characteristics of family ownership logic: 1) active and visible ownership, 2) stability in ownership and power, 3) industrial and long-term focus, 4) multiple ownership goals, 5) autonomy towards capital markets, 6) flexibility in governance structures and 7) identification. Tagiuri and Davis (1996) introduce the concept of "bivalent attributes" to explain the dynamics of family firms. These firms embrace simultaneous roles, shared identity, a lifelong common history, emotional involvement and confusion, the private language of relatives, a mutual awareness and privacy and the meaning of the family company. According to the authors, these inherent features are the source of both advantages and disadvantages. Ruiz Jiménez, Vallejo Martos and Martínez Jiménez (2015) suggest that family firms are more harmonious, in the sense that they show higher levels of trust, participation and better work climates than non-family companies. Although many researchers have been interested in what characterises family businesses, it is not entirely indisputable what makes them unique. Within the field, there are ongoing discussions about the core characteristics of family businesses and in what ways they are distinct (Dawson and Mussolino, 2014), and how to define them (Diaz-Moriana *et al.*, 2019). There is also an interest in differences among family firms, since family involvement vary in these businesses (Memili, Singal and Barrédy, 2016).

If we turn our attention to other areas of research into family businesses, we find that succession is a well-researched subject (Brockhaus, 2004, Short *et al.*, 2016; Gabriel and Bitsch, 2018), for example, challenges to succession (Fox, Hamilton and Nilakant, 1996) and the potential clash between family and business (Chandler, 1990). Other areas of study are the socialisation of successors (García-Álvarez, López-Sintas and Saldaña Gonzalvo, 2002) and knowledge transfer in family business succession (Boyd *et al.*, 2015). Entrepreneurship in family firms has also attracted researchers' interest (Hnátek, 2015; Goel and Jones, 2016; Basco, Calabrò and Campopiano, 2018), as well as economics (Casson, 1999), and governance (Madison et *al.*, 2016). Dyer (2006), Pindado and Requejo (2015), and Craig, Dibrell and Garrett (2014), examines family influence on firm performance. Pratt (2000), Aronoff and Ward (2001) and Ward (2004) focus on topics such as the influence of commitment, legacy transmission, hard-work, long-term profit and personal development, as well as the myths of creation and identity, of both the family members and the business. Denison, Lief and Ward (2004) studied corporate cultures of family enterprises using quantitative methods. Their research demonstrates that these firms' histories and shared identities can provide a connectedness to core values and standards of behaviour. Hall, Melin and Nordqvist (2001) argue that the culture in family-owned businesses may be stronger than in other forms of ownership. Laforet (2016) studied the effects of organisational innovation performance in family firms, and Vallejo-Martos (2011) highlights the organisational culture of family firms as a key factor of competitiveness. Vallejo (2009) researched non-family employees' identification and involvement levels and found that both positively and significantly influence the survival or continuity of family-owned businesses.

2.4.1 Research on Storytelling in Family Businesses

Family business narratives provide particularly rich material for scholars (Hamilton, Discua Cruz and Jack, 2017), especially for those who want to understand such things as attitudes, values, culture, and how family and non-family members perceive their social reality. Nevertheless, to date, there has been little research conducted into the role of storytelling in family businesses (Johansson, Li and Tsai, 2014), although there are some notable exceptions.

As an example, Mussolino *et al*. (2019) analyse daughters' self-positioning in family business succession, through narrative inquiry. Dawson and Hjorth (2012) adopt a narrative approach to address the succession process in a family business and their analysis highlights five key themes that centres on leadership style and succession, trust and communication, balance between agents, history and identity, and fear of losing one's identity and social standing through the succession process. Dalpiaz, Tracey and Phillips (2014) explore how successors use family business succession narratives to legitimate their succession, building on a case study of Italian design firm Alessi. In another case study, Steier (2007) explores a familial sub-narrative relevant to entrepreneurship and extends previous research that suggests economic activity is embedded in social relationships. Apropos social relationships and behaviour, Peters and Kallmuenzer (2018) analyse entrepreneurial behaviours and their effect on performance by interviewing owner-managers of hospitality family firms in a narrative setting. Brundin and Kjellander (2010) explore how family business owners express and perceive their family business story and the implications, of that, for the strategy formation of the firm. Hamilton draws on narrative accounts to bring the role of women in family businesses to light (2006a), and highlights narrative's role in understanding the individuals and their social world in family enterprises (2006b). Nilsson (2015) investigates the phenomena of invisibility and visibility in families' situation through life stories, and McCollom (1992) uses organisational stories to examine the relationship of the family and business systems in a family-owned company setting.

Narratives have been shown to contribute to the understanding of commitment among family business members (Barker *et al*., 2004), as well as motivation (Johansson, 2004), and gender identities and practices (Díaz Garcia and Welter, 2013) among individual entrepreneurs. Storytelling might also enable learning and innovation within the family business and sustain culture over time (Hitch and Kennedy-Reid, 2010). Stories have also been found to facilitate identity creation and sensemaking according to preliminary findings by Parada and Viladás (2010). While this research is informative and demonstrates the importance of studying storytelling and values in family businesses, it also explicitly stresses that the topic could be further explored in research that focuses on the transmission of

meanings. Narva (2001) investigated heritage and tradition in family businesses and identified narratives for transmitting values. Zwack *et al*. (2016) used mixed methods to examine the transmission of family values in family firms through storytelling and found that "storytelling is a powerful tool used in family firms to impart cultural family values to family members and other stakeholders" (2016, p. 20). This leads us to the next section in this literature review – the research on values in family businesses.

2.4.2 Research on Values in Family Businesses

Values are moral or ethical codes that define what is right, wrong and desirable, according to Sharma and Nordqvist (2008), in their presentation of a classification scheme for family firms. Values have been shown to play an important role in family businesses (Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008, 2013), and may be central in shaping organisations and their efficiency (Bertrand and Schoar, 2006). They affect behaviour, relationships and priorities, according to Ward (1987), who uses the classification *business-first*, *family-first* and *family-enterprise first* to describe different orientations, and thereby value systems, in family firms. In family business research, values are generally regarded as explicit or implicit notions of what is beneficial for both the family and the family business (Hall, Melin and Nordqvist, 2001). Having clear values is often claimed to be one of the sources of successful and tenable family businesses, and the existence of values is considered to be a key element in running the company (Parada, Nordqvist and Gimeno, 2010; Simon *et al.*, 2012). Research suggests that *moral* and *social* values are more accentuated in family businesses than in non-family ones (Sorenson, 2013). Additionally, the values of family firms are often considered to be more *emotional* (Ward, 2008) and *behavioural* (Ceja, Agulles and Tàpies, 2010).

The importance of family values has not been examined empirically in any profound way (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004) and, typically, values have not been the central focus when researchers have explored the philosophy, culture and attitudes of family businesses (Simon *et al.*, 2012). However, there are some noteworthy exceptions. Camfield and Franco (2019) study the relationships between personal values and the professionalisation of family firms; Sánchez Marín *et al.* (2016) focus on culture, orientation and values in family businesses;

Parada, Nordqvist and Gimeno (2010) analyse the role of professional associations in fostering a change of values; Vallejo (2008) demonstrates the existence of cultural differences between the values of family and non-family firms; Haugh and McKee (2003) identify shared values that underpin the family culture and how they affect employees; Koiranen (2002) explores the values of old Finnish family firms; and García-Álvarez and López-Sintas (2001) focus on the value systems of the founders of family businesses. Additionally, limited research exists on *how* values are created and transmitted (Parada and Viladás, 2010). This is also highlighted by Fletcher, Melin and Gimeno (2012) who review the literature in the field of culture and values in family businesses and conclude that there is still little understanding of "how family business cultures produce relations of power or asymmetry and what ideologies, discourses and reasonings contribute to such relations" (2012, p. 130). Payne (2018) states there is a need for a better examination and understanding of the "how" and "why" of family businesses.

If we summarise the research on family business, taking into account the research on storytelling and values in family businesses, it becomes clear that it is fragmentary and insufficient. The research to date shows that family businesses distinguish themselves from non-family ones in several ways. It also demonstrates that values are important, however their importance has not yet been studied in a careful or in-depth manner and neither has how values are transmitted. While storytelling in family businesses has been researched to some extent, these investigations provide only limited scientific contributions to the link between storytelling and values in family businesses. According to Sorenson (2013), scholars have not managed to fully explain how family values are embedded in family companies. Zwack *et al*. (2016), state that research that focuses explicitly on value transmission through storytelling is limited. This is where I make my contribution to the research. A narrative approach might be useful for exploring values in family businesses, since "the analysed field provides an unlimited supply of good and powerful stories about families and family firms" (Simon *et al.*, 2012, p. 144). I hope that, by looking at stories at Hotel Queen Sophia, I can provide answers about storytelling and values in a family business context.

2.5 Discussion

My triadic literature review shows that most of the existing research has been carried out on organisational storytelling in general, whereas much less attention has been paid to storytelling in family businesses and, in particular, how it relates to organisational and personal values. The research conducted to date has been dominated by quantitative methods. A qualitative approach and the findings of this research project could make a valuable contribution to research on family businesses. However, the question arises: if so little research has been carried out, is the topic really worth investigating? My answer is, without doubt! Organisations are in the business of making sense of the world (Weick, 1979; Garsten, 1991), and it is important to understand storytelling since it "perpetuates cultural heritage and helps individuals make sense of the world" (Anderson, 2010, p. 285). I am interested in the practice of storytelling, and similarly to Ochs and Capps (2001), I emphasise narrative activity and storytelling as a "sensemaking *process* rather than as a finished product with loose ends knit together into a single story-line" (2001, p. 15). The stories people tell may reveal a lot about values, and values are important in order to understand an organisation and the people who work in it – i.e. the culture. Meyer (1995) has made a vital contribution about stories and values in organisations; he claims that one can gain insight into the basic characteristics of an organisation's culture by understanding its key values. Meyer explores how narrative reveals values; which he does by isolating narratives from organisational members' accounts of their daily lives at work. He then categorises the values by major themes, which leads to an understanding of the values that are stressed, most often, by its members. "Since values both unify and divide members of a culture, uncovering an organisation's values through narratives provides a clearer understanding of that culture – both of its points of unity and of its point of conflict" (1995, p. 212). Eliciting values from stories is an excellent way of exploring the values that are in play in the family business and how these are expressed through employees', managers' and owners' stories. In this thesis I will adopt an approach similar to that of Meyer (1995), categorising and thematising my data, in order to convey different values in a family business. However, unlike Meyer, I examine not only the stories extracted from interviews but also those that

come from participant observation and daily interactions with the organisational members. In this way, stories are gathered from "where they happen"; from top to bottom and from the bottom and up. According to Meyer, the analysis of values from narratives "provides observers, as well as organisational members, with key insights into which behaviours are desired in an organisation, as well as with the narratives constructed to make sense of those behaviours" (1995, p. 217). All in all, looking at stories and their different functions is a way of uncovering thoughts, opinions and attitudes and of contributing to an increased understanding of values in family businesses.

2.6 Research Questions

As I have demonstrated in the introduction chapter, and through this triadic literature review, research to date suggests that values are vital in family firms, and that they influence behaviours, decisions and priorities in these organisations. However, previous research has been unable to thoroughly explain how values are embedded in, and passed on, in family businesses. Moreover, scholars have not explored the role of storytelling for values transmission, in family firms, carefully. Research in this area is fundamental to being able to better understand how values affect ownership, management and work in family companies. Set against this context, I have formulated the following research questions, which I intend to answer in this thesis.[2]

Main Research Question

- How are organisational and personal values conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business?

Sub-Questions

- How does storytelling uncover different perceptions of values?
- How is the notion of "family" present in the stories?

[2] I arrived at my research questions by identifying a topic that is overlooked and under-researched; something that Alvesson and Sandberg refer to as *neglect spotting* (2013, p. 31).

2.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have shown that there is room for further contribution within my chosen research area. I have reviewed and discussed the literature with the aim of situating this study within the body of the relevant literature and provided a context for my research. In section 2.2, I focused on the research on storytelling in organisations and discussed the definition of story, narrative and storytelling as well as explained how I will use these terms in this thesis. In section 2.3, I reviewed the research on personal and organisational values and problematised the concepts of organisational values versus core values as well as explained how I understand, them and will use them. In section 2.4, I discussed the existing research on family businesses and presented what makes these businesses unique, with an in-depth review about storytelling as well as values in family firms. In section 2.5, I discussed the relevance of my research and its potential contributions. In section 2.6, I explained how I arrived at my research questions and I also presented my main research question and two sub-questions.

The next chapter will deal with my research methodology and method. I will also introduce this thesis' research subject: The Hotel Queen Sophia.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology and Method

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes and justifies the methodology and research design used in this study. It also discusses the chosen research methods.

Method is a term used to denote the techniques and procedures employed to obtain and analyse research data, for example observation and interviews. Methodology, on the other hand, is "the theory of how research should be undertaken, including the theoretical and philosophical assumptions upon which research is based and the implications of these for the method or methods adopted" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012, p. 674). Methodology can be described as the doctrine of the method, that is, a theoretical legitimisation for how a certain method could be the basis for being able to say anything about the causes and connections (Allwood and Erikson, 2012).

This research is ethnographic and the methods used are participant observation and semi-structured interviews. I begin this chapter with a description of the broad theoretical underpinnings of my chosen research methods (3.2). Section 3.3 introduces the research subject and section 3.4 explains how the data was collected. In section 3.5, I reflect on field relations, and section 3.6 explains how data was sorted out and analysed. To summarise, chapter three shows the rationale of ethnography as a research tool and explores the implementation of the approach by discussing the methods that are used in this study.

3.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

Research and researchers are often influenced by different theoretical orientations. My philosophical grounding is in hermeneutics and my research is centrally informed by social constructionism and narrative approaches.

3.2.1 The Hermeneutic Approach

How can we understand people? How can knowledge be acquired? Is there an objective world, or are there only subjective perceptions of it? "All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless", Merleau-Ponty argued in *Phenomenology of Perception* (1962, p. ix). According to him, perception plays a fundamental role in understanding, and engaging with, the world. As for myself, I have always been interested in how people experience and understand their everyday life; society and different phenomena. Early in my professional life, I began to take an interest in how individuals, groups and organisations worked and how personal and company values were visible in the workplace as well as how they affected work, talk and acts. It was as a coffee shop clerk, hotel cleaner, treatment assistant, French teacher, museum guide, press officer, copywriter, public relations consultant, project manager, team leader and director. No matter the role I had, I reflected a great deal about leadership and the relationship between managers and employees, the relationship among employees and, not least, the values that permeated the organisations where I worked.

Being trained in ethnology and ethnographic research, I believe that knowledge about people is achieved through an understanding of their life-world. This view of knowledge lies within the hermeneutic tradition of research (Martin and McIntyre, 1994; Benton and Craib, 2011). As a study and interpretation of human behaviour and social institutions, hermeneutics involves understanding a social system from the perspective of the social subject. The fact that I am interested in how people think, talk and interact, based on their context, makes the tradition of hermeneutic research an appropriate philosophical ground. It implies that the most fundamental experience of social life is the meaning of any action. Within hermeneutics there is no search for truth in terms of laws; rather the researcher tries to understand the meaning, significance and values in a text, a story or in a person's actions and decisions. Within this tradition great consideration is given to the background and the context from which the interpretation stems (Widerberg, 2002). For example, a hermeneutic approach can provide an explanation of a

phenomenon by placing it within its human, social and organisational context. The explanation of action is a matter of meaning and within this context language, stories and words are key components (Rosenberg, 2012).

Hermeneutics has its origins in the interpretation of sacred texts (Benton and Craib, 2011) and was developed centuries ago, to try to understand authoritative texts in which the meaning was questionable and/or hidden (Martin and McIntyre, 1994). The modern hermeneutic tradition can be traced back to intellectuals such as Wilhelm Dilthey and Heinrich Richert (Martin and McIntyre, 1994). Another pioneer was Friedrich Schleiermacher, who emphasised human forms of expression (Birkler, 2008). One of the most influential writers in modern hermeneutics was Hans-Georg Gadamer, who claimed that "the hermeneutical dimension plays a basic role in all experience of the world" (Gadamer, 2006, p. 49), and viewed language as the medium of hermeneutic experience (Gadamer, 1975). He stressed that we can never detach ourselves from the socio-cultural context in which we find ourselves. Our interpretations of other people's life situations must always be made in the light of our understanding of our own situation. According to this view, human perceptions of the world and everyday life depend on both the parts and the whole and the relationship between them. A basic hermeneutic assumption is that in all interpretation and understanding the parts depend on the whole and vice versa (Widerberg, 2002).

There are other ways to understand human thoughts and behaviours. During the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, different ideologies were developed in social sciences, as a criticism of a scientific perspective which many believed did not take the social context into account, when studying humans and human behaviour. These new philosophies are commonly labelled as "the linguistic turn" and its proponents believed that *language* was the key to understanding the human being in its context (Werhane, 2018). The linguistic turn resulted in a resurgence of qualitative methods and also in a philosophical discussion with origins in hermeneutics and phenomenology (Allwood and Erikson, 2012). Social constructionism was one of these fruitful new perspectives and the first to use this term were Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in their book *The Social Construction of Reality* (1967). Their social constructionism had its roots in hermeneutics, as well as in

phenomenology, with links to philosophers Martin Heidegger and Edmund Husserl. They also referenced social scientist Alfred Schutz, whose work, *The Phenomenology of the Social World,* heavily inspired Berger and Luckmann to develop their theories (Benton and Craib, 2011). In the following section I will elaborate on social constructionism, as well as on language and narrative.

3.2.2 Social Constructionism and Narrative

Taking hermeneutics as my overarching philosophical approach, I will now focus on the theoretical assumptions on which this research is based.

This research is centrally informed by social constructionism and narrative approaches. Social constructionism is a theory of knowledge that examines the development of jointly constructed understandings of the world. It is concerned with the ways in which people think about and use categories to structure their experience and perception of the world. "The truth is out there" is a famous tagline from the television series X-Files, but social constructionists question the whole idea of "truth". They would rather we said: "The interpretation is out there". Yet, the way we interpret, and make other people intelligible to ourselves, does not necessarily correlate with what we actually see, rather it is about what we believe we know (Gergen, 1985), our beliefs and preconceptions.

Most constructionist research is not concerned with the physical world per se (ontological focus); rather its focus is on how we *understand* the world, which means it has an epistemological focus (Loseke, 1999; Pernecky, 2012). Berger and Luckmann (1967) argue that society is made up of actions that are expressions of subjective meanings. In everyday life, individuals are guided by knowledge that is often taken for granted; reality emerges as a world we share with other people. The most basic interaction is the face-to-face situation; all other interactions can be derived from this prototypical case of social interaction. Interpersonal interaction is characterised by typifications that guide the interaction:

> The reality of everyday life contains typificatory schemes in terms of which others are apprehended and "dealt with" in face-to-face encounters. Thus I apprehend the other as "a man", "a European", "a buyer", "a jovial type" and so on. (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, pp. 30-31)

Typifications are bundles of beliefs, or expectations, assembled into stereotyped assumptions about the other. Berger and Luckmann argue that all human activity that takes place repeatedly becomes a habit, which eventually makes the activity institutionalised. Institutionalised actions are characterised by being shared by members of a social group or society, such as a company or an organisation.

> The typifications of habitualised actions that constitute institutions are always shared ones. They are *available* to all the members of the particular social group in question, and the institution itself typifies individual actors as well as individual actions. (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p. 54)

Social constructionists are concerned with the nature of knowledge and how it is created (Andrews, 2012). They claim that knowledge is found in the socially framed individual experiences of reality. "Society is viewed as existing both as a subjective and objective reality. Meaning is shared, thereby constituting a taken-for-granted reality", suggests Andrews (2012, p. 39). Furthermore, cognitive processes and actions are the result of social interaction between people. The methodological implication is that it is not possible to obtain unchallenged or objective facts about something, for example an organisation or a workplace. Instead what is important to research is how individuals perceive and relate to the organisations of which they are a part, and this is the way to learn more about the organisation and its values. When covering qualitative research in hospitality, Walsh (2003) stresses that its goal is "to build an understanding and reconstruction of the constructs other people hold" (2003, p. 68). According to Griffin (2018), constructionism, as a research framework in hospitality, "proactively constructs knowledge that, when done well, is born from the lived experiences of those affected, ringing true, and demonstrating the value and importance that participants place on the topics at hand in their own lives." (2018, p. 39) In this project's case, deploying a social constructionist methodology sheds light on how the people in the organisation experience their everyday life at work, how they talk about their experiences and the value systems that inform and emerge from this.

According to social constructionists, language is interpreted, negotiated and reformulated in social processes. Gergen, a contemporary proponent of social

constructionism, claims that "central to the constructionist account of the social origins of knowledge is a concern with language" (Gergen, 2011, p. 109). He is interested in how we understand and construct our world with the help of stories and how "language shapes our sense of the real" (Gergen, 2009, p. 41). This strong connection between social constructionism, language and narrative makes it relevant to my project. It helps me understand what functions stories serve at Hotel Queen Sophia, and how they construct and are constructed by employees' and owners' perception of the organisation and the daily work.

Let me now turn to a discussion of narrative approaches. The Russian literary theorist, Vladimir Propp, is generally considered to be the father of narratology (Pavel, 1973). He has inspired other scholars such as the structuralist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and semiotician, Roland Barthes. Paul Ricoeur is another key contributor to the understanding of narrative. Ricoeur was interested in the narrative identity – "the sort of identity to which a human being has access thanks to the mediation of the narrative function" (Ricoeur, 1991, p. 74). Interest in narrative has increased over recent decades, with several different approaches being taken. One of them is a text-based narratology that has its roots in structuralism while another is sociolinguistically influenced narrative research. Although there is no such thing as a unified narrative theory, all of the various approaches see narrative as a basic form of knowledge (Johansson, 2005; De Fina and Georgakopoulou, 2012).

Contemporary researchers have successfully managed to combine a narrative approach with a social constructionist perspective. Jerome Bruner (1987) has explored "life as narrative" using social constructionism and narrative theory, inspired by Ricoeur. He declares that "we organise our experience and our memory of human happenings mainly in the form of narrative" (Bruner, 1991, p. 4); and that narrative is not only a form of representing, but also of constituting, reality (Bruner, 1991). He sees self-storying as universal and, in his book, *Making Stories* he develops his thoughts on "the narrative creation of self" (Bruner, 2003). If we turn our attention to organisational research, Barbara Czarniawska is an influential scholar who takes a constructionist perspective and applies narratology to management studies. Her key contributions are *Narrating the Organization* (1997), *A Narrative Approach to Organization Studies* (1998), and a chapter on

social constructionism and organisations in *Debating Organization* (2003). Herein, she suggests that constructionism in organisation studies is a form of unmasking, "in the sense of revealing what has been forgotten or not paid attention to." (Czarniawska, 2003, p. 137) Other approaches can also be highlighted within the constructionist context. While conducting participant observation in an advertising agency, Rosen used two different dramatic occasions – a business breakfast (1985) and the yearly Christmas party (1988) – as examples of ways of unveiling power relations and social order. While researching what people say and do, he explores how a particular ritual or "social drama" (1988, p. 463) can provide a way to explain how social structures are constructed and reconstructed. This approach has inspired me, in the next chapter, where I use the yearly staff meeting as a starting point for my empirical analysis.

I will close this section by focusing on the objections to narrative and social constructionism. Narrative approaches and social constructionism are not without their critics. One of the most common objections to the narrative approach, especially in organisation studies, is that it is not a narrowly defined scientific paradigm, which, in turn, imposes limitations on its development and use (cf. Rhodes and Brown, 2005). Another criticism asks whether a researcher using a narrative approach can make truth claims at all – something that has been extensively discussed in the literature (Alvermann, 2000). The same argument has been made against social constructionism, on the grounds that either it is not realism, or that it assumes realism (Stam, 2001). The main objections are to be found among those with an essentialist view of reality and who claim legitimacy for "objective" knowledge (Misra and Prakash, 2012). One of the most vocal critics is the Canadian philosopher Ian Hacking. In his book *The Social Construction of What?* (1999) he questions the whole meaning and use of the idea of social constructionism; he does not see it as a useful approach within the social sciences, and he questions the great many items that are said to be socially constructed. Others have argued that if all knowledge is personalised construction, how can any interpretivist claims be rejected? (Cizek, 1995) According to the theory of science literature, many philosophers stress that research should be falsifiable (Martin and McIntyre, 1994; Delanty and Strydom, 2003; Kincaid, 2012). My response to this point – or call it a challenge – is similar to that of Rhodes and Brown (2005, p. 180).

I see narrative research, as well as social constructionist research, as a way to engage not with a presumed neutral "real" world, but with the complexity and nuances of the "lived" world and the values that are embedded in it. In any case, constructionism does not consider the notion of "truth" a singular and measurable reality (Griffin, 2018). In brief, I do not strive to make truth claims with my chosen research approach, but I believe I can describe and examine how people at Hotel Queen Sophia *experience* and *perceive* their lived world, and that is my ambition.

3.3 Research Subject

This research deploys qualitative methods in order to explore the stories individuals tell, as well as putting them into context. Quantitative methods would not provide the same opportunities for in-depth analysis, complexity and flexibility. As Charmaz (2006) argues, the constructionist approach, outlined earlier, all but assumes the need for qualitative methods, in that it is interpretive in nature and eschews the application of pre-given constructs, in favour of understanding the meanings that arise through practice and social interaction. Over the past decades, family business research has progressed and has undergone significant changes that now validate its legitimacy as an independent academic field of study. An example that demonstrates this is the total number of studies published, their impact and the number of conferences and journals dedicated to this field (Evert *et al*., 2016). However, since much research in family business studies still relies on quantitative methods (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009; Dawson and Hjorth, 2012), a qualitative approach promises to make an invigorating contribution.

My research approach chooses one company (including its owners, managers and employees) as the subject of research. As my purpose is to investigate what stories can reveal about personal and organisational values, as well as the family's influence, it is important that the company is not too big. According to the standardised definitions of the European Commission, a small business is one with up to 50 employees, and a medium-sized has up to 250 employees (European Commission, 2019). I opted for a small business that is part of a medium-sized hotel group.

In the field of family business, there is room for more rigorous questioning and methodologies; for example, qualitative sophisticated case studies (Smyrnios, Poutziouris and Goel, 2013). A sound way to conduct research on storytelling in organisations is to select one company or organisation for study (Myers, 2013), sometimes referred to as "single-site ethnography" (Neyland, 2008, p. 63). This provides insightful information and allows comparison of the different stories told by employees, managers and owners, as well as comparing the stories told by family and non-family members working in the organisation (McCollom, 1992). Using a case study in family business research can give insight through rich detail (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009). Even though some studies have conducted research over several companies (e.g. Parada and Viladás 2010), investigating a single company offers a better opportunity for an in-depth exploration of how people in the organisation create meaning, through storytelling, and how it affects them in everyday life. Boje's pioneering studies, of story performance in an office-supply firm (1991) and at the Walt Disney Company (1995), are important to highlight as examples of case study storytelling research. Other relevant works include Nymark's (1999) study on storytelling at Hewlett-Packard in Denmark, Landau and Drori's (2008) research on narratives in an R&D laboratory, and Dalpiaz, Tracey and Phillips' (2014) narrative case study of the Italian family firm, Alessi. My interest is in studying the hospitality industry because it is dominated by small and medium-sized businesses and, furthermore, family firms are particularly prominent therein (Getz, Carlsen and Morrison, 2004). Hospitality is also an area where qualitative research approaches may represent a valuable addition to our understanding of the behaviour and different aspects of culture (Laerdal, 2017), as well as permitting us to explore "the important intangible elements of hospitality." (Lynch, 2005a, p. 545) They are especially interesting to investigate when it comes to their stories, as well as values and management practices (Peters and Buhalis, 2004).

3.3.1 Empirical Site – Hotel Queen Sophia

My company of choice is Hotel Queen Sophia. It is a four-star hotel located in the city centre of Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. It is one of the oldest hotels in Stockholm with a history dating back to the second half of the nineteenth century.

Hotel Queen Sophia has been in the Andersson family since the 1970s. It has more than 140 rooms divided into: small single rooms, standard single rooms, standard double rooms, superior double rooms, deluxe double rooms, deluxe business rooms and family rooms as well as a luxury suite. It also includes a lobby bar and restaurant, meeting facilities, reception rooms, a roof-top terrace and a mini-gym. The hotel is housed in a historic building, which characterises the hotel. The guest and public areas feature period details such as marble staircases, iron stair railings, painted ceilings, and stained glass windows to name but a few, that take advantage of the historic heritage. The hotel is appointed in the same style with large oil paintings, chandeliers, oriental rugs and antique and old-style furniture. All the rooms in the hotel are individually decorated in a classic style that has been interpreted in various ways.

Both the restaurant and the lobby bar are open to the public. The restaurant serves an à la carte menu in the evenings. It is also open at lunchtime from Monday to Friday, serving a menu that varies daily and which includes "classics". On Saturdays and Sundays there is a well-attended brunch service in two sittings which can be pre-booked.

The hotel is part of a chain of privately owned independent hotels. It is located in one of Stockholm's main streets and in the surrounding neighbourhood there are a variety of companies, restaurants, cafés and shops as well as the city's financial district. There are well-known city parks, museums, theatres, galleries, and businesses within ten minutes' walk from the hotel. In other words, it is "right in the middle" of the centre of action. This fact is also reflected in the variety of guests choosing the hotel who include business travellers, weekend travellers and tourists from Sweden, Europe and the rest of the world.

3.3.2 The Organisation

The hotel is part of the family-owned HQS Hotels group, with around 130 employees and hotels located in Stockholm and three other large Swedish cities – Gothenburg, Linköping and Umeå[3]. A few years ago, George Andersson handed

[3] Together with two other parties the family also runs another hotel that was about to open, just outside the city centre of Stockholm the same year. This is the first hotel that the family had owned in partnership with non-family members.

leadership of the group over to two of his children – Veronica and Richard. Veronica is also the managing director of Hotel Queen Sophia. The restaurant and bar are run and partly-owned by a cousin of the children, Keith, but is majority-owned by George Andersson and his family. Cleaning operations are outsourced. However, the work is overseen by the housekeeping manager who is a hotel employee. Through the years the hotel has had their own cleaning staff, periodically, but now they have chosen to engage a cleaning company. Many of the cleaning staff have worked in the hotel for a long time and are often considered part of the hotel staff.

I conducted fieldwork at Hotel Queen Sophia from April to October in 2015. This was to gain insights into work and everyday life in the hotel, as well as to take the opportunity to experience different parts of the organisation. These parts included management, reception, the lobby, the bar, the restaurant, the kitchen, room service, the conference centre, interior design, maintenance, housekeeping and cleaning. Since the clientele varies depending on the day of the week – business travellers during weekdays, vacationing people on weekends – I scheduled my work so that it covered all cycles of the hotel's business.

Including the restaurant, the hotel has 35 permanent employees. In addition, there are a number of casual staff, seasonal staff and trainees. For this reason, the number of people on the payroll is far greater than the permanent employees at Hotel Queen Sophia. My aim was to interview the majority of the permanent staff but also some of the part-time and seasonal employees. For this reason, I included a summer season in my fieldwork period. All-in-all I interviewed 33 people at Hotel Queen Sophia.

3.3.3 Negotiating Access

My first contact with the hotel was in January 2015, when I emailed the managing director of the hotel – Veronica – who is also one of the owners. I introduced myself, my background, my planned thesis, my specific interests, and, of course, why I wanted to conduct my research at the Hotel Queen Sophia. I also explained what I could contribute in terms of work and expertise (see Appendix A), and I

asked if it was possible to get together for a meeting.[4] The managing director replied later that day:

> Thank you for your email and your interest in our company. It sounds very interesting and exciting, but I would like to consult with some of my colleagues so that it feels okay for them as well. Of course, we can meet so that you can tell us more about the project and the conditions. Please come with suggestions for dates. I will talk to my colleagues tomorrow. (Email correspondence, 19 January 2015)

One week later, I met with the managing director and the hotel manager as well as the food and beverage manager. We sat in the spacious hotel lobby. I had prepared some PowerPoint slides that I had printed out in four copies, and I shared them out. This presentation served as a basis for the meeting. I told them about myself and my background, and about my thesis, but also what I could contribute to the hotel when it came to expertise and manpower. They had the opportunity to ask questions. I also raised ethical issues, for example that the research project needed to get approval from the university's ethical committee, and that I was the only one who would have access to the recorded material and the field notes. We agreed that the hotel would be anonymised, and that all the participants' names would be pseudonymised.

Conducting participant observation in an organisation or a company often requires expertise and skills that are useful to that workplace (Krause-Jensen, 2013). For me it was important to emphasise the kind of skills I had and what I could contribute to the organisation. It felt vital to communicate that I would not be a burden to the staff, managers or owners. I also stressed that I was self-employed and that I was used to solving things on my own and to working freely and responsibly. I think that this was a sound approach (later on I found out that "personal responsibility" is an important feature that is expected of employees). All three of them seemed positive about the research project, the suggested methods and the arrangements. However, I told them to take a few days to think it through before they took the final decision. It was a successful meeting of about an hour. A

[4] Because gaining access to a research site can often be a challenge, I have included this email, as an inspiration for other researchers seeking access to family businesses (see Appendix A).

few days later, I received an email from the managing director Veronica, who wrote that I had been given permission to do my research at Hotel Queen Sophia. The hotel manager, Nathalie, would be my contact person during my fieldwork, and the planned start of the fieldwork would be in April.

3.4 Research Methods

3.4.1 Empirical Data Collection

As an ethnologist, I am trained in ethnographic research which enables a researcher to get close to where it happens. Ethnography has a long history within the social sciences, and in management and organisation studies it provides an opportunity to understand the wider context in which people work (Myers, 1999; Watson, 2011; Røyrvik, 2013). Organisations are human constructs and connect employees with broader structures and influence human action (Garsten and Nyqvist, 2013). As such, organisations offer ethnographers the opportunity to gain knowledge about the different values in play. Cuncliffe states that "organisational ethnographers are cultural explorers, discovering how organisational actors make sense and get things done and how organisational communities and identities continually emerge over time" (2010, p. 229). Ethnographers are interested in sociality and people's lives and pay special attention to stories, talk, interactions and actions of organisational members. I am particularly influenced by interpretative ethnographers who have a social constructionist approach and who view sociality as intersubjective, that is, that it emerges from the conversations and interactions between people (Cuncliffe, 2010). Using a constructionist approach, my goal was to understand the world of lived experience from the perspective of those who work at Hotel Queen Sophia – the owners, managers and the staff (Andrews, 2012). This in-depth and detailed interpretive research was also a way to explore and understand the uniqueness of family business (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009). Ethnography usually includes multiple methods of data collection, and I selected participant observation and interviews as the best options for my research project.

3.4.1.1 Participant Observation

Participant observation is a particularly suitable research method for the study of organisational culture (Myers, 2013), whereby the researcher seeks to become a member of the organisation under study. As the researcher is in the field for a reasonable amount of time and takes part in the daily duties, interactions and events of a group, he or she can discover what people think and can expose the cultural meanings they adopt daily (Spradley, 1980; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Participant observation originates from ethnographic research performed in tribal cultures and remote places, and modern workplaces can similarly be regarded as "tribes" since they have specific traditions, rites and cultures (Vinten, 1994). For my research project, my way to gain knowledge and an understanding of the staff's actions and thoughts from within, was through working with them, talking to them and interacting with them. According to Czarniawska (2014), scholars have long debated what participant observation actually is and how it differs from non-participant observation. Her definition, which I share, is "that it makes sense to call it 'participant observation' when observers are doing the same things as the people (or some of the people) they are observing" (Czarniawska, 2014, p. 44).

Participant observation can be concealed or revealed and at an early stage, before starting my fieldwork, I decided to work in an overt way since I believe a covert mode would have provoked multiple ethical issues (Vinten, 1994). Additionally, it would have been almost impossible to work undercover since a Google search, or a visit to the hotel from someone I knew, would instantly have revealed my real identity. Moreover, it would have meant a couple of serious limitations, namely that I would not have been able to move around freely in the hotel, and that I would not have been able to ask many questions before anyone began to be suspicious (Repstad, 2007). Moreover, I did not see any advantages in using covert research, as I believe openness and reliability are key factors for the kind of research I wanted to conduct. That said, there are different ways of working when doing participant observation. Junkers (1960) has presented a continuum between participation and observation with four different research roles: 1) complete participation, 2) participation as observer, 3) observation as participant, and 4) complete observation. Number 2 on this continuum best describes my research

role, as I participated in the daily work at Hotel Queen Sophia, although the management (and I) stated that I was there primarily for observation purposes.

Being at the hotel provided an opportunity to experience how stories are present in different ways and situations – in everyday conversations, guest relations, meetings and internal communications.

3.4.1.2 Field Notes

Field notes refer to the various notes researchers make during or after participant observation in the specific setting they are studying, such as an organisation or a workplace. It is the researcher's own record of, and commentary on, his or her experiences in the field (Myers, 2013). Quite often, field notes are merely considered a record of what happened and what was said, but there is more to them than that. Most of all they contain "the researcher's lived experience of a particular moment" (Jarzabkowski, Bednarek and Lê, 2014, p. 276). Field notes, taken in real time, were an essential part of the daily work and helped me reproduce the overall atmosphere of being at the hotel, when I started writing this thesis. They were a way to remember what I had seen, heard and felt. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) emphasise rigorous note taking and stress the importance of writing up field notes on a regular basis, since memory should never be relied upon. Usually, I would transcribe my field notes every night while my memory was still fresh. I adopted the principle that "more is more" and that it was virtually impossible to have too much detail in the field notes (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). Navigating through the large amount of text had to be a future concern. Examples of things I recorded were: the room I was in, the place I was, who was present, what time of day it was, the nature of the meeting or gathering (staff meeting, weekly planning meeting etc.), the atmosphere and the mood, what I and others talked about, the feelings they expressed and what my feelings were, to name but a few. These were also things that were not easily captured in audio recordings. Making field notes was an important part of my daily work. To remember the place, the context and the environment I also took photos with my mobile phone every day. They served as a memory aid; a way to supplement my observational field notes (Neyland, 2008).

However, participant observation was not enough to provide all of the answers to my research questions and experienced observers seldom rely on participant observation alone (Vinten, 1994). Semi-structured interviews provided a more focused way of gathering qualitative data, and were also an important complement to participant observation.

3.4.1.3 Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews are one of the most important data-gathering techniques in qualitative management research (Myers, 2013) and constructionist research in particular (Charmaz, 2006). They enable us to gather rich and varied data from people in various roles and situations. Interviews can allow us to see that which is not ordinarily on view (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). A well-performed interview can help us focus on the individual and that person's story and experiences. Interviews can be classified into three basic types: unstructured, semi-structured, and structured. I found that semi-structured interviews were the most suitable approach for my data-gathering. This involves the use of some pre-formulated questions, but no strict adherence to them is required. A semi-structured interview uses a guide that focuses on certain themes (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011; Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012). This proved to be an appropriate choice, since I knew that I would probably only get *one* single interview session with each person (Bernard, 1994). Thus, I needed to ensure that I covered the various areas from where I wanted answers. As a researcher, this approach gave me some structure and focus, but also allowed for some improvisation (Myers, 2013). Semi-structured interviews helped me narrow down a few topics that I wanted to address. Often, I would use an opening statement, followed by a few general questions to trigger conversation (Rabionet, 2009). Other times I went straight to the questions in the interview guide.

Spradley (1979) points out that an ethnographic interview should not be introduced too quickly when doing fieldwork since it can be perceived as a formal interrogation by the persons being interviewed. Building rapport is also a crucial factor when conducting ethnographic research, and creating trust often takes time. It is important not to be too eager or pushy as there is a risk that the people you want to approach distance themselves. It involves gradually building trust and

thereby enabling acceptance (O'Reilly, 2009; Madden, 2010). For this reason, I thought it was important to establish good contact and to have some informal conversations with each person at the hotel before the interviews took place. I was also aware of the fact that my specific interview questions were likely to take shape during my time in the hotel. Nonetheless, I already had an idea of the sort of questions I wanted to ask before starting my fieldwork, and they covered topics such as relationships, daily routines, work engagement, joys and challenges, and memorable events.

My first interview was conducted one month after my start at the hotel. By that time, I had got to know the business and the employees and had developed and refined my interview guide, including the main topics and the questions. The interview guide varied slightly, depending on whether I interviewed employees, managers or owners (see Appendix B). I conducted the interviews in the workplace since this was a great way to get an overall impression and to gather experiences and information that helped to form a useful background for both the face-to-face interviews and the accompanying analysis (Widerberg, 2002).

3.4.2 Getting Front Stage and Backstage

Workplaces consist of many different parts, public as well as private. The Queen Sophia is no exception. As with every other organisation, it may be understood as a multiplicity of stages (Boje and Rosile, 2003), with many different stories (Boje, 1995). In this thesis, I am inspired by Goffman's dramaturgical approach and spatial concept of front regions and back regions, commonly referred to as front stage and backstage (Goffman, 1959). Methodologically, they constitute a useful framework for both people watching and people understanding, especially in settings that include customer relations, such as service work in hotels (Di Domenico and Lynch, 2007), and restaurants (Erickson, 2004, 2007).

Turning to Goffman is handy when studying hospitality and tourism (Larsen, 2010), and his dramaturgical approach helps understand face-to-face interactions in organisations (Shulman, 2017). Goffman field worked as a doctoral student on the Shetland Island of Unst, where he set out to record and understand social behaviour in various types of relations, especially conversations. This included

work in a hotel, where he made observations of everyday interactions (Shulman, 2017). His main method was ethnography, in the form of participation and observation. His thesis *Communication Conduct in an Island Community* (1953) formed the basis for *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). Goffman himself describes it as "a sort of handbook" (Goffman, 1959, p. xi), in which he uses theatrical metaphors to describe social interactions – including behaviour and talk – front stage and backstage. According to him, the best way to understand social behaviour is by seeing people as performers on a stage, where they actively try to manage impression (Goffman, 1959). The workplace is a typical example of a social stage that requires employees to put on a front. It constitutes "a social system that demands outward shows of appearance from individual workers" (Shulman, 2017, p. 101). Since it can be quite demanding to act out social roles front stage, there are backstage areas where the employee can "step out of character" (Goffman, 1959, p. 112) and relax, such as the kitchen, back office and lunch room. Goffman notes that "there tends to be one informal or backstage language of behaviour, and another language of behaviour for occasions when a performance is being presented." (Goffman, 1959, p. 128)

As Giddens pertinently points out, Goffman focuses a great deal on communication, and "is concerned with interpersonal interaction between individuals in situations of copresence." (2009, p. 293) The consequence of Goffman's concept is the realisation that if you really want to understand people, you need to follow your informants in their daily work, and above all: tag along backstage. There is where they drop their professional front (Goffman, 1959), which enables scholars to examine what happens when this take place – when they switch from one audience to another. In this thesis, I will highlight how this affects talk, stories and storytelling. Goffman's approach also recognises the importance of emotions (Giddens, 2009). He inspired Hochschild (1983), whose work on "emotional labour" had a great impact on highlighting the role of emotions in social situations at work, and which I will have reason to dig deeper into in this thesis, as I explore storytelling and values at the Hotel Queen Sophia.

3.4.3 Justification of Methods

Before I move on to the section about field relations, I would like to comment on my choice of methods. To refresh the reader's mind, my main research question is: "How are organisational and personal values conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business?" How can the methods I have chosen – participant observation and semi-structured interviews – be considered appropriate to respond this research question? Participant observation was a great way to interact and speak naturally, with the people I wanted to gain an understanding about. I was able to do this "in real life", at work, while we were working together. As Johansson, Li and Tsai (2014), suggest, narrative approaches in the area of family business have traditionally relied on *interviews* as the main way to collect data. Using participant observation as well allowed me to take part of storytelling activities where they occur, in order to understand further how values and stories interrelate. People in an organisation tell stories as a way of describing and managing their everyday work (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). This includes talking about what has happened, what is happening right now, and what will happen in the future. This was also a way for me to understand how people perceive, organise and talk about their lives.

Individual and collective values became clear through the everyday stories and conversations at work at Hotel Queen Sophia. According to Berger and Luckmann (1967), conversations between people are the most crucial way of maintaining, changing and reconstructing subjective reality.

> Everyday life is, above all, life with and by means of the language I share with my fellowmen. An understanding of language is thus essential for any understanding of the reality of everyday life. (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p. 37)

In true social constructionist spirit, I regard knowledge as a (re)construction of reality as we understand it, and not as an image of reality itself. According to social constructionism, the construction of knowledge is created collectively, in a social interaction between people (Gergen, 1985; Griffin, 2018).

Interviews are a great way to explore how individuals perceive and organise their reality, and how this is reflected through their stories. Here, social constructionism contributes to an understanding of such things as assumptions and expectations of others (i.e. *typifications*, Berger and Luckmann, 1967); institutionalised actions, and how employees, both individually and collectively, relate to their work and their workplace when they talk about it. According to Pernecky (2012), constructionism adds a valuable dimension to tourism research. Griffin (2018) suggests that constructionism offers hospitality researchers a framework wherein to approach and conduct their studies, and states that it is "a paradigm that creates, itself, a context of respect for and understanding of different people's opinions, stories, and experiences". (Griffin, 2018, p. 39) This is a view that I share. The interviews, as well as the stories I heard and the conversations I had, while I worked together with the people at the hotel, contributed to this understanding.

To summarise, gathering data from everyday situations and conversations in the front and back regions of the hotel, such as the reception, the back office, the restaurant, the kitchen, the office and in meetings, as well as through interviews, was a great way to understand storytelling. I believe the combination of spontaneously occurring stories and stories mediated in semi-structured interviews was the optimal manner to answer my research questions.

3.5 Field Relations

3.5.1 Getting Ready for Fieldwork

I met my contact person – hotel manager Nathalie – a few weeks prior to the fieldwork's start, in order to schedule my work, both short and long term. We also discussed practical things, such as clothing and workspace. We agreed on the following:

- That I would work around 20 hours per week.
- That Tuesdays and Wednesdays were initially my "fixed" days.
- That I would include varied days of the week in my schedule, so I could get a clear picture of how the hotel operations shift. From Mondays to Thursdays there are mostly business travellers, on Fridays and Saturdays they change to weekenders, Sunday nights are very quiet.

- That I would work morning shifts, day shifts and evening shifts in order to experience how the hotel business shifts around the clock.
- That I would wear a "Trainee" badge.
- That I would be able to use the lobby and the conference rooms as my "office" to sit down and write, given that those were not occupied by guests. (This proved to be a golden opportunity to experience daily events and interactions in the hotel.)

The schedule was drawn up so that I would follow and participate in virtually all parts of the hotel business such as cleaning, reception, management, maintenance, revenue, breakfast room, kitchen and restaurant. The schedule would be drawn up on a monthly basis, in agreement, and we decided to input some flexibility into the schedule. This allowed for extended studies in areas of extra interest, and shorter time in those areas where not very much might happen. I would have the opportunity to interview employees during working hours, as well as to sit down and write notes and observations when work was quiet.

The way a researcher presents the self through appearance, such as gestures and dress, is a way of impression-management. It is also a way of being sensitive and attentive to others, the people being observed and interviewed (De Laine, 2000). Where clothing and the dress code were concerned, I was told that I should get a dark blazer, dark trousers and a shirt in a neutral colour to wear when I was working at the front desk. A little later I also acquired clothes to wear for working in the restaurant and breakfast room: a black shirt, black jeans and black shoes. I wore these with an apron that the restaurant provided. On the days I worked in the kitchen I borrowed a traditional white chef's coat and an apron that I got from the laundry. When I worked in parts of the hotel without a clear dress code (such as cleaning, maintenance, management and interior design), I tried to adapt to the other staffs' appearance as much as I could. Usually this meant that I wore dark pants and a dark sweater, shirt or polo shirt (during the summer). This was something I decided myself and I felt it gave me a neutral but well-dressed look. It was also convenient because on many days I moved between different tasks. For example, one day I might clean in the morning, and then in the afternoon I might

work in the conference area. My clothing and my trainee sign made it easy to move freely between the departments and the roles at the hotel.

I also made an in-field checklist before getting started. It included information about observation and interviews as well as data collection and storage (see Appendix C). This was a good way to remind myself about keeping focused and prepared for my mission.

3.5.2 How I was Introduced

Van Maanen (2010) claims that the way to become an ethnographer is by "going out and doing it" (2010, p. 242). This slogan-like statement is inspiring and liberating, but in practice ethnography may present many challenges. My arrival at Hotel Queen Sophia, and my first days at the workplace, was a time for orientation. I was not sure how and where to start or how I would get to know the staff and the managers. Together with the hotel manager, we had decided that I would be introduced to staff and managers in the following way:

> Nicolas is a PhD student at Leicester University and he is interested in family hotel businesses. He will write his thesis on what it is like to work at Hotel Queen Sophia. He will follow the work in different parts of the business during the next six months and interview us about what it's like to work in a family-run hotel.

From experience, I know that people forget the details of this kind of personal introduction easily. Therefore, I saw it as my own responsibility to introduce myself to different people clearly, at appropriate times; from the very beginning and to tell them why I was at the hotel and what I would do there.

It could have felt rather awkward or uncomfortable, in many ways, to enter the research site, but it did not. The atmosphere was welcoming and managers and staff showed interest in me. In my field notes the first day (21 April 2015) I wrote: "The employees are curious about me and what I am going to do here at the hotel. Many of them asked about my thesis, so I told them about it." I also made a big effort to introduce myself and I told the people I met about my purpose for being at the hotel. However, I was well aware that detailed descriptions of my academic project could be potentially difficult to perceive and could sound a bit boring, so

during the following months I often chose to say “I’m a PhD student and I'm here for six months to examine how it is to work in a hotel”. I also did this out of pure necessity because, sometimes, I was thrown into tasks and there was hardly time for long discussions about my background and my academic work. It was just a matter of knuckling down and introducing myself more fully when there was time for it. For me, introducing myself was a way of taking control of the information and the way I appeared to others (Goffman, 1959). It was also fundamental since my contact person would not be around all the time. It turned out that this approach was, in many ways, in line with the hotel's own view of how staff are expected to behave.

Let us return to day one. On my first day at Hotel Queen Sophia I wrote in my note book:

> When I arrived today, I got a tour and an introduction from Nathalie. She showed me the back office, located on two floors behind the reception area. There are office spaces and computers that can be used by the staff, and she told me that the restaurant staff usually work there when they are not on the floor, ordering supplies and writing menus. I was introduced to various people, including Lisa, the front desk manager. Then we went to another part of the building complex (the one facing south) and said hello to the conference manager. I was shown the conference rooms that were not booked today. Nathalie also showed me the roof terrace and the gym. (Field notes, 21 April 2015)

I also attended the weekly operations’ meeting with the departmental managers. It was – and regularly would be – held at ten o’clock in the morning every Tuesday in a quiet corner of the restaurant, which also served as the breakfast room. This was a meeting I ended up participating in every week, during my time at the hotel, except for during the summer holidays when these meetings were not held. I introduced myself to those who participated: Keith (the food and beverage manager and part-owner), Khadija (the housekeeping manager), Lisa (the front office manager) and Nathalie (the hotel manager). Typically, one of the two caretakers would participate also, as well as the sales manager, but on that first day they were busy elsewhere. Each explained, in turn, their areas and responsibilities and what was on their agenda. At this meeting, topics such as hotel

occupancy, economy, and rebuilding, guest reviews, the reservation system, furnishings and upcoming events were discussed. I did not say very much at the meeting but focused instead on listening to the others and taking notes. My presence did not seem to affect the others substantially. The meeting lasted just over half an hour and in my notes, I wrote: "I perceived the operations meeting as efficient without being stressful. Happy and positive atmosphere."

A little later that day I joined Sümeyye, one of the receptionists, while she performed guest service tasks and topped up chocolate, fruit and soft drinks in selected rooms (those that accommodate guests with special VIP or loyalty cards). From my field notes:

> Sümeyye showed me different rooms and told me which ones she liked. She also showed me the Carl Gustaf suite. "Celebrities usually stay here", she told me and "bloggers usually shoot out here on the terrace", she said with a light amenable voice. We took a shopping basket from a linen closet and loaded it with fruits, sweets and drinks and then went to different rooms and put the goodies on the desks or nightstands. She told me that she liked to work out regularly and that she goes to various classes at *Fresh Fitness*. She asked me what kind of training I liked so I told her. She has Turkish roots. Her older sister also works at the hotel. In the closet where the candy boxes are stored, there were also a lot of teddy bears, something that caught my attention. I asked her about it. "We sell them in favour of an aid organisation for disadvantaged children. It is part of our CSR work, they sell really well. Guests buy them as gifts for their children." (Field notes, 21 April 2015)

I also wrote down what I had done in terms of tasks that first day: "Picked up a few dishes in reception and carried them out to the kitchen, lent a pen, ordered a taxi for a guest, learnt how to answer the telephone, followed a woman with a pram up to the conference area, tagged along with Sümeyye to replenish drinks, candy and fruit."

There was much to consider when starting the fieldwork and it could have been easy to be overwhelmed by all the new things and tasks at the hotel, as well as what people said and did. However, both on that day and in the future, I tried to keep in mind that ethnography is about the researcher's "personalised seeing,

hearing, and experiencing in specific social settings", also referred to as the "I-witnessing" (Van Maanen, 2011, p. 222). This was a way for me to stay focused.

3.5.3 During Fieldwork

As explained earlier, I am trained as an ethnologist so I did my best to deploy the "ethnographic gaze", the distinct way ethnographers have trained their observations on others (Madden, 2010), right from the start. I conducted participant observation in a transparent and revealed way (overt mode). I participated as an observer and worked with people; I talked to them and interacted with them in an attempt to gain an understanding of their daily conversations and thoughts. I started my fieldwork in the reception and went on to work in housekeeping, an area where I had previous experience, from having worked as a cleaner one summer in a London hotel in the 90s. After that, I worked in many different parts of the hotel and would occasionally return to areas where I had worked previously, such as reception, housekeeping, breakfast and restaurant.

Entering the site, being at the site and exiting the site all involve human relations. The different phases of fieldwork may offer social processes of negotiations whether it is about gatekeepers (Smith 1997; Reeves, 2010) or the researcher's field relations and his or her position in the field (Spradley, 1980; Irwin, 2006). Access to a research site is a continually negotiated process and "reflects localised socially embedded conditions and practices" (Bondy, 2012, p. 578). Conducting fieldwork is not only an intellectual activity, the researcher's emotions are also important and these can change during the period he or she is in the field (Krause-Jensen, 2013). Being in a workplace largely involves accepting the conditions, norms and rules that apply there, and these can sometimes cause frustration. My main challenges during the fieldwork often concerned getting access to informants.

3.5.3.1 Scheduling Interviews – and Changes in the Schedule …

At first, I drew up my schedule monthly, with the hotel manager, Nathalie, but after a couple of months I drew up the schedule on my own initiative. This arrangement suited me well. Usually, I would write an email to the hotel manager every third to fourth week to tell her when I would be at the hotel and what I would do. Generally, I could manage most things on my own, but sometimes I needed the

hotel manager's help. One challenge was how to get access to employees for interviews. I was permitted to interview everyone I wanted, as long as they themselves volunteered to participate in the study. But it was not always easy to make time for the interviews. In organisations, access to informants is often controlled, restricted and timed (Gusterson, 1997; Krauser-Jensen, 2013). Usually, I felt I was trespassing on the employees' schedules when I wanted to "borrow" an employee, even if it was only for an hour. This was most evident in the reception area, where the work is based on the constant physical presence of the staff. We solved the problem by having the interviewee come in an hour before the regular day's work started and be interviewed, or by their staying an hour after the end of the workday. He or she would then get paid for that extra hour. However, this was primarily for the employees working at the front desk. I was able to interview the majority of the other participants during regular working hours.

Before conducting an interview, I asked the potential participant and his/her manager if I could interview him/her, and then I asked both the manager and the employee what time would fit. Then we booked a slot for the interview. Usually, this slot would be changed at least once, because daily tasks intervened and were considered more important. Before each interview, I would either send an email, or tell the person face-to-face, what the interview would be about. I also explained who would have access to the recorded material (only myself). Of the 34 invited participants, only one person did not want to participate in an interview. That person's explanation was: "I do not really know what I feel for the company right now, so I do not want to be interviewed." For integrity reasons and other reasons, I did not insist on any further explanation. In social science research, one may face reluctant respondents (Dundon and Ryan, 2010) and participant withdrawal may occur and cause implications (Stevenson Thorpe, 2014). So, even if it was only one single person who refused to participate in an interview, I was afraid what others might think and ask "why?", thus causing a chain reaction of doubt and withdrawal. This was another reason for keeping quiet and just letting it be.

3.5.4 Integrity and Interpretation – Reflections on the Research Role

In this section, I will elaborate on some obstacles that I faced when conducting the research and also when I began to analyse the data. Since empirical research is a

way of gaining knowledge by means of direct and indirect observation or experience, it is important for me, as a researcher, to have an awareness of myself, my opinions and preconceptions.

Firstly, it is important to acknowledge the potential social challenges of gaining entry into a research site for conducting fieldwork, as well as in constructing a research role, and managing relationships with informants. In ethnographic research there are always tensions involved as well as a risk of getting too close to informants or too distanced from them (Neyland, 2008). Although I felt I was well received at Hotel Queen Sophia, I was most probably perceived as an "outsider" in the eyes of employees, management and owners. In my experience, this might have been an advantage, since it can sometimes be easier to open up to a person with whom one does not have a professional relationship. Not being part of the everyday working community in the usual sense (in that I was not an employee) could help me remain independent. Nonetheless it was a challenge. In order to foster confidence, I thought it was important to show clearly that I was respectful of the participants' privacy and that I would never attempt to force anyone to participate, for example, in an interview.

Secondly, it was also clearly stated that the owners had given me permission to conduct the research. The fact that the owners "sponsored" the research, and that my contact person was the hotel manager, could have had an impact and raised ethical issues – for example staff may have felt pressured to participate and/or may have seen me as the eyes and ears of the boss. It could also have affected *what* they chose to tell me, and *how* they told it (McLean, Pasupathi and Pais, 2007). I thought that the best way to handle this concern was by clearly communicating to the staff that my aim was to understand their daily experiences and that my study was exploratory and not about finding out what is "right" or "wrong" in the organisation. I also explained that the hotel would be anonymised in the thesis, and that the informants' real names would not be disclosed. To portray people, even if they have aliases, requires consideration, especially if the portraits are rich and detailed (Widerberg, 2002).

Thirdly, it was necessary to consider the interview situation (Qu and Dumay, 2011), and how this was influenced by me, my role and other persons. It could

have, potentially, brought to the fore questions of gender, power and also matters relating to personality, transparency and integrity. Overall, I felt that the informants were open and positive; some of them were more verbal and talkative than others. However, a few of them were less open when we were in the interview situation than they were in everyday situations at work. This was probably because it was an arranged situation and that the interview was recorded. The advantage of semi-structured interviews is that they allow for both "free speech" and detailed answers, but that they also work well for those who are not as talkative. It is also a fact that many people are not used to talking about their thoughts and feelings, therefore, an interview with personal questions might have created an awkward situation for some of them. A researcher has a responsibility not to embarrass or upset informants during an interview, or induce these kinds of feelings after having spoken to them (De Laine, 2000). That said, it is almost impossible to ensure that an informant does not get emotional during an interview and express feelings that he or she may find embarrassing afterwards, or, as Goffman puts it: "there seems to be no social encounter which cannot become embarrassing to one or more of its participants" (Goffman, 1967, p. 99). My interviews with the staff at Hotel Queen Sophia were often quite vivid and included joy, laughter, curiosity, anger, frustration, sadness and tears. However, I did not feel that this made the informants uneasy – neither during the interview nor afterwards. On the contrary, the majority of them seemed to be relieved to have the opportunity to speak out and to show emotions. I experienced it bringing us closer together. "Once established, trust might lead to the revealing of experiences, thoughts and emotions which individuals would normally not voice", according to Nordqvist, Hall and Melin (2009, p. 304). This trust manifested itself in greater confidence and further interactions. Many times, the informants would come and tell me additional things after an interview – things that could be considered personal and private.

Fourthly, a researcher's pre-understanding, values and opinions may have a significant impact on how gathered data is interpreted (Repstad, 2007); and as Richardson (2000) points out, ethnographic life is not separable from the self. Hence, it is important to reflect continuously on one's own role as a researcher within the production of knowledge (Griffin, 2018). It is impossible to eliminate

selectivity, but it is crucial to be aware of how it could influence data gathering and analysis and, consequently, the usefulness and reliability of research results (LeCompte, 2000). Therefore, throughout this thesis, I reflect on myself and my role in fieldwork and in specific situations.

Fifthly and finally, an ethnographer's description is always both a description and an analysis. By focusing on the analytical aspects of the description it is possible to envisage what have been explored.

> The ethnographer "inscribes" social discourse; *he writes it down*. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account, which exists in its inscriptions and can be reconsulted. (Geertz, 1973, p. 19).

Clifford Geertz developed the concept of "thick description", a notion borrowed from language philosopher, Gilbert Ryle (Geertz, 1973). As one of the leading representatives of the hermeneutical approaches in anthropology, Geertz considered himself a social constructionist and believed that meaning is socially, historically, and rhetorically constructed (Olson, 1991). The consequence of his theory is that a (thick) description must be composed not only of facts, but also of commentary, interpretation and interpretations of those comments and interpretations. In terms of interpretation, constructionism encourages the researcher to acknowledge his or her own subjectivity (Griffin, 2018). The analysis is "sorting out the structures of signification" (Geertz, 1973, p. 19) – an awareness that I follow in this thesis.

3.6 Organisation of Data

3.6.1 Notes on Transcribing

As mentioned previously, I conducted 33 interviews at Hotel Queen Sophia. My aim was to have a variety of people representing diverse views (Repstad, 2007; Myers, 2013), as well as a certain breadth of opinion (Rubin and Rubin, 2005). The interviewees were aged between twenty-one and seventy, with an average age of forty-one years.[5] When I met each informant, I would usually put on the recorder

[5] Excluding the members of the owning family, the interviewees were between twenty-one and fifty-four years, with an average age of thirty-nine years.

at an early stage, which meant that the recorded interviews often included small talk and questions before the interview, as well as after. The reason I turned the recorder on, at an early stage, is because I think small talk and questions before an interview are often meaningful and interesting as a part of the research. Things such as an informant's interests, worries, doubts as well as their curiosity and openness towards the research, the researcher and the interview situation, would often become apparent early on in the interview. Moreover, since the interviews often had the character of conversations, it also felt natural to start the recording early, so I did not miss out on anything of importance. The recorded interviews, including small talk, lasted 55 minutes on average, with variations of between 38 to 78 minutes. Transcribing the interviews was a way to gain a sense of how the interviews went, and permitted analysis. To get an overview of each interview, I found it valuable to write up a brief summary of each interview of about half to one page (Widerberg, 2002; Myers, 2013). This made it easier to search through my interviews during the analysis process. All the recordings were transcribed within two months of the fieldwork's end. They were transcribed verbatim with pauses and interruptions included. During the writing-up I would go back to the recorded interviews to relive the "mood" of the interview, and to identify such things as sighs, laughter, tears, voice tone and pitch, and not least, emphasis made by the informant.[6]

3.6.2 Using NVivo to Identify the Most Prevalent Values

Qualitative data is non-numerical data that has not been quantified (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2012). Nevertheless, it is important to organise, categorise and label the data in order to analyse it successfully (Repstad, 2007). Mello (2002) presents different approaches to analysing narratives, which include analysing the text of narratives to find patterns, topics and themes that occur across the narratives of different individuals, and which may be attained by coding. I found NVivo a useful tool for my analysis work. NVivo is a computer-aided qualitative data analysis package that is suitable for analysing qualitative data such as interviews, field notes and text documents. Using NVivo coding, I organised the material and identified the organisational members' *personal values*, as expressed

[6] Throughout this thesis, emphasis made by the informants is italicised in their stories/quotes.

through their stories. Following this, I categorised these values by major themes (Meyer, 1995), and identified the values that were stressed most often: the aggregate values of the organisation (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).[7] This small number of values together constitute the Hotel Queen Sophia's *organisational values* (Bourne and Jenkins, 2013). However, in this thesis, I mainly refer to them as *the most prevalent values*, and I will introduce these values in the next chapter. But just a few more words about NVivo; it was not only a usable tool for eliciting values from stories (cf. Meyer, 1995), but also a way to identify other relevant themes and topics to examine. In my analysis of storytelling, it enabled me to "explore concepts and categories, trying to find the best fit or most plausible explanation" (Díaz Garcia and Welter, 2013, p. 388).

3.6.3 Preparing for Narrative Analysis

The use of field notes, conversations, and interviews in analysis is often referred to as *narrative inquiry* or *narrative analysis* (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Webster and Mertova, 2007). This research uses narrative analysis to process qualitative data, since it focuses on how people make and use stories to perceive and interpret the world. Narrative analysis is the study of the stories that people tell (Gartner, 2007). It is an interpretive approach which helps us understand human behaviour as well as the complex, dynamic and relational quality of social interactions (Cope, 2005; Leitch, Hill and Harrison, 2010). It enables the researcher to create "a complex picture of social situations, in order to examine the actions of the various actors in a story, and to explore their own values, ideas and beliefs" (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012, p. 200). Since I analyse stories from owners, managers and employees in a family-owned hotel, the narrative perspective is highly relevant because it sheds light on the different ways people talk about their lives, their work and their everyday experiences as well as how this talk reflects their values. Current management research also has an interest in this perspective. Dawson and Hjorth (2012) argue for the adaption of greater multiplicity in family business research by adopting a narrative approach; and according to Czarniawska (1998) and Myers (2013) narrative analysis is an ideal way to enter into a dialogue with managers and business people in organisations. Hansen claims that

[7] This process will be reflected upon in Chapter 9 – "Discussion and Conclusion".

narratives that are constructed and used by a certain group can be revealing when researchers want to understand "why people act and think the way they do in organisations and what is meaningful to them" (Hansen, 2006, p. 1050). Narrative is an important way for humans to create meaning from their experiences (Polkinghorne, 1988). Since narrative analysis considers narratives as social products produced by people in the context of social, historical and cultural locations, and not as "facts" about the world, it is close to social constructionism (Lawler, 2002). As described in the section "Theoretical underpinnings", I am particularly influenced by the rich and useful combination of social constructionism and narrative that sees stories as "acts of sensemaking" (Boje, 2001, p. 16). An important insight is that all people in an organisation do not share the same story. According to Schwartzman, stories play an important role in forming an organisational reality for members, and she underscores that "in many organisations, there may be several organisational realities (1993, p. 44). There are several stories, which of course, will influence how owners, managers and employees perceive the company and talk about it. "Organisations cannot be registered as one story but instead are a multiplicity, a plurality of stories and story interpretations in struggle with one another" (Boje, 1995, p. 1001).

3.7 Leaving the Field

The ethnographer's exit from the field has traditionally been considered part of his or her personal experience, to be dealt with in private, and has seldom been worthy of inclusion in the text (De Laine, 2000). I am of a different opinion, so let me briefly reflect on this matter. Fieldwork involves establishing contacts, creating trust and building ties with other people. During my time at the hotel I had great freedom to move, work and speak to everyone I wanted to, about various topics. Throughout my tenure, I felt I had the complete trust and confidence of the management and owners, which was truly great. I enjoyed myself and felt at home in the corridors, in the office, and, yes, the whole hotel. I also appreciated the people who worked there. For this reason, it was an emotional experience to leave the organisation. The question is: how is it really achieved in a correct way? Exiting fieldwork is an area that has not been widely researched, even though it may potentially have great significance for analysis and theorising (Michailova *et al.*,

2014). Exiting fieldwork means a withdrawal from a research site where data have been gathered over a period of time, but according to Michailova *et al*. (2014) it is far more than that. They view fieldwork exit as a process of ending relationships that have been developed with participants during that time.

> It is affected by past, present, and future connections, which may be personal or organisational, formal or informal. [...] Exiting fieldwork is associated with changes in identities and emotions as enacted and experienced by both the researcher and research participants and their (self) learning and reflexivity (Michailova *et al*., 2014, p. 139).

The hotel industry is characterised by a high staff turnover, which means that it is not uncommon to have new people in a workplace, and it is not unusual that they disappear after a while. In this way, I felt that neither my arrival at, nor my exit from the research site was particularly dramatic. People come and go in this industry. However, for me, leaving the field was not about ending relationships. My farewell was not definitive because I clearly communicated that, someday, I might need to come back for more observations and additional interviews. As Neyland points out, "ethnographers do not exit from their responsibilities when they leave the field" (Neyland, 2008, p. 158). I felt I had the employees', managers' and owners' confidence and trust to care for. Hence, I sought to leave the field whilst retaining a good rapport with the owners, managers and staff, for future needs. In this way there would be fewer obstacles if I had to go back. My goodbye was mainly to the seven or eight employees I had become close to during my time at the hotel. I swapped contact details and became Facebook friends with a couple of them. For me, personally, the period I spent at Hotel Queen Sophia was not just fieldwork – it was a much-needed break from my normal life. As a freelance consultant based at home, I had not had work colleagues for five years. At the hotel I was included in a context, albeit as an outsider, and this was an interesting and stimulating experience. I felt I was seen, confirmed and involved and I did not leave the field untouched.

3.8 Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology for my thesis with a presentation of my theoretical underpinnings. The research approach is ethnographic and, in this

chapter, I considered the qualitative techniques that were employed in my research: participant observation and semi-structured interviews. A detailed discussion of the choice of research subject as well as gaining access to and entering the research site was also carried out in this chapter. I also discussed and problematised field relations, including aspects of integrity and ethics in ethnographic fieldwork. Following this, the process of the organisation of the data was explained, and narrative analysis was introduced. Finally, I discussed what leaving the field might mean to the organisation and to me as a researcher.

This chapter established *how* data was gathered. The next chapter – The Staff Meeting – is the first one where I will present *what* data I gathered, specifically the empirical findings of this thesis.

Chapter 4: The Staff Meeting

4.1 Introduction

At the beginning of my fieldwork at the Hotel Queen Sophia, I attended a large staff meeting, held by the owners and the management. This meeting was interesting since it clearly manifested various elements of the company's values, as well as those of the family and its employees. It was an exciting and singular environment which gave everyone at the hotel the opportunity to meet in the same room – from caretakers and cleaners working in the basement, to the management and owners working on the top floor. From a storytelling perspective, the staff meeting was vivid and information-rich. In this chapter, I introduce the most prevalent values within the organisation at Hotel Queen Sophia, all in one way or another expressed in stories and talk at the staff meeting. These values are *joy*, *cooperation*, *consideration*, *flexibility* and *commitment*. This chapter is the first of five presentation of findings chapters.

4.2 Everyone Gathered on the Fourth Floor

It was early on a Wednesday afternoon at the end of April. I had only been at Hotel Queen Sophia for just over a week when the time came for their annual staff meeting, held in in the conference facilities on the fourth floor. I had taken the chance to get some fresh air outside the hotel's entrance just before the meeting started; spring often arrives late in Sweden, so most people, like me, take all the chances they can to snatch a few minutes in the sun. But I made sure I wouldn't arrive late and took the lift up to join the others.

There were five differently sized rooms, a reception desk and a small lounge. The conference facilities' style was that of a spacious apartment from the turn of the last century. Guests are welcomed by parquet floors, tiled stoves, bay windows, pillars, and beautiful leaded windows when they arrive. The conference facilities are divided into five rooms and are rented out for lectures, conferences, exhibitions, customer events, mini-fairs and receptions, as well as dinners, parties and weddings, both daytime and evenings. All the conference rooms are named

after the surrounding streets, such as King Street, Victoria Street and North Road. We were to be in the one called Queen Street.

Most people were already there when I arrived a few minutes before 2 p.m., with thirty or so people in the room in total. All the hotel's employees were invited and expected to attend. They had even employed a temp at the front desk during the meeting, which further emphasised the importance of attending. The room had been furnished with five tables, each with five or six chairs. Just inside the door there was a table set with beautiful plates of multi-coloured and decorated cupcakes for the staff, and we could also take a cup of coffee or tea before sitting down. We were informed that we should preferably not sit with the people we normally worked with, something that was fairly easy for me as I had only been there a week. I chose the first table I came to, sat down and introduced myself to the others: "I'm Nicolas and I'm spending six months here at the hotel, researching what it's like to work in a family-owned business." By this stage I had already become accustomed to giving the short version of my presentation, rather than going into detail about my PhD and my interest in values and storytelling. "Yes, I know, I heard you were coming", commented Joel, who works as the head waiter. "It'll be interesting to follow your work here", said Maria, the financial manager.[8]

A number of Kinder Eggs had been placed on each table, which attracted many people's interest. "I wonder what we'll be using those for?" said someone at our table. We didn't have time for much talking before throat-clearing and eyebrow-raising at the front indicated that the meeting was about to start.

There were four people at the front of the room. They were Veronica, managing director of Hotel Queen Sophia and one of the owners, as well as her sister, Cecilia, who is owner and interior design manager for Queen Sophia and the other hotels. These women are the daughters of George and Judith, who bought the hotel in the 1970s and ran it together until a few years ago. Next to them stood Nathalie, the hotel manager, and Keith, who is a restaurateur and part-owner of the restaurant; he is also a cousin of Veronica and Cecilia, and their brothers Peter and Richard.

[8] All quotes, and descriptions of events, in this chapter are from my field notes 29 April 2015, unless otherwise is stated.

During the meeting, Nathalie and Keith were the ones who did the most talking, and who mostly took the lead in the various activities.

Keith began by saying: "This is an inspiration meeting and a wonderful opportunity for us all to get together". Nathalie continued: "What a fantastic group!" Keith carried on: "We thought we'd start by telling you who does what and clarifying the organisation, so that you all know who's responsible for what here at the hotel." They had drawn the organisation on the board in advance, and outlined it to the group. Nathalie clarified: "I'm now the hotel manager for Queen Sophia. There are a lot of challenges, but I'm starting to feel more comfortable, so do ask me about what it is I do." She was positive, and spoke in a clear voice.

Now it was Keith's turn to talk about himself: "I own 49% of the restaurant and Hotel Queen Sophia owns 51%. I'm the food and beverage manager, and am also a part-owner and have overall responsibility for the staff", he said. I jotted down in my notepad that it seemed to be important that everyone knew what people in management roles did. Could it possibly have been unclear before this? Perhaps the organisational structure was new? After all, I had not been there long, so everything was new and unfamiliar for me.

During the meeting, they talked about organisational changes. The HR manager, Doreen, was going to change jobs. Well, quite simply, she was going to stop working at the hotel and start at The Loft – a new hotel that was going to open the following year in a partnership with two other hotel families. When it became apparent that the HR manager was getting a new role at another hotel, some people started shuffling in their seats and there was some hushed mumbling. After a moment, an employee asked: "But in that case, who should we talk to?" Veronica, the managing director and owner of Queen Sophia, replied: "You should talk to your line manager". Keith added: "And if you work in the restaurant, I'm the one you should talk to. If it's something that we don't know how to deal with, we'll simply check it with Visita and Betania".[9] Another employee asked about what was going to happen to HQS College, a concept the company has for continuing professional development. Veronica said: "Naturally, we'll be carrying on with HQS

[9] Visita is a sector and employer's organisation for the Swedish hospitality industry. Betania is a corporate healthcare company.

College. Everything that Doreen's done, we'll be continuing", said Veronica. My interpretation was that she was trying to reassure the employees that they wouldn't be losing anything, even if the HR function disappeared. I made a note: "Remember to ask both Doreen and Veronica about the HR position disappearing and not being replaced". In my field notes from the meeting, I had also written:

> My perception is that there's some concern that HR manager Doreen is leaving and will be hotel manager at The Loft. Many people seem to have questions about who to talk to, and appear surprised that there won't be a new HR manager. Nathalie, Veronica and Keith presented arguments that were intended to reassure people, but most didn't seem convinced. (Field notes, 29 April 2015)

As if she had been able to pick up the atmosphere in the room, Nathalie now said: "If you have questions about what we've talked about, my door is always open." Keith added: "Yes, ask as much as you want! It's best if you email me questions because I work on the floor, it's easy for me to forget them otherwise." Then he moved on quickly to the next part of the conference programme: "Now, shall we find some inspiration and motivation?" This was a rhetorical question, needing no response. He nodded at Veronica, who took over.

4.2.1 The Hotel Concept

Veronica began with a moment of earnest seriousness; she looked out across all the tables and us, the audience. After a deliberate pause, she said: "HQS Hotels was created by my grandfather, Andrew. But it was my father, George, who developed the company and this hotel, and made it what it is today. As you know, we now have four hotels around the country. We are also building The Loft, a hotel with a very special character, which we'll own along with two other families." She continued: "The Loft will be somewhat new. We're not used to owning hotels with others, but it's going to be really exciting." She then changed track and moved around a bit at the front, demonstrating that it was time to show PowerPoint pictures on the screen. She continued: "Last year, those of us in the management group started working on *concept*s for our hotels. In this work, it's important that we are *a private business*, the family is *extremely dedicated*, we all work together,

and we want *you all* to know that."[10] Cecilia, Veronica's sister, added: "I'm responsible for the interior design at our hotels, and for all the refurbishing." Veronica continued talking about what she wanted to convey, using the restaurant as an example: "When we redid *Lily's*, we imagined Lily's four rooms and kitchen from the start of the last century, and we think that this idea was very successful. Naturally, we wanted to create her kitchen, but also the library, orangery, pantry and salon. We flirt with the menus of the time."[11] Then she showed the concept images for Queen Sophia on the screen and said: "We want to use this lovely history for Queen Sophia. We want to have somewhat of a *sense of luxury*, a hotel that *surprises*, is not antiquated and old, but *surprising*. Every room should be *unique*, we want the guests to be *inspired*. Our role models are Crosby Street Hotel and The Bowery in New York, and series like Downtown Abbey". Now Keith took over, and became serious: "We're not just saying this for *you*, we want you to transfer this to the guests. Yes, *convey* it to the people you meet." I looked across the audience and noted that no one was showing any reaction. Cecilia added: "Yes, I want you to think, 'How can I include this in my work, what I do every day?', such as in *drinks,* for example."

Because I have a background in the world of advertising and PR, I felt that I had easily understood what the management intended with the various concepts and what they wanted to achieve – packaging and USP's are vital in marketing – but I felt unsure whether the people standing at the front had really managed to bring their staff on board. Did the employees understand the various concepts and what they wanted to achieve? Were they interested and involved? Veronica took over and said: "We want the salon to be a meeting place for guests and Stockholmers, there should be games and other activities", continuing: "As we said, each hotel

[10] All italics in the quotes in this and other chapters are for emphasis provided by the informants themselves.

[11] The name and the history are that of Lily Johansen, whose influence can be seen in the restaurant – the period is the early 1900s and the home is that of the influential hotelier Lily, once part of Queen Sophia's premises. Together with her husband Wilmer, she succeeded in establishing Queen Sophia as one of Stockholm's most popular places and a haunt of the era's cultural elite. Many authors, actors and other famous personages of the early 1900s were seen at "The Queen", as the restaurant was called. On Hotel Queen Sophia's website, it states that Lily's kitchen, orangery, library, pantry, and salon have influenced Lily's various areas and given rise to its slightly longer name, "Lily's Kitchen – and four rooms".

should have its own concept. Well, we think that this is *fun*". She was noticeably excited. Again, I looked out over the audience, who didn't seem to be reacting to the fact that the managing director had presented the idea of a concept, or that it was supposed to be fun. I wrote in my notebook: "Ask the managing director about the various concepts when I interview her." Nor could I stop myself from thinking: what is it that is so much "fun"? She continued describing the other three hotels and their concepts. There were PowerPoint slides that were alternately short descriptive words and picture collages. Or "mood boards" as interior design manager Cecilia called them. The concepts for all four hotels were presented, including their restaurants.

Managing director Veronica then clarified that "what all our hotels have in common is that the lobby should feel like a *living room*". After this she said that the management group had started to work on these concepts at a conference in Madrid, something that most people in the room already seemed to know about. There, "we developed a *toolbox*", said Veronica, and continued: "and we also practiced an *elevator pitch*, how we'd describe the hotel in just a few short sentences." Then she said: "Perhaps it's a little vague and confusing just now, but this is because it's a process, ongoing work, and under development so to speak. Of course, we want to hear your thoughts and ideas. The concept for Queen Sophia should be *guidance,* you should see this as a kind of proposal", she concluded.

In my notes from the meeting I have further reflections on the lack of enthusiasm from the staff. When Veronica went through all the concept images it was fairly quiet, with few reactions from the audience. It was mainly the sales manager, Samantha, who had questions and opinions. Probably because she could benefit from it in her sales efforts. It was clear that these concepts were something the management thought were exciting and inspiring, but which did not really succeed in creating the same enthusiasm among those listening. Veronica had said that the concepts resulted from the management going to Madrid and working on them – a conference trip that the people who work on the floor had not been able to go on. One explanation for the lack of enthusiasm could be that the staff had not been part of developing the concepts themselves. Even if the management talked about the concepts as a process – something under development – it was clear that the staff

were expected to feel enthusiasm and put what was presented into action, whether or not it was finished. They also used English words such as “concept”, “mood boards”, “elevator pitch” and “toolbox” and, deep down, I wondered how many employees were comfortable with these terms. This is a type of management speak (Cluley, 2013); and the use of jargon or buzzwords can seem alien to others, even meaningless and superficial (Prasad, Prasad and Mir, 2011), or irritating (Feek, 2007). Perhaps this contributed to creating a distance between the management and the employees?

4.2.2 The First Task: The Kinder Egg

The management had used the word “workshop” in parallel with “staff meeting” when they presented the afternoon’s activities. After going through the concepts, we were to do the first exercise. It involved the classic Kinder Egg, which also explained why there were six of them on every table. Nathalie explained the rules. The item or toy we found in the chocolate egg, the “surprise”, should be linked to a hotel in HQS Hotels and an explanation provided as to why. First we discussed this with the others at the table, and then everyone presented theirs out loud to the others in the room and those leading the meeting. Now Keith was leading the meeting and the exercise. Person by person, table by table, people presented their ideas. It was clear that this was to be a creative exercise with no right or wrong, and nor did anyone seem particularly anxious to come up with a good answer or say something clever. The mood in the room was cheerful and positive. A few examples of items and associations include a penguin that made someone think about the family’s City Hotel in Umeå which has a swimming pool; a sports car made someone else think of the hotel in Gothenburg because “it’s young and urban”; and a bear with a cub was associated with Hotel Queen Sophia because there are teddy bears on all the beds, which the guests can buy and the money is donated to a children’s charity. So, one hotel was chosen to make an association with. Most employees chose Queen Sophia, perhaps because many of them had not actually visited the family business’s other hotels. Once everyone had presented their answers, Keith burst out happily: “I’m really impressed!” and started clapping his hands. All the others in the room also started clapping their hands. Nathalie said cheerfully: “Now we’ve really started getting creative.”

4.2.3 Task Number Two: Live the Concept

The next exercise was for everyone to ponder what they could think and do to clarify the concept for Queen Sophia; how they could explain it, and what they needed help with in this context. So, this dealt with how to communicate what the hotel stands for in thoughts, words, and deeds. The employees were divided into groups – two of the tables were asked to think about the restaurant, Lily's, and the other three tables about the hotel itself. When the responses were presented, they were of different types. For Lily's, the ideas were along the lines of creating table mats or menus with short historical texts, e.g. from Lily and the prominent guests of her era, the famous authors and poets, or work clothes that are associated with the hotel's history. For the hotel itself, ideas included working more with scents in the hotel, perking up the uniforms for the employees at the front desk, perhaps a slide show about the hotel's history on the big TV in the lobby. The ideas were presented table by table, to the people standing at the front. Hotel manager Nathalie was the person in charge. She had a positive, encouraging voice as each table presented its ideas and responses: "Good, excellent", she said, and when everyone had finished, she summarised: "We got lots of good ideas to take with us from this."

There weren't many employees who expressed a need for help during this exercise, but Sabrina – who works as a receptionist – said: "We need help getting rid of the dolls in the corridor on the third floor." It was said with humour, but was also intended seriously, as she was talking about a doll collection in a glass cabinet in the third-floor corridor. The very first time I had passed them I thought that they felt old-fashioned and a bit out of place, like a relic of the past. Apparently, this was an idea I shared with others. The comment generated a good deal of giggling from the other staff, but was met by ignorance and silence from all the management standing at the front. The same applied to another employee's honest comment about how the uniforms people working in the restaurant were neither attractive nor practical, instead they felt "rustic and scruffy". This was also ignored by the management and owners leading the meeting. It was a kind of censorship by management control, as if they had found the employees' comments uncivilised or dangerous (Collinson, 2002). My perception was that this was one of the occasions

on which the employees' opinions weren't listened to by the management in an open and positive manner. Later, several employees would explain to me in interviews and informal conversations that subjects relating to interiors, art, and design are regarded as personal by the owner family. This makes criticism a sensitive subject.

The management also talked for a while about next year's 125th anniversary, and how they were going to work on ideas for it with external consultants in the near future. They also talked about the renovations to the facade, and changes that were planned. Veronica said: "The awning on Queen Street will be removed and we'll also get rid of the slogan we've used until now." ["Classic elegance on Humlegården",[12] my comment]. "We'll be looking at a new solid awning, and new signs", continued Veronica, "they'll come when Fabege is finished."[13] Among other things, the hotel was to be returned to its original white colour. The wrought iron railings on the balconies were also going to be renovated and raised due to current legislation. Keith: "It's all a bit messy and difficult right now, but it'll be great later."

Nathalie spoke up and returned to the idea of concepts: "I hope that you've got a good image of the concept for Queen Sophia now, this is the starting point." Cecilia added: "It's good if you can take the concept with you into your work." Nathalie continued: "Take the hotel's history and tell the guests about it." Managing director Veronica then said: "We'll produce some type of text about this, so that you can read it and refresh your memory." It seemed important that everyone really embraced the concepts and conveyed them to guests and visitors.

Cecilia, interior design manager, also talked about the newly renovated rooms at Hotel Queen Sophia. "There are four rooms that we call *petite rooms*, with fancy details and items we've bought in antique shops and at auctions", she said. A while later, when I was shadowing her at work, she told me that each year they renovate around ten per cent of the rooms in HQS Hotels. In this way, they gradually renew the rooms, but without it being too great a cost on one occasion. The result is that

[12] Humlegården is a big park in central Stockholm.
[13] Fabege is a property company focusing on the development and management of commercial premises.

the hotels are decorated in quite a few different styles, because each renovation reflects what felt modern or aesthetically attractive just then.

4.2.4 Task Number Three: Fun at Work

Once they had finished talking about the concepts, it was time for the next exercise. Keith stood at the front and took a small step towards the room, at the same time as he spread his arms out. "What makes work *fun*?" he said. "Yes, what makes you feel that you're having a *great time*?" added Nathalie. Now, everyone was encouraged to think about what was necessary for work to be enjoyable; each person was to write down about five key words. Everyone then discussed their answers in the groups around the tables. One person in each group was the secretary, and wrote down what was said. The answers were then presented to everyone in the room, one table at a time. This is a selection from what was read out:

"Having time to do what you're supposed to."

"Time to be pleasant."

"Good communication, clear communication."

"Resources."

"Incentives and bonuses, being able to benefit when things are going well."

"Looking after the staff, fun when things happen, parties."

"Showing appreciation, happy faces, even *between* departments."

"More get-togethers with all the staff and from all departments."

"When you are included and can influence your work environment."

"When you help each other and cooperate."

"Try to include all the new people."

"Everyday happiness in the workplace."

"Saying hello to each other, *everyone*."

"Cheerfulness."

“Laughter’s catching and makes you live longer.”

“Socialising after work, playing rounders.”

“Praise and appreciation are needed.”

“Respect for each other.”

“Getting enough information.”

“Pleasant manners and that everyone is kind to each other.”

“Good teamwork.”

“Giving each other compliments.”

“We want more *good-looking* guests.”

That final comment generated a good deal of laughter and a few employees continued the joke. A woman who works at the reception said: “Maybe we could have attractive masks to put on the guests when they come and check in?” which led to more laughter. Overall, there was a positive and cheerful atmosphere during the interactive workshop exercises, and people seemed involved in their conversations and suggestions.

Doreen, the departing HR manager, was sitting at the front of the room, close to the management. So far she hadn’t said very much, but now she said, in a serious voice:

> I would like to interpose that all of us sitting here have chosen our job ourselves. All of us applied for our jobs on our own. Every one of you chose to start working here of your own free will. If you do not want to be here, you can go elsewhere. (Field notes, 29 April 2015)

Her statement came out of nowhere, but I guess that she was alluding to the subject of enjoyment in the workplace. Despite her statement’s directness, which is pretty unconventional by Swedish standards, the employees didn’t appear to react to it, at least not visibly. I wondered what had caused this comment. Were there employees who were not cheerful when they worked? Did they complain a lot or were bad tempered? Did they moan about their jobs? When I interviewed the HR manager a few months later, we returned to the meeting and her statement, and what she then said actually reinforced what she had said at the meeting.

> "It should be *fun* to work at Hotel Queen Sophia"; that is George's motto. It has been his mantra throughout the years. While we must take care of our guests, at the same time, it must be fun at work. And so ... there's no need to feel sorry for someone who works at Hotel Queen Sophia: all of the employees applied for their jobs voluntarily. All of them signed their contract here themselves. If you don't think it's fun to work here, then it's your own responsibility to do something about it. You can't go around and complain if you work at Queen Sophia. I think it's a great place to work. (Interview, Doreen)

I will elaborate on the complexity of "having fun" throughout this thesis, but let me return to the staff meeting. Hotel manager Nathalie took over, saying: "Now we're really going to *enjoy* ourselves!" and appeared to mean the upcoming period of time. Keith added: "We'll do something *fun* together after the summer." Then it was time for him to summarise the day. Among the things he took up was the importance of the staff naturally meeting and socialising. "Spontaneous meeting places in the hotel are good, not just in the staff lunchroom." He concluded: "Also, all of you here are ambassadors for all new employees", and Nathalie added: "Yes, you're the ones who must convey *joy*", apparently meaning that this should be conveyed to new employees, colleagues, and guests. Then she reminded everyone of the special offers available to staff, such as sampling the accommodation at the other hotels.

Keith then said: "I thought we'd have a glass of wine down in the restaurant now, for those who can", and people started to move downstairs for some relaxed socialising. It was after 4 pm, and I had to collect my dog from the minder, so I was not able to stay for long. However, there was a good atmosphere and the staff seemed happy as we walked down the stairs to the restaurant.

4.3 Values and Stories in Meetings

The staff meeting did not go unnoticed, it came up in conversation during 18 of the 33 interviews I conducted during my time at Queen Sophia. Sometimes this was on my initiative – because I wanted to follow up on something that had been said there – and at other times it was because the informants referred to it.

Meetings are interesting for someone who wants to understand the relationship between stories and values in an organisation. The process of meetings contributes to the production and reproduction of the structures of everyday life in organisations (Schwartzman, 1993). According to Schwartzman, meetings are "communication events that must be examined because they are embedded within a sociocultural setting (an organisation, a community, a society) as a constitutive social form" (1993, p. 39). Since meetings may have different formats: structured or unstructured, scheduled or spontaneous, lecture-style or collaborative, they may also have different functions (Schwartzman, 1989; Sprain and Boromisza-Habashi, 2012). Similar to yearly sales' meetings, annual picnics, Christmas parties and company breakfasts, staff meetings can be regarded as a type of ritual that happens at regular intervals (cf. Moore and Myerhoff, 1977; Rosen, 1985, 1988). Such meetings have a special character because they are one of the few occasions, during the year, when everyone in the workplace gathers in one place at the same time. A meeting does not contain just talk and conversation, but also acts, and such acts carry ritual significance (Goffman, 1981). Rosen (1985, 1988) suggests a meeting can be understood as a social drama, "the processed unit through which power relations, symbolic action, and their interaction are played out, and through which social structure is made evident" (Rosen 1985, p. 31).

At Queen Sophia, they usually had a Christmas party and a summer party, to which everyone was invited. These were lively and almost exclusively focused on entertainment and joy. The staff meeting, or staff conference, had a slightly more formal character and work-related issues were discussed. However, the atmosphere was happy, spirited and playful. The character of the staff meeting was that of *focused interaction*, to borrow a term from Goffman (1961, 1963a). This occurs when "people effectively agree to sustain for a time a single focus of cognitive and visual attention" (Goffman, 1961, p. 7). The management can present its ideas to the staff and, in turn, the staff is expected to contribute their ideas and opinions. Usually, a hierarchy exists for who talks and in what order (Shulman, 2017). However, meetings are not only occasions to work; they are also arenas where a group's status order may be played and displayed (Schwartzman, 1986; Owens and Sutton, 2001). Furthermore, they "are venues during which people direct traffic in comments, and in which some people police others." (Shulman,

2017, p. 89) Members of organisations use meetings to read and see their place in specific social systems, according to Schwartzman (1993). She suggests that meetings are "responsible for the construction of both order and disorder in social systems" (1993, p. 40).

A staff meeting is more than an opportunity to interact and discuss current issues. It is also an event where, for a brief time, ideology or a segment thereof is made visible (Rosen, 1988). During the staff meeting at Queen Sophia, values emerged that would be crystallised more clearly in the next few months of my fieldwork at the hotel.

4.3.1 Joy

Fostering "cultures of fun" in workplaces has been a prominent feature of culture management programs since the early 1980s (Fleming, 2005), as a response to social trends (Warren, 2005). Play is considered an important aspect of organisational culture (Costea, Crump and Holm, 2005), and may also be a form of management control – a part of "the panoply of techniques that seek to align the personal desires of workers with bottom-line corporate objectives" (Butler *et al*., 2011, p. 330). According to Warren (2005), structured fun may be understood as a management tool. The staff meeting at Queen Sophia was joyful and included elements of play and creativity. This was reflected in both the speech and in the tasks. The management was expressly optimistic and was careful to emphasise that things were "fun", such as when Veronica presented the concepts: "Well, we think that this is *fun*". The tasks were playful and the participants were asked to think about what makes the job pleasant: "What makes work *fun*?" (Keith). "Yes, what makes you feel that you're having a *great time*?" (Nathalie). Managed fun – of which this staff meeting is an example – is a way to create a more relaxed and pleasurable ambience and involves the symbolic blurring of conventional boundaries that normally distinguish work and non-work (Fleming, 2005). During the meeting, the staff joked in an overt way, for example the comment about wanting more good-looking guests and having masks to put on them. The employees also expressed, in various ways, the importance of joy at work. Some of their comments during the staff meeting were: "Fun when things happen",

"cheerfulness", "everyday happiness in the workplace", and "laughter's catching and makes you live longer".

Having fun can be an encouragement, but it can also be a call or a command. This is something that was reflected in HR manager Doreen's story when I interviewed her a few months after the meeting: "If you don't think it's fun to work here, then it's your own responsibility to do something about it." Hereby, joy turns from being an emotion to a moral emotion (Haidt, 2003; Lindebaum, Geddes and Gabriel, 2017), a moral mood (Walker and Kavedžija, 2015), or – as I understand it – a *value*. Joy is often assumed to be something that comes from within but at Queen Sophia it also comes from above. During his many years in the hotel, the owner George had established the motto: "It should be fun to work at Hotel Queen Sophia", a value that was clearly accentuated and that imbued the organisation. Thus, one can say that joy is expected of the employees at the hotel. Put simply, joy is a *norm* that defines how members of the group ought to behave in given situations (Thome, 2015). This was reflected in Nathalie's admonition: "You're the ones who must convey *joy*". In many ways, joy, playfulness and humour permeated the daily work at the hotel. Most employees embraced this value, even internalised it.[14] However, this was not always the case and there were also members of the organisation that did not adopt it (cf. Fleming, 2005). There were others who used humour, parody, irony and cynicism as a kind of "offstage" resistance (Tretheway, 1999; Mumby 2005; Contu, 2008) – manifested through unofficial talk, behaviours and actions (Scott, 1990). Using cynicism can be a way for members of an organisation to defend their identities from a degrading form of normative control (Fleming and Spicer, 2003), and irony can be a way of expressing criticism (Johansson and Woodilla, 2005), something I will give examples of in this thesis.

4.3.2 Cooperation

Cooperative values and principles are relevant for family firms (Goel, 2013), and cooperative behaviour plays an important role in the context of family businesses (Goel and Roessl, 2015). The importance of cooperation, teamwork and team spirit as something desirable reappeared several times during the staff meeting at Hotel

[14] According to Scott (1971), internalisation of a norm is "the propensity to conform to the norm – to behave in the way the norm reinforces" (1971, p. 88).

Queen Sophia, including when the employees discussed and said what makes the job fun and pleasant:

"Good communication, clear communication."

"Showing appreciation, happy faces, even *between* departments."

"More get-togethers with all the staff and from all departments."

"When you are included and can influence your work environment."

"When you help each other and cooperate."

"Socialising after work, playing rounders."

"Good teamwork."

Teamwork is not a new phenomenon, according to Davies (2015); it has been emphasised by management since the 1930s. Teamwork has become a key concern for many organisations where a growing pressure on managers and employees to perform their tasks more effectively and with more quality and customer satisfaction creates a need for cooperation at work (Levi and Slem, 1995). The concept of teamwork is widely used in everyday conversation, but what is it really? According to Salas, Sims and Shawn Burke (2005), no one has managed to clearly define this, as yet. Nevertheless, they have identified five core components of teamwork based on a review of the team literature: team leadership, mutual performance monitoring, backup behaviour, adaptability, and team orientation. Throughout this thesis, I will discuss the emphasis on cooperation and teamwork at Hotel Queen Sophia, as well as its complexity. Everyday interaction and saying hello to peers was also important at the hotel. At the staff meeting, the management stressed the importance of interaction between different departments, such as Keith's saying: "Spontaneous meeting places in the hotel are good, not just in the staff lunchroom."

During the staff meeting, the owner Veronica also talked about The Loft – a new hotel they would open with two other hotel families – which could highlight the emphasis on cooperation further. I later learned that these were families the Queen Sophia family had known for a long time. Harms, Memili and Steeger (2015)

states that family firms' cooperation behaviour differs from those of other firms. Their features drive strategic orientation and thus cooperation management. Family values, friendship ties and exchange patterns are key components for cooperative decisions, according to the authors.

During my time at the hotel, cooperation would emerge as an important value. At Hotel Queen Sophia, the staff work together, cooperate and help each other. Even during my interviews – when we talked about the staff meeting – cooperation and team spirit was highlighted.

> I think it is important to have meetings and trainings that can evoke this "we-feeling". It's really important. That is how the hotel will be successful. So, the management might need to have even more team-building meetings, but it's hard to say how, because you can't just have a lot of meetings ... But if they succeed in creating a team spirit, the staff will feel a sense of community ... then they will succeed very well. (Alexandra, waitress, interview)

How different departments cooperate was also discussed, here on my initiative:

> Me: At the staff meeting last spring, I felt that the management wished that the hotel staff and the restaurant staff would cooperate better. Is that true?
>
> Emel: Yes, but overall I believe we get along really well. We greet each other as a team, but when it comes to tasks like picking dishes, it can differ. I don't want to say, "Can you pick the dishes?" It should just work, I think. Sometimes there are issues with the practical daily tasks. (Emel, receptionist, interview)

4.3.3 Consideration

"People are defined by the set of relationships they have with other humans, and without relationships, we are not human", according to Burton and Dunn (2005, p. 458), who also claim that relationships in which people act in a caring manner are a universal attitude and ethically fundamental to humans. Consideration is a mode of interaction and plays an important role in the formation and maintenance of relational trust (Nugent and Abolafia, 2006). Consideration and care were expressed during the staff meeting when employees talked about what makes the

job fun and pleasant. Often it was in the sense of compassion, respect and the importance of having an inclusive approach. The employees emphasised kindness and care between colleagues:

"Try to include all the new people."

"Praise and appreciation are needed."

"Respect for each other."

"Pleasant manners and that everyone is kind to each other."

"Giving each other compliments."

The management also exhibited consideration and care. From a management research perspective, consideration is the extent to which a leader shows concern and respect for the members of the organisation, care about their welfare and shows appreciation and support (Bass 1990; Judge, Piccolo and Ilies, 2004). Managerial caring is "a process wherein a manager exhibits inviting, advancing, capacitising, and connecting behaviours toward an employee or employees" (Kroth and Keeler, 2009, p. 521). The fact that the management asked the staff what they needed help with, regarding the hotel's concept, and what makes work fun and pleasant, can be considered a form of caring. Additionally, the way they took note of the concerns that arose when it was stated that the HR manager would be quitting – and how they informed the staff about what they could do as an alternative to contacting the HR manager if they had issues to discuss – can be understood as an attempt to be considerate. (Although, it was obvious that many employees did not feel calm and reassured.) The management and, particularly, the family's care of the employees would become clearer in the following months. Several employees would articulate this in my interviews with them, namely, the consideration that they felt the family showed them. In particular, those who have been employed long time expressed gratitude for the family's care over the years.

It has been claimed that family business leaders treat employees in a more caring way (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2005; Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Scholnick, 2008; König, Kammerlander and Enders, 2013), and family business employment is positively associated with employees' perceptions of organisational support

(Bammens, Notelaers and Van Gils, 2015). A recurring theme in many stories from Hotel Queen Sophia was that the staff believed there was a kind of personality and sense of a family atmosphere salient in the organisation. "Family-like" was an expression several of the employees used. I will explore and discuss this topic in later chapters.

4.3.4 Flexibility

Flexibility, that is being able to adapt to different circumstances, is often considered one of the modern era's most prominent and valued features in organisations (Sennett, 1998). It is perhaps not surprising that it is a clear value in an area such as hospitality, where employees are expected to be able to deal with different people, solve unexpected tasks and help out where needed. A professional role that involves guest relations is a kind of "emotional labour" (Hochschild, 1983), where it is important to deliver joy, but also to deal with complaints, problems and guests' bad behaviour and excesses (Tracy, 2000; Guerrier and Adib, 2003). One must therefore be able to switch between different roles as a way of controlling guests and as a way to "impression manage" (Leidner, 1993; Korczynski, 2002). According to Gabriel (2010), emotion can be understood as an integral part of the service interaction – "it can be planned, standardised, deployed and controlled in the interest of profit and sales" (Gabriel, 2010, p. 43). Put more simply, the employees are required to manage their emotions in return for a wage (Hochschild, 1983). However, flexibility is about more than just adapting to different roles and managing emotions in interactions with guests.

During my time at the hotel, I discovered how the emphasis on flexibility was linked to the organisation itself, but also to the family's view of the hotel's business. It could be such a thing as the housekeeping manager being on stand-by over the phone, during the weekend, even though she was not on duty; or that the breakfast manager would come in on her day off and train new waiting staff; but also such a thing as both the conference manager and the hotel manager stepping in as receptionists when they were short-staffed on the front desk. In many ways, flexibility was expected when working at Hotel Queen Sophia, and this is a value closely associated with commitment and cooperation. At the staff meeting, this was manifested in the management's expectations of the employees: that they should

take on the newly introduced concept for Queen Sophia, and think about how to implement it in their daily work. Regardless of how they had behaved before, it was now expected that they would change themselves to embody and communicate the concept, in order to create emotional connection with guests (Ryu et *al.*, 2018). The fact that it was expected that they convey joy to new employees, colleagues, and guests also shows a form of expected flexibility. During my subsequent interviews with employees, managers and the owning family, it would become clearer how flexibility permeated the organisation.

4.3.5 Commitment

The management at Hotel Queen Sophia expected commitment from the employees. It was also something the employees expected of each other. Employees develop multiple work-relevant commitments (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001), and, as Meyer and Allen (1997, p. 107) suggest, "commitment can take different forms and can be directed at different constituencies within the organisation". Throughout this thesis, I will show examples of this. Commitment is about engagement and responsibility, but also about loyalty. During the staff meeting, it was clear that the management expected that all employees would translate the hotel concept into practice, would embrace it and let it permeate their daily work. To a large extent, they wanted their employees to identify with the hotel organisation (Lindebaum, Geddes and Gabriel, 2017). This included a kind of duty not to challenge the choices the management or the family had – or had not – made. This was shown most clearly in the neglect of criticism of the dolls on the third floor, but also regarding the workwear for those who worked in the restaurant. Silence can be a functional tool, reflecting relationships and power dynamics in organisations (Bies, 2009). This was something that was picked up by group reservations' manager, Eileen, when I interviewed her a few weeks later. She mentioned that it could be difficult to speak out and say what you really think in staff meetings:

> Eileen: No one says anything in a staff meeting if they wouldn't agree on something ... Maybe you noticed that it was very quiet when the management talked?

> Me: Yes, but I remember someone raised her hand and said that the staff wanted help to remove the dolls on the third floor …
>
> Eileen: If you say such a thing ... I think it's pretty brave to say it, I would not say it, I know how it would be received, so I would not say so. But then there are those who still are outspoken, and I think that's healthy in a way, that not everyone is like me. (Eileen, interview)

The fact that a value exists can also be clearly manifested when it is *not* present, as in the absence of commitment among employees when the management tried to arouse enthusiasm about the hotel's new concept – a process that the employees had not been involved in.

The staff also expected the management and the owners to be committed. During my time in the hotel it became clear that the management and the family were not always considered to be fulfilling their responsibilities and, thus, they were seen as lacking in commitment. This was illustrated when I interviewed financial manager, Maria. She expressed dissatisfaction that what was discussed at the staff meeting received no continuation:

> Maria: It's great to have such a meeting, but then of course it must be followed up.
>
> Me: What happened after the staff meeting?
>
> Maria: Nothing, we have not even received any report or summary. (Maria, interview)

Several other employees also pointed this out to me in the following months, i.e., that the meeting was not followed up in any way. Although I asked the hotel manager for a summary or minutes of what was discussed during the meeting, several times during my time at the hotel, I never received any. Six months after the meeting, when I had completed the fieldwork, I was still told that there was no written report. One might wonder what kind of signal this sends to the staff about what was discussed, and what it might say about the importance of the ideas, thoughts and feedback that the employees expressed during the meeting.

4.4 Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the organisation of the Hotel Queen Sophia, its staff, management and owners, while giving an insight into the key values that are made visible through stories, speech and discussion at the annual staff meeting. I introduced the five most prevalent values within the organisation; all expressed at the staff meeting, in some manner. These values are: *joy*, *cooperation*, *consideration*, *flexibility* and *commitment*. In this chapter, I also exemplified these values, explored them and pointed out their complexity, something I will continue to do throughout this thesis.

In the next chapter, the second presentation of findings chapter, I will present the owning family – George and Judith and their four children: Veronica, Cecilia, Richard and Peter. I will explore the ways in which the family and the family members' values become clear through storytelling.

Chapter 5: The Family

5.1 Introduction

To interview people from different generations is important in order to understand family firms (Nordqvist, Hall and Melin, 2009). I begin this chapter by introducing the six members of the family: George and Judith, and their children Veronica, Richard, Cecilia and Peter. What are their backgrounds? What are their roles in the business? What do they have to say about the Queen Sophia? After this, I show how the values that were introduced in the previous chapter are expressed in the family members' stories (section 5.3). These values are *joy*, *cooperation*, *consideration*, *flexibility* and *commitment*. In the section about family and personal character (section 5.4), I explore a recurring theme in the family's stories that is closely linked to values, namely the importance they ascribe to "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch". What is included in these concepts? Can they be regarded as values, or is the emphasis on family and the personal touch about something else? Finally, in section 5.5, I provide a summary of this chapter. This chapter is the second of five chapters that cover the presentation of findings.

5.2 The Anderssons

Let us get to know the Andersson family. I interviewed all of them, one-on-one, in the North Road conference room on the fourth floor. This is one of the smaller meeting rooms, with a more intimate character, and is close to the office. I met George and Judith on the same day, one after the other. They came to the hotel expressly for this purpose. I interviewed the other family members on other occasions during my six months at the hotel.[15]

5.2.1 George

George is seventy years old and has four children with his wife, Judith. Two years ago, he handed over the management of the company to the eldest two: Veronica and Richard. He has retired now and is only involved in the area of the business

[15] Unless otherwise stated, all quotes in this chapter are taken from my one-on-one interviews with the family members.

that relates to property issues and rents, as well as being a board member for HQS Hotels. The business owns two hotel properties, and for the other two hotels they are long-term tenants, with contracts that must be renegotiated at regular intervals.

Researchers Stephens and Breheny point out that "participants in qualitative research interviews often shape their accounts as stories" (2013, p. 14), and almost as soon as we sat down, George started talking about himself and the hotel. He grew up in a family of hoteliers; his parents ran hotels in both Stockholm and their hometown of Umeå. "That's the background to me getting into the business. After a variety of studies in economics … well, it was all I wanted to do. My dream was always to find something in Stockholm." After running a couple of other hotel businesses with his father, Andrew, he and his wife were able to acquire their first hotel in the latter half of the 1970s. That hotel was the Queen Sophia. "At that time it had around forty rooms. Seven rooms had toilets and the rest had cold running water, as they wrote in the advertisement", George explained. The hotel became a joint project for the couple. "Judith wanted … no, *demanded* to be included. She wanted to develop the Queen Sophia just as much as I did. She did the décor and I managed the finances and operations."

They have developed the business over the years and the hotel has been able to grow, by taking over and rebuilding apartments in the same and neighbouring buildings. Great effort was also put into improving the facilities. "From the very start, every penny went into installing toilets and showers." Because George is passionately interested in art, he started to purchase art and antiques, over the years and as finances allowed, both for the rooms and the public spaces such as the lobby and corridors.

Since the business started, additional hotels have been acquired for HQS Hotels and some have been sold. Hotel Queen Sophia, which now has more than 140 rooms, has remained in the family's ownership. It is also the hotel in the group of which George is most fond: "Hotel Queen Sophia is what I'm most proud of." He said that he has never taken it for granted that the children would want to continue running the hotel and the rest of the business, but he made no secret of the fact that he was happy they decided, for themselves, to go into the business. He

also has hopes for future generations. “What if my grandchildren walked past in ten to fifteen years and said: ‘Grandma and Grandpa owned that hotel once’, and they hadn’t had the chance to develop it. That wouldn’t be good.”

“Both conflict and enrichment can result from being deeply involved in both work and family life”, according to Rothausen (2009, p. 230). So, out of curiosity, I asked George what it was like to run a hotel with his wife. “I think it worked well. Of course we had our arguments, but I think it worked well”, he said.

George is the majority owner, with 38.4% of HQS Hotels, which includes Hotel Queen Sophia. His wife also owns a large shareholding and he has spread the rest of his shares to his children as gifts.

5.2.2 Judith

Judith is sixty-seven years old, and has been married to George for more than forty years. She is a trained nurse; a profession she left relatively quickly when she and her husband acquired the Hotel Queen Sophia and started working there. During her time at Hotel Queen Sophia she was responsible for the interior design of the hotel and its rooms, a responsibility that is now being shouldered by her daughter, Cecilia.

Judith said that the hotel was a joint project from the very first. “I managed the décor and we expanded all the time. I did some upholstery and sewing courses and then sewed the curtains and other things that were needed.” She also said that she was “more or less the housekeeping manager at first.” Initially she managed everything regarding design herself, room by room. “Everything was so small to start with. We brought in interior designers once it got a bit bigger.”

Judith said that buying a hotel was exciting – “I was young and daring back then. I was brave enough for almost anything.” When I commented that buying a hotel sounds incredible, she said: “Yes, I thought it was great fun; there was a fantastic attic up there”, she said, gesturing at the ceiling. “There was loads of stuff in it. I spent my days there, rummaging around and finding old furniture that we put into the hotel rooms and so on.”

Parallel to working on the hotel, she and George had four children. They hired nannies so they could combine work and family life. “The children were small, but the larger the family got, the less I worked. When we had our fourth child, I said that I was going to stay at home with him.”

As the years passed she did less, and ten years ago, she stopped working actively in the hotel business. However, she still feels involved in interior design issues and loves to talk about ideas if the children ask for her advice.

During our conversation, Judith said that she has always appreciated her work and running hotels with her husband, but that the first few years were the most fun. There was a sense of building something up from nothing. “We were so enthusiastic! All our new projects have been great fun. We’ve had new floors and departments …” She also expressed optimism about the future: “We’ll see if there’s anything else ahead”, and she seemed to mean various hotel projects. Over the years she had complete confidence in her husband, whom she believes showed good judgement in both running the hotel and in business. “I’ve trusted George completely, he knows what he’s doing.”

Judith owns 18% of HQS Hotels, which means that she has the second-largest shareholding in the company.

5.2.3 Veronica

Veronica is the managing director of Hotel Queen Sophia. She also shares the managing directorship of HQS Hotels with her brother Richard, where her areas of responsibility include products, interior design, renovations, marketing, sales and staff development issues. She is forty-two years old and is married with two children. Veronica owns 10.9% of the company, which is the same proportion as the other siblings.

Through years of exposure to the family business, family employees can cultivate a great understanding of the business (Kets de Vries, 1993). Of all the siblings, Veronica is the one who has worked the longest at the hotel and has held positions in various parts of the business. She started working extra hours as a cleaner, as a seventeen-year-old, and then as a receptionist. At around the turn of the century she started working full-time at the hotel, first in sales and then in marketing. By

then, she had a degree in European Business Administration from London. She was also the hotel manager for Hotel Queen Sophia for some years.

It has been two years since she and her brother Richard assumed responsibility for the business, and they share an office at the Queen Sophia:

> Sharing the office is excellent, because it's … we're not there at the same time; often we're in different places, so it's an efficient use of the space as well. We said from the start that it's important we have good dialogue.

She feels that she and her brother have been given free rein to run the business and that their father has not interfered in the details, even though he remains on the board and contributes his thoughts and opinions as a member of the board. "We've often talked about things, beforehand. Even if he doesn't entirely agree with our proposals, I think he understands our ideas fairly well."

Veronica, like other family members, feels that Hotel Queen Sophia is special, partly because it is the first hotel that both her parents were involved with. "It's been extra important; it's the *jewel in the crown*. It's always been so attractive, even looking back fifteen years … it's always been smart, with a good location in Stockholm." She described the other hotels as "step-children" – "I care a great deal about them, but I don't have quite the same commitment."

I asked her about how she sees Hotel Queen Sophia in five years. She thought for a while, before answering:

> I want to raise Queen Sophia … not to be a *luxury hotel*, but still to have that *feeling of luxury,* that it has a clear *brand*, a clear *concept*, with *its history*. And that you feel that certainty that you can be proud of every room. Yes, a slightly more *heightened* level.

5.2.4 Richard

"Of course, Queen Sophia is the hotel that I've spent most time at; I've worked here … it's really been a part of my life, so of course it means a huge amount", said Richard when we met to talk. He is a managing director of HQS Hotels; a position he shares with his sister Veronica. He has overall responsibility for finances, operations, expansion and issues relating to staff contracts. He has also been very

involved in the new hotel, The Loft, which they were about to open with two other hotelier families.

Richard is married, forty years old, and has three children. He owns 10.9% of the business. He started working at the hotel in the summers while he was in high school:

> I was probably 15 the first time I worked there and I didn't do anything worthwhile, but I learned a lot anyway. I did do some work … I looked after breakfast and stuff. After sixth-form I studied at Stockholm University and my final year was spent in London, I did a Master's there.

In London, he started an events business with a friend; a company that they built up and expanded to several countries before finally selling it to a global player. It was in relation to this that he eventually thought about stepping into the family business, two years ago. "That autumn, dad said, 'Come and start working; I'm going to take a step back and retire.' So Veronica and I discussed where we wanted to take the business and what we wanted to do." I asked Richard if he and his sister decided, themselves, how they would organise things. He answered: "Yes, that was entirely us. Dad and I agreed that I would join the company, and then he said: 'Talk to each other.'"

Richard hadn't actively worked in the company for fifteen years, when he started as managing director, but he had been on the board. Had he ever felt any pressure to start working in the family business, in that time?

> No, but perhaps a little *internal* pressure … or … not pressure exactly, that's the wrong word. But an inner *question*. If *I* don't do it, what'll happen to the business? Mum and Dad won't carry on. Does Veronica want to run this by herself or with Peter? Can they and do they want to? There was a little uncertainty. I knew that if I came on board I would at least … I'm not saying that I'd do *fantastically well*, but that I would … manage it anyway. I know how to run a company and I knew I'd understand what it was all about anyway, but perhaps I wouldn't do a good job. However, I did have experience of running a business.

5.2.5 Cecilia

> We're a company that tries to transform ourselves, to follow trends, to follow what the guests want … not *décor trends*, but trends in the hotel market. What could be more profitable? Of course, we should create unique, attractive hotels, but we also need to make them *profitable* – we are always working to a budget.

Those are Cecilia's words. She is the youngest sister, aged thirty-eight, and responsible for interior design at Hotel Queen Sophia and the family's other hotels. She has a background as an assistant scenographer and prop maker in television productions and advertising. She is trained in art and design and has also completed a course in scenography. Cecilia started to work full-time in the business six years ago, as an interior designer. Before this, she had worked at the Queen Sophia in her spare time in her youth – cleaning, breakfasts, in caretaking and up in the office. She even helped the housekeeping manager with "curtains and extra stuff", as she expressed it. She has taken over the role of interior design manager from her mother, Judith.

As with her siblings, she emphasised that she has never felt that the family expected her to start working in the business.

> It's definitely been the case that we have been able to do as we want, but I've found it difficult to say no to the hotel. The more you work in it, the harder it is to let someone else take over. […] Perhaps I've been too weak to get out of it, because I'm involved. Even if you don't *want* to be involved, you are.

She feels she has great freedom in her work: "Dad tries not to interfere. He doesn't interfere so much with what I do, he often just lets me choose and trusts me." She described a great deal of her work as finding "clever solutions":

> It can be difficult to find things that work for breakfast, it's crowded […] there can be many things we need to find space for. Like now, working with the rooms that will be small double rooms; how can we do this best, so that the guests are happy and it looks good? One quality I'm expected to have is good taste; to be aware of trends so that I can create unique rooms.

Privately, Cecilia is married and has two children. She owns 10.9% of the family business. When I interviewed her there was no doubt that the business meant a lot

to her, particularly this hotel. "I've worked here for such a long time; it's been such a huge part of my life. I've been here since I was … mum and dad bought Queen Sophia when I was born. It's part of my childhood, so it's hard to let go."

5.2.6 Peter

> This is the only job my father ever had, and I decided when I was ten that I wanted to work with the same thing.

Peter is thirty-three years old and the youngest of the siblings. When we met, he was on paternity leave and back in Stockholm, temporarily, on holiday. For the past few years he has lived in South Africa with his wife, who has an executive position at a company there. They have two children. One of them was present during the interview and while I talked to Peter, he occupied himself watching cartoons on an iPad.

Le Breton-Miller and Miller (2015) argue that "learning by younger family members who are to be involved as steward-like owners, board members, or managers of their firms is a process that occurs in large part via senior family members over a significant fraction of the human life cycle, beginning in early childhood and enduring until well into a career." (2015, p. 386) This seems to be the case for the children in the Andersson family. As with his older sister Veronica, Peter has been the hotel manager at the Queen Sophia. He has also been the sales manager, but he started at the hotel long before that:

> I was thirteen when I had my first job here. But I also had school and studying, and then I moved abroad after sixth-form to study. However, I kept coming back, doing summer jobs and helping out here and there.

He went to bartender school and studied international business in London, where he was also a management trainee at a major hotel chain, before moving home four years ago and starting to work at the hotel. In order to learn the business, he worked in different departments of the hotel, before becoming its sales manager. He described it as a good way of getting to know the business:

> I was interested and wanted to learn all about the challenges everyone faces. I just felt that it was very important, to know what work is like for them, to

> bond with them, so they could come to me and explain how to do things better.

He called Hotel Queen Sophia a "member of the family" and said that he has more feelings for this hotel than for the others. "I've been on our Christmas cards here and I ran around playing in the lifts; this is where Grandpa died, even though that was before I was born."

Unlike the other siblings, he feels that it has not always been easy to do his job without the family becoming involved. For example, when he worked as hotel manager:

> Peter: There were quite a few requests made, coming from various directions. All the siblings were here at the hotel, as well as an old hotel director, by which I don't mean my sister but my dad. So there were a lot of people who gave me …
>
> Me: You mean they gave you "good advice" because they'd once been hotel managers?
>
> Peter: Yes, partly that. If I asked about something, then I had to do *exactly* what was described to me. Which … yes, it was more *complicated* then, if you didn't really want to do it exactly that way.

He is also very aware that he is the youngest sibling:

> And that's not just in the family, because we've been here since … playing in corridors since we were really little, and a lot of the staff from back then are still here. I've been named "Little Pete" by the sales director, and she probably still sees me largely as that.

Like the other three siblings, Peter owns 10.9% of the family business, HQS Hotels.

5.3 The Family Members' Values

Life stories may be understood as psychosocial constructions and as such they mirror the culture wherein the story is composed; they also reflect values and norms in the societies in which they have their constitutive meanings (McAdams, 2001). I will now examine the values that were presented in the previous chapter. These are joy, cooperation, consideration, flexibility and commitment. Their

presence is noticeable in both the family and the employees, but they are sometimes expressed in different ways, and may have other meanings for the family than for their employees.[16] My intention in this section is to show how the values are expressed in the family members' stories.

5.3.1 Joy

> Working at Queen Sophia should be *fun*. If the employees think it's fun, then it reflects back onto our clients. We always used to end our kick-off meetings with how working at Queen Sophia should be fun. And we know that employees in management positions have taken to the idea of joy and, in turn, try to pass it on. (George)

It is relevant to identify founders' values in order to understand the founders' influence on family business behaviour (García-Alvarez and López-Sintas, 2001). George's words captured one of the most prominent values of the hotel: joy. The other family members also highlighted the importance of joy as well as a positive attitude; often in contexts where they were talking about qualities that were desirable in the hotel's employees. Veronica emphasised a "positive attitude" and a desire to "make things work for others". Richard highlighted "cheerfulness and positive energy" and added that "people who drain your energy, that's just the worst." On another occasion, he said "we're keen to make our guests happy and satisfied." Peter highlighted the importance of combatting a culture where people badmouth others and complain about the guests. When I asked Judith about which qualities the staff should have, she replied: "Pleasant and cheerful, of course, and helpful." Joy has a meaning, a purpose, and the assumption is that it rubs off on those nearby; on both guests and colleagues. Cecilia said: "It's difficult to make everyone positive and cheerful, but a positive attitude is important to me, because it makes *me* positive."

The family does not only talk about joy as a desirable quality – they also expressed joy and optimism themselves during our conversations. Veronica described feeling joyous about enthusiastic staff, and about how many of the staff from the cleaning company have said they want to work at the hotel. Judith said that she has enjoyed

[16] This difference is something that I will highlight in Chapter 9 – "Discussion and Conclusion".

her working life and uses words such as "fun", "great fun" and "really fun" to describe it. The same applied to her husband, George. When I asked what had made him happiest over the years, he answered: "*Everything's* been fun!" But there have also been challenges:

> Of course it wasn't fun when money was just leaking out of the hotel in Linköping, or when we only had 20 per cent occupancy in Umeå. That's when you don't sleep well and you worry about how on earth you're going to fill the beds. But the thing about meeting satisfied guests is that it motivates all the staff. It's a challenge, it's fun.

There is an expectation of a positive attitude towards each other in the family, something that is not always easy. For example, Cecilia said that the siblings do not always agree about how the rooms should be decorated:

> We've tried to have a motto that you shouldn't say no and that we should see each other's ideas in a positive light. But it's hard to find the balance.

So, joy has several dimensions for the Andersson family. The joy they feel, or have felt, themselves about working in the hotel industry is apparent in what they say. But they also talked about the joy they find in employees who are committed and take initiative, and how a positive attitude, cheerfulness and optimism are *expected* of the employees. They also seemed to expect it of the other members of the family. It is also clear that whining and a poor attitude are not desirable behaviours at Hotel Queen Sophia. "Negative energy is a *very* bad thing", said Cecilia, an attitude she shares with the others in the family.

5.3.2 Cooperation

Peters and Kallmuenzer (2018) suggest that family businesses in the hospitality industry "are not solely driven by profit-orientation but value long-term cooperation and social networking" (2018, p. 35). Cooperation was a recurring theme in my interviews with the family members, particularly regarding cooperation within the family. When Cecilia talked about her parents, she emphasised: "They really ran the hotels *together.*" In our conversations, the parents, Judith and George, spoke about how they cooperated over the years, but they also spent time talking about how their children cooperate now. The siblings

also emphasised their cooperation when I spoke to them. This is Richard, talking about when he, and his sister, took over the joint hotel management:

> Among the first things that Veronica and I did was to say, "Where do we want to go with this business?" I had a very visionary managing director at my previous job; he made a *painted picture*:[17] "Where are we? Where will we be in five years?" And he painted a picture of it. Veronica and I did exactly that. We wrote it down … you're welcome to look at it, our painted picture. We've shared it with everybody in the organisation; it's no secret."

Veronica, who shares an office with Richard, said:

> We've said from the start that it's very important that we have a good dialogue. We have a regular time every Friday when we meet and check things between us. On Fridays, we have *Friday feedback*.[18]

Everyone in the family said that, overall, working together in the family business works – and has worked – well. However, in my conversations with the children it was apparent that sibling roles sometimes characterised their cooperation, particularly regarding how they relate to each other and how they communicate. Cecilia said:

> Naturally, you don't entirely leave a sibling role behind. Veronica and I can perhaps get very angry, but then we know that we have to maintain a professional … and that's another role …

She also said: "Richard and I may have a particular way of talking to each other; we can be sarcastic in a joking way, and that might be noticeable." When I asked Richard about what it is like to work with his family, he answered:

> It has advantages and disadvantages, you could say. Well, how should I put it? In some ways *advantages*, because you can fall out and disagree without it being a big thing. It's a much bigger thing to fall out with a normal colleague.

Peter thought along the same lines when he talked about what working with his siblings was like and what it was like working with his father, George:

---

[17] Richard uses the English term.
[18] Veronica uses the English term.

> It's special, because you take freedoms that you might not take with other colleagues, in how you speak and act. I've got a favourite story I like to tell. I sat here to start with, working in Dad's chair while he was still managing director. That wasn't a problem in itself. But then I moved, because I used to take the places that were free. When he came back the following day, my username was still on the computer screen. He was around sixty then, and not the best of friends with technology, so he didn't know how to change it. He rang and shouted at me, completely over the top, and was *so* angry. That's something that would never happen at another company over such a small thing. Nor would I go into a managing director's office to work …

Cooperation between the family members is characterised by a particular way of speaking and communicating which, in many ways, suits their purpose. The communication behaviours, as well as values and norms within the family, are believed to affect the business (Sciascia *et al.*, 2013). Tagiuri and Davis (1996) discuss the private language of relatives and stress that it can permit family members to communicate more effectively than what is usually possible among non-family members, in family firms. However, they emphasise that "aspects of this private language can trigger sensitive, painful reactions that can distort communication." (1996, p. 205) According to Danes *et al.* (1999) communication between family members can be a way of resolving tensions and conflicts and retaining order. Thus, it is evident that the communication and attitudes that exist between family members, in family-run businesses, are of a special character.

5.3.3 Consideration

The value of consideration was apparent in conversations with the various family members, being expressed in terms of kindness, concern and respect. This included the consideration that they showed each other within the family, such as George and Judith respecting the children's choice of careers and never pressuring them to work in, or take over, the family business (something that all the siblings confirmed during our conversations). This attitude was also shown in George's reluctance to interfere in how Veronica and Richard manage the company:

> They can ask me and I'm happy to answer, but I don't go to them. If they make one mistake in ten, then they're still doing nine right. I think they've done a brilliant job over the last two years.

Dimensions such as empathy and warmth have been found to be significantly higher in family businesses than in non-family ones (Payne *et al.*, 2011). Consideration was most noticeable when the family members talked about how employees were expected to behave. Judith highlighted the importance of their being "pleasant" and emphasised "helpfulness" as an important quality when working at the hotel. She also thought that the staff lived up to this: "I don't think that they put on an act because I turn up, the staff are very pleasant and friendly." Veronica said: "You should be a *problem solver*; you should enjoy making people happy, *hospitality*." Peter highlighted similar ideas when he explained the desirable qualities for the staff:

> *Friendliness*, we work with people. We feel that it's not the one thing or the other, but it's important that they are friendly, because people don't come here because it's a functional and well-thought-out hotel, and efficient. There's Scandic[19] for that. Here we have to be friendly and have the *personal touch*.

Cecilia also emphasised the importance of being friendly and respectful to each other; something the staff don't always live up to. Here, she was talking about the two caretakers:

> They sometimes have a difficult role. People demand … they do quite a lot while they also have … they're hot-tempered: They can shout and go on, so people are scared of them. They think: "This is just how it is." They argue with each other and think the other is … it can be sensitive.

Consideration is also something that the family feels for the staff. I noticed it expressed in various ways during my time at the hotel, in daily work and in informal chats with the siblings, but also during the interviews. For example, when Veronica spoke about how noticeable it is that the Queen Sophia is family-owned:

> We are involved in very many different things, we feel a great deal about various issues […] it's not only the result that counts. It's also that … It's very much the guests' experience and the staff's experience of being here. We feel that it's important to enjoy being here, that not everything is about the

[19] One of the largest hotel chains in the Nordic.

> financial outcome. […] We've completely failed if people and guests aren't happy here.

When Veronica talked about the education programme, their consideration for the employees was also apparent: "HQS College is really a working name for HR issues, how the staff should be happy." The fact that the hotel has had an HR manager, for staff to talk to, can also be seen as a way of looking after the staff. However, both Veronica and Richard say that it was never actually the purpose of the role, and that the position is not necessary. Staff should talk to their line manager instead. Richard spoke about the HR manager: "She had somewhat of an internal therapist function. You could go to her and talk about a problem, but nothing ever happened … the only function was that the person got something off their chest."

5.3.4 Flexibility

The Andersson family's expectation that employees should be flexible was formulated in slightly different ways during our conversations. When Richard talked about desirable qualities for employees, among them he mentioned "drive", "the desire to develop and progress" as well as "to realise that you can have an influence, you always have a mandate". Veronica pointed out that "you have to have a bit of intelligence and keep things in your head, be orderly and so on". When I asked Cecilia about why employees might *not* be happy at the Queen Sophia, she answered:

> I think that they might not enjoy… that perhaps they want it to be a little *stricter*, more *of the same* … so that you know what you are getting. We can change our minds …

In other words, employees need to be flexible, partly to do the work itself, but also to deal with working at this hotel. Veronica also highlighted why some people do not suit the hotel:

> Many people are concerned about right and wrong and following *the rule book*, but you can't be so very … you have to think *outside the box* sometimes. It's important to be able to go back and reflect, *the openness*.

Flexibility is also a quality that is rewarded: "Those people who aren't good at their jobs and don't display these qualities, this *flexibility*, we don't offer them the chance to progress", said Veronica.

Richard gave an example of work-role flexibility when he talked about his sister, Veronica, who helped the hotel manager – who was relatively new to the position – more than was expected: "Nathalie and Veronica have worked more closely than was actually intended or how it should be." However, he appeared to see this as something natural. Flexibility is closely linked to humility, in the sense of being able to adapt and help out where needed and to not be stuck in routines, titles or formal job descriptions. This is something that Richard feels is very important for working at the hotel:

> An organisation needs different types of people, but if they are to have something in common it's … *humility*. It sounds like a cliché, but I think it's important. It drives me mad when titles are so important, and what your office looks like. I don't like it, no matter who you are.

Family business behaviour is influenced by the owning family and its dynamics (Zachary, 2011). Furthermore, the impact of family values on the business has been extensively recognised in family business research (Gagné, Sharma and De Massis, 2014), and it is claimed that family firms' survival and successful performance rest on their ability to achieve and sustain strategic flexibility (Zahra *et al*., 2008). Additionally, the role of the founder has been found to have a great impact on the way the identity of the flexible family firm develops (Hatum and Pettigrew, 2004). The fact that both managing directors, Veronica and Richard, emphasised flexibility and humility so strongly is interesting. A little further on in the thesis I will demonstrate how this value of flexibility is clearly reflected in day-to-day activities.

5.3.5 Commitment

> It would have been strange if I'd have started working at another hotel, even if it had worked out well. But I'm just so very … I have a strong sense of loyalty. […] Well, you have commitment in an entirely different way; I still feel that … it's not as an *employee* but as a part-owner. (Veronica)

For the Andersson family, commitment involves different things. It is most clearly noticeable as a kind of loyalty – or rather, perhaps, an *emotional loyalty* – that is felt for the hotel and the family business. For example, in the previous section (5.2), it became clear how George would feel about the hotel if, at some time in the future, it was no longer owned by the family: "What if my grandchildren walked past in ten to fifteen years and said: 'Grandma and Grandpa owned that hotel once', and they hadn't had the chance to develop it. That wouldn't be good." Veronica's choice of words, when she described the other hotels as "step-children", may illustrate her feelings for the Queen Sophia which she called "the jewel in the crown". Peter called it a "member of the family" and said that he has more feelings for this hotel than for the others. Richard expressed that it "means a huge amount" to him and Cecilia said that she has "found it difficult to say no to the hotel." For the family, the hotel is linked to memories, childhood, youth and achievements, something that is well illustrated by the various family members' stories about themselves and the hotel in section 5.2. However, commitment also shone through Peter's story of how he worked in different departments of the hotel in order to understand the business and the challenges the employees faced.

Commitment is also expected from the staff, and their desire to be involved, to take their own initiatives and develop is appreciated. Richard talked about how many of the staff who have worked there for a long time also fulfil this:

> I also think that the staff *care* … the advantage is that they've worked here so long that they become part of … I think that Khadija really feels that Queen Sophia is a part of her life.

Veronica talked about the same employee – housekeeping manager, Khadija – with pride and joy:

> It's great to hear that, when Khadija was in Dubai, staying at a fancy hotel … she only saw all the things that *didn't* work and handed over a long list to the manager, who called and wanted to talk to her. He offered her a job there!

To return to the commitment among the family, this is manifested in how they sometimes don't want to transfer areas of responsibility to others. Among other things, Veronica said: "It's never the same if someone comes from *outside*." Peter said that the family can find it difficult to let go of things that people at other hotels

would see as minor details. He used the example of the décor and said that it "is very close to everyone's *hearts*, we often return to it and talk about it in detail." Richard has this to say about the family's commitment: "Never needing to doubt that we all take one hundred per cent responsibility, or more, is a huge advantage."

With Veronica, commitment appeared to be something different, which could be described as a type of duty. She spoke about a period a few years ago, when she needed to work extremely hard at the same time as being pregnant. Even though she said "I think it's really important that you don't live with your work all the time", she emphasised: "When people need to work less because they're pregnant or on sick leave, I just don't understand it; I worked flat out then." She continued: "As I don't normally get ill myself, I feel a bit like *'Get on with it!'*" She then explained, in a little more detail, how she doesn't like it when people whine and complain without taking any responsibility for finding a solution to their problems, themselves. She said that she thought the same when her friends complained about their jobs.

5.4 Exploring Family, Family-Owned and Personal Touch

So far in this chapter, I have presented the family members and I have shown how the values, found at the Hotel Queen Sophia, are expressed in their stories. In this section, I will explore and discuss the emphasis the family puts on "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch" (5.4.1). I will also discuss how family talk relates to values (5.4.2).

5.4.1 "We're Quite an Approachable Family"

During my interviews with the family members, they all placed great importance on the Queen Sophia's being a family-owned hotel. They talked about what they are like as a family, and how this is reflected in the hotel. How was this apparent in what they told me? Among other things, as has already been seen in this chapter, by the use of family metaphors to describe the feelings they have for the hotel. For example, they talked about the Queen Sophia as a "member of the family" (Peter) and other hotels in the company as "step-children" (Veronica) or, as Peter called the Umeå hotel, "a cousin or half-sister". However, this was also made clear in other ways. Cecilia said: "I think that the hotel is perceived as having *a personal*

touch, we're quite an approachable family, so I think that's reflected in it." According to Hubler (2009), "the culture of the family business and the creation of the family point of view are often established by the father in his influential role as the business leader." (2009, p. 254) During our conversation, daddy, George, returned to family and the personal touch of the hotel, in various ways. For example, he said that over the years the greatest challenge has not been "to maximise profits, but to establish interesting hotels with personality on the right locations." The values that he said he wanted to pass to his children were "good morals, a focus on customers and employees." As regards employees, George said:

> It's been important to us that all the employees are interested and involved, and that we should be a hotel that says who we are as a family; that should be reflected in the staff and also in the *décor*. So that's number one.

He continued to talk about the interiors:

> And the rooms in themselves; it's easy to get a *personal style*. There's no room that looks like another one. There are high ceilings and bay windows; it's built on a *history* that is fun to develop.

The family's own opinions of themselves and the hotel are also closely linked to how they wish to be perceived. During the interviews, family members took both an internal and external perspective (cf. Braidford *et al.*, 2014). They openly expressed how they wanted the Queen Sophia's family ownership to be outwardly visible, and for the guests to feel it. This was emphasised in various ways. Judith said that she hopes it is noticeable that the hotel is family-owned and "that the owners are somewhat at the centre and meet the guests." In our conversation, Peter highlighted how the hotel must be tailored to the family's personality to feel individual, and when I asked Veronica how they wanted to be perceived, she said: "That you feel the *intimacy*, not the *lavishness*." Richard said the following:

> I want the guests to feel that there's a family behind the hotel. Not because I think anyone stays at a hotel because it's family-owned, but if the hotel is *special*, it doesn't feel like a Scandic. This is a bit *unique*, it's *a gem*. It's owned

> by one family, there's no big chain that owns it.[20] I think that contributes to the atmosphere; staying here is a bit more enjoyable.

Richard continued talking, still clearly differentiating the Queen Sophia from a chain hotel:

> I want this to be the opposite. This isn't just any old hotel. This is a hotel that this family has made a great effort to make it *unique*, something *personal*. So you don't have to like all the décor, but there's a *soul* to it. That's what I'd like to achieve with this hotel and with all our hotels in general.

His sister Cecilia had the same opinion. I told her that I've seen how they clearly emphasise the hotel's family ownership on their website and in their hotel brochures. Is there an element of pride in this?

> Yes, *absolutely*, we're very proud that there's a lot of *history*, of the fact that it's family-owned and about all that's happened at Queen Sophia from when Mum and Dad took over until now, and what we want it to be. But we never want it to be a chain hotel. So absolutely, that's what would reflect the family. I think many people have enjoyed working here, because there's a good spirit to it.

Zellweger *et al.* (2012) suggest that "when family members believe in their firm and history, they tend to be more inclined to construct a strong family firm image that can be exploited through the promotion of the business as a family firm in the market place." (2012, p. 246) Several of the family members talked about the hotel by clearly positioning it against what it is *not* – a "chain hotel". They feel that they are – and want to be – something entirely different; not "a hotel like any other" or "lavish". They use words such as "personal", "history", "special", "unique", "soul", "intimate" and "a gem" to describe this. The concept of the hotel's having a personal touch also appears to be linked to the fact that they are a family and that the hotel is family-owned. "Family", "family-owned" and "personal touch" are, thus, all connected and can be said to characterise the family's stories, but also how the parents and children perceive the hotel and the character they want it to have.

[20] Hotel Queen Sophia is part of a global chain of independent hoteliers. During my time in the hotel, the management made an active choice to drop the "chain brand", and instead become a "soft brand" within the hotel group, which means minimal branding requirements. Instead, they enhance their own hotel name and individuality.

Neither do they appear to draw any clear boundaries between themselves, what they are like as a family and what the hotel is like, nor how it should be perceived. In this way, the hotel becomes a kind of extension of the family and the family's identity. Not surprisingly, the owners of family businesses play an important role in the construction of *organisational identity* (Boers, 2013). The synthesis of the different beliefs that stem from the family and the business – usually linked to their joint history – can provide an explanation about how this unique organisational identity emerges (Zellweger, Eddleston and Kellermanns, 2010). According to the Anderssons, the hotel is – and they want it to be – a mirror of the family. This was also obvious when George said:

> I believe that if you're going to maintain the family profile you shouldn't have an external managing director, it should be someone from the family.

The fact is that the family situation matters for family businesses. Close and emotional family ties may be more important than economic matters for succession success (File, Prince and Rankin, 1994; Santiago, 2000; Sharma *et al*., 2001; Peters, 2005). In this endeavour, values count. Sorenson (2013) suggests that founders have a chance to create an organisational culture around their own values and beliefs and, in this process, some founders may seek to promote family values in the firm, especially if they see the business as a family business and expect other family members to work in it. According to Gagné, Sharma and De Massis (2014), founders create the values and goals that guide their business, and they also have plenty of time to ensure that their beliefs and preferences pervade the culture and systems of their firms. Schein (1983) expands on the same point:

> Founders and owners do have distinctive characteristics that derive partly from their structural position as owners. It is important to understand these characteristics if one is to explain how strongly held many of the values and assumptions of first-generation or family owned companies are. (Schein, 1983, p. 25)

5.4.2 Family Talk and Values

The bundle of resources that is unique to a business because of a family's involvement and interaction is often acknowledged as the "familiness" of the business (Habbershon and Williams, 1999; Pearson, Carr and Shaw, 2008).

Familiness is thought to stem from the interactions of the family system, individual family members and the business system.[21] As I approach the end of this chapter, it is reasonable to ask: Is the Anderssons' great emphasis on family and family ownership and insistence on the personal touch all about values? Not as I comprehend it, even if it is closely associated with values. Instead, it is about how they see themselves, their business and how they want the hotel to be perceived. I believe it is close to what Hubler (2009) calls "the soul of family business". He suggests that "soul is what drives all that happens in family businesses, as well as the indefinable essence of a family's spirit and being" (2009, p. 254). However, as I have shown in this chapter, the family members' stories about the family and the hotel are permeated by the five values of joy, cooperation, consideration, flexibility and commitment. *How* are the values embedded in this "family talk"? In different ways and several examples follow.

Joy was most clearly expressed, perhaps, in George and Judith's detailed stories about the joy they felt in building and running the hotel business together. Joy also characterised their stories about the children's choices to start working in the family business.

Cooperation infused the family talk. For Judith and George, the hotel was a joint project from the very start, and over the years it became a family affair. Likewise, the children highlighted the parental cooperation, over the years, in their stories. The fact that all the siblings are involved in – and work together – in the hotel business also shows how strongly cooperation is valued within the family.

Consideration emerged, for example, when Judith emphasised that the owners (the family) "are somewhat at the centre and meet the guests." Similarly, when Richard emphasised the fact that a family owns the hotel, he said it "contributes to the atmosphere, staying here is a bit more enjoyable." This family cares about their guests and is visible to them and the hotel has a personal touch. This concern also affects the employees, something that became clear when Cecilia said: "I think many people have enjoyed working here, because there's a good spirit to it."

[21] It should be noted that the term and the use of the concept has its critics, see for example Weismeier-Sammer, Frank and von Schlippe (2013) and Frank *et al*. (2010).

Flexibility was communicated in Richard's finding it natural that his sister, Veronica, coached Nathalie in her new role as hotel manager, although Veronica also had her own managing director duties to attend to. It was also reflected in the presumed availability within the family. Richard said: "You never need to feel guilty for calling someone in the family late at night, something you would never do with anyone else." However, flexibility is also a sort of privilege that comes from being a family member, as, for instance, when Judith talked about what it was like to work while the kids were small:

> Judith: After all, I was a bit flexible. I could go home if needed.
>
> Me: Did you have your children with you at work, some time?
>
> Judith: Not very often. Sometimes, if I had to go to work on Sundays, one of the kids would come with me. If there was no chambermaid that could come to work, then I had to go instead.

Commitment was made clear when several of the family members emphasised that one must belong to the family to be completely dedicated to the business. Like when Veronica said: "It's never the same if someone comes from *outside*", and when Peter pointed out: "Never needing to doubt that we all take one hundred per cent responsibility, or more, is a huge advantage."

Thus, the five values can be found in the family members' stories, in their images, words and their descriptions of the family, the hotel and what they want to be. Language allows family members to negotiate and reinforce values and beliefs (Tannen, Kendall and Gordon, 2007). In the case of the Andersson family, it also permits them to form a shared view of the hotel and the business as a whole. As Hubler (2009) so accurately puts it, "the manifestation of the soul in family business comes as a result of the emergence and discussion of family values." (2009, p. 255) The five values are highly prominent among the family and its members and, as I will continue to examine and elaborate on in the coming chapters, are also apparent among the employees at Hotel Queen Sophia. In the final discussion, in Chapter 9, I will discuss, further, how the different values are manifested in different ways among family members and employees.

5.5 Summary

In this chapter, I focused on the family who own and run Hotel Queen Sophia – the Anderssons. I presented the six family members through their stories and their own words about themselves and the hotel, and I explained their present and previous roles in the business (5.2). I also showed how the values of joy, cooperation, consideration, flexibility and commitment are expressed in the stories told by the family members (section 5.3). In section 5.4, I explored a recurring theme in the family's stories that is closely linked to values, i.e. the importance they attribute "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch". I also showed how these concepts are used and I discussed how they relate to values.

In the following three presentation of findings chapters, I will present the various parts of the hotel and its members, while immersing myself in the different values. In chapter 6 – The Lobby – I examine *joy* and *consideration*. In chapter 7 – The Restaurant – I explore *cooperation* and *flexibility*. Finally, in chapter 8 – Life in the Corridors – I delve into the value of *commitment*. However, let us start with the lobby and reception – the heart of the hotel.

Chapter 6: The Lobby

6.1 Introduction

The lobby area is the first place in the hotel that the guest encounters and often it is a vibrant and busy location. The lobby is of great importance as it shapes the impact on guests and other visitors (Rutes, Penner and Adams, 2001), and it supports product and service differentiation (Worcester, 2000). The Hotel Queen Sophia is no exception. It is also where the receptionists work and where staff, from the different departments in the hotel, meet and chat. In this chapter, I show how the values of *joy* and *consideration* are expressed through the employees' stories and daily conversations. In the first part (6.2), I introduce the scene, events and people. I describe everyday life in the lobby area, reception and back office and introduce four of the employees who work in this part of the hotel. In 6.3, I immerse myself in the discussion of the two values and put them in context. How are joy and consideration manifested in this particular setting? I also reflect on the importance that the staff in the reception area put on familiness. Finally, in section 6.4, I summarise this chapter. This is the third of five presentation of findings chapters.

6.2 The Heart of the Hotel

> From the late nineteenth century on, hotels became vertical cities, constantly mixing a personal, illusive sphere with sheer anonymity. In the hotel lobby, a fleeting place-for-passing-through, the muzak never stopped while, day in and day out, new guests got their room number at the front desk. (Heynickx, 2015, p. 138)

Even today, lobbies are still highly vibrant places. Hotel lobbies have a contemporary role, among others, as social and cultural meeting places (Naqshbandi and Munir, 2011). According to Löfgren (2016), a hotel "balances so precariously between a number of polarities such as private and public, intimate and intimidating, adventure and routine." (2016, p. 277) This makes the everyday working-life in and around the lobby interesting. "Reception is the heart of the hotel", said Carl, the night manager, when I interviewed him. He was not the only

one to use this metaphor. Several of the staff spoke about reception and the back office as the "hotel's heart". Usually, they highlighted that a lot of things happen here: guests check in and out at the front desk, restaurant visitors pass through the reception area, deliveries arrive, and, every day, other employees come by the back office to clock in and out and to gossip for a while. Some of the other expressions used to describe this part of the hotel were: "where it happens", "in the thick of it" and "in the eye of the storm".

When discussing reception and the back office, I find it fruitful to draw on sociologist Erving Goffman's structural division of social establishments and the distinction between "front region" and "back region".[22] Goffman conducted fieldwork in a Shetland Island hotel and developed an analytical approach to interaction, as described in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1959). It is especially useful to understand the daily conversations, talk and stories at the Queen Sophia. The front region refers to the place where a performance is given (Goffman, 1959; Shulman, 2017). The reception and lobby area may be understood to be front regions; correspondingly, the back office, is an example of a back region. According to Goffman, an individual's performance in the front region may be viewed as an attempt to give the appearance that his or her activity in the region maintains and embodies particular principles. The back region, on the other hand, can be defined as "a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course." (1959, p. 112) Goffman suggests that people use back regions to prepare themselves for performances in front regions. "Here, the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking his lines and step out of character." (1959, p. 112) Conversely, the front region "is the meeting place of hosts and guests or customers and service persons", according to MacCannell (1973, p. 590). This is the servicescape where services are delivered (Shulman, 2017). However, as will become clear in this chapter, it is sometimes difficult to separate front regions from back regions and, moreover, the two may be transformed, one into the other (Goffman, 1959).

[22] Also referred to as "backstage" and "front stage".

6.2.1 Front Region: Reception and the Lobby Area

> The hotel is a place where experiences are co-produced in interaction between hotel staff, other guests and material artefacts. (Strannegård and Strannegård, 2012, p. 2010)

As you step into the hotel from the busy street, you encounter a reception desk in dark wood with a crystal chandelier hanging above it. On the wall behind the desk is a beautiful old-style clock and historical portraits of Swedish queens hang in thick gold frames. The reception desk has a white marble top and one or two receptionists, dressed in elegant black uniforms, greet you as a guest. Welcome to the Queen Sophia!

As you proceed a little further in, you pass a painted pillar decorated in gold and you are now in the lobby, or "The Salon" as the management like the staff to call it when they present it to the guests. This is one of "Lily's four rooms".[23] It is situated in a covered courtyard between three adjoining houses. Wooden windows and iron balconies face the inner courtyard and the houses are painted in red, yellow and ochre tones, creating a sense of warmth and intimacy. The lighting is warm and dimmed, and heavy wall drapes in subdued colours contribute to the atmosphere. In the lobby, historical and old-fashioned "objets" can be found, such as oriental rugs, velvet buttoned armchairs, fringed table lamps, paintings, old framed menus, a traditional coat rack, a hat, a couple of walking sticks, women's shoes, an embroidered bag, plumes, a wall pendant and a standing table frame with a yellowed portrait of a woman. The walls are panelled in dark wood. It is almost like stepping into someone's cosy house from the past; there is a feeling of being thrown back in time, something that is reinforced by the furniture, lighting, menus and clothes. It is as if you had stumbled behind the scenes to see what it looks like. McCannell (1973) calls this phenomenon "staged intimacy": "What is being shown to tourists is not the institutional 'backstage', as Goffman defined this term. Rather, it is a staged back region, a kind of living museum" (1973, p. 596). Thus, hotel guests may feel that they are entering a back region, but actually it is a front region that has been created for the guests to specifically shape their experiences. McCannell uses the term "staged authenticity" to describe what it is about. It may

[23] As I have described in Chapter 4 – "The Staff Meeting".

be “a touristic front region that has been decorated to appear, in some of its particulars, like a back region” (1973, p. 598). This kind of scenographic hotel environment emphasises and enhances the guests’ sense of escapism (Strannegård, 2009).

6.2.2 Back Region: The Back Office

The back office is located behind reception. Saloon-style swinging doors separate these two areas. These doors not only serve an architectural and visual function, but they also have a symbolic function. They mark the dividing line between the guest area and the staff area (Shulman, 2017). They separate public and private, and divide the stories and talk of the front stage from those of the backstage. Goffman’s (1959) analysis is helpful to understand this division:

> Very commonly the back region of a performance is located at one end of the place where the performance is presented, being cut off from it by a partition and guarded passageway. By having the front and back regions adjacent in this way, a performer out in front can receive backstage assistance while the performance is in progress and can interrupt his performance momentarily for brief periods of relaxation. In general, of course, the back region will be the place where the performer can reliably expect that no member of the audience will intrude. (Goffman, 1959, p. 113)

Strannegård (2009) points out that there are regions in hotels that guests never have access to. The back office at Hotel Queen Sophia is such a place. It is cramped and messy and out-of-date with loose wires, visible cables, a cabinet for electrical equipment and other odd items. When the luggage room is full, guests’ bags are stacked here, on top of each other, sometimes higgledy-piggledy, making the room feel even smaller and messier. Goffman claims that the line dividing front and back regions is illustrated everywhere in society, and he stresses that there are differences in design and decorations between the two (Goffman, 1959, p. 124). At the Queen Sophia, these differences are striking.

In the back office, there is a photocopier, a bulletin board with schedules for those at the front desk, digital wall screens for clocking in and out and also four monitors for the surveillance cameras in the public areas, such as reception. Every day, the employees enter the back office to clock in and out and, no less important, to chat

with their colleagues for a while. According to Goffman, it is in the back regions "that we may expect reciprocal familiarity to determine the tone of social intercourse." (1959, p. 128) It is also here, in the back office, that the staff prepare themselves for their work in the front regions. Shirt collars are corrected, scarves are tied, makeup is applied, hair is put up and, using Goffman's words, "costumes and other parts of the personal front may be adjusted and scrutinized for flaws." (1959, p. 112)

The front office manager and assistant front office manager have their main work space in the back office. During their shift, the receptionists move in and out between reception and the back office. It may be to talk with someone who is in-charge, to do some administrative tasks or to drink some water or a cup of coffee when it is quiet at the reception. But who are the people that work here? By highlighting some of the employees' stories, I would like to describe the work, events and everyday life in the lobby through the employees' own words, and to delve into the two values that were most clearly expressed in this area of the hotel: joy and consideration.

6.2.3 Nadia – The Employee of the Year

According to Koseoglu, Onder and Bilen (2012), a hotel's culture is of significant importance to hotel guests' expectations of the hotel's service, as well as for how they perceive its quality of service. The receptionists' duties are to make guests feel welcome, to check guests in and out, to manage reservations, take messages and to deal with requests and complaints from guests. The daily routines for employees in reception at the Queen Sophia require that the person who worked the previous shift does a hand-over to the arriving employee. The incoming person also checks whether there is anything particular to think about during their shift and reads the hotel's email. They also check what is happening during the upcoming day or week, for example if there is a conference or party, so that they are aware of it. "Then you just get on with it", as the receptionist, Nadia, expressed it when she explained the daily routines to me.

Early one afternoon, at the end of April, I helped Nadia in reception. She asked me to find out when two different running races were to be held in Stockholm and to

write an email to the person responsible for the hotel's food purchases, ordering bananas for those dates so that runners could have them in preparation. Nadia said: "Try to find a picture of a funny monkey with a banana to put in the email, and sign it with my name." (Field notes, 29 April 2015) I did this, after searching for images on Google. The humour was appreciated and several employees dropped by to say it was a funny email. It was also Nadia's own initiative to consider the guests' needs and to order bananas as she guessed that many of them would appreciate it. Another day, a member of the reception's staff offered guests chocolate-coated strawberries, which they had arranged on a nice silver plate on the reception desk. This was also done on the initiative of an individual employee.

In many ways, these are relatively typical, ordinary occurrences, in reception at the Queen Sophia where the hotel's values are often expressed in small gestures and everyday conversations. When I interviewed Nadia a few weeks later, both joy and consideration were expressed. But first, who is Nadia?

Nadia is thirty-one and has worked as a receptionist at the Queen Sophia for three years. She is originally from Poland, but moved to Sweden to, as she says, "experience things, change the environment, and shake life up a bit." She has previously worked in a supermarket, as a cleaner and as a secretary at a driving school. She first came into contact with the hotel during a placement on a hotel course. When the course finished, she was offered a job.

Joy and optimism shone through my conversation with Nadia. She said that she thinks that working at the Queen Sophia is fun, and, in many ways, she represents the everyday joy that is found at the hotel. She also has happy memories close at hand, such as this one, when she talked about a funny episode during her placement:

> In reception, you get lots of questions about touristy things during the holidays. A Danish couple came and started asking things. I tried to understand, but I'm not that good at Danish. And I was new… but they asked about something that I thought was *cycling*. They wanted to rent bikes and have a nice day out in the sunshine. I answered: "Yes, it's a lovely day for cycling". Then my colleague took over the conservation, and as soon as

> they'd left, she started laughing, because apparently, they'd asked about a *boat*.

In addition to having fun with her colleagues at work, Nadia emphasised the importance of making guests happy so that they come back, and also how the management expects the staff to be cheerful and positive.

During our conversation, Nadia talked about consideration, including the owning family. She thinks it is noticeable that the hotel is family-owned: "Everyone in the family who works here is so *involved*. They check what's happening and ask how it's going. Perhaps a guest has emailed directly to them, and then they deal with it themselves." I asked her what other things demonstrates this. Nadia: "When Peter was hotel manager and was 'manager on duty' at the weekends, he would get up and help guests at breakfast. He wiped tables and so on; kept an eye on things and asked us how things were. It's things like that, I guess, no other hotel manager would do." Nadia said this shows a kind of consideration and a desire to understand what work is like for the employees. As regards consideration, I asked Nadia how *she* is. Does she want to receive feedback?

> Nadia: No, I know that I'm good at my job and get a positive feeling from my work and what I do. I don't expect anyone to come and tell me that. But it's true; it feels nice to be appreciated.
>
> Me: Do you feel that you get appreciation from the job in itself?
>
> Nadia: Yes, when the job's done and the guests are happy, that's more confirmation than something nice from the boss.
>
> Me: Like a good flow?
>
> Nadia: Yes, I like it when work is on a roll, when things get done. You have time for everything, can answer emails and phone calls and have guests in front of you. Nothing gets left for later or causes stress.

Even as Nadia highlighted the satisfaction of the job, itself, she also emphasised the consideration and team spirit she experiences at the hotel. The day after our interview she took me aside and said: "There's something I forgot to tell you yesterday. I was awarded *Employee of the Year*." She continued speaking, with pride: "I was voted this by the reception staff, and I got a grant, which I used to go

to London to make study visits to three five-star hotels." At the hotels, she saw how their organisation was built up and how they worked, which she really seemed to appreciate.

6.2.5 Front Stage Stories

The values of joy and consideration were clearly expressed in this part of the hotel. Consideration was especially noticeable, front stage – in reception and the lobby area. In my field notes, I have commented on the *consideration of guests*:

> For some particular guests (two couples), who celebrate their ruby weddings – forty years – in June, they plan to arrange for something nice to be in their rooms, maybe fruit, candy and a card. Sümeyye told me that she would make a note in the booking system so that the staff would remember to do that "little extra something" for them. (Field notes, 21 April 2015)

A little later that same day, I had scribbled down:

> Sümeyye told me that dogs are welcome at the hotel. "We usually put a bowl of water in their owner's room together with nice little gift of dog treats for them." She also told me that dogs are welcome in the lobby. (Field notes, 21 April 2015)

Another sign of concern for the guests is that, every summer, the hotel creates a "children's corner" in the lobby so that the children can draw, craft and play with toys. This year, it was also planned that they would show kid's movies on the television in the lobby. There is also *consideration for the staff*:

> Today, front office manager Lisa brought a cinnamon-roll wreath for the staff at reception. Even those who passed the back office got to taste it if they wanted to. (Field notes, 22 April 2015)

The daily conversations between the staff, at the front desk, were often low-key, and all maintained the formality that one would expect of a four-star hotel. The receptionists had a positive, happy and thoughtful tone, towards both guests and colleagues alike. However, there were exceptions to this formality. When it was quiet and empty in reception and the lobby – usually during late mornings and early afternoons – these spaces were infrequently transformed into backstage regions. How was this manifested? An example would be how the staff talked and

what they talked about, such as here, where one of the receptionists expressed dissatisfaction, in a somewhat sarcastic tone:

> Today, Clarissa was standing in the lobby, fixing the flowers. "Are you the stand-in floral manager during the summer?" I asked cheerfully. She replied: "Yes, *now* you see what's typical of a family-run hotel; that you must jump in and make a little bit of everything." She sighed. "But isn't it fun to arrange the flowers?" I commented. She replied, acidly: "Well yes, but I have my own usual duties to handle too ..." (Field notes, 15 July 2015)

Another example of backstage behaviour, front stage, was when I was talking to the receptionist, Belinda, in the lobby at a quiet time of the day during the summer. She said: "I sometimes have difficulty talking positively about some of the rooms in the hotel because I would not like to stay in them myself." (Field notes, 28 April 2015) On another occasion, she underscored: "I would *never* stay at such a hotel. When I'm abroad on vacation, I stay at five-star hotels. That's the standard *I* want." (Field notes, 20 July 2015)

Front regions could also be transformed into back regions in other ways, and by persons other than the receptionists; for example, by the owning family. One day, in mid-June, I found the managing director and owner, Veronica, taking photos of her kids sitting on the reception desk. One of them was jumpy and fiddled with the chandelier above. The atmosphere was happy and excited, and judging by the children's nice clothes, I assumed that they had celebrated the last day of school before summer vacation. A little later that day, I saw that Veronica had also photographed the kids on the bed in room 119, and posted the picture on the hotel's Instagram account with the text: "School's out, summer holiday's in! Find our best rates on hotelqueensophia.se." (Field notes, 10 June 2015) Edensor (2001) suggests that most stages can change; they are ambiguous and they are places of activity for different performances. A little further on in this chapter, in the section about the back office, I will continue the discussion about how front and back regions sometimes blend. For now, let me further highlight how the value of consideration is found in the employees' stories. Young receptionist, Michael, is a good example of a person who embodies this value.

6.2.6 Michael – The New Guy

> I studied drama at upper-secondary school. I like being extrovert, which is why I wanted to work as a receptionist, and because I like being social and talking to people.

Michael is twenty-one and is one of the most recent employees at the Queen Sophia; he had only been working for a few months, when I interviewed him. Before he started at the Queen Sophia he had done a year of film studies at university, as well as working for a few months at a hotel on Sardinia and another in the Alps. Just after arriving home to Sweden, he emailed the Queen Sophia, went for an interview with the assistant front office manager, Emel, and started work soon afterwards. The idea was that he would work by the hour, a few shifts per week. "But people quit and I stayed here", said Michael. He immediately understood everything he had to manage simultaneously – from the new booking system to dealing with dissatisfied guests.

> When I was here for the first few days, standing behind the reception desk, I didn't understand how I'd ever really manage it properly. […] I didn't understand how many balls it's possible to juggle at once. Answering the phone, having loads of guests in front of you, the façade being renovated, there was loads to do and all over the place. And there was I, who'd worked at quite a quiet hotel before.

But once Michael got used to it, people gradually began talking about how good he was at his job; with both the new booking system and the guests. His colleagues and bosses particularly emphasised his pleasant attitude with the guests, but also his ability to stay calm when things got difficult. How did he learn to prioritise?

> It's important to be the public face and to manage the guests properly, while at the same time I want to be able to do the work behind it too. […] Of course, it was really tough in the beginning. But I realised that the more time passed and the more days I was here, the calmer I got.

Michael started work at about the same time as the major renovation of the hotel's façade commenced, and it continued for months, including the entire summer. The management had chosen not to inform the guests about this in advance, something that meant the receptionists had to deal with many complaints from angry guests

who were dissatisfied with their rooms; that windows were covered or that it was noisy. Michael said that these situations can be difficult because you have so many eyes watching you, from other quests who are checking in or who have complaints. In *Behavior in Public Places*, Goffman claims that we have "party faces, funeral faces, and various kinds of institutional faces" (1963a, p. 28). Those who work in reception at Hotel Queen Sophia also have "happy faces", "pleasant faces" and "considerate faces" in their repertoire, no matter how they feel inside. This became particularly clear during my conversation with Michael. He used a performance metaphor when he talked about his work and said that "it's like standing on a stage".

> Michael: This summer has been a real learning experience for me, the most educational thing I've ever done. I've never taken as much crap as I'm doing now. You shouldn't ever take it personally, but you sometimes do anyway. It's *me* they're standing there shouting at – no one else.
>
> Me: Saying you shouldn't take it personally is easy enough, but if you have it thrown in your face …
>
> Michael: Exactly! My having done drama helps me, I know how to act. I've played so many different roles. Somehow you know how to answer and to manage the guests. I see that as a little contribution from the theatre.

I was struck by how solution-oriented Michael was as he talked about that stressful summer. Our conversation made it clear how much he cares about the guests and that they have a good time, even if many situations were unpleasant for him, personally. His consideration for the guests was apparent when he talked about an incident that summer:

> Michael: I was standing in reception when a group arrived to check in. One extra bed was missing, so they were really annoyed. It was late; they wanted to go to bed …
>
> Me: Oh, did you manage to organise a bed?
>
> Michael: Luckily there was one on their floor.
>
> Me: Who made the bed then?
>
> Michael: Really, the cleaners should.

> Me: But you did it yourself?
>
> Michael: Yes … the tough thing was … I was the only person in reception and I had to leave it for 20 minutes …
>
> Me: Yeah, it takes a while to …
>
> Michael: Yes, so I put a sign in reception, "Ring if you need me", type of thing. So people did call. In a situation like that it's hard to prioritise, there was so much happening at once.
>
> Me: Do you get frustrated or nervous in such a situation?
>
> Michael: I don't get nervous, I know that all the guests will have a bed at the hotel and they'll be satisfied in the end, but I'm almost in a cold sweat. After all, I want to manage everything as quickly as possible and then things can go wrong because I do them too quickly.

Michael clearly seems committed to the promises and sacrifices that are built in to the role of a receptionist (cf. Goffman, 1961, p. 89). He thinks that he gets good support from his manager, Lisa, and says that "she's a very modest person. I feel very secure with her." And the owners? Well, Michael thinks it is noticeable that the hotel is family-owned. He emphasises the family's consideration and participation:

> You're in such close contact with everyone. Richard comes past reception every day, Veronica too. You know them all. Everything's so … you become like a big *family* in some way. You're very close to each other.

Family ownership is a positive thing for Michael. He believes that it creates closeness and gives the hotel, and his work there, a family-like touch.

Michael's story is filled with his consideration for the guests and putting them first. But he also highlighted the consideration that he feels his line manager (Lisa) shows him, as well as the owning family, which contributes to a sense of closeness and family. He also mentioned his colleagues: "I get on with most of them, or *everyone* really." He continued: "We talk a lot when we're standing in reception, about what's happening and what we think … we've almost always got someone to talk to about things."

Another employee who expressed great consideration for the guests was the night receptionist, Carl. Let me introduce him now.

6.2.7 Carl – The Night Manager

"I've had lots of different jobs in the hotel business; done conferences, bookings, orders, *yup* … you name it." Carl is 43 and has worked at the hotel for five years. Previously he has worked at other hotels in Stockholm, studied at university and worked at a travel agency in Paris.

At the Queen Sophia, Carl mainly works as a night receptionist. This means that he works seven days in a row and then has as many days off. When we met for an interview, I asked him what working nights was like.

> One common misunderstanding is that you're some type of night guard who just sits and watches people go in and out, and that not much happens. But it's not like that at all, here. If you work nights, you summarise what's happened during the day, add up all the tills, go through the arrival lists for the next few days and prepare for the guests who'll be arriving, so there's quite a lot of office work.

In my conversation with Carl, his consideration for the guests and focus on their well-being was clear. Among other things, he said that it is important to keep an eye on who goes in and out of the hotel during the night. It is in the middle of a busy area for nightlife and there can be drunks and fights outside. "It's a zoo, it really is", he stated. "Do you ever get scared?", I wondered.

> I've never been scared, though I can get worried, both for the guests' security and because they should be in a calm environment. Sure, a few nutcases have walked in, but I've managed to talk them out of here again.

Consideration was also apparent when Carl talked about what the guests are like. He said that "ninety-eight per cent of the guests are very nice" and that most are down to earth:

> There's a different kind of atmosphere at night. People aren't as stressed and often they've already checked in earlier during the day, so there can be long, pleasant, interesting conversations. […] It might not be like in a bar, but it's

> different, some want to talk and others don't want to talk at all, and you have to respect that.

I asked if he has got to know anyone better.

> Yes, there are actually a few guests that I say hi to and chat with as I would an acquaintance. And they talk to me in the same way. You notice that. If you think it's meaningful then it's really nice.

Carl's consideration for the guests was also obvious when he mentioned potential crises, such as if a fire should break out at the hotel: "We have to remember that the night is the only time when *all* the guests are actually in the building, so it's not an unimportant time." He said that most fire safety training courses assume that a fire starts during office hours:

> I've always been the one with my hand in the air saying "But what if …" because it's not mentioned. But I know what I should do. I should stay in reception, because if one thing is certain, it's that the phone'll light up like a Christmas tree, and it's important to take the calls. If no one answers when the fire alarm goes off there'll be panic.

During our conversation, we talked about the family that owns the hotel. Does Carl think it is apparent that the hotel is family-owned? "Yes, it runs through everything in some way", he answered. How?

> You have respect for them, because this is *their* hotel. A Scandic is the shareholders' hotel and that's so abstract, but here it's concrete because they lead the work at the hotel. The advantage is that decisions are made close by and you can talk to the people who actually decide things.

Carl often takes up issues directly with the owners. "This could be anything from salary negotiations to concrete suggestions and even events that have occurred", Carl said. He added: "If you want to talk, you get to talk." He also appreciates the owners' commitment and that they care about the employees:

> When Peter was the hotel manager he did a good thing. He wanted to see all the departments, so he actually worked nights with me, to understand what it's like and how I find it … I really appreciated it. Because it's a little bit of a blind spot for many people.

Carl feels that there's mutual respect between him and the owning family, but also emphasises that he has no personal relationship with any of them. He also explained his reasoning about the owners' presence and commitment and highlighted how it is not always constructive:

> Carl: This is probably not just a job; it's their lives, childhood and everything. Of course it's in their blood somehow. Those of us who aren't in such a situation probably can't imagine what it would be like, for better or worse. We think like employees, in another way. Of course we work with our heart and soul, but it's our job – not our life. Sometimes you could think that …
>
> Me: You mean you're expected to be as passionate?
>
> Carl: Yes, sort of. That whatever's decided you should be just as enthusiastic, but people don't work like that. That part of a family business … you perhaps demand as much from others as you do from yourself.

Other disadvantages he brings up, regarding family ownership, include the focus on economy, which results in his not being offered training to the extent he would like. "As long as everything rolls along, they don't see CPD as particularly necessary", he says. The same is true of the potential for a career and advancement at the hotel. "This is very limited, which is also a problem, because the family appoint other family members to higher positions first. This makes it very difficult for outsiders to come in and advance."

Carl says that important qualities in colleagues are taking responsibility and having a good attitude towards both other colleagues and guests. Crang (1994), examined hospitality work, and found that the metaphor of performance was employed and debated among employees. Just as Michael did, Carl used performance metaphors when he described his work:

> Me: There's so much going on in reception, you must be very stress resistant and able to prioritise. And at the same time look cheerful?
>
> Carl: Yes, put a smile on your face. Of course, it's theatre, so much of it is theatre. Acting is part of the job.
>
> Me: You mean that even when you're not cheerful …

> Carl: Yeah, or a bit under the weather. Then you have to remember that you have a role and that you're playing it.
>
> Me: Do you like it?
>
> Carl: Yes, to some extent. It happens automatically. I almost don't think about it when I take on the role.

It is easy to imagine that this "acting" or "playing a role", which both Michael and Carl describe, is somewhat shallow, but that would be a simplified interpretation. To smile and be pleasant to guests is an integrated part of the work that Hochschild (1983) defines as "emotional labour". This kind of work requires the individual to encourage or restrain emotions in order to maintain the outward visage that produces the proper state of mind in guests and customers. According to Hochschild, emotional labour "calls for a coordination of mind and feeling, and it sometimes draws on a source of self that we honour as deep and integral to our individuality." (Hochschild, 1983, p. 7)

The role that Carl describes includes consideration for the guests; in this case, seeing things from a guest's perspective:

> Sometimes I remind myself of how the guests experience it. In reception, we say the same thing two hundred times … but for the people arriving, a family, they're spending seven thousand krona on three nights, which is a lot of money when it's your own. And they might have saved a whole year to come here. Then we have to remember that this is a big deal for them, it's easy to forget that. They could have looked forward to this trip for a whole year, so we have to treat them well.

Then he rounded off this thought by saying: "The most important thing is making the people who come here feel welcome. They don't know about all the office stuff I have to do. That's what it's all about. If we don't have any guests, we won't have any jobs."

When I worked a night shift, a little later towards the end of August, Carl was sitting on a bar stool in reception trying to fix a difficult booking. He described the atmosphere during the evenings and how he likes to have the entry door open to

get some fresh air. He also said: “At night, when everyone else who’s working has gone home, I feel like it’s *my* hotel in some way.” (Field notes, 28 August 2015)

6.2.8 Backstage Stories

In the same way as front stage stories may reveal values, the same goes for the backstage ones. In the back office, both consideration and joy permeated the daily conversations and the stories. How? For example, in concern about the *guests’ well-being*, as when Lindsay, who is responsible for the flowers at the hotel, told me: “It's important that the flowers don’t have strong scents, because many guests are allergic.” (Field notes, 13 May 2015) Care was also shown to *me*, for example when Lindsay told me, the same day, that her Rhodesian ridgeback had passed away and asked me if I wanted the dog’s raincoat. Often, those in the back office would also ask me to come and chat for a while. They wondered how my work was going and what I had discovered. It also happened that they asked me to join them on different get togethers. The front office manager, Lisa, asked me: “We have a ticket to Fjäderholmarna[24] tonight, with a three-course dinner included, if you want to come along?” (Field notes, 22 September 2015) This was an inclusive approach, significant for the culture in reception and the back office. On other occasions, back office talk included both consideration and joy, as in this episode that I experienced:

> When I entered the back office this morning, a conversation was taking place between Lisa, Rania and a third person. It was about a guest who had got a parking fine. Lisa said: “We're telling everyone that they must put the parking voucher in the window, but it seems hard to understand. It's the third time in a short time, and it’s always Scanians*. What’s wrong with people from Scania?*”[25] I felt like she referred to me, since I am from Scania and have a distinct Scanian accent. The others laughed and so did I, although a bit abashed. Lisa then went out to Nadia at the front desk and said: “We must get better at explaining to guests that they should put the parking voucher in their car window.” She carried on: “But we have good contact with Q Park;

[24] A small group of islands in Stockholm's inner archipelago.
[25] Sweden’s most southern region.

> they are usually nice and the guests usually get off the fine when we explain to them what has happened." (Field notes, 22 April 2015)

According to Ojha and Holmes (2010), "humour helps people to interpersonal, intercultural, organisational, performative, rhetorical, and small group contexts" (2010, p. 279). They also state that humour can lighten tense moments and convey various messages. Back office talk at the Queen Sophia, as the story above illustrates, was quite often about guests, or incidents with guests. Usually, sound levels were significantly higher in this part of the hotel, although much of what was said was actually audible, front stage, in reception. Saloon doors may be useful, but not to conceal lively conversations. That way, the assumed backstage privacy was a chimera.

Other typical features of the conversations taking place here were private and personal talk between employees, as well as gossiping, humour, joking and irony. This short episode can illustrate this:

> When I came back from my rounds in the corridors with a red basket, one of the girls in the back office joked with me. "Have you been shopping?", she said. "Sure thing", I replied. "I've been at the market." (Field notes, 26 May 2015)

Talk in the back office was more informal than at the reception. The staff talked about everything from how difficult the guests can be, how annoyed they were at the management, their pets, their families, and their private love lives. Edensor (2001), explored Goffman's metaphor of performance, and found it useful to understand backstage behaviour:

> For Goffman (1959), the inherently dramatic nature of social life ensures that we invariably play particular roles in "front stage" social contexts, driven by an urge for "impression management", removing our mask only in informal "backstage" regions. (Edensor, 2001, p. 60)

What does Edensor mean by "removing our mask" only when we are backstage? Are back regions' behaviour and talk more authentic than that of the front regions? No; both are a necessary and natural part of the daily work. Cain (2012), studied emotional labour and she challenges the assumptions, of fronts being all about

performances and that back regions being more genuine, by showing how the staff integrate the two into a professional sense of self.

As I highlighted earlier in this chapter, sometimes the boundary was blurred between the back and front regions at the Queen Sophia. Goffman (1959, pp. 128-129) explains: "By invoking a backstage style, individuals can transform any region into a backstage." An illustration of this might be when Slavko, the caretaker, put his arm around the waist of one of the female receptionists while giving her a compliment, in the back office. A couple of weeks later, in the morning, he did the same thing again, this time in reception – the front stage. From my field notes that day:

> At 11.30 today, I helped Eva in reception. Then Slavko came up from behind her and put his arm around her waist and teased her a little and said she was beautiful. She got a bit embarrassed, but seemed quite used to this happening. She asked him – and the other caretaker, Darko, who had now joined us – about her water heater. When they left she turned to me and said: "I usually ask them about technical things I don't understand." She also said: "They're nice when they're in a good mood." (Field notes, 12 May 2015)

These were some examples of the stories and conversations in the back office. In the following section, I present Lisa, the front office manager, who has her main workplace in the back office. What her story reveals about joy and the desire to have fun puts words to the everyday ambience that characterises the back office and reception.

6.2.9 Lisa – The Front Office Manager

"Having fun, that's really important for me", said Lisa, the front office manager, when I met her for an interview. All the conference rooms were booked, so we had to sit in room 323. The guest had just left. The curtains were drawn; there were used ear plugs on the bedside table and the moisture from the hot shower was still noticeable. A wet towel was draped over my chair. Lisa continued: "I really think we have fun in back office and reception; we laugh a lot during the day. I need to have fun and I feel that I'm developing in my role. I have to be able to have the responsibility I have."

Lisa always has a laugh ready, and I often noticed how her infectious joy made its mark on reception and the back office. But still, a great deal of our conversation dealt with how the last six months had *not* been great fun. It also dealt with her consideration for the employees, and how she felt that the hotel manager and management had lacked exactly this.

Lisa is forty-three and has worked at the hotel for two-and-a-half years. Before this, she worked at a couple of other hotels, and as an airline representative at Arlanda, Stockholm airport. She received her training at a Swiss hotel school. At the time of our conversation, a few months had passed since the façade renovation began and the introduction of the new booking system. She said that these things had created extra pressure on the staff.

> In the summer, everyone went on leave at the same time, and only Emel and I were left. I had to work nights and there was so much for Emel to do. She was on her own here. There was … all of this stuff with the renovation … guests arrived and were furious.

Lisa's consideration for the reception staff was obvious when we talked. At the same time, she emphasised how the hotel manager and management had not given them the recognition they deserved.

> The first few weeks were all about dealing with crises: there were double bookings and that kind of thing. I've brought it up with Nathalie, that we really have to do something for the reception staff to thank them for putting up with so much this summer; that it's a miracle they're still here. We have to, because otherwise we won't keep the good ones.

She highlighted the importance of the management's seeing and appreciating the staff. In this context, she mentioned the *Employee of the Year* award that they have had for several years. All the staff can vote for the colleague they think has done something well, for the hotel or for their colleagues or both.

As with other members of staff that I spoke to, Lisa used family member and former hotel manager, Peter, as an example when I asked how a good manager should behave. "He listened to all of us, and let us help him. He took in what we said … 'Ah, Stuart thinks that, Lisa likes guest relationships.' Then he used it." What

Lisa describes is a kind of humbleness, interest and commitment in a manager. At the same time, she stated that the management could be better at feedback:

> Sure, I get that they think we do a good job, but it's amazingly difficult to get them to say it. I feel that it's very hard to get encouragement from them; they just give you things to do all the time.

The above can be used to illustrate consideration in action, but also the lack of it where you would expect it. Lisa also says that many things just peter out, like the management group's meeting in Madrid and the ideas that were presented at the staff meeting, but which were never followed up.[26]

> They had a meeting in Madrid last year that hasn't led to anything. They had so many ideas when they came back … None of that has started and that was six months ago. […] Many people are at the point where they're fed up … they wonder why Nathalie is interfering with the arrivals list when she's got other things to think about in the building. Nathalie needs to learn to relax.

Lisa also explained that she thinks that the hotel manager, Nathalie, has not dealt with issues that are normally a hotel manager's job; focussing instead on showing the managing directors and owners, Veronica and Richard, that she can solve the everyday issues that arise.

> Lisa: Right now, I feel that I could just as well go to Veronica and Richard about things, because she has to ask them anyway. "But aren't *you* the hotel manager?" I think.
>
> Me: Do you think she could be better at taking her own decisions?
>
> Lisa: Yes, quick decisions! Because we can't have things like this, just petering out and nothing happening. I've told the others in reception: "I'll quit soon if things don't start happening."

Lisa talked about this in association with the situation in reception during the summer. They were understaffed at the same time as they were supposed to be learning a new booking system and were also managing numerous complaints

[26] As I described in Chapter 4 – "The Staff Meeting".

from guests, related to the façade renovations. Lisa felt there was a lack of consideration from both the management and the hotel manager.

> Lisa: Veronica looked completely blank when I said that the summer had been chaotic. She didn't get it at all; she looked at me as if I came from outer space. Then I understood that Nathalie doesn't pass things on to the management that we might not be doing too well here right now.[27]
>
> Me: Does it feel as if they lack awareness?
>
> Lisa: Yes, sort of. Veronica is managing director, but it's Nathalie who should keep an eye on things and know when it's time to act. They have to see … they have to understand that we sat and cried in back office every day this summer when there was no manager here.

She talked about how important it is to really see the staff and to reward them for good work:

> I usually take the reception staff out in June. Last year we went to Sandhamn.[28] We just went out with the boat, ate lunch, and then we went to Rita's house and had snacks and champagne. We haven't had time this year; I've said we should do something again.

She also thinks that gifts are important:

> There should be a proper Christmas present, and an Easter egg. It's really important. And cream buns on the right day. Those costs just have to be paid. The little things mean a lot.

In the context of consideration for staff, she emphasised the importance of joy: "I'm so used to us having fun in reception. We have to get back to where we think it's fun, and to laughter, and I think we've started to get that back over the last week or so." According to Bruner (2002), narrative is a recounting of expectations gone awry, something I thought about when Lisa talked. She got upset when I asked her about the annual summer party did not happen this year, without the management

[27] This was not the first time Nathalie's leadership skills were questioned. Many members of staff felt that she lacked authority and influence, which is why they, sometimes, went straight to the managing directors if there was something important to discuss.
[28] An island in the Stockholm archipelago.

providing any information or commenting on it. "It just can't *not happen*", Lisa said drily.

On another occasion, I met her in the back office. She was much happier then, including about reinforcements for the reception team:

> A new guy's starting in reception soon. Just like Michael, he's got no hotel education, but has worked in reception at a golf club. Our reasoning is that it's much more important to have the right person than to have training and the right experience. They can learn the booking system afterwards. He's been a model too, so that's not bad … we can take lots of lovely hotel pictures with him … but *oooh*, what am I saying … (Field notes, 15 September 2015)

Lisa giggled, embarrassed, but I carried it on and added "then you can activate the Instagram account properly" and "it doesn't hurt for the guests to have something nice to look at".[29] Then we laughed together.

To summarise; in this section I have described everyday life in the lobby, reception and the back office, as well as introduced some of the key personnel who work there. I have also shown what their stories are about, and how the values of joy and consideration become clear in the stories.

6.3 Joy and Consideration in Context

In this section, I put the values of joy and consideration into context and discuss how they are manifested for the people who work here in this particular setting. I also reflect on the importance the staff in the reception put on familiness.

6.3.1 Emotional Work in the Experience Economy

Today, many hotel guests seek unique experiences, which the rise of design, boutique and lifestyle hotels demonstrates (Strannegård, 2009). When guests look for more than just a room for the night, the numerous demands, on those who work at the hotels, increase. The employees are part of the experience, and they are supposed to evoke different emotions in the guests. "Performance of the brand servicescape" is a way to describe what this is about (Ryu *et al.*, 2018, p. 28). According to Urry (2002), "tourism is often about the body-as-seen, displaying,

[29] No, I am no angel either.

performing and seducing visitors with skill, charm, strength, sexuality and so on." (2002, p. 156) Larsen (2010) states that the production-side of the hospitality industry "is increasingly theatrical and performative; they resemble real theatres as workers are 'cast members' wearing costumes and trained to enact scripts and roles that fit in with their institutional setting, which is often a theatrical themed environment." (2010, p. 320) This is associated with the rise of the "experience economy" (Pine and Gilmore, 1999), where focus lies on the experiential aspects of social and economic life and where staging experiences is strongly emphasised (Mehmetoglu and Engen, 2011).

To work in a reception area is a kind of service work that involves direct interaction with guests. According to Leidner (1999), emotional labour is of great importance to be able to perform this sort of work. A characteristic for service jobs – such as receptionists – is that the employers try to manage the staff's emotions while, at the same time, the employees themselves strive to control the emotions of their guests and customers. In this kind of setting, "the power dynamic of the workplace shifts from a tug-of-war between workers and management to a three-way contest for control between workers, management and service recipients" (Leidner, 1999, p. 91). Being able to fulfil these manifold requirements is a crucial component of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983).

It is against this background – the experience economy and emotional labour – that the strong presence of joy and consideration can be understood, at least partly. For example, when Nadia stressed, in her story, the importance of making guests happy, and that the management expect the staff to be cheerful; or when Carl talked about putting a smile on his face, even if he does not always feel happy, as well as when Michael expressed that he wants the guests to be cared for, even if he himself is "almost in a cold sweat". Thus, both joy and consideration are something that is expected from the staff, and which should be conveyed to the guests and visitors. It also seems that the staff expect these qualities from themselves. In order to expand on this further it might be useful to focus on personal values.

6.3.2 Joy and Consideration as Personal Values

The emphasis on joy and consideration can also be understood as personal values. For the staff at the Queen Sophia, this is about feeling joyous at work; laughing with colleagues and having the opportunity to successfully execute their responsibilities. "Having fun, that's really important for me", said Lisa. Nadia said she gets a positive feeling from the job itself, and also expressed an intrinsic satisfaction about being able to finish the work in time, as well as making the guests happy.

The desire to care for each other at work, and to help each other, also became clear in the stories. Examples were given, when Nadia emphasised the consideration and team spirit she experiences at the hotel; when Michael said that he receives good support from his manager and that "she's a very modest person" and when Lisa talked about how important it is to really see the staff and to reward them for good work.

In this sense, joy and consideration are closely linked to the wish to enjoy *the work itself*, and to develop and function well with colleagues. Additionally, the great consideration, given to guests, may be interpreted as a sign of personal values. Why? Because, often the initiatives that the receptionists took extended far beyond what the employees must do, such as putting regulars in their favourite rooms, ordering bananas for marathon guests, offering them chocolate-dipped strawberries, remembering their ruby weddings, solving their parking fines and so on. A culture of taking one's own initiatives was manifest among the receptionists, and this was also the case for decision-making and taking responsibility (cf. Sosteric, 1996). Moreover, it is not far-fetched to assume that many people who work in the hotel industry do so because they enjoy meeting new people, making them happy, and caring for them. In this way, the work can actually be about expressing the values you already hold, instead of trying to adapt to certain rules and norms. Hochschild (1983) claims that service providers are *expected* to feel and show certain emotions during their encounters with customers and guests; something that is associated with "psychological costs" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 187), such as stress and burnout. This is one side of emotional labour. On the other hand, Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) maintain that the negative effects of emotional

labour on the individual's well-being are moderated by their identification with the role, or the values and norms of the role. They state that "identification may render emotional labour *enjoyable* and enhance well-being" (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1993, p. 107). Gabriel (2010), argues that *caring* in service work, for example, should not be "reduced to a simple enactment of different emotional scripts or resistance to them" (2010, p. 58). This is also in line with my own observations. Many of the receptionists, at the Queen Sophia, seem to identify with the receptionist' role and understand that it fits with their view of themselves. Even if the work itself contains situations where the staff sometimes have to act in dissonance with their feelings, this does not necessarily mean that they are not true to themselves (cf. Guerrier and Adib, 2003), or that they are victims of a "false self" (Hochschild, 1983, p. 194). It means that they perform the work that they are hired for, while remaining aware of its pros and cons. However, exceptions to this may be noted, such as when the receptionist, Belinda, said: "I sometimes have difficulty talking positively about some of the rooms in the hotel", and that she "would *never* stay at such a hotel". This indicates an alienation or estrangement (Hochschild, 1983); a need to separate oneself from the hotel, the work role and the requirements that are associated with that role.

6.3.3 Reflections on Familiness

The values, as they appear in this part of the hotel, can also be understood in the light of the family's influence and involvement. The presence of joy and a positive attitude in reception and the back office may be explained by the family's strong emphasis on joy, as I have described in the previous two chapters. To recall owner George's motto: "Working at Queen Sophia should be *fun*." As reported in the previous chapter, family businesses stand out on dimensions such as empathy and warmth, which include care, compassion, consideration, helpfulness, friendliness, support and well-being (Payne *et al.*, 2011). In the receptionists' stories, consideration was clearly associated with the family. Nadia said: "Everyone in the family, who works here, is so *involved*. They check what's happening and ask how it's going." Michael explained: "You're in such close contact with everyone. Richard comes past reception every day, Veronica too. You know them all. Everything's so … you become like a big *family* in some way." Several members of the staff also

used family member and former hotel manager, Peter, as an example of a great manager. As Lisa said, “He listened to all of us.” And Nadia: “He wiped tables and so on; kept an eye on things and asked us how things were. It’s things like that, I guess, no other hotel manager would do.”

The influence of the family was usually mentioned in positive terms, with references, such as the decisions are made close by, and that you can talk to the people who actually decide things; that the family is committed and that the presence of the family gives the hotel a nice touch. But disadvantages were also mentioned, such as the fact that the staff is expected to jump in and do a little bit of everything, and that they are supposed to have the same strong commitment as the owning family, and also that the family appoint family members to higher positions before non-family members. In this way, the staff may consider the family as an asset, as well as representative of some of the downsides of working at the hotel. Tagiuri and Davis (1996) have highlighted that the organisational features of family firms account for both their strengths and their weaknesses; something that became evident during my conversations with the receptionists. Kets de Vries (1993) summarises the “good news” and “bad news” of working in family businesses and mention commitment and quicker decision-making as advantages, whereas an unclear division of tasks and nepotism are the disadvantages.

Finally, I would like to emphasise that although joy and consideration appear particularly clearly in this part of the hotel – reception, the lobby and the back office – it does not mean that the values of commitment, flexibility and cooperation are not present here. *Commitment* may be distinguished in night manager Carl’s strong ambition to ensure the guests’ (good) experience and well-being. Young Michael embodies *flexibility* in his quest to solve the difficult situations that come up in reception daily. Finally, front office manager, Lisa's, emphasis on *cooperation* becomes evident when she talks about team spirit and job satisfaction in the group.

6.4 Summary

In this chapter, I introduced the scene, events and people in the lobby area of the Queen Sophia (6.2). I discussed everyday life and talk in reception and the back

office using sociologist Erving Goffman's (1959) structural division of social establishments and the distinction between "front region" and "back region". I also presented four of the employees who work here, more closely, through their stories and their descriptions of the work. Above all, I highlighted two values that appear especially clearly in this part of the hotel, in the employees' stories and daily talk: *joy* and *consideration*. In 6.3, I immersed myself in the discussion of these two values and put them into context. I also explained how these values are manifested in this particular setting, and I reflected on the importance that the staff in reception put on familiness.

In the next chapter – The Restaurant – I will present the restaurant and the kitchen areas and the people who work there, and the values of cooperation and flexibility will be explored in-depth.

Chapter 7: The Restaurant

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore everyday life in the restaurant and kitchen of Hotel Queen Sophia. I immerse myself in the stories of the waiters, chefs, managers and the other people working in the restaurant and the kitchen. I continue to use Goffman's concepts of front and back regions (1959), as I introduce the restaurant and the kitchen (7.2). I also show how the values of *cooperation* and *flexibility* become particularly clear in this part of the hotel, when expressed through the employees' stories (7.3 and 7.4). In section 7.5, I expand the understanding of these two values and discuss them further. I also explore the manner in which the staff in the restaurant and kitchen talks about the family who own the hotel.

7.2 Welcome to Lily's

> From the lightning and music in the entryway to the decorations on the walls, from the language of the menu to the appearance and flavour of the food and beverages, restaurants create an easily consumable packaged environment that customers partake of while they eat and drink. (Erickson, 2004, p. 77)

Lily's salon, pantry, orangery, library and kitchen have all influenced restaurant Lily's various areas and have prompted its slightly longer name, "Lily's Kitchen – and four rooms".[30] The guests usually reach the restaurant through the hotel's reception, after first passing through the *salon* (lobby), which I presented in the previous chapter. Guests use the restaurant for breakfast, lunch and/or brunch, and between these times it is possible to get a cup of coffee, a glass of wine or to just have a rest after a day of meetings or on the town. There is also a bar menu. However, if you want an a la carte dinner, you need to enter another of Lily's rooms. Allow me to present them.

The first room you come to is the cosy *pantry*. Wooden boxes and preserved vegetables vie for space on the shelves and there is a little stone table in the middle

[30] As I explained in Chapter 4 – "The Staff Meeting".

of this small room, for groups that want to eat in private. The bar is on the long side of the room.

If you continue into the restaurant, the *orangery* is to your right. This is the heart of the restaurant, with windows that give onto Stockholm's bustling streets. It has rustic tables in dark wood and simple carver chairs in a traditional Swedish style. The pale wallpaper has patterns from old botanical illustrations. Fresh herbs, green plants and clay-potted lemon trees line the window, accentuating the style.

If, however, you choose to pass through to the left-hand side of the restaurant, you end up in the *kitchen*. *Lily's kitchen*, that is. Mossberg and Eide (2017), explore meal experiences and highlight that a "characteristic of the experience economy is the integration of production and consumption" (2017, p. 1185). This is made real, here, in Lily's kitchen. Chefs prepare the food in an open kitchen, fully visible to the guests who are sitting there to eat. Themes and theatricality have become an institutionalised aspect of many restaurants (Gardner and Wood, 1991; Shulman, 2017), and Lily's is one of them. The open kitchen is framed in Moroccan tiles and the shelves hold glass jars, platters and kitchen equipment. The walls of the guests' area are tiled in white and the tall window onto the street is decorated with historic culinary objects. There are rustic tables here too; some are round with white marble tops. The Thonet-style chairs are reminiscent of a French bistro.

The *library* is upstairs and has dark-red wallpaper with a gold pattern. There are framed black-and-white photos on the walls and the brass lamps spread a warm glow. Once again, the tables are rustic as are the chairs, in dark wood. There are old books in the bookshelves for guests to browse through as they wait for dinner. From up here, they can look down on those below.

Hotels such as the Queen Sophia are sometimes referred to as historic hotels or boutique hotels. In these, the home concept may be understood as a constructed commercial product (Lynch and MacWhannell, 2000; Lynch, 2005b). Another way of describing what this – the hospitality home setting – is about, is "pseudo-domestication" (Wood, 1994; Lynch, 2005b). The aim is to create a sense of closeness and intimacy between the hotel and restaurant, and the guests (Dallabona, 2016). So, the four home-like rooms and the kitchen, described above,

are Lily's guest areas and, along with the bar, they can be characterised as the front regions (Goffman, 1959; Shulman, 2017). We will return to these later in the chapter, but first let me show you the back regions. What do they look like? Who works there? What stories are told?

7.3 Kitchen Stories

> Kitchen spaces are barren. They do not have office doors or classic indicators of hierarchies such as an office secretary or placards denoting personal space. Rather, a cook must share the kitchen with other restaurant employees: waiters and waitresses, dishwashers, management, the head chef, and fellow cooks. (Demetry, 2013, p. 578)

The "real" kitchen at Lily's is a cramped space, filled with workbenches, shelves, kitchen equipment and staff. Here, in the backstage area, cold kitchen chefs, chefs, dishwashers and waiting staff share the space. It is separated from the guest areas by only a swing door, which is in almost constant use for most of the day and the evening. According to Erickson (2004), guests are supposed to "see as little of the work that goes into their meal as possible, and the division allows for this" (2004, p. 80). The walls are tiled in white and the beige-tiled floor is often slippery from the food scraps and liquids that end up outside the waste bin, as the waiting staff run in and out. There are also fridges, freezers and kitchen machines. This kitchen is where food, particularly cold dishes, is prepared for breakfast, lunch, brunch and dinner. The hot dishes are prepared in the restaurant's open kitchen, where there are ovens, grills and hobs. My first day here got off to anything other than a flying start.

7.3.1 Where's the Head Chef?

It was about 08:30 on a morning in May, when I walked into the kitchen via the staff door. In my field notes from that day, I had written down the dialogue that took place.[31]

[31] Quotes and descriptions from that day's event are from my field notes, 19 May 2015.

“Hi, I’m meeting David here”, I said jauntily. The guy in front of me looked at me disinterestedly.

“He’s not here.”

“Er, he said I should ask for him; I’m going to borrow a chef’s shirt.”

“Aha”, said the guy, without making the slightest effort to show any interest.

“Yeah, I’m going to sort of be on placement here, and David told me I could borrow a chef’s shirt to wear.”

The guy picked up his mobile phone and scrolled through it absently.

“He’s not here anyway”, he said, and carried on fiddling with his phone.

I then left to find out where David, the daytime head chef, was. No one seemed to know and when I returned to the kitchen fifteen minutes later, I was a bit fed up. The guy was still standing there, apparently with nothing to do. I asked about David again.

“He’s overslept”, he said. And then, with emphasis, he added: “But you can borrow a chef’s shirt from me.”

I didn’t know whether to be angry or happy – *couldn’t he have said that to start with!* However, I was relieved that the clothes dilemma looked like it was going to be resolved. I followed his instructions – one of which was “Just don’t lose the buttons; they’re my own, not the restaurant’s” – then I went down to the cellar to get the shirt.

This was a taster of what work in the kitchen had to offer. The culture, jargon and working situation in this part of the hotel are somewhat different from the other parts of the hotel. Gossip, rude jokes, angry shouting and very direct communication are integral parts of the everyday work. The atmosphere is tougher than in other parts of the hotel, which is illustrated by my field notes from another morning in May:

> A delivery guy arrived today with something and I tried to help him sort it out. I walked into the kitchen, where the atmosphere felt tense, and happened to say to Keith, who was closest: “A delivery guy’s looking for

> David". "I'm not David, I'm Keith", he answered sarcastically. He sneered. I laughed, probably a bit nervously, and turned to David (who I had now seen), and asked if he could help the delivery guy. Of course, I knew that Keith is Keith, but perhaps thought that because he was closest, and is the boss, that he would be able to help. (Field notes, 5 May 2015)

"Kitchens have the reputation for being brutal, loud places", Fine suggests (2009, p. 225). In the kitchen, just as out in the restaurant, sly digs, snapping at others, irritation, comments and groans were common, but were often spur of the moment incidents, after which everything returned to normal. David, who is forty-eight and is the daytime head chef, has worked at Lily's for eleven years. When I interviewed him, he said: "It's really pretty stressful in restaurants; it just is. And there is a culture in the restaurant world that chefs and waiting staff can stand and shout at each other." However, he didn't speak only about the occasionally tough language that was used, but emphasised cooperation and an inclusive approach. He said: "We are a small group and everyone here has a part in it." It was clear that if you worked in the kitchen, you should be interested, hard-working and motivated. He explained how and why not everyone is a good fit for working here:

> If you are *lazy*. If you're ready to struggle and do your best, then it's okay. But if you disappear for a cup of coffee, stand chatting in reception … then you leave your mates to do [the work] … you have to *work hard*. (Interview, David)

Nancy is thirty and from Kenya. She works the daytime shift in the restaurant. She also highlighted cooperation, when I met her for an interview, and moreover she spoke in a compelling way: "You have to *cooperate*! If you are not cooperative, I don't know if you can manage to work in this kind of field. *No, no, no*. We have to help each other."

Cooperation in the kitchen and restaurant at Lily's is also often of the silent type. You do your work, fill in for each other, and are there for each other. Cooperation is built upon knowing what you should do. You work and move around smoothly in the kitchen and between the tables, in a type of silent knowledge. However, as I said above, a sarcastic comment or a snort is always close by when things don't go

as expected. “Behind the scenes, servers collide and swear, tell stories and holler”, as Erickson (2004, p. 80) brings to our attention.

Flexibility is also a prominent value here, as we will examine throughout this chapter. It is closely linked to cooperation because employees are expected to be flexible and support their colleagues in their work. However, flexibility is also found in situations with guests. In my interview with David, he told me:

> At lunch, we’re extremely good at *not* saying no. Someone came in at a quarter to two today and asked what we had for lunch. Sure, no problem! Or if there’s a group of twenty, they’re still welcome. There’s never anyone [among the staff] who moans because guests arrive. We’re great at lunches. We find solutions. On a day like that, when it’s really busy, I see it as a *sports performance*. (Interview, David)

I spent a great deal of time in the kitchen and the dining areas during my period at the hotel. Because a couple of extra hands were always appreciated it was easy to jump in and help, particularly during breakfast and lunch, but also during brunch and dinner. This entailed constant movement between the kitchen and restaurant and between the back and front regions, which is a natural part of this type of job. In the next two sections, I will present two employees who work here in a little more detail – Lela and Alexandra. Their stories further highlight what values, such as flexibility and cooperation, mean at Hotel Queen Sophia.

7.3.2 Lela – The Breakfast Manager

“I’m the day supervisor”, Lela said when we met for an interview in one of the conference rooms. As usual, she was busy, but seemed happy to take a break from work to talk about herself and her job. As breakfast manager, she is responsible for supervising the daytime staff – for breakfast, lunch and conferences. She also draws up the schedules for the daytime staff and is responsible for recruiting and training them.

Lela is fifty-four, and is a trained nurse from Sri Lanka. She came to Sweden with her husband, who is a researcher, at the end of the 1980s.

“I had to ask others how to look for work; about the way in. I couldn’t just open a newspaper and apply for a job – I didn’t know any Swedish.”

A classmate from her Swedish course told her that the Queen Sophia was looking for staff and she was given hourly work as a cleaner. After a while she started to help a colleague who was responsible for breakfasts. Soon after she was charged with opening up for breakfasts herself in the mornings and advanced quickly; after three months, she was breakfast manager.

"I learned to take the initiative myself and to take responsibility", Lela said. She learned the names of the different vegetables, how to make coffee and how the kitchen worked. "I called salespeople and suppliers and said that I was new. 'Do you want to come to the hotel and show me the products?'" They did.

Her enthusiasm went even further. "After work I used to go to different restaurants and have a look. 'Aha, that's how they make open sandwiches.' My boss took me to several different hotels to eat breakfast and to see how they work and put things on plates. That's how I learned." She continued: "It only took me a month-and-a-half to learn. My attitude was: *I can do it*!"

She thinks it is evident that she works in a family-owned hotel.

> For me, for example, it's when Veronica, George or Judith walks past … when they ask: "How are you?", "How's the family?" They might not know that much about me, but they still ask.

The family influences behaviour in family businesses (Dyer, 2003), and moral and social values are given more priority (Sorenson, 2013); something that was demonstrated when Lela continued:

> They discuss things with me and talk to me … I've worked here so long that they come to me automatically. They ask: "How do you want it to be?" When Cecilia wanted to do something with the dining room she asked me what I'd like. It feels great.

She also said that she feels for the family, and that there is a sense of family among the staff: "Khadija, Slavko, Darko … we're like a family. We might argue and shout at each other, but we also joke with each other and can sit and talk." Lela talked about herself, her colleagues and the owners as if they were a close-knit family (cf. Erhardt, Martin-Rios and Heckscher, 2016).

When I asked Lela what skills are needed to work breakfasts, she captured what flexibility and cooperation mean in practice, fairly well.

> First of all, and most importantly, you need to be energetic and cheerful and have respect. You have to respect everyone else who works here, and always be ready to smile. To always say: "Yes, we can do that. *I'll fix it*!" To have that attitude; and sometimes the guests ask … for example, on Sunday I'll have someone who's vegan. I'll say: "No problem, I'll fix vegan food!" Other places might say that they can't do it, but for me, to do that little thing for a guest; and lactose … there are so many different sorts. Vegan, that's a little special, but sure!

I met Lela almost every day during my time at the hotel. I was struck by her commitment, her focus on her colleagues and her emphasis on cooperation. She also embodied flexibility. Being breakfast manager did not stop her from helping out where it was needed; she carried heavy boxes, refilled coffee, climbed up ladders and wiped tables. She was there when they were short-staffed or when new staff needed training; even if it was her day off – she dropped by the hotel and worked a few hours to make sure things ran smoothly and that the staff worked well together. Since both hotels and restaurants are subject to what guests need and demand "here and now", they specifically want staff that is flexible (Guerrier, 1999).

Fine (2009) suggests that people who cover for each other at work, and who perform each other's tasks, assume that this helpfulness will be reciprocated later. For Lela, it is clear that cooperation and flexibility are closely linked and are something *mutual*.

> I try to manage the staff as well as possible. If I need help with something and ask for something small, then lots of people come to help me. That's why I'm always gentle with them. It's give and take. But when I employ them, I say: "I'm tough, I want everything to work well."

Employee-friendly working conditions in the hospitality industry increase job satisfaction, which results in higher commitment among staff (Hofmann and Stokburger-Sauer, 2017). This was illustrated at the hotel, as Lela continued to say:

> Not everyone is one hundred per cent good … But the staff that I have now, is just wonderful, they make the effort … I always try to help them if they ask whether they may have time off now and again. They know that if I always give to them, then they give back too.

Lela also highlighted good cooperation with her own manager.

> Things work really well with Keith. He has *feelings* and he's also really thorough and things should work. Sometimes he gets cross or irritated, but you know that it passes after five minutes. Everyone has their ups and downs some days.

Lela is now one of the people who have worked at the hotel the longest.

"I've always been appreciated here", she said. "Queen Sophia was my first job in Sweden, so I can't forget that." Lela is also grateful to her husband, who has always supported her and helped run the household when the children were small.

"He has been really kind and helped a lot. He knows that work comes first for me because I have fought for it – from cleaning to doing better and better at work. That was what made me Employee of the Year, one year", said Lela, noticeably touched.

7.3.3 Alexandra – The Caring Mentor

One day in May, I helped out in the kitchen and restaurant. The tempo was high, with everyone working hard and with concentration. I set the tables between two sittings and carried out the dishes. During one visit to the kitchen, the dishwasher, Ahmed, snapped at me because I didn't know which dishwasher basket a bottle should go into. Apparently, I had chosen the wrong one. He gesticulated wildly with his arms, reinforcing my ineptness. Alexandra, who is a waitress, witnessed this and said to him, straight out: "Hey, remember he's new here; you don't need to shout, you can be a bit kinder." I felt embarrassed and awkward. Shortly afterwards, when we talked about the incident out in the restaurant, I tried to smooth it over by saying that I had noticed he could be a bit tough, but that I did

not take it too personally. “But it’s not okay to be like that; he’s mean to all the new employees”, said Alexandra, as she wiped off a chair.[32]

This was not the first or the last time that she looked after me. During my time at the hotel, Alexandra was something of a protector and mentor. She used to ask how my work was going and was always helpful in explaining how things worked.

When I met Alexandra for a one-to-one interview, she told me that she is thirty-five and works in the restaurant over breakfast and lunch, and for brunch at the weekends. She has worked at the hotel for more than two-and-a-half years, with a break for parental leave. She has a university education in social science and started working at the hotel while she was finishing off some courses and then she stayed. She has been offered a permanent job, but said no because she feels she has more freedom being employed on an hourly basis.

Her shifts usually start at seven in the morning. She fries eggs and bacon and puts out different breads, yoghurt, ham, cheese, vegetables, smoothies and juices, as they need refilling. She also makes sure that there is freshly brewed coffee and that the espresso machine is working. After that she prepares lunch and serves food to the lunch guests, who start arriving at 11:30 a.m.

During our interview, Alexandra said that she gets on well with the breakfast manager Lela, and with Keith, who is co-owner of the restaurant and cousin to the Andersson siblings. But she does not have such positive things to say about the restaurant manager, Sandra. The difference between working mornings (breakfast, lunch and brunch) and working evenings (dinner) became apparent when Alexandra talked about her.

> Sandra is a more senior manager than Lela, but I don’t have anything to do with her. She doesn’t care, she ignores breakfast really; it doesn’t really exist for her. Well, it’s there for her when she wants to *complain*, if I’m honest.

She continued: “I think that *everyone* thinks that breakfast is worth the least, but I don’t think it’s because of that. She’s got so much else to do, she simply doesn’t have the energy to care.”

[32] Quotes and descriptions from that day’s event are from my field notes, 20 May 2015.

I asked Alexandra what could take the joy out of her job. She thought for a moment and then answered:

"What I think is difficult isn't the guests … I don't really care, it is what it is. Sometimes they're right and sometimes they're not. But it's difficult when … it's stressful when you get an undeserved amount of criticism from the management"; something she said happens now and again. However, other staff at the hotel also had opinions. Because breakfast is free for staff, most of them drop in every day for a sandwich and a coffee. According to Alexandra, they often have opinions about things:

> "Why don't you do this? It's much better." Sometimes there are a lot of complaints … it's easy to have opinions, but no one sees the whole picture. […] It could be anything – that the cups are in the wrong place, that it's dirty, that the food's run out, that there's not enough space. What the hell can I do about there not being enough *space*? [laughs]

I asked Alexandra how it feels. "Having non-constructive opinions, only saying what's wrong; that doesn't help me in my work."

Alexandra returned to flexibility several times during our conversation. It is clear that she values it highly. As in her response, below, when I asked about which tasks feel particularly meaningful.

> I like it when I get to think and not just carry things to and from the kitchen. We have a lot of bookings for brunch and sometimes they're not right. Then you have to make sure things run smoothly anyway, because there's always up to twenty or thirty people who aren't in the system … it's like that every other weekend. Then you have to make sure everything works. I like it, solving situations like that.

So, flexibility for Alexandra means the opportunity to solve problems in her own way – something she thinks feels meaningful – but it also means autonomy at work. Her work is demanding and stressful, with few chances for breaks, but Alexandra feels that she can influence her tasks and her work situation: "That's why I stay. I feel that I have a great deal of freedom, like with my working hours, and even with what I have to do." She does not believe she would have the same freedom and opportunities to develop at a major hotel chain.

> I felt that … now, with my youngest child. That was why I wanted to work so little, I had a baby in the middle there and I feel that eventually I'll need to work full-time, but not in the restaurant. I've talked to them about what opportunities are available.[33]

Group membership and teamwork are considered important in the hospitality industry (Lee-Ross and Lashley, 2003), and cooperation is required in restaurant work (Fine, 2009). Alexandra strongly emphasised the importance of cooperation during our conversation, as illustrated by the following exchange:

> Me: What do you think are important qualities for your colleagues to have?
>
> Alexandra: That they're cooperative.
>
> Me: Are the people who work here cooperative?
>
> Alexandra: Yes, I think most of them are. Some people who work evenings can be a little square.
>
> Me: In what way?
>
> Alexandra: They only see their thing, not the *whole picture*. It's a little … it's not really surprising. I've been to hotel and catering college, so on placements I've seen that it's not an unusual attitude.
>
> Me: Do chefs and kitchen staff …
>
> Alexandra: The *guys* in the kitchen, they have some sort of aggression, I wonder if it's to do with the stress and the prestige. They feel that they have to perform every time they cook something. They get a lot of criticism all the time … something like that. But it doesn't matter if I don't like someone, not as long as I can cooperate with them.

Cooperation also came up again, when I asked what was important, for her to feel good at work.

> A lot of things. Knowing what to do, that there's clarity and no weirdness, that you don't get unnecessary criticism. Then … I like it when there's good

[33] Alexandra was enthusiastic about knowledge exchange and the desire to develop, something she also had the opportunity to do. A few days before I left the hotel, she told me she was going to try working as a receptionist on the night shift, which she seemed very happy about. (Field notes, 7 October 2015)

> *cooperation*. I wouldn't be able to work somewhere hierarchic, where you feel you have to fight and prove what you can do and trample over others.

Alexandra highlighted staff parties, Christmas dinners and summer events as things that made work more enjoyable. According to Smith and Stewart (2011), these kinds of ritual-like activities are meaningful organisational occasions which serve various and important functions. However, for Alexandra, daily work is still the most important:

> I mostly work with David[34] in the kitchen and I like working with them there, they're quiet and sensible, I really like that. […] I've worked a few evenings and then there are more grumpy chefs. I wouldn't enjoy that.

A common reason for wanting to work in the restaurant industry is to have a good time together with co-workers, while being busy at work (Wellton *et al.*, 2017); something that became clear during my conversation with Alexandra.

What about the family? Well, during our conversation Alexandra returned to the owners occasionally. She was there when the generations changed, that is, when George handed over to the children.

> More happens now; it feels … it's noticeable that they're younger and hungrier. […] They haven't changed the concept or anything, but they have more of a drive to *develop*, not just for things to be fine. Things were good before, but now it feels as if they're working for development.

She feels that she has a personal relationship with the owner family, particularly Veronica, one of the managing directors:

> It started when she was ordering lunch and asked: "What are you going to do in the summer?" and "What are you doing in the holidays?" Little things you do between colleagues. So we have contact in that way.

About the siblings in general, she said: "None of them are unpleasant. They're very ambitious. They *work* here; they aren't just *spending time* here." She added: "Sometimes I think they work more than I do. They don't simply wander around."

[34] The daytime head chef.

7.4 Tales from Lily's

In this section, I continue to highlight how flexibility and cooperation permeate the daily work in the restaurant. According to Whyte (1949), a restaurant is "a social system whose parts are interdependent in a highly sensitive manner" (1949, p. 305); something that is highlighted here. Let us return to the front regions and the guest areas.

7.4.1 It's Dinner Time![35]

"Nicolas, can you take the order from the man at table 3?" I stiffened when Joel, the head waiter, said those words. I looked at the clock – 08:15 p.m. My experience as a waiter[36] was not even five hours' long. As yet, I hadn't made a fool of myself. Perhaps because I had mostly stayed close to the bar, folding napkins and gazing out across the buzz of the restaurant. "Oh, sure … but what if he asks something about the menu, or the wines", I asked, worriedly. "He won't, he's the type who knows what he wants, and it'll probably be a beer to go with it", promised Joel. He was right. The elderly man ordered a chanterelle soup, char – and a Heineken. I wrote everything down, went to Joel and proudly read out the order.

This shift had started earlier in the day, at 03:45 p.m. to be precise, which is the time the evening shift starts.[37] You generally ate some food before it was time for a run-through with the team, which is done every day. As usual, Sandra led it. She is forty years old, is the restaurant manager, and has been in the industry her entire professional life. She came to Lily's five years ago. When I spoke to her in our one-to-one interview, she explained which qualities are important for working in the restaurant: "Being flexible, to start with, and able to cope with stress, absolutely. Otherwise you can't do the job." She also emphasised the importance of good cooperation. One of the items at today's meeting also dealt with that: "When you arrive in the afternoon, please check the lobby; make sure it's nice and clean with no empty glasses on the tables. Then you can light the candles, and then start setting tables in the restaurant." Judging from her tone of voice, I understood that

[35] Unless otherwise is stated, the quotes and descriptions in this section are from my field notes, 28 August 2015.
[36] That is how I believe the guests saw me.
[37] Evening shifts at Lily's ended at around midnight, but could often be longer.

she thought the staff had not managed to keep the lobby nice and tidy. This is the shared responsibility of the restaurant and hotel, but the staff from each area often tended to see it as the other side's responsibility.

"There's a lot to do tonight", said the waitress, Chloe, as we set the tables. Chanson-type French music played from the loudspeakers and the oil lamps glowed warmly in the room. Ambience is important in the creation of a successful hospitality experience (Heide, Lærdal and Grønhaug, 2007). On the tables, we had set out place mats in a vintage style, with wine glasses, water glasses, cutlery, mismatched old saucers with small flowers and gilt edges, and white napkins in silver-metal rings. The food at Lily's can best be described as a fusion of Swedish, French and American. *Chanterelle soup*, *steak au poivre* and *crème brûlée* were on the menu that night. The theme often followed the seasons, such as an asparagus menu in the spring and, as now, chanterelles at the end of August. According to Mossberg and Eide (2017), both the restaurant itself and the menu with its different themes can be understood as "experience staging", which emphasises "the symbolic, aesthetic and hedonic nature of experiences", as well as the "consumers' engagement and their search for value creation" (2017, p. 1185).

The bartender, Enrique, had only been in the job two weeks but appeared to have complete control of his domain. I had carefully noted what I had to do, in my field notes: "Light the candles in the salon, change the candle rings", "go up to a suite with a bucket of ice, glasses and knives", "slice bread", "bring wine and beer up from the cellar", "clear tables", "polish glasses", "reset the tables between guests", "fetch strawberry puree", "fold napkins – three different styles" and, not least, "take an English-speaking man's order".

Sometime later, after taking the order, I was once again standing at the bar. Linda, one of the slightly older waitresses, came over holding a wine bottle and imitated a strong American accent: "Can you make sure the wine is not warm". She grimaced with her entire face. An American woman had said this, when Linda was about to serve the wine. Commenting on the guests was common at Lily's; it could be their attitude, behaviour, or appearance. This evening, the guests who had booked special offers were referred to as "mean". Staff often swapped comments about the guests, when they met at the bar to collect drinks. Even though this is the front

stage, the staff appeared to feel that they were backstage. According to Erickson (2004), waiters "use the backstage to assemble food and beverages but also to drop character, if only for a few seconds." (2004, p. 80) Goffman (1959) suggests that when team members "go backstage where the audience cannot see or hear them, they very regularly derogate the audience in a way that is inconsistent with the face-to-face treatment that is given to the audience." (1959, p. 170) "This is how we are", commented Linda, who had worked at Lily's for a few years.

Out in the kitchen, the chefs were in a good mood, joking about, and the work was going well. They also came out to the bar to get themselves drinks. Enrique got irritated because the glasses were running out: "You can't drink out of the beer glasses, take other ones, I need those for the guests", he said, annoyed. When individuals enter a region, they usually need to recognise the physical boundaries (Goffman, 1963a). According to Fine (2009), a great deal of the separation, between chefs and waiters, concerns spatial rights. "The kitchen is the domain of the cook; the 'front' or dining room belongs to the server." (Fine, 2009, p. 109) As here, this could also belong to the bartender. Tiffs between staff members were common at Lily's but, as I said earlier in this chapter, they appeared to be something quickly shaken off.

According to Larsen (2005, 2010) performances should never be determined by their choreographing, since they always include factors of changeability; for instance, performances enacted by employees are never entirely identical to scripts in staff handbooks. I noted that Chloe sat, or rather leaned, on the neighbouring table when she took the order from a group of four people. When she commented on this later, she said: "Yes, it's probably a little *too* relaxed, I don't think we're really allowed to do that …" This may illustrate how a restaurant "is co-practised, co-created, co-performed and generated in interactions" (Mossberg and Eide, 2017, p. 1187). Chloe is twenty-two and has worked at the hotel for just over six months. When I interviewed her, she said: "I think service work is fun; you can talk to people out there." She likes it being down-to-earth: "You can walk around and chat to guests and colleagues; it's not so stuck up." She also emphasised cooperation because she thinks it's so important to the job.

> Chloe: I've never been afraid of asking anyone, if I need help … everyone can always help out. It's nice to be able to have that relationship; that everyone helps.
>
> Me: What do you think is important about having colleagues, is it helping each other?
>
> Chloe: Yes, absolutely, *cooperation*. […] I'd rather work with someone who wants to work and who's there for you. That's important for everyone.

Several of the people whom I spoke to, who work in the restaurant, expressed how they wanted it to be relaxed, down-to-earth and personal, and that the people who work there are flexible and cooperative. Lily's was like that; the staff was there for each other when it was needed, and nothing was left to chance. In my field notes, from that evening at the end of August, I had noted: "It feels like good teamwork and you go in and look after each other. The people who work there seem happy together."

Cooperation and flexibility were also apparent, in other ways, when I interviewed Joel a few weeks later.

7.4.2 Joel – The Head Waiter

Joel is almost thirty and has worked at the hotel for just over a year. He has a permanent job and works full-time. Prior to this he worked at an Indian restaurant in his hometown of Halmstad, and in a pub in the same town. "I often did double shifts", he said when we met to talk for a one-to-one interview. He came to Stockholm to train as a sommelier, had a placement at a wine bar and then started working extra there, which he still does regularly. He saw an advert for staff at Lily's on the internet. He started as a waiter, but once he was there he applied for and got the job of head waiter.

Flexibility was expressed in different ways during my interview with Joel, including when we talked about what is necessary to do his job. According to Joel, this means adapting his behaviour to deal with what the situation requires.

> Me: What qualities do you think you need to work here?

> Joel: Primarily that you see things that no one else does – it's bloody important. For example, if the ink in this pen runs out [Joel holds up a pen] – it's little things like that you have to think of. That's the main thing … and you have to be a bit jokey and pleasant, have a sense of humour.
>
> Me: And be able to handle everyone from snobby types to drunks?
>
> Joel: Yes.
>
> Me: I understand there are maybe limits …
>
> Joel: Yes; you still have to command some respect. And then you're a work person and a private person, that's not the same. It's theatre, the whole thing.
>
> Me: Does it feel like that?
>
> Joel: Yes, though now I've done this for so long that it's not acting anymore; that you come in and should be a particular way.
>
> Me: Is it like stepping into a role when you come here?
>
> Joel: Yes … a bit, still. But it's actually fun.

At work, Joel is the person that his position allows and requires him to be (Goffman, 1961). This may include the encouragement or suppression of feelings to make guests feel cared for (Hochschild, 1983). But, as Guerrier (1999) points out, people working in hotels and restaurants "may not think of themselves as being servile to customers but instead may enjoy stepping into the limelight and putting on a good performance for the customer." (1999, p. 59)

For Joel, flexibility is also closely associated with both *autonomy* and *a lack of prestige*; being able to make your mark on the business:

> When I moved to Stockholm to train as a sommelier… I didn't want to stand with my hand behind my back and always serve from the right. I wanted to be able to sit down with the guest, pour from the wrong side and be relaxed, instead of being a stuffy type. It was a bit over-formal when I started here, but no, it should be a coming home feeling. Not only serving from the right. I guess it feels easy and relaxed coming here.

Then he added: "It feels as if it's become a little more how I want it to be here."

As for many others who work at Queen Sophia, Joel expressed strong commitment: "I think about work all the time; at home too." Having a good time with colleagues and guests is what he most emphasises: "I'd rather go to work than be at home, because I think it's so much damned fun – I can really long for my shift to start", said Joel.

Teamwork is also vital. Joel points out that working in the restaurant means taking care of groups of guests and giving them a good experience, so cooperation is really important: "The guest sees that, how we work as a *team*." During our conversation, Joel often returned to cooperation and the importance of personalities that complement each other and create a group dynamic.

> A girl-friend of mine is studying HR. They talk a lot about how a team should have a Karlsson, Matsson and a Svensson. Different *types*, that is. One who's fun and giggly, one who is focused … there are different personalities …

I asked who *he* is. "I'm probably the one who laughs and is funny and jokes around. I brighten things up", answered Joel.

He also thinks it is important to have a supportive manager who understands the employee's situation, particularly, as concerns "customer stressors" (Hunter and Penney, 2014, p. 264), such as dissatisfied and unpleasant guests. Sometimes he thinks that his manager, Sandra, lacks this understanding.

> She can come to us and say: "Those guests weren't so satisfied, what happened there?" Well, we're *understaffed*, we don't have time. Most complaints, when the guests give us a low grade, are because we're understaffed. We do the best we can.

He thinks that Sandra is glaringly absent from the restaurant in the evenings; that she mostly sits at her computer and goes home early. "If she'd have been here she would have understood. Now we always have to sit down and explain", he said resignedly.

Disloyal colleagues are something else that Joel finds difficult to deal with. He socialises privately with several colleagues and they usually have a beer together after work. They used to have a drink in the hotel bar after their shift, but an incident, sometime ago, put a stop to this pleasant habit.

> Joel: We were in the bar in our work clothes, but we'd finished working. Some of my colleagues downed a couple of shots before getting changed and going out for the night. Then it got …
>
> Me: You were getting warmed up?
>
> Joel: Yes, exactly. Stuart from reception sent an email to the management, which he's so good at … [irony in his voice]
>
> Me: He ratted on you? Were you cross with him?
>
> Joel: Yes, actually. He just wants to do everything right. He's a goody-two-shoes.
>
> Me: Were you behaving yourselves?
>
> Joel: Yes, we were, and it was relatively quiet. It was no worse than any other night.

It was also apparent how group dynamics and cooperation work when Joel talked about the new barman, Enrique:

> Joel: He won't be here long, I'm sure of that. It's not right.
>
> Me: For you or for him?
>
> Joel: For both. […] He doesn't really fit in. He *tries* but … I've given him three weeks, then he'll quit.
>
> Me: Why d'you think …
>
> Joel: I guess he thought this was a flashier hotel bar, where you can mix fancy drinks, but there are lots of other things to do, too. [There's] carrying food, laying tables, serving and washing dishes; that type of thing. He probably thinks he's going to stand at his bar and look good – but that's not really how it works.

Before he had to get back to work, I asked Joel what his plans for the future were.

> I don't really know right now. I think I'm going to stay here as long as I'm up to it. It's so big here. You might think a head waiter doesn't have that much to do; just seat a few guests, but it's bloody busy all year round.

7.4.3 Keith – The Cousin and Co-Owner

"You could say that the restaurant is my concept – everything except the décor", explained Keith, the food and beverage manager and co-owner, when we met for an interview. Keith is forty-five, married, and has two children. He worked as a chef, sous-chef and head chef at several leading restaurants in Stockholm before he started Lily's, ten years ago. It was George who recruited him. Keith's mother is George's sister, so he is a cousin to the owner siblings, Veronica, Richard, Cecilia and Peter. He thinks that he was asked to start the restaurant because they are related: "George has never taken on someone external before, he says that he knows hotels but not restaurants. You have to have a little know-how", said Keith. He owns 49%, while the Andersson family owns 51%. I asked him what it's like running the restaurant as a co-owner.

> That depends a lot on the other half. I've been the one who is *active.* They [the family] have been passive owners. For me, it's gone pretty smoothly. Everything is integrated … it's worked well. I guess it's worse if the other co-owner wants to come in and interfere all the time.

Are there any disadvantages? I wondered.

> Yes, one disadvantage is that I can't do what I want. If I want to make this a Thai eatery – to be extreme – I can't do that. I have to work with the hotel. The disadvantage for me is that I can get a bit stuck.

He gave another example:

> I'd like to have a bar where you can really drink, but they [the family] don't want that because it would disrupt the hotel. Then it hurts my business, we can't grow. It's a conflict of interest.

He discusses issues such as this with the managing directors. He thinks that cooperation is important and emphasises that things have improved significantly since Richard and Veronica took over the managing directorship from their father, George.

> Keith: Since Richard started … he's more open and has worked in other companies; the discussions are at a different level. George is very conservative.

> Me: What was different for you when George handed over to Veronica and Richard?
>
> Keith: Richard, he's responsible for the hotel and operating schedule. We have a meeting once a week and eat breakfast together every Thursday. Looking after things yourself can be pleasant, but not having anyone to discuss things with for seven years in a row ... you get pretty empty … but now things are good with Richard, the last six months.
>
> Me: So it's got better?
>
> Keith: Yes, there's a more open dialogue.

Apropos cooperation, during my fieldwork I regularly encountered the opinion that there is a kind of "us and them" attitude between the people who work in the restaurant and in the hotel. That people mostly care about their own areas, despite the restaurant and hotel overlapping, and even though the hotel guests see them as one and the same facility. I asked Keith if this was something he recognised. He does.

> People who work for Lily's probably feel that they work for Lily's most of all. And the hotel … even if we're working towards it's being integrated, well … I think it's bloody difficult. […] It's still never "one".

Who is responsible for making cooperation work across these boundaries? I wondered.

> If you ask me, it's primarily the heads of department. They steer the direction we go in. Me, Nathalie, Lisa, finance and maintenance could eat breakfast together. But reception eats in the back office! Why don't we eat together? Some things can be fixed really easily.

He concluded:

> It has got a bit better, for a while there was a lot of "us and them" attitude. Perhaps I was a bit focused on the restaurant too. […] You have to try to welcome people in … but it has to come *from the heart* in some way.

According to Seymour (2000), employees in the hospitality industry are seldom recruited in an objective way, rather "on the strength of whether the candidate will

'fit in', or has the 'right' personality" (2000, p. 169). During our talk, Keith returned to the importance of cooperation and the staff's composition.

> Much of it has to do with group dynamics. When you are considering who to employ, you have to look at how they have different roles. It's good to have someone cheerful, like Chloe and Joel. On paper, it might look good to have four people like that, but there's no guarantee it would be a good thing. It's about the mix of people.

He continued developing his ideas about an optimal group of employees.

> You want someone cheerful, someone gay, someone younger; that's a good group dynamic. Perhaps I shouldn't have preconceived ideas, but gay people are usually happy and positive and have a different way of thinking than straight people. So a mix is needed.

Keith also said what he thinks someone should be like, in order to fit in at Lily's: "How you are as a person, that you have *drive*, that's most important." He also highlighted factors that are linked to flexibility and a lack of prestige.

> We don't want things to be too formal in our restaurant; there should be a good atmosphere, where you joke with the guests: "Hi there! Welcome!"

Keith divides his time, fifty-fifty, between being in the kitchen and in the office. When I asked him what was the most difficult thing about running the restaurant, he answered quickly: "It's the staff. Staff costs." He continued: "It's a constant dilemma, and very hard to solve. But if we work it out we'll be profitable."

Similarly, for many others at the hotel, Keith emphasised commitment when he talked about good staff. "That's how you want them; people who feel like a bit more than employees. You want them to feel: 'This is my place'." He also emphasised the importance of guests feeling "looked after" by the staff, something that's good for the business. "It means additional sales for me, more satisfied guests and better service", said Keith.

There's no doubt about what Keith enjoys most in his job – the flexibility and freedom.

> It might sound like a bit of a cliché, but it [the work at the restaurant] becomes a lifestyle; I'm happy at work. It's very free and I have a very free

> role. I'm quite creative and have quite an entrepreneurial mindset. It is fun to be able to influence things, they could be small things, but I have full control of my work. Sure, I have particular times and routines and so on. I don't think I could see myself as an employee. I guess that's freedom.

I will explore this link between flexibility and freedom in the next section.

7.5 Understanding Flexibility and Cooperation

In this section, I immerse myself in the discussion of the two most prominent values in this part of the hotel – flexibility and cooperation. I begin by establishing the link between flexibility and personal freedom. I then elaborate on cooperation versus conflict. Finally, I discuss how the staff at Lily's speaks about the family.

7.5.1 Flexibility and Freedom

As modern companies are considered to be vulnerable to changing market conditions, increased competition, and an overall dynamic business climate, flexibility is often presented as "a critical characteristic of organisations that have to deal with turbulent environments" (Dunford *et al.,* 2013, p. 85). Employers value flexibility highly and this is emphasised both in production processes and employment systems (Kalleberg, 2003). It also applies to the restaurant industry, which is increasingly competitive "with an ever-changing array of new entrants and increased customer power" (Hancer and George, 2003, p. 13). Within this context, flexibility is an essential characteristic of restaurant staff (Fine, 2009), and a desired feature of employees in the hotel industry (Guerrier and Lockwood, 1989). As I have shown in this and previous chapters, both management and owners express the importance of flexibility in employees. However, critics of the strong emphasis on flexibility in modern organisations often highlight the negative aspects. Sennett (1998), claims that the "pursuit of flexibility has produced new structures of power and control, rather than created the conditions which set us free" (1998, p. 47). However, the positive aspects of flexibility are also highlighted (Bal and De Lange, 2015). For example, the employees' *own* strong emphasis on flexibility and flexible work arrangements (Clarke and Holdsworth, 2017). This was also expressed by Lily's staff. It was clearly associated with autonomy, as well as freedom of choice. Here are a few examples from my one-to-one interviews:

“It’s very free and I have a very free role”, Keith explained, when I asked what he enjoys most about his job.

“I feel that I have a great deal of freedom, like with my working hours”, Alexandra said, when she explained the reasons for wanting to work at Lily’s.

“I’m free; I think I’m free”, Nancy responded when I asked her if she can influence her job situation and her work tasks.

“It feels as if it’s become a little more how I want it to be here”, Joel said when he explained the importance of the restaurant’s having a relaxed ambience.

When I asked David about his work situation, he replied: “What's good here is that we have a good dialogue; you get a pretty big freedom. And that you can discuss. I think it's a lot about not having so much prestige; although I'm clear with how I want things to be.”

Sandra has been on sick leave for fatigue syndrome. She explained: “What helps me is the flexibility with times. Maybe I have not got it expressly, it has just become so. I think I've got this flexibility from Keith, because I'm equally flexible back.”

To summarise: The staff at Lily’s stresses the importance of flexibility in their daily working life. Even if the request for flexibility comes from managers and owners, this does not mean that individuals themselves cannot emphasise flexibility strongly – or rather emphasise the *different aspects* of the same value. As I have shown here, flexibility is about autonomy; the opportunity to influence the daily work and how it is performed, as well as the working hours. Furthermore, flexibility for Lily's employees – as expressed through their stories – is often about “give and take”; it is something mutual, reciprocity. However, it is also, about adapting to the specific conditions that the work requires.

7.5.2 Cooperation and Conflict

Restaurant’s kitchen culture is well-known. In *Down and Out in Paris and London*, Orwell (1986/1933) describes his kitchen experiences at Hôtel X: “Everyone seemed to be in a hurry and a rage.” (1986, p. 56) Modern kitchen life has been immortalised in executive chef Bourdain’s *Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly* (2007/2000), where, for example the author’s advice to

aspiring chefs is: "This business *grows* assholes; it's our principal export. *I'm* an asshole. You should probably be an asshole, too." (Bourdain, 2007, p. 293) There is no doubt that restaurant kitchen culture is mythicised. But how well does it correspond to the actual working conditions? According to Bloisi and Hoel (2008), who have reviewed the literature on abusive work practices among chefs, bullying and abuse may be an expected part of restaurant kitchen culture. Chefs have been found to be more aggressive (Meloury and Signal, 2014). Is this true for Lily's as well? Yes – and no. Although the atmosphere in the kitchen at Lily's is sometimes tough and nervy, it is also friendly and relationship-oriented. David captured this fairly well when we talked during the interview: "Keith is not directly Gordon Ramsay; he is very soft. It feels like it's the same in the rest of the hotel too, it's not that George comes by and yells at you, either". Lela also gave an example during my interview with her, using Keith: "Sometimes he gets cross or irritated, but you know that it passes after five minutes. Everyone has their ups and downs some days." As I have explained in this chapter, minor conflicts were common, in and outside the kitchen, but they were usually short-lived. Furthermore, at Lily's, the open kitchen seemed to have a calming effect on the chefs' behaviour, probably because this is placed in the front region.

Team spirit, camaraderie and emphasis on relationships characterises the family-based restaurant (Erhardt, Martin-Rios and Heckscher, 2016). The importance of cooperation and teamwork was also clearly emphasised by the staff at Lily's. Cooperation was often mentioned in the contexts where they talked about important qualities in themselves and desirable qualities in colleagues, as I have shown in this chapter. The importance of getting along with co-workers was also clear in their stories about problems and conflicts at work, that is, where cooperation does *not* work[38], and also when disagreements tend to be long-lasting. Here are some examples from the one-to-one interviews:

Lela told me about a colleague of hers: "There is one person who has made it difficult for us all, stressed us out and everything. At first you get angry, but when you get home you think: 'She should not ruin my work.'"

[38] Organisational conflict may have both negative and positive effects (Jehn and Bendersky, 2003). Here I focus on the aspects stressed by Lily's employees.

Joel explained that the previous team members at Lily's were "grumpy, cranky, tired, irritated, and backbiting. If I was not there, they were constantly talking behind my back."

Nancy told me about a conflict with a fellow worker who repeatedly criticised her: "She could say, like: 'Why are you doing this? You shouldn't be doing this', in front of all the guests. […] She kept following me, she would never give up."

A source of conflict could also be that the staff do not always regards themselves as a unified group. The people working in this part of the hotel expressed a feeling of "us and them" as regards other employees, more frequently.

In this chapter, I have described how minor conflicts may be *spatially* bound – i.e., tiffs and disagreements between the kitchen staff (chefs and dishwashers) and the guest areas staff (waiters and bartenders). But this also applies to breakfast staff vs. dinner staff. Concerning the latter, there is also a difference in status, which means that evening workers are generally considered to have a higher rank than the breakfast/lunch staff. A differentiated status system is common in hospitality organisations, where some positions carry a particular status within the organisation whereas others carry a certain stigma (Saunders, 1981; Wood, 1994). In my interviews with employees at Lily's, this was often explained in terms of dinner work requiring more skills and being more multifaceted.

Regarding the difference between breakfast/lunch versus dinner work, Alexandra, a daytime waitress, told me: "I think that *everyone* thinks that breakfast is worth the least". Chloe, a dinner waitress, explained what she thinks about breakfast work: "It's a very simple job, somewhat mechanical."

Restaurant staff also experienced minor conflicts with other hotel staff sometimes, especially the receptionists. According to Dann and Hornsey (1986), "the prevalence of interdepartmental conflict in hotels seems to be one of the distinctive features of their operation." (1986, p. 23) As I have highlighted in this chapter, the lobby area, especially, may sometimes cause conflicts. Hotel staff tends to see the lobby as the restaurant's area of responsibility, and vice versa. The sense of belonging seems to be bound to the own group (Baumeister and Leary, 1995).

When I asked restaurant manager, Sandra, during my interview with her, if she considered the restaurant and the hotel as a joint organisation, she replied:

> *Nobody* feels that's the case, I think. If so, I would be surprised. I think the others feel: "I work at Hotel Queen Sophia." It's a bit us and them, and we're talking about it all the time, that you should not feel so. But it's tricky; it still becomes us and them.

This polarity is also noticeable at the owner-level. Keith, the co-owner explained in my interview with him: "People who work for Lily's probably feel that they work for Lily's most of all." He has also experienced the feeling that "Lily's is not really a priority" in relation to the hotel business. "There is a conflict of interest and the hotel is always prioritised", he said.

7.5.3 The Family in the Staff's Stories

Similar to other staff at the hotel, the employees at Lily's talked about the family that owns the hotel, in different ways. Joel thinks it is "very clear" that it is a family-owned business, "at least when you work from within". Chloe stated that "it can be positive that the company is family-owned."

According to Sorenson (2013), when there are several family members that own and work in the company, "there is high likelihood that values emphasised by the family will be socialised into the business" (2013, p. 128). This is also the case at Hotel Queen Sophia. The staff that work in the restaurant stress the *consideration* the family show them. Lela said: "They discuss things with me and talk to me … I've worked here so long that they come to me automatically. They ask: 'How do you want it to be?'" Kepner (1983) suggests that one of the reasons that a family runs a business is to care for and develop people. The Andersson family are perceived as humble, and do not actively demonstrate that they own the place. "They don't show it in front of us. They don't just go around telling everybody: 'Hey, we are the bosses'", Nancy explained. *Commitment* from the family can contribute to an enhanced organisational responsiveness, according to Zahra *et al.*, (2008) and the staff at Lily's clearly emphasised the family's commitment to the business. "They're very ambitious. They *work* here; they aren't just *spending time* here", Alexandra explained, and added: "Sometimes I think they work more than I do."

In family businesses, the owners retain a constant influence to make sure that the business survives to next generations (Davis and Harveston, 1998). This influence can be exerted in different ways. Some of the employees pointed out the difference they have noticed since father, George, passed the torch to his children. In my one-to-one interviews with them, Keith said that now it is "a more open dialogue", and Alexandra stated that "they have more of a drive to *develop*, not just for things to be fine." What is interesting to note is that Lily's staff did not consider Keith as part of the owning family, in the sense that they included him when they talked about the owning family. Neither did Keith himself, other than his explaining that his mother is sister to George, and that he is a cousin to George and Judith's children, and also that he believes he was asked to start the restaurant because they are related. His sense of this was also made clear when he, during the interview, referred to the family as "them" instead of "us", and when he said that their interests could sometimes collide with his; for example, that "the hotel is always prioritised". During our one-to-one interview, he also underlined that the family run four profitable hotels and that Lily's just "a drop in the bucket" for them. Nonetheless, he gets along well with the family, he explained.

Finally, in this chapter, I would like to highlight that although cooperation and flexibility are the most apparent values in this part of the hotel, other values are also distinguishable. As the stories, I have related, in this chapter have shown, *joy*, *consideration* and *commitment* also permeate the organisation at Lily's. Here are some examples from the interviews. Joy was highlighted when Joel said that his work is "so much damned fun – I can really long for my shift to start." Consideration was illustrated when Lela talked about her staff, "I always try to help them if they ask whether they may have time off now and again. They know that if I always give to them, then they give back too." Commitment was made clear when Keith expressed how he wanted staff to be: "That's how you want them, people who feel like a bit more than employees. You want them to feel: 'This is my place'." Consideration and commitment were also clearly emphasised, when the staff talked about the characteristics of the owning family.

7.6 Summary

In this fourth presentation of findings chapter, I examined everyday life at Lily's – the restaurant and kitchen of Hotel Queen Sophia. I delved into the stories of the waiters, the chefs and the managers that work in this part of the hotel. I introduced the restaurant and the kitchen (7.2), using Goffman's concepts of front and back regions (1959). I also showed how the values of *cooperation* and *flexibility* become very clear in "Kitchen Stories" (7.3) and "Tales from Lily's" (7.4), where the important values were illustrated through the staff's stories. In section 7.5, I aimed to increase our understanding of the meaning of cooperation and flexibility, for the employees at Lily's, by discussing these values in context. I also examined how the employees at Lily's speak about the family who owns Hotel Queen Sophia.

In the next chapter – Life in the Corridors – I will continue to explore the Hotel Queen Sophia, and present the people who work there. At the same time, the value of commitment will be dealt with in a thorough manner.

Chapter 8: Life in the Corridors

8.1 Introduction

The hotel's corridors are mainly the workplace of the cleaning staff, but they are also meeting places for other people in the hotel: the hotel guests, the owners, the managers, the office personnel, and the caretakers. In this chapter, I explore the last of the five most prominent values at Hotel Queen Sophia: *commitment*. I describe this part of the hotel and I present five employees, a little more closely, through their stories. The chapter is structured as follows: first, I give a description of the corridors and explore life in housekeeping (8.2). Then, I focus on the caretakers (8.3), and I also take a closer look at the office (8.4). At the end of the chapter (8.5), I examine the value of commitment in context. I also discuss the relationship between employee criticism and commitment in-depth and examine commitment, against the background of emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and "dirty work" (Hughes, 1951, 1958, 1971).

This is the fifth, and last, presentation of findings chapters.

8.2 "Knock, Knock. Housekeeping"

I knocked twice on the door. "Housekeeping!", I said in a firm voice. It took a while before a man in his fifties opened the door. He was well-built and his torso was bare. I tried to work out where to look. I said something like: "I've brought your clean laundry", and handed over the plastic-covered hanger and clothes, while feeling overly formal. He took them with a "Thank you" and closed the door. Should I have said more? No, you do not drag out a conversation with a half-naked guest in their doorway. The bedroom is a private and intimate area (Elias, 1982), be it at home or in a hotel. I turned around and walked towards the lift.[39]

The division between public and private, distance and intimacy, is always present when you work in the rooms and corridors of Queen Sophia. A hotel is "a domestic space – a home from home – but, at the same time, guests are away from home and

[39] This episode is recounted from memory. Other descriptions of events, and the quotes in this section, are taken from my field notes.

freed from some of the constraints of being at home." (Guerrier and Adib, 2000, p. 690) Unlike several other areas of the hotel, the line between front stage and backstage (Goffman, 1959; Shulman, 2017) is constantly blurred in the rooms and corridors. Room attendants must know how to act on multiple stages: public spaces as well as guest rooms (Kensbock *et al.*, 2016), and physical boundaries must be considered (Goffman, 1963a). The corridors and rooms are back regions when you are in them, either alone or with co-workers. However, they become front regions as soon as a guest passes through the corridor or is present in their room at the same time as you; which could be when you least expect it. Wood (1994) explains: "A hotel room may 'belong' to the host, but it is the guest's for the duration of their stay." (1994, p. 74) This separateness is intended to protect the guests and the hotel staff from one another's possible uncivil acts (Wood, 1994). Room attendants typically try to clean the rooms while the guests are out. Hunter Powell and Watson (2006) note that "the work of room attendants remains largely 'unseen' by guests and other hotel employees" (2006, p. 298). According to Kensbock *et al.* (2013), room attendants are practically invisible.

But, what is it like in this area of the hotel? What is daily life like for the room attendants? Let me take you on a journey through the hotel.

Walking the corridors of Hotel Queen Sophia is like taking an artistic stroll through different eras and styles of interior design. Just as in other areas of the hotel, the corridors are decorated with historical objects, such as antique tables and chairs, gilt mirrors, chandeliers, dark wood cabinets, grandmother clocks, paintings, etchings, and framed photographs of Swedish royalty. There are oriental rugs, tiled stoves, and pillars. On one floor the carpet is lavender-coloured with pink flowers; on another it is dark-burgundy with golden-yellow fleurs-de-lis. On a third it has a tartan-pattern which, along with the dark doors, is reminiscent of a Scottish castle. Here the guests can sample an air of the lifestyle they want to associate with – or one that exists in the world of their dreams (Mossberg and Nissen Johansen, 2006). There is a mixture of styles, which not only reflects George and the family's interest in art, but also the fact that each floor was renovated at different times. The rooms and corridors are in different buildings, with a somewhat varied architecture. The

corridors also have rooms for office staff, such as revenue manager, Sophie, and sales manager, Belinda.

The staff usually differentiate between the two main parts of the hotel by talking about the "new" and the "old" parts. The old part, which is accessed via the smaller lift, has leadlight windows with the geometric forms and coloured elements that are typical of art deco. The curved stone staircase stretches downwards from the top floor, with a dark-brown bannister and red carpeting, held in place by brass stair rods. I became very aware of these details, as one of my regular tasks was to vacuum the stairs.

8.2.1 The Room Attendants and Me

How can field work be conducted so as to experience the "inside"? How do you build rapport and create trust? These are questions that most ethnographers ask themselves. In my case, these questions were actualised because I shadowed many areas of activity at Queen Sophia. As researchers, we may find ourselves experiencing and working on "multiple identities" (Cunliffe and Karunanayake, 2013, p. 371), and positioning oneself as a researcher is not a singular act; rather it is "a continuous interplay of multiple relationships, identities, and expectations situated in specific conversations and moments in time." (Cunliffe and Karunanayake, 2013, p. 374) One day, I worked in reception; the next day, I was in the kitchen and on the third day, I was with the caretakers. Sometimes I was a waiter in the restaurant; sometimes I was a host upstairs, in the conference department. I simply changed my shirt, so that I looked suitable for what I was doing. Sometimes, I did this in the toilets, which made me feel like Superman – minus the superpowers, of course. Adapting to new contexts and new tasks was a natural part of my daily life and I never really had the opportunity to become really good at any one thing. This was why I was looking forward to doing some cleaning.

When I was a nineteen-year-old, I worked as a room attendant at a hotel in Bayswater. I had bought a one-way ticket to London and I walked around knocking on hotels doors in the area, looking for work. I got lucky on just the second day, at the *Mitre House Hotel*, not far from Hyde Park, and worked there for a summer. The job involved ironing laundry and cleaning hotel rooms. The cleaning trolley was a

major aid in my performance (cf. Kensbock *et al.*, 2016). I cannot claim to have become an expert; but, over time, I developed an eye for cleanliness and thoroughness. A contributing factor to this was, almost certainly, the fact that if you left a strand of hair in the sink or forgot the special fold in the sheet, you got a good telling-off from the housekeeper.

So, one morning in May, as Queen Sophia's housekeeping manager, Khadija, introduced me to all the room attendants, down in the staff room in the cellar, I was looking forward to working with them, with nervous expectation. I would come to clean several times during my six months at Queen Sophia.

The room attendants' work is characterised by emotional labour (Ross, 1995), and according to Harris (2010), housekeeping includes work that Hughes (1971) calls "dirty work". This kind of labour "symbolises lack of dignity and status and potential degradation of the worker" (Harris, 2010, p. 146). The cleaning staff at the Queen Sophia come from Mexico, Puerto Rico, Iraq, Lebanon, Uganda and Algeria. For the most part, housekeeping is construed as a female occupation; constituting, as it does, traditional domestic tasks, such as cleaning and looking after the home (Guerrier and Adib, 2000). However, there are several male room attendants at the Queen Sophia, who work closely together with their female colleagues.

Mahir is the cleaning company's team leader, on-site, and manages the room attendants in their daily work. He reports to Khadija. He has a degree in languages and, apart from Swedish and French, he speaks Italian, English and Arabic. During my days on the cleaning team I often shadowed Mahir, who put me to work. He was dedicated and committed, something I recorded in my field notes. He showed me how to change duvet covers and pillow cases, he talked about how they allocate rooms to be cleaned among the room attendants, he showed me how to remove mould spots in the showers with a special cleaner and brushes. One day we ran over to the *Regent Hotel* on the other side of the road to borrow twenty-five hand towels. We laughed, as we stood in the middle of the road, dodging the cars, each with a pile of fluffy towels in our arms.

One of the tasks I was assigned, was vacuuming the stairs in the old part of the hotel, from floor six, all the way down. The red carpet was not easy to manage. The powerful vacuum cleaner grabbed a hold of it and the brass stair rods that should have held it in place came off. However, I battled on and, when I had reached the ground floor, I usually vacuumed the lobby and its big oriental rug. This was a job I really enjoyed. The vacuum cleaner gave me a task and a sort of confidence, while I was also able to observe the interaction between the hotel staff and the guests.

I also shadowed the staff and their cleaning trolleys in the corridors, and Mahir could have me on his coattails when he was giving instructions to the room attendants. The training of room attendants primarily takes place on the job (Eriksson and Li, 2009; Kensbock *et al.*, 2016), and a particular day with Mahir left an impression.

> On one floor, something happened. A young, black man, Victor, was being trained. He is the son of Joan, who also cleans at the hotel. Mahir did not think he was cleaning well, he forgot things; so, Mahir had to show him what to do again and was quite angry. He also rang Victor's mum, who had to come in. Mahir said to me, "Victor smells of sweat, so she's bringing a new t-shirt". Victor had to put on deodorant and get changed in a guest bathroom. I stood and watched. Victor's face was hard-set and he looked almost vacant, as he was told off. Mahir said that Victor probably couldn't work alone, perhaps not at all. (Field notes, 13 June 2015)

Being forced to witness this situation was difficult. This was partly because I felt sorry for Victor who was disciplined and possibly could not stay on, and partly because it was tough to be Mahir's sidekick in that situation, as if I was some sort of manager or superior myself. I had experienced a similar feeling, a few weeks earlier, when Khadija asked me to check some rooms. Even though I had only worked in cleaning for a few days[40] I was going to assess the work of the room attendants – my new colleagues.

> Khadija said that we were going to check the quality of some rooms. "First we'll do a room together, so you can see what to do, and then you can do two on your own", she said. There was a checklist to help. In the first room (room

[40] Apart from the summer in London.

> 625 on the sixth floor), which we did together, she found several things to comment on: window coverings that weren't pulled down, fingerprints on a window, dust, marks on the pillows, beds made unevenly, a dirty kettle and tray. In the bathroom, Khadija noted marks on the ceiling and in the shower. She brought in the man who had cleaned the room to show him and to explain. The room attendant listened and redid it, to put it right. (Afterwards he even rung Khadija to say thank you for the feedback). Khadija had a firm but friendly way with him. They spoke Arabic with each other. They joked a little and they both laughed.
>
> Khadija thought that I had given overly high marks to the rooms I inspected myself. "I never give fives", she said.[41] "But, what if there's nothing to comment on, what do you give them?" I asked. "If a bin is clean and has a new bag, it can't be anything other than perfect, can it?" "But, I never think anything is worth a five", she answered. On the stairs down to the fifth floor I commented on the list, jokingly, "It looks like my school grades, everything from one to five." Khadija laughed.
>
> After this I did the two rooms on my own. I found quite a bit to comment on: broken lamps, dusty tiled stove, fingerprints in makeup on the doors, holes in sheets, only one bathrobe in a double room (there should be two), and pubic hair on two toilet edges. When I showed this to Khadija, she called Mahir, after my inspection and asked him to take it up with the relevant room attendants. She thought I had done a really good job. (Field notes, 6 May 2015)

In my field notes, from the same day, I have written, "I thought it was a little difficult to be the 'messenger' in this way, especially because I 1) worked with the room attendants yesterday and 2) have never inspected rooms before. I felt a little bit like a traitor or a police officer who came in and found fault with the room attendants' work. Still, the cleaning staff didn't seem to take it that way." No, the cleaning staff seemed to be as dedicated to doing a good job as Khadija and Mahir. As social actors, they showed "adroitness and dexterity in fulfilling their role", as Kensbock *et al.* (2016, p. 119), put it.

[41] The grading scale was from one to five, with five being the top grade.

Who is Khadija, and what is her role at the hotel? Allow me to present her in more detail. In various ways, she embodies the commitment that is so noticeable at Queen Sophia.

8.2.2 Khadija – The Housekeeping Manager

Khadija and I met for an interview in her little room on the first floor, which has a view of the atrium and lobby. She is the longest-serving member of staff at the hotel: twenty-two years. She is forty-eight, from Morocco and a trained pharmacist. She came to Sweden in the early 1990s and started studying Swedish.

> It was a friend who said: "You don't do anything at the weekends, can't you work here?" I said: "As a *cleaner*? No way!" The cultures are so different, I couldn't tell my relatives that I do this. Not until now.

She talked about class differences in Morocco: "I come from quite a high class. We lived in the middle of Casablanca, good schools, everything was nice, and we travelled a lot." She continued: "But my husband, who had lived longer in Sweden, knew that there was nothing wrong with cleaning. So I started cleaning here, and enjoyed it." Eventually she was promoted to housekeeping manager, a job she has held for more than fifteen years.

Khadija is one of the people I got on with best, during my time at the hotel. She made an effort to show me her job and to find me things to do. She worked Monday to Friday, but was always available at weekends, for the cleaning teams. She valued loyalty and commitment.

One day, before the summer, when I was working with Khadija, she said that some people call her "the witch". During the interview I asked her what she meant by that. She answered: "That I *nag*. I say to the staff, jokingly, that my job is to find faults. But it is my job. I don't see when it's nice." She elaborated:

> I can't check the rooms myself. When I say that I'm a witch that's mostly because … when I walk round to fix things, I have to say so, that's my job. Sometimes you see big things. It's lucky that I see things before the guests arrive. But they [the cleaning staff] say: "You're our witch, but we love you."

Khadija's sense of responsibility and thoroughness can be considered as a type of commitment, but they are also signs that she is doing her job and making sure the

rooms are clean and pleasant. This can also be interpreted as an expression of the *expectations* that are placed on her. A housekeeper must "possess a range of skills to perform emotional as well as physical labour." (Harris 2010, p. 146)

Several times during the interview, and on the days when I shadowed Khadija at work, I was struck by her commitment. During our interview she told me about an event that serves to illustrate this:

> I can get a call, as I'm walking along the corridor, like on Friday when Ingvar Hansson[42] checked into 419. He's often here, but he wasn't too happy because Nathalie had sold his usual room to someone else. He smokes and usually always stays in 402.

Khadija said that smoking is not allowed in any of the rooms, but that Room 402 has a balcony where it is permitted. She continued:

> Because he was going to have a live broadcast on the Saturday, he wanted to send his shirts to the laundry. I was going to collect my grandchildren from the nursery at four o'clock. At a quarter to three I was asked: "He's staying here and needs clean shirts, please can you help him?" I panicked ... I said that I had to collect my grandchildren from nursery, but that I'd manage.

Khadija said that Mr Hansson was nice. He explained that he had two shirts he needed help with, but there probably wasn't time to wash them.

> I said: "Shall I take them home and sort it out?" "No, if you could just iron them." But for me – ironing dirty clothes! It was really hot and stressful on Friday. He's an important guest and he was already unhappy with the room. I started reading the Quran to help me, so that God would help me with this. I brought it up and started sorting it out ... two shirts. I did it, I was a bit worried something would happen, that my iron wouldn't work. But it was fine.

"He said that he would wear one of the shirts the next day for the live broadcast", Khadija concluded her story about Mr Hansson, noticeably proud about having resolved the difficult situation.

[42] Pseudonym for a famous Swedish television celebrity.

Like many others at the hotel, Khadija feels autonomous in her work. She likes the variety best: "Having days that are the same is not fun." I asked what she thinks about her boss, Nathalie. Khadija answered: "She's not tough enough to be a hotel manager for this group. There are some tough ladies in this building." The closest she has been to a boss was with Veronica, she said. "She was my hotel manager, but then Pete, her brother, came and that was *hell*. The worst time of my life." Khadija said that Peter ignored agreements and did not want to pay suppliers. He wanted to be more efficient and cut down costs. Khadija: "He wanted to save, and save on staffing, but that's not possible." Even though she criticised Peter she thinks that he taught her a lot, particularly about budgets and finance. She added: "I have a great deal of respect for the family."

The way the family saved money on different things – services, training, staff, purchasing, and suppliers – was a frequent theme during my time at the hotel. Khadija feels that it is noticeable that the company is family-owned. George's presence is obvious, even though he no longer works in the day-to-day, "They walk along the same path, in their *father's* footsteps. When they have worked with me they say that things have been renewed, but the foundation was laid by their father." I asked what this foundation is. Khadija thought briefly and answered:

> Not doing anything fun for the staff. Save, save and save. Always the same questions … "No, we can't afford that type of thing." […] With Veronica, Pete and Richard, there are no gifts at Christmas.

I said that I had heard, from others, that there had not been a summer party. "It's been ages since we did anything", stated Khadija, resignedly, and added: "These little things aren't so expensive." She also said that "people need praise; I praise my colleagues." She continued: "You get to hear that you're good when you're in your appraisal, but I don't only need to hear it, once a year." During the interview she clarified: "The bosses have to show respect."

Our conversation about the family continued. According to Khadija, the members of the family have different opinions about things that relate to her area of responsibility, which she finds difficult. She uses the example of the sister who is responsible for interior design, Cecilia:

> Khadija: Cecilia is really difficult. Or not *difficult*, but she's a special type of person.
>
> Me: Why? Because she's artistic?
>
> Khadija: Okay, she's really good at interior design, but she needs to remember that some things aren't suitable for a room. There were some rugs, that after just two-three months … they were really expensive.
>
> Me: They're not suitable for a hotel?
>
> Khadija: No, some things aren't suitable for hotels. You have to think about how to look after things too. There are a lot of things in the room.

At Hotel Queen Sophia, each room is unique, with different furniture and items. This places greater demands on those who clean (cf. Seifert and Messing, 2006). Khadija said that it complicates the room attendants' work: "It is a problem for the staff. They go in with things all over the place; espresso in different colours, three different tea flavours …" Additionally, cleaning is "one of the most injury-prone occupations in the contemporary labour market." (Herod and Aguiar, 2006, p. 426) Khadija feels that the family members' differing opinions are not always easy to manage. "But I'm grateful that we have a good cleaning company; they listen and are patient." She continued: "Mahir is really good; helpful, and can be relied on." She also said that the room attendants were happy at the hotel and did not want to swap workplaces.

My conversation with Khadija was emotional. She feels that there are prejudices about immigrants that are reflected in society and in the workplace. This was clear when the discussion turned to salary reviews, which brought up an unpleasant memory. "In my twenty-two years here I have had a salary review twice", Khadija started saying. It was on one of these occasions that she felt hurt by the then hotel manager:

> She said something that I'll never forget. She wanted to know what my situation at home, *privately*, was like. She said she thought I should apply for *social security benefits*. "What did you say?" I said to her. "Would you say that if a Swede was sitting here?" "No, but I don't mean … because your husband's on a low income …"

Khadija's eyes filled with tears, when she told me.

"*Nicolas*, you can see what people … […] If you don't have your roots in Sweden you're treated differently. It's horrible."

I asked what she replied to the manager.

"I said: 'If it was someone else, would you say the same thing, then?' 'No, but I thought your finances, they don't sound so good.'"

Khadija responded:

"I'm not here, so that you can advise me to go on benefits. I have my pride. Benefits are for people without jobs, not for me."

The manager replied: "But we can't afford to give you a pay rise."

Liladrie (2010, p. 64) notes that the work culture of a hotel might be permeated by superior attitudes and "a racialised structure of divisions and entitlements." Khadija told me that she felt discriminated against, by both managers and colleagues. She thinks she is treated differently.

> You're discriminated against, always. When it happens, often you can get a complex about it too. I wear a veil, I'm an immigrant. You can try to ignore the thoughts, but reality shows that this is the way it is.

Goffman (1963b) highlights the social stigma associated with race and religion and uncovers how the stigmatised person is exposed to discriminatory circumstances, and linked with negative stereotypes. Khadija continued:

> Things happen that are difficult to deal with. You try to be strong, but sometimes I come here and just cry. And then I have to go and wash my face, but inside, you're often hurt there.

Khadija raised her hand to her chest.

> But I do like it here, to be honest. The day I no longer like it, I'll hand in my notice.

It is difficult not to be affected by her story. It actualises issues of culture, religion and prejudices, as well as class and gender. Women's work in the hospitality

industry often has a lower status, solely because it is women who perform it (Hunter Powell and Watson, 2006).

Khadija's story is also about joy and commitment. Even though she feels that she does not receive much in return, from the management and owners, she is very loyal.

> Before I place an order, I compare prices, I check suppliers, and I negotiate prices. Someone else might think: "Why should I waste my time on this?"

Her commitment reaches far outside her working hours. When she sees special offers for products in her area of responsibility, she gets into her own car to go and make purchases for the hotel – even at weekends and in the evening.

At the end of our conversation, I asked Khadija whether she is happy in Sweden. "I love Sweden, it's my country." She talked about Morocco and said that "When you go there, you're foreign." However, she added: "But, I long for my country; my roots are there."

It was not only through cleaning that I learned about the various areas of the hotel and came to feel at home in the corridors. Every day, I took "VIPs" to the rooms – refilling sweets, fruit and mineral water for guests with various types of loyalty cards. I also took dry cleaning to guests and watered the pot plants that were spread around different parts of the hotel. I also received a long-term task from Khadija: to make an inventory of which of the 147 rooms had ironing facilities. Additionally, I helped the caretakers to fix key card locks. Let me introduce them.

8.3 Hanging Out with the Caretakers

The caretakers, Darko and Slavko, are to be found down in the winding corridors below ground. This is where they are based, when they are not moving around the hotel's rooms and corridors, fixing things. They have been friends since their youth in Croatia, where they trained as teachers together. They take care of the hotel's premises, such as the guest rooms, conference facilities, restaurant and reception. Being a caretaker at a hotel involves knowing a lot about many different things. I discovered this on the very first day, as I shadowed them at work. I will let my field notes tell the story.

I met them down in their room in the cellar. It looks like a combination of a warehouse and a workshop and there were furniture deliveries for the four small rooms that were to be renovated. "Or the *petite* rooms, as they're called", said Slavko. He had irony in his voice when he emphasised the word *petite*.[43] I went with him to check the rooms that had been commented on.

He printed out a list in reception, and then we walked around. "I like to start from the top and work my way down, so that I finish in reception", he said. Various things that needed fixing were key card locks that were flashing red or orange. "The girls in reception should know how to fix them, it's actually their responsibility, but they're a bit scared of the technical stuff", he said. Otherwise there was a drain that needed cleaning, because of a blockage in the sink; a smoke alarm that was beeping, and a pin from an adapter that had become stuck in a plug socket. Slavko seemed to know how everything should be fixed and did it quickly and effectively.

In a junior suite he examined a water jug for a Nespresso machine. I asked him whether they had a budget to stick to, and how he and Darko knew what needed purchasing. He said: "I buy what's needed without asking, even if it costs 10–15,000 krona."[44] He continued: "If I ask Nathalie, she will say that she has to ask Veronica, and Veronica will say that she has to ask Richard and so everything takes ages without anything being decided. There's usually a bit of a to-do when I've bought things, without asking, but it passes after a couple of days." He said that the management want to keep costs down.

At ten o' clock, Slavko, Darko and I sat in the upper floor of the restaurant to eat breakfast. […] Khadija sat behind us and they joked a bit with her. After she had left, Slavko and Darko said that it is good to get to know people with different backgrounds at the hotel and to get rid of preconceived opinions or, sometimes, have them confirmed. They said that they usually joke with Khadija. Darko: "Then she answers back with: 'Watch out, I'm wearing extra explosives today'." He added: "Sometimes she says she'll have to turn towards Mecca six times a day because she has to listen to so much smutty talk." At the same time, he and Slavko were serious when they said that it is important to get to know people with different background and religions.

[43] Irony may be a way of expressing criticism (Johansson and Woodilla, 2005).
[44] Between 900–1350 GBP.

> They both appear to have experience of the war, in former Yugoslavia, and the conflicts there.
>
> When [after breakfast], we were walking along the corridors, I asked Slavko how he had learned all the caretakers' tasks. "I grew up on a farm. You didn't ring a plumber or a carpenter, you fixed everything yourself", he said. (Field notes, 12 May 2015)

After the summer, when I interviewed Slavko, he told me more about himself and his work.

8.3.1 Slavko – The Fast and Furious

"I like to get to the room when there's no one there. I want to do my job as quickly as possible." Slavko's answer to my question, about what makes his work meaningful, came with no hesitation, when we met for an interview in a conference room on the fourth floor. The highest priority is that the rooms are pleasant and function well: "You talk to the guest first, so there are no complaints." There is no doubt that he is a dutiful person.

Slavko is fifty-two years old and has worked at Hotel Queen Sophia for fifteen years. Before he started at the hotel he worked as an office caretaker and as a supervisor at a public authority. He is a qualified teacher, from the same university as Darko, but also a qualified electrician. I asked him what qualities his managers and colleagues expect him to have.

> Slavko: *Qualities*? I know what they want, but they don't get it.[45]
>
> Me: So what do they want? [laughs]
>
> Slavko: That you're humble, but they're not getting that from me.
>
> Me: Is that so?
>
> Slavko: It depends on how they have presented the problem. In the end I think they appreciate … but you can be a little stressed and use tough language and so on …
>
> Me: When you say "they"…?

[45] As I discussed in Chapter 4 – "The Staff Meeting" – this kind of cynicism can be a way for staff to defend their identities from a degrading form of normative control (Fleming and Spicer, 2003).

> Slavko: *Reception*, or whoever, it could be the boss. If I'm stressed I don't care, I say what I think and feel.

He talked about his manager and the owners. "They always say: 'You're really competent, and you are kind.' I know that. But one thing they always comment on is that sometimes my communication with my colleagues is a little difficult; that I'm not always positive." According to Hunter Powell and Watson (2006), relations between housekeeping and reception may occasionally be tense. At Queen Sophia this also applies to caretakers and reception. Slavko said that he and Darko can be perceived as tough. "We talk like construction workers", as Slavko, himself, explained it. He said that many employees take it for granted that the caretakers will fix things that, according to Slavko, they could do themselves. "Why do they have to ask us about everything, when they could think for themselves?"

I understood that, in particular, Cecilia's work as an interior designer made it difficult for the caretakers, as I shadowed them at work. During the interview, Slavko said: "Cecilia is such an unstructured person, it's terrible. It's completely *un-fucking-believable* … her office is a tip. I want to go on sick leave when she starts a project."

I asked about the newly renovated rooms, those he had made fun of by being ironic about the epithet "petite". Slavko answered: "It was a disaster. There were four rooms that were supposed to be rented out after two days. It's not possible." I asked him if they managed to get the rooms done. "They were finished on time, but that week was hell, it was incredible." I said that it worked out nicely in the end. "Yes, at the expense of my nerves", answered Slavko.

During our conversation, we got on to the subject of the owner family. What does Slavko think about working at a family-owned hotel? He said that "if you have a family business, you should have an external hotel manager." He continued developing his reasoning:

> Peter was the hotel manager and he's a son. Veronica is the managing director, and Cecilia is the designer. Previously, it was George and Judith. It gets *strange*. It's not bad, but in some way it feels wrong. I don't know why. […] They're the same family and they march to the same drum. They're the same family who want to earn money and want to pay as little as possible.

Slavko became noticeably animated on the subject of the family and finances, and continued to give me his opinions, now about the siblings.

> Everyone wants to show daddy that they're good at what they do. It affects the company and the people below them. That's because they are bloody tough on the employees, just to show daddy that they're clever and can save money. They cut down on costs and everything.

He continued: "When you look at the profits you can see they've been really good for the last ten years. When it comes to pay rises there's no scope for that."

I asked whether he has salary reviews with Nathalie. He nodded, but added: "She can't do anything; you may as well talk to Veronica or Richard." He said that Nathalie "has no desire to do anything herself", and continued: "Actually, I don't think she's my boss."

Several of those I interviewed, during my time at the hotel, mentioned the lack of trust in Nathalie. It was not unusual to go straight to one of the owners and managing directors, Veronica or Richard, instead.

When I interviewed Slavko, it had just been finalised that his colleague, Darko, was to start working at the new hotel that the family were opening, *The Loft*. I asked Slavko how he felt about them going in different directions. "It's mixed. We're very different as people. When I get a task, I want to get it done as quickly as possible and he doesn't care. He can have a project for weeks." He added: "It's been good, but sometimes we get on each other's nerves."

During our conversation he clarified how he works best: "I'm a lone wolf; I don't need anyone."

8.3.2 Darko – The Calm and Conscientious

"Being helpful to everyone, in all areas. That you help out, that's the point of the job." When Darko talked about what is expected of him at work, his story revealed enthusiasm and commitment. It is clear that this is expected of him, but it is also something he appreciates: "That's what is exciting about this job. You can never say that today will be like this or that." Darko's commitment is linked to the job's

freedom and autonomy. He said: "You're very independent and can decide what to do yourself."

When it comes to his duties as caretaker, he is self-taught. He learned from his father, who repaired things himself, and points out that "you have to be curious and have a bit of a technical bent." The buildings that house Queen Sophia are old. "Wiring, water pipes and network cables … you have to know the buildings."

Darko has been caretaker at Queen Sophia for fifteen years, with a couple of breaks for other jobs. He is a qualified teacher, but has never worked as one.

During our conversation we talked about the family. What does he think about working with them? Darko said that "they are all very down-to-earth" and it is easy to talk to them. He emphasised that "George is a bit more old school" with more of a distance to the employees. Still, Darko pointed out that when there were big decisions, they used to go straight to him. "You get to know each other and are more secure."

However, what did come up as difficult was dealing with some family members. Once again, it was interior designer, Cecilia, who was mentioned. According to Darko, she is bad at planning. He said: "You can't change anyone else, you can only change yourself."

When we talked about what is important at work, I asked Darko about feedback. "Of course, it's important", particularly when "appreciation comes from higher up", he answered. However, as with many of the others I interviewed at the hotel, his own delight in doing a good job is what seems to mean the most to him.

> For me it's so … I'm happy when, particularly when, *difficult* things have to be fixed. And you fix it and the room is finished. Then I'm satisfied.

This attitude recurred several times, for example, when I asked Darko what he thinks is fun at work:

> Fixing something that you see works afterwards, technically or whatever. Solving a problem, understanding how things work and putting it right. […] That's a type of satisfaction.

Darko feels he has a freedom in his work, both in performing his tasks and planning his work: "We're so independent … we decide our breaks, when we need them. If something is tough and difficult, of course you have to rest. There's no slave driver here whipping you to work."

Darko and I also talked about colleagues at Queen Sophia, in general, and the qualities he thinks they should have. This was clearly something he had thought about. "Direct communication. I don't like it when you start … blah blah blah. Just say it!" He said that not everyone appreciates this directness:

> Darko: We got into trouble much more before, but now I'm older and just ignore some things. But there were lots of times [before] we could get a telling-off, right from the top boss.
>
> Me: Because …?
>
> Darko: Like a little kid [laughs]. Arguing with some brat in reception who didn't know how to treat his elders … if you're a caretaker you're worth bugger all.

Hotel employees use the requirements of their jobs to create different hierarchies vis-à-vis of their colleagues, and may view themselves as superior to others as concerns competence, authority and prestige (Sherman, 2005). I asked how a good boss should behave: "With empathy and respect for the staff, because the staff is the most important thing they have." He also emphasised the importance of genuine appreciation from managers: "It should be spontaneous, and not learned phrases." I asked whether he does anything with his colleagues, such as going out for a beer after work.

> Darko: When I'm talking about appreciation and so on, they've taken all that away.
>
> Me: What was it like before?
>
> Darko: Christmas parties, presents, gifts, bowling, the amusement park … we took a boat to the islands. But now there's nothing.
>
> Me: Why is that, do you think?
>
> Darko: I ask myself that, too.

> Me: I've heard that from several people here, that there's usually a summer party, but this year …
>
> Darko: Picnics, playing kubb[46] … but now, *nothing*.
>
> Me: Is it because of money?
>
> Darko: Yes, what else? The time is there. It's mean! We had parties at Spy Bar[47] all night or Christmas parties, when George was boss. He handed over the card and said: "Here you are!"

Shortly afterwards, he added: "These new generations of bosses are so greedy and mean." Darko feels that the family "has a tight hand on the wallet."

During my time at the hotel, I often saw the caretakers together. I asked what he thinks about working with his partner, Slavko. He laughed a little, then he said:

> It's a bit difficult to combine work and friendship at the same time. At work we are very different, with different skills, and we have different ways of doing things: We're different people with different characters … we don't always match.

I wondered how it felt to no longer work together. "Finally!" he answered and laughed. But then he got a little more serious and said: "We've done this together, it's enough now."

Individual life stories reflect cultural values and norms, and narratives of the self are also a way for people to give their lives wholeness and meaning (McAdams, 2001). Darko and Slavko were interviewed separately, but it is no coincidence that their stories interlock; they have worked side-by-side, as caretakers, for many years and they have known each other since they were young. They also have a shared history of moving to Sweden from the former Yugoslavia.

8.4 The Office

The caretakers are based in the hotel's cellar, but several of the managers and owners are high up in the building. On the fourth floor, beyond the corridors, is the office. No one has their own room here; the space is shared with others. If you

[46] A lawn game using wooden blocks and batons.
[47] An (in)famous Stockholm nightclub.

want to talk in private, you must use a nearby conference room. This is where hotel manager, Nathalie, and the siblings, Cecilia, Veronica and Richard work, as well as the financial staff and booking staff. One of these people is Eileen, who is responsible for the hotel's group reservations. Her story is interesting, since it conveys different aspects of commitment, but also because it contributes to the understanding of the everyday working life in this part of the hotel – the office.

8.4.1 Eileen – The Group Reservations' Manager

"I was actually employee of the year once." Early on in the interview, Eileen spoke enthusiastically about this memorable event at work. She is thirty-three and has worked at the hotel for seven years. On an early summer morning, we met for an interview in one of the suites. Her high level of commitment was what won her the award. On her own initiative, she had proposed a reorganisation to make work more efficient. Eileen said that receiving the award felt particularly good because many employees do not always appreciate changes to the organisation. She emphasises how "it's really important to have an open and creative attitude."

Eileen has a qualification in hotel management and has been head of reception at the hotel, as well as responsible for the conference facilities. She has been group reservations' manager for a year. This entails answering enquiries, negotiating prices, booking groups, sending confirmations, following up and invoicing.

Eileen said that the most challenging aspect of the job is dealing with the lack of staff and covering for sick colleagues, at the same time as completing her own tasks. She said that you don't stay home when you're ill "unless you're dying". She continued: "You are always doing someone else's job, as well as your own, which leads to a huge workload at times." In this case, it is clear that commitment is expected from her and her colleagues.

So, what about the family? I wondered during the interview. She said that she works close to the owners, which she thinks is good. "I've been able to express my ideas straight away", said Eileen. She also said that "the closer you are to the real decision-makers, the easier it is to make your own changes happen." She thinks it is "very easy to talk to the owners" and there are "short decision-making processes." She describes her own relationship to the family as follows: "It is not a

personal relationship in any way, but not impersonal, either." She feels that the family have a professional approach, and an integrity: "It feels as if they are very sensible people."

Although she finds it easy to talk to the owners, there are things she chooses not to discuss:

> Eileen: A lot of family members are very involved here, so talking about some things is a bit taboo. Because Cecilia does all the décor … you can never …
>
> Me: [Interrupts] Say that a room is *ugly*?
>
> Eileen: No, you just wouldn't. Because that makes it *personal* in a way. I wouldn't do it, anyway. Maybe that's because of my personality, too. I know that those who've done that a bit, and it's not gone down very well. It's the same with Keith who owns Lily's. He's a cousin of the family. You'd never say the food is horrible … not that it is, but you couldn't say so.

As I said in Chapter 4, "The Staff Meeting", Eileen thinks that there is somewhat of a culture of silence among the staff, because the owners tend to take comments and criticism personally.

As regards her colleagues, Eileen says that the most important quality is flexibility, "that you really help out and get on with things when it's needed, no laziness or skiving." She continued:

> Then, being able to make fun of yourself a little, it's really important to be able to joke about things at work. And that you're … so much is based on being loyal, flexible and hardworking. That's why we're here. […] We have to share the work.

Her reasoning about loyalty, willingness to work and to share the work are clear examples of the commitment she expects from her colleagues and herself.

Eileen believes that she has chosen to work at the hotel, for a long time, because she has had a great deal of influence over her tasks: "That's been the best thing about this workplace." She continued:

> Of course, it has something to do with responsibility. But it would never have been this way if I hadn't worked so closely with the owners, all the time, so I'd say that's been the most fun; absolutely the best thing. That's how I still think about my job. That there are so many opportunities to change my situation.

She thinks they are good at making use of the competence, to be found in the building, but that sometimes outside skills and knowledge should be brought in, as well: "It's not healthy if there's no renewal and no new ideas coming in. Sometimes I feel that incompetent people end up a little too high up."

As I highlighted earlier in this chapter, job satisfaction appears to be linked to commitment. I asked Eileen what makes her proud at work. She answered: "When I succeed in fulfilling my own goals. [...] I try to set my own goals and I'm proud when I succeed."

She also talked about what is important for the hotel, such as good occupancy rates, good ratings and a good image. But, how does an employee know how the hotel should be perceived by guests? Eileen said that this is conveyed internally at meetings and through service training within HQS College.

> I think it's well communicated. [...] There have been three key words: *passion*, *heart*, *responsibility*. And I actually think about that sometimes, when I try to convey what the hotel represents.

According to Höpfl (2002), staff working with customer relations must "embody the values which corporate culture proposes" (2002, p. 262). Harris (2010) claims that the fact that staff should "embody the brand" place "increasing emphasis on the personal and cultural attributes" of employees in hotels (2010, pp. 146-147). I will problematise these wishes and potential pressures in the closing Discussion and Conclusion Chapter.

8.4.2 Nathalie – The Hotel Manager

"You shouldn't think that going to work is tough, you should think that it's *fun*. For me, it's about being challenged and meeting new challenges", said Nathalie, the hotel manager at Queen Sophia, when we met for an interview in a conference room. She is the final person that I will present in detail, in this thesis. Her office is

on the fourth floor, but she is usually to be found in the corridors or in reception. She is thirty-six and has worked at the hotel for almost eight years. When we met, she had been the hotel manager for a year.

Nathalie has hotel and restaurant vocational training and is a qualified bartender. She has worked as waiting staff and as head waiter at a renowned Stockholm hotel and in England, waiting tables and doing room service. At Queen Sophia, she started as a receptionist, and was promoted to the head of reception. She took over from the owners' son Peter, as hotel manager, when he took parental leave.

I asked her whether her experience of different hotel jobs is an asset in her role as hotel manager: "Yes, definitely. It creates a greater understanding." She also said that her previous experience offers a kind of security.

As with many others at the hotel, she is highly committed to her job. During our interview, this was particularly apparent when she talked about the relationship with guests, which is also a source of joy.

> Dealing with a complaint can be really stressful, if the guest is very upset. Naturally, the aim is to make a dissatisfied guest happy again. Only last week, I had a guest who was dissatisfied and I followed up on it. She sent back a really nice reply and lots of thanks for how well we handled it. That's … you can *live on* that.

Her strong relationship to her job was also apparent when she talked about reading hotel reviews on TripAdvisor and similar booking sites.

> Every negative review, it's somehow *personal* for me, especially when I'm in this position. It breaks my heart that a guest has found us so … and that it can be done anonymously, you can't go back to which guest it is. Then we don't have a chance; you have to think that a guest who complains, he gives us the chance to make him happy. Unlike someone who just says things anonymously. Well, what do you do then?

The above quote shows how a poor review is also a rating of one's own work, i.e., how well a job is done. For Nathalie, it is apparent that as hotel manager she is absolutely responsible for how the guests experience the hotel, but she also talked about her colleagues. I asked her what qualities she is expected to have at work.

> I think that it's *responsiveness*; being able to listen to and see your colleagues. Then, of course, you need to have an overall perspective too. As head of reception it's relatively focused on reception. The difference for me, now, is that there are so many other areas. […] Last autumn I had a budget to do and I'd never done a budget before. Veronica helped me, it's nice to have her so close by.

I asked whether they work well together. She thought a little and said: "Yes, I feel we do. We think very similarly."

An interviewer is not a neutral bystander, as Stephens and Breheny (2013) point out. This became evident to me, when I spoke with Nathalie. The interview was not easy to conduct; partly because various people's assessments of her were echoing in my head, and partly because she did not seem to be aware that many people on the staff had no faith in her. However, it was clear that she found her job challenging, particularly regarding finance and HR issues. She returned to the support she feels she gets from her boss, Veronica.

> I can discuss everything with Veronica, it could be from really small things to big issues too. Veronica is very active there. She has her own interests there too, because Queen Sophia is a real child of her heart.

Nathalie is among the staff that work closest to the family. I asked whether she thinks it is noticeable that she works for a family business:

> Yes, decisions don't have to go a long way to be made. I can go to Veronica and say, "Shall we do this?'" For me, I don't think I'd like to work in a big chain where there's a long way… [to decision-makers]. It's different working for a family-owned company.

She also said that the family strives to put a personal touch on the hotel.

> George has always had his words that he's emphasised over the years – that working for HQS Hotels should be fun, and that's something that should be in everything … [all activities]. Of course, everything goes in cycles and there are tougher times, but you have to think that going to work is fun.

According to Nathalie, the family's influence is clear. During the interview she described their commitment and enthusiasm in emotional terms.

> All the children grew up with the hotel. They have cleaned rooms since they were kids, so they have a different type of love for this place, which is obvious. For example, Queen Sophia is really Veronica's favourite … they really care about it. So it's a different type of love than the one you have as an outsider.

During our conversation, Nathalie emphasised the qualities she thinks are important in her colleagues. The aspects she brought up included being "service minded" and "having a humble attitude towards others." Being "calm and responsible" is also important according to her. As with the other managers at the hotel, Nathalie emphasised group dynamics:

> It could be that you find someone who is very young and perhaps someone who has more experience. Someone might be better at administration and the other at meeting guests. Then they complement each other well.

Female leaders in the hospitality industry have a greater focus on personal consideration for team members, according to Whitelaw and Morda (2004). But how do you find the right staff? Nathalie explained:

> Someone can look great on paper, but when you meet them … somehow you want to find a personality that matches. […] I often think that the first gut feeling is that you dare to use. […] But of course a recruitment can be the wrong one.

8.5 Comprehending Commitment

How may the value of commitment be further understood? In this section, I will take a closer look at commitment and set the value into its context.

8.5.1 Critical Yet Committed – Stories about the Family and the Management

The employees at Hotel Queen Sophia are devoted, and committed to their work. This became clear in our daily conversations and during my one-to-one interviews. They often talked about their own ideas, interests and initiatives. The family was referred to in positive terms such as "they are very sensible people" (Eileen), and "very down-to-earth" (Darko). Khadija said: "I have a great deal of respect for the family." But, as I have shown in this chapter, the employees also have critical views on both the owners and the management, especially hotel manager, Nathalie. This

criticism is apparent in several parts of the hotel, but it is here – among the staff who have the corridors as their dominant workplace – that it is most noticeable.

The criticism is of different kinds. Most remarkable is the criticism of the new generations of owners, as "greedy and mean" (Darko), and that they just "save, save and save" (Khadija). According to Miller *et al*. (2009), it has been argued that family firms are especially disposed to stinginess and that they discriminate against non-family managers. Another opinion is that the siblings want to prove good, for George. "Everyone wants to show daddy that they're good at what they do", Slavko said. In addition, the interior designer, Cecilia, is criticised for being very unorganised. Several people also question if it is right to put family members in important positions. "It gets *strange*", according to Slavko who thinks that the hotel should have a hotel manager from the outside. Eileen emphasised, "It's not healthy if there's no renewal and no new ideas coming in." Achieving fairness is a main challenge in family firms (Barnett and Kellermans, 2006; Samara and Arenas, 2017). Family business research suggests that family influence may lead to nepotism (Kets de Vries, 1993), which may have negative effects on the perceived distributive fairness of non-family staff, as concerns performance appraisal, job status and promotion (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997). As for the non-family hotel manager Nathalie, many employees lack confidence in her. "She's not tough enough to be a hotel manager for this group", Khadija expressed. "She can't do anything; you may as well talk to Veronica or Richard", Slavko said.

Parallel with these critical testimonials, the employees show strong signs of commitment (cf. Kets de Vries, 1993). Despite being critical of the owners and management, they are loyal and dedicated to their work and to the hotel. This commitment is manifested in different ways.

For example, during our interview, Slavko discussed, in detail, the importance of the rooms being pleasant and functioning well: "You talk to the guest first, so there are no complaints." He also said how he works best: "I like to get to the room when there's no one there." The day I shadowed him he told me: "I like to start from the top and work my way down, so that I finish in reception." His interest in what is important in the job, and how he likes to perform his work, shows his commitment.

In our one-to-one talk, Darko emphasised: “I’m happy when, particularly when, *difficult* things have to be fixed. And you fix it and the room is finished. Then I’m satisfied.” Darko’s testimony shows what he thinks about the challenges in his work, how he approaches them, and how satisfied he is when he can handle them.

When I interviewed Khadija, she said: “Before I place an order, I compare prices, I check suppliers, and I negotiate prices. Someone else might think: ‘Why should I waste my time on this?’” Her story illustrates that she is highly aware of what the owners and managers think is important, and that she is committed to fulfilling these wishes.

When, during our one-to-one conversation, I asked Eileen what makes her proud at work, she answered: “When I succeed in fulfilling my own goals. […] I try to set my own goals and I’m proud when I succeed.” Eileen's story clarifies how individual freedom and responsibility is related to commitment.

During my interview with Nathalie, she talked about guest relations: “Only last week, I had a guest who was dissatisfied and I followed up on it. She sent back a really nice reply and lots of thanks for how well we handled it. That’s … you can *live on* that.” Here, commitment is made visible through the feeling of making a guest happy.

Commitment comes in many different guises. People may also have conflicting commitments; they are not necessarily made consciously and intentionally (Becker, 1960). As shown in this chapter, as well as Chapter 4 ”The Staff Meeting”, and Chapter 5 ”The Family”, the value of commitment is expressed in several ways. It is *expected* from the employees, by the owners, managers and co-workers. The individual employees also expect commitment from their colleagues. Most noteworthy, however, is the *own* commitment that the staff expresses. It is a commitment that is closely related to the satisfaction of performing one’s work in a desired way. Moreover, it is about the sense of well-being in doing a good job. This becomes more relevant when it is discussed in association with emotional labour and “dirty work”. Therefore, let me elaborate on this relationship.

8.5.2 Commitment, Emotional Labour and "Dirty Work"

The employees in this part of the hotel, as well as in other parts, often expressed a desire to do a good job. In many cases this is also what gives the work meaning; a feeling of a job well-done. This seems to be linked to an *inner experience*, rather than an external pressure. Of course, the desires and requirements of owners, managers and colleagues exist, but once again, well-being at work seems to be closely linked to the individual's own experience and their ability to do a good job. This is particularly noticeable when it comes to hotel housekeeping and caretaking, which is characterised by emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) and "dirty work" (Hughes, 1951, 1958, 1971). The work itself, and the performance of these jobs, are often interpreted in a problem-oriented way. Hochschild (1983) highlights the "human costs" of emotional labour; where the potentially most harmful attitude is the employee who "identifies too wholeheartedly with the job" (1983, p. 187). Furthermore, housekeeping (Harris, 2010) and janitors' work (Hughes, 1958) include "dirty work". Society perceives these jobs to be "tainted" in a physically, socially or morally way (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999, p. 428). The labour "symbolises lack of dignity and status and potential degradation of the worker" (Harris, 2010, p. 146). McMurray and Ward (2014) link emotional labour and "dirty work", and claim that emotion can stand as a "form of dirt and taint" (2014, p. 1138). As for service work, Höpfl (2002) explains: "The requirement to 'fake it', to perform with a simulated intimacy is a familiar aspect of many service role jobs." (2002, p. 261). There seems to be an assumption that service work is rarely healthy, genuine, or something to take pride in.

But is that really so?

According to Gabriel (2010), who researched service work, the traditional emotional labour approach presents "a partial view, one that tends to deny emotions any autonomy, ultimately subordinating them to cognition and the logic of capitalist controls." (Gabriel, 2010, p. 44) I would like to add that the assumptions behind "dirty work" are also, often, relatively one-sided. Moreover, as Ashforth and Kreiner (1999, p. 429), point out: "researchers have used the construct in idiosyncratic ways, often without explanation".

As shown through the stories in this chapter, the employees experience autonomy, commitment and pride in doing their job. This does not mean they like everything about their job, that they are not critical, or that they do not sometimes overly-engage in their work.[48] However, overall, they show satisfaction with their working situation. Similar findings have been reported in other contemporary hotel research. According to Faulkner and Patiar (1997), many of the staff who work in housekeeping ”appear to be quite satisfied with most aspects of their job” (Faulkner and Patiar, 1997, p. 112). Eriksson and Li’s (2009) case studies show that room attendants in Denmark have a high level of job satisfaction. Hunter Powell and Watson (2006) studied room attendant work in Wales, expecting that the dirty work status of the job would cause a negative self-image; instead they found that the room attendants held ”a predominately positive view of the job.” (2006, p. 306) Kensbock *et al*. (2016) interviewed room attendants in South East Queensland hotels in Australia. They conclude:

> Room attendants find dignity in their work through recognising and celebrating their own values, beliefs, perceptions and motives. Room attendants take pride, for example, in displaying values such as honesty, discretion, a positive work ethic, and high standards of tasking. (Kensbock *et al*., 2016, p. 122)

As for employees performing “dirty work”, Ashforth and Kreiner (1999) find that they “often appear able to create and maintain a positive work role identity”. (1999, p. 428) There is no doubt that dignity can be imported into this kind of work (Hamilton, Redman and McMurray, 2017).

The staff that I interviewed could have stated “I'm just doing my job”, or “I'm doing the best I can”, or “For me, this job is just a way to support myself.” One does not have to *like* one’s work, in order to perform it. However, during my time at the hotel, I only encountered this view exceptionally. Employees rarely expressed that they did not care about the company, or that the work effort they did was just done because someone else asked them to, or because they had to do it. On the contrary, they are committed and find joy in their work. Eileen that said that “there are so

[48] For example, in my field notes I had noted that both Khadija and Nathalie sometimes showed a commitment that lacked limits. For example, one day, Khadija said: “Last night, I emailed Nathalie at one o’clock”. (Field notes, 3 June 2015)

many opportunities to change my situation". And Darko explained that he and Slavko are "so independent" and that there is "no slave driver here whipping you to work." Hotel manager, Nathalie, said she "can *live on*" the satisfaction she gets of helping a guest. Perhaps one explanation is that the daily tasks – be it emotional labour, dirty work or both – are more easily accepted and performed when they are a part of a work role that is genuine and rewarding to one's self (cf. Hochschild, 1983; Hughes, 1951). That is, if you really like your job and find it interesting and satisfying, you can put up with the downsides associated with the work (cf. McMurray and Ward, 2014).

Before closing this chapter, I would like to highlight a further aspect of commitment, and the understanding of this value. Commitment at work – or *to* work – may be understood in terms of *length of service*. Research shows that this is a challenge for the hotel industry, along with limited career possibilities (Brien, Thomas and Brown, 2017). The Hotel Queen Sophia is characterised by many staff members who have been working here for a long time. Of the thirty-three people I interviewed, twenty-six were non-family members, of whom sixteen people had been working at the hotel for five years or more. Eleven of them had worked there for ten years or longer.[49] This may further highlight how commitment is a prominent value in the hotel.[50]

As with the other parts of the hotel, the other four values are also clearly distinguishable here. *Joy* was evident when Nathalie explained that "you have to think that going to work is fun", and when Eileen said that "it's really important to be able to joke about things at work." *Cooperation* as a value was illustrated by Eileen when she emphasised: "We have to share the work." *Consideration* became visible when Nathalie articulated her own expected qualities, "being able to listen to and see your colleagues", as well as when Khadija emphasised that "people need praise; I praise my colleagues." *Flexibility* was conveyed in Darko's story of what is expected from him: "Being helpful to everyone, in all areas."

[49] The hotel has thirty-five permanent employees. In addition, there are a number of casual staff, seasonal staff and trainees. As explained in Chapter 3 – "Research Methodology and Method" – I interviewed both permanent and non-permanent staff.
[50] Especially given that the Swedish labour market for hotel and restaurant employees is very positive according to the Sweden's Public Employment Agency (2017).

8.6 Summary

In this chapter, I explored the last of the five most prominent values at Hotel Queen Sophia: *commitment*. Through the stories of different people, I strove to give a picture of them and their work. I described life in the corridors by taking a closer look at cleaning and housekeeping (8.2). I also presented the everyday work and the stories of the caretakers (8.3), and of the people working at the end of the corridors: the office (8.4). In section 8.5, I discussed commitment, within the context of criticism, as well as in relation to emotional labour and ”dirty work”.

In the next chapter – Discussion and Conclusion – I will discuss my findings in relation to previous research. I will interpret the findings and answer my research questions, and I will present my contribution to theory. I will also summarise the study and present my conclusion.

Chapter 9: Discussion and Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

In this thesis, I have immersed myself in the organisational life of the Hotel Queen Sophia. I have explored what employees say about themselves, their work, their colleagues, their managers and the owning family. I have also investigated how the managers and the owners talk about their job, their staff and their experiences of the everyday situations at the hotel. The multifaceted dimensions of hotel life have been highlighted, as well as the individual life stories therein. Like Boje (1995), who used the play and discursive metaphor, *Tamara,* to theorise Walt Disney enterprises as a storytelling organisation, Kensbock *et al*. (2016), who interviewed hotel workers, identify "that there are a multiplicity of performances, a plurality of stories and interpretations" (Kensbock *et al*., 2016, p. 117). Similarly, I did not find one single, common story in the Hotel Queen Sophia; neither in the reception, the restaurant, the office, the corridors nor any other parts of the hotel. Rather, what unfolded was a *choir of voices*, all conveying individual life experiences and interpretations of working at the hotel. Nevertheless, it was possible to identify some clear values, from this plurality of voices. I have presented and explored those values: *joy, consideration*, *cooperation*, *flexibility* and *commitment,* in the past five presentation of findings chapters. In this final chapter, I discuss these values further, as I interpret my findings and answer my research questions (9.2). I also demonstrate my original contribution to theory (9.3), and the implications of my findings (9.4). Moreover, I present some concluding reflections on my ethnographic work (9.5), and provide recommendations for future research (9.6). Finally, in section 9.7, I summarise the study and present my conclusion.

However, before delving into this exciting part of the thesis, let me give a concise summary of the purpose of the study and explain how I collected and analysed my data.

9.1.1 Understanding Values through Storytelling

My research interests are in the field of family business, values and storytelling. The ambition of this particular research project has been to investigate values in a

family-owned company; and more specifically, how values and storytelling are related. In order to accomplish this, I selected one company as the subject of my research, including its owners, managers and employees. The company is the Hotel Queen Sophia, a four-star family-owned hotel located in the city centre of Stockholm, the capital of Sweden. Through my triadic literature review, presented in Chapter 2, I arrived at my main research question:

- How are organisational and personal values conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business?

I also ask two sub-questions:

- How does storytelling uncover different perceptions of values?
- How is the notion of "family" present in the stories?

This research is ethnographic and the methods used are participant observation and semi-structured interviews. I conducted fieldwork at the Queen Sophia, during a six-month period, from April to October in 2015, in order to explore and understand how values are conveyed through storytelling. I helped out in different parts of the organisation and I also conducted thirty-three interviews with employees, managers and owners. Storytelling is infused with values, and by analysing the stories people tell at work, personal and organisational values may be revealed (Meyer, 1995).

Narrative analysis was used to interpret the stories gleaned from participant observation, conversations and interviews. Narrative analysis is the study of the stories that people tell (Gartner, 2007), and is a valuable way to explore the complexity of actors and actions in stories, as well as people's values, ideas and beliefs (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). In this family-run business, personal and organisational values were uncovered by analysing what people said, in order to find the patterns, topics and themes that occurred across the stories of the different individuals (Mello, 2002). I organised the collected material, using NVivo to explore concepts and categories (Díaz Garcia and Welter, 2013), and through this I developed a structure that made the data easier to interpret (Repstad, 2007). Firstly, I identified the owners, managers and employees' *personal values*, as expressed through their stories. Personal values, sometimes

referred to as individual values (Rokeach, 1979), are the beliefs that guide a person's actions (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015; Lichtenstein, Lichtenstein and Higgs, 2017). Secondly, I categorised these values by major themes (Meyer, 1995). This was a way to identify the values that were the most common – the *organisational values*. The term refers to the small number of values that, when combined, make up an organisation's value system (Bourne and Jenkins, 2013), the aggregate values of that particular organisation (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998). Thus, the five values that I identified through this research are not only the most prevalent values in the organisation. They also constitute the *organisational values* of the Hotel Queen Sophia. They are the values that the owners, managers and employees, most commonly express through storytelling. According to Sorenson (2013), organisational values "provide a basis for policies, practices, and expected social behaviour" (Sorenson, 2013, p. 117).

9.2 Interpretation of Findings

The aim of this part of the thesis is to interpret my findings in relation to the existing body of knowledge. I have structured this section around each of my three research questions and I will discuss my findings, and their meanings, as well as their connection to the literature.[51]

9.2.1 How Values Are Conveyed through Storytelling – Discussion of Main Research Question

My main research question is: "How are organisational and personal values conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business?" In order to answer this question, this section is divided into two parts. I will first discuss *what* the values are, and then examine *how* they are conveyed.

9.2.1.1 The Most Prevalent Values

Generally, values have not been the prime area of focus in research into the culture and attitudes of family firms (Simon *et al.*, 2012). However, this study puts them in

[51] To clarify – no new literature and no new data are presented in this chapter (except Tolstoy (2013/1873-7). All the references, as well as informants' quotes and stories, have been presented previously in the thesis. The fact that they are included again is to be able to discuss – and answer – my research questions.

the spotlight, as the centre of attention. The five most dominant values that are revealed through storytelling, at the Hotel Queen Sophia, are *joy*, *consideration*, *cooperation*, *flexibility* and *commitment*. I have already presented and explored them thoroughly in this thesis. Nevertheless, I will make a brief recap, as they are fundamental to the discussion that follows.

Joy. Owner George established the motto: "It should be fun to work at Hotel Queen Sophia." The value of joy strongly characterises the organisation and is constantly present in the daily work at the hotel. Both the owners and managers clearly communicated this value in their stories – as an attitude, an encouragement, a call or a command. When I interviewed HR manager, Doreen, she said: "If you don't think it's fun to work here, then it's your own responsibility to do something about it." Thus, joy is not only a value; it is a moral emotion (Haidt, 2003; Lindebaum, Geddes and Gabriel, 2017). Moreover, the staff, themselves, expressed joy and optimism when they spoke about their feelings and experiences at work. At the staff meeting, employees expressed the importance of "cheerfulness" and "everyday happiness in the workplace." Generally, working at the Queen Sophia is considered to be fun, joyful and positive. The fact that one is *expected* to have fun does not seem to be in contrast to actually *having* fun. In section 9.2.2, I will discuss these different ways of relating to and understanding this value, as well as the four other values. I will show how values can be perceived differently, depending on the person, role and context.

Consideration. This value recurs abundantly in the stories from the hotel, and is addressed by employees, managers and owners. For example, the owners and managers exhibited consideration for the staff. They are concerned about their well-being, and they express appreciation, respect and support (cf. Bass 1990; Judge, Piccolo and Ilies, 2004). Family business leaders are considered to treat employees in a more caring way (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2005; Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Scholnick, 2008; König, Kammerlander and Enders, 2013). It has also been suggested that one of the reasons that a family runs a business, is to care for and develop people (Kepner, 1983). This kind of managerial caring (Kroth and Keeler, 2009) was also highlighted by the employees, who articulated the consideration and respect they felt the family showed them. Breakfast manager,

Lela, said: "They discuss things with me and talk to me … I've worked here so long that they come to me automatically. They ask: 'How do you want it to be?'" Family business employment is positively associated with employees' perceptions of organisational support (Bammens, Notelaers and Van Gils, 2015). Dimensions, such as empathy and warmth, have been found to be significantly higher in family businesses than in non-family ones (Payne *et al.*, 2011). My study supports these findings.

Cooperation. Cooperative principles and behaviour are important within the context of family businesses (Goel, 2013; Goel and Roessl, 2015), something that the stories of Hotel Queen Sophia illustrated. The importance of cooperation emerged from interacting with, and speaking to, the employees and managers. During the staff meeting, employees expressed the importance of helping each other, respecting each other, and of teamwork and good cooperation, something I presented in Chapter 4. When I interviewed front office manager, Lisa, she emphasised cooperation in the context of team spirit and job satisfaction. So too did breakfast manager, Lela, who exemplified this using her relationship with her own manager, restaurant co-owner Keith: "Things work really well with Keith. He has *feelings* and he's also really thorough and things should work." Cooperation was also conveyed when I interviewed the members of the owning family. Veronica has a close cooperation with her brother Richard, and shares the managing directorship of the hotel business with him; they also share an office. When her sister, interior designer Cecilia, spoke about her parents, George and Judith, she emphasised: "They really ran the hotels *together*." Teamwork is considered important in the hospitality industry (Lee-Ross and Lashley, 2003); and Peters and Kallmuenzer (2018) suggest that family businesses in this industry value long-term cooperation and social networking, something that is clearly revealed in the stories of Queen Sophia.

Flexibility. Flexibility is a sought-after quality in modern organisations (Sennett, 1998), and particularly in hotels and restaurants (Guerrier, 1999). To be able to adapt to different circumstances is a natural part of the work in hospitality; and, through storytelling, it became clear that people at Hotel Queen Sophia are expected to be open and flexible. Flexibility is needed in order to perform the

work, but also to cope with working at the hotel. David, the daytime chef, explained: "There's never anyone [among the staff] who moans because guests arrive. We're great at lunches. We find solutions. On a day like that, when it's really busy, I see it as a *sports performance*." This value was also clearly conveyed in the interviews with family members. When owner and managing director, Richard, talked about desirable qualities among the staff, he mentioned "drive", "the desire to develop and progress" and "to realise that you can have an influence, you always have a mandate". There is no doubt about the significance his sister Veronica attributes to this value: "Those people who aren't good at their jobs and don't display these qualities, this *flexibility*, we don't offer them the chance to progress", she said. According to Zahra *et al*. (2008), family business survival and its successful performance rest on its capability to achieve and sustain strategic flexibility.

Commitment. This value permeates the atmosphere and culture at the Hotel Queen Sophia and the stories told by owners, managers and employees reveal that commitment can take many different guises (Meyer and Allen, 1997). This value is about engagement and responsibility, but also loyalty. Multiple work-relevant commitments are developed (Meyer and Herscovitch, 2001). As I have shown in this thesis, employees at the hotel take their own initiatives at work and they are committed to giving the guests a nice experience. Several of them are also available in their spare time. It is clear that they care about their job, beyond what their job descriptions impose. Another aspect of commitment is the fact that owners and managers *expect* employees to sympathise and identify with the hotel organisation (Lindebaum, Geddes and Gabriel, 2017), and also to communicate desired messages. This was expressed overtly, during the staff meeting, when family member and interior designer Cecilia said: "It's good if you can take the concept with you into your work." It was apparent again, as hotel manager, Nathalie, underscored: "You're the ones who must convey *joy*". Thus, employees should be committed to embodying the hotel's brand and character, as well as its values (cf. Höpfl, 2002; Harris, 2010). This is something that I will discuss, in more depth, later in this chapter.

As I have shown here, values are clearly present in everyday life at Hotel Queen Sophia. They play a crucial role in family firms (Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008), and they influence all that happens in these companies: behaviour, relationships and priorities (Ward, 1987). This research exposes the personal and organisational values at the Queen Sophia. They become clear through people's voices and words. But *how* are the values disclosed? In what ways are they communicated? Let me elaborate on this subject, next.

9.2.1.2 How Are Values Conveyed?

Storytelling is a relational activity (Riessman, 2012); an interactive process where both the *story* and the *telling* are essential to explore (Mandelbaum, 2013; van Hulst and Ybema, 2019). This particular study shows that values are conveyed in different ways through storytelling. They appear in informal conversations between employees, in conversations between managers and employees, and in dialogues between owners and employees. They are also communicated in staff meetings and other gatherings; occasions where ideology is made visible (Rosen, 1988). Furthermore, values came to light in my conversations and interviews with the employees, managers and owners of the hotel. Thus, they appear in *different types of social interactions*. The values that emerged were both provoked and unprovoked. This means that they can be distinguished in spontaneous conversations between members of the organisation, and on those occasions when they spoke to me on their own initiative; i.e., without any encouragement to tell me anything at all. But of course, they also emerged in my interviews, which were semi-structured and which used a guide that focused on certain themes (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011; Lapan, Quartaroli and Riemer, 2012), and which aimed to give the interviewees an opportunity and a time to communicate their thoughts, opinions, feelings and values. The stories reflect the informants' perceptions of the past, the present and the future (Richardson, 1990; Bruner, 2003).

Values can be expressed directly and in a straightforward manner, as when lunch and breakfast waitress, Nancy, explained: "You have to *cooperate*! If you are not cooperative, I don't know if you can manage to work in this kind of field. […] We have to help each other." And when waitress, Alexandra, said: "I like it when there's good *cooperation*." Here, the value of cooperation is clearly formulated.

However, values can also appear in a more subtle and integrated way, such as when housekeeping manager, Khadija, expressed consideration and commitment in her story about hotel guest Mr Hansson who needed help with two shirts. Although she was almost done for the day and needed to collect her grandchildren from the nursery, she stayed to help him:

> I said: "Shall I take them home and sort it out?" "No, if you could just iron them." But for me – ironing dirty clothes! It was really hot and stressful on Friday. He's an important guest and he was already unhappy with the room. I started reading the Quran to help me, so that God would help me with this. I brought it up and started sorting it out... two shirts. I did it, I was a bit worried something would happen, that my iron wouldn't work. But it was fine.

To elaborate further on how values are conveyed through storytelling; they occur when employees, managers and owners communicate what they believe is *important and meaningful:* in life, work and on a personal level. The informants often spoke about what they cherished, which this quote from Keith, the restaurant's co-owner, highlights:

> It might sound like a bit of a cliché, but it [the work at the restaurant] becomes a lifestyle; I'm happy at work. It's very free and I have a very free role. I'm quite creative and have quite an entrepreneurial mind-set. It is fun to be able to influence things, they could be small things, but I have full control of my work. Sure, I have particular times and routines and so on. I don't think I could see myself as an employee. I guess that's freedom.

Head waiter, Joel, explained what is important to him: a good time with colleagues, "I'd rather go to work than be at home, because I think it's so much damned fun – I can really long for my shift to start." Front office manager, Lisa, said: "Having fun, that's really important for me". These three quotes all convey, in different ways, the value of joy.

Values also became apparent in those contexts where the staff told *how* they carry out their work, and also when they explained *how they wish* to perform their work. For example, they expressed a need for flexibility and freedom. Caretaker, Slavko, explained how he wants things to be: "I like to get to the room when there's no one

there. I want to do my job as quickly as possible." Receptionist, Nadia, told how she likes it to be at work: "I like it when work is on a roll, when things get done. You have time for everything, can answer emails and phone calls and have guests in front of you." Additionally, values were revealed when informants spoke about everyday situations at work. Such as when hotel manager, Nathalie, expressed her commitment to making guests feel satisfied, and the joy she feels when she succeeds:

> Dealing with a complaint can be really stressful, if the guest is very upset. Naturally, the aim is to make a dissatisfied guest happy again. Only last week, I had a guest who was dissatisfied and I followed up on it. She sent back a really nice reply and lots of thanks for how well we handled it. That's … you can *live on* that.

The staff, managers and owners often referred to values as *desired qualities* or *character traits*. They formulated which qualities were expected of *themselves*, but also which characteristics they expected from *others*. Caretaker, Darko, explained: "Being helpful to everyone, in all areas. That you help out, that's the point of the job." Group reservations manager, Eileen, said that the most important quality her co-workers must possess is that they are flexible, "that you really help out and get on with things when it's needed, no laziness or skiving." She continued and explained that "so much is based on being loyal, flexible and hardworking. That's why we're here. […] We have to share the work." When she talked about the staff, managing director and owner, Veronica, explained:

> Many people are concerned about right and wrong and following *the rule book*, but you can't be so very … you have to think *outside the box* sometimes. It's important to be able to go back and reflect, *the openness*.

Values also appeared in stories of which traits they *do not like.* Owner and managing director, Richard, explained:

> An organisation needs different types of people, but if they are to have something in common it's … *humility*. It sounds like a cliché, but I think it's important. It drives me mad when titles are so important, and what your office looks like. I don't like it, no matter who you are.

Clearly communicating what one likes, or does not like, is a way of demonstrating what one honours. In short: ones' values.

In the stories, it also became apparent that employees feel that *they are shown* these values by owners and managers. This is expressed most clearly when it comes to the value of consideration. Receptionist, Nadia, explained about the family: "They check what's happening and ask how it's going." When receptionist, Michael, talked about them, he said:

> You're in such close contact with everyone. Richard comes past reception every day, Veronica too. You know them all. Everything's so… you become like a big *family* in some way. You're very close to each other.

Overall, staff consider that the family care; not only about themselves, and their hotel, but also about the employees. This value is also clearly expressed in their own stories, for example, when managing director, Veronica, talked about the staff: "We feel that it's important to enjoy being here, that not everything is about the financial outcome." Her sister, interior designer Cecilia, said: "I think many people have enjoyed working here, because there's a good spirit to it." Also, the managers clearly show concern about their employees. Breakfast manager, Lela, said: "I try to manage the staff as well as possible. […] I'm always gentle with them." Lisa, the front office manager, explained that "we really have to do something for the reception staff to thank them for putting up with so much this summer", when she talked about how the façade renovation and the introduction of a new booking system had put extra pressure on staff.

There are also *expectations* of which values the members of the organisation should adopt. Their stories highlight how the employees felt they should *embrace* and *exhibit* the values. Well worth noting, however, is that this is generally seen as something natural at work, and an integral part of a professional role. Only in exceptional cases is it associated with something negative (cf. Hochschild, 1983). The staff rarely talked about the exhibition of these values in negative terms. Showing values such as joy, consideration and flexibility does not seem to violate one's integrity. It is an accepted component of the job; a part of the professional role. Sometimes it requires a type of performance. "Acting is part of the job", night

manager, Carl, said. Young receptionist, Michael, explained: "I studied drama at upper-secondary school. I like being extrovert, which is why I wanted to work as a receptionist, and because I like being social and talking to people." Head waiter, Joel, declared that it is a bit like stepping into a role when he comes to work, and that "you have to be a bit jokey and pleasant, have a sense of humour". He concluded: "But it's actually fun."

Values have a strong influence in family firms (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004; Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008) and they affect behaviour, relationships and priorities in these businesses, according to Ward (1987). In this section, I have shown how values are conveyed through storytelling in a family business. I suggest that this process might be different in family businesses to other sort of businesses. Why? Because communication in family businesses is considered to be unique (Tagiuri and Davis, 1996; Danes *et al.*, 1999; Sciascia *et al.*, 2013), and stories have been found to be important for transmitting values in family businesses (Narva, 2001; Zwack *et al.*, 2016). My specific research focusses on the everyday talk, conversations and stories in a family firm and highlights *how* this is done.

To summarise, the findings presented here, show that, through storytelling, values are conveyed as wishes, desired qualities, character traits, expectations and musts. They emerged when people talked about what was important and meaningful, and when they expressed what they liked or disliked in a work context. Furthermore, values appeared in different types of interactions. They were communicated in informal everyday talk among staff and in dialogue between managers and employees, but also in conversations between owners and employees, and in meetings. Furthermore, values became visible in the researcher's conversations and interviews with the employees, managers and owners of the hotel.

9.2.2 How Storytelling Uncovers Different Perceptions of Values – Discussion of Sub-Question 1

Let me continue to discuss the values as they appear among the owners, managers and employees at Hotel Queen Sophia. In this section, I answer the sub-question:

"How does storytelling uncover different perceptions of values?"[52] This discussion expands the discussion of the main research question, and contributes important nuances and different understandings of values. However, in order to discuss it, I first need to turn our attention to the characteristics of values.

Although values are a relatively well-researched area, there is no consistent understanding of them, neither in research or everyday life (Sagiv and Roccas, 2017). Kluckhohn (1951) found that, in the literature, values are "considered as attitudes, motivations, objects, measurable quantities, substantive areas of behaviour, affect-laden customs or traditions, and relationships such as those between individuals, groups, objects, events" (Kluckhohn, 1951, p. 390). According to Rokeach (1979), researchers have been vague in their use of the concept "value"; he suggests that this vagueness is deliberate and necessary, since values are not routinely assessable. Meglino and Ravlin (1998), claim there is no consensus on the nature of values. The authors highlight the fact that values, among other things, have been treated as "needs, personality types, motivations, goals, utilities, attitudes, interests, and non-existent mental entities" (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998, p. 351). This complexity regarding the nature of values also becomes apparent when one investigates how values are uncovered through storytelling. When analysing stories, it is evident that values appear in different ways, depending on how they are perceived by the members of an organisation – as emotions, actions, attitudes, requests, abilities, and skills. What is common to all is that they "represent desirable goals and reflect what people consider important and worthy" (Sagiv and Roccas, 2017, p. 4). What differentiates values from other constructs is that they are inherently positive and function as guiding principles, according to Sagiv and Roccas (2017). In order to illustrate how different perceptions of values are revealed in the stories from Hotel Queen Sophia, I will discuss the values one by one.[53]

One of the most prominent values at Hotel Queen Sophia is *joy*. This value was overtly expressed by the members of the organisation, in different ways. Owner

[52] Within this context, "different perceptions" mean the ways in which values are regarded, understood or interpreted.
[53] Considering the research question, I focus on the *different* perceptions that emerge through storytelling. Of course, there are also similarities.

George has established the motto: "It should be fun to work at Hotel Queen Sophia." When the owning family and the management at Hotel Queen Sophia spoke about joy and the importance of having fun, it was usually formulated as *statements* or *requests*. An example is when hotel manager, Nathalie, emphasised during the staff meeting: "You're the ones who must convey *joy*" – it was an imperative targeted at the employees.[54] According to the owners and managers, it *should* be fun to work at Queen Sophia and employees ought to feel, and exhibit, happiness in their daily work. In this manner, joy becomes a *responsibility* and a *norm* (Thome, 2015). As mentioned earlier in this thesis, the responsibility was highlighted when HR manager, Doreen, said: "If you don't think it's fun to work here, then it's your own responsibility to do something about it." Joy is a clear *expectation* of how employees should feel and behave. Thus, whereas joy may be understood as an emotion, it is more than that – it is a moral emotion (Haidt, 2003; Lindebaum, Geddes and Gabriel, 2017), a moral mood (Walker and Kavedžija, 2015), or as I suggest: a value.

According to Warren (2005), this type of prescription and encouragement to have fun is a kind of management tool that may cause the staff to view management with contempt and distrust. Interestingly, during my interviews with the managers and owners, they did not reflect on the fact that their strong emphasis on joy might constitute a pressure on employees. However, did the employees perceive it as a strain? No, if we judge the answer from their stories. It was rarely raised as something they felt required to feel or show. Rather, they emphasised their own desire to enjoy themselves at work and the importance of having fun with their colleagues. Hence, the value of joy is stressed by the staff themselves. When she spoke about the desired qualities among colleagues, group reservations' manager, Eileen, said that it is important to "make fun of yourself a little" and to "be able to joke about things at work". When head waiter Joel talked about himself, he said that he "laughs and is funny and jokes around", and that he brightens things up. This value, joy, is the clearest example of how a value is perceived differently by owners/managers and employees. In short: according to owners and managers,

[54] As explained in Chapter 3 – "Research Methodology and Method", any emphasis made by informants is italicised in their stories/quotes. Italics that are not within quotation marks are emphasis made by me.

employees *should* have fun. The employees, on the other hand, *want* to have fun. The same value carries different meanings.

Let me now focus on the value of *consideration*. When the owning family expressed consideration and care, it was usually in a context where they were communicating how they felt about each other, and their employees, as well as when they spoke about how they wanted the employees to treat the hotel's guests. Thus, on one hand, the value of consideration emerges as an *emotion* in the family members' stories. On the other hand, consideration is formulated as a *desirable characteristic* that people working at the hotel should have. When Peter described the desired qualities for employees, he underscored: "*Friendliness*, we work with people." According to the employees, consideration is something that is shown to them, especially by the family, but also by managers, as an *attitude*. Family business leaders are thought to treat employees in a more caring way (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2005; Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Scholnick, 2008; König, Kammerlander and Enders, 2013), and family business employment is positively linked to employees' sense of organisational support (Bammens, Notelaers and Van Gils, 2015). Sometimes the topic of consideration came up as something the employees wished for, such as when I asked caretaker, Darko, how a superior should be. He replied that a good boss should have "empathy and respect for the staff". Through storytelling, it also becomes clear how the employees themselves display consideration in their daily work. This is noticeable in their accounts of guest encounters, but also when the staff talks about how they relate to each other. They want their colleagues to be kind and caring. According to Nugent and Abolafia (2006), consideration is important for the building and preservation of relational trust. At the annual staff meeting, employees emphasised such things as: "pleasant manners and that everyone is kind to each other", "giving each other compliments", and "respect for each other". When analysing their stories, it becomes clear that the employees *show* consideration (to guests and colleagues), and that they *are shown* consideration (by owners, managers and colleagues). Thus, consideration is perceived as something you *should give* – and something you *expect to get*.

Cooperation is the next value to highlight. According to Peters and Kallmuenzer (2018), family firms in the hospitality industry acknowledge lasting cooperation and social networking. When the owning family of Hotel Queen Sophia expressed the value of cooperation, it was usually to describe how they worked together as a family; something I presented in "The Family" chapter. From this perspective, the value emerges as a *family feature*; i.e., a kind of "togetherness" (cf. Ward, 1987; Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008). Through their stories, it becomes clear that the family is a unit that works together. Interior designer, Cecilia, emphasised how her parents "really ran the hotels *together.*" The parents, Judith and George, spoke about how they had cooperated over the years. Additionally, they talked about how their children cooperate today. The siblings also emphasised cooperation when I spoke to them. Managing director, Veronica, who shares an office with her brother, Richard, also a managing director, said that it is really important to "have a good dialogue", and that she and her brother "meet and check things" regularly. Cooperative values are important for family businesses (Goel, 2013) and so is cooperative behaviour (Goel and Roessl, 2015). So, for the family, cooperation is an integral part of their way of relating to each other; a matter of course and a characteristic of this family.

How do other members of the organisation perceive this value? According to the employees and managers, cooperation is an *ability* that is required in order to be a good colleague and to function in a team. Daytime waitress, Alexandra, said that cooperation is about seeing "the *whole picture*", not only your own tasks. Dinner waitress, Chloe, told me that "everyone can always help out". Team spirit, camaraderie and emphasis on relationships characterises the family-based restaurant (Erhardt, Martin-Rios and Heckscher, 2016). At the Hotel Queen Sophia, it is also linked to job satisfaction. During the staff meeting, when employees were asked about what was necessary to make work enjoyable, they said: "good teamwork" and to "help each other and cooperate". Depending on whose story one listens to, cooperation can be perceived as a *family feature* or an important *ability*.

I will now turn my attention to *flexibility.* Like joy, this value was often explicitly expressed by members of the organisation. It has been claimed that a family business's survival and successful performance rest on its ability to attain and

maintain flexibility (Zahra *et al.*, 2008). The owning family highlighted it as a *skill* that the employees must possess. Managing director and owner, Veronica, said that the staff should not be so worried about "right and wrong" or "following *the rule book*"; rather they must "think *outside the box"*. Flexibility is also rewarded: "Those people who aren't good at their jobs and don't display these qualities, this *flexibility*, we don't offer them the chance to progress", said Veronica during our interview.

Flexibility is a desirable feature for employees in the hotel industry (Guerrier and Lockwood, 1989) and it is also an essential characteristic of restaurant staff (Fine, 2009). This is reflected in the stories that show that flexibility is a much-needed *skill,* in order to work in this organisation. In many ways, managers and employees share this perception. Flexibility is associated with the ability to adapt to different situations – taking care of guests, handling difficult situations, filling in for each other, and helping out where needed. Thus, the value of flexibility appears as a mode of behaviour (Meglino and Ravlin, 1998); a kind of "practical smartness" for work situations. When I asked Joel about what qualities one needs to work at the hotel, he replied: "Primarily that you see things that no one else does – it's bloody important." So, do employees' perceptions of this value differ from the owners and managers'? Yes, as I have shown in Chapter 7 – "The Restaurant": flexibility is clearly associated with *autonomy* and *freedom of choice* among the staff. Here are a few examples, taken from my one-on-one interviews:

"I feel that I have a great deal of freedom, like with my working hours", waitress, Alexandra, said.

"I'm free; I think I'm free", waitress, Nancy, responded when I asked her if she can influence her work tasks.

"It feels as if it's become a little more how I want it to be here", head waiter, Joel, said when he explained the relaxed ambience in the restaurant.

When I interviewed her, the group reservations' manager, Eileen, emphasised flexibility, and "an open and creative attitude". She also said that there are many opportunities to influence her work situation and that she has a great deal of power over her tasks: "That's been the best thing about this workplace." Hence, the

employees *own* strong emphasis on flexibility and flexible work arrangements clearly emerges through the stories (cf. Clarke and Holdsworth, 2017).

As explained here, although the demand for flexibility comes from managers and owners, the staff themselves also emphasise flexibility. However, they emphasise the *additional aspects* of the same value, where autonomy and freedom are also included. Based on the employees' stories, a broader sense of flexibility emerges than is conveyed by the owners and managers.

Finally, I will concentrate on *commitment*, a value that has been identified as one of the main characteristics of family businesses (Parada, Nordqvist and Gimeno, 2010). The owners expressed it as a feature that is strongly linked to the family. One has a certain *devotion* and *emotional attachment* to the hotel that is explained by being family, and by the fact that the hotel is part of one's life (cf. Brundin, Florin Samuelsson and Melin, 2014). Veronica said: "I have a strong sense of loyalty. […] Well, you have commitment in an entirely different way; I still feel that … it's not as an *employee* but as a part-owner." Her brother, Richard, said the following about the family's commitment: "Never needing to doubt that we all take one hundred per cent responsibility, or more, is a huge advantage." Commitment is also expected from the staff. Employees should be engaged and take own initiative and responsibility; a view the owners shared with the managers at the hotel. How did the staff exhibit this value? Commonly, commitment was expressed as a *sense of duty*. This value was often disclosed implicitly, for example, in stories about attitude and actions, and it clearly influenced behaviour (Cieciuch, Schwartz and Davidov, 2015). Breakfast manager, Lela, and housekeeping manager, Khadija, said that they would often come in, during their spare time, to make sure everything was running smoothly, and they were always available by phone on evenings and weekends if the staff or managers needed to reach them. According to Meyer and Herscovitch (2001), employees develop multiple work-relevant commitments, and Meyer and Allen (1997) suggest that commitment may take different shapes. As I highlighted in Chapter 8, "Life in the Corridors", commitment is closely linked to job satisfaction. Caretakers, Slavko and Darko, were committed to solving everyday problems quickly and to being helpful to guests. It was a commitment they enjoyed, since they themselves were in charge of deciding how these tasks could

best be fulfilled. Darko said: "You're very independent and can decide what to do yourself." When I asked group reservations' manager, Eileen, what makes her proud at work, she answered: "When I succeed in fulfilling my own goals. […] I try to set my own goals and I'm proud when I succeed." The staff and managers often expressed the satisfaction they felt in being committed; to perform their tasks in a desired way, to set the bar high, and to succeed. Thus, the family's commitment can be described as an *emotional attachment*. Among the staff and the managers, it takes the form of a *sense of duty*; one that is often perceived as enjoyable.

Before I finish this section, it might be pertinent to consider how the different perceptions that appear here can be derived from the fact that the company is family-owned. The findings should be understood within the context of family firms, where cultures are thought to be strong (Hall, Melin and Nordqvist, 2001; Vallejo, 2008), and where business behaviour is influenced by the founder's values (García-Alvarez and López-Sintas, 2001), as well as the family system (Zachary, 2011). Research suggests that *moral* and *social* values may be more accentuated in family businesses than in non-family ones (Sorenson, 2013).[55] In addition, the values of family firms are often more *emotional* (Ward, 2008) and *behavioural* (Ceja, Agulles and Tàpies, 2010).[56] The different perceptions of values, which are expressed through storytelling at Queen Sophia, commonly relate to one or more of these categories – they are multifaceted.

To summarise: The analysis of my findings shows how storytelling uncovers different perceptions of values, and I have presented how this is done, in this section. Storytelling in everyday situations, conversations and interviews reveal how values have various meanings and different significations, for different members of the organisation. There is no unanimous understanding of values at Hotel Queen Sophia. Values are about skills and abilities. They may be leadership tools for managers and owners, but they are also the guiding principles for employees. Furthermore, a value may be an inner experience, an emotion or an

[55] According to Sorenson (2013), moral values are those that "help sustain interpersonal relationships", and social values are those that "include preferred group or societal outcomes" (2013, p. 118).
[56] Behavioural values refer to modes of behaviour, rather than states of existence (Ceja, Agulles and Tàpies, 2010; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998).

attitude that one wants – or ought – to embrace. Values, as they appear through storytelling, come in different guises. The values at Queen Sophia are also manifested through particular behaviours; they are exhibited. What is common is that they are inherently positive and desirable. This is a distinguishing feature that separates values from other constructs, according to Sagiv and Roccas (2017). This specific research suggests that one reason why values are not easy to assess (Rokeach, 1979), and that no consistent understanding of them exists (Kluckhohn, 1951; Meglino and Ravlin, 1998), may stem from the fact that they are *perceived* differently by different people.

9.2.3 How the Notion of "Family" is Present in the Stories – Discussion of Sub-Question 2

Family business narratives offers an especially rich material for researchers (Hamilton, Discua Cruz and Jack, 2017), something I have strived to make use of, and to show in this study. However, in order to understand values fully, within these firms, one must take *stories about family* into account. In this section, I discuss the final research question, "How is the notion of 'family' present in the stories?" At the Queen Sophia "family" appears differently, at least in part, in the informants' stories – depending on whether they are family or non-family-members. Therefore, let me start by discussing the family members.

9.2.3.1 The Notion of "Family" in Family Members' Stories

The Hotel Queen Sophia is a family affair. All the members of the Andersson family: father George, mother Judith, and their children Veronica, Richard, Cecilia and Peter are involved in the business, in one way or another, and they are all co-owners.

Their stories demonstrate that the family and the hotel are inseparable entities. George and Judith described how the hotel is part of their relationship, their family, their efforts, their dreams, and their lives. The same can be said for the children. In our interviews, all of the siblings explained how they had been introduced to the business, in one way or another, and in different forms of hands-on training, throughout their upbringing; something that is typical for family firms (Casson, 1999; Dyers, 2006). They have developed their savoir-faire by gaining positions

with more and more responsibility; in other words, they underwent successor socialisation (García-Álvarez, López-Sintas and Saldaña Gonzalvo, 2002). The children have grown up with the hotel and *at* the hotel; it is a part of their family life, their background and their common memories. The youngest brother, Peter, explained: "I've been on our Christmas cards here and I ran around playing in the lifts; this is where Grandpa died, even though that was before I was born." The shared sense of identity and a lifelong common history have been acknowledged as a characteristic of family firms (Tagiuri and Davies, 1996), as has a strong emotional attachment to the business (Brundin, Florin Samuelsson and Melin, 2014). These stories highlight how the family and the hotel coexist and are intimately intertwined – the social systems overlap (Tagiuri and Davies, 1996; Arregle *et al.*, 2007).

The notion of family is also presented in other ways. The family, themselves, place great emphasis on the fact that the hotel is family-owned. I have described how the family use family metaphors when they speak about the Queen Sophia (and their other hotels). For example, they talked about the Queen Sophia as a "member of the family" (Peter) and other hotels in the company as "step-children" (Veronica). Moreover, it is clear that the family believes that the hotel has gained its special character *from* the family, which makes it a hotel like no other. The Andersson's use words such as "approachable", "intimate", "personal touch", "history", "special", "unique", "soul" and "a gem" to describe this. The terms, "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch", are – as I highlighted in Chapter 5 – all interconnected and can be said to characterise the family's stories; but, they also reveal how the family perceive the hotel and the character they *want* it to have. Zellweger *et al.* (2012) suggest that when family firms believe in their business and history, they can capitalise on their family ties to construct a strong family firm image that may be used to promote the business. Similarly, the Andersson's stories reveal that "family" is viewed as something positive, and as a competitive advantage. They want it to show that the Queen Sophia is family-owned.

Furthermore, in our interviews, the Andersson's switched between internal and external perceptions, when they spoke about the hotel (cf. Braidford *et al.*, 2014). They do not draw clear boundaries between themselves, how they are as a family,

and what the hotel is like. In this way, the hotel becomes a type of extension of the family and the family's identity. As a consequence, their stories also reflect the identity of the organisation. This is in line with previous research that has shown that business owners play an important role in the construction of its organisational identity (Boers, 2013). The synthesis of the different beliefs that originate from the family, their common history and the business may explain how this unique organisational identity appears (Zellweger, Eddleston and Kellermanns, 2010). The Andersson's stories reveal that they have developed what Sorenson (2013) calls a *family-business identity* – they have developed beliefs about what the family and the hotel have in common. Hubler (2009) uses the word *soul* to describe "what drives all that happens in family businesses, as well as the indefinable essence of a family's spirit and being" (2009, p. 254). Parada and Viladás (2010) analysed stories from founders and family members, in family firms, and concluded that the business "is a manifestation of their individual and collective identity, and a source of pride and recognition" (2010, p. 171). Similarly, the family members at Queen Sophia, honour the hotel, its history, its development and its future.

There is more to highlight, in the notion of family in the stories. During our interviews, the family members mentioned that working together is not always conflict-free; minor tensions and disagreements may appear between them. They also emphasised the straightforward way they speak to each other. Peter described it like this: "It's special, because you take freedoms that you might not take with other colleagues, in how you speak and act." The private language of relatives is an attribute that is typical of family firms, according to Tagiuri and Davies (1996). However, although the family members described these features and circumstances, it was not something that was generally thought to impact the business. No family member associated current relationships within the family with their potential influence on the hotel and its organisation, in a negative way. Nor did any of them state that the family's influence could be unfavourable, from a business or a guest perspective. In this context, family involvement is perceived as rather unproblematic. Their stories clearly show that, for the Andersson's, "family" is something predominantly positive.

The study of family is central to understanding family business; through focusing on the notion of "family" in the stories, the intergenerational dynamics of family and business can be uncovered (Hamilton, 2006b). Stories reflect how relations between the family and the business are created and sustained (cf. McCollom, 1992). The fact that the family's personality and the character of the hotel are interconnected and fused together becomes clear, when the Andersson family talk about themselves and the hotel. They believe the hotel mirrors them as a family, and this is what makes it special. This is how the Queen Sophia achieves its personal touch and how it becomes something other than a "chain hotel" – the antithesis of a family-owned hotel, according to the family.

9.2.3.2 The Notion of "Family" in Non-Family Members' Stories

The different resources that are unique to a business, because of a family's involvement, is often recognised as the "familiness" of the business (Habbershon and Williams, 1999; Pearson, Carr and Shaw, 2008). As discussed in the previous section, the family members' perception of "family" and what it means for the hotel business are quite homogeneous, in the sense that it is assumed to be not particularly problematic; neither for the family itself, nor the employees, nor the business. On the other hand, non-family members have a more complex and diverse perception of "family" in the context of a family business.

As it appears in non-family employees and managers' stories, the notion of family is associated with different things; it is imbued with a variety of understandings. Most of the employees and managers said that it is noticeable that the hotel is family-owned, and the majority of them gave examples of how this is noticeable. The family place its mark on the atmosphere, the working culture, the expectations on employees and managers, and the relationships – but also physically, on the interior design, the décor and the hotel's character, according to employees and managers. As reported by Getz, Carlsen and Morrison (2004), family affairs permeate all aspects of the business in tourism and hospitality. The advantages and disadvantages of family businesses are well-documented in the literature (Peters and Buhalis, 2004) and, correspondingly, the stories from the non-family members at Queen Sophia show that the family is considered to have both a positive and a negative impact on the business.

The family is also associated with the values that are discernible in the hotel. The stories, as told by the non-family members of the organisation, reveal that the family expect the employees and managers to embrace and "perform" these values, to varying degrees. The family is generally perceived to be engaged, committed, hardworking and caring, by the staff and the managers. Waitress Alexandra talked about the siblings and said: "None of them are unpleasant. They're very ambitious. They *work* here; they aren't just *spending time* here." Receptionist Nadia explained: "When Peter was hotel manager and was 'manager on duty' at the weekends, he would get up and help guests at breakfast. He wiped tables and so on; kept an eye on things and asked us how things were. It's things like that, I guess, no other hotel manager would do." The family members are regarded as down-to-earth and approachable, an image that the family members themselves also articulated in my conversations with them. Research suggests that family business leaders treat employees in a more caring way (Miller and Le Breton-Miller, 2005; Miller, Le Breton-Miller and Scholnick, 2008; König, Kammerlander and Enders, 2013), and family business employment is distinctly correlated with employees' perceptions of organisational support (Bammens, Notelaers and Van Gils, 2015). Typically, employees and managers at Queen Sophia said they get along well with family-members. Haugh and McKee (2003) found that when employees rely on and internalise the owning family's values and the family metaphor, their autonomy seems to be encouraged. Similarly, the non-family members at Queen Sophia exhibit independence, freedom and openness at work, as revealed from their stories. However, there is a limit to how much employees can be frank, and can complain about matters related to the family, as this easily becomes personal.

Direction by inheritance and a lack of non-family members in positions of true authority are typical to family businesses, according to Payne (1984). Similarly, the employees at Queen Sophia believe that family members are appointed to positions, even if they are not the most suitable person for the task (cf. Kets de Vries, 1993). A culture based on strong family bonds may bring about nepotism (Bertrand and Schoar, 2006), and the stories of the non-family members at Queen Sophia reveal their view that an overly strong family influence may be unhealthy and disadvantageous to the business. This influence is also associated with feelings of unfairness (Cropanzano and Greenberg, 1997; Barnett and Kellermans, 2006;

Samara and Arenas, 2017). Some of the employees expressed the concern that there were few career possibilities for them at Queen Sophia; that a sort of ceiling existed on promotion (Casson, 1999). In this case, "family" denotes something that has a negative impact on both the hotel business and its employees. This is in sharp contrast to the understanding that the family themselves have.

Another aspect of the family, which emerges when employees talk about them, is their being *economical,* which usually means being careful about spending money, and keeping costs down. It is sometimes expressed as the family's being greedy or mean. This feature of family firms – that they may be particularly given to stinginess – has also been highlighted in family business research (Miller *et al.*, 2009). According to the employees and managers at Queen Sophia, employee basics such as wages, and pleasures such as gifts and job parties are affected. Caretaker Darko said: "These new generations of bosses are so greedy and mean." Housekeeping manager Khadija explained: "Not doing anything fun for the staff. Save, save and save. […] It's been ages since we did anything". The family is also assumed to keep down costs on purchases and fees paid to suppliers. As with the aspect of nepotism, this is a feature that family members, themselves, rarely mentioned.

The culture in family firms is a product of the values, beliefs, intentions and objectives that are grounded in the family and its history, but also of existing social networks (Hall, Melin and Nordqvist, 2001). The devotion and attachment, which the owning family feels for its family legacy, is most likely to be transmitted to non-family employees through the values that are latent in the organisational culture (Vallejo, 2009). Like the family themselves, many of the employees recognise that it is the family that gives the hotel its special character. Thus, at this point, the family's picture of what makes the hotel unique and special overlaps with the non-family members' picture. The family represent the "personal touch" of the hotel, even if it is the employees who are supposed to convey this impression to the guests.

To summarise the discussion of sub-question 2; my findings clearly show the importance that both family and non-family members put on "family", as well as the family's influence on the hotel. Furthermore, this influence is not neutral. It is

clear that family members – as well as non-family employees and managers – regard the hotel as an *extension of the family*. Hotel Queen Sophia reflects the personality and values of the family and is intimately associated with it. "Family", as it appears in the hotel's stories, is filled with expectations, attitudes, opinions, associations and possibilities. It carries different meanings and connotations for the family and non-family members of the organisation.

9.3 Contribution to Theory

Here I discuss how my empirical research makes a theoretical contribution. I discuss my findings, in relationship to the different areas I have presented in the Literature Review and that cover storytelling, values and family business. In particular, the most important contributions can be found at the point where these different areas meet and merge.

9.3.1 The Ways Values are Conveyed in Family Business

The first contribution concerns how values are conveyed through storytelling in family businesses. Even if researchers have not agreed over how family firms are unique, when compared to non-family ones (Dawson and Mussolino, 2014), the main body of research, to date, shows that family firms have specific intrinsic characteristics and distinctive features (Payne, 1984; Tagiuri and Davis, 1996; Westhead and Cowling, 1998; Brundin, Florin Samuelsson and Melin, 2014). Values have been shown to be influential in family businesses (Sharma and Nordqvist, 2008); and they affect the behaviour, priorities and relationships within these firms (Ward, 1987). However, the importance of family values has not been thoroughly examined, empirically (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004), and generally values have not been the focal point, when researchers have explored the philosophy, culture and attitudes of family businesses (Simon *et al.*, 2012). Moreover, there is insufficient research concerning how values are embedded in family businesses (Sorenson, 2013). Although previous research has identified that stories transmit values in family businesses (Narva, 2001), the research that focuses explicitly on *how* values are transmitted is limited (Parada and Viladás, 2010; Zwack *et al*., 2016). I suggest that this can be explained, at least partially, by the lack of an *insider view* of the storytelling organisation; something which Boje

(2008) also draws our attention to. New knowledge can be added to the field of understanding how values emerge in family businesses, by studying dialogues and conversations in the organisational members' everyday lives at work and how they talk about their social reality. Relationships and social networks matter a great deal in family firms (Karlsson, 2013). Narratives can reveal much about the everyday life, culture and values in organisations – they are "sediments composed of norms and practices" (Czarniawska, 2010, p. 63). Furthermore, they are also a way to approach the emotional life of organisations (Fineman, 2000). My research makes a valuable contribution in this area, since it uncovers how values are conveyed in different ways, and in different situations, in the family business organisation. Values are expressed through storytelling and transmitted as wishes, desired qualities, character traits, expectations and musts. They become visible when owners, managers and employees demonstrate what is important and meaningful. According to Boje (2014), storytelling is the primary way of sensemaking in organisations. My research shows how values are expressed through everyday talk, in dialogues and daily interactions, in meetings and in interviews. Since research has suggested that communication in family businesses is special (Danes *et al.*, 1999; Sciascia *et al.*, 2013; Tagiuri and Davis, 1996), the process of how values are conveyed through storytelling is, most likely, also special. In this way, my research adds a missing piece of the puzzle – namely, *how* values are disclosed and passed on in family businesses.

To sum up: This research increases our knowledge of the process through which storytelling conveys values, and provides a more thorough understanding of the complexity of this process within the context of a family business.

9.3.2 The Personification of Values in Family Business

A second major contribution of my research into storytelling in family businesses is that it shows how the values of the organisation are embraced and exhibited. Put simply, how they are *personified*. The process of bringing values to life starts with the owning family (Aronoff and Ward, 2001), and at the Hotel Queen Sophia, the values of the organisation are sometimes manifested as norms (Scott, 1971; Thome, 2015). The family members share the values and exhibit them to each other, and to their employees. The owners and managers also expect that

employees should embrace and exhibit those values; something that the staff integrate into their professional roles and their daily work. This means that the incorporation of values is reflected not only in the employees' attitudes and talk but also in their personal characteristics and actions, and they in turn expect their colleagues to display these values, also. Moreover, the employees are required to transfer "the personal touch" and the identity of the hotel to guests (cf. Ryu *et al.*, 2018), as I have shown in this thesis. Thus, the personality of the family should be conveyed through the employees' personality (Dallabona, 2016).

Values have a central capacity to influence key behaviours in family firms (Sharma and Nordqvist, 2013). However, descriptions of *how* values are personified by organisational members are few in the family business literature. Researchers have suggested that moral and social values may be given higher priority (Sorenson, 2013), as well as emotional (Ward, 2008) and behavioural ones (Ceja, Agulles and Tàpies, 2010). This indicates that values are manifested in actions, and between people, in these organisations. Dimensions such as empathy and warmth, as well as a harmonious culture, are more emphasised in family businesses (Payne *et al.*, 2011; Ruiz Jiménez, Vallejo Martos and Martínez Jiménez, 2015). Moreover, many family businesses, in the tourism and hospitality industry, are rooted in "people skills", such as friendliness and helpfulness (Getz, Carlsen and Morrison, 2004). Thus, the reason that the employees at Hotel Queen Sophia are expected to personify the owners and management's values, can be explained, at least partially, by the fact that they work in a family business, and partially by their working in the hospitality industry. Höpfl (2002) states that employees, who work in customer relations, must "embody the values which corporate culture proposes" (2002, p. 262). Additionally, Harris (2010) suggests that the fact of the staff's having to "embody the brand" places "increasing emphasis on the personal and cultural attributes" of staff in hotels (Harris, 2010, pp. 146-147).

Dedication to customers is a key element of family firms' competitive strategy (Vallejo-Martos, 2011), and family firms with strong value systems have an edge in service businesses (Aronoff and Ward, 2001). The family is a core differentiator in the service delivery process (Peters and Buhalis, 2004), and the culture of family businesses is believed to enhance performance (Denison, Lief and Ward, 2004).

Values function as powerful motivators for the staff in family businesses (Aronoff and Ward, 2001). Research suggests that when employees rely on, and internalise, the owning family's values and the family metaphor, their autonomy is encouraged (Haugh and McKee, 2003). Similarly, the non-family members at Queen Sophia express autonomy, as revealed in their stories. They embrace and exhibit the values of joy, consideration, cooperation, flexibility and commitment, and this affects their daily work and their interactions with guests and co-workers. Furthermore, they relate to service work's expectations freely and creatively, and do not seem to perceive the sometimes low-skilled tasks or less glamourous duties as "dirty work" (Hughes, 1951, 1958, 1971), or "tainted" (Ashforth and Kreiner, 1999). Neither is the work associated with a need to "fake it" (Höpfl, 2002, p. 261), or the harmful conditions of "emotional labour" (Hochschild, 1983). Similarly, Kensbock *et al*. (2016), Eriksson and Li (2009), Hunter Powell and Watson (2006), and Faulkner and Patiar (1997) identify aspects of job satisfaction among hotel workers, such as pride, dignity, and a positive work role identity. Although these studies do not refer, specifically, to a family business context, they point to the fact that there are elements that may compensate for the potential downsides of service work in the hotel industry. My research suggests that *family* may be such a factor. Hochschild (1983), who highlights the human costs of emotional labour, points out that service jobs could be less harmful "if workers could feel a greater sense of control over the conditions of their work lives." (Hochschild, 1983, p. 187) As my research shows, the staff at Queen Sophia personify the values of the organisation and feel they have control and influence over their work. In particular, they emphasise the meaningfulness they find in the work itself.

To summarise: My research on storytelling contributes to the understanding of how values are embraced and exhibited – i.e. *personified* – in a family business. Furthermore, it suggests that this personification of values is linked to autonomy, which in turn adds important knowledge to family business and hospitality research.

9.3.3 The Ethnonarrative Approach in Family Business Research

The third, and final, major contribution is the research method/methodology that I chose to use in this study – ethnography and narrative analysis – and what I

achieved by applying it. How so? Because it permitted me to explore the complexity of storytelling and values in this family firm. This is how I was able to explore the mechanisms of how values are conveyed, perceived and embraced at the Queen Sophia. In the literature, this stream of research is referred to as an *ethnonarrative approach* (Hansen, 2006), *narrative ethnography* (Gubrium and Holstein, 2008), and *narrative inquiry* (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Webster and Mertova, 2007).

Smyrnios, Poutziouris and Goel (2013) state that there is room for more rigorous questioning and robust qualitative research methodologies within family business research. As this particular research shows, ethnographic research, which uses a combination of participant observation and semi-structured interviews, is a fruitful way of exploring storytelling and values in a family business. People in organisations tell stories to describe and manage their everyday work (Easterby-Smith, Thorpe and Jackson, 2012). Being in the field and taking part of everyday conversations, dialogues in work situations and meetings, combined with interviews with members of the organisation, facilitates "thick description" (Geertz, 1973). This is another reason why this approach is an important contribution, as it permits a richer understanding of what is being studied. Since these ethnographic methods are well-known and have been used for a long time (Spradley 1979, 1980; Madden, 2010), one might assume that they are widely used in the field of family business and storytelling. However, this is not the case. One notable exception is McCollom (1992), who analysed organisational stories, collected through participant observation and interviews, to reveal how family and non-family employees experienced membership in a family business system.

According to Dawson and Hjorth (2012), family business research has not been very responsive to narrative approaches and, when they are used, narrative research usually relies on *interviews* as the main data collection method (Johansson, Li and Tsai, 2014). The studies of Mussolino *et al*. (2019), Peters and Kallmuenzer (2018), Nilsson (2015), Brundin and Kjellander (2010), Steier (2007) and Hamilton (2006a; 2006b), are examples of this. Commonly, researchers enter the organisation, conduct interviews, and step out again. This means one fails to be

in the centre of events – "on the scenes of story construction and storytelling" (Gubrium and Holstein, 2008, p. 250).

Furthermore, although participant observation is considered a particularly suitable research method for studying organisational culture (Myers, 2013), few contributions, in narrative family business research, use this method. Hansen (2006) states that, in general, narrative research relies on the analysis of various texts and often ignores context. However, as Czarniawska (1998) suggests, it is *in the field* that one can study how organisational stories are produced. Therefore, to make interviews accompany direct observation is valuable (Czarniawska, 2004). In this way, people's thoughts and the cultural meanings, they adopt daily, can be discovered (Spradley, 1980; DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011). It is a way to learn about the organisations' cultures from the inside out (Schwartzman, 1993), and to collect what organisational members say in the front regions as well as in the back regions of the workplace (Goffman, 1959; Shulman, 2017). In this way, the boundaries between public and private in the workplace may become clear, as well as how these boundaries sometimes become blurred by the employees' everyday talk and stories (cf. Goffman, 1959; Edensor, 2001). Using a combination of ethnographic and narrative methods enables the researcher to be in the midst of stories, in order to "make sense of life as lived" (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000, p. 78). Context matters when one wants to understands the stories people tell (Czarniawska, 1997; Boje, 2001; van Hulst and Ybema, 2019).

To summarise: Applying a well-established method (ethnography) to a well-established research field (family business), and using narrative analysis to interpret the findings, is an important contribution to the literature and knowledge about storytelling and values in family business research. The ethnonarrative approach makes it possible to uncover how values are conveyed, perceived and personified in these businesses.

9.4 Implications for Practice

Here I state the implications of my findings; I provide their overall meaning, as well as describing how they fit into the "real world".

An important implication for practice is *realising the power of storytelling for values transmission in family business*. Owners and managers in family businesses, as well as organisational consultants and researchers, need to pay attention to the impact of stories and storytelling on the communication of values. Likewise, it is important to be aware of the different contexts wherein values are expressed: everyday situations, meetings, encounters and conversations – front stage as well as backstage. In addition, storytelling uncovers how members of the organisation perceive their everyday life at work and how they reflect on their job and their tasks. It shows what they like and dislike, their wishes, needs, and pleasures. Everyone who wants to understand an organisation *from within* should listen to its stories.

One should recognise the fact that *family matters in a family business*. A family firm is anything but a neutral place. Consideration of this fact is crucial for those who intend to manage, work in, or conduct research, in such an organisation. All employees in family businesses are expected to adopt the values of the organisation that, most probably, stem from the family. It is about embracing them – and exhibiting them. The values should be "lived". It is also important to identify the broader impact the family have on the organisation's culture and identity, especially in family-*run* businesses where the owners, most likely, are present in the daily activities in one way or another. The family and their firm are intimately intertwined, and the family put their mark on almost all areas. This affects everything from the choice of interior design to how business decisions are made. Employees, as well as managers, are expected to approve of this situation.

From the above, it follows that "family" in family businesses bring about positive consequences. This, together with other research, shows that when employees embrace the values of the family business, they also experience autonomy and freedom. It also underlines the importance of employees' sharing the organisation's values. However, in order to do this, the values have to be ones that employees are committed to sharing. This research does not provide a recipe for *how* this should be achieved. However, it does indicate that it is important for owners, managers and organisational consultants to take this aspect into consideration, when they want to understand and increase such things as

motivation, performance and job satisfaction, and also if they want to develop an organisational culture.

"Family" in family business may also be associated with negative impacts. This, and other research, shows that families are often believed to appoint their own family members to significant positions. Outsiders may experience fewer career opportunities and fewer ways to develop. Therefore – if that is the intention – family businesses should clearly show that they may consider putting non-family members into significant positions. Family business owners and managers in such companies can do so by providing career possibilities, but also by developing their personnel, promoting good people, announcing new positions, both internally and externally and, well, simply *avoiding nepotism.*

Family business owners can also be perceived as stingy, and employees may experience few opportunities for pay rises, promotion, education or professional development. Fun events, such as parties and after-works at the expense of the company can be few and small. This is an important point to be aware of and to counteract (if so desired). In the long run, it is about attracting and keeping the staff you want.

Finally, let me present some practical implications concerning organisational values in general.

A vital lesson that was learnt from this research is that when organisations define their values, it may be appropriate to *define what to put into these concepts*. As this research shows, joy, consideration, cooperation, flexibility and commitment, for example, may have different meanings for different people. If one believes it is important to have a consensus about values, it is important to define and discuss them in a context where owners, managers and employees all participate. For example, define: "With *joy*, we mean …", and "*Commitment* for this organisation is about …"

It is also important to define what kind of values one is referring to, when organisational values are being discussed. Is it the aggregated values of all organisational members (as I have examined here), or does one mean *core values* or *corporate values* in the sense of the values that the members jointly – or the

management themselves – have *decided* are the (valid) values for that particular organisation?[57] At first glance this may seem to be more or less the same, but the distinction is important. In addition, it makes sense in relation to how to decide which values should apply.

Given the aforementioned implications, it follows that *the process of identifying an organisation's values* is significant. In this study, they were obtained by a researcher who conducted participant observation and semi-structured interviews, to identify values through storytelling, and to learn how they were conveyed, perceived and translated into practice. Thus, the perspective was one where values were sought from within, and where owners', managers' and employees' personal values were uncovered, to arrive at the organisational values.

9.5 Final Considerations

Every academic study is unique, with specific circumstances, challenges and limitations. Here, I make some concluding reflections on my ethnographic work on storytelling and values in a family business.

The first consideration concerns the fact that *storytelling is never neutral*. The owners, managers and employees may have their reasons for portraying themselves, their opinions and their thoughts, in a certain way. Even if they intend to be honest, their memories can be selective or fragmentary and they may adapt their stories to the preference of the listener (McLean, Pasupathi and Pais, 2007). In addition, qualitative research, in the form of participant observation and interviews, is easily influenced by the researcher's relationships with the interviewees (Spradley, 1979). An interview can constitute a situated understanding, i.e. where the specific relationship that is established between the interviewer and the interviewee, as well as their subsequent interaction, can be influenced by the attributes of the interviewer (Qu and Dumay, 2011). My constant presence, during the data collection phase, and the fact that I conducted my work overtly (Vinten, 1994) may have influenced what the interviewees said in our interviews and informal conversations. Ethnographic life is inseparable from the self (Richardson, 2000), and the researcher, himself or herself, affects how stories

[57] As I discussed in-depth in Chapter 2 – "Literature Review".

are told, perceived, interpreted and written down (cf. Repstad, 2007). In addition, it is the researcher who ultimately reduces the interviewees' stories to more concentrated ones. I *include*, which implies that, at the same time, I *exclude*. It is important to reflect continuously on one's own role as a researcher within the production of knowledge (Griffin, 2018), and throughout this thesis, I have striven for transparency, which is a prerequisite for all research. Nevertheless, I believe it is important to be aware of the fact that storytelling – and *story writing* – is not neutral.

The second consideration involves *timing*. The temporal aspects of a setting, such as times, dates, months and seasons are important to acknowledge when carrying out ethnography (Madden, 2010). It is nearly impossible to know what an ordinary work situation is, at the Hotel Queen Sophia. However, it is clear that during my time at the hotel, it was not "business as usual". I conducted my fieldwork over a period when the hotel was being renovated and a new booking-system was being introduced. This affected the employees and managers in terms of additional workload and stress. For obvious reasons, many of their stories focused on these circumstances. What might have happened, instead, had I carried out my fieldwork a year before, or after? In what manner would this have been reflected in the stories and their content?

The third consideration is my *limited time in the field*. Whereas I had the opportunity to participate in many areas of the business during my six months at the hotel, it would have been preferable to have had the time to expand my work further into each area. A hotel organisation, such as the Queen Sophia, contains many parts and many different types of occupations. In most cases, the departments are separated by floors and doors, and by the different characteristics of the professions. Based on my collected material, I was able to address my research questions, and to highlight and explore the values of the owners, managers and employees at the Hotel Queen Sophia. However, might a longer time in the kitchen, restaurant, front desk, housekeeping or office have allowed me to visualise values, and the different perceptions of them, further? Might it have given me a more refined picture of how values vary within the same organisation? Might it have provided an increased understanding of how organisational and personal

values are conveyed through storytelling? Although I was able to answer my research questions, using my chosen approach, I consider it a limitation that I was not able to devote more time to each department.

The fourth and final consideration is *the absence of comparisons*. My research project includes *one* family-owned company, with its owners, managers and employees. It is a case study. This means that there is no comparative material, which is a type of limitation. Several times, while working on this thesis, I thought of the quote: "All happy families are alike; each unhappy family is unhappy in its own way", from Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* (2013/1873-7, p. 1). It reminded me that it is not only the fact that a company is family-owned that affects the organisation, but also *which* family owns and runs it. All families – happy or otherwise – are not the same. Given the influence a family exerts on its business, it would have been interesting to compare my material with another family-owned hotel, inter alia, to see how different family values might potentially affect the businesses and their employees in different ways. An additional limitation, related to this comparative aspect, is the lack of a comparison between different cultures and societies. Values are "cultural products" (Geertz, 1973) and, also, society-dependent (World Values Survey, 2014). Therefore, it would have been interesting to have been able to compare material from a family-owned hotel in, for example, a collectivistic country, to see how it potentially contrasted with a family-run hotel in such a distinctive, individualistic society as Sweden. These reflexive considerations lead us directly to the recommendations for future research.

9.6 Recommendations for Future Research

How might my study be expanded? What else needs to be studied in my topic area? Which direction should any future research on the topic take? In this section, I make suggestions and provide recommendations for future research.

Family businesses, in general, and family-run hotels, in particular, are interesting because they offer opportunities to explore values at both the personal and the organisational level. I have identified the following areas for future research.

Dig deeper into values and job satisfaction in family-run hotels. One recommendation for future research is to investigate the link between family

businesses and autonomy further, by including aspects such as motivation and job satisfaction. In what ways do the family influence the employees' experiences and perceptions of "dirty work" and "emotional labour" in this industry?

Explore values in different family-run hotels, within the same region. Comparisons between different family-run hotels, within the same city, country or culture would be interesting, in order to investigate which personal and organisational values are conveyed through storytelling among employees. Multi-sited ethnography (Madden, 2010) could also shed light on potentially different understandings of values in different businesses, and how the notion of family is present in stories, in different family-owned hotels.

Research values in family-run hotels in different cultures. Do family-run hotels in different parts of the world, for example in Italy, India, Australia and Argentina, share commonalities of personal and organisational values? I recommend future research conducts cross-cultural studies, to see how personal and organisational values are conveyed through storytelling, in family-run hotels in different societies and cultures. This may reveal, among other things, how personal values and organisational values relate to culture and society.

Explore different data collection methods. I propose that future research, into family-run hotels, complements participant observation with different kinds of interview methods. *Focus groups* are one such method. A group of owners, managers or employees could be interviewed separately, or mixed groups could be created, of owners, managers and employees, to see how values are expressed when people with different roles and backgrounds are mixed. It would also be interesting to explore methods that involve interviewing managers, owners and employees in a *different environment,* other than "at work". This might provide insights into how stories about life and work potentially differ when the interview is conducted "off" the physical site. For example, a future researcher might focus on attending after-work get-togethers with employees, might follow managers on business trips, or might attend the hotel owners' family dinners. These could be interesting ways to explore storytelling and values.

Focus on those who left. Because family businesses have a particular character, it would be interesting to study the people who have quit their jobs in family-run hotels. What do former employees, managers and employees have to tell? What values do they express? How do they perceive the family business? Why did they quit? A further recommendation for future research, but still within this theme, could be to compare stories and values between those who have left, and those who still work, in a family-run hotel. This might also shed light on why people choose to *stay* in a particular organisation.

9.7 Conclusion

In recent decades, family business research has evolved and has undergone significant change – all of which has validated its legitimacy as an independent, academic field of study. However, a great deal of research in this area still relies on quantitative methods, and values have not been the central focus when researchers have explored the philosophy, culture and attitudes of family firms. In addition, little attention has been paid to storytelling in family businesses and, particularly, how this relates to organisational and personal values.

The ambition of this particular research project was to investigate values in a family business and, more specifically, to determine how values and storytelling are related. A main research question and two sub-questions were devised to frame the study. The main question relates to how organisational and personal values are conveyed through storytelling in a family-run business. The first sub-question asks how storytelling uncovers different perceptions of values, and the second sub-question asks how the notion of "family" is present in the stories.

In order to present my findings, I took the reader on an ethnographic journey through the different parts of Hotel Queen Sophia. I introduced the facilities, the organisation, the people who work there and, of course, their stories and the values they expressed through storytelling. Often, when writing an ethnography, the presentation of findings is integrated with an interpretation of the same, and I also chose to do this. After the *Introduction* (Chapter 1), and the *Literature Review* (Chapter 2), I explained the *Research Methodology and Method* used in this study (Chapter 3). This was followed by chapters that presented the findings. *The Staff*

Meeting (Chapter 4) presented the five most prevalent values at the Queen Sophia: joy, consideration, cooperation, flexibility and commitment. From a storytelling perspective, the staff meeting was vivid and information-rich, and it clearly exhibited the various elements of personal and organisational values. *The Family* (Chapter 5) introduced the owning family, through their personal stories and it showed how the values of the organisation exist among the family members. This chapter also explored a recurring theme in the family's stories that is closely linked to values, namely the importance they ascribe to "family", "family-owned" and "personal touch". The subsequent chapters deepened the understanding of the five different values, and showed how they emerged through the employees, managers and owners' stories. *The Lobby* (Chapter 6), highlighted how the values of joy and consideration were expressed through the employees' stories and daily conversations. I described the everyday life of the lobby area, reception and back office and introduced the staff that works in this part of the hotel. I also immersed myself in a discussion on how joy and consideration are manifested in this particular setting. At the same time, I reflected on the importance that the employees put on familiness. *The Restaurant* (Chapter 7), introduced the restaurant and the kitchen areas and showed how the values of cooperation and flexibility are particularly clarified in this part of the hotel, when expressed through the employees' stories. I deepened the understanding about the connection between flexibility and freedom, as well as the link between cooperation and conflict. I also explored the manner in which staff in the restaurant and kitchen talk about the owning family. *Life in the Corridors* (Chapter 8), explored the last of the five most prominent values at Hotel Queen Sophia, commitment. As in the other presentation of findings chapters, I described this part of the hotel and its employees a little more closely, through their stories. In addition, I discussed the relationship between employee criticism and commitment, and examined commitment against the background of "emotional labour" and "dirty work". Finally, in this last part of the thesis (Chapter 9), I discussed my findings in relation to current research. I answered my three research questions, presenting how values are conveyed and perceived at Hotel Queen Sophia, and showing how the notion of family is present in the stories.

Let me conclude now what this study has shown. This research shows that values are conveyed as wishes, desired qualities, character traits, expectations and musts, through storytelling. They emerge when people talk about what is important and meaningful, and when they express what they like or dislike about the work context. Additionally, values appear in different types of interactions. They are communicated in the informal everyday talk among staff and in the dialogue between managers and employees, but they also emerge in conversations between the owners and employees, in meetings, and in the conversations and interviews that this researcher carried out with the employees, managers and owners.

In relation to how storytelling uncovers different perceptions of values, this research suggests that there is no unanimous understanding of values. They have varied meanings and different significations for different members of the organisation. Values are about skills and abilities. They may be leadership tools for managers and owners, but they are also the guiding principles for employees. Additionally, a value may be an inner experience, an emotion or an attitude that one wants to – or should – embrace. This research shows that values are manifested through particular behaviours; they are embraced and exhibited. Values, as they appear in storytelling, come in different guises. What they have in common is that they are innately positive.

As concerns the notion of "family" in the stories – this study reveals the close connection between the family and the different values that are discernible in the hotel. It also shows the importance that both family and non-family members put on "family", as well as the family's influence on the hotel. The hotel is regarded as an extension of the family. It reflects the personality and values of the family and is intimately associated with it. In the stories, the notion of "family" is filled with expectations, attitudes, opinions, associations and possibilities. It carries different meanings and connotations for the family and non-family members of the organisation. "Family" is anything but neutral.

I have also presented my original contribution to theory in this chapter. This study has made a substantial contribution to the body of knowledge concerning storytelling, values and family business. Firstly, it shows how values are disclosed and passed on in a family business. This increases the knowledge of the process,

through which values are conveyed through storytelling and it offers a thorough understanding of the complexity of this process. Secondly, the research reveals how the values of the organisation are embraced and exhibited – i.e. *personified* – in different ways. It suggests that this personification of values is linked to autonomy, which adds important knowledge to family business and hospitality research. Thirdly, this study makes an important methodological contribution. The thesis' ethnonarrative approach led to a deeper understanding of how values are conveyed, perceived and personified, which contributes to the literature on storytelling and values in family business research.

So, what do the lessons-learnt from this research mean in "real life"? An important implication for practice, arising from this study, is the recognition that *family matters in a family business*. A family and its firm are closely intertwined and the family put their mark on almost all areas, something of which employees and managers, who work in such an organisation, are expected to approve. Another crucial implication for practice is *the realisation of the power of storytelling for values transmission in family business*. It is vital that attention is paid to the impact of stories and storytelling on the communication of values, and the different situations wherein values are expressed. The research also highlights some implications that concern organisational values in general. When organisations define their values, it may be appropriate to *define what to put into these concepts*, since values have different meanings for different people. It is also important to define *what kind of values* one is referring to, when discussing organisational values. Thence, it follows that *the process of identifying an organisation's values* is significant.

Suggestions for future research include, for example, *digging deeper into values and job satisfaction in family-run hotels,* to investigate the link between family businesses and autonomy further. Another recommendation is to *explore values in different family-run hotels, within the same region*, in order to identify similarities and dissimilarities. Another suggestion is to *research values in family-run hotels in different cultures* for the purpose of investigating whether they share commonalities of values. Future research into family-run hotels might also consider *exploring different data collection methods*. A final recommendation is to

study the people who have quit their jobs in family-run hotels, that is: *to focus on those who left*. Their voices can provide an interesting perspective on family businesses and values.

Let me also share a more personal conclusion. One vital insight from this study is how the subject of research together with the chosen research approach made it possible to explore the plurality of voices and the complexity of values. By experiencing storytelling from different members and parts of the organisation, at different times and in different situations, I not only had the opportunity to answer my research questions, but new, important and promising knowledge about storytelling and values in family businesses was also generated. Ethnographic data is a rich source of information and it offers many possibilities for scholars in qualitative research. My hope is that I, and other researchers, might continue this exciting work to increase the understanding further of what it is to own, manage and work in family firms. One thing is sure: family business is more than just a family affair.

Appendix A: Email Negotiating Access

Subject: A PhD Thesis about Hotel Queen Sophia?

Dear Veronica,

My name is Nicolas Jacquemot and I am an ethnologist and doctoral student at the University of Leicester in the UK, but I live and work here in Stockholm. My research focuses on values and culture in family-owned companies. For my thesis, I will interview employees, managers and owners of a family business. I am especially interested in the hospitality industry and I have previous experience from hotel work. For this reason, I would like to meet you to discuss if it is possible for me as a researcher to study organisational culture within HQS Hotels.

My research project involves two parts: Firstly, to fieldwork at one of your hotels (Queen Sophia) during the period April to October 2015, and participate in daily activities in the reception, housekeeping, breakfast and management, much like an intern. Secondly, I would like to perform in-depth interviews with around 30 employees about everyday routines, experiences of work, what makes work meaningful, challenges, etc. The work would lead to a doctoral thesis on the theme of values and culture in a family-run hotel. Besides the fact that my research could contribute to an increased understanding of how it is to work in the hotel business, I also believe that it could be valuable to you as owners and your employees.

I make my own living and I am insured by my own company, so my work is not associated with any expenses for you. In addition to Swedish (my mother tongue), I also speak English and French. Aside from hotel work, I have worked as a guide at cultural institutions in Stockholm, and for many years at a cafe. The last 15 years I have worked in public relations and marketing so I also believe that I could contribute with expertise in that area. Is it possible to get together for a meeting? That way, I can tell you more.

Best regards,

/Nicolas

(Email correspondence, 19 January 2015)

Appendix B: Interview Guide

B.1 Interview Guide – Employees

Introduction

- What are your main tasks?
- How long have you been working at the hotel?
- What have you worked with (and/or studied) before?
- Can you briefly describe what your typical work day looks like?

Personal Qualities, Priorities and Working in a Family-Run Company

- What qualities should you have for your own job/role? *What knowledge are you expected to have?*
- How do you know what is important for the company? *How is it communicated, e.g. via owners, managers, staff meetings etc.?*
- Do you feel that you can influence your work tasks and your work situation? *How?*
- Do you think it is apparent that you work in a family business? *If so, in what way(s)? Please, also, feel free to tell me about both advantages and disadvantages related to this.*
- What relationship do you have with the hotel owners? *Do you know any of them? Do you feel confident talking to them? Is it important to have a good relationship with them?*
- Have you ever worked in a business that is not family-run? *If yes, have you noticed any differences? What?*
- What qualities do you think are important for colleagues to have? *What characterises a good co-worker?*
- What qualities do you think are important to a manager? *How should a good leader be?*

Joys, Challenges and Memorable Events

- Can you remember a really fun situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was it fun?*
- Can you remember a really difficult or challenging situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was difficult/challenging?*
- Can you also tell me a bit about common challenges in your day-to-day work?
- Can you recall something memorable that you have done with your colleagues recently, at work or outside? *What did you do? Why was it memorable?*
- What is important for you to feel good at work? *What is important in order to enjoy yourself and enjoy your job?*
- If you had to select one task that you think is the most meaningful. What would it be and why?
- What makes you proud of yourself at work?
- Is there anything that you have thought of yourself that you would like to add? *Is there anything I forgot to ask about?*

Finally, I would like to thank you for the chat and your participation!

B.2 Interview Guide – Managers

Introduction

- How long have you been working at the hotel?
- What have you worked with (and/or studied) before?
- How long have you been a manager?
- What are your responsibilities?
- Can you briefly describe what your typical work day looks like?

Personal Qualities, Priorities and Working in a Family-Run Company

- What qualities should you have for own your job/role? *What knowledge are you expected to have?*

- How do you know what is important for the company? *How is it communicated, e.g. via owners, managers, staff meetings etc.?*
- Do you feel that you can influence your work tasks and your work situation? *How?*
- Do you think it is apparent that you work in a family business? *If so, in what way(s)? Please, also, feel free to tell me about both advantages and disadvantages related to this.*
- What relationship do you have with the hotel owners? *Do you know any of them? Do you feel confident talking to them? Is it important to have a good relationship with them?*
- Have you ever worked in a business that is not family-run? *If yes, have you noticed any differences? What?*
- What qualities do you think are important for the staff to have? *What characterises a good co-worker?*
- What qualities do you think are important to a manager? *How should a good leader be?*

Joys, Challenges and Memorable Events

- Can you remember a really fun situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was it fun?*
- Can you remember a really difficult or challenging situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was difficult/challenging?*
- Can you also tell me a bit about common challenges in your day-to-day work?
- Can you recall something memorable that you have done with your employees and/or other managers recently, at work or outside? *What did you do? Why was it memorable?*
- What is important for you to feel good at work? *What is important in order to enjoy yourself and enjoy your job?*
- If you had to select one task that you think is the most meaningful. What would it be and why?
- What makes you proud of yourself at work?

- Is there anything that you have thought of yourself that you would like to add? *Is there anything I forgot to ask about?*

Finally, I would like to thank you for the chat and your participation!

B.3 Interview Guide – Owners

Introduction

- How long have you been working at the hotel?
- What have you worked with (and/or studied) before?
- Can you briefly describe what your typical work day looks like?

Personal Qualities, Priorities and Working in a Family-Run Company

- What qualities should you have for your own job/role? *What knowledge are you expected to have?*
- What is important for the company? *How is it communicated, e.g. via owners, managers, staff meetings etc.?*
- Do you think it is apparent that you work in a family business? *If so, in what way(s)?*
- How is it to work with your family/siblings/parents/children? *Do you socialise privately? Do you talk about work then?*
- When you are part of a hotel family, do you experience some form of pressure to work in the business? *Or expectations? How? Are there other challenges related to this?*
- Do you think the hotel business reflects you as a family in some way? *If so, how?*
- Have you ever worked in a business that is not family-run? *If yes, have you noticed any differences? What? Do you find any advantages and disadvantages with working in a family business?*
- What qualities are important that managers and employees who work here have?

- Are there advantages for non-family members to work in a family business, do you think? *If so, what are these?*
- Are there any disadvantages for non-family members working in a family business, do you think? *If so, what are these?*

Joys, Challenges and Memorable Events

- Do you spend time with someone working at the hotel privately/after work?
- Can you remember a really fun situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was it fun?*
- Can you remember a really difficult or challenging situation at work? *What happened? What did you do? Why was difficult/challenging?*
- Can you also tell me a bit about common challenges in your day-to-day work?
- Can you recall something memorable that you have done with the hotel's staff recently, at work or outside? *What did you do? Why was it memorable?*
- What is important for you to feel good at work? *What is important in order to enjoy yourself and enjoy your job?*
- If you had to select one task that you think is the most meaningful. What would it be and why?
- What makes you proud of yourself at work?
- Is there anything that you have thought of yourself that you would like to add? *Is there anything I forgot to ask about?*

Finally, I would like to thank you for the chat and your participation!

Appendix C: In-Field Checklist

In-Field-Checklist

Observations and interviews

- Make observations and notes from the start, since it is easy to become "blind" and too familiar with a place after a while
- Notice what people do, and ask them what they do, to get their own explanations in their own words
- Write down observations, preferably as soon as possible
- Notice the stories that come up in everyday work life, note the situation and context
- Remember to gain knowledge and develop questions to add to the interview guide
- *And*: Remember to remain open-minded about how the fieldwork itself unfolds, conversations will happen and themes I haven't thought about may come up

Data collection and storage

- I have acquired a new PC-compatible recorder (Dictaphone) for the interviews
- I have also a bought an encryption product to keep my working files – it is a USB stick recommended by the university
- I have got five small notebooks for field notes that fit in a jacket pocket
- I will use the "Z: Drive", where I intend to keep all materials, both documents and mp3 files from recordings

Bibliography

Abbott, G.N., White, F.A. and Charles, M.A. (2005) 'Linking Values and Organizational Commitment: A Correlational and Experimental Investigation in Two Organizations', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 78(4), pp. 531-551.

Adamson, G., Pine, J., Van Steenhoven, T. and Kroupa, J. (2006) 'How Storytelling Can Drive Strategic Change', *Strategy & Leadership*, 34(1), pp. 36-41.

Adib, A. and Guerrier, Y. (2003) 'The Interlocking of Gender with Nationality, Race, Ethnicity and Class: The Narratives of Women in Hotel Work', *Gender, Work & Organization*, 10(4), pp. 413-432.

Agerholm Andersen, M. (2010) 'Creating Esprit de Corps in Times of Crisis: Employee Identification with Values in a Danish Windmill Company', *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 15(1), pp. 102-133.

Aggerholm, H.K. (2010) 'Management Conversations in Danish Companies: Communicating Corporate Values and Strategies', *Strategic Direction*, 26(1). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1108/sd.2010.05626aad.007 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Allison, J. (2018) 'Values Statements: The Missing Link Between Organizational Culture, Strategic Management and Strategic Communication', *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-08-2018-1501 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Allport, G.W., Vernon, P. and Lindzey, G. (1970) *Study of Values*. 3rd edn. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Allwood, C.M. and Erikson, M.G. (2012) *Grundläggande Vetenskapsteori: För Psykologi och Andra Beteendevetenskaper* [Basic Philosophy of Science: For Psychology and Other Behavioural Sciences]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Alvermann, D.E. (2000) 'Narrative Approaches', in Kamil, M.L., Mosenthal, P.B., Pearson, D. and Barr, R. (eds.) *Handbook of Reading Research.* Vol. 3. Mahwah: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 123-139.

Alvesson, M. (2015) *Organisationskultur och Ledning*. 3:e uppl. [Organizational Culture and Leadership. 3rd edn.]. Stockholm: Liber.

Alvesson, M. and Sandberg, J. (2013) *Constructing Research Questions: Doing Interesting Research*. London: Sage.

Anderson, K.E. (2010) 'Storytelling', in Birx, H.J. (ed.) *21st Century Anthropology: A Reference Handbook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 277-286.

Andersson, F.W., Johansson, D., Karlsson, J., Lodefalk, M. and Poldahl, A. (2018) 'The Characteristics of Family Firms: Exploiting Information on Ownership, Kinship, and Governance Using Total Population Data', *Small Business Economics*, 51(3), pp. 539-556.

Andrews, T. (2012) 'What is Social Constructionism?', *The Grounded Theory Review: An International Journal*, 11(1), pp. 39-46.

Arieli, S., Sagiv, L. and Roccas, S. (2019) 'Values at Work: The Impact of Personal Values in Organisations', *Applied Psychology: An international Review*, 0(0), pp. 1-46. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1111/apps.12181 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Aronoff, C. and Ward, J. (2001) *Family Business Values: How to Assure a Legacy of Continuity and Success*. Marietta, GA: Family Enterprise Publishers.

Arregle, J-L., Hitt, M.A., Sirmon, D.G. and Very, P. (2007) 'The Development of Organizational Social Capital: Attributes of Family Firms', *Journal of Management Studies*, 44(1), pp. 73-95.

Ashforth, B.E. and Humphrey, R.H. (1993) 'Emotional Labor in Service Roles: The Influence of Identity', *The Academy of Management Review*, 18(1), pp. 88-115.

Ashforth, B.E. and Kreiner, G. E. (1999) '"How Can You Do It?": Dirty Work and the Challenge of Constructing a Positive Identity', *The Academy of Management Review*, 24(3), pp. 413-434.

Auvinen, T., Aaltio, I. and Blomqvist, K. (2013) 'Constructing Leadership by Storytelling – the Meaning of Trust and Narratives', *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 34(6), pp. 496-514.

Baker, K., Dalton, R.J. and Hildebrandt, K. (1981) *Germany Transformed: Political Culture and the New Politics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bal, P.M., and De Lange, A.H. (2015) 'From Flexibility Human Resource Management to Employee Engagement and Perceived Job Performance across the Lifespan: A Multi-Sample Study', *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, 88(1), pp. 126-154.

Bammens, Y., Notelaers, G. and Van Gils, A. (2015) 'Implications of Family Business Employment for Employees' Innovative Work Involvement', *Family Business Review*, 28(2), pp. 123-144.

Bansal, P. (2003) 'From Issues to Actions: The Importance of Individual Concerns and Organizational Values in Responding to Natural Environmental Issues, *Organization Science*, 14(5), pp. 510-527.

Barker, R.T. and Gower, K. (2010) 'Strategic Application of Storytelling in Organizations: Toward Effective Communication in a Diverse World', *International Journal of Business Communication*, 47(3), pp. 295-312.

Barker, R.T., Rimler, G.W., Moreno, E. and Kaplan, T.E. (2004) 'Family Business Members' Narrative Perceptions: Values, Succession, and Commitment', *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*, 34(4), pp. 291-320.

Barelli, P. (2019) 'La Mort de Jeanne Augier, Propriétaire du Negresco à Nice', *Le Monde*, 10 January 2019. Available at: https://www.lemonde.fr/disparitions/article/2019/01/10/la-mort-de-jeanne-augier-proprietaire-du-negresco-a-nice_5407364_3382.html (Accessed: 20 April 2019).

Barnett, T. and Kellermans, F.W. (2006) 'Are We Family and Are We Treated as Family? Nonfamily Employees' Perceptions of Justice in the Family Firm', *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 30(6), pp. 837-854.

Basco, R., Calabrò, A. and Campopiano, G. (2018) 'Transgenerational Entrepreneurship Around the World: Implications for Family Business Research and Practice', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2018.03.004 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Bass, B. M. (1990) *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership: Theory, Research, and Managerial Applications*. 3rd edn. New York: Free Press.

Baumeister, R.F. and Leary, M.R. (1995) 'The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation', *Psychological Bulletin*, 117(3), pp. 497-529.

Becker, H.S. (1960) 'Notes on the Concept of Commitment', *The American Journal of Sociology,* 66(1), pp. 32-40.

Benedict, R. (1934) *Patterns of Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Benton, T. and Craib, I. (2011) *Philosophy of Social Science: The Philosophical Foundations of Social Thought*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Berger, P.L. and Luckmann, T. (1967) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. New York: Anchor Books.

Bernard, H.R. (1994) *Research Methods in Cultural Anthropology*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Bertrand, M. and Schoar, A. (2006) 'The Role of Family in Family Firms', *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 20(2), pp. 73-96.

Bies, R.J. (2009) 'Sounds of Silence: Identifying New Motives and Behaviors', in Greenberg, J. and Edwards, M.S. (eds.) *Voice and Silence in Organizations*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, pp. 157-170.

Birkler, J. (2008) *Vetenskapsteori: En Grundbok* [Philosophy of Science: An Introduction]. Stockholm: Liber.

Bjørge, A.K. and Whittaker, S. (2015) 'Corporate Values: A Linguistic Approach', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, 15(3), pp. 347-362.

Bloisi, W. and Hoel, H. (2008) 'Abusive Work Practices and Bullying Among Chefs: A Review of the Literature', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(4), pp. 649-656.

Boers, B. (2013) *Organizational Identity Construction in Family Businesses: A Dualities Perspective*. Jönköping: Jönköping University JIBS Dissertation Series No. 091.

Boje, D. and Rosile, A. (2003) 'Theatrics of SEAM', *Journal of Organizational Change*, 16(1), pp. 21-32.

Boje, D.M. (1991) 'The Storytelling Organization: A Study of Story Performance in an Office-Supply Firm', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 36(1), pp. 106-126.

Boje, D.M. (1995) 'Stories of the Storytelling Organization: A Postmodern Analysis of Disney as "Tamara-Land"', *Academy of Management Journal*, 38(4), pp. 997-1035.

Boje, D. M. (2001) *Narrative Methods for Organizational and Communication Research*. London: Sage.

Boje, D.M. (2008) *Storytelling Organizations*. London: Sage.

Boje, D. M. (2014) *Storytelling Organizational Practices: Managing in the Quantum Age*. London: Routledge.

Bondy, C. (2012) 'How Did I Get Here? The Social Process of Accessing Field Sites', *Qualitative Research*, 13(5), pp. 578-590.

Botero, I.C., Cruz, C., De Massis, A. and Nordqvist, M. (2015) 'Family Business Research in the European Context', *European Journal of International Management*, 9(2), pp. 139-159.

Bourdain, A. (2007/2000) *Kitchen Confidential: Adventures in the Culinary Underbelly*. Updated Edition. New York: Harper Perennial.

Bourne, H. and Jenkins, M. (2013) 'Organizational Values: A Dynamic Perspective', *Organization Studies*, 34(4), pp. 495-514.

Bourne, H., Jenkins, M. and Parry, E. (2017) 'Mapping Espoused Organizational Values', *Journal of Business Ethics*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-017-3734-9 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Boyce, M.E. (1996) 'Organizational Story and Storytelling: A Critical Review', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 9(5), pp. 5-26.

Boyd, B., Royer, S., Pei, R. and Zhang, X. (2015) 'Knowledge Transfer in Family Business Successions: Implications of Knowledge Types and Transaction Atmospheres', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 5(1), pp. 17-37.

Brabet, J. and Klemm, M. (1994), 'Sharing the Vision: Company Mission Statements in Britain and France', *Long Range Planning*, 27(1), pp. 84-94.

Braidford, P., Houston, M., Allinson, G. and Stone, I. (2014) 'Research into Family Businesses', *BIS Research Paper 172*. London, UK: Department for Business, Innovation & Skills. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/family-businesses-research (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Brien, A., Thomas, N.J. and Brown, E.A. (2017) 'How Hotel Employee Job-Identity Impacts the Hotel Industry: The Uncomfortable Truth', *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 31, pp. 235-243.

Brockhaus, R.H. (2004) 'Family Business Succession: Suggestions for Future Research', *Family Business Review*, 17(2), pp. 165-177.

Brown, A.D., Gabriel, Y. and Gherardi, S. (2009) 'Storytelling and Change: An Unfolding Story', *Organization*, 16(3), pp. 323-333.

Brown, M.H. (1985) 'That Reminds Me of a Story: Speech Action in Organizational Socialization', *Western Journal of Speech Communication*, 49(1), pp. 27-42.

Brown, M.H. (1990) 'Defining Stories in Organizations: Characteristics and Functions', *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 13(1), pp. 162-190.

Brundin, E., Florin Samuelsson, E. and Melin, L. (2014) 'Family Ownership Logic: Framing the Core Characteristics of Family Businesses', *Journal of Management & Organization*, 20(1), pp. 6-37.

Brundin, E. and Kjellander, B. (2010) 'Strategy Formation in the Family Business: The Role of Storytelling', *JIBS Working Papers, 2010-1*. Available at: http://hj.diva-

portal.org/smash/record.jsf?pid=diva2%3A371781&dswid=9106 (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Bruner, J. (1987) 'Life as Narrative', *Social Research*, 54(1), pp. 11-32.

Bruner, J. (1990) *Acts of Meaning*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruner, J. (1991) 'The Narrative Construction of Reality', *Critical Inquiry*, 18(1), pp. 1-21.

Bruner, J. (2003) *Making Stories: Law, Literature, Life*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Bruni-Bossio, V. (2018) 'Corporate Board Decision-Making: Applying Collective Versus Personal Values', *Journal of Business Strategy*, 39(1), pp. 15-23.

Buckler, S. A and, Zien, K. A. (1996) 'The Spirituality of Innovation: Learning from Stories', *The Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 13(5), pp. 391-405.

Burnes, B. and Jackson, P. (2011) 'Success and Failure in Organizational Change: An Exploration of the Role of Values', *Journal of Change Management*, 11(2), pp. 133-162.

Burton, B. K., & Dunn, C. P. (2005) 'The Caring Approach and Social Issues in Management Education', *Journal of Management Education*, 29(3), pp. 453-474.

Butler, N., Olaison, L., Sliwa, M., Meier Sørensen, B. and Spoelstra, S. (2011) 'Work, Play and Boredom', *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organization*, 11(4), pp. 329-335.

Cain, C.L. (2012) 'Integrating Dark Humour and Compassion: Identities and Presentations of Self in the Front and Back Regions of Hospice', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 41(6), pp. 668-694.

Camfield, C. and Franco, M. (2019) 'Professionalisation of the Family Firm and Its Relationship with Personal Values', *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 28(1), pp. 144-188.

Carlisle, Y. and Baden-Fuller, C. (2004) 'Re-Applying Beliefs: An Analysis of Change in the Oil Industry', *Organization Studies*, 25(6), pp. 987-1019.

Casson, M. (1999) 'The Economics of the Family Firm, *Scandinavian Economic History Review*, 47(1), pp. 10-23.

Ceja, L., Agulles, R. and Tàpies, J. (2010) 'The Importance of Values in Family-Owned Firms', *Working Paper, WP-875*. IESE Business School, University of Navarra, pp. 1-39. Available at: https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/6259595.pdf (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Chandler, A.D. (1990) *Scale and Scope: The Dynamics of Industrial Capitalism*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Chen, P-J. and Choi, Y. (2008) 'Generational Differences in Work Values: A Study of Hospitality Management', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 20(6), pp. 595-615.

Choi, Y. and Chung, I.H. (2017) 'Attraction-Selection and Socialization of Work Values: Evidence from Longitudinal Survey', *Public Personnel Management*, 46(1), pp. 66-88.

Cieciuch, J., Schwartz, S.H. and Davidov, E. (2015) 'Values, Social Psychology of', in Wright, J.D. (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd edn. Vol. 25. Oxford: Elsevier, pp. 41-46.

Cizek, C.J. (1995) 'Crunchy Granola and the Hegemony of the Narrative', *Educational Researcher*, 24(2), pp. 26-28.

Clandinin, D.J. and Connelly, F.M. (2000) *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Clark, B.R. (1972) 'The Organizational Saga in Higher Education', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17(1), pp. 178-184.

Clarke, S. and Holdsworth, L. (2017) 'Flexibility in the Workplace: Implications of Flexible Work Arrangements for Individuals, Teams and Organisations', *Research paper, Ref: 3/17*. ACAS/Alliance Manchester Business School, University of Manchester. Available at: http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/o/7/Flexibility-in-the-Workplace.pdf (Accessed: 5 May 2019).

Cluley, R. (2013) 'What Makes a Management Buzzword Buzz?', *Organization Studies*, 34(1), pp. 33-43.

Collins, D. (2013) 'In Search of Popular Management: Sensemaking, Sensegiving and Storytelling in the Excellence Project, *Culture and Organization*, 19(1), pp. 42-61.

Collins, J.C. and Porras, J.I. (2005) *Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies*. London: Random House.

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

Contu, A. (2008) 'Decaf Resistance: On Misbehavior, Cynicism, and Desire in Liberal Workplaces', *Management Communication Quarterly*, 21(3), pp. 364-379.

Cope, J. (2005) 'Researching Entrepreneurship through Phenomenological Inquiry: Philosophical and Methodological Issues', *International Small Business Journal*, 23(2), pp. 163-189.

Cornellisen, J. (2011) *Corporate Communication: A Guide to Theory and Practice*. 3rd edn. Los Angeles: Sage.

Costea, B., Crump, N. and Holm, J (2005) 'Dionysus at Work? The Ethos of Play and the Ethos of Management, *Culture and Organization*, 11(2), pp. 139-151.

Craig, J.B., Dibrell, C. and Garrett, R. (2014) 'Examining Relationships Among Family Influence, Family Culture, Flexible Planning Systems, Innovativeness and Firm Performance', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 5(3), pp. 229-238.

Crang, P. (1994) 'It's Showtime: On the Workplace Geographies of Display in a Restaurant in Southeast England', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 12(6), pp. 675-704.

Cropanzano, R. and Greenberg, J. (1997) 'Progress in Organizational Justice: Tunneling through the Maze', in Cooper, C. L. and Robertson, I. T. (eds.) *International Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. New York: Wiley, pp. 317-372.

Cuncliffe, A.L. (2010) 'Retelling Tales of the Field: In Search of Organizational Ethnography 20 Years On', *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(2), pp. 224-239.

Cunliffe, A.L. and Karunanayake, G. (2013) 'Working Within Hyphen-Spaces in Ethnographic Research: Implications for Research Identities and Practice', *Organizational Research Methods*, 16(3), pp. 364-392.

Czarniawska, B. (1997) *Narrating the Organization: Dramas of Institutional Identity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Czarniawska, B. (1998) *A Narrative Approach to Organization Studies*, Qualitative Research Methods Vol. 43. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Czarniawska, B. (2003) 'Social Constructionism in Organization Studies', in Westwood, R. and Clegg, S. and (eds.) *Debating Organization: Point-Counterpoint in Organization Studies*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 128-139.

Czarniawska, B. (2004) *Narratives in Social Science Research*. London: Sage.

Czarniawska, B. (2010) 'The Uses of Narratology in Social and Policy Studies', *Critical Policy Studies*, 4(1), pp. 58-76.

Czarniawska, B. (2014) *Social Science Research: From Field to Desk*. London: Sage.

Dallabona, A. (2016) 'At Home with the Missoni Family', *Home Cultures,* 13(1), pp. 1-21.

Dalpiaz, E., Tracey, P. and Phillips, N. (2014) 'Succession Narratives in Family Business: The Case of Alessi', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 38(6), pp. 1375-1394.

Danes, S.M., Zuiker, V., Kean, R. and Arbuthnot, J. (1999) 'Predictors of Family Business Tensions and Goal Achievement', *Family Business Review*, 12(3), pp. 241-252.

Danielsson Malmros, I. (2012) *Det Var en Gång ett Land ... Berättelser om Svenskhet i Historieläroböcker och Elevers Föreställningsvärldar* [Once Upon a Time There Was a Country … Narratives About "Swedishness" in History Textbooks and Students' Worldview]. Lund: Agerings Bokförlag.

Dann, D. and Hornsey, T. (1986) 'Towards a Theory of Interdepartmental Conflict in Hotels', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 5(1), pp. 23-28.

Davies, W. (2015) *The Happiness Industry: How the Government and Big Business Sold Us Well-Being*. London: Verso.

Davis, P.S. and Harveston, P.D. (1998) 'The Influence of Family on the Family Business Succession Process: A Multi-Generational Perspective', *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 22(3), pp. 31-53.

Dawson, A. and Hjorth, D. (2012) 'Advancing Family Business Research through Narrative Analysis', *Family Business Review*, 25(3), pp. 339-355.

Dawson, A. and Mussolino, D. (2014) 'Exploring What Makes Family Firms Different: Discrete or Overlapping Constructs in the Literature?', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 5(2), pp. 169-183.

Dawson, P. and Sykes, C. (2019) 'Concepts of Time and Temporality in the Storytelling and Sensemaking Literatures: A Review and Critique', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 21(1), pp. 97-114.

De Fina, A. and Georgakopoulou, A. (2012) *Analyzing Narrative: Discourse and Sociolinguistic Perspectives*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

De Laine, M. (2000) *Fieldwork Participation & Practice: Ethics & Dilemmas in Qualitative Research*. London: Sage.

De Massis A., Frattini F., Majocchi A., Piscitello L. (2018) 'Family Firms in the Global Economy: Toward a Deeper Understanding of Internationalization Determinants, Processes and Outcomes', *Global Strategy Journal*, 8(1), pp. 3-21.

Delanty, G. and Strydom, P. (2003) *Philosophies of Social Science: The Classic and Contemporary Readings*. Maidenhead: Open University Press.

Demetry, D. (2013) 'Regimes of Meaning: The Intersection of Space and Time in Kitchen Cultures', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 42(5), pp. 576-607.

Dempsey, J. (2015) 'Moral Responsibility, Shared Values, and Corporate Culture', *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 25(3), pp. 319-340.

Denison, D., Lief, C. and Ward, J.L. (2004) 'Culture in Family-Owned Enterprises: Recognizing and Leveraging Unique Strengths', *Family Business Review*, 17(1), pp. 61-70.

Dermol, V. and Trunk Širca, N. (2018) 'Communication, Company Mission, Organizational Values, and Company Performance', *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 238, pp. 542-551.

DeWalt, K.M. and DeWalt, B.R. (2011) *Participant Observation: A Guide for Fieldworkers*. 2nd edn. Lanham: AltaMira Press.

Di Domenico, ML. and Lynch, P. (2007) 'Commercial Home Enterprises: Identity, Space and Setting', in Lashley, C., Lynch, P. and Morrison, A. (eds.) *Hospitality: A Social Lens*. Oxford: Elsevier, pp. 117-128.

Díaz Garcia, M-C. and Welter, F. (2013) 'Gender Identities and Practices: Interpreting Women Entrepreneur's Narratives', *International Small Business Journal*, 31(4), pp. 384-404.

Diaz-Moriana V., Hogan T., Clinton E., Brophy M. (2019) 'Defining Family Business: A Closer Look at Definitional Heterogeneity', in Memili E., Dibrell C. (eds.) *The Palgrave Handbook of Heterogeneity among Family Firms*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 333-374.

Dolfsma, W. (2009) *Institutions, Communication and Values*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Dose, J. J. (1997) 'Work Values: An Integrative Framework and Illustrative Application to Organizational Socialization', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 70(3), pp. 219-240.

Driscoll, C. and McKee, M. (2007) 'Restorying a Culture of Ethical and Spiritual Values: A Role for Leader Storytelling', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 73(2), pp. 205-217.

Dundon, T. and Ryan, P. (2010) 'Interviewing Reluctant Respondents: Strikes, Henchmen, and Gaelic Games', *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(3), pp. 562-581.

Dunford, R., Cuganesan, S., Grant, D., Palmer, I., Beaumont, R. and Steele, C. (2013) '"Flexibility" as The Rationale for Organizational Change: A Discourse Perspective', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 26(1), pp. 83-97.

Dyer, W.G. (2003) 'The Family: The Missing Variable in Organizational Research', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 27(4), pp. 401-416.

Dyer, W. G. (2006) 'Examining the "Family Effect" on Firm Performance', *Family Business Review*, 19(4), pp. 253-273.

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Jackson, P. (2012) *Management Research*. London: Sage.

Edensor, T. (2001) 'Performing Tourism, Staging Tourism: (Re)producing Tourist Space and Practice', *Tourist Studies*, 1(1), pp. 59-81.

Elias, N. (1982/1978) *The History of Manners: The Civilizing Process.* Vol. 1. New York: Pantheon Books.

Enz, C.A. (1988) 'The Role of Values Congruity in Intraorganisational Power', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 33(2), pp. 284-304.

Erhardt, N., Martin-Rios, C. and Heckscher, C. (2016) 'Am I Doing the Right Thing? Unpacking Workplace Rituals as Mechanisms for Strong Organizational Culture', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 59, pp. 31-41.

Erickson, K. (2007) 'Tight Spaces and Salsa-Stained Aprons: Bodies at Work in American Restaurants', in Beriss, D. and Sutton, D. (eds.) *The Restaurant Book: Ethnographies of Where We Eat*. Oxford: Berg, pp. 17-24.

Erickson, K. (2004) 'Bodies at Work: Performing Service in American Restaurants', *Space and Culture*, 7(1), pp. 76-89.

Eriksson, T. and Li, J. (2009) 'Working at the Boundary Between Market and Flexicurity: Housekeeping in Danish Hotels', *International Labour Review*, 148(4), pp. 357-373.

Eurofound (2018) 'Working Life in Sweden'. Available at: https://www.eurofound.europa.eu/country/sweden#highlights-working-life-in-2018 (Accessed: 3 April 2019).

European Commission (2019) 'What is an SME?'. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/growth/smes/business-friendly-environment/sme-definition_da (Accessed: 28 February 2019).

European Family Businesses (2019) 'The Numbers in Europe'. Available at: http://www.europeanfamilybusinesses.eu/ (Accessed: 19 April 2019).

European Family Businesses and KPMG Enterprise (2018) *European Family Business Barometer*. 7th edn. Available at: http://www.europeanfamilybusinesses.eu/publications/94/29/European-Family-Business-Barometer-7th-edition (Accessed: 19 April 2019).

Evert, R.E., Martin, J.A., McLeod, M.S. and Tyge Payne G. (2016) 'Empirics in Family Business Research: Progress, Challenges, and the Path Ahead', *Family Business Review*, 29(1), pp. 17-43.

Family Firm Institute (2014) *Family Enterprise: Understanding Families in Business and Families of Wealth*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Faulkner, B. and Patiar, A. (1997) 'Workplace Induced Stress Among Operational Staff in the Hotel Industry', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 16(1), pp. 99-117.

Feek, W. (2007) 'Best of Practices?', *Development in Practice*, 17(4/5), pp. 653-655.

Fenton, C. and Langley, A. (2011) 'Strategy as Practice and the Narrative Turn', *Organization Studies*, 32(9), pp. 1171-1196.

File, K.M., Prince, R.A. and Rankin, M.J. (1994) 'Organizational Buying Behaviour of the Family Firm', *Family Business Review*, 7(3), pp. 263-272.

Fine, G.A. (2009/1996) *Kitchens: The Culture of Restaurant Work*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Finegan, J. and Theriault, C. (1997) 'The Relationship Between Personal Values and the Perception of the Corporation's Code of Ethics', *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 27(8), pp. 708-724.

Fineman, S. (2000) (ed.) *Emotion in Organizations*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.

Firth, R. (1953) 'The Study of Values by Social Anthropologists', *Man*, 53(231), pp. 146-153.

Fleming, P. (2005) 'Worker's Playtime? Boundaries and Cynicism in a "Culture of Fun" Program', *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 41(3), pp. 285-303.

Fleming, P. and Spicer, A. (2003) 'Working from a Cynical Distance: Implications for Power, Subjectivity and Resistance', *Organization*, 10(1), pp. 159-181.

Fletcher, D., Melin, L. and Gimeno, A. (2012) 'Culture and Values in Family Businesses – A Review and Suggestions for Future Research', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 3(3), pp. 127-131.

Fox, M., Hamilton, R.T. and Nilakant, V. (1996) 'Managing Succession in Family-Owned Businesses', *International Small Business Journal*, 15(1), pp. 15-25.

Frank, H., Lueger, M., Nosé, L. and Suchy, D. (2010) 'The Concept of "Familiness": Literature Review and Systems Theory-Based Reflections', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 1(3), pp. 119-130.

Gabriel, A. and Bitsch, V. (2018) 'Impacts of Succession in Family Business: A Systemic Approach for Understanding Dynamic Effects in Horticultural Retail Companies in Germany', *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1108/JSBED-01-2018-0030 (Accessed: 6 May 2019).

Gabriel, Y. (2000) *Storytelling in Organizations: Facts, Fiction, and Fantasies*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Gabriel, Y. (2010) 'Beyond Scripts and Rules: Emotion, Fantasy and Care in Contemporary Service Work', in Sieben, B. and Wettergren, Å. (eds.) *Emotionalizing Organizations and Organizing Emotions*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 42-62.

Gadamer, H-G. (1975) *Truth and Method*. London: Sheed & Ward.

Gadamer, H-G. (2006) 'Classical and Philosophical Hermeneutics', *Theory, Culture & Society*, 23(1), pp. 29-56.

Gagné, M., Sharma, P. and De Massis, A. (2014) 'The Study of Organizational Behaviour in Family Business', *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 23(5), pp. 643-656.

Garcia, A.B., Rocha, F.L.R., Pissinati, P.S.C., Marziale, M.H.P., Camelo, S.H.H and Haddad, M.D.C.F.L (2017) 'The Effects of Organisational Culture on Nurses' Perceptions of Their Work', *British Journal of Nursing*, 26(14), pp. 806-812.

García-Alvarez, E. and López-Sintas, J. (2001) 'A Taxonomy of Founders Based on Values: The Root of Family Business Heterogeneity', *Family Business Review*, 14(3), pp. 209-230.

García-Álvarez, E., López-Sintas, J. and Saldaña Gonzalvo, P. (2002) 'Socialization Patterns of Successors in First- to Second-Generation Family Businesses', *Family Business Review*, 15(3), pp. 189-204.

Gardner, K. and Wood R.C. (1991) 'Theatricality in Food Service Work', *lnternational Journal of Hospitality Management*, 10(3), pp. 267-278.

Garsten, C. (1991) 'Outlining the Organization – Creating Culture Across Boundaries', *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie*, 116, pp. 5-24.

Garsten, C. and Nyqvist, A. (2013) 'Momentum: Pushing Ethnography Ahead', in Garsten, C. and Nyqvist, A. (eds.) *Organizational Anthropology: Doing Ethnography in and Among Organizations*. London: Pluto Press.

Gartner, W.B. (2007) 'Entrepreneurial Narrative and a Science of The Imagination', *Journal of Business Venturing*, 22(5), pp. 613-627.

Geertz, C. (1973) *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: Basic Books.

Gergen, K.J. (1985) 'The Social Constructionist Movement in Modern Psychology, *American Psychologist*, 40(3), pp. 266-275.

Gergen, K.J. (2009) *An Invitation to Social Construction*. 2nd edn. London: Sage.

Gergen, K.J. (2011) 'The Self as Social Construction', *Psychological Studies*, 56(1), pp. 108-116.

Gergen, M.M. and Gergen, K.J. (1993) 'Narratives of the Gendered Body in Popular Autobiography', in Josselsson, R. and Lieblich, A. (eds.) *The Narrative Study of Lives*. London: Sage, pp. 191-218.

Getz, D., Carlsen, J. and Morrison, A. (2004) *The Family Business in Tourism and Hospitality*. Wallingford: CABI Publishing.

Giddens, A. (2009) 'On Rereading *The Presentation of Self*: Some Reflections', *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 72(4), pp. 290-295.

Goel, S. (2013) 'Relevance and Potential of Co-operative Values and Principles for Family Business Research and Practice', *Journal of Co-operative Organization and Management*, 1(1), pp. 41-46.

Goel, S. and Jones, R.J. (2016) 'Entrepreneurial Exploration and Exploitation in Family Business: A Systematic Review and Future Directions', *Family Business Review*, 29(1), pp. 94-120.

Goel, S. and Roessl, D. (2015) 'Cooperatives and Cooperative Behavior in the Context of Family Businesses', *Journal of Co-operative Organization and Management*, 3(2), pp. 49–51.

Goffman, E. (1953) *Communication Conduct in an Island Community*. PhD Thesis. Chicago: The University of Chicago. Available at: https://archive.org/details/GOFFMAN1953CommunicationConductInAnIslandCommunity/page/n12 (Accessed: 6 May 2019).

Goffman, E. (1959) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. New York: Anchor Books.

Goffman, E. (1961) *Encounters. Two Studies in the Sociology of Interaction*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company Inc.

Goffman, E. (1963a) *Behavior in Public Places. Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings*. New York: The Free Press.

Goffman, E. (1963b) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Goffman, E. (1967) *Interaction Ritual: Essays on Face-to-Face Behavior*. New York: Anchor Books.

Goffman, E. (1981) *Forms of Talk*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Griffin, T. (2018) 'The Making of Meaning in Tourism and Hospitality Research', in Nunkoo, R. (ed.) *Handbook of Research Methods for Tourism and Hospitality Management*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 32-42.

Gróf, A. (2001) 'Communication in The Creation of Values', *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 6(4), pp. 193-198.

Gubrium, J.F. and Holstein, J.A. (1998) 'Narrative Practice and the Coherence of Personal Stories', *The Sociological Quarterly*, 39(1), pp. 163-187.

Gubrium, J.F. and Holstein, J.A. (2008) 'Narrative Ethnography', in Hesse-Biber, S. and Leavy, P. (eds.) *Handbook of Emergent Methods*. New York: Guilford Press, pp. 241-264.

Guerrier, Y. (1999) *Organizational Behaviour in Hotels and Restaurants: An International Perspective*. Chichester: Wiley.

Guerrier, Y. and Adib, A.S. (2000) '"No We Don't Provide That Service": Harassment of Hotel Employees by Customers', *Work, Employment & Society*, 14(4), pp. 689-705.

Guerrier, Y. and Adib, A. (2003) 'Work at Leisure and Leisure at Work: A Study of the Emotional Labour of Tour Reps', *Human Relations*, 56(11), pp. 1399-1417.

Guerrier, Y. and Lockwood, A. (1989) 'Core and Peripheral Employees in Hotel Operations', *Personnel Review*, 18(1), pp. 9-15.

Gursoy, D., Maier, T.A. and Chi, C.G. (2008) 'Generational Differences: An Examination of Work Values and Generational Gaps in the Hospitality Workforce', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27(3), pp. 448-458.

Gusterson, H. (1997) 'Studying Up Revisited', *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review*, 20(1), pp. 114-119.

Habbershon, T.G. and Williams, M.L. (1999) 'A Resource-Based Framework for Assessing the Strategic Advantages of Family Firms', *Family Business Review*, 12(1), pp. 1-26.

Hacking, I. (1999) *The Social Construction of What?* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Haidt, J. (2003) 'The Moral Emotions', in Davidson, R.J., Scherer, K.R. and Goldsmith, H.H. (eds.) *Handbook of Affective Sciences*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 852-870.

Hall, A., Melin, L. and Nordqvist, M. (2001) 'Entrepreneurship as Radical Change in The Family Business: Exploring the Role of Cultural Patterns', *Family Business Review*, 14(3), pp. 193-208.

Hamilton, E. (2006a) 'Whose Story is it Anyway? Narrative Accounts of the Role of Women in Founding and Establishing Family Businesses', *International Small Business Journal*, 24(3), pp. 253-271.

Hamilton, E. (2006b) 'Narratives of Enterprise as Epic Tragedy', *Management Decision*, 44(4), pp. 536-550.

Hamilton, E., Discua Cruz, A. and Jack, S. (2017) 'Re-Framing the Status of Narrative in Family Business Research: Towards and Understanding of Families in Business', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 8(1), pp. 3-12.

Hamilton, P., Redman, T. and McMurray, R. (2017) '"Lower than a Snake's Belly": Discursive Constructions of Dignity and Heroism in Low-Status Garbage Work', *Journal of Business Ethics*, pp. 1-13. Available at: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10551-017-3618-z (Accessed: 8 May 2019).

Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1983) *Ethnography: Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

Hancer, M. and George, R.T. (2003) 'Psychological Empowerment of Non-Supervisory Employees Working in Full-Service Restaurants, *Hospitality Management*, 22(1), pp. 3-16.

Hansen, H. (2006) 'The Ethnonarrative Approach', *Human Relations*, 59(8), pp. 1049-1075.

Harms, H., Memili, E., and Steeger, J. (2015) 'Expert Insights on the Determinants of Cooperation in Family Firms in Tourism and Hospitality Sector', *Journal of Co-operative Organization and Management*, 3(2), pp. 72-83.

Harris, C. (2010) 'Building Self and Community: The Career Experiences of a Hotel Executive Housekeeper', *Tourist Studies*, 9(2), pp. 144-163.

Hatum, A. and Pettigrew, A. (2004) 'Adaptation Under Environmental Turmoil: Organizational Flexibility in Family-Owned Firms', *Family Business Review*, 17(3), pp. 237-258.

Haugh, H.M. and McKee, L. (2003) '"It's Just Like a Family" – Shared Values in the Family Firm', *Community, Work & Family*, 6(2), pp. 141-158.

Heide, M., Lærdal, K. and Grønhaug, K. (2007) 'The Design and Management of Ambience – Implications for Hotel Architecture and Service', *Tourism Management*, 28(5), pp. 1315-1325.

Hemp, P. and Stewart, T.A. (2004) 'Leading Change When Business is Good', *Harvard Business Review*. Available at: https://hbr.org/2004/12/leading-change-when-business-is-good (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

Herod, A. and Aguiar, L.L.M. (2006) 'Introduction: Cleaners and the Dirty Work of Neoliberalism', *Antipode*, 38(3), pp. 425-434.

Heynickx, R. (2015) 'Time in the Hotel: Gazing with Lobby Lizards', *Interiors*, 6(2), pp. 138-156.

Hills, M. D. (2002) 'Kluckhohn and Strodtbeck's Values Orientation Theory', *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 4(4), pp. 1-14.

Hitch, S.A. and Kennedy-Reid, S. (2010) 'Innovation through Storytelling in The Family-Owned Business', *International Conference on Organizational Learning, Knowledge and Capabilities*, Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts, 3-6 June. Available at: https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/wbs/conf/olkc/archive/olkc5/papers/188_hitch_f

ull_paper_276_innovation_through_storytelling_in_the_family-owned_business.pdf (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

Hnátek, M. (2015) 'Entrepreneurial Thinking as a Key Factor of Family Business Success', *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 181, pp. 342-348.

Hochschild, A.R. (1983) *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Hofmann, V. and Stokburger-Sauer, N.E. (2017) 'The Impact of Emotional Labor on Employees' Work-Life Balance Perception and Commitment: A Study in the Hospitality Industry', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 65, pp. 47-58.

Höpfl, H. (2002) 'Playing the Part: Reflections on Aspects of Mere Performance in the Customer-Client Relationship', *Journal of Management Studies*, 39(2), pp. 255-267.

Hubler, T.M. (2009) 'The Soul of Family Business', *Family Business Review*, 22(3), pp. 254-258.

Hughes, E.C. (1951) 'Studying the Nurse's Work', *The American Journal of Nursing*, 51(5), pp. 294-295.

Hughes, E.C. (1958) *Men and Their Work*. Glencoe: The Free Press.

Hughes, E.C. (1971) *The Sociological Eye: Selected Papers*. Chicago: Aldine-Atherton.

Humphreys, M. and Brown, A.D. (2002) 'Narratives of Organizational Identity and Identification: A Case Study of Hegemony and Resistance', *Organization Studies*, 23(3), pp. 421-447.

Hunter Powell, P. and Watson, D. (2006) 'Service Unseen: The Hotel Room Attendant at Work', *Hospitality Management*, 25(2), pp. 297-312.

Hunter, E.M. and Penney, L.M. (2014) 'The Waiter Spit in My Soup! Antecedents of Customer-Directed Counterproductive Work Behavior', *Human Performance*, 27(3), pp. 262-281.

Hutchinson, K. (2018) *Leadership and Small Business: The Power of Stories*. Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Hyde, R.E and Weathington, B.L. (2006) 'The Congruence of Personal Life Values and Work Attitudes', *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs*, 132(2), pp. 151-190.

Hyvärinen, M. (2008) 'Analyzing Narratives and Story-Telling', in Alasuutari, P., Bickman, L. and Brannen, J. (eds.) *The Sage Handbook of Social Research Methods*, Los Angeles: Sage, pp. 447-460.

Illes, K. and Vogell, C. (2018) 'Corporate Values from a Personal Perspective', *Social Responsibility Journal*, 14(2), pp. 351-367.

Inglehart, R. (1997) *Modernization and Postmodernization: Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Inglehart, R. and Baker, W.E. (2000) 'Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values', *American Sociological Review,* 65(1), pp. 19-51.

Irwin, K. (2006) 'Into the Dark Heart of Ethnography: The Lived Ethics and Inequality of Intimate Field Relationship', *Qualitative Sociology*, 29(2), pp. 155-175.

Jarzabkowski, P., Bednarek, B. and Lê, J.K. (2014) 'Producing Persuasive Findings: Demystifying Ethnographic Textwork in Strategy and Organization Research', *Strategic Organization*, 12(4), pp. 274-287.

Jehn, K.A. and Bendersky, C. (2003) 'Intragroup Conflict in Organizations: A Contingency Perspective on The Conflict-Outcome Relationship', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 25, pp. 187-242.

Johansen, T.S. (2012) 'The Narrated Organization: Implications of a Narrative Corporate Identity Vocabulary for Strategic Self-Storying', *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 6(3), pp. 232-245.

Johansson, A. (2005) *Narrativ Teori och Metod* [Narrative Theory and Method]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Johansson, A.W. (2004) 'Narrating the Entrepreneur', *International Small Business Journal*, 22(3), pp. 273-293.

Johansson, A.W, Li, S-J. and Tsai, D-H. (2014) 'What Stories are Told from a Family Business and When?', *Revue de l'Entrepreneuriat*, 13(3-4), pp. 171-186.

Johansson, U. and Woodilla, J. (2005) 'Irony – Its Use and Potential in Organization Theory', in Johansson, U. and Woodilla, J. (eds.) *Irony and Organizations: Epistemological Claims and Supporting Field Stories*. Malmö: Liber/Copenhagen Business School Press, pp. 25-50.

Jonsen, K., Galunic, C., Weeks, J. and Braga, T. (2015) 'Evaluating Espoused Values: Does Articulating Values Pay Off?', *European Management Journal*, 33(5), pp. 332-340.

Judge, T.A., Piccolo, R.F. and Ilies, R. (2004) 'The Forgotten Ones? The Validity of Consideration and Initiating Structure in Leadership Research', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(1), pp. 36-51.

Junkers, B.H. (1960) *Fieldwork: An Introduction to the Social Sciences*. Chicago University.

Kalleberg, A.L. (2003) 'Workers Flexible Firms and Labor Market Segmentation: Effects of Workplace Restructuring on Jobs and Workers', *Work and Occupations*, 30(2), pp. 154-175.

Karlsson, A. (2013) *Jag Tänker Styra Det Här Tills Jag Dör, Sen Får Jag Se Hur Jag Gör* [I Intend to Control This Until I Die, Then I Will See How I do]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Karp, D.R. (2000) 'Values Theory and Research', in Borgatta, E.F. and Montgomery, R.J.V (eds.) *Encyclopedia of Sociology*. 2nd edn. Vol. 5. New York: Macmillan Reference, pp. 3212-3227.

Kensbock, S., Jennings, G., Bailey, J. and Patiar, A. (2013) '"The Lowest Rung": Women Room Attendants' Perceptions of Five Star Hotels' Operational Hierarchies', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 35, pp. 360-368.

Kensbock, S., Jennings, G., Bailey, J. and Patiar, A. (2016) 'Performing: Hotel Room Attendants' Employment Experiences', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 56, pp. 112-127.

Kepner, E. (1983) 'The Family and The Firm: A Coevolutionary Perspective', *Organizational Dynamics*, 12(1), pp. 57-70.

Kets de Vries, M.F.R. (1993) 'The Dynamics of Family Controlled Firms: The Good and the Bad News', *Organizational Dynamics*, 21(3), pp. 59-71.

Kincaid, H. (ed.) (2012) *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Science*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kluckhohn, C. (1951) 'Values and Value Orientation in the Theory of Action', in Parson, T. and Shils, E.A. (eds.) *Toward a General Theory of Action*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 388-433.

Koiranen, M. (2002) 'Over 100 Years of Age but Still Entrepreneurially Active in Business: Exploring the Values and Family Characteristics of Old Finnish Family Firms', *Family Business Review*, 15(3), pp. 175-187.

Kopelman, R.E., Rovenpor, J.L. and Guan, M. (2003) 'The *Study of Values*: Construction of the Fourth Edition', *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 62(2), pp. 203-220.

Korczynski, M. (2002) *Human Resource Management in Service Work*. Basingstoke: Palgrave.

Koseoglu, E., Onder, D.E. and Bilen, O. (2012) 'A Cross-Cultural Comparison of Tourists' Perception of Hotel Lobbies', *International Journal of Architectural Research*, 6(3), pp. 109-123.

Krajcsák, Z. (2018) 'Making High Committed Workplaces by Strong Organizational Values', *Journal of Human Values*, 24(2), pp. 127-137.

Krause-Jensen, J. (2013) 'Counter-Espionage: Fieldwork among Culture Experts in Bang & Olufsen', in Garsten, C. and Nyqvist, A. (eds.) *Organizational Anthropology: Doing Ethnography in and Among Organizations*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 46-71.

Kroth, M. and Keeler, C. (2009) 'Caring as a Managerial Strategy', *Human Resource Development Review*, 8(4), pp. 506-531.

König, A., Kammerlander, N. and Enders, A. (2013) 'The Family Innovator's Dilemma: How Family Influence Affects the Adoption of Discontinuous

Technologies by Incumbent Firms', *The Academy of Management Review*, 38(3), pp. 418-441.

Labov, W. and Waletsky, J. (1967) 'Narrative Analysis: Oral Versions of Personal Experience', in Helm, J. (ed.) *Essays on the Verbal and Visual Arts*. Seattle: University of Chicago Press, pp. 12-44.

Laforet, S. (2016) 'Effects of Organisational Culture on Organisational Innovation Performance in Family Firms', *Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development*, 23(2), pp. 379-407.

Laerdal, K. (2017) *Co-Construction of Hospitality Culture: Behaviour, Encounters and Social Construction in English Hotels*. PhD Thesis. University of Brighton. Available at: https://research.brighton.ac.uk/en/studentTheses/co-construction-of-hospitality-culture (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

Landau D. and Drori I. (2008) 'Narratives as Sensemaking Accounts: The Case of an R&D Laboratory', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 21(6), pp. 701-720.

Lapan, S.D., Quartaroli, M.T. and Riemer, F.J. (eds.) (2012) *Qualitative Research: An Introduction to Methods and Design*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Larsen, J. (2005) 'Families Seen Sightseeing: Performativity of Tourist Photography', *Space and Culture*, 8(4), pp. 416-434.

Larsen, J. (2010) 'Goffman and the Tourist Gaze: A Performative Perspective on Tourism Mobilities', in Jacobsen, M.H. (ed.) *The Contemporary Goffman*. New York: Routledge, pp. 313-332.

Lawler, S. (2002) 'Narrative in Social Research' in May, T. (ed.) *Qualitative Research in Action*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, pp. 242-258.

Le Breton-Miller, I. and Miller, D. (2015) 'Learning Stewardship in Family Firms: For Family, by Family, Across the Life Cycle', *Academy of Management Learning & Education*, 14(3), pp. 386-399.

LeCompte, M.D. (2000) 'Analyzing Qualitative Data', *Theory Into Practice*, 39(3), pp. 146-154.

Lee-Ross, D. and Lashley, C. (2003) *Organization Behaviour for Leisure Services*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.

Leidner, R. (1993) *Fast Food Fast Talk: Service Work and the Routinization of Everyday Life*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Leidner, R. (1999) 'Emotional Labor in Service Work', *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 561(1), pp. 81-95.

Leitch, C.M., Hill, F.M. and Harrison, R.T. (2010) 'The Philosophy and Practice of Interpretivist Research in Entrepreneurship: Quality, Validation, and Trust', *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(1), pp. 67-84.

Levi, D. and Slem, C. (1995) 'Team Work in Research and Development Organizations: The Characteristics of Successful Teams', *International Journal of Industrial Ergonomics*, 16(1), pp. 29-42.

Lichtenstein, S., Lichtenstein, G. and Higgs, M. (2017) 'Personal Values at Work: A Mixed-Methods Study of Executives' Strategic Decision-Making', *Journal of General Management*, 43(1), pp. 15-23.

Liladrie, S. (2010) '"Do Not Disturb/Please Clean Room": Hotel Housekeepers in Greater Toronto', *Race & Class*, 52(1), pp. 57-69.

Lindebaum, D., Geddes, D. and Gabriel, Y. (2017) 'Moral Emotions and Ethics in Organisations: Introduction to the Special Issue', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 141(4), pp. 645-656.

Loseke, D.R. (1999) *Thinking about Social Problems: An Introduction to Constructionist Perspectives*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

Lynch, P.A. (2005a) 'Sociological Impressionism in a Hospitality Context', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 32(3), pp. 527-548.

Lynch, P.A. (2005b) 'Reflections on the Home Setting in Hospitality', *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 12(1), pp. 37-49.

Lynch, P.A. and MacWhannell, D. (2000) 'Home and Commercialised Hospitality', in Lashley, C. and Morrison, A. (eds.) *In Search of Hospitality: Theoretical Perspectives and Debates.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann, pp. 100-117.

Löfgren, O. (2016) 'Staying in Hotels', in Waskul, D.D. and Vannini, P. (eds.) *Popular Culture as Everyday Life*. New York: Routledge, pp. 275-285.

MacCannell, D. (1973) 'Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings', *American Journal of Sociology*, 79(3), pp. 589-603.

Madden, R. (2010) *Being Ethnographic: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Madison, K., Holt, D.T., Kellermans, F.W. and Ranft, A.L. (2016) 'Viewing Family Firm Behavior and Governance through the Lens of Agency and Stewardship Theories', *Family Business Review*, 29(1), pp. 65-93.

Maggio, R. (2014) 'The Anthropology of Storytelling and the Storytelling of Anthropology, *Journal of Comparative Research in Anthropology and Sociology*, 5(2), pp. 89-106.

Malbašić, I., Belužic, B. and Pasarić, N. (2018) 'Organizational Values as the Basis for Business Excellence, *Management*, 13(3), pp. 265-279.

Mandelbaum, J. (2013) 'Storytelling in Conversation', in Sidnell, J. and Stivers, T. (eds.) *The Handbook of Conversation Analysis*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, pp. 492-507.

Marshall, J. and Adamic M. (2010) 'The Story is The Message: Shaping Corporate Culture', *Journal of Business Strategy*, 31(2), pp. 18-23.

Martin, M. and McIntyre, L.C. (eds.) (1994) *Readings in the Philosophy of Social Science*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.

Mayton, D.M., Ball-Rokeach, S.J. and Loges, W.E. (1994) 'Human Values and Social Issues: An Introduction', *Journal of Social Issues*, 50(4), pp. 1-8.

McAdams, D.P. (2001) 'The Psychology of Life Stories', *Review of General Psychology*, 5(2), pp. 100-122.

McCarthy, J.F. (2008) 'Short Stories at Work: Storytelling as an Indicator of Organizational Commitment', *Group Organization Management*, 33(2), pp. 163-193.

McCollom, M. (1992) 'Organizational Stories in a Family-Owned Business', *Family Business Review*, 5(1), pp. 3-24.

McLean, K.C., Pasupathi, M. and Pais, J.L. (2007) 'Selves Creating Stories Creating Selves: A Process Model of Self-Development', *Personality and Social Psychology Review*, 11(3), pp. 262-278.

McLellan, H. (2006) 'Corporate Storytelling Perspectives', *The Journal for Quality and Participation*, 29(1), pp. 17-20.

McMurray, R. and Ward, J. (2014) '"Why Would You Want to Do That?": Defining Emotional Dirty Work', *Human Relations*, 67(9), pp. 1123-1143.

Mead, M. (1935) *Sex and Temperament in Three Primitive Societies*. London: Routledge.

Meglino, B.M. and Ravlin, E.C. (1998) 'Individual Values in Organizations: Concepts, Controversies, and Research', *Journal of Management*, 24(3), pp. 351-389.

Mehmetoglu, M. and Engen, M. (2011) 'Pine and Gilmore's Concept of Experience Economy and Its Dimensions: An Empirical Examination in Tourism', *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 12(4), pp. 237-255.

Mello, R.A. (2002) 'Collocation Analysis: A Method for Conceptualizing and Understanding Narrative Data', *Qualitative Research*, 2(2), pp. 231-243.

Meloury, J. and Signal, T. (2014) 'When the Plate is Full: Aggression Among Chefs', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 41, pp. 97-103.

Memili, E., Singal, M. and Barrédy, C. (2016) 'Family Governance and Family Firm Outcomes', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 6(2). Available at: https://doi.org/10.1108/JFBM-05-2016-0010 (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962) *Phenomenology of Perception*. London: Routledge.

Meyer, J.C. (1995) 'Tell Me a Story: Eliciting Organizational Values from Narratives, *Communication Quarterly*, 43(2), pp. 210-224.

Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N.J. (1997) *Commitment in the Workplace: Theory, Research, and Application*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Meyer, J.P. and Herscovitch, L. (2001) 'Commitment in the Workplace: Toward a General Model', *Human Resource Management Review*, 11(3), pp. 299-326.

Michailova, S., Piekkari, R., Plakoyiannaki, E., Ritvala, T., Mihailova, I., and Salmi, A. (2014) 'Breaking the Silence About Exiting Fieldwork: A Relational Approach and Its Implications for Theorizing', *Academy of Management Review*, 39(2), pp. 138-161.

Miller, D. and Le Breton-Miller, I. (2005) 'Management Insights from Great and Struggling Family Businesses.', *Long Range Planning*, 38(6), pp. 517-530.

Miller, D., Le Breton-Miller, I. and Scholnick, B. (2008) 'Stewardship vs. Stagnation: An Empirical Comparison of Small Family and Non-Family Businesses', *Journal of Management Studies*, 45(1), pp. 51-78.

Miller, D., Lee, J., Chang, S. and Le Breton-Miller, I. (2009) 'Filling the Institutional Void: The Social Behavior and Performance of Family vs Non-Family Technology Firms in Emerging Market', *Journal of International Business Studies,* 40, pp. 802-817.

Misra, G. and Prakash, A. (2012) 'Kenneth J. Gergen and Social Constructionism', *Psychological Studies*, 57(2), pp. 121-125.

Mitroff, I. I. and Kilmann, R.H. (1975) 'Stories Managers Tell: A New Tool for Organizational Problem Solving', *Management Review*, 64(7), pp. 18-28.

Mok, C., Pine, R. and Pizam, A. (1998) 'Work Values of Chinese Hotel Managers, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 21(3), pp. 1-16.

Moore, S.F. and Meyerhoff, B. (1977) 'Introduction', in Moore, S.F. and Meyerhoff, B. (eds.) *Secular Ritual*. Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities Press, pp. 3-24.

Mossberg, L. and Eide, D. (2017) 'Storytelling and Meal Experience Concepts', *European Planning Studies*, 25(7), pp. 1184-1199.

Mossberg, L. and Nissen Johansen, E. (2006) *Storytelling: Marknadsföring i Praktiken* [Storytelling: Marketing in Practice]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Mullane, J.V. (2002) 'The Mission Statement is a Strategic Tool: When Used Properly', *Management Decision*, 40(5), pp. 448-455.

Mumby, D. K. (2005) 'Theorizing Resistance in Organization Studies: A Dialectical Approach', *Management Communication Quarterly*, 19(1), pp. 1-26.

Murgia, A. and Poggio, B. (2009) 'Challenging Hegemonic Masculinities: Men's Stories on Gender Culture in Organization', *Organization*, 16(3), pp. 407-423.

Musacchio Adorisio, A.L. (2009) *Storytelling in Organizations. From Theory to Empirical Research*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Mussolino, D., Cicellin, M., Pezzillo Iacono, M., Consiglio, S. and Martinez, M. (2019) 'Daughters' Self-Positioning in Family Business Succession: A Narrative Inquiry', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jfbs.2019.01.003 (Accessed: 7 May 2019)

Myers, M.D. (1999) 'Investigating Information Systems with Ethnographic Research', *Communications of the AIS*, 2(23), pp. 1-20.

Myers, M.D. (2013) *Qualitative Research in Business & Management*. London: Sage.

Na, E-Y. and Duckitt, J. (2003) 'Value Consensus and Diversity Between Generations and Genders', *Social Indicators Research*, 62(1-3), pp. 411-435.

Naqshbandi, M. and Munir, R.S. (2011) 'Atmospheric Elements and Personality: Impact on Hotel Lobby Impressions', *World Applied Sciences Journal*, 15(6), pp. 785-792.

Narva, R. (2001) 'Heritage and Tradition in Family Business: How Family-Controlled Enterprises Connect The Experience of Their Past to The Promise of The Future', in McCann, G.K. and Upton, N. (eds.) *Destroying Myths and Creating Value in Family Business*. Deland, FL: Stetson University, pp. 29-38.

Naus, F., van Iterson, A. and Roe, R.A. (2007) 'Value Incongruence, Job Autonomy, and Organization-Based Self-Esteem: A Self-Based Perspective on Organizational Cynicism', *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 16(2), pp. 195-219.

Nayir, D.Z. and Uzunçarsili, U. (2008) 'A Cultural Perspective on Knowledge Management: The Success Story of Sarkuysan Company', *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 12(2), pp. 141-155.

Neyland, D. (2008) *Organizational Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Nilsson, H. (2015) *Snacka om (O)synlighet: Familjeföretagarens Nästa Drag* [Speaking about (In)visibility: The Family Business Owner's Next Move]. Växjö: Linnaeus University Press.

Nordqvist, M., Hall, A. and Melin, L. (2009) 'Qualitative Research on Family Businesses: The Relevance and Usefulness of the Interpretive Approach', *Journal of Management & Organization*, 15(3), pp. 294-308.

Nugent, P.D. and Abolafia, M.Y. (2006) 'The Creation of Trust through Interaction and Exchange: The Role of Consideration in Organizations, *Group & Organization Management*, 31(6), pp. 628-650.

Nygaard, A., Biong, H., Silkoset, R. and Kidwell, R.E. (2017) 'Leading by Example: Values-Based Strategy to Instill Ethical Conduct', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 145(1), pp. 133-139.

Nymark, S. R. (1999) *A Discourse on Organizational Storytelling: Creating Enduring Values in a High-Tech Company by Storytelling*. PhD Thesis. Aalborg University, Department of Business Studies. Available at: https://vbn.aau.dk/ws/files/86315/nymark-soren.pdf (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

O'Neil, S.M. and Horne, A.L. (2012) 'Evaluating the Internalisation of Core Values at a South African Public Service Organisation', *Journal of Human Resource Management*, 10(1), pp. 1-14.

O'Reilly, K. (2009) *Key Concepts in Ethnography*. London: Sage.

Ochs, E. and Capps, L. (2001) *Living Narrative. Creating Lives in Everyday Storytelling*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

O'Gorman, K.D. and Gillespie, C. (2010) 'The Mythological Power of Hospitality Leaders?', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 22(5), pp. 659-680.

Ojha, A.K. and Holmes, T.L. (2010) 'Don't Tease Me, I'm Working: Examining Humor in a Midwestern Organization Using Ethnography of Communication', *The Qualitative Report*, 15(2), pp. 280-302.

Oles, P.K. and Hermans, H.J.M. (2010) 'Allport Study of Values', in Weiner, I.B. and Craighead, W.E. (eds.) *The Corsini Encyclopedia of Psychology*. 4th edn. Vol. 1. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 67-68.

Olson, G.A. (1991) 'The Social Scientist as Author: Clifford Geertz on Ethnography and Social Construction', *Journal of Advanced Composition*, 11(2), pp. 245-268.

Olsson, S. (2000) 'Acknowledging the Female Archetype: Women Managers' Narratives of Gender', *Women in Management Review*, 15(5/6), pp. 296-302.

Orwell, G. (1986/1933) *Down and Out in Paris and London* (The Complete Works of George Orwell Vol. 1). London: Secker & Warburg Ltd.

Ostroff, C., Shin, Y. and Kinicki, A. J. (2005) 'Multiple Perspectives of Congruence: Relationships Between Value Congruence and Employee Attitudes', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 26(6), pp. 591-623.

Parada, M.J., Nordqvist, M. and Gimeno, M. (2010) 'Institutionalizing the Family Business: The Role of Professional Associations in Fostering a Change of Values', *Family Business Review*, 23(4): 355-372.

Parada, M.J and Viladás, H. (2010) 'Narratives: A Powerful Device for Values Transmission in Family Businesses', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 23(2), pp. 166-172.

Pavel, T.G. (1973) 'Some Remarks on Narrative Grammars', *Poetics*, 2(4), pp. 5-30.

Payne, G.T., Brigham, K.H., Broberg, C., Moss, T.W. and Short, J.C. (2011) 'Organizational Virtue Orientation and Family Firms', *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 21(2), pp. 257-285.

Payne, G.T. (2018) 'Reflections on Family Business Research: Considering Domains and Theory', *Family Business Review*, 31(2), pp. 167-175.

Payne, P.L. (1984) 'Family Business in Britain: An Historical and Analytical Survey', in Okochi, A. and Yusuoka, S. (eds.) *Family Business in the Era of Industrial Growth, Its Ownership and Management*. Tokyo: University of Tokyo Press: pp. 171-206.

Pearson, A.W., Carr, J.C. and Shaw J.C. (2008) 'Toward a Theory of Familiness: A Social Capital Perspective', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 32(6), pp. 949-969.

Pernecky, T. (2012) 'Constructionism: Critical Pointers for Tourism Studies', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(2), pp. 1116-1137.

Peters, M. (2005) 'Succession in Tourism Family Business: The Motivation of Succeeding Family Members', *Tourism Review*, 60(4), pp. 12-18.

Peters, M. and Buhalis, D. (2004) 'Family Hotel Businesses: Strategic Planning and the Need for Education and Training', *Education & Training*, 46(8/9), pp. 4016-415.

Peters, M. and Kallmuenzer, A. (2018) 'Entrepreneurial Orientation in Family Firms: The Case of the Hospitality Industry', *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(1), pp. 21-40.

Pindado, J. and Requejo, I. (2015) 'Family Business Performance from a Governance Perspective: A Review of Empirical Research', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 17(3), pp. 279-311.

Pine, B. and Gilmore, J.H. (1999) *The Experience Economy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

Polkinghorne, D.E. (1988) *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. New York: SUNY Press.

Polletta, F., Chen, P.C.B., Gardner, B.G. and Motes, A. (2011) 'The Sociology of Storytelling', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 37, pp. 109-130.

Post, J.E and Berman, S.L. (2001) 'Global Core Citizenship in a Dot.com World: The Role of Organisational Identity', in Andriof, J. and McIntosh, M. (eds.) *Perspectives on Core Citizenship*. Sheffield: Greenleaf Publishing, pp. 66-82.

Prasad, A., Prasad, P. and Mir, R. (2011) '"One Mirror in Another": Managing Diversity and the Discourse of Fashion', *Human Relations*, 64(5), pp. 703-724.

Pratt, M.G. (2000) 'The Good, The Bad, and The Ambivalent: Managing Identification Among Anyway Distributors', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 45(3), pp. 456-493.

PwC (2018) *PwC Global Family Business Survey*. 9th edn. Available at: https://www.pwc.com/fambizsurvey2018 (Accessed: 22 April 2019).

Qu, S.Q. and Dumay, J. (2011) 'The Qualitative Research Interview', *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, 8(3), pp. 238-264.

Rabionet, S. (2009) 'How I learned to Design and Conduct Semi-Structured Interviews: An Ongoing and Continuous Journey', *The Weekly Qualitative Report*, 2(35), pp. 203-206.

Reeves, C. (2010) 'A Difficult Negotiation: Fieldwork Relations with Gatekeepers', *Qualitative Research*, 10(3), pp. 315-331.

Repstad, P. (2007) *Närhet och Distans: Kvalitativa Metoder i Samhällsvetenskap* [Proximity and Distance: Qualitative Methods in Social Sciences]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Rhodes, C. and Brown, A.D. (2005) 'Narrative, Organizations and Research', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 7(3), pp. 167-188.

Richardson, L. (1990) 'Narrative and Sociology', *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 19(1), pp. 116-135.

Richardson, L. (2000) 'Evaluating Ethnography', *Qualitative Inquiry*, 6(2), pp. 253-255.

Ricoeur, P. (1984) *Time and Narrative, Volume 1*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Ricoeur, P. (1991) 'Narrative Identity', *Philosophy Today*, 35(1), pp. 73-81.

Riessman, C.K. (2012) 'Analysis of Personal Narratives', in Gubrium, J.F., Holstein, J.A. and Marvasti, A.B. (eds.) *Sage Handbook of Interview Research: The Complexity of the Craft*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, pp. 367-379.

Rindfleish, J., Sheridan, A. and Kjeldal, S-E. (2009) 'Creating an "Agora" for Storytelling as a Way of Challenging the Gendered Structures of Academia', *Equal Opportunities International*, 28(6), pp. 486-499.

Rokeach, M. (1973) *The Nature of Human Values*. New York: The Free Press.

Rokeach, M. (1979) *Understanding Human Values: Individual and Societal*. New York: The Free Press.

Rosen, M. (1985) 'Breakfast at Spiro's: Dramaturgy and Dominance', *Journal of Management*, 11(2), pp. 31-48.

Rosen, M. (1988) 'You Asked for It: Christmas at The Bosses' Expense', *Journal of Management Studies*, 25(5), pp. 463-480.

Rosenberg, A. (2012) *Philosophy of Social Science*. Boulder: Westview Press.

Ross, G.F. (1995) 'Interpersonal Stress Reactions and Service Quality Responses among Hospitality Industry Employees', *The Service Industries Journal*, 15(3), pp. 314-331.

Rossetti, L. and Wall, T. (2017) 'The Impact of Story: Measuring the Impact of Story for Organisational Change', *Journal of Work-Applied Management*, 9(2), pp. 170-184.

Rothausen, T.J. (2009) 'Management Work-Family Research and Work-Family Fit: Implications for Building Family Capital in Family Business', *Family Business Review*, 22(3), pp. 220-234.

Røyrvik, E.A. (2013) 'Oblique Ethnography: Engaging Collaborative Complicity Among Globalised Corporate Managers', in Garsten, C. and Nyqvist, A. (eds.) *Organizational Anthropology: Doing Ethnography in and Among Organizations*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 72-88.

Rubin, H.J. and Rubin, I.S. (2005) *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data*. 2nd edn. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Ruiz Jiménez, M.C., Vallejo Martos, M.C. and Martínez Jiménez, R. (2015) 'Organisational Harmony as a Value in Family Businesses and Its Influence on Performance', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16(2), pp. 259-272.

Rutes, W.A., Penner, R.H. and Adams, L. (2001) *Hotel Design: Planning and Development*. Oxford: Architectural Press.

Ryu, K., Lehto, X.Y., Gordon, S.E. and Xiaoxiao, F. (2018) 'Compelling Brand Storytelling for Luxury Hotels', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 74, pp. 22-29.

Sagie, A. and Elizur, D. (1996) 'The Structure of Personal Values: A Conical Representation of Multiple Life Areas', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 17, pp. 573-586.

Sagiv, L. and Roccas, S. (2017) 'What Personal Values Are and What They Are Not: Taking a Cross-Cultural Perspective', in Roccas, S. and Sagiv, L. (eds.) *Values and Behavior: Taking a Cross Cultural Perspective*, Cham: Springer International Publishing, pp. 3-13.

Salas, E., Sims, D.E. and Shawn Burke, C. (2005) 'Is there a "Big Five" in Teamwork?', *Small Group Research*, 36(5), pp. 555–599.

Samara, G. and Arenas, D. (2017) 'Practising Fairness in the Family Business Workplace, *Business Horizons*, 60(5), pp. 647-655.

Sánchez Marín, G., Carrasco Hernández, A.J., Danvila del Valle, I. and Sastre Castillo, M.A. (2016) 'Organizational Culture and Family Business: A Configurational Approach', *European Journal of Family Business*, 6(2), pp. 99-107.

Santiago, A.L. (2000) 'Succession Experiences in Philippine Family Businesses', *Family Business Review*, 23(1), pp. 15-35.

Saunders, C. (1981) *Social Stigma of Occupations: The Lower Grade Worker in Service Organisations*. Farnborough: Gower.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012) *Research Methods for Business Students*. Harlow: Pearson Education.

Schein, E.H. (1983) 'The Role of the Founder in Creating Organizational Culture', *Organizational Dynamics*, 12(1), pp. 13-28.

Schein, E.H. (2004) *Organizational Culture and Leadership*. 3rd edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schein, E.H. (2010) *Organizational Culture and Leadership.* 4th edn. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Schuman, H. and Scott, J. (1989) 'Generations and Collective Memories', *American Sociological Review*, 54(3), pp. 359-381.

Schwabenland, C. (2006) *Stories, Visions and Values in Voluntary Organisations*. Ashgate: Aldershot.

Schwartz, S.H. (1992) 'Universals in the Content and Structure of Values: Theory and Empirical Tests in 20 Countries', in Zanna. M. (ed.) *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*. Vol. 25. New York: Academic Press, pp. 1-65.

Schwartz, S.H. (2006) 'Les Valeurs de Base de la Personne: Théorie, Mesures et Applications' [Basic Human Values: Theory, Measurement, and Applications], *Revue Française de Sociologie*, 47, pp. 249-288.

Schwartz, S.H. (2012) 'An Overview of the Schwartz Theory of Basic Values', *Online Readings in Psychology and Culture*, 2(1), pp. 1-20.

Schwartzman, H. B. (1986) 'The Meeting as a Neglected Social Form in Organizational Studies', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, 8, pp. 233-258.

Schwartzman, H.B. (1989) *The Meeting: Gatherings in Organizations and Communities*. New York: Plenum.

Schwartzman, H. B. (1993) *Ethnography in Organizations*, Qualitative Research Methods Series. Vol. 27. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Sciascia, S., Clinton, E., Nason, R.S., James, A.E. and Rivera-Algarin, J.O. (2013) 'Family Communication and Innovativeness in Family Firms', *Family Relations*, 62(3), pp. 429-442.

Scott, J.C. (1990) *Domination and the Art of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Scott, J.F. (1971) *Internalization of Norms: A Sociological Theory of Moral Commitment*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Seifert, A.M. and Messing, K. (2006) 'Cleaning Up After Globalization: An Ergonomic Analysis of Work Activity of Hotel Cleaners', *Antipode*, 38(3), pp. 557-578.

Sennett, R. (1998) *The Corrosion of Character. The Personal Consequences of Work in the New Capitalism*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Sergeeva, N. and Trifilova, A. (2018) 'The Role of Storytelling in the Innovation Process', *Creativity and Innovation Management*, 27(4), pp. 489-498.

Seymor, D. (2000) 'Emotional Labour: A Comparison Between Fast Food and Traditional Service Work', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 19(2), pp. 159-171.

Shapiro, B. (2016) 'Using Traditional Narratives and Other Narrative Devices to Enact Humanizing Business Practices', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 139(1), pp. 1-19.

Sharma, P., Chrisman, J.J., Pablo, A.L. and Chua, J.H. (2001) 'Determinants of Initial Satisfaction with the Succession Process in Family Firms: A Conceptual Model', *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 25(3), pp. 17-35.

Sharma, P. and Nordqvist, M. (2008) 'A Classification Scheme for Family Firms: From Family Values to Effective Governance to Firm Performance', in Tàpies, J. and Ward, J.L. (eds.) *Family Values and Value Creation: The Fostering of Enduring Values Within Family-Owned Businesses*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 71-101.

Sharma, P. and Nordqvist, M. (2013) 'Using the Configuration Approach to Understand the Reasons for and Consequences of Varied Family Involvement in Business', in Smyrnios, K.X., Poutziouris, P.Z., and Goel, S. (eds.) *Handbook of Research on Family Business.* 2nd edn. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 142-160.

Sheehan, N.T. and Grant, I.E. (2014) 'Principles Operationalize Corporate Values so they Matter', *Strategy & Leadership*, 42(3), pp. 23-30.

Sherman, R. (2005) 'Producing the Superior Self: Strategic Comparison and Symbolic Boundaries Among Luxury Hotel Workers', *Ethnography*, 6(2), pp. 131-158.

Short, J.C., Sharma, P., Lumpkin, G.T. and Pearson, A.W. (2016) 'Oh, the Places We'll Go! Reviewing Past, Present, and Future Possibilities in Family Business Research', *Family Business Review*, 29(1), pp. 11-16.

Shulman, D. (2017) *The Presentation of Self in Contemporary Social Life*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Simon, A., Marquès, P., Bikfalvi, A. and Muñoz, M.D. (2012) 'Exploring Value Differences Across Family Firms: The Influence of Choosing and Managing Complexity', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 3(3), pp. 132-146.

Sisson, D.C. and Bowen, S.A. (2017) 'Reputation Management and Authenticity: A Case Study of Starbucks' UK Tax Crisis and "#SpreadTheCheer" Campaign', *Journal of Communication Management*, 21(3), pp. 287-302.

Smith, A.C.T. and Stewart, B. (2011) 'Organizational Rituals: Features, Functions and Mechanisms', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(2), pp. 113-133.

Smith, J. (2009) 'Narrative: Sociolinguistic Research', in Mey, J.L. (ed.) *Concise Encyclopedia of Pragmatics*. Amsterdam: Elsevier, pp. 473-476.

Smith, P.B. and Schwartz, S. (1997) 'Values', in Berry J.W., Segall, M.H. and Kagitcibasi, C. (eds.) *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology*. Vol. 3. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, pp. 77-118.

Smith, V. (1997) 'Ethnography Bound: Taking Stock of Organizational Case Studies', *Qualitative Sociology*, 20(3), pp. 425-435.

Smyrnios, K.X., Poutziouris, P.Z., and Goel, S. (2013) 'Introduction: Trends and Developments in Family Business Research', in Smyrnios, K.X., Poutziouris, P.Z., and Goel, S. (eds.) *Handbook of Research on Family Business*. 2nd edn. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 1-13.

Sorenson, R.L. (2013) 'How Moral and Social Values Become Embedded in Family Firms', *Journal of Management, Spirituality & Religion*, 10(2), pp. 116-137.

Sosteric, M. (1996) 'Subjectivity and the Labour Process: A Case Study in the Restaurant Industry', *Work, Employment and Society*, 10(2), pp. 297-318.

Spates, J.L. (1983) 'The Sociology of Values', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 9, pp. 27-49.

Spear, S. and Roper. S. (2016) 'Storytelling in Organisations: Supporting or Subverting Corporate Strategy?', *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 21(4), pp. 516-532.

Spradley, J.P. (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Spradley, J.P. (1980) *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Sprain, L. and Boromisza-Habashi, D. (2012) 'Meetings: A Cultural Perspective', *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 7(2), pp. 179-189.

Spranger, E. (1928) *Types of Men: The Psychology and Ethics of Personality*. (P.J.W. Pigors, trans.). Halle: Niemeyer.

Stam, H.J. (2001) 'Introduction: Social Constructionism and its Critics', *Theory Psychology*, 11(3), pp. 291-296.

Steier, L. (2007) 'New Venture Creation and Organization: A Familial Sub-Narrative', *Journal of Business Research*, 60(10), pp. 1099-1107.

Stephens, C. and Breheny, M. (2013) 'Narrative Analysis in Psychological Research: An Integrated Approach to Interpreting Stories', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 10(1), pp. 14-27.

Stevenson Thorpe, A. (2014) 'Doing the Right Thing or Doing the Thing Right: Implications of Participant Withdrawal', *Organizational Research Methods*, 17(3), pp. 255-277.

Strannegård, L. and Strannegård, M. (2012) 'Works of Art: Aesthetic Ambitions in Design Hotels', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 39(4), pp. 1995-2012.

Strannegård, M. (2009) *Hotell Speciell: Livsstilskonsumtion på Känslornas Marknad* [Hotel Special: Lifestyle Consumption on the Emotional Market]. Malmö: Liber AB.

Sullivan, W., Sullivan, R. and Buffton, B. (2002) 'Aligning Individual and Organisational Values to Support Change', *Journal of Change Management*, 2(3), 247-254.

Sweden's Public Employment Agency (2017), 'Var är Jobben? Bedömning för 2017', ['Where are the Jobs? Evaluation for 2017']. Available at: https://www.arbetsformedlingen.se/Om-oss/Statistik-och-publikationer/Prognoser/Prognoser/Riket/2017-02-09-Prognos-Var-finns-jobben-2017.html# (Accessed: 24 January 2018).

Søderberg, A-M. (2015) 'Recontextualising a Strategic Concept Within a Globalising Company: A Case Study on Carlsberg's 'Winning Behaviours' Strategy', *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 26(2), 231-257.

Tagiuri, R. and Davis, J. (1996) 'Bivalent Attributes of the Family Firm', *Family Business Review*, 9(2), pp. 199-208.

Tannen, D., Kendall, S. and Gordon, C. (eds.) (2007) *Family Talk: Discourse and Identity in Four American Families*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Thome, H. (2015) 'Values, Sociology of', in Wright, J.D. (ed.) *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. 2nd edn. Vol. 25. Oxford: Elsevier, pp. 47-53.

Tolstoy, L. (2013/1873–7) *Anna Karenina*. London: Penguin Classics.

Tracy, S. (2000) 'Becoming a Character for Commerce', *Management Communication Quarterly*, 14(1), pp. 90-128.

Trethewey, A. (1999) 'Isn't it Ironic: Using Irony to Explore the Contradictions of Organizational Life', *Western Journal of Communication*, 63(2), pp. 140-167.

Triandis, H.C. (1990) 'Cross-Cultural Studies of Individualism and Collectivism', in Berman, J.J. (ed.), Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, 1989: *Cross-cultural Perspectives, Current Theory and Research in Motivation*. Vol. 37. Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, pp. 41-133.

Urry, J. (2002) *The Tourist Gaze*. 2nd edn. London: Sage Publications.

Vaara, E., Sonenshein, S. and Boje, D.M. (2016) 'Narratives as Sources of Stability and Change in Organizations: Approaches and Directions for Future Research', *The Academy of Management Annals*, 10(1), pp. 495-560.

Vallejo, M.C. (2008) 'Is the Culture of Family Firms Really Different? A Value-Based Model for Its Survival through Generations', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 81(2), pp. 261-279.

Vallejo, M.C. (2009) 'The Effects of Commitment of Non-Family Employees of Family Firms from the Perspective of Stewardship Theory', *Journal of Business Ethics*, 87(3), pp. 379-390.

Vallejo-Martos, M.C. (2011) 'The Organizational Culture of Family Firms as a Key Factor of Competitiveness', *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, 12(3), pp. 451-481.

Van Deth, J.W. and Scarbrough, E. (1995) *The Impact of Values*. Oxford: Oxford University.

Van Hulst, M. and Ybema, S. (2019) 'From What to Where: A Setting-Sensitive Approach to Organizational Storytelling', *Organization Studies*, pp. 1-27. Available at: https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840618815523 (Accessed: 7 May 2019).

Van Maanen, J. (2010) 'A Song for My Supper: More Tales of the Field', *Organizational Research Methods*, 13(2), pp. 240-255.

Van Maanen, J. (2011) 'Ethnography as Work: Some Rules of Engagement', *Journal of Management Studies*, 48(1), pp. 218-234.

Vernon, P. and Allport, G.W. (1931) 'A Test for Personal Values', *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 26(3), pp. 231-248.

Vinten, G. (1994) 'Participant Observation: A Model for Organizational Investigation?', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 9(2), pp. 30-38.

Walker, H. and Kavedžija, I. (2015) 'Values of Happiness', *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, 5(3), pp. 1-23.

Walsh, K. (2003) 'Qualitative Research: Advancing the Science and Practice of Hospitality', *Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly*, 44(2), pp. 66-74.

Ward, J. L. (1987) *Keeping the Family Business Healthy*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ward, J.L. (2004) *Perpetuating the Family Business: 50 Lessons Learned from Long-Lasting Successful Families in Business*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Ward, J. L. (2008) 'Introduction', in Tàpies, J. and Ward, J.L. (eds.) *Family Values and Value Creation: The Fostering of Enduring Values Within Family-Owned Businesses*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 1-6.

Warren, S. (2005) 'Humour as a Management Tool? The Irony of Structuring Fun in Organizations', in Johansson, U. and Woodilla, J. (eds.) *Irony and Organizations: Epistemological Claims and Supporting Field Stories*. Malmö: Liber/Copenhagen Business School Press, pp. 174-199.

Watson, T. (2011) 'Ethnography, Reality, and Truth: The Vital Need for Studies of "How Things Work" in Organizations and Management', *Journal of Management Studies*, 48(1), pp. 202-217.

Webster, L. and Mertova, P. (2007) *Using Narrative Inquiry as a Research Method*. London: Routledge.

Weick, K.E. (1979) *The Social Psychology of Organizing*. 2nd edn. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Weick, K.E. (1995) *Sensemaking in Organizations*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Weismeier-Sammer, D., Frank, H. and von Schlippe, A. (2013) 'Untangling "Familiness": A Literature Review and Directions for Future Research', *Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 14(3), pp. 177-189.

Wellton, L., Jonsson, I.M., Walter, U. and Svingstedt, A. (2017) 'Restaurant Practices – Time, Planning, Knowledge and Dreams', *Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 17(3), pp. 297-311.

Werhane, P. (2018) 'The Linguistic Turn, Social Construction and the Impartial Spectator: Why Do These Ideas Matter to Managerial Thinking?', *Philosophy of Management*, 17(3), pp. 265-278.

Westhead, P. and Cowling, M. (1998) 'Family Firm Research: The Need for a Methodological Rethink', *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 23(1), pp. 31-56.

Whitelaw, P. and Morda, R. (2004) 'Leadership in the Hospitality Industry: Boadecia vs. Attila – Bring it on!', *Journal of Hospitality Management*, 11(2), pp. 139-148.

Whyte, W.F. (1949) 'The Social Structure of the Restaurant', *American Journal of Sociology*, 54(4), pp. 302-310.

Widerberg, K. (2002) *Kvalitativ Forskning i Praktiken* [Qualitative Research in Practice]. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Wong, C-K.S. and Chung, K-H.M. (2003) 'Work Values of Chinese Food Service Managers', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 15(2), pp. 66-75.

Wood, R.C. (1994) 'Hotel Culture and Social Control', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 21(1), pp. 65-80.

Worcester, B.A. (2000) 'Illusions of Grandeur', *Hotel and Motel Management*, 215(18), pp. 54-55.

World Values Survey Wave 6. (2014) Inglehart, R., C. Haerpfer, A. Moreno, C. Welzel, K. Kizilova, J. Diez-Medrano, M. Lagos, P. Norris, E. Ponarin & B. Puranen et al. (eds.) Madrid: JD Systems Institute. Available at: http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSDocumentationWV6.jsp (Accessed: 4 May 2018).

Zachary, R.K. (2011) 'The Importance of the Family System in Family Business', *Journal of Family Business Management*, 1(1), pp. 26-36.

Zahra, S.A., Hayton, J.C., Neubam, D.O., Dibrell, C. and Craig, J. (2008) 'Culture of Family Commitment and Strategic Flexibility: The Moderating Effect of Stewardship', *Entrepreneurship, Theory and Practice*, 32(6), pp. 1035-1054.

Zellweger, T.M., Eddleston, K.A. and Kellermanns, F.W. (2010) 'Exploring the Concept of Familiness: Introducing Family Firm Identity', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 1(1), pp. 54-63.

Zellweger, T.M., Kellermanns, F.W., Eddleston, K.A. and Memili, E. (2012) 'Building a Family Firm Image: How Family Firms Capitalize on their Family Ties', *Journal of Family Business Strategy*, 3(4), pp. 239-250.

Zwack, M., Kraiczy, N.D., von Schlippe, A. and Hack, A. (2016) 'Storytelling and Cultural Family Value Transmission: Value Perception of Stories in Family Firms', *Management Learning*, 47(5), pp. 590-614.