

ORGANIZING ALTERNATIVES: EXAMINING NORMATIVE AND  
ALTERNATIVE NONPROFIT ORGANIZING PRACTICES

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By

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## ABSTRACT

Homelessness presents a massive organizational problem in the United States, with over 400,000 men, women, and children making use of shelter services each night. In this study, I take a comparative ethnographic approach to study how the use of the organizing Discourses of feminism, paternalism, neoliberalism, and anarchism result in more normative or alternative organizing practices. My project examines the organizing practices at two shelters for homeless women. One shelter is affiliated with an international religious nonprofit organization and self-identified anarchists run the other. Using the communicative constitution of organization (CCO) and institutional logics theories, I propose a theoretical framework for understanding how organizing Discourses are enacted or resisted at the organizational and individual level. My findings highlight how the institutional logics of responsibility, social welfare, and market manifest in different and sometimes paradoxical organizing practices based on the Discourse that is being translated. In this project, I highlight and critique how Discursive translations of institutional logics structure relations of power that impact agency at the individual and organizational level. My project has implications for understanding why the United States organizes around the social problem of homelessness the way it does, and explores alternatives to normative nonprofit organizing practices.

## CHAPTER I: RATIONALE AND JUSTIFICATION

In a speech before a conservative women's group in 1980, British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher stated that "there is no real alternative" to neoliberal capitalism (or neoliberalism). Neoliberalism is an economic and social theory that differs from other forms of capitalism in that it encourages the expansion of market ideology into new arenas (e.g., nonprofit and government), and the use of state power to protect and bolster the market (Wacquant, 2009). The rise of neoliberalism in Thatcher's United Kingdom fundamentally altered how welfare programs in the United Kingdom functioned, which then precipitated several changes in how nonprofit organizations were run (Billis & Harris, 1992). My project takes as its starting point that neoliberalism has remained a dominant Discourse in the nonprofit sector since the 1980s. Despite Thatcher's claim that there is no alternative to neoliberalism, I believe that alternatives to the organizing Discourse of neoliberalism exist, and that some nonprofit organizations (NPOs) are using them to resist neoliberal ideals. This project studies how organizations in the nonprofit sector enact and/or resist neoliberal Discourse in their organizing practices.

Neoliberalism has never received total support in the United States. Even President Reagan, who campaigned on a hardline neoliberal doctrine, caved to public pressure and only implemented limited deregulation and privatization instead of the large-scale neoliberal change he sought (Klein, 2010). Reagan may have never received the support for neoliberal policies he desired, but neoliberal ideals of individuality, competition, privatization, and deregulation became prominent in the United States. However, while neoliberalism has enjoyed a period of dominance in public Discourse, questions about the long-term viability of neoliberal policies have begun to surface

(Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2014a). For example, the recent rise of the Occupy movement in the United States not only challenged neoliberal policies, but it also challenged commonsense perceptions of organizing by eschewing hierarchy and attempting consensus in the movement's decision-making (Piven, 2013).

As people become more aware of the limits and failings of neoliberalism, a shift in understanding how organizations can organize without adopting neoliberal values is worth exploring (Parker et al., 2014a). The purpose of this study is to examine and contrast alternative organizing practices with more normative (neoliberal) organizing practices in the nonprofit sector. I argue in this dissertation that nonprofit organizations are particularly valuable to the study of alternative organizing practices due to the ways in which they are situated between multiple, conflicting forces in a market economy (Jensen & Meisenbach, 2015; Sanders & McClellan, 2014).

The remainder of this chapter proceeds as follows: I first discuss the current questions being asked about alternative organizations. Second, I outline my theoretical commitments and begin to draw links between the theoretical families that provide the basis for my argument; third, I discuss the primary questions and challenges surrounding nonprofit organizing communication research; and I conclude the chapter by briefly introducing the specific social problem of homelessness on which my dissertation focuses and explaining how that problem serves as a meaningful site of study socially and theoretically.

### **Alternative Organizing**

At the moment, organizational scholars are just starting to scratch the surface of what it means for an organization to be considered alternative. The growing interest in

alternative organizing is demonstrated by efforts like the “Transform” conference hosted in Denmark, which began in 2011 as a forum for scholars to discuss alternatives to “mainstream economy and thinking” (Transform!Denmark, 2014). In spite of such efforts to discuss alternatives, defining precisely what constitutes an organization as alternative remains difficult. In their recent book, Parker, et al. (2014a) discussed alternative organizations as having: (a) some level of individual autonomy, (b) some understanding of the collective and duty to others, and (c) a responsibility to the future. The authors argued that alternative organizing exists along a continuum with some alternative organizations departing more fully from the norms than others. Cheney (2014) argued against looking for “perfect cases” of alternative organizations and instead suggested that scholars “look to alternative aspects or dimensions of organizations that may be present in varying degrees” (para. 10).

Cheney (2014) stated that alternative organizations arise in response to a variety of problems. These problems span from issues relating to neoliberal global policies to the development of technologies that change organizing practices. Alternatives are not always necessarily better than the current way of organizing, however. For example, the promotion of self-managed teams has led to new, tighter forms of control in working organizations (Barker, 1993). Also, organizations that embrace “fun” and “play” as constructs to promote individual authenticity within their organization may use these policies to increase control over employees (Fleming & Sturdy, 2011). Finally, although workplace democracy has widely been touted as an important step towards transforming organizational culture, recent scholarship suggests that democratic reforms fail to

challenge more deep-seated power issues within and across organizations (Bean, Lemon, & O'Connell, 2013).

These conversations about alternative organizing are in their early stages, but potentially productive and provocative questions are already being asked. Cheney (2014) offered the following call at the end of his discussion on the state of alternative organizational scholarship:

The term itself is not yet tired or hackneyed, and that supports its continued usefulness. But, can it be employed in new ways and new contexts? Can it serve to inspire? And, how can its persuasive power be enhanced in various media?

These are the important questions to investigate as we consider not only the life of the term but also the larger question of how best to advance the values and goals most commonly associated with "alternative" and "organization." (para 11)

Cheney articulated a need for thinking about alternatives in a broad way and offers much in the way of how we as scholars might approach issues pertaining to alternative organizing by his providing questions instead of answers. Alternative organizing remains an open question and will likely remain so. The goal of my project is not to offer a definitive answer on alternative organizing. Rather, my goal is to contribute to the discussion by examining how organizations may resist neoliberal forms of organizing by turning to alternative organizing practices.

Now that I've discussed some of the issues of alternative organizing, the next section of the paper details the theories that I use to explore those issues. I first briefly discuss my views on the communicative constitution of organization, and then I highlight some of the advantages that using institutional logics provides for my project.

## **The Communicative Constitution of Organization and Institutional Theory**

By adopting a communicative constitution of organization (CCO) approach, I can take a practice view of organizations. In particular, I draw from the Montreal School (TMS) of CCO, which is primarily concerned with language and discourse in use (Schoeneborn, et al., 2014). By drawing on TMS scholarship, I am responding to Koschmann's (2012) call to use this approach in nonprofit communication research. By emphasizing the role of communicative practices in the organizing process, I am able to examine how certain practices draw from more normative or alternative organizing Discourses (which, borrowing from Foucault [1977] I define as systems of knowledge that are tied to relations of power and the construction of truth). Furthermore, by using CCO I am also positioned to explore how specific communication practices within two organizations draw from or challenge dominant organizing logics.

CCO in general, and TMS in particular, argues that organizing is a process in which communication plays the central role (Robichaud & Cooren, 2013). TMS examines how interactions within organizations "scale up" to change the organization as a whole (Koschmann, 2012). The ability to view how practices grow and change an organization makes CCO ideal for studying how organizations are or are not constituted as alternative through practices that either reflect or challenge normative neoliberal ideals.

Institutional logics examine how organizations use multiple logics as resources for organizing (Coule & Patmore, 2013). These institutional logics use Discourses (like neoliberalism) to serve as the "substance" by which standards of rationality are set and maintained (Friedland, 2009a). By drawing upon an institutional logics perspective, I can

compare organizing practices across organizations as meso level organizations interact with macro level Discourses. An institutional logics perspective highlights how organizing practices, rules, and beliefs are manifested in sociohistorical contexts that can be traced and understood (Thornton & Ocasio, 2008). Institutional logics also highlight the importance of material constraints (Thornton, Ocasio, & Lonsbury, 2012). Being able to account for the role of materiality is important for understanding alternative organizing according to Cheney (2014) because they influence the organizing process in important ways.

Finally, an institutional logics perspective is heavily concerned with agency at the organizational level (Suddaby, 2010). In particular, the institutional logics perspective seeks to understand how organizations within an institutional field conform to or resist institutional norms (Thornton et al., 2012). The institutional logics perspective on agency complements and enhances the discussions of agency that emerge from TMS.

I believe that the institutional logics perspective can make important contributions in understanding both nonprofit and alternative organizing practices. Specifically, I believe that an institutional logics view of nonprofit and alternative organizing advances theorizing on both types of organization. The next part of this chapter offers some brief considerations of important issues pertaining to nonprofit organizing as a unique phenomenon.

### **Nonprofit Organizing**

My interest in nonprofit organizing comes as a result of my own experience. In the three years between my undergraduate and Masters programs I worked for a normative, large, nonprofit organization named Boys Town and then with a for-profit

prison corporation. Working as a case manager in a for-profit halfway house associated with a prison corporation, I witnessed firsthand the problems of the institution of neoliberal organizing ideals in a social service organization. Neoliberal organizing encourages commodification in arenas where it had not previously existed. This means that those who receive services in neoliberal nonprofit organizations (NPOs) become commodities in addition to service recipients.

Nonprofit goals tend to be focused on particular social problems, but the scope of these problems can vary widely (Lewis, 2005). While some NPOs may focus on local problems, many of the most visible nonprofits are international forces with the capacity to influence government policy around the globe, (e.g., United Way, Red Cross, and Greenpeace). Large NPOs bring in millions in donations every year and are closely scrutinized (by external organizations like Charity Navigator) to judge their financial efficiency. Large NPOs stand in stark contrast to the more locally focused organizations that are often forced to compete with bigger nonprofits for funds and support (Eisenberg & Eschenfelder, 2009).

To increase their appeal as a destination for donor contributions, many NPOs are adopting more corporate values such as efficiency and transparency to remain competitive (Sanders & McLellan, 2011). A byproduct of this corporatization has been the steady increase in pay for nonprofit top executives, some of whom make millions of dollars each year. Many nonprofits are pressured to increase their executive compensation in order to retain or recruit from what is perceived as a limited pool of applicants willing to manage large NPOs (Gose, 2014).

Although many NPOs have aligned themselves with neoliberal organizing principles to navigate their organizational landscape, other NPOs may have resisted this pressure. My study examines how two NPOs in similar areas draw from different organizing Discourses to achieve their organizational goals. The next section of the paper outlines my dissertation.

### **Project Overview and Conclusion**

To better understand alternative organizing, I have examined how alternative and normative organizing practices manifest in two distinct homeless shelters located in the same area. I selected the issue of homelessness for two primary reasons. First, homelessness is a massive social problem in the United States, with the most recent reports stating that the homeless population on any single night in the USA was over 600,000 (Henry, Cortes, & Morris, 2014). Second, homelessness is a social problem that is uniquely tied to economic issues and thus is tied to discussions of neoliberalism.

My study heeds the call of Cheney (2014) to better understand the possibilities and limitations presented by new focus on alternative organizing. Additionally, this study heeds the call for nonprofit theorizing from a communicative perspective that seeks to engage both with issues of marketization as well as examining how NPOs might manage the market economy without adopting neoliberal and more traditional organizational values. To best contribute to the discussions of alternative and nonprofit organizing, I engaged in a comparative poststructuralist ethnographic project that examines alternative and normative organizing practices. Specifically, my project seeks to articulate how social Discourses enable and constrain the agency of organizations and their organizing practices.

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines the scholarly literature related to: institutional theory, alternative organizing, the communicative constitution of organization, and nonprofit organizing. I use these bodies of literature as a starting point for a discussion of how organizations navigate their organizational landscape in a more or less normative manner. These aforementioned scholarly fields offer a broad and flexible vocabulary that is useful for unpacking the role of Discourse in the enactment of organizing practices.

The first section of this literature review explores issues pertaining to institutional theory. I begin with institutional theory for two reasons. First, institutional theory provides a framework for understanding how organizing practices interpenetrate across organizational boundaries and may come to define an organizational field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1986). Second, institutional theory provides a framework for understanding how organizing practices are tied to a broader ideology and serves to bridge the gap between macro (societal) and meso (organizational) levels (Friedland, 2009; Lammers & Barbour, 2006). I conclude this section by arguing for an institutional logics perspective that highlights issues of the sociohistorical nature of organizing and accounts for issues of agency and materiality in the organizing process (Thornton et al., 2012).

After discussing relevant aspects of institutional theory, I then explore the nascent research on alternative organizing. Alternative organizing, like institutional theory, proposes that organizing practices are tied to a broader ideology (Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2014c). Recent scholarship on alternative organizing proposes that in the United States and much of the Western world that dominant ideology is tied to neoliberalism (e.g., Parker et al., 2014b; Webb & Cheney, 2014). Furthermore,

alternative organizing highlights the political and power laden nature of organizational choices (Parker et al., 2014b), and it challenges the assumed centralized and natural status of organizing practices (Parker et al., 2014a). Alternative organizing can also be used as a lens to examine organizing practices to productively examine how organizations may be alternative in some ways and normative in others (Cheney, 2014).

Next, I discuss the process-focused view of organizing that is highlighted by the communicative constitution of organizations (CCO). CCO theorizing views organizations as always in process and moves scholars beyond viewing organizations as containers (Robichaud & Cooren, 2013). Also, CCO highlights how organizations are continuously (re)constituted through communication (Putnam, Nicotera, & McPhee, 2009). I focus on the Montreal School (TMS) approach to CCO for two reasons in this study. First, TMS views organizations as sites where a multitude of practices work together to constitute an organization (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009). Second, TMS highlights important issues of agency in regards to how organizing takes place (Brummans, 2006).

Finally, I examine the work on nonprofit organizing that has been done both within and beyond organizational communication. I offer a historical overview of the development of nonprofit organizing in the 20th century and examine how changes in the political and economic landscape led to the current state of nonprofit organizations (NPOs). I examine how NPOs can be understood as the sites of multiple tensions between paradoxical ideologies and organizational goals (Sanders, 2012). I particularly focus on how the adoption of market-based organizing logics has impacted the nonprofit sector.

Bringing these areas of literature together offers a conceptual framework that allows an unpacking of the links between macro-level Discourses and how those Discourses manifest in practices at the meso and micro level. I believe that the interpretation of macro level discourses at the meso level manifests in the form of normative or alternative organizing practices. To better explore this idea, I first explore relevant ideas and conversations around institutional theory.

### **Institutional Theory**

Institutional theory provides a theoretical lens for making informed comparisons across organizations because it provides a framework for understanding similarity and difference in organizations that operate within an “organizational field.” An organizational field is a set of organizations sharing meaning systems and whose members interact with one another more often than they interact with outsiders (Scott, 2001). Under institutional theory, organizations are collections of practices that are judged based on societal expectations of what a particular kind of organization should "look like" (Marion & Gonzales, 2014).

To explain the relevance of institutional theorizing to the current project, this section provides an overview of the foundational issues that led to the theory's development and current state(s). I first offer a very brief overview of the early days of institutional theory and then move to "neo-institutional" theory. Second, I discuss the changes in institutional scholars' focus that arose in the late 20th century and especially the shift to organizational isomorphism. Next, I examine the extant literature on the institutional logics perspective and highlight how institutional logics inform this project's focus on organizing practices. Finally, I examine some of the communication research

that has drawn on institutional theory. Institutional theory, and in particular institutional logics, provides a framework for understanding how the Discourse of neoliberalism has influenced the organizing practices of the nonprofit sector. I use institutional theory as a way to examine how organizations enact practices associated with neoliberal Discourse or resist that discourse by embracing alternative organizing practices and Discourses.

**The move from institutional to neo-institutional theory.** Philip Selznick (1984) is often cited as the source of "old" institutionalism. Selznick's work offered a distinction between organizations and institutions and argued that organizations can become "institutionalized" over time. The process of institutionalization can change the basic nature of an organization, enabling it in some ways and leading to a "trained or built-in incapacity" (Selznick, 1996, p. 271) in others. Broom and Selznick (1955) defined the process of institutionalization as "the emergence of orderly, stable, socially integrating patterns out of unstable, loosely organized, or narrowly technical activities" (p. 238). Old institutionalism was concerned with how structure impacted the agency of organizations and how links between structure and agency manifested at the organizational level (Lecours, 2005). However, while the emphasis on structure and agency remains in institutional theory, criticisms of how structures were created and maintained led to a major shift in institutional theorizing.

Criticisms of old institutional theory began to arise regarding the seemingly neutral and naturalistic growth of institutions. Looking back at developments in institutional theory, Strang and Sine (2002) discussed that institutional theorists began to argue that rather than arising without human influence, institutions were actually products of various sociohistorical factors. Similar to systems theory, institutional theory became

more concerned with how organizations existed within and reacted to their organizational environment (Meyer & Rowen, 1977). Therefore, instead of thinking of institutions as arising without human influence, scholars began to argue that they were a product of a socially defined organizational environment. Thinking of institutions like this has led to them being defined as "constellations of established practices guided by enduring, formalized, rational beliefs that transcend particular organizations and situations" (Lammers & Barbour, 2006, p. 357).

One of the key contributions of institutional theory is its explanation of how different organizations become more similar to one another over time. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) argued that a central concern to institutional theory was the concept of organizational isomorphism. Organizational isomorphism refers to the homogenization of organizations across an organizational field and has been defined as "a constraining process that forces one unit in a population to resemble other units that face the same environmental conditions" (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983, p. 149).

While organizational fields may initially be characterized by high degrees of diversity, they are likely to shift and become increasingly homogenous as time progresses (Deephouse & Suchman, 2008). Organizations within a field do not become isomorphic without external influence; rather, scholars argue that isomorphism occurs as a result of institutions seeking to regulate and maintain the status quo. Institutional forces that maintain the status quo are classified as: (a) mimetic, (b) normative, and (c) coercive (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Lammers & Barbour, 2006; Lawrence, 2008). Mimetic isomorphism occurs when an organization mimics the organizational practices of a similar organization as a way to reduce uncertainty. Coercive isomorphism is the use of

formal or informal control mechanisms to force an organization into compliance. Finally, normative isomorphism occurs through the establishment of standards of legitimacy for organizations within a field, and it often takes the form of socialization into accepted standards (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

However, some institutional scholars have argued that institutional theory has over-emphasized isomorphism and that institutional scholarship has failed to account for the myriad ways that organizations manifest as different (Greenwood, Hinings, & Whetten, 2014; Suddaby, 2010, 2012; Thornton et al., 2012). Suddaby (2010) contended that isomorphism originally was principally concerned with "why and how organizations adopt processes and structures for their meaning rather than their productive value" (p. 15). Suddaby continued by pointing out that the shift to focusing on homogeneity has deemphasized the importance of the creation of meaning in a field, and it has masked the importance of *practices* as representative of those processes and structures. To reclaim how practices interpenetrate across organizations within an institutional field, some scholars have proposed an institutional logics perspective (Greenwood, et al., 2014; Thornton & Ocasio, 2008; Thornton et al., 2012). An institutional logics perspective, which I cover in the following section, seeks to be a lens by which the links between institutions and individual organizational actors might be understood. This perspective is centrally important for understanding how normative and alternative practices can be understood in relation to the broader organizational field.

**Institutional logics.** My project is focused on the use of organizing practices that lead to organizations being classified as more or less alternative in the nonprofit sector. An institutional logics (ILs) perspective is particularly relevant to this focus. The

institutional logics perspective moves beyond issues of isomorphism and emphasizes how organizations exhibit at least partial autonomy from social structures (Thornton et al., 2012).

An institutional logics perspective takes as its starting point that organizations are places of interwoven logics and that the navigation of those logics is key for understanding how practices are exhibited within that organization (Coule & Patmore, 2013; Duran, Szostak, Iourdan & Thornton, 2013). Thornton and Ocasio (2008) defined institutional logics as, "The socially constructed, historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organize time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (p. 102). An institutional logics perspective takes an even more in depth examination than institutional theory of the sociohistorical conditions that led to a particular logic.

Institutional logics emerge from what Friedland (2009a) referred to as the "substance," or the guiding values and standards of rationality that govern a social world. These substances (which are similar to but also different from Discourses) are used to create and maintain culturally understood notions of knowledge and legitimacy. Friedland (2009a) argued that substance is the central idea of an institutional field, and he linked substance to logic by stating:

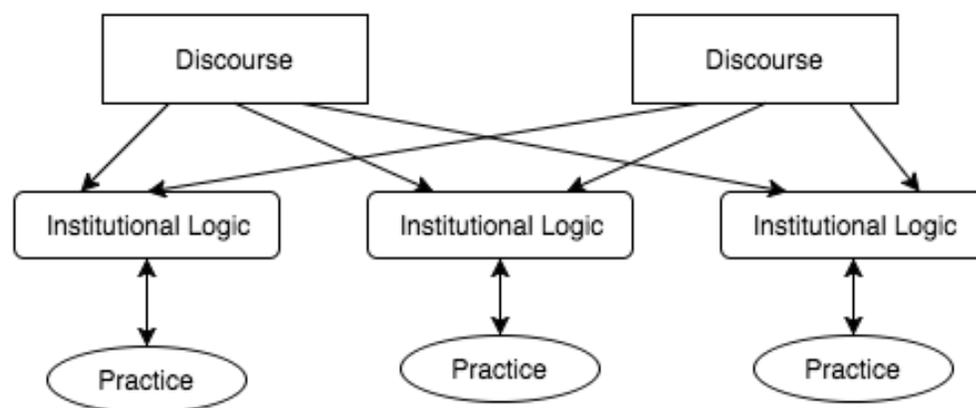
An institutional logic is a bundle of practices organized around a particular substance and its secondary derivatives from which the normativity of those practices is derived. Within any institution, the discursively laden practical organization of bodies and things in its space and time signify those substances.

This choreography of practice is not, properly speaking, a form of social signage. The practices through which those substances as well as the subjects they imply—voting, democracy or representation, and citizen, for example—are symbolizations in that they have a nonarbitrary relation to the signified, here democracy or representation. (p. 45)

Friedland’s definition of substances is heuristically useful, but is also open to multiple challenges. Most fundamentally, Friedland (2009b) argues that institutional substances are undetectable. Perhaps the fact that Friedland is focusing upon religious institutional logic drives his argument that substances are undetectable. However, the similarities between substances and Discourses highlights the empirical possibilities of drawing on the concept of cultural Discourses as the rational bases of institutional logics.

Institutional logics are linked to an overarching Discourse like: democracy, feminism, neoliberalism, and (I add) anarchy. The figure below displays the relationships between Discourse, logic, and practice:

Figure 1.



Not represented in the chart above is that each level is mutually constitutive.

Practices have the capacity to change logic, and logic has the capacity to change

Discourse and vice versa. The mutually constitutive nature of practice-logic and logic-Discourse articulates how agency is viewed from an institutional logics perspective by emphasizing that change may occur and influence across micro, meso, and macro levels.

A society is composed of a vast array of institutional logics that interweave together to form dominant rationalities in a social world (Thornton et al., 2012). Institutional logics like: social welfare (Pache & Santos, 2013), medical, professional (Reay & Hinings, 2005), family, religion, and market (Thornton et al., 2012) serve as templates for organizational fields that at the societal level form an “interinstitutional system.”

Multiple and often contradictory institutional logics can be located within organizations (Coule & Patmore, 2013; Durand, et al., 2013). According to Pache and Santos (2013) nonprofit organizations can be characterized as “hybrid” organizations due to how they must balance the competing market logics and social welfare logics. Pache and Santos continued that social welfare logics are characterized by nonprofit organizing forms, ownership by those who embrace the mission, and the reinvestment of profits into the organization. They argue that the social welfare logics contrast with market (which they refer to as commercial) logics that emphasize for-profit organizing, ownership based on the investment of capital, and the distribution of profit to shareholders.

An institutional logics perspective, like most forms of institutional theory, also highlights agency. However, institutional logics locate agency more with individuals and organizations and less with the structures of institutional forces that enforce the standards of the dominant logics (Greenwood, et al., 2014). Under an institutional logics

approach agency is emphasized in how individuals and organizations draw upon and productively manage various and conflicting logics (Suddaby, 2010).

Institutional logics are not static and unchanging. Organizations and individuals are capable of introducing new organizing logics and even bringing them to prominence across an organizational field. For example, one study from the institutional logics perspective offers the anecdote of Google's decision to embrace open source values, which had been maligned by its chief competitors. However, the success Google experienced due to its decision to embrace open source values prompted a change in the institutional field of software development (Durand et al., 2013). In this example, Google introduced open source as a logic to compete with market logic. Google is obviously a force in the corporate world, but this example displays how an organization can challenge the dominant institutional logics of an organizational field. The use of open source as a dominant organizing logic promotes cooperation that challenges the capitalist trend towards competition as the best producer of innovation.

An institutional logics perspective offers a way for scholars to take a practice focused view of organizations that accounts for macro level Discourses. Specifically, the institutional logics perspective treats contradiction and paradox within organizations as a natural result of competing logics. Each organizational practice draws from an overarching logic that must be situated within the dominant organizing logics of that field. Institutional logics examines organizing practices across organizations by situating how each organization in a field and across fields makes sense of the competing nature of their organizing logics.

The next section of this chapter shows how one Discourse, neoliberalism, has come to cut across various institutional logics and in particular how it has impacted the organizing of the nonprofit sector. I argue in this project, like several other nonprofit scholars, that neoliberal values have become disproportionately dominant in the nonprofit sector. The infiltration of neoliberalism into the nonprofit sector has taken the form of market logics coming to dominate the nonprofit sector. Therefore, understanding the basic tenets and ideals of neoliberalism and articulating how those ideals have infiltrated the nonprofit sector is necessary.

**Neoliberalism and institutional theory.** A neoliberal philosophy takes as its starting point a belief in the freedom of individuals to make their own way in the world, and that to do so they must be free from the arbitrary exercise of power (Harvey, 2007). Freedom from arbitrary power is meant to result in a natural and logical progression toward the “best” way of accomplishing social goals, because competition will result in a self-regulating market system (Klein, 2010). However, neoliberalism came to dominate other aspects of social life and in the Western world it has become the dominant framework for restructuring across a range of organizing contexts (Peck & Tickell, 2002).

The rise of neoliberalism as a dominant economic and political philosophy brought a shift in organizing practices across a variety of areas:

Neoliberalism has been a political project concerned with institutional changes on a scale not seen since the immediate aftermath of the Second World War and a project that has attempted to transform some of the most basic political and economic settlements of the postwar era, including labor market accords,

industrial relations systems, redistributive tax structures, and social welfare programs (Campbell & Pedersen, 2001, p. 1).

Neoliberalism as a dominant philosophy has precipitated change across a broad spectrum of organizations. One of the most closely studied has been the nature of change in the university system. Deetz (1992) argued that the rise of larger classrooms and the increased use of multiple choice question tests emerged from a desire to make the academy more “efficient,” which was a value once reserved for corporations. The rise of neoliberal policies has caused academic institutions to find new ways to frame their institutional existence by “proving” the quality of their performance (Olssen & Peters, 2005).

While nonprofit organizations have been sites of resistance to the social costs of neoliberal policies and the withdrawal of the state, they have also become subject to neoliberal influence (Peck & Tickell, 2002). Maier, Meyer, and Steinbereithner (2014) argued that NPOs becoming more businesslike has become a global trend. The change in the nonprofit sector to adopt more market logics has led to the adoption of neoliberal subjectivities. The adoption of neoliberal subjectivities has led to organizational changes in the nonprofit sector such as the reframing of those receiving services from social-welfare groups to be relabeled as “consumers” instead of dependents or beneficiaries (McDermont, 2007). In the nonprofit sector, the penetration of neoliberalism results in a stripping down of traditional nonprofit values like collectivism, mission, and emotion in favor of rationality, bureaucracy, and competition (Baines, 2008).

Institutional logics offer a useful way for understanding normative and alternative organizing practices and provide a way to unpack how organizations exercise agency in

their selection and maintenance of organizing practices that align the organization with the institutional field or challenge the dominant organizing paradigm. My project examines how organizations balance competing institutional logics in the hybrid form of organizing in the nonprofit sector that comes from having to manage two central institutional logics (market and social welfare). In particular, my project explores how varying Discursive translations to similar institutional logics can result in different organizing practices. The next part of this chapter touches on some of the ways that institutional theory has been used in communication research. Communication research on institutional theory has contributed to institutional theory in several ways but of key importance to my project is understanding how the communicative practices of organizations may influence or be influenced by the institutional logics.

**Institutional theory in communication.** Within communication, institutional theory has most thoroughly been discussed as a theoretical approach by Lammers and Barbour (2006). The authors argued that institutional theory provides a way by which the societal and organizational levels could be viewed as mutually constitutive. The macro-meso divide is one that has long troubled organizational communication scholars as they attempt to provide a framework for understanding and explaining how larger cultural discourses manifest themselves at the organizational level. For example, Ashcraft's (2006) discussion of the links among gender, discourse, and organizing offered one interpretation of how the gap from discourse to organizing can be bridged by using a lens that "sees larger societal narrative as a text that directs the formation of identities (e.g., occupational choice) and organizational forms (e.g., proclivity for bureaucracy)" (pp. 284-285).

Organizational communication scholarship informs the predominantly sociological view of institutional theory by moving from the focus on the organizational field to a focus on individual organizations. Instead of emphasizing the field, organizational communication work on institutional theory emphasizes "local and micro-practices that use or creatively fix routines" (Lammers & Barbour, 2006, p. 363). An institutional theory of communication has many components. In my project, focusing on how institutional communication facilitates boundary spanning communication and also how it encourages the alignment of organizations within an institutional field to accepted norms is of primary importance.

Lammers and Barbour (2006) argued that communication within and between organizations—both by individuals and the organization itself—often serves to align organizations with institutions. Communicative practices within organizations invoke institutional forces (e.g., rules, governing bodies) that apply across organization (Finet, 2001). By invoking these institutional forces, organizations are able to enforce and add weight to their communicative actions but the alignment with these forces can also constrain organizations. In general, the dominance of accepted practices may limit innovation and difference between organizations (Christensen, Bohmer, & Kenagy, 2000). The focus on institutional theory and the use of institutional communication and the role it plays in the limitations of creativity and agency in organizing practices is why this aspect of Lammers and Barbour's framework is useful for a project aimed at understanding alternative organizing practices. Institutional communication aligns organizations with institutional norms and values. Therefore, examining how organizations navigate the communicative practices of the institutional field enables me

to better examine how the organization resists or enacts the pressures to conform to organizational field standards.

The discussion of boundary spanning communication within Lammers and Barbour's framing of institutional theory for organizational communication highlights the role of communication in the establishment and maintenance of normative behavior in an organizational field. Boundary spanning communication is also tied to issues of intelligibility because an institutional field provides a common language for organizations within their institutional field. Examining the use of language for emergency planners Lammers and Barbour stated, "Emergency plans—no matter how farfetched or counterproductive—need to draw on established practices for clear communication, tight coordination, and complete cooperation to be seen as successful" (p. 366). The expectation is that organizations should be able to discuss their work and communicate in a meaningful way with other organizations that are within the same institutional field. However, an organization that may fit within that institutional field but may be unable or unwilling to master and use the discursive resources (Kuhn et al., 2006) may prove a problem for other organizations within that field. Organizations that do not conform may be forced to change in order to fit within the normative framework of that institution.

Koschmann, Kuhn, and Pfarrer (2012) suggested that a communicative approach to understanding these cross-sector and interorganizational collaborations is uniquely situated to fill in gaps that are found in non-communicative views of institutional theory. In particular, they argued that a constitutive communication approach to institutional theory addresses the mechanism by which institutions are reproduced:

A communication approach to organizational constitution shows that such a mechanism may involve distanced textual representations that emerge from cooriented text-conversation dialectics. That is, institutional reproduction involves social practices of both individuals and organizations, and a communication perspective shows how text, narratives, and other institutional messages (Lammers, 2011) create causal relationships between communication practices and institutional processes. (p. 349).

The communicative constitution of organizations represents a shift from just institutional theory to an institutional logics perspective by emphasizing the role of materiality and particularly how texts develop and influence individuals and organizational practices. The switch to emphasis on texts is consistent with views of institutional logics that foreground materiality and artifacts in institutions and organizations (Czarniaskwa, 2006).

Lammers (2011) proposed a communicative institutional logics perspective centered on the idea of institutional messages. Lammers argued institutional messages facilitate the “scaling up” of organizations to the institutional level and the “scaling down” of institutions to the organizational level. In other words, institutional messages are the medium through which the macro, meso, and micro divides are bridged. Lammers’ theory of institutional messaging argues that it is through communication that organizations and institutions interact with one another. An organization’s communicative practices are based in their interpretation and navigation of the guiding institutional logics. My project shows how organizations engage in alternative practices based on alternative translations of organizing Discourses.

**Summary.** This project leverages an institutional logics perspective to analyze

the Discourse behind the adoption of normative or alternative organizing practices. In particular, I examine how the Discourses of neoliberalism interactions with institutional logics at the meso-organizational level and how those logics influence organizations in the nonprofit sector. Examining how nonprofit organizations draw on different Discourses, how they manage the competing market and social welfare institutional logics, and how they either enact or resist the normative pressures leads me to my first two research questions:

RQ1: How are multiple Discourses drawn from in the organizing process, creating more normative or alternative organizing practices?

RQ2: How do nonprofit organizations enact and/or resist communicatively constructed organizing practices related to the Discourse of neoliberalism and its translations of institutional logics?

The change in organizing practices that came with the rise of neoliberalism is emblematic of the corporate colonization that Deetz (1992) argued had changed the democratic landscape in the United States. A recent surge in interest on alternative organizing has come about as a response to the perceived failings of neoliberal and capitalist structures (Parker, et al, 2014a). The next section of this paper details some of this literature on alternative organizing and its questioning the dominance of neoliberalism's influence on organizations of all types.

### **Alternative Organizing**

My project focuses on how organizations operating within an institutional field resist or enact normative pressures that emerge at the institutional level resulting in more normative or alternative organizing practices. I am interested in how NPOs that are more

alternative may draw on different Discourses and navigate the tensions between market and social welfare institutional logics in novel ways. To explore the links between alternative organizing and institutional logics I first offer some definitions about what constitutes an organization as alternative. Second, I examine some formerly alternative organizing practices that have since become (somewhat) normative, and finally I examine anarchist organizing and some of the principles and challenges of organizing with "anarchy" as a guiding institutional Discourse.

**Defining alternative organizing.** Defining an organization as alternative or normative is a difficult task since most organizations defy easy categorization. Due to the problems of categorizing an organization as strictly alternative or strictly normative it is more useful to situate organizations and organizing practices as shifting along a continuum from normative to alternative (Parker et al., 2014c). By starting out with the assumption that organizing practices exist along this kind of continuum, what becomes salient is not the "either/or" debate about whether an organization is alternative. Rather, placing the organizing practices along a continuum provides an opportunity for discussing both individual organizing practices as well as how those organizing practices fit within a larger framework for understanding the more normative or alternative nature of the organization as an aggregation of those practices.

Scholarship on alternative organizing suggests that all forms of organizing are inherently political (Parker, 2014a). Forms of organizing being political means that not only are there power dynamics in the organizing process, but that there is power inherent in the types of organizations that come into being. Institutional logics show that there are certain dominant Discourses in organizing that frequently cut across organizational

boundaries and become unreflexive normative organizing practices. The accepted nature of these practices leads to certain ways of organizing being privileged over others.

However, organizing is a goal driven activity, and organizational scholars have long accepted ideas like equifinality, which argues that there are multiple paths to the same goal (Bertalanffy, 1969). Different ways of organizing could be seen as simply different ways of achieving goals. However, the political nature of the organizing process leads to a false assertion that there are often singular and right ways to achieve organizational goals. In other words, “we can, and should, treat all assertions about the relationship between means and ends as political ones” (Parker et al., 2014a).

Cheney (2014) argued that one of the simplest ways to discuss what makes an organizing practice alternative is to simply put it into opposition with "traditional" organizing practices. I choose to replace Cheney's use of the term traditional with the term normative for two reasons. First, I believe that describing a practice as normative is more flexible in referencing both "traditional" organizing practices as well as organizing practices that were once alternative but have since become normative, if not dominant (e.g., workplace democracy). Second, using normative in the place of traditional brings the conversation more closely in line with the vocabulary being used within institutional theory. Placing alternative organizing practices along a continuum has the inevitable result of setting "alternative" and "normative" organizing practices into tension with one another. While this choice could be problematic, the oppositional definition of alternative versus normative is also analytically useful because it highlights the marginalized space that some organizing practices occupy.

Parker, Cheney, Fournier, and Land (2014a, 2014b, 2014c) have offered the most comprehensive and thorough examination of what constitutes an organization as alternative. Specifically, they argue for an understanding of alternative that emphasizes its difference from more capitalist forms of organizing. In their view, the failings of capitalism and neoliberal policies may lead to the creation of organizing practices that do not adhere to those organizing Discourses. While their project is concerned with how organizing will occur in the future, they argue that it is productive to view how alternative organizing is already taking place in the present (Parker et al., 2014b).

Criticisms of alternative organizing practices often surround the issue of utopianism and viability and emerge from those who have benefitted from the current dominance of neoliberal ideals in organizing (Parker et al., 2014a; Weeks, 2011). Alternative organizations often appear alien and incomprehensible to outsiders (who have often benefitted from the current dominant organizational structures). However, critiques of alternative organizing that are focused solely on feasibility present their own problems:

We should always be suspicious if someone tells that there is no alternative, no choice, and that we should be ‘realistic’. The end point of many arguments against change is that things have to be like this because of ‘the market’, or ‘the bottom line’, or ‘human nature’ which are all assertions that suit pro-capitalists and those who have something to defend in the present state of affairs. In fact, we think that almost no particular forms of human organizing are inevitable, and that there are always choices about means, ends and the relations between them. (Parker et al., 2014a, p. 628)

The authors argue here that critiques of alternative organizing may often stem from seemingly well-intentioned individuals who caution against “unrealistic” ideals.

They continue that many of these critiques come from individuals who are embedded in and have benefitted from a capitalist system of relations. Therefore, the criticisms of alternative organizing practices as unrealistic may be seen as political attempts to suppress the creation of organizing forms that disrupt the status quo and may threaten current relations of power.

The next section of this chapter details some of the alternative organizing practices that are prevalent in current organizations. Many of these practices are well documented, but a concerted effort to analyze how they might all fit under a theoretical umbrella of alternative has not yet taken place. I believe that it is important to note at this point that classifying an organization as "alternative" does not intrinsically mean that its organizing practices are better than a normative organization, or even good. Some of the examples below are going to draw on scholarship that has revealed the alternative practices to be even more oppressive or ineffective than the practices being replaced.

**Feminist organizing.** Communication work on feminist organizing provides a compelling example of alternative organizing that has been examined by communication scholars and highlights tensions between alternative and normative organizing practices. Feminist organizing practices seek to move past the patriarchal gender ideologies that dominate most organizations. Within more normative, neoliberal, and patriarchal organizations, feminine behaviors assume a subordinate role under organizational ideologies that treat feminine subordination as natural (Weeks, 2011). Patriarchal and masculine organizing is not natural, however; rather "some contexts perpetuate traditional gender enactments whereas other contexts offer avenues for change in gender stereotypes, beliefs, and behaviors" (Buzzanell, 1994, p. 342).

Feminist organizing is often conflated with nonprofit work, but this conflation has failed to examine the consequences for embedding feminist organizational practice within the competitive market place (D'Enbeau & Buzzanell, 2011). One kind of feminist organizing values alternative themes such as "community, integrative thinking, and connectedness" (Buzzanell, 1994, p. 342). These themes are not inherently incommensurate with market logics, but they mark a shift from the intensive individualism and self obsession that is a staple of neoliberal ideology (Giroux, 2011; Harvey, 2007), to a more collective way of organizing. Furthermore, organizations like the third-wave feminist magazine "Moxy" are likely to receive censure from their organizational field as they attempt to package and sell their ideology as part of their product (D'Enbeau & Buzzanell, 2011). The problems of trying to "sell" feminism, and the pressure from advertisers to adjust their message to make the magazine a more attractive vehicle for generating consumer demand, represents the coercive power of a dominant discourse and institutional logic to discipline organizations that wish to remain viable.

Feminist organizing presents unique challenges and opportunities as they are enacted in practice. Ashcraft (2006) examined the tensions around what she terms "feminist-bureaucratic" organizing. Ashcraft acknowledged the role of bureaucracy as a dominant organizing logic that had often been implicated in perpetuating a rationality that encouraged the subordination of women in organizations and perpetuated a masculine gendering of the organization. In her analysis, Ashcraft acknowledged and explicated the organization's decision to adopt some increasingly bureaucratic practices in response to

their attempt to navigate tensions around: (a) homogeneity vs. heterogeneity, (b) moral aims vs. instrumental aims, and (c) formalized control vs. unobtrusive control.

While not explicitly dealing with institutional logics, Ashcraft's (2006) discussion of feminist-bureaucratic control in a women's shelter organization can be re-read as an issue of contradictory institutional logics and Discourses working at the organizational level. Bureaucracy is one example of an institutionalized practice rooted in a market logic (Thornton et al., 2012), and feminist organizing is a collection of practices that emerges from a feminist Discourse and operates with contrasting logics. The tension between the two forces manifests due to the contradicting institutional logics, but it also displays how differing logics can be used as resources for creating and maintaining organizational practices. Ashcraft (2006) offered insight into examining how the tensions may result in the "failure" of practice meeting ideology by arguing that:

The abiding "revolutionary pragmatism" of feminist approaches (Fine, 1993) reminds us that practice is not the impure arena in which forms fail to reach their potential; it is the lived domain in which forms gain flesh, encounter predicaments, and follow unexpected paths. (p. 78)

Working from an institutional logics perspective I argue that Ashcraft's argument here is highlighting how all practices are imperfect manifestations of institutional logics. No organization is perfectly bureaucratic, efficient, feminist, or democratic. However, the navigation and management of the competing tensions around various institutional logics provides the foundation for organizing practices. Feminist organizing may fall short of ideals in practice but so too does any corporation in pursuit of pure profit for stakeholders.

The challenges of a feminist organization and feminist organizing most clearly show the kind of conflict inherent in an alternative organizing attempt. Feminism is another example of an institutional Discourse, and in its role as an interpenetrating institutional Discourse it comes into direct conflict with the neoliberal values that dominate the organizational landscape. The conflict in institutional Discourses results in the organizing paradoxes that seem to suffuse each aspect of a feminist organization. Similar to research on feminist organizations, my project examines the organizing practices of an organization that draws from a different organizing Discourse, in this case, anarchy.

The examples above may be critiqued for “falling short” of a true challenge to neoliberalism. However, they remain useful in exploring how non-neoliberal organizing practices may infiltrate and change organizations. While team-based management and workplace democracy have become appropriated into a neoliberal framework, appropriation is not necessarily a total defeat of an alternative ideal. The appropriation of practices into a neoliberal framework can be troubling, but it also offers the hope for change because appropriation of these kinds of practices can never be total (Parker, et al., 2014b). Through the appropriation process normative neoliberal institutions and organizations may be moved towards a more equitable and socially responsible form of organizing.

The final idea of alternative organizing I discuss in this literature review is anarchist organizing. Anarchist organizing is based on a set of organizing principles that is strictly opposed to the dominant neoliberal framework that drives most organizations. Therefore, anarchist organizations provide a dynamically different way to talk about the

organizing process. In this section I not only articulate some of the base principles of anarchist organizing but I also propose “Anarchy” as another Discourse that interpenetrates across institutional logics.

**Anarchist organizing.** This section of the chapter examines anarchist organizing practices, and in particular it examines how anarchist organizing practices challenge normative, neoliberal organizing practices. Anarchist organizing is what the organizing process looks like without "the divine right of kings, the violence of the state, or the coercions of capital" (Parker, et al., 2014c, p. 35). Using the term anarchy in any discussion, even academic ones, is fraught with peril. Often, the first task of any scholarly or academic work involving anarchy is to first note that the term must be recovered from the stereotypical image portrayed in the media:

To refer to someone as an anarchist invokes a discrediting set of associations that is generally accepted by the public as such without any qualifications. At best 'anarchists' are popularly depicted as irresponsible political romantics whose presence turns otherwise peaceful demonstrations into violent carnivals of anti-state behavior, conveying the image of anarchists as radical activists with no serious policy agenda (Falk, 2010, p. 383).

Considering this popular way of imagining anarchists it is no surprise that the term "anarchist organization" is often met with derision or even laughter (Shantz, 2010). However, rather than being synonymous with chaos and unstructured activity anarchist organizations often have a unique organizational structure that may often appear strange to outsiders.

Anarchist organizations, according to Ward (1966), have four defining components. First, anarchist organizations should be small, because a larger organization is more likely to result in a hierarchical structure. Second, anarchist organizations must be entirely voluntary. Third, Ward argued that an anarchist organization should be temporary because "permanence is one of those factors which harden the arteries of an organization" (p. 3). Finally, an anarchist organization should be functional and goal driven. While all organizations are goal driven, Ward (1966) argues that anarchist organizations should last only so long as the goal is unmet. Ward believed it to be problematic when an organization focused on "its own survival, in serving the interests of office-holders rather than its function" (p. 3).

While Ward provided a useful outline for understanding some of what makes anarchist organizations unique, more recent scholarship has examined anarchist organizing in practice and highlighted other important aspects of anarchist organizing. For example, Clough (2012) argued that anarchist organizing is characterized by a particular affective affinity towards the organization, which means that anarchist organizing is uniquely emotional. Also, anarchist organizing practices often emphasize the use of consensus in the decision making process (Shantz, 2010). The use of consensus in making organizational decisions often leads to long discussions and slow movement by the organization, but it also emphasizes collective responsibility and the individual voice of each participant (Ward, 2004).

Finally, anarchist organizations also frequently eschew a commitment to textualized "rules," which cement other organizations and lead to the dominance of bureaucracy (Shantz, 2010; Ward, 2004). Where many organizations have embraced

bureaucracy as an organizing practice, many anarchist organizations avoid bureaucracy entirely in order to deal with individuals on a case-by-case basis. For example, one anarchist homeless shelter in the Midwest maintains general guidelines for how long their guests may stay but uses community consensus and discussion to make individualized decisions (Jensen & Meisenbach, 2015).

Anarchy as in institutional substance runs counter to the general principles of neoliberalism. Organizations emerging from a neoliberal institutional field are often characterized by market logic: rationality, hierarchy, bureaucracy, competition, and efficiency. In contrast, anarchist organizations emphasize: emotionality, equality, consensus, and cooperation. Although both neoliberalism and anarchy focus on the importance of the individual, neoliberalism emphasizes personal accountability. In contrast, anarchist Discourse emphasizes each individual's responsibility to every other individual.

**Summary.** Organizations are commonly defined by how they coorient towards the accomplishment of a goal (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009). I add to this definition that organizations are collections of practices that facilitate the achievement of a goal. Within each organization, each practice may be viewed as along a continuum from normative to alternative. Organizations that are perceived as "alternative" are constructed by multiple practices that run against the normative grain of organizing. I've discussed one of the alternative organizing practices that have received attention from communication scholars in feminist organizing. I've also examined some of the theoretical views on anarchist organizing, which directly relate to the alternative organizing practices that are seen at one research site.

To examine organizations from the level of practice, and in particular communicative practices, I argue that a constitutive communication approach is invaluable. The next section of this chapter details a brief history of the communicative constitution of organization (CCO) and examines how that theoretical perspective might be used productively in line with institutional theory. In particular, I highlight how the Montreal School of CCO research has been useful for my project.

### **The Communicative Constitution of Organization**

In the previous sections I have shown how an institutional logics perspective may be used to understand alternative organizing practices. This section examines how the communicative constitution of organization (CCO) aids in the understanding of alternative organizing. Specifically, I argue that the use of alternative discourse in the organizing process is central to the constitution of alternative organizing. CCO is a family of theories that deals explicitly with organizing as a process that emerges through communication (Putnam et al., 2009). By emphasizing the communicative and process oriented nature of organizing, CCO foregrounds organizations as always in flux and in the process of being made and remade (McPhee & Zaug, 2009). However, the best way to understand how this process takes place remains under dispute within the CCO theoretical family, and from this dispute three different schools of thought have arisen: the Montreal School (TMS) (e.g., Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009), Four Flows (e.g., MCPhee & Zaug, 2009), and Luhmannian (e.g., Schoeneborn, 2011). For the purposes of this project, I am not examining Luhmannian or four flows scholarship on CCO, as they do not adequately emphasize process and agency, which are very relevant to my project.

**The Montreal School of CCO.** Authors within the Montreal School (TMS)

argue that CCO is the result of a 20-year shift in organizational studies that has switched the focus from organization to organizing (Robichaud & Cooren, 2013). TMS scholars argue that the shift to process focused theory for understanding organizations has implications for understanding agency, materiality, and the central role that communication plays in the organizing process. The emphasis on process and how organizations "become" (Taylor, 2009) makes TMS uniquely suited for studying how an organization evolves to be either more normative or alternative.

TMS argues that other views of CCO (in particular the four flows) take for granted the organization as an a priori construct. Therefore, these other schools of CCO are unable to fully articulate the importance of process (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009). The heart of TMS is the concept of coorientation, which can be understood as how activity is coordinated through interaction (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009). TMS assumes that coorientation is only possible through communication, which links two actors towards a goal. In the coorienting communication, language acts as an agent within the interaction (Taylor, 2009).

More than the other schools the Montreal School focuses on how communication occurs at the level of language (Brummans, Cooren, Robichaud, & Taylor, 2013). Two hallmarks of TMS emerge from this focus. The first area of importance is an examination of how interactions "scale-up" into texts and policies (Koschmann, 2013), and the second is the question of textual and non-human agency (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009). Other key concepts that have emerged through the theorizing around TMS include ventriloquism, which can be understood as how either nonhuman objects (e.g., texts) speak through people or people speak through nonhuman objects (Cooren, et al.

2013); and imbrication, where an ongoing process of coorientation leads to routines and divisions of responsibility that are not made open for question or debate (Taylor, 2009).

Miller (2015) outlined the six steps of the scaling-up process, whereby interactions over time may become textualized and have the capacity to make a difference beyond the initial interaction. Miller argued that the move from interaction to text generally takes the following form: (1) the intent of the speaker is embedded in a conversation; (2) conversation is narrativized to another party; (3) the narrative is transcribed into a more permanent form; (4) specialized language is developed around that text and used in subsequent texts and conversations; (5) texts become resources for material and organizational frames; and (6) a standardized form of the text is disseminated to the public.

Koschmann (2013) provided an example of the scaling up process by examining the development of organizational identity in an inter-organizational collaboration. Koschmann was able to trace the development of an identity through conversations around organizational awards. These conversations about awards led to discussions of organizational goals and eventually resulted in the creation of a collective inter-organizational identity. The creation of a collective identity switched focus from individual members' authorship to the capacity for the organization to act as its own author for texts. CCO and the scaling-up process highlight how institutional logics are crafted and maintained. Kuhn (2012) discusses the importance of the creation and maintenance of inter-penetrating texts that help set and maintain institutional standards. Therefore, TMS highlights the sociohistorically constructed nature of the logics and Discourses that are drawn upon as organizing resources. My project examines how

organizational members draw on or resist the normative organizing Discourses of the nonprofit sector.

Scaling-up results in the eventual sedimentation, or settling, of communication that began at an interpersonal level. Taylor (2009) described scaling-up in the following way:

As it [language] becomes their [individuals] agent in interacting with others, it establishes in spoken and written form—text—the character of their relationship to each other, in the context of their joint relationship to common objects. It materializes their relationship, even as it serves as the instrument they use to negotiate it. Language is thus more than a simple means; it is a construction of that relationship in text that may now be used as rule and resource (Giddens, 1984). It builds a framework for subsequent interaction, and stabilizes it.

Organization is created in the organizing. (p. 166)

Taylor articulated the links between language, interaction, scaling-up, and most importantly, the role that texts and structures play as resources for organization. Taylor's description of how individuals interact with and negotiate texts leads to the next section of this paper, which deals explicitly with issues of non-human agents in organizational communication. The understanding of agency found in TMS is central to my projects goal of examining alternative organizing practices because it highlights not only how individuals act as agents, but also how organizations may be understood as agents.

*Agency and the Montreal School.* The issue of non-human agency is one of the most important and most contentious aspects of TMS (Brummans, 2006; Robichaud, 2006). The most common definition used by Cooren is that non-human agents are those

things that make a difference in an interaction. For TMS scholars materiality plays a central role in the communicative practices not only in the form of texts but also in other objects like guns (Latour, 1994) and cameras (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2008). TMS scholarship argues that these material objects constitute agents in that they prompt actions that might otherwise not be taken (e.g., you change your behavior because you interpret that someone is watching your actions through the camera).

The concept of non-human agents, actants, or non-human actors (the terms are often interchangeable in TMS) provokes feelings of ambivalence even from Cooren, who argued that “I have to say that I am always ambivalent about the term non-human, because a text, a machine, or a website is something that is, in many respects, extremely human” (Schoeneborn, et al., 2014, p. 298). In the following portion of the chapter, I briefly outline some of the discussions of the two principle understandings of agency that can be found in CCO to orient my readers to my own definition of agency. I first discuss internalist views of agency, which while not prevalent in TMS, remain important to discuss in order to better understand how agency is discussed in a different manner between schools of CCO. The majority of the discussion of agency focuses on issues of hybrid agency, which currently acts as the primary way of discussing nonhuman actors in TMS.

Issues of agency, as TMS scholars discuss them, are vitally important to any discussion of alternative organizing for several reasons. First, I view the relatively low numbers of alternative organizations in the nonprofit sector as a result of institutional forces that often draw on textualized authority to limit agency in organizing practices. In other words, established rules and standards “act” on organizations in a way that

discourages novel organizing practices. Second, my study examines two organizations that operate in a similar material environment and understanding how each organization interprets the material conditions that act on them (in the form of institutional pressures) as they pursue their mission is helpful for understanding the discursive and material context that gives rise to each organization.

*External/hybrid agency and nonhuman actors.* An external/hybrid view of agency is a subtle, yet still radical, shift from the internal view of agency adopted from a structuration theory stance. In structuration, agency is defined by Giddens (1986) as being able to “act otherwise,” which he argued means “being able to intervene in the world, or to refrain from such intervention, with the effect of influencing a specific process or state of affairs” (p. 14). Communication scholars often draw upon Giddens’ definition of agency. Therefore, the idea of “nonhuman agents” coming from a strict interpretation of Giddens’ work appears untenable. Cooren (2004) however, despite drawing heavily from structuration for aspects of CCO, takes his definition of agency from another source.

Cooren (2004) argued that nowhere in the dictionary definition of agency is there any indication of “intention” being necessary for agency. Working from Merriam-Webster, Cooren contested that all that is required for something to have agency is the ability to “make a difference” in the interaction. Therefore, Cooren and other TMS scholars take the stance that texts, rules, and other material objects like guns and signs, can be seen as agents or actors in interaction due to their ability to influence the interaction.

Borrowing from Latour (1994) and actor-network theory nonhuman agents are characterized at times as “actants” (Taylor, 2013) in order to analyze the hybrid nature of agency created when nonhumans and humans “act together” in interactions. Taylor (2013) highlighted actant as a way of reconceptualizing, or at least better expressing, some of the issues around nonhuman actors in organizations. Confusingly, Cooren and Fairhurst (2009) used the terms actor, agent, and actant interchangeably. However, Taylor (2013) discusses the difference to be found in the term by highlighting the hybridicity of agency located in actants. Seeking to reconcile the idea of mutually influencing agency between human and material objects, Latour (1994) offered the example of an individual holding a gun. Latour’s argument is based on the premise that the relationship between individuals and objects is the basis for a hybrid understanding of agency, “You are different with a gun in hand; the gun is different with you holding it. You are another subject because you hold the gun; the gun is another object because it has entered into a relationship with you” (p. 33). Subjects and objects, for Latour, mutually constitute interactions by influencing one another. While the gun is an extreme example, Latour, Cooren, and Taylor all use it to exemplify and examine the way that an object, a gun, can “make a difference” in an interaction. Cooren (2004) argued that introducing an understanding of nonhuman agents breaks down the duality of agency and structure that results from using structuration theory. By introducing nonhuman actors into the equation, the source of action is problematized and changes how action is viewed (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009).

Brummans et al. (2013) discussed the issue of nonhuman agency as an issue of translation. Individuals translate texts, policies, and material objects in order to make

them intelligible based on a worldview. This translation links up with Cooren's notion of ventriloquism (2010, 2012), in particular regarding instances when individuals within organizations cite policy as a way of affirming their authority or their position. Cooren noted that when individuals invoke policy they are ventriloquizing the organization by projecting the voice of the organization as a present third party in the interaction. However, the organization may also speak through individuals by requiring them to speak in certain ways.

A hybrid version of agency, which views material objects and texts as actants, does not seek to remove accountability or responsibility for individuals. Rather, a hybrid agency examines how the translation of objects and texts enhances or constrains human actors in interactions. Guns, cameras, rules, and signs all enable and constrain actions based on individual interpretations of the consequences for not accounting for them in interaction.

In choosing, implementing, and enacting organizing practices, I argue that individuals and organizations are making a choice (though this choice may often be unconscious). However, that choice may be limited by the perceptions of what may or may not be viable based on the material and discursive limitations that are imposed upon them by their physical environment and their institutional field. Understanding how organizations and individuals interact with macro-level organizing logics and Discourses, and how they translate those organizing logics into specific organizing practices, is the basis for understanding how an organization may be located along the continuum for alternative to normative, which leads to my next research question:

RQ3: How do organizational/individual translations of institutional logics constrain or enable agency in the organizing process?

**Summary.** The purpose of this section has been to provide a general overview of the Montreal School of the communicative constitution of organization research as it informs the current project. I have elected to highlight TMS over other forms of CCO because it provides me with a compelling analytic lens for understanding the process by which practice is communicatively negotiated and constituted in organizing. TMS provides me with an analytic lens for examining organizations as an ongoing process of being made and remade through discourse. I argue in this project that the communicative practices used in an organization are manifestations of the Discursive translations ILs that shape that organization. When Discursive translations of institutional logics are in competition with one another they are negotiated through the communicative practices of an organization, which in turn constitute the organization as a whole.

The final section of this chapter examines scholarly literature on nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit organizations face a multitude of challenges in a neoliberal society, and in order to maintain their operations they must continuously navigate competing institutional logics. The need to secure funding is often put into conflict with organizational goals and missions and the capacity to navigate competing organizational needs is often central to the nonprofit experience.

### **Nonprofit Organizing**

My study examines how nonprofit organizations navigate conflicting institutional logics and Discourses as they pursue their missions. To position nonprofit organizations as the sites of multiple and conflicting institutional logics, this section of the chapter

covers several areas of interest. First, I offer a brief history of the organizing practices of the modern nonprofit in the Western world, and in particular I focus on how the modern nonprofit became a contested space for competing institutional logics. I also explain how the current state of the modern nonprofit has led to especially difficult issues around the raising of funds. I conclude this section by examining the problems associated with the economic definition of nonprofit organizing and how communication work has helped nonprofit scholarship move beyond it.

**Nonprofit organizations in the United States.** The creation of the modern NPO in the United States began during the mid-18th century. During this time a shift occurred in public perception about whose duty it was to care for impoverished populations. The care of the poor had been (and remains) largely the concern of religious institutions, but a philosophical shift began that made the importance of philanthropy a part of an individual's civic duty as opposed to their religious or moral duty (Robbins, 2006). The shift of care from a religious obligation to a civic duty led to a sudden influx of charity from wealthy patrons directly to NPOs as opposed to being filtered in through churches (Brown & Slivinski, 2006). While this change in donations meant that the NPOs at the time were now actually receiving more income, it also meant that there was now increased scrutiny on how NPOs used their resources.

The move to civic duty as a motivator for nonprofit contributions was also accompanied by the upswing of the "progressive ideal" (Hall, 2006; Robbins, 2006). The progressive ideal emphasized science and quantifiable metrics, which led to NPOs finding ways to "prove" their efficiency. At the time the majority of charity was flowing through a few wealthy philanthropists (many of whom would nearly bankrupt their

estates in an attempt to be more charitable than their peers), and so each organization was forced to compete for attention from a relatively small but deep pool of donors (Brown & Slivinski, 2006).

Other than seeking to fulfill their mission the securing of donations is the second most important goal of any NPO (Eisenberg & Eschenfelder, 2009). Donors are individuals with limited resources, and therefore they must make decisions as to how to allocate their donations (Steinberg, 2006). Due to the limited nature of resources NPOs are faced with a task of "proving" to potential donors that they are worthy of the donations (Lewis, 2005). Many NPOs began to seek ways that they could easily display the effectiveness of their services to make them a more attractive destination for donations (Robbins, 2006).

To show their effectiveness many nonprofit organizations have adopted market values and rationales for organizing (Sanders, 2012). In other words, the nonprofit sector has become increasingly colonized by corporate values, ideologies, and logics (Deetz, 1992). In the quest to show that they are worthy of donations, NPOs are often forced to make difficult decisions in order to ensure the continued existence of their organization. At times, the decisions the NPOs must make in order to survive may put their core values at risk.

"Mission drift" refers to a practice whereby NPOs may begin to shift away from their original goal (Frumkin & Andre-Clark, 2000). Generally, when mission drift occurs it is due to the financial pressures of existing within a market economy (Sanders, 2012). When an NPO experiences mission drift it may lead to it changing key aspects of its organizing practices (e.g., charging for previously free services) or more fundamental

changes to the mission of the organization (e.g., changing the population that is served to a more easily quantifiable one). Mission drift is an unfortunate side-effect of organizations seeking to continue their operations while attempting to balance competing institutional logics. Mission drift can also be interpreted as an NPO's social-welfare logic being overwhelmed by its market logic. The next part of this chapter offers a brief overview of some of the general definitions for nonprofit organizations and in particular examines the impact of the dominant "economic" framework that is used as a starting point to discuss NPOs. Understanding the dominance of the economic framing of NPOs serves as an important starting point for understanding how market logics dominate normative NPOs.

**Defining nonprofit organizing.** All organizations are goal oriented, but nonprofit organizing is unique in the role that the "mission" plays in the organizing practices of nonprofits (Lewis, 2005). Unfortunately much of the nonprofit organizing literature has neglected the importance of mission and has settled on more structural ways of thinking about NPOs. For example Salamon's (1999) oft cited definition argued that NPOs are: organized, private, non-profit distributing, self governing or voluntary to some meaningful extent, and for public benefit. A structural view of NPOs has its uses, but it leads to a neglect of significant aspects of nonprofit organizing (Lewis, 2005). Another way an organization is defined as nonprofit that neglects the importance of "mission" is based on whether or not they are able to distribute their profits (Hale, 2013). A nonprofit organization may not distribute excess funds to shareholders but must rather take those funds and in some manner apply them towards furthering their charitable cause. An economic definition of NPOs means that the modern nonprofit can be understood as a

creation of the IRS (Eisenberg & Eschenfelder, 2009).

The focus on tax-designation has led to an economically framed definition for NPOs that emphasizes the language of scarcity and the role it plays in nonprofit organizing practices (Brown & Slivinski, 2006; Hale, 2013). Beginning with a tax code definition of nonprofit organizations has several significant drawbacks. First, it neglects the large numbers of NPOs that do not have incorporated status (Smith, 2000; Kirby & Koschmann, 2012). Second, and more importantly, economic theorizing of nonprofit organizations leads to a disproportionate attention on the economics of nonprofits and abandons many of the unique aspects of nonprofit organizing (Koschmann, 2012). The emphasis on the marketization of NPOs contributes to the view of NPOs needing to adopt market rationalities in order to survive (Maier et al., 2014). The final part of this chapter overviews some of the communicative work on nonprofit organizing and how it helps move beyond simple economic theorizing and positions itself uniquely in order to examine how the competing organizing logics are managed.

**Communicative work on nonprofit organizing.** A communication stance on nonprofit organizing has several advantages. First, communication theories of nonprofits are well positioned to highlight the nature of relationships between organizations and their communities (Lewis, 2005). Nonprofit organizations must secure donations to continue to exist, and thus the relationships these organizations have with their communities are vitally important. A communicative view of these relationships provides a basis for understanding the symbiotic nature of these relationships that goes beyond economic theorizing. Furthermore, communicative stances on nonprofit organizations provide a rich path for understanding the relationship between not only

communities and organizations but also individuals and organizations. For example, communication theories of nonprofit organizing have been shown to move beyond psychology of volunteerism and highlight relationships within and between organizations and communities (Ashcraft & Kedrowicz, 2002).

Communication-centered analysis of nonprofit organizing is also well suited to examine tensions in NPOs. Sanders (2012) argued that communication scholars are uniquely positioned to study the tensions inherent in nonprofit organizing by stating that organizational communication scholars should adopt a perspective that "does not seek resolution but instead focuses on how organizational members practically live with tensions and contradiction" (p. 182). Sanders continued by arguing that the tension around the organizing practices should be viewed as constitutive and productive as opposed to merely destructive. Also, under some conditions tensions and paradoxes might be maintained by nonprofit employees who are satisfied with their occupations through different ways of framing those tensions (Meisenbach, 2008). Finally, Jensen and Meisenbach (2015) argued that some nonprofit organizations are forced to continuously navigate their environment while balancing organizational commitments with their need to secure support from external sources.

**Summary.** This section has detailed an overview of nonprofit scholarship both within and external to organizational communication. Organizational communication research has certainly contributed to nonprofit organizing but much work remains to be done. In particular, I argue that a communicative view of nonprofit organizing is well situated for understanding how the navigation of institutional logics and Discourses leads to the creation of more or less normative nonprofit organizations. Furthermore, I am

interested in how market rationalities help create the norms for nonprofit organizations, which are both within and external to the market system. I argue that nonprofit organizations are uniquely suited for the study of alternative organizing practices due to the dominance of normative institutional logics within the nonprofit sector and the presence of a competing logic in the form of social-welfare.

### **Chapter Summary and Research Questions**

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide an overview of the relevant aspects of theorizing about: institutional logics, alternative organizing, the communicative constitution of organization, and nonprofit organizing. I argue that an institutional logics perspective highlights how certain organizing practices are related to a dominant neoliberal substance/Discourse that has led to the colonization of organizing practices across several organizational fields. A neoliberal Discourse has an emphasis on the virtue of free-market and competition and a focus on individual responsibility. The adoption of neoliberalism as a guiding organizing Discourse has cemented certain practices in the organizational landscape as normative even in instances where those organizing practices fail to adequately meet the needs of the organization.

The communicative constitution of organization, and specifically the Montreal School of CCO, provides a lens for understanding how institutions are reified through discourse, and it also offers a way of examining how institutional logics themselves are constituted. By blending CCO and institutional logics, a theoretical bridge is created that scales up from the micro to the meso (through CCO) and then from the meso to the macro (institutional logics) and vice versa. Also, a CCO approach offers an avenue for unpacking the role that language in use plays in the organizing process as well as offering

a unique perspective for understanding how the use of institutional language impacts the constitution of the nonprofit organization.

NPOs are the sites of competing institutional logics; to survive they must communicatively navigate competing logics. The way that NPOs choose to navigate logics and to draw from different Discourses result in the creation and use of organizing practices that are either more normative or more alternative. To explore how NPOs navigate the tensions around different organizing logics, I have offered the following research questions. I address these questions by comparing the communicative practices of two separate nonprofit organizations that seek to serve the homeless in the same community.

RQ1: How are multiple Discourses drawn from in the organizing process, creating more normative or alternative organizing practices?

RQ2: How do nonprofit organizations enact and/or resist communicatively constructed organizing practices related to the Discourse of neoliberalism and its translations of institutional logics?

RQ3: How do organizational/individual translations of institutional logics constrain or enable agency in the organizing process?

### **CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY AND METHODS**

The primary purpose of this study is to better understand and interrogate how NPOs enact or resist dominant organizing logics and Discourses. Communication work on nonprofits has generally focused on nonprofit organizations that would likely be classified as normative (e.g., Gill & Wells, 2014; Koschmann, 2013). This prior research has helped explicate the unique role and organizing challenges of NPOs in the United States as they seek to balance a myriad of organizational demands. To this point communication scholars have not examined the role of institutional logics in the organizing practices of nonprofits. However, with the increasing attention to nonprofits as contested organizing sites in communication (Sanders & McClellan, 2013), institutional logics offers valuable insight into how this contestation is understood and managed (Pache & Santos, 2013). Exploring the role of institutional logics and Discourses in the nonprofit sector may be accomplished through comparative ethnography. Specifically, I am drawing from critical, poststructuralist, and performative ways of doing ethnography to compare the organizing practices of two nonprofit organizations. This chapter is devoted to outlining my justification for using comparative poststructuralist ethnography to analyze the communicative practices that serve to enact or resist institutionalizing Discourses and logics.

The order of this chapter is as follows: (a) First, I describe my epistemological, ontological, and axiological commitments in regards to my poststructuralist stance; (b) Second, I explain the general characteristics of ethnography and the specific commitments of critical and poststructuralist ethnography; (c) Third, I offer a brief

overview of my research sites, (d) Fourth, I explain how I collected my data, and (e) I conclude the chapter by discussing my method of data analysis.

### **Philosophical Commitments**

Issues of ontology, epistemology, and axiology ground and orient researchers as they conceptualize, design, and execute their research projects. While I do not explicitly draw from poststructuralist theorizing in my literature review (e.g., Foucault, 1977; Weedon, 1987/1997), my epistemological and ontological stance firmly situates this project as poststructuralist. Poststructuralist ontology takes a view of reality as subjective and constructed and maintained through discourse. The ontological assumptions inherent in a poststructuralist view of the world challenge modernist assumptions about an objective *a priori* reality. A poststructuralist stance argues that discursive systems play a central role in the maintenance of what counts as legitimate knowledge (Foucault, 1977). Ontologically the argument for the link between Discourse and the creation of knowledge challenges modernist assumptions of a singular Truth. Instead of singular Truth, poststructuralist ontology believes that representations of “truth” are always fragmented and partial (Mumby, 1997).

Poststructuralists argue that power and knowledge are inextricably linked, and that certain groups have a vested interest in maintaining the dominance of certain ways of knowing and engaging with the world. Foucault (1989) argued that discursive fields, which he defined as “those ready-made syntheses, these groupings that we normally accept before any examination, those links whose validity is recognized from the outset” (p. 25), played a pivotal role in maintaining power. Discursive fields function by taking socially constructed meanings and rules for behavior and situating them as natural.

Poststructuralists argue that knowledge and meaning are linked to a historical context, and that they cannot be regarded as naturally occurring but rather they are socially (re)constituted in relation to their context. Weedon (1987/1997) argued that there was no universal meaning for issues of sexuality or madness but rather that “their meanings always take the forms defined for them by historically specific discourses” (p. 104).

Poststructuralist epistemology is characterized by an embracement of “difference” and challenges both the notion of Truth as well as whether or not it is possible to “know” something (Belsey, 2002). Knowing is problematized for poststructuralists due to the problem of representation and the difficulty in separating signifier and signified (Weedon, 1987/1997). The inability to know something fully opens up dominant Discourses for questioning, which means that those Discourses “are always open to alternative articulations” (Mumby, 1997, p. 16). However, while a full knowing of something may not be possible, poststructuralist research seeks to understand how knowledge emerges through interaction during the research process (Deetz, 1996).

To examine both the dominant and the potential alternative articulations of Discourses, poststructuralist researchers may adopt a research path that differs from more modernist trajectories. A poststructuralist view of the world brings with it a change in orientation by a researcher who shifts from “a uniquely positioned arbiter of knowledge,” (Mumby, 1997, p. 14) to someone who is more open to how knowledge emerges in unique contexts. As is discussed later in this chapter, ethnography is a research methodology well suited to examine how knowledge emerges within a specific cultural context and has been used to productively examine how individuals are able to subvert organizing logics like bureaucracy (Trethewey, 1997).

Questioning dominant Discourses and opening space for alternative and emergent ways of knowing carries an ethical dimension. The ethics of poststructuralist research emphasize how researchers relate to others (Popke, 2003). Derrida (1997) argued for a deconstructionist ethic rooted in the criticism of oppressive institutions:

That is what gives deconstruction its movement, that is, constantly to suspect, to criticize the given determinations of culture, of institutions, of legal systems, not in order to destroy them or simply to cancel them, but to be just with justice, to respect this relation to the other as justice. (p. 18)

How researchers relate to their research participants is key in understanding the axiological commitments of poststructuralist research. The nature of relationships between researcher and participants is especially vital when dealing with marginalized voices and bodies. To apply these poststructuralist epistemological and axiological commitments in my project, I will be engaging in a critical ethnographic project, which I discuss in the next section.

### **Ethnography and Critical Ethnography**

In qualitative research, ethnography is both a methodology with certain research commitments and paradigmatic concerns and a method of data collection (Tracy, 2013). Creswell (2007) defined the ethnographic project as one where a researcher "describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group" (p. 90). The hallmark of ethnography, as opposed to ethnographic methods, is an emphasis on long-term, immersed, and holistic views of cultures (Tracy, 2013). The goal of an ethnographic project is to take extended periods of

observation (generally supplemented by interviews and document analysis) to provide a picture of the process of culture as it is created and enacted by a group (Creswell, 2007).

There are many definitions of culture that are drawn on by ethnographers, but all of them emphasize the importance of how culture is constructed and maintained. Geertz (1973) defined culture as the "webs of significance" (p. 9) that have been spun by humans and provide a basis for sociality. The view of culture as constructed led Geertz to view the ethnographic project as not scientific but interpretive. Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo (1982) expanded on Geertz's view of culture by arguing that culture is performed and enacted through communication. Finally, Thomas (1992) argued that culture is linked to how language and discourse are used and the rules governing interactions between individuals.

Ethnographic projects have provided invaluable interpretations into the workings of culture in communication (e.g. Pacanowsky & O'Donnell-Trujillo, 1983; Philipsen, 1975; Tracy, 2004), but critical ethnography involves the use of ethnographic observation and analysis for emancipatory aims (Tracy, 2013). The growth of critical ethnography as a way of doing research has highlighted the capacity for ethnographic methods to enable researchers to study "the process of domestication and social entrapment [Mills, 1970, pp. 3-4] by which we are made content with our life conditions" (Thomas, 1993, p. 7). Critical ethnography differentiates itself from "traditional" ethnography by seeking to analyze issues pertaining to power in the social world as opposed to simply seeking to describe (Creswell, 2007). In my project, critical ethnography is a methodology that helps unpack the "domestication" of organizing practices in the nonprofit sector. This

domestication takes the form of market and neoliberal organizing practices in the more visible parts of the nonprofit sector.

Critical ethnographic approaches argue that through ethnography researchers may work towards the emancipation of marginalized groups. Emancipation in a critical ethnographic project "refers to the process of separation from constraining modes of thinking or acting that limit perception of and action toward realizing alternative possibilities (Thomas, 1992, p. 4). I believe that homeless shelters work within an organizational landscape that coerces them into normative forms of organizing. To examine how and why homeless shelters enact or resist dominant Discourses, a critical ethnographic methodology aids my project by highlighting alternative possibilities to the current organizing practices.

Critical ethnographers analyze hidden agendas and power dynamics that limit the agency of actors in a social system (Thomas, 1992). The need to scrutinize these agendas from the researcher's perspective is tied to a moral and ethical obligation to investigate issues of power within a particular cultural context (Tracy, 2013). Culture is viewed here as a process in which there are zones and areas of conflict between interested parties. The dialectical intertwining of power and resistance in the organizational setting is rooted in a set of "discursive and nondiscursive practices" that both enable and constrain interactions between actors (Mumby, 2005, p. 38). These constraints are enacted both at the intra- and inter-organizational level and the use of those discursive practices are understood through a critical ethnographic lens.

Critical ethnography is also well suited to this project due to its ability to unpack and analyze how cultural context enables and limits ways of thinking (Thomas, 1992).

Critical ethnography is not limited to the influences and coercive pressures that occur within an organization but also offers an avenue by which a culture might be seen as part of a more holistic and complex interconnected web of sociality (Moreman & McIntosh, 2010). The analysis of how organizational cultures are the results of this larger web are especially clear in poststructuralist approaches to ethnography. Poststructuralist ethnography has similarities to critical ethnography while also maintaining key differences (Thomas, 1992; Tracy, 2013).

A poststructuralist approach to ethnography focuses on the shifting and fluid nature of power and how agency is enacted in oppressive systems (Tracy, 2013). Issues of power in a poststructuralist ethnographic project become more concerned with the cultural shifts that reflect larger Discourses that become organizational practices (Ganesh, Zoller, & Cheney, 2005). Ultimately, poststructuralist ethnographic projects unpack how certain problems become "sedimented" and how that leads to the valuation of certain ways of doing or knowing as being more valuable than others (Tracy, 2013).

So far I have discussed what I see as the pertinent ideas related to critical and poststructuralist views of ethnography. Although I am a poststructuralist, Thomas' (1992) insight into the "how" of doing ethnographic works informs my project. The next section of this chapter briefly overviews the research sites I used for my data collection.

### **Explanation of Research Sites**

For this project, I chose to do a comparative ethnography at two homeless shelters in the same geographic area to explore alternative and normative organizing practices in the nonprofit sector. To make a significant, meaningful, and resonant (Tracy, 2010) argument about the nature of alternative organizing in the nonprofit sector I argue that

comparative ethnography was an appropriate method. By comparing the organizing practices of one more normative and one more alternative NPO, I am positioned to argue how organizations facing similar challenges use more or less normative organizing practices based in normative or alternative organizing Discourses. I view a comparative poststructuralist ethnography as a method that positions me to make arguments about the embodied communicative practices at two different shelters with similar populations and missions. I first provide an overview of the more normative homeless shelter I studied.

**Midwest Safe Family.** The first homeless shelter that I provide an overview for is Midwest Safe Family (MSF). MSF is a pseudonym for a homeless shelter affiliated with a large, internationally recognized, Christian-run nonprofit organization, which I give the pseudonym Saving Grace (SG). MSF has multiple programs in the shelter, including a food pantry, a shelter for veterans, and more than 60 beds for homeless women and women with children, which is the focus of this project.

SG is an internationally recognized charity, which has its headquarters in Europe. SG was originally founded in Europe in the mid-1800s and has since spread all over the globe. As of the beginning of 2014, SG had over 100,000 employees and provides numerous services including: homes for elderly, addiction treatment services, refugee services, medical hospitals, and most importantly for this project, over 400 homeless shelters that provide service for nearly 24,000 homeless and housing insecure individuals across the globe.

**Judy's Place.** Judy's Place (JP) is the pseudonym of the second homeless shelter that I discuss. JP is a small house of hospitality located roughly 18 miles away from Midwest Safe Family. As part of the Catholic Worker movement, JP offers hospitality to

more than 10 women and women with children. During observations, JP suspended a program during which they provided lunch to members of the community (both men and women) to reduce strain on workers and to create a more comfortable environment for the guests. However, they continued a program that provided sandwiches to members of the community who came to the door and asked.

The Catholic Worker movement arose in New York City during the early 1930s in the midst of the Great Depression. The founding members of the movement, Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin, wished to create a radical newspaper that was not atheist. In addition to the newspaper, Day and Maurin believed it was their duty to provide what they termed "houses of hospitality" for those in need in the community.

Since the 1930s the Catholic Worker movement has held true to its spiritual and radical roots with the three key descriptors for Catholic Workers being: anarchist, Christian, and pacifist. Perhaps the most unique aspect of Catholic Worker houses is the complete autonomy that each community has. According to the Catholic Worker website there is no need to request permission to start a house of hospitality. Even if someone wanted to ask permission before beginning a community, they would be unable to do so. As the Catholic Worker website states:

It is unlikely that any religious community was ever less structured than the Catholic Worker. Each community is autonomous. There is no board of directors, no sponsor, no system of governance, no endowment, no pay checks, no pension plans. Since Dorothy Day's death, there has been no central leader.

(Forest, n.d.)

This loose structure and lack of central leadership contrasts with the more normative organizing practices of SG, which tightly controls who can use its name.

In addition to their work with the homeless and housing insecure, most Catholic Workers are committed to more general issues of social justice. JP's website contains a multitude of links to resources on racial injustice and sexism. Several of the organization's newsletters, which I have given the pseudonym "The Welcome Place" deal specifically with these issues as well.

There are obvious differences between these two organizations in the scope of their projects and their level of affiliation with their overarching movement or larger organizational structure. However, there is also an important similarity between the two organizations that must be acknowledged. Both organizations are often perceived as religious, but as I discuss later in this paper, the role of religion in both organizations is very different.

### **Method of Data Collection**

To see the different ways that organizations confront the same social problem (homelessness), and how those organizations may draw on different Discourses and institutional logics, I collected data from two organizations that served homeless women in the same area. At each organization, I collected data from multiple sources to paint a more holistic picture of the organizational processes of each organization, which I discuss below. My paths to collecting data from participants were: (a) immersion in the organization, (b) semi-structured interviews, and (c) gathering key organizational documents and artifacts.

**Immersion in the organization.** A shelter for homeless and housing insecure

individuals is a place of meeting between groups (e.g., volunteers, workers, homeless, housing insecure) who have the potential to be viewed as very different. By immersing myself in the research sites as much as possible, I sought to span what Wilentz (2013) referred to as a “giant gaping hideous crevasse” between researchers from dominant populations like myself and marginalized participants. I engaged in a performative method of data collection (Conquergood, 1985, 1991), which included, as much as possible, becoming an active participant at both sites of data collection.

In the initial stages of the development of this project, I sought opportunities to serve as a volunteer at both organizations. However, at MSF I was unable to achieve my goal to act as a volunteer. Throughout much of my observations I was referred to as “Peter the intern,” and I was given many of the status symbols of an intern. First, I was given the use of the intern office at MSF. I was also given a line on the sign-in sheet with the staff, and even a mailbox that was labeled “Peter-Intern.” After being introduced as an intern, I would quickly correct the label and explain my role as a researcher and talk about my project.

I was surprised to learn of the relatively small role that volunteers played at MSF. For my first few days at MSF, I often asked the shelter director Betty if she had anything I could do. She eventually sat down and expressed her confusion as to what to do with me. She claimed that if I were a social work or a psychology intern she would know what to do, but that she wasn’t sure how to help a communication researcher. Ultimately, much of my observations took the form of shadowing staff, and in particular shadowing Janet, one of MSF’s case managers. I had a few opportunities to “give back” to MSF

during my time as a researcher however. I helped lead a focus group on two occasions, and I also served as a volunteer during their Christmas toy giveaway.

At JP I was almost immediately plugged in as a “housetaker” or a volunteer who watched the house. As a housetaker, my duties were: to answer the door, hand out sandwiches, sort through donations, cook some meals, answer the phone, and do some miscellaneous cleaning. While on house, I would also be responsible for admitting or denying admittance to potential guests. Although I never had occasion to admit anyone other than one overnight guest to the emergency shelter room, I was unfortunately frequently in the position to deny entry to the house, most often because the house was full.

Acting as a housetaker provided me with myriad opportunities to immerse myself in the daily organizing process at JP. Some of the longer term guests would come and sit with me during my four to five hour shift, and several ethnographic interviews took place during these times. Furthermore, I had the opportunity to join workers and guests for breakfast, lunch, and dinner and to help guests in their search for employment. I find it worth noting that housetaking provided more opportunities to interact with volunteers and guests than with other workers, who were generally in their rooms if they were in the house.

I had other opportunities to interact more with workers at JP on the third floor of the building where they had their rooms. During my observation period, I was offered the opportunity to sleep at the house when I was spending extended periods of time in the area. The time spent upstairs provided some other opportunities for interaction and

relationship building with the workers, and also gave me other opportunities to help out at JP even when I wasn't acting as a housetaker.

In total, I completed 234 hours of immersion in the two organizations over a six month period. I spent approximately 125 hours at JP and 109 hours at MSF. During my observations I made jottings, which are “brief written records” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2010, p. 20) that ethnographers make to aid them in recalling important incidents from observations. My jottings initially were used to broadly record as much of the interactions around me as possible. As time progressed, my jottings became more focused and emphasizing instances when discourse reflected broader organizational or cultural ideals. From my jottings, I developed detailed field notes that created narratives of each day's experiences. While writing the field notes I sought to be as descriptive as possible and to use the process of writing the field notes to create a sense of “analytic distance” to contrast with the immersive experience of my field work. My field notes resulted in 247 pages of single spaced notes.

**Semi-structured interviews.** To supplement the data I collected as part of my immersion in the organization, I also conducted discursive semi-structured interviews (Tracy, 2013). These interviews sought to explore how my participants engage with the organizing practices of their organizations. Semi-structured interviews use an interview guide to ensure that certain important questions and themes are discussed during the interview process but also leave open more room for adaptation and creativity during the interview process. Engaging in semi-structured interviews encourages a more argentic role in the part of the research participant (Tracy, 2013).

I also sought to make my interviews dialogic. A dialogic interview emphasizes caring and establishing a relationship between interviewer and participant as opposed to more alienating and social scientific ways of conducting qualitative interviews (Kvale, 2008). My interest in how organizing interacts with larger discourses about organizing logics guided the creation of my interview guides to be discursively oriented. During my interviews I asked participants questions about: their experiences with homelessness, what they view as the strengths and weaknesses of their organizations, their organization's mission, and how they view their organization as different from or similar to other organizations in the area. (For specific interview guides please see appendices A, B, and C.)

In total, I conducted 15 semi-structured interviews as part of my data collection. I interviewed clients/guests, workers/staff, and volunteers. My interviews ranged from 20-80 minutes, with a 45 minute average. I conducted seven interviews at MSF with my participants including two administrators, three staff, and two clients. I conducted eight interviews at JP with my participants including four workers, two volunteers, and two guests. All but one interview was audio-recorded, with one participant requesting that I take notes for their interview due to concerns about confidentiality. Interviews with guests/clients were the most difficult to obtain. Two guests at JP missed multiple interview dates, and one client who had agreed to an interview was removed from the shelter after drugs were found in her room at MSF. Interviews were transcribed by myself or through a transcription service. My data from interviews totaled 262 single space pages.

**Document and artifact collection.** Texts play an integral role in both

institutional theory and CCO; so analyzing available documents is vital to understanding the organizing process. In some organizations the texts and policies can dominate conversations and offer strong guidance for key organizing practices. Both organizations were rich with texts, and these provided valuable insights into each organization.

At JP, the primary texts I analyzed were the logbook, which was used to communicate between shifts, and the tri-annual newsletter that I gave the pseudonym “The Welcome Place”. I took pictures of the logbook entries with my phone and entered the scanned entries into my qualitative analysis software. I collected the first three months of logbook entries, after which I made notes in my jottings if something interesting occurred. For the Welcome Place, I elected to go back three years, after which themes and topics of issues began to repeat.

At MSF, the primary documents I drew from were the handbooks and intake packets that staff and clients were given upon entry into the organization. These served as an excellent introduction into the rules and expectations for both staff and clients as they transitioned into the organization. I also collected organizational memos, though these had little impact on this particular project. Finally, I took pictures of wall decorations at both organizations.

## **Analysis**

Analysis of the experiences and data that I collected during immersion and interviews occurred during the data collection process. The earliest stages of this analysis occurred during the memo-writing process (Charmaz, 2006) that I engaged in throughout the project. Memo-writing provided further analytic space and helped me find emergent themes in my data as I engaged in the collection process. The memo-writing process also

helped me refine aspects of my theoretical construct. Finally, writing the memos provided me with an opportunity to think critically about my own place in the organizations, and to interrogate my own actions as both participant and researcher.

Four months into my data collection, I began the initial coding of the data I had collected. At this point in my project, I had not yet begun to conduct my semi-structured interviews. Through this analysis process, I was able to refine my observations and interviews. This reading of the data was primarily concerned with more emergent meanings, and served as the first step in my iterative (Tracy, 2013) analysis.

An iterative analysis of data “alternates between emic, or emergent readings of the data and an etic use of existing models, explanations and theories” (Tracy, 2013, p. 184). In the first cycle of coding, I engaged in an “primary-cycle coding” (Tracy, 2013) process during which I read and re-read the data again while labeling instances with the intent of capturing the essence of what I see as happening. My initial codes were largely descriptive and focused on action within the instance (e.g., “talking about responsibility”, “running out of supplies”), which helped me to remain focused on organizing process and practice from the earliest stage.

After finishing my primary cycle coding, I engaged in secondary-cycle coding. The goal of secondary coding is to move beyond simple description and to begin to provide analysis and interpretation of events. Second-level codes provided synthesis and analytic weight to the coding done in the first level and it is in this stage of coding that the theoretical constructs began to feature more heavily (Charmaz, 2006; Tracy, 2013). Second level codes that emerged from this coding cycle focused on the linking of institutional logics and Discourse. Using qualitative software, I overlapped coded

incidents with codes like “IL Responsibility” and “Neoliberal Ideology.” Examining where codes featuring ILs and Discourse began to overlap created the basis for my findings.

Emic readings of my data complemented and complicated my original theoretical framework. For example, in the initial coding stages I noticed several staff/workers discussing burnout and fatigue related to their work with the homeless. During my semi-structured interviews and during less formal discussions, I was able to dig more into the issue of emotional fatigue. I learned that how staff/workers understood the idea of responsibility, one of the logics I analyze in this project, impacted their emotional investment in their work.

During the coding process, I engaged in a constant comparative analysis (Charmaz, 2006; Tracy, 2013), whereby I compared incidents to other incidents. The comparison of incidents highlighted nuance and paradox within each organization. In particular, the comparison highlighted how discourse around certain topics might shift depending on the participants in the interaction. For example, at MSF, coded incidents under IL responsibility that were tied to my “Neoliberal Ideology” and “Paternalist Ideology” codes led to findings about paradoxical organizing practices around personal responsibility.

### **Validation**

Creswell (2007) suggested seven different potential strategies to validate qualitative data: prolonged engagement, triangulation, peer review/debriefing, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher bias, member checking, thick description, and external audits. To ensure that my claims were meaningful, I engaged in the process of

triangulation, where multiple sources of data are drawn upon to create a more holistic and accurate representation of the organization. To triangulate my findings, I used organizational artifacts (e.g., posters, logbook entries, handbooks), participant observation, and semi-structured interviews. Also, my research design encouraged prolonged engagement, which Creswell (2007) claims involves more than simply learning the culture, but also provides opportunities to correct researcher assumptions. During observations and interviews, I was provided opportunities to discuss preliminary findings with my research participants, and to have some assumptions and interpretations corrected (e.g., many staff at MSF did not seem to view mental illness as the largest contributor to homelessness).

### **Summary**

In conclusion, to study alternative organizing practices I engaged in a poststructuralist comparative ethnography that drew on critical, poststructuralist, and performance ideals about how fieldwork should be conducted. I collected data from two homeless shelters in the same geographic area that served similar populations. Data collection methods included immersion in the organization, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. I argue that this research methodology and its attendant methods positioned me to make claims about how organizational members and organizations as actors resist or enact institutional normative organizing Discourses.

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

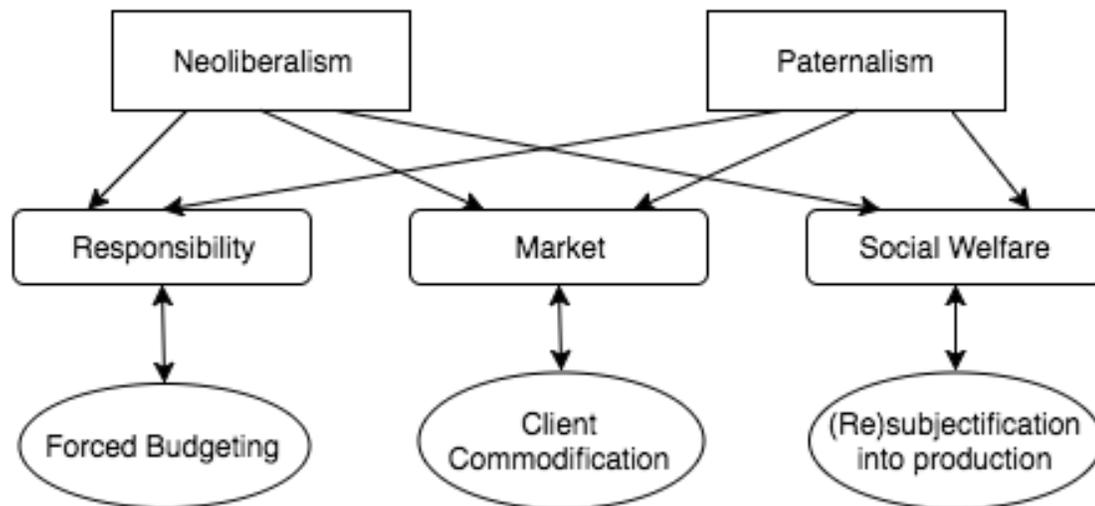
The purpose of this chapter is to show the findings of my data collection. Rather than answering each question individually, I explore the pertinent results regarding the institutional logics (IL) of responsibility, social welfare, and market to examine the salient issues across my research questions. These questions are: 1) How are multiple Discourses drawn from in the organizing process, creating more normative or alternative organizing practices? 2) How do nonprofit organizations enact and resist communicatively constructed organizing pressures related to the Discourse of neoliberalism and its ILs? And 3) How do organizational/individual translations of ILs constrain or enable agency in the organizing process?

As I discuss each IL in this chapter, I explicate how the logic functions in relation to the guiding Discourses and also how it constitutes and is constituted by everyday interaction within both organizations. Analyzing the interaction of each logic in relation to the guiding Discourses and the manifestations in everyday practice and interaction provides a useful starting point to answer my research questions in the following chapter.

As the chapter proceeds, I discuss each organization individually before concluding the chapter with a direct comparison of my results. As I examine each organization, I first explore the IL of responsibility and how it was understood at each organization as either “responsibility for self” or “responsibility for other.” I next discuss the IL of social welfare, which explores how each organization made sense of their mission. Finally, I examine institutional market logic and how it manifested in issues related to organizational governance and everyday talk.

In terms of the Discourses that feed into these ILs, I found that the dominant guiding Discourses within my participating organizations were: neoliberalism, anarchism, feminism, and paternalism. Each of these Discourses acts as an institutional substance (Friedland, 2009a, 2009b), which provides the basis for rationality for the ILs. Although an ILs perspective posits the possibility that the flow from Discourse to IL is not mono-directional (that meso-level logics can change and influence the broader, macro-level cultural Discourse) my findings do not reflect this relationship. Although I do not doubt the possibility of change flowing up from ILs to Discourses by challenging and shifting systems of knowledge and relations of power, it was not found in my results. Therefore, I will be limiting my discussion to a narrower view of the flow from Discourse to IL. Figure 2 here provides an abbreviated explanation as to how the relationship between Discourse, IL and practice can be understood at Midwest Safe Family.

Figure 2



As this chart shows, flows from Discourse to IL in my findings are monodirectional. However, some aspects of my findings will show a multi-directional interaction between practice and IL. As I discuss each IL, I examine how the Discourses of paternalism,

feminism, anarchism and neoliberalism individually or mutually influence the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market. To describe these relationships, I frame the move from Discourse to IL as a process of translation. I use the term translation to better link my theoretical framework to the vocabulary used in the communicative constitution of organization (CCO), and because it highlights the inductive and unconscious process (Brummans et al., 2014) that occurs in the move from macro to meso to micro. Before proceeding to my analysis, I pause briefly to better define how the organizing Discourses in this chapter are understood.

### **Organizing Discourses**

To provide greater clarity as to the understanding of the Discourses and how each functioned at the organizational level, I provide a working definition to provide a basis for the Discourses of neoliberalism, paternalism, feminism, and anarchism. I recognize that multiple understandings and interpretations are possible, and that multiple (and at times, conflicting) intellectual trends can be identified within an individual Discursive framework. I start this discussion with the understanding of neoliberalism at work in my project.

Neoliberal Discourse. Neoliberal organizing Discourse centers on the valorization of market values and the belief in equal opportunity between individuals to become whatever they wish to be. Neoliberalism differs from other forms of liberalism in two central ways that are central to this dissertation. First, neoliberal Discourse encourages the use of market rationalities in arenas where they had not previously been present. In this dissertation, these market rationalities are witnessed in the use of “business-like” thinking and everyday discourse at the organizations.

Second, and related to the first point, is the emphasis on the creation of the self as a market commodity. In a neoliberal society, everyone has (supposedly) equal opportunity and obligation to craft themselves (through education, training, and personal initiative) into a productive citizen, and the failure to do so falls on the individual as opposed to the system. This belief in or resistance to self-commodification manifests most clearly in how each organization understood the IL of responsibility.

**Paternalist Discourse.** Paternalism is deeply linked to how social welfare agencies in neoliberal systems function (Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011). In particular, “soft” or “libertarian” paternalist organizing Discourse functions to guide nonprofit organizing practices. Soft paternalism functions to correct what governmental and market agents regard as the irrational actions of individuals and groups (Jones, Pyket, & Whitehead, 2011).

Soft paternalism as an organizing Discourse in a homeless shelter serves as the rationality for practices that are meant to correct the irrational behavior of individuals who have failed to self-commodify (generally through the institution of wage labor). As work is the most basic form of compliance in a neoliberal society (Wacquant, 2009), the failure to engage in wage labor is a deviation from acceptable social standards. Paternalistic policies at both shelters examined in this project were designed to encourage behaviors that would (re)constitute the “nonworking deviants” in the shelters into conforming producers.

I have opted to draw on paternalist Discourse as opposed to maternalist Discourse in this dissertation for two primary reasons. First, paternalism has a heuristically rich history of being put into conversation with social welfare practices in neoliberal societies

(Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011). Second, the practices that I classify as paternalist within this section function, in many ways, to infantilize adults and limit individual agency in a way that is different from a maternalist framework. Peterson (2012) described the difference between paternalist and maternalist methods of confronting social problems:

When we are being paternal, we are taking charge, making decisions for others, and having the attitude that our decisions are better than those for whom we are caring because they are not intelligent, informed, caring, or worldly enough to make the best decisions for themselves. Maternalism connotes a more nurturing approach to addressing a concern or problem.

In short, paternalism can be understood more mono-directional and authoritarian than maternalism, which is more dialogic and caring.

**Feminist Discourse.** Defining “feminism” as an organizing Discourse is, at best, fraught with contradictions. As Harris (2016) noted, feminism is rife with contradictions and paradoxes. For the purpose of this dissertation, three aspects of feminist theorizing function as central to providing the rationality for organizing practices. First, issues pertaining to the intersectionality of race, class, and gender (Saatcioglu & Corus, 2012) informs how oppression is understood and confronted at the systemic level. Second, the feminist practice of consciousness raising (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002) shapes how JP engages in part of its social welfare mission. Finally, a feminist ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) underscores the way that mutually supportive and individualized relationships were shaped and encouraged at JP. These feminist ideals are also used as a manner to critique neoliberal and paternalist organizing Discourses.

**Anarchist Discourse.** Like neoliberalism, anarchism places a strong emphasis on the individual. However, unlike neoliberalism, anarchism does not engage with the marketplace as the path towards freedom. In fact, anarchy eschews capitalism as anything other than a system that promotes the oppression of the individual. In my project, anarchy as an organizing Discourse balances individual autonomy with individual obligation to serve the needs of others. Similar to feminism, there are multiple different branches of anarchist Discourse, but the framework that dominates in this project is one that is rooted in the constructive and feminist anarchist traditions.

Constructive anarchy as an organizing Discourse seeks to challenge social structures that create the conditions necessary for oppressive systems to flourish. Rather than seeking to integrate marginalized groups into oppressive systems, constructive anarchy seeks wholesale systemic change. One method of engaging in this change in constructive anarchist movements is through the use of “prefigurative organizing.” Prefigurative organizing can be understood as organizing in a manner that reflects the future towards which these groups are working. Thus, constructive anarchy seeks to eschew the adoption of organizing practices that mirror the oppressive structures they seek to address. However, constructive anarchy maintains a pragmatic dimension, and as an organizing Discourse it recognizes the need to also work within the existing social system (Shantz, 2010).

The anarchist organizing practices at work at JP are also influenced by anarcho-feminist organizing Discourse. Anarcho-feminist Discourse emerges most prominently in the way that responsibility is understood at JP. In particular, the ethic of care that is

foundational to the feminist practices at JP link with anarchist understandings of individual liberty to shape how community and oppression are understood.

Before discussing the interaction of Discourses and ILs at either organization, I first describe the pertinent material and discursive aspects that constituted each research site. I do this to provide an opportunity to contextualize the statements, texts, and ethnographic incidents that serve as the basis for my data. After providing the ethnographic context, I discuss how Discourses shifted translation of ILs at the organizational level and how these ILs manifested at the level of everyday practice. I begin this section with an examination of Midwest Safe Family (MSF).

### **Midwest Safe Family**

MSF is a tan brick building set low to the ground off of a busy street in a major metropolitan city. Turning into the sloping driveway that descends into the parking lot reveals a surprisingly large building with a parking lot capable of holding approximately 40 cars. A playground with newish looking equipment and that is enclosed by a black fence is located to the right of the entryway's glass double doors (with a sign requesting that the door to the left be used).

Immediately upon entering the air conditioned building there are two sign-in sheets, one for the clients (the term used to describe the homeless women and veteran males who use the services there) and another for visitors to the building. Visitors are required to wear a green badge identifying them as belonging in the building. A glass-enclosed reception area dominates the entryway, where clients, but not visitors, entering the building are required to have their bags searched (though this did not always occur).

To the left of the reception area, a short staircase descends into a hallway that branches into the “family room,” where there are toys and computers for children to use under parental supervision and when a staff is present, and onto the “black level” which is the lower residential level, overseen by a case manager named Janet. An elevator can be taken back up to the entryway and the “white level,” the other residential area, overseen by the case manager Heather. Throughout the building surveillance cameras monitor the halls.

The family room door was brightly painted to look like a jungle scene, and the bright, almost raucous colors continued into the room itself. A low, rickety table was the primary place where mandatory focus group meetings were held from 9-10AM Monday through Friday, and Bethany (who was in charge of educational services) had her office here. Further into the room, toys were neatly put away with books on the shelves. The room appeared clean, and the staff was relentless about ensuring that the mothers at MSF made their children put all toys and books away.

Behind the reception desk, another glass-enclosed area leads to the locked Veteran’s area, where clients from the VA stay. Other than a brief tour of the area during room checks, I spent little time here and had few interactions with the veterans using the services. The veterans operated under a different program with different requirements, and therefore did not feature in my project.

Next to the veteran’s area, an elevator that required key access led up to the administrative area of the building. Clients rarely ventured up to this floor other than when directed to meet with the director Betty, but at times they would wander up the stairs and beyond the sign that stated they were not allowed beyond that point. On those

same stairs was the entry to the chapel/multipurpose room. The food pantry program was held in the large room each week, as was the Christmas toy giveaway and any other number of functions. MSF did not currently have an in-house clergy person, but when they did, religious services could be held in the area as well.

Negotiating access to MSF was a long, drawn out process that foreshadowed parts of what I would learn about the organization during my time there. It took me several days to reach Betty, the shelter director. After speaking with her briefly and describing my project, she expressed interest but informed me that I would need to seek permission from the volunteer coordinator. This coordinator told me to fill out an online form (that included my areas of expertise and the pertinent information for a background check) and to check in with the administrator who handled the volunteer paperwork. Unfortunately, the administrator to whom he referred me was on vacation, and I was therefore required to wait until she came back. After a very brief conversation with her the following week, she immediately transferred me to the administrative assistant for Lana, the regional director. After describing my reason for calling to Lana's assistant, I was transferred to Lana who informed me that I needed to submit a written proposal to the board that would discuss the project.

I submitted the proposal by the Thursday deadline so it could be on the agenda for the next Tuesday meeting, and was left to wait. Unfortunately, Lana went out of town during this time, and I was left in limbo for two weeks before being contacted by her. She informed me that the project had been approved and that we should set up a time to meet to discuss the project in person at MSF. When we met, Lana was more than an hour

late to the meeting, and I was informed that neither the shelter director Betty nor the regional coordinator Wendy had been informed about the project.

Once I had been granted permission to conduct my observations, I was given a place on the staff sign-in sheet in the reception area, a mailbox that identified me as an “intern,” and the use of the intern’s office. Being labeled as an intern led to some confusion, and I frequently had to correct the staff that introduced me to the clients and one another as an intern by explaining that I was a researcher and talking a little bit about my project. Early in my observations, I asked Betty about the potential volunteering opportunities at MSF. Betty expressed that she was at a loss to help me. After two few relatively fruitless days sitting in either the intern’s office, the entryway, or the dining room, I began to shadow a case manager named Janet and to attend focus group meetings for the women in the shelter. I was also given the opportunity to lead two focus meetings on communication.

Now that I have provided a brief overview of the research site and offered some context for my findings, I next discuss each key IL at MSF and how its enactment was based on a translation of a guiding Discourse. This next section examines how the Discourses of neoliberalism and paternalism guided the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market. I begin with a discussion of the IL of responsibility.

**Responsibility.** At MSF, the IL of responsibility was translated from a neoliberal Discourse that espoused personal accountability and a requirement to act in accordance with market demands. In a neoliberal society, everyone is perceived as receiving equal opportunities, and as such any failure is attributed to the individual. The IL of responsibility at MSF functioned to position the clients in the organization as possessing

total individual agency, which is understood as the ability to “do otherwise” (Giddens, 1986). However, with this responsibility, MSF also discursively positioned the women as completely responsible for their homelessness, and the staff often dismissed systemic contributions to homelessness.

However, this neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility came into frequent conflict with paternalistic Discursive translations of responsibility, which emphasized how the clients at the shelter could not be trusted to act responsibly. This section examines how neoliberal and paternalistic Discourses were translated into an, at times, paradoxical IL of responsibility. I first explore how the neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility emerged in everyday discourse at MSF. Next, I discuss how contradictions and tensions within the IL of responsibility result from competing Discursive translations. Finally, I examine how individual agency was enabled and/or constrained due to the translation of paternalistic and neoliberal Discourses.

*The institutional logic of responsibility at Midwest Safe Family.* Everyday discourse at MSF revealed a predominantly neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility. For example, at focus group meetings, the variety of neoliberal-guided topics included: what your dream house would look like, finding childcare, dealing with children and homework, doing chores in the shelter, and following program policies. Usually, focus group consisted of two to seven women, although there were rarely more than five. Although missing focus group could result in a client being written up, write ups rarely occurred unless it was a consistent problem.

One focus group, led by a Black case manager in her mid-50s named Janet, explicitly addressed the issue of "personal responsibility," and was part of a two-week

session, the first of which I was unable to observe. Janet had once been homeless and addicted to drugs, and she often used these experiences as illustrations during her case management meetings and focus groups. Janet had worked at Saving Grace (SG), the larger organization connected to MSF, for nearly 10 years, and she had earned her BA while working at another SG shelter. She had transferred to MSF five years ago. Janet began the observed focus group with an open question to the four women sitting around the rickety wooden table in the family center, asking, "What do you think about when you think about personal responsibility?" One of the women, Alice, who often drew with crayons during meetings, responded that she thought of accountability.

When Alice mentioned accountability, Janet became animated, leaned forward in her seat and stated, "You're the only one that can be held responsible, can be held accountable." Janet claimed that often people don't want to be accountable and that they want others to take care of things for them. However, she argued that the women shouldn't let other people "put energy into you" and that they need to make certain that their own affairs were in order. Janet continued that the women need to "take charge" of their lives and work to hold themselves accountable for their actions. She argued that "lies and excuses" keep people from getting the help that they need.

Janet's statements reflect a belief that the reason the clients at MSF were homeless was because of a lack of personal responsibility and accountability. This stance draws from a neoliberal Discursive understanding of the IL of personal responsibility. In a neoliberal society everyone is provided equal opportunity, and if someone is failing to succeed in a neoliberal society that failure is their own fault. In other words, Janet is

using a neoliberal understanding of responsibility to position the women as primarily responsible for their own homelessness.

Talk about responsibility that drew from a neoliberal understanding of the IL generally dominated focus groups, regardless of the topic. For example, a focus group about the rules the six clients at the meeting would have for their "dream home" offered another example of how neoliberal translations of personal responsibility penetrated a variety of discussions. Leading this particular focus group was Sarah, a black woman in her early 40s who had worked for MSF in a variety of capacities over the last 16 years. Currently, Sarah was the staff member in charge of helping the clients locate housing and employment. Bethany, a Black women in her late 20s who helped clients find education and childcare opportunities and had started at MSF less than a year ago was helping Sarah lead the focus group. As the group of five clients talked about their rules, one of them, Tammy, mentioned that no guests would be allowed in her dream house. Sarah interjected, pushing Tammy further by asking what if it's a close friend or relative who desperately needs a place to stay? Tammy stayed firm and Sarah nodded her head approvingly. Sarah shared that in a recent visit to another shelter one of the employees had told her that the time in the shelter was a time for the clients to be selfish. Sarah said she liked that sentiment and that time in the shelter was time for the women to focus on themselves. Furthermore, she argued that the selfish attitude should continue outside of the shelter. She claimed that she doesn't like to get involved with her neighbors because once you do they will come over and ask to borrow things.

Sarah's encouragement of the women at the shelter to be selfish reflected a neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility in its call to make sure the clients at the

meeting took care of themselves first and foremost. This attitude is emblematic of the kind of economic Darwinism (Giroux, 2011) that can be found in a neoliberal world. It is likely that Sarah's call to be selfish was meant as a strategy through which the women could protect themselves from being exploited once they had a house of their own, but it also discouraged mutual aid and support that could be helpful during the transition.

The neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility revealed one way in which organizational members at MSF appeared to be ventriloquized (Cooren, 2012) by neoliberal and paternalistic Discourses. The echoing of normative standards for personal responsibility in relation to the structuring of society and individual agency within that society limited discussion and disclosure within the focus meetings. Any time during which a more structural concern (e.g., childcare, transportation) was brought up as a barrier, the conversation turned to how the clients could either overcome the barrier or stop making excuses. A “motivational poster” that hung in the hallway near the offices echoed this stance. A picture of what the poster stated was a “Colored School Room” in 1943 with the word “Opportunity” in large letters above it. Below the black and white picture of the Black students in school, the words “Being able to see past traditional barriers and having an intense belief in your ideas and abilities will help you take advantage of any opportunity.” As this poster states, what is required to take advantage of "any opportunity" is simply the capacity to see beyond the barriers. This attitude reflects a belief that any failure to surmount barriers rests on the individual's inability to see a way beyond the barriers.

Now that I have discussed how neoliberal Discourse was translated into the IL of responsibility in everyday discourse at MSF, I next examine tensions and contradictions

that arose around the IL of responsibility. Although interactions between staff and clients generally reflected an idealized neoliberal Discursive position, organizational practices in other contexts often reflected a more tension-filled and complex stance. Furthermore, the IL of responsibility was also informed by translations of paternalistic Discourse, which further complicated how the IL of responsibility functioned at MSF. The next section explores these contradictions and tensions, and in particular how they manifested in the construction of agency.

*Tensions and contradiction around responsibility.* While a neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility dominated at MSF in interactions between staff and clients, the issue could become more complex in interactions between staff. At times, staff would assume one stance while interacting with clients and then change their position when speaking with other staff. For example, during a focus group on childcare, one guest named Londa expressed her frustrations around finding affordable childcare; Bethany asked her "what preparations are you making knowing that?" Londa replied that she was continuing to look for work, and also looking for places where the fees weren't as high. Bethany, whose position at the shelter was to coordinate with childcare and education, interjected that her job was to help the clients navigate issues like this, and that the women in the shelter need to come and talk to her when they are having these kinds of frustrations.

However, while Bethany's stance in focus group seemed to echo the sentiments of other focus meetings (where proper planning and execution could surmount any problem), a discussion held later between staff complicated the actual understanding of personal responsibility at MSF. Later that same day an impromptu staff meeting

occurred in the program director, Betty's, office. As Bethany slouched into the chair on the other side of Betty's desk, she stated emphatically that the women in the shelter are "well and truly stuck" due to the challenges of finding affordable and safe childcare. This statement prompted a brief brainstorming session among Betty, Bethany, Sarah, and me as to potential solutions to the childcare problem.

Bethany's stance in focus group seemed to reflect a neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility by stating that proper planning and a "take charge" attitude could solve the problem of childcare (which was a central obstacle to finding and maintaining employment). This stance was consistent with statements that she and other staff had made in previous focus meetings. However, in her interaction with other staff, including the meeting above, her stance implied a belief that childcare may represent a nearly insurmountable barrier for the women in the shelter. Bethany's change in stance when discussing the problem when clients were not present reflected a challenge to the idealized neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility that was used in focus group. By acknowledging the systemic barrier, Bethany was also acknowledging that there were issues beyond the control of the clients. This contrasted with the belief that many staff espoused during their focus group meetings that if the women planned and held themselves accountable that they could overcome any obstacle.

Although there were certainly complications around systemic issues vs. personal responsibility, the issue tended to be resolved by reflecting on the neoliberal translation of a responsibility IL. When I asked Sarah what the biggest challenge facing MSF was, she responded with "people not wanting to take responsibility for themselves" and continued that she believed that a sense of entitlement prevented the women in the shelter

from being successful. This theme continued later in the interview when I asked her what in the broader world made the existence of the organization necessary:

Oh you know what that is. The finances, the entitlement, all of that, uh, the same things that we talked about before. Some people, the average person that I come across would rather, like, in a negative situation, not average, in, you know, having things together. But that average person that doesn't have things together, they would rather have nothing than to work at McDonald's. Me, [if] I would lose my job, I'm going to McDonald's, Peter, I'm gonna sit[work] at McDonald's until I can do better. Their, that's not their philosophy. They'd rather have nothing, figure out how they're gonna go for this and how they're gonna do that 'cause they can just sit at home and do whatever, you know. That's not the way it works, so I think, um, that's what's going on in the world.

Sarah places a neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility squarely at the heart of the problem of homelessness and the creation of the conditions that necessitate homeless shelters. While Sarah was the most vocally accepting of a neoliberal definition of personal responsibility at MSF, her statements echo sentiments shared by other staff at the shelter. What this notion of personal responsibility meant for MSF as an organization was that they focused on homelessness at an individual level and ignored systemic concerns.

Moreover, Sarah's argument about what individuals are or are not "able to do" in situations highlights an important link between how responsibility was understood in this organizations and how it was linked to the concept of agency. Tensions around agency and the IL of responsibility manifested due to the translation of paternalistic Discourses.

The next section examines how tensions and paradox emerged regarding individual agency due to the competition between neoliberal and paternalistic Discourses linked to the IL of responsibility at MSF. In particular, I explore how these tensions emerged in regards to client finances.

*Responsibility, agency, and paradox.* The tension around finances reveals the paradoxical clash of paternalism and neoliberalism around agency and responsibility at MSF. While on the one hand the women at the shelter were positioned as possessing tremendous agency in their ability to control their lives, paternalistic Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility limited their agency over the money they either earned through employment or received through government aid programs. The inability to use their funds as they saw fit directly contradicted an idealized neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility. Although the staff at the shelter encouraged their clients to “take responsibility,” the organization’s use of paternalistic practices limited its clients’ ability to do so. The paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility positioned clients as incapable of acting in a responsible manner.

From an idealized neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility, the clients at MSF were often discursively positioned as having total agency. This agency was positioned as untapped potential that was available as long as the women made the decision to change their lives. Another poster hanging in the hallway near the offices upstairs reflected this belief. A picture of Rosa Parks sitting on a bus, staring calmly out the window with the word “Destiny” in large letters above it. Below the picture, the poster stated “The choices you make in life ultimately determine your destiny.”

The underlying message of this poster can be interpreted as suggesting that the clients at MSF reached their situations through their choices and that their next choices can likewise set them on another path. This stance corresponds with the links between a neoliberal informed understanding of responsibility and the total agency of the clients in the shelter. However, the paternalistic practices at MSF pressured their clients away from acting as agents. However, the use of Parks' image in this poster is open to an alternative and more tension-filled reading. The types of choices that the staff at MSF are encouraging involve following the rules and maintaining the status quo. However, the narrative of Parks seems more suited to endorsing resistance to the unjust systems that create homelessness rather than seeking avenues to participate in those systems.

Paternalist Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility manifested throughout MSF, with clients being required to ascribe to a dress code, a curfew, and being forbidden from cooking their own food or having food or medicine in their rooms. Where the paternalistic attitude was most visible was in the handling of finances at MSF. In the intake packet clients filled out when entering the program at MSF a savings plan was detailed, the plan stated that clients must save 80% of their income during their stay in the program (though there was some room for negotiation depending on financial obligations). The money was to be turned into the case manager, but if the client had an established checking or savings account they could still use that as long as they gave the statement to the case manager every month.

While this policy was meant to help the clients in the shelter have more agency as they transitioned into housing, it was not always received gratefully. One client, Mary, was particularly resentful of the policy. Mary resented the level of control MSF exerted,

and the level of information they had about her. During a meeting with her case manager Janet, Mary was confronted about whether or not she had started receiving disability payments. Janet had noticed that Mary had purchased several new articles of expensive clothing, and when Mary admitted that she had received the money then Janet informed her that per the agreement she had signed that she was either going to have to turn over the money or provide bank statements. Janet reminded Mary of the more than \$2,000 she owed in past utilities and court cases and said that it was important that the money that Mary received go to start covering those expenses. Mary said that she was going to "take care of her business" and that Janet and the staff at MSF "knew too much" about other peoples' lives. This interaction between Janet and Mary reveals the paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility in that Janet seeks to discipline Mary for irresponsible behavior. Although under a neoliberal organizing Discourse, Mary should be free to act as she wishes in the market, Janet seeks to discipline her for failing to act responsibly.

In spite of the multitude of paternalistic disciplining mechanisms that were used to limit the agency of the clients at MSF, more often than not the staff perceived themselves as giving their clients a great deal of freedom. This freedom was often discursively positioned by the staff describing their job to "provide tools" to the clients. The next section explores the provision of tools and its implications for agency.

*Providing tools.* At MSF, the IL of responsibility being translated from a neoliberal Discourse resulted in, ostensibly, a more hands-off approach to dealing with clients. The hands-off attitude manifested in a discourse of "providing tools" to the women who used their services. Janet often told me that she felt that what MSF did

particularly well was to provide tools to the women and offer them an opportunity to do "the right thing" for themselves and their families. These "tools" took on various forms, from providing the opportunity to develop "good habits" that could be transitioned into homes, forcing the women to budget and save money, or showing them how to work through policies.

Bethany reflected on how her job often focused on helping the women in the shelter navigate the McKinney-Vento act, which dealt with issues pertaining to homelessness and schooling. When I asked her how what she did on a daily basis fit into the organization's mission, she told me that her work on advocating for the children at the shelter was the primary way. She told me during her interview about a particular case that came to mind as she was advocating for a child who had been expelled, and helping the mother work through the system:

I don't want to take over, but I'll give her the tools that she needs. For example, I had a child suspended from school one time. He had behavior issues. Mom let the, let the school district know this up front. They suspended him for a long time, I think like 10 days. He hadn't been to school a week. So when advocating for her, I told her to document it. You know, she was very upset at calling the school. I said, "Let's sit down, write a letter." So I'm going in the handbook, showing her, using their lingo back at them about how to file grievances, disagreements, then behavior discipline plans, so going and doing certain things like that. So not only am I helping the child here in the shelter, but when I, when that parent leaves here, I try to set them up, educate them on McKinney-Vento act, and so that they know when they leave here so that they can advocate... So that's kind of... doing that, um, that's, doing the most good to me. "Not only can I

advocate while you're here, but I want to give you the tools to be able to advocate, for you to be able to advocate for yourself because you're not going to be here only about 140 days roughly.'

Bethany's argument that the time in the shelter is limited and, therefore, it is important to set the women up for success in the future was certainly present in the providing tools discourse, but that stance also manifested in a way that more closely linked it to issues of responsibility. By positioning themselves as providers of tools, the staff at MSF repositioned responsibility for *using* the tools on the women in the shelter. For example, Sarah and Bethany would often comment negatively on how the women would not make use of the services they provided, but then emphasized that it was up to the clients to seek out staff help.

The discursive framework of providing tools placed the responsibility to act as agents on the clients at MSF. The time at the shelter was seen as a period during which these skills, or tools, could be learned. However, the responsibility for the women to do so was laid at their feet. Bethany and Sarah only worked with those who sought them out. In this way, neoliberal and paternalistic Discourse could be seen as, to some extent, working together as opposed to working in tension.

The neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility provided a significant benefit for the workers at MSF, as it provided an avenue to avoid burnout in the organization. Case managers and other individuals in similar professions (Thomas, Kohli, & Choi, 2014) suffer a high degree of burnout due to the emotional work associated with the position. By emphasizing the accountability of their clients, the workers at MSF were able to distance themselves from women who failed out of the shelter. For example,

Betty informed me that she could "sleep easy at night" when a family was kicked out of the shelter because she felt that MSF had done everything for the woman that they could reasonably be expected to do. Because consulting with staff to help clients with housing, employment, or education was voluntary for the clients, the burden of responsibility for use of those services was placed entirely on them, and the staff were able to metaphorically wash their hands of any of the clients who were unable to be successful in the program.

**Conclusion: Responsibility.** At MSF, the IL of responsibility was primarily translated from a neoliberal Discourse. This translation resulted in the understanding of the IL manifesting in practices that emphasized personal accountability. The clients at MSF were positioned as having complete agency, and as such they were placed as almost entirely to blame for their homelessness. However, the discursive positioning of the clients as possessing almost superhuman agency was contradicted by a coercive and paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility that manifested in practices that assumed that clients at MSF could not be trusted to act responsibly. Paternalism interfered with an ideal neoliberal IL of responsibility by limiting the ability for the clients at MSF to be responsible.

**Social Welfare.** A social welfare IL is most fundamentally concerned with the provision of products and/or services to a marginalized population (Pache & Santos, 2013). At Midwest Safe Family, the neoliberal and paternalistic translations of an IL of social welfare manifested in the provision of services that were primarily concerned with the (re)subjectification of its clients into productive citizens. While neoliberal and paternalist Discourses often clashed in their translations into the IL of responsibility, they

were much more complementary in regards to the IL of social welfare. To explore how paternalistic and neoliberal Discourses were translated into an IL of social welfare, I cover the following topics. Because organizational mission plays a central role in the enactment of a social welfare IL, I begin with a discussion of MSF's organizational missions and the role of a religious IL. Next, I discuss how the process of achieving these missions impacted organizational agency. I conclude this section with a discussion of subjectification at MSF, and how the reconstitution of its clients as productive subjects was the end goal of the organization.

***Religious and social welfare institutional logics and organizational mission.***

This section examines how the social welfare IL intersected with a religious IL at MSF, and in particular how the religious IL manifested and created tension in relation to the organization's missions. MSF identified itself as a "church first," and the rationale for its organizational mission drew heavily from a religious source. Thus, attending to how the social welfare IL interacted with a primarily paternalistic Discursive translation of a religious and social welfare IL is necessary.

MSF's two organizational missions emerged at different levels of the organization. One mission came from the parent organization of SG, and the other was specific to MSF. Because my research participants articulated both missions in interviews when I asked them what the organization's mission was, I explore the implications of both in this section. Interestingly, at times it seemed that the missions could be seen as acting in opposition with one another (though awareness of this contradiction was never articulated by my participants).

The SG mission was explicitly religious and positioned the organization's social welfare mission as being rooted in the evangelical Christian tradition. The organization's website stated:

Saving Grace, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

SG's organizational mission clearly foregrounds the importance of religion to its social welfare mission. The use of religious motivation and religious talk at MSF was frequent and revealed an interaction between the ILs of religion and social welfare. For many staff in the organization, this religious orientation helped them make sense of the role of its organization on a daily basis. When I asked Wendy what the organization's mission was she answered that:

Wendy: Well, you know, we are Christians first. First and foremost. Uh, so, and that's how our mission statement starts. It says that the Saving Grace, an international movement is an evangelical part of a universal Christian, Christian church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

Peter: Mm-hmm. So what does that mean to you?

Wendy: What it means to me is that, again, you know, our founder here ...he ministered to those undesirables, you know? The people who were castaways.

Just like Jesus did. And so we say, here, at Saving Grace we say we are the hands and feet of Jesus.

Wendy's interpretation of the mission highlights the importance of Christian religious beliefs in the daily organizing practices at MSF. Although guests were not required to attend religious services as part of their stay (which most of the guests seemed to appreciate), religious values saturated the organization. Religious conversations featured heavily throughout the daily lives of members at MSF. Sarah and Janet in particular referenced God on a regular basis, and Janet often argued that the clients in the shelter needed to have a healthy relationship with God prior to having any other sort of relationship. Often, staff would inform the women that they needed to trust in God in order to make sure that they were moving in the right direction, when statements like this were made clients could often be seen nodding their heads and making affirmative noises.

A religious IL incorporates a "supernatural" element into the organizing process and crafts norms in relation to what Thornton (2004) refers to as congregational membership. Wendy's belief that the organization functions as a church "first and foremost" and that all of the work that they do within the organization begins with that assumption reveals how the organization's social welfare IL is inextricably linked to a religious IL. From this perspective, the reason for the social welfare work that is done at MSF is seen as being based in a religious mission. Sarah's sentiment was echoed by many other staff at MSF, who claimed that the organization's religious nature gave them both a sense of their own personal mission, and the opportunity to embrace a part of their identity (Christianity) that would be suppressed at other places of work.

The social welfare IL at MSF's interactions with a religious intuitional logic primarily drew from a paternalistic Discourse. Paternalism manifested in a religious framing of the organizational mission through the use of everyday religious talk. Staff at MSF used religious talk to not only make sense of their own mission, but to correct client behaviors. Janet, in particular, referenced Christian religious beliefs to correct clients. She often argued that the clients in the shelter needed to have a healthy relationship with God prior to having any other sort of relationship. Often, staff would inform the women that they needed to trust in God in order to make sure that they were moving in the right direction.

The mission that was specific to MSF was to "do the most good." At first glance, there may not appear to be much conflict between these two missions. However, the mission to "do the most good" came into conflict with the religious ILs within the organization. To "do the most good" MSF needed to seek funding from external organizations like Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Despite identifying as a church first, when the organization's religious IL clashed with external mandates that needed to be met to receive funding, the latter always seemed to win. Most notably, this conflict occurred when MSF received a mandate from HUD to start serving LGBT populations because of how HUD defined families. Sarah recounted to me how the staff reacted to HUD's decision to help same-sex couples:

Sarah: I'm thinking of which, uh, how many staff was in there when she came and told us that we're gonna have to start taking these different type families, and it's directly against our principles, but that's when we took on this job, we have to do it based on no discrimination, none of that, just, and none of that. And then

quickly we aligned right back in, but we always think, "Dang, God is gonna be really mad at us." But we're doing our job, so ...

Peter: Mm.

Sarah: ... we're free of that once we say that. But, initially, the honest end of it was overwhelming. We were, like, "What are the other kids in the shelter gonna say when they see two women walking in the door together, and it's okay. What are they gonna say when w-..." you know, we're thinking all these things, but we cannot discriminate, and we know this. But morally and ethically and Godly and all that, we were just sitting there thinking, "This is not gonna go so well." And that's, and when they're bringing something like this, you think, "It's all gonna all just happen all at once." But, for us so far, it hasn't happened like that 'cause we do have sporadic people that come in with, you know, that are bisexual. You can clearly see dressed on their thi-, and we don't, we do what we're supposed to do with them. We don't discriminate.

Sarah continued to recount a specific instance in which she helped one part of a lesbian couple gain custody of her child, and that in spite of her personal feelings she felt that she had done everything she could to help the woman gain custody of her child. However, what appears in Sarah's statement is her interpretation of the religiously informed organizational mission and how it has come into conflict with neoliberal values that emphasize quantitative measures of performance. Sarah resolved this tension by pointing out that she was doing her job and used that rationale to distance herself from the decision.

As this section has explored, religious ILs interacted with social welfare ILs at MSF in a manner that complicated how social welfare ILs interacted with neoliberal Discourse. The neoliberal organizing framework emphasized the need for MSF to accrue resources to increase the amount of “good” the organization could do. Although staff resolved the conflict in a variety of ways, the conflict revealed important issues around agency at the organizational level, which I discuss next.

*Social welfare institutional logic and organizational agency.* The influence of neoliberal organizing Discourses at MSF resulted in agency most often being framed in terms of financial and material resources. However, to accrue the financial resources that were needed to make meaningful decisions and provide more services to its clients, MSF had to engage in organizing practices that were in tension with the paternalistic Discursive translations of the ILs of social welfare and religion. In essence, to increase its material agency (via financial resources), MSF surrendered its ability to make decisions about whom it helped (and how long they stayed).

Because financial resources were so important to how MSF viewed its own ability to fulfill its organizational mission, the staff at the organization felt unable to resist decisions that brought in more funds. The staff members at MSF positioned themselves as passive and lacking agency in response to the demands of the federal government. For example, during my first meeting with the administrators to discuss my project, I asked them to tell me who they felt like they were supposed to help. Lana, one of the regional administrators immediately responded, “We help who HUD tells us to help.” Despite identifying as a church first, many staff at MSF made peace with decisions that seemed to violate their core organizational values (e.g., helping gay and transgender populations and

sending clients to housing before they were ready) by positioning themselves as lacking agency in the process. Because the decision to violate organizational values was constructed as inevitable, the staff was able to frame their compliance with these mandates as nothing more than a part of their job. However, although this positioning the organization as passive may have resulted in the violation of what many members of the organization viewed as their “Godly mission” it opened up opportunities to fulfill their commitment to “Doing the most good.”

Because the social welfare IL emphasizes the provision of services to marginalized populations, the neoliberal Discursive translation of that IL at MSF emphasized the quantity of services that were provided. The ability to “do the most good” was primarily framed in terms of material resources that MSF had to serve its clients. Especially important was the fact that MSF had so many beds and more staff to work for the clients full-time. In addition to the case managers for client general needs (which other SG shelters in the area did not have), they had the support of Sarah and Bethany, who dealt with employment, housing, and education. The resources for all of the staff came largely due to MSF’s contracts with the county, state, and federal government.

From a neoliberal perspective, agency can best be understood as the ability to function within a market system. In other words, agency can be tied directly to financial resources. To be able to make meaningful decisions and to best provide services to their clients, marketized nonprofit organizations like MSF seek financial resources from federal and state governments. However, to fulfill the contracts from these external government agencies, MSF’s mission begins to shift or drift from its original “church”

focus. MSF, with the large number of services they offered, could either allow its mission to “drift” slightly from how members of the organization understood it, or they could cut those services (along with the jobs).

However, MSF’s positioning itself as passive and lacking agency provided an avenue through which it was able to meet HUD obligations while simultaneously maintaining its religious values. Under its current contract with the county, MSF has little to no control who it brings into the program. During observations, prospective clients were unable to come directly to the shelter and request help. Instead, the potential clients needed to be referred through a resource hotline for homeless in the area. That resource center was run by another conservative Christian organization called Housing Hotline (HH), and members at both JP and MSF expressed the belief that HH may not be adequately providing services to LGBT populations. As Sarah pointed out, although MSF had received a directive from HUD that it would have to accept “different kinds of families,” relatively few same-sex couples have been in the shelter. Considering the increasing overrepresentation of LGBT populations among the homeless (Durso & Gates, 2012) it is entirely possible that they are simply not being referred to MSF.

Contracts also limited organizational agency at MSF by limiting who could seek services there, and how long clients could stay. For example, MSF was unable to provide services to anyone above the Health and Human Services defined poverty line. During an intake, a new client complained to Janet about how low the poverty line was. Janet agreed with the woman, and then shrugged and stated that it was out of her hands. Likewise, HUD’s contract with MSF pressured the organization to place clients in housing programs within 120 days. Although many staff recognized the HUD deadline

as unrealistic, they were forced to abide by them to meet the terms of the contract. The specifics of this practice are explored in depth in the market section of this chapter.

*Subjectification and social welfare.* Neoliberal Discourse also influenced how that social welfare IL directed the resources MSF acquired. At MSF, the neoliberal translation led to the primary goal of the organization to (re)integrate and (re)constitute its clients into the market. Discursively, the staff members framed this mission as getting their clients “back on track.”

At MSF, getting back on track meant that a certain number of measurable and material goals had been achieved. In particular, this discourse emphasized placing clients in housing programs outside the shelter. However, while housing was certainly the most important part of getting back on track, Janet articulated a series of other concerns she had in regards to getting the clients at MSF on track. After Janet used the phrase in an interview, I asked her what she meant by back on track, she responded that:

Janet: At one point of time that they consider to being on track, they were living the quote-unquote normal life of working, having a home. Some of them. Some of them not having the mental stress and anxiety. Um, some of them didn't live. Some of them wasn't experiencing the domestic violence and all of that. And some got into alcohol. They think about income. Saving Grace's mission would be to get them back to or at least reasonably close to it as possible.

Peter: Uh-huh.

Janet: Because you know my, my friend here, you know I see these women, you got to work. Got to have an income.

Peter: Uh-huh.

Janet: Um, these women and men come in, they don't, they don't have that physical um health that they need as far as like some people are sick nowadays. Now they know how, how to get them enrolled in ObamaCare, get insurance. They haven't been to doctors in years. You probably need med, haven't had it, or worse was getting it, but don't ... They didn't get it anymore. So when we are getting them back on track, we are hoping to get them established in all the things that they need as well as um, employment, even mental health.

In this statement, Janet articulated two important assumptions that she brought with her to her work at MSF. First, she listed a variety of goals that she sees involved in getting “back on track.” She argues that getting back on track involves addressing problems associated with housing, income, education, physical and mental health, and addiction. Second, Janet offers the assumption that the clients in the shelter were, at one point, “on track” and that one or more of the goals she listed have not been met and have resulted in the clients becoming homeless. While Janet’s definition of on track covers a variety of issues, all of them are targeted at the positioning of the clients at MSF so that they can be as “productive” as possible once they re-enter the market economy. Janet’s discursive articulation of “back on track” represented MSF’s neoliberal translation of the IL of social welfare and shows how that translation impacts nonprofit mission. The mission at MSF becomes the (re)subjectification of the homeless women they served from “nonworking deviants” to productive subjects.

To achieve this neoliberal (re)subjectification, the social welfare IL at MSF also productively drew on paternalist Discourse. For example, the intake process for clients at MSF established both the expectations for the program and provided case managers with

an understanding of what barriers each client faced in regards to getting back on track. However, the intake process also had the side effect of, in many ways, making the clients feel exposed. During the intake process, clients were expected to disclose any and all potential issues that may prevent them from being in a strong position to apply for housing programs. Revealing all of these potential issues required clients to reveal many things about which they may have been embarrassed or wished to keep secret.

Resentment of and resistance to the paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of social welfare and the disciplinary practices that translation used was common among clients. For example, clients sometimes complained about the security cameras at times, in particular when the footage was being used in disciplinary processes. More commonly, however, clients would lie or withhold information. Not only would clients elect to withhold information about potential barriers to housing, but at times they may also withhold their sources of income. For example, Tiara was caught with a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) card, which she had not disclosed during her intake. During her observed intake, Tiara had signed a form that claimed that she currently had zero income, which she clearly understood included any federal or state level aid programs based on Janet's explanation. After being caught, Tiara had claimed she had forgotten that she was receiving the benefit. However, I find it unlikely that she had forgotten, as during her intake she was able to state the exact amount she owed on her credit cards. More likely, the decision by clients to omit or lie about their resources struck me as a strategy by which they could resist organizational practices that likely increased their feelings of vulnerability. Through this resistance, they likely hoped to increase their individual agency while in the shelter.

Paternalist Discursive translation of the social welfare IL also emerged in the financial policies to which clients were expected to adhere. Once an income was established through work or a federal aid program, the next step was often to ensure that the clients would be in the best position to secure housing by addressing savings and back-owed rent or utilities. MSF maintained a relationship with other organizations that helped with housing, but to qualify for the housing assistance programs the clients had to be presented by their case managers. The case managers explained to me that the housing program took applications from lots of organizations in the area, and for the women to be competitive they needed to have savings and to have at least started addressing securing an income and savings to be considered.

Getting back on track served as a central organizing discourse within MSF by framing the viable “successful” ends of a stay at the shelter in a limited number of possible outcomes. The appropriateness of the metaphor for “on track” highlights how the discourse served to limit the agency of the women staying at the shelter. Tracks, by definition, are pre-defined. Metaphorically, MSF viewed the women as trains that had either been derailed or never set on the correct path. Therefore, MSF maintained that the best course of available action was to simply “correct” its clients to return them to the track.

***Conclusion: Social welfare.*** An IL of social welfare helps organizations make sense of how to provide services to a disenfranchised population. At MSF, the paternalistic and neoliberal Discursive translations of a social welfare IL manifested in practices that could be either contradictory or complementary. Contradictions arose in between the religious IL that was central to the SG mission and its incompatibility with

neoliberal Discourse. However, the neoliberal and paternalist Discursive translations complemented one another when seeking to achieve the (re)subjectification of MSF's clients into productive subjects. Paternalist Discursive translations provided the disciplinary practices (e.g., intimate knowledge of client's financial resources, forced budgeting, surveillance) needed to meet neoliberal Discursive demands to (re)create capitalist subjects.

**Market.** In this final section I explicate how the Discourses of neoliberalism and paternalism were translated into a market IL. The adoption of market logics at an NPO like MSF is representative of the increasingly normative trend of the marketization of NPOs. Specifically, neoliberal Discourses influence how MSF engaged a market IL manifested in particular organizing practices. This section explores how the neoliberal translation of an institutional market logic manifested in: the reliance on wage labor, the articulation of market language, the commodification of the clients, and the use bureaucratic practices.

***Reliance on wage labor.*** The almost complete reliance on wage labor and the lack of volunteer workers at MSF was one of the first things I noticed during my observations. The neoliberal translation of a market IL led to volunteers having a very small role in the daily organizing process of MSF. Normally, the use of volunteers at NPOs is emblematic of the nonprofit form (Frumkin, 2002; Pache & Santos, 2013). However, at MSF, volunteers had an extraordinarily limited presence. The program director, Betty, informed me that she had requested a volunteer with janitorial experience, but my only encounters with volunteers occurred during the toy giveaway event. During the event, a few older volunteer men and I helped put together the bags of gifts for the

families. Because the regular use of volunteers is often a defining characteristic of nonprofit work, the relative lack of volunteers at MSF highlights a shift that is occurring in the nonprofit sector as more marketized NPOs turn to paid labor. This increased reliance on paid employees over volunteers reflects a neoliberal Discursive valuation of paid labor as inherently superior to voluntary (Weeks, 2011).

However, the translation of market ILs that led to a reliance on wage labor manifested in organizational problems as well. Although the use of staff instead of volunteers provided the opportunity for more time and focus to be spent on projects on a weekly basis it also had the potential to have workers who treated their time in the shelter as “just a job.” The administrator Wendy informed me during her interview that staff that treated their work as a “job” instead of a “calling” either did not last or did not do well in the organization. In short, paying a wage is not sufficient to guarantee the quality of work.

*Articulation of market language.* The use of market language, which could be tied to the neoliberal translation of the IL of market, was common at MSF. The use of these discursive resources impacted how the staff at MSF made sense of and organized around the social problem of homelessness. In particular, the use of these discursive resources structured interaction at MSF to mirror a more corporate environment.

The first way in which a neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL emerged in discourse at MSF was through an emphasis on efficient production. After describing my project to Sarah and Bethany as addressing different ways of organizing around homelessness, Sarah stated emphatically that funders give money to “those who produce.” Neoliberalism is cited as different from other forms of liberal capitalism

because it involves the expansion of market logics into new arenas (Harvey, 2007; Peck & Tickell, 2002). Sarah's use of the term "production" revealed an internalization of neoliberal market ideals invading a social welfare organization. Bethany agreed with Sarah's claim and told me that funders want those who can show results the fastest.

While the use of terms like production are easily linked to a neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL, the use of neoliberal discursive resources also manifested in a more subtle and daily manner. The use of the term clients highlighted both how the women seeking services at MSF were located in the organizational hierarchy in a more subordinate position, but also emphasized a more neoliberal and marketized tone to the services rendered at the organization by its common association with the transactional nature of the term (clients often pay for the services they receive).

However, during observations, a discursive shift began to occur that reflected a level of awareness in regards to the use of the term clients. Several staff mentioned that they were supposed to start calling the clients "guests." I was informed that the change in language was something that Wendy had instituted. I asked her about the change during her interview, and she responded that she saw the use of guest instead of client as a way to change organizational culture:

Yeah. And, and some of the language and the thoughts. You know, "You shouldn't do anything. You shouldn't be just, you know, sitting around here." I said, "Well, let's start looking at the people whom we serve as our guests. Like, if they went to Holiday Inn or you know, whatever. How may we help you? How may I serve you the most?" I said, "We ... Because if we say as the Saving Grace, where we are the hands and feet of Jesus, I don't see Jesus snubbing his nose up at

folk? You know. So why are we doing that?" I was just really trying to work and change their mindset. You know? And change the culture here and, so the people can see themselves as servants and that they're not here to be served, but to serve.

Wendy claimed that by changing the language she hoped to change the mindset and attitudes of some of the staff at MSF. However, the neoliberal intrusion of market language into the nonprofit sector remains in Wendy's statement, because even while referencing the term "guest" she still resorts to a transactional metaphor in referencing a stay at a hotel.

Wendy's attempt to shift away from neoliberal Discursive resources at MSF was not quickly successful. For example, it seemed that the reason behind the shift to guest was unclear to some of the staff. During an intake meeting, Janet corrected herself to use the term "guest" instead of "client." She remarked to the woman whose intake she was conducting that they "weren't supposed to say client anymore, we're supposed to call you guests." When the woman asked why that was, Janet claimed she didn't know, and then said it was probably so the women didn't feel like staying too long. Janet's perception of what guests meant as an orienting term reveals a breakdown in the communication within MSF, and the difficulty in reversing entrenched organizational norms. For Janet, the use of the term guest was not meant to reshape staff perceptions but rather to encourage clients to not get too comfortable in the shelter. The use of the term guests, based on Janet's translation, was meant as a means to improving organizational efficiency. Thus, Janet's attempt to counter the market IL by using the language of guests still translated back into a neoliberal capitalist discursive framework. By using the term client and resorting to traditionally corporate values through their daily discourse, the staff at MSF

reflected the normative trend to bring market ILs into the nonprofit sector (Coule & Patmore, 2013; Pache & Santos, 2013). These discursive practices were linked to the commodification of their clients, which I discuss in the next section.

*Commodification of clients.* Commodification in new arenas is, perhaps, the best indication of a neoliberal organizing (Harvey, 2007; Peck & Tickell, 2002) and can thus be linked to a neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL. Commodification represents the transformation of goods into capital. At MSF, the clients that were placed into housing were the “goods” that MSF produced. Therefore, MSF not only (re)constituted its clients into productive subjects in a neoliberal economy, but MSF’s organizational structure also served to make its clients into a product that had transactional value by fulfilling contracts with external government agencies.

MSF used the contracts with external organizations like HUD to commodify its clients into goods that could be “traded” for financial resources. As I previously discussed, the use of market language was prevalent throughout MSF. The contracts provided the parameters for what constituted sufficient production. Wendy elaborated on how these commodifying practices impacted its clients. After she spent some time discussing the Housing First model of working with the homeless, I asked her what sorts of pressures that model put on MSF. Wendy responded that:

Wendy: Oh. It just says, you know we, we, we start corralling people, you know, to meet our outcomes and to meet, you know, uh, our, uh, funding, uh, our funders', uh, expectations. We just start housing people. Whether they're qualified or eligible for it or not.

Peter: Hm.

Wendy: (Exasperated laughing) So you just start housing people. You know, now we can say, you know, "We met our outcomes. Give us more money."

(Exasperated laughs) But ... Yeah, I'm just saying, so, you know, is that what we like to do? No. Um, in many cases does that occur? Yes.

Wendy's response that MSF places people into housing before they are ready was a sentiment echoed throughout the organization. As Janet pointed out, four months was far from sufficient time to help clients get back on track. The four months in the shelter that clients were given was already a minor resistance to HUD, which wanted the clients at organizations like MSF housed within 30 days of arriving at the shelter. Wendy and others' argument that they needed to meet funder expectations, and in particular the acknowledgment that the funders were able to pressure them to send clients out before they were perceived as ready, is indicative of the commodification of its clients.

Although MSF sought to create a space where the clients could get back on track, that goal was subsumed under its need to show that the organization had "met outcomes." In effect, the "product" that MSF "sold" to funding agencies was placement of clients in housing.

In addition to being placed in external housing programs before they might be ready, MSF's quest to meet HUD funding frequently led to them placing their clients in housing in poorer parts of the city, where the educational options for the clients' children were not adequate. For example, many of the clients were placed in a school district with a high school that had lost accreditation. When making plans with clients for example, Bethany's educational goals were often overruled due to where Sarah was able to find housing for the clients quickly. Although many of the staff claimed that education

“likely” played a factor in homelessness, the need to meet HUD funding requirements resulted in organizing practices that deemphasized education.

Market ILs emphasize an understanding of ownership based on those who have “invested capital” in the site (Pache & Santos, 2013). Since HUD and organizations like HUD are currently the largest “investors” in MSF, then they have ownership over what and how production should be understood and enacted. As HUD currently defines production in relation to how many clients leave the shelter into housing, then MSF is obligated to its “shareholders” to produce those desired ends.

The practice of commodifying clients was complemented by the use of market bureaucratic practices. Neoliberal translations of a market IL leads to bureaucratic practices to both ensure consistent production and, in the case of organizations like MSF, to prove its results to its funders. The next section explores how paternalist and neoliberal interpretations of a market IL manifested in the enactment of bureaucratic practices at MSF.

*Use of bureaucratic practices.* Although bureaucratic practices are not exclusive to a market IL, they are common because standardization is linked to efficiency and increased market gains through standardization (Thornton et al., 2012). Bureaucracy at MSF functioned as a part of the neoliberal market IL as a way to standardize and display its value to the agencies with which it contracted.

Paternalistic discursive translations of a market IL manifested at MSF in the bureaucratic hierarchical structure of the organization. My own experiences in navigating site access via a labyrinth of forms, phone calls, and personnel, aptly revealed the complexity of MSF’s bureaucratic hierarchical structure. The layers of bureaucracy

and hierarchy reflect on how individual organizations within the broader SG structure limited the agency of organizations to self-determine. Mandates could be handed down from the central office without any input from the local offices. When I was scheduled to meet with Lana to negotiate access, Betty and Wendy had not been informed of the meeting or that I would be doing the project.

Paternalistic Discursive translations of market ILs could most readily be seen when rules were broken. Rules at MSF were primarily enforced through bureaucratic mechanisms. A client who broke rules and was “held accountable” for their infraction was “written up.” A write up included not only a detailing of the infraction, but also the plan of action for clients moving forward. For example, when clients were not doing their chores or keeping their rooms clean, case managers and program assistants could write the client up. These write-ups would then be discussed at the next meeting the client had with the case manager. Generally, any write-up would include a plan of action (e.g., start doing chore, attend focus group regularly), and once the reason for the write-up and plan of action had been discussed, the client would be asked to sign the document. Three of these write-ups could result in MSF removing the client and her family from the shelter, but many incidents that could be written-up were either ignored or addressed with a warning. However, Janet complained during her interview that the uneven enforcement of rules meant that the clients were not learning to be accountable. Because the clients were not learning to be accountable in the shelter, she reasoned, they were not being prepared for life outside the shelter. This attitude is representative of the paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of the market and the interaction with the social welfare IL at MSF. The goal of the paternalistic policies was to prepare clients for the market by

disciplining them into compliant subjects. Bureaucratic disciplinary measures were the primary means of securing this compliance.

To best achieve this compliance, many staff at MSF believed that the rules should be enforced consistently in all cases. However, the unreflexive nature of rule enforcement at MSF led to some clients feeling like the staff lacked empathy. When Tiara, a guest, had first arrived at MSF she claimed she had been unaware of the rules around meals. She claimed that while some of the staff could be friendly, others seemed intent on the rigid enforcement of the rules:

One time I came in late, I was like, I want to eat and one lady told me no. I'm like, I'm in a shelter, I'm homeless you know you not gone help me to eat and this is supposed to be a place that provide food and everything else for us. I just came here that was like... I was in here like a week and she told me no. I ain't even know what time it was. I was told that 5, no at 5:30 we supposed to eat or something. So I ain't know, I didn't, I really didn't know, and she was like, "No, no you late!"

Tiara's statement reflected a common sentiment among some of the clients, who felt that staff at times lacked compassion or sympathy for them. Some of this lack of compassion is likely what Wendy hoped to address through the change in language, but it also reflects a deeper potential problem in a paternalistic Discursive translation of bureaucracy based in a market IL because it reveals how individual needs may get forgotten in the rigid enforcement of rules.

**Conclusion: Market.** This section has described how neoliberal and paternalistic translation of a market IL manifested at MSF. I discussed how the organization's:

reliance on paid staff, articulation of market language, commodifying practices, and use of bureaucratic practices, were indicative of its status as a marketized nonprofit organization. The prevalence of a market IL is indicative of how MSF conformed to the trend in the United States to embrace more corporatized and marketized organizing practices to increase its transactional resources as market actors.

**Conclusion: Midwest Safe Family.** Throughout the first part of this chapter, I have examined how neoliberal and paternalist Discourses informed the translation of the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market at MSF. The translation of these discourses sometimes complemented one another, and at times manifested in paradoxical fashions, leading to various consequences for both individual and organizational enactments of agency. I next discuss how anarchist and feminist Discourses impacted the organizing practices at Judy's Place (JP). Although neoliberal and paternalistic translations of the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market did manifest at JP, anarchist and feminist Discursive translations provided avenues of resistance. As I did with MSF, I first explore the material and discursive setting that constituted JP as a research site.

### **Judy's Place**

JP was a three story red brick building located next to a Catholic church that had been closed in the 1970s. JP itself had been the nunnery for the church, and when the diocese donated the nunnery to the workers for the house to be founded in the late 70s it had required them to also take over the care of the church. Several years prior to my project, the church had been passed on to a friend of the organization's who had largely let it fall into disuse. The house was located in a lower income neighborhood in the city.

Many residences in the area were clearly vacant and some appeared burned out or collapsing. These rundown houses and apartment buildings contrasted sharply with JP's immediate surroundings where new duplexes showed signs of development that many in the area worried was the first step towards gentrification. Members of the community informed me that much of the decay was due to property owners coming in, buying the buildings, and waiting for them to be condemned so they could more easily develop the area.

Since its inception, JP has been a house devoted to the care of homeless women and women with families. The only restrictions on guests (the term used to describe the women and their children) were that they must identify as a woman (one transgender woman stayed at the house during observations), and be over the age of 17. Stays could last from one night in the emergency room, to more than two years. Determination on the length of stay was made by the workers who either currently lived on the third floor of the building or in the surrounding neighborhood.

Inside, JP feels like an old home, the wood door to the front is impossibly thick and heavy, and the narrow entrance often made bringing in donations a difficult task. Immediately to the right when entering is the front room where visitors to the house could wait, and where during the summer a window air conditioning unit was placed. Across from the front room is the brightly lit toy room, with foam padding on the floor and a vast array of slightly beat-up or broken toys and children's books in varying levels of repair.

Also in the entry hallway was the computer room, with three desktop PCs that were almost always occupied by guests and their children, the often disorganized clothing

room (which guests could search through on Mondays and outside community members could come in on Tuesdays), and the entrance to the TV room, which was also air conditioned in the summer (though that window unit broke during July).

Finally, a small room located directly across from the office (which was itself simply a room with a locked closet, a desk, and a phone), held a twin bed that was always neatly made with fresh sheets. This room was used as an “emergency” shelter where women with no more than one child could stay for a single night. Calls for this room should only be taken after 6PM, but this rule was not regularly enforced.

Next to the dining room where volunteers prepared meals and workers were served, is the backdoor that led to a small porch and a newer looking wooden ramp for wheelchair access. A separate doorbell was attached to this door to allow whoever was on the house to know when someone at the front or back door.

The second floor was where the guests stayed, with the largest room being able to accommodate a large family with up to six children, and the smallest room having just enough space for a twin bed and some effects. Finally, the third floor of the building, which was off limits to guests, housed the three to seven workers, who were the “full time” volunteers who lived in the house. During observations, I was given use of one of the rooms upstairs, and only had to ask in advance to see if I could stay overnight. In addition to the rooms for the workers, a recently remodeled full kitchen with a couple of old couches took over one room, and another room filled with couches was where the majority of my interviews took place.

In addition to the workers, JP had a frequent stream of regular and one-time volunteers. Many of the regular volunteers performed as housetakers, taking either the

morning shift from 8AM-1PM, the afternoon shift from 1PM-6PM, or the closing evening shift from 6PM-10:30PM. Because the number of workers was insufficient to cover all of these shifts, housetakers fulfilled an essential role in the running of the organization. While “on house,” housetakers had a great deal of autonomy, though they needed to text one of the live-in workers if they were planning to admit a guest to the overnight room. Besides serving as housetakers, some regular volunteers came in once or twice a month to cook the meals for the house. Finally, volunteer groups or individuals would occasionally come in to help with tasks like sorting through the donation room or cleaning.

My quest for access to Judy’s Place had included more than a week of anxiety and waiting. It was the start of June, and I had been desperately trying to get into contact with one of the workers at the house. It had taken me from Monday to Wednesday to get a worker on the phone instead of one of the housetakers, and once I had accomplished this task I met with another hurdle. I explained my project to the worker, Danielle, and referenced my work with a similar house in the region. We chatted briefly about mutual acquaintances from the other house, and she informed me that she would discuss the possibility of my research being conducted at Judy’s Place during its next community meeting on the following day. I answered a few more questions for her about my research and my planned methods of data collection, and then we bid farewell.

As Thursday came and went, followed by Friday and Saturday with no word, I started to become anxious. Sunday morning I resolved to call if I hadn’t heard yet, but I was saved the trouble when Danielle reached out to me. She informed me that they were willing to have me come out, but that they wanted to meet with me in person first. I

agreed readily and asked when I could come out. She listed a few dates, and we decided I would come to visit on Tuesday to work with a white male worker in his mid-20s who had been at the house for five years named Edward. After working a four-hour shift with Edward, followed by another shift with a white female worker in her mid-20s who had been at the house for less than a year named Olivia the following day, I was forced to wait as the community once more deliberated about my project. Danielle reached out the following day to inform me that I had permission to begin my observations.

Once I was able to begin my observations, I generally performed as a housekeeper. Much of my time as a housekeeper was spent either sitting alone in the office waiting to answer the phone, handing out sandwiches, or chatting with some of the guests. Often, one of the older guests would need help in the computer room that was a door or two down the hallway from the first floor office. At times, I would be assigned various tasks like taking out the trash or cleaning out a newly vacated room, but mostly I sat and chatted.

Now that I have provided a brief overview of Judy's Place and offered some context for my findings, I next discuss each IL and how its enactment was based on a translation of a guiding Discourse. The next sections examine how the Discourses of anarchism and feminist guided the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market. I begin with a discussion of the IL of responsibility.

**Responsibility.** At JP, the IL of responsibility emerged from a translation of anarchist and feminist Discourses. At heart, these translations led to an emphasis on mutual accountability and "coresponsibility" (Vieta, 2014) being encouraged in the organization. Much like neoliberal Discourse, anarchist Discourse emphasized personal

accountability. However, an anarchist Discursive translation of a responsibility IL highlighted systemic issues that limited individual agency. The anarchist Discourse at JP was closely tied to a feminist Discourse that emphasized an ethic of care and attending to individual needs.

This section explores how the translations of anarchist and feminist Discourses manifested in the IL of responsibility at JP. First, I examine how these Discursive translations of responsibility highlighted systemic issues related to homelessness. Next, I discuss how feminist Discursive translation of a responsibility IL encouraged guests and workers at JP to care for one another. I conclude this section by discussing how the anarchist translation of the IL of responsibility resulted in tension between individual agency and organizational support.

*The institutional logic of responsibility and systemic critique.* For the workers at JP, the anarcho-feminist translation of an IL of responsibility was central to understanding the root cause of homelessness. Olivia, a young white worker in her mid-20s who had previously been at another Catholic Worker house on the west coast, discussed this issue with me during her interview. When I asked her why there was homelessness, she told me:

Because people have so much and don't share (laughs)! In the simplest terms and I think that not enough people take personal responsibility in doing anything about it. I think one of my biggest frustrations around people calling on behalf of someone else for shelter is, "why don't you open up your spare bedroom?" I mean, I don't know many, there are, probably every house in my parent's neighborhood and maybe I direct it at my parents too much... and if everyone

took in one person, that would be all it is and then we wouldn't, and then, if that, if that family financially supported one other family and accompanied them to help them find a new space then it wouldn't require us to like, get all this money to support all these families and then not necessarily being able to meet all their needs because we just don't have the ability to do that.

The anarchist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility can be seen in her taking to task those who have the financial resources to help but do not choose to do so.

Likewise, the feminist translation of the IL of responsibility is present in her emphasis that people need to take responsibility for each other. This articulation of taking responsibility for one another was central to the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility, and it served as the basis for the systemic critiques that organizational members and allies engaged in.

Systemic critiques based on this translation of responsibility logic often found an outlet in *The Welcome Place*, JP's organizational newsletter that was written by members of the organization and their friends and supporters. In a 2015 issue addressing the protests in Ferguson, one friend of the organization stated that:

What makes us, Catholic Workers, a little different from those big non-profit folks is that we see these works of mercy as acts of resistance, and we draw the connections to resistance movements. When we see so many people in need and we even live with them, we start to know them. We only start to know them because most of us will never know what it means to be destitute. We realize that it's not these people who are broken, it's the whole system, and it is our

responsibility to challenge and change this system, just as it is our responsibility to care for those most adversely affected by it.

This passage links Catholic Worker critiques about systemic oppression to their belief that due to their understanding of responsibility they should challenge the system and care for those adversely affected by it. This passage highlights how the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility plays into not only showing why homelessness exists but also why organizations like JP exist.

The guests at JP picked up on the anarcho-feminist translation of personal responsibility during their time at the house, and it was possible to hear those Discursive understandings of the IL of responsibility speak through them as they engaged in systemic critiques. For example one guest, a black mother in her mid-20s who had been at the house for a little under a year, named Meredith, reflected on how she had picked up on systemic views of homelessness from her time at JP. When I asked her why there was homelessness, she first discussed issues around income inequality, and then continued that:

Meredith: Or like ... Because, there's things that they probably can do. Like, I understand some people are homeless because of, like, schizophrenia, sicknesses like mental illness, or drug addiction, like, you know, they're addicted, they can't help it. But, just like rehab, you know, they could have like rehab shelters, and all this, like, I think they just use the money for like, war.

Peter: Mm-hmm.

Meredith: Like, I think I was sitting in the office one day and they spent like... so much money... It was something like they spend more money on like war weapons and stuff than they spend on like, education.

Monica's answer echoes critiques of the system leveled by other members of JP, who placed much of the blame for the problem of homelessness on a government that spends massive resources on the military while neglecting the needs of its own citizens.

However, while the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility placed the blame for homelessness on systemic concerns, this translation was not without complications or tensions. For example, one of the workers, a white man in his 20s named Terry highlighted the different stance on responsibility by discussing a guest named Shannon:

We have, we have like a woman here who is pretty much computer illiterate; she's a black woman who's like 60 years old. Nobody really wants to hire this person in our world today. She actually got a job working at the welfare office; it was like kind of a clerical kind of position but [she] couldn't figure out how to do the computer and so she didn't last long there. So how we we, you know, and she's also somebody who looks for jobs all the time, um, how do we say, "Oh, well, your time's up, you know, you have to go on to the next place." When I don't know that there's much else she could be doing to try and figure out life. Uh, it's just the way systems are set, and the way the work force is today. She's been like left behind and uh, you know...

In this passage, Terry makes explicit his belief that the system is to blame for the guest's homelessness and that she is not responsible for her position. He argued that they could not ask the woman to leave because she has been "left behind" by the system.

However, Terry's statement that the fact that the guest was seeking employment influenced the decision to let her stay also revealed a tension between the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility and a more normative neoliberal Discursive translation of that IL. Terry acknowledged that because the woman was seeking employment impacted decision-making around whether or not she would be asked to leave. Similar sentiments were expressed at times for guests who had stayed for an extended period of time but who were not seen as making progress towards finding employment or looking for a place of their own. The tension between the search for paid work and being allowed to stay is representative of one manner in which the neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility seeped into JP. Because Shannon was "taking responsibility" for herself and looking for work (albeit unsuccessfully) she was able to stay longer. The fact that the search for labor impacted worker decision-making around length of guest stay highlighted some of the difficulties in completely rejecting neoliberal Discursive ideals. These tensions manifested even, as Terry claimed in his interview, when they sought to distance themselves from oppressive systems. He told me the workers find themselves trying to "push the people, the guests we live with to participate in them in various ways. Like uh, you know, go and, go and get a shitty job." This hesitancy by workers to push their guests into a system that they recognized as fundamentally oppressive fundamentally shaped how JP shaped its practices and directed organizational resources and energy.

The anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility meant that workers and volunteers at JP directed much more of their efforts at addressing systemic issues, and left them, in many ways, without the resources to effectively address individual level issues. For example, workers could only provide marginal time and energy to helping those guests who were actively seeking work. Likewise, organizational resources were not used to address clients who could be seen as disruptive or as attempting to exploit the organization.

As I have argued in this section, the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility emphasized the role that oppressive systems played in the problem of homelessness. The foundation of the systemic critique was that the homelessness occurred because people didn't take responsibility for one another. Thus, workers, volunteers, and guests were encouraged to be responsible for one another. Next, I discuss how feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to organizational members taking responsibility and caring for one another through an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982) at JP.

*The institutional logic of responsibility and the ethic of care.* A feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to an enactment of a feminist ethic of care by emphasizing the need for guests, workers, and volunteers to offer one another mutual support. During my observations, a guest named Yolanda briefly stayed at JP. Yolanda was a black woman in her mid-20s with a brash personality. Her voice projected throughout the house, and I could easily hear her coming down the stairs as she had a tendency to stomp as she stepped, rattling the pictures on the office wall. Yolanda suffered from depression and had been diagnosed as bipolar. As a condition of her stay at

JP, she was required to enroll in a mental health program at a local hospital.

From the moment she arrived at JP, Yolanda was a point of contention in the house. Her first night she started "cooking" and left several burners running, which another guest named Peggy turned off after being woken up. One of the workers, a white woman in her late 30s who had been at JP for nine years named Danielle, documented Yolanda's second night in the logbook as follows:

So at 7 this morning Terry and Olivia saw Yolanda coming in. I talked to her this morning she said she left at 5 and came back at 7. I also told her I smelled alcohol on her breath. She said she drank this morning but abided by the rules and didn't bring anything in the house. She tells the truth ☺. All the women said she was up most of the night going up and down the stairs and slamming her door, so most of them are upset.

However, in spite of documented guest frustration towards Yolanda, on several occasions I saw the women in the house going out of their way to engage with her. When I commented on the behavior to Danielle, she told me that the other guests had been asked to be supportive and help keep Yolanda stable until she got settled in.

Although the other guests quickly tired of Yolanda's behavior before she left the shelter after less than a week, the choice by the workers to encourage the other women in the house to reach out as opposed to isolating Yolanda reflected a feminist ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982), which Discursively shaped responsibility as an IL at JP by emphasizing the need to be responsible for one another. Had Yolanda been a client at MSF, it seems much more likely that the other clients would have been told to do everything they could to ignore the disruptive presence. Interestingly, the decision by the workers to encourage

the other guests to reach out to Yolanda can be read as a paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility which, in some ways, limited the agency of the guests, a topic that will be addressed below.

***Responsibility, agency, and paradox.*** In spite of the dominance of feminist and anarchist organizing Discourse at JP, paternalistic Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility also manifested at the organization through the institution of rules that limited guest agency. For example, mothers were required to be on the same floor as their children when they were in the house. Furthermore, JP instituted a curfew for its guests, requiring that they return to the house by 10PM. The curfew was intended to relieve the burden on the volunteer workers who would otherwise have to stay up and wait for a guest who was running late for curfew. Finally, workers at JP had the ability to remove guests from the house. Although there were not set time limits on the length of stay, guests who had been at the house for an extended period of time were sometimes asked to leave even if they hadn't broken any rules.

During observations however, the role of the paternalistic Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility at JP became more complex. After a series of reflective meetings on how JP may be reflecting issues related to race and power as an organization, the workers at JP elected to provide all of the guests currently staying in the house with keys to the front door. When I asked Olivia, one of the workers, to tell me about the changes occurring in the house she said that many of the changes were shifts that had been discussed for a long time, but had never been fully realized. She pointed out that giving keys to the guests was a huge step because it had not happened in the 40 years that JP had existed. Olivia contextualized the keys as a logical progression of a

series of choices that had been made in order to stop “micromanaging everything about people’s lives.” She compared the decision to give the women keys to an earlier decision that had been made at JP:

I think it’s something that’s kind of been talked about for a long time.. um.. like around food rules. It’s something that we wanted to talk about since I moved in over a year ago and we just never quite got there because I think there was always this tension around like, why are we trying to stop people from accessing the food? What is that coming from? And um, I think a lot of that surrounds the community looking at the structures and how racism plays into a lot of that. So I think that it’s like, been an underlying thing even before I was here.

Olivia continued that she saw the changes in structure as precipitated at least in part by other changes occurring in the house due to a sudden reduction in live-in workers and a need to lessen the burden on those who remained in the house.

The decision to entrust keys to the guests at JP can be interpreted as reflecting a more anarcho-feminist Discursive understanding of responsibility. Anarchist Discourse highlights the responsibility of each individual to govern themselves, and feminist Discourse highlights the need to attend to others. By providing the women with keys, the workers trusted the guests’ commitment to be responsible to the workers and other guests who lived at JP. Terry, Olivia, and Danielle, the workers who would be continuing to live in the house as the changes took place, expressed both trepidation and excitement about the coming change. However, while providing keys may have shifted the conversation around curfew, during a conversation with Olivia she informed me that they would continue to have a curfew as a rule in the house.

Interestingly, the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility and the material constraints of organizing at JP manifested in a paradoxical relationship between individual agency and services. Because the guests at JP had more avenues for empowerment and, therefore, more agency in their daily lives, more responsibility was placed upon them on a daily basis. One guest, a black woman in her 60s who had been at the house for about two years named Peggy, informed me during her interview that JP was not a good place to go if you were looking for someone to hold your hand. The lack of handholding was fine for some of the guests like Monica, who had little trouble finding employment. For other guests however, more daily support was needed to help them achieve their goals while in the shelter. Although JP acknowledged and foregrounded systemic issues that led to the creation and maintenance of the problem of homelessness, the lack of material resources did not provide the organization with the in-house resources needed to guide their guests through the transition process. Therefore, although an anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility highlights systemic concerns, the material resources of JP were inadequate to prepare their guests to combat those concerns other than the workers offering what help they could. Unfortunately, the workers at JP already found themselves stretched thin.

***Responsibility and emotional strain.*** The translation of anarcho-feminism and the IL of responsibility at JP had the potential to place increased emotional strain on the workers when they chose to remove someone from the program. One guest, a black woman in her early 30s, Shara, was asked to leave, along with her three young daughters, due to her use of homophobic language towards a lesbian couple who had begun staying at the shelter. Use of discriminatory language was one of the few areas of zero tolerance

at JP, and during my observations, this was the only instance of rule enforcement leading directly to someone leaving. JP's rules, which are read during intake into the house, state that:

We are a house that welcomes all people, regardless of “color or creed”. Black, white, old, young, lesbian, straight, or transgender people—all are welcome here. So, anyone who uses hateful language towards another that is racist, homophobic, etc. will be asked to leave.

The use of homophobic language by Shara towards the new guests prompted a tension between attending to the needs of Becca and Naomi, the interracial lesbian couple, and Shara and her daughters. Shara was asked to leave in part because many of the women had complained about her recently, but also because the couple was less likely to find a place to stay anywhere else.

The feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to the decision for Shara to leave. While none of the workers seemed to regret the decision, the fact that it re-emerged as a topic weeks after Shara left continued to bother some of them, in particular due to the need to put her daughters out as well.

Also, the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility, which led to an emphasis on “responsibility to others,” placed a strain on the workers who lived in the house by providing few opportunities to relax while at home. Terry commented that it was difficult to “go to the bathroom” without receiving a request from a guest and feeling the need to honor it. There was a great deal of turnover among the workers at JP, and one of the most cited reasons was the emotional toll that took place due to the nature of living with their guests and feeling responsible to respond to their needs at any time.

**Conclusion: Responsibility.** The IL of responsibility at JP was primarily translated through anarchist and feminist Discourses, though paternalist and neoliberal Discourses also manifested in the organization. These Discourses resulted in responsibility being leveraged to critique systematic inequality and oppression that led to the conditions of homelessness. The use of these Discourses to make sense of the IL of responsibility also led to an ethic of care being fostered among their guests. Furthermore, this translation of the IL of responsibility led to more individual agency for guests, but unfortunately material constraints meant that relatively few services were provided to help the guests as they sought their goals. Also, the burden of feeling responsible for the guests created increased emotional strain on the workers, which led to high turnover during observations.

**Social Welfare.** At JP, the anarcho-feminist translations of a social welfare IL took two separate directions. Like with MSF, at the surface the mission of the organization was to provide services to homeless women and families. However, in addition to this goal, JP and its workers sought to create systemic change through education and social protest. To describe the anarchist and feminist translations of a social welfare IL at JP I discuss the following topics. First, I discuss the role of “mission” at JP. Second, I discuss how the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of social welfare impacted organizational agency. Third, I discuss the feminist Discursive influence on the social welfare IL and consciousness raising efforts. Finally, I explore how organizational changes at JP laid the groundwork for a shift in organizational mission and possible implications for subjectification at the shelter.

***Social welfare institutional logic and organizational mission.*** Perhaps

unsurprisingly for an anarchist Discursive translation of a social welfare IL, JP lacked what would appear to be a clearly articulated mission. All of the members of the organization noted the importance of taking care of the women and providing a space for them, but there was no clearly defined mission statement for organizational members to cite. When I asked one volunteer, a white woman in her 40s who had been volunteering at JP for more than a decade named Erica, what JP's mission was she responded that:

It is to provide hospitality, uhh.. to provide hospitality to homeless women and children. So hospitality, and I do use the shorthand when I'm explaining to people what you know what I do, or what Judy's Place is, that it's a shelter, but it's not a shelter. It is a house of hospitality. And I could do more to educate, but its goal is to live with people and to share what uh resources we have, um, with people who need them in a way that hopefully is not embedded in like power and other harmful, or ... The whole idea of personalism. So you know, the working on the needs of people who are there. Treating people as human beings, and getting to know them as people and not just as clients to be served. I think that's really an important part of it for me there and I think that that's, that's a critical part.

Erica claimed that JP's central mission is to provide hospitality for the women, and she argued that there is more to hospitality than just being another homeless shelter. She stated later that the driving principle of personalism guides a different orientation towards their mission. She makes the point that the workers at JP seek to get to know the guests as "people and not just as clients."

The Catholic Worker movement more generally is likewise lacking in a specific mission, but its website provides a description of the personalism that Erica sees as central to the mission of JP:

Personalism, a philosophy which regards the freedom and dignity of each person as the basis, focus and goal of all metaphysics and morals. In following such wisdom, we move away from a self-centered individualism toward the good of the other. This is to be done by taking personal responsibility for changing conditions, rather than looking to the state or other institutions to provide impersonal "charity." We pray for a Church renewed by this philosophy and for a time when all those who feel excluded from participation are welcomed with love, drawn by the gentle personalism Peter Maurin taught (Catholic Worker, 2014).

This description of personalism reflects aspects of important ideas that different staff, guests, and volunteers engaged with when asked about JP's mission. Terry said that they were hoping to create a world of justice and that the way that goal has manifested has been in the creation of space for homeless women.

Personalism is reflective of JP's anarchist Discursive translation of the social welfare IL. The concept of personalism highlights JP's anarchist belief in direct intervention in solving social problems as opposed to looking to government interventions that have prevented opportunities for direct mutual aid and support (Amster, 2015). Rather than seeking outside intervention or the institution of a "charitable" model that focused on the redistribution of financial largesse from the government or private individuals, the personalist philosophy emphasized direct action and solidarity with the poor.

By using an anarchist translation of the IL of social welfare, JP gravitated to organizing practices that emphasized direct action based on individual need. Furthermore, the personalist model of organizing seemed to lead JP to largely eschew forming ties to outside organizations that would place limits on its ability to respond flexibly. The next section explores how the anarcho-feminist Discursive translations of a social welfare IL impacted organizational agency at JP and in particular how flexibility was placed as centrally important to organizational members.

*Flexibility and organizational agency at Judy's Place.* Anarchist and feminist Discursive translations of a social welfare IL at JP emphasized the needs of individuals. The individualized treatment by the workers towards each of the guests was both part of organizational practice as well as in daily interaction. When they first came to JP, guests were told that there was no official timeline for their stay, but that the topic would be visited every couple of months by the workers. The decision about how long anyone could stay was based on the worker perceptions of individual needs, and the guests who made JP their home appreciated the flexibility around those needs. One guest, Meredith, expressed her surprise at how nice everyone was when she first came to the shelter. I asked her to say more about what was surprising, and she responded that:

I would say that they, um, I'm trying to figure out the word for it. They were basically, they just like care about the guests that actually stay here. Um, not saying that other shelters don't, but sometimes it's just like, um, you're not, you know, you're not a name with a face, basically. You just like this homeless person that just doesn't matter, because a lot of people think like, being homeless, like, "you lazy, you make bad decisions, why don't you get up and get a job," and I've

been working since I don't know when and I'm still homeless. So, like, (laughs).

But, yeah, it's pretty cool.

Meredith continued that when she had first come to JP, she had been told that there wasn't a definitive time period that she could stay, but that they'd check up on the matter every couple of months. Meredith had been homeless off and on for several years, and unlike some of the other guests at the house had experienced other shelters. She argued that the individualized treatment they received at JP was very different from other places she'd stayed before.

The emphasis on personalism, drawing from an anarchist Discursive understanding of a social welfare IL, gives JP a great deal of agency in its ability to provide individualized treatment. Edward, a white male worker in his mid-20s who had been at the house for five years, discussed how he liked that JP was free of the bureaucracy that often constricted other organizations and kept them from being able to respond compassionately. Furthermore, by refusing to work with organizations like HUD or the federal government, the agency of both the workers and the organization as a whole was increased. The perception by some members of the organization was that accepting external funding from an agency like HUD could force them to organize like a traditional charity or service provider. However, Danielle informed me that she wasn't sure that an organization like JP could be founded in the current economic climate. Danielle claimed that JP was lucky to have been founded during a time when the tax codes were different, and that the organization had some longtime supporters who believed in what the organization was trying to accomplish.

Anarcho-feminist translations of a social welfare IL dominated at JP, but they did not entirely eclipse more normative neoliberal Discursive translations. JP sought to differentiate itself from other shelters in the area, and in many ways provided much more flexibility than other area shelters. in terms of length of stay and meeting individual needs. However, in spite of this goal, normative values within the organization led to some guests articulating their mission as very similar to other shelters. One guest, Peggy, who had never been to another shelter except as a volunteer, told me the mission was:

To show you that you're not alone, that you can come here out of the cold. You can get yourself together here. All you have to do is ask, and then you can get on your feet here to go back out there and try again. So it's like a transitional house.

Peggy's claim that the house was "a transitional house" and that it served to "get you back on your feet" reflects a welfare mission more closely aligned with a normatively neoliberal shelter than an anarchist one because it echoes the "back on track" discourse that was so prevalent at MSF. The similarity to other shelters that was perceived by guests was, perhaps, because they were not sufficiently brought in to the social change efforts in which JP engaged. The next section of this paper explores how the social welfare IL at JP led to efforts at creating systemic change.

*Social change and social welfare IL.* The anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of a social welfare logic at JP addressed social change and the conditions that created homelessness. As was discussed earlier, homelessness at JP was discursively positioned as a manifestation of systematic imbalances. Therefore, when discussing mission, members of JP often discussed broader social concerns that they sought to confront in addition to their more daily work with the guests in the house. However,

while the workers all saw their work as being part of a broader project of confronting inequality, there was not a sense of unity in the focusing of efforts. For example, one new community member felt that while the house was working on some projects related to racism that JP hadn't engaged as fully as she thought it would when she joined.

Edward pointed out that while making changes that impacted the homeless community as a whole was a dream of JP that they fell well short of that goal:

I think that we do hospitality to several women and kids, and we, mostly do a good job, I think compared to at least other shelters in the area. We do like, at least as good or in some ways better than other shelters, but we aren't, I don't think, systematically changing the way homelessness is addressed in the city. We do hospitality to those 12 women well, and I think that's kind of it.

Edward prefaced this comment by stating about how he has had to “scale down a bit” in regard to his expectations as to what can be accomplished. Edward was also very active in the local Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement along with another worker. While JP as an organization did not throw all of its energy behind BLM, worker participation in it was fully supported by the other workers.

Although another worker, Terry, shared some of Edward's sentiment, he also pushed back against this feeling, when I asked him about the mission he claimed:

You know, everyone here might frame it differently, but like, to create a place um, of justice kind of in the, in the world and in our city um, where like, an- and its current form and the form it's pretty much taken for almost the whole time it has existed is offering hospitality to women and children. Um, uh, like when there are people who are homeless like welcoming them in because in a just world

everyone would have access to housing and food and th- the necessities to life.

So the hospitality is really like the fruit of that tree. More than the tree itself.

Terry's statement reflects an anarchist Discursive translation of a social welfare IL by claiming that JP is a type of prefigurative organizing. Prefigurative organizing is a concept in anarchist organizing that claims that people should seek to embody the future they desire through current organizing practices (Shantz, 2010). By positioning JP as an organization that provides the things that everyone would have in a just world, JP acts as both model and instrument towards social change. Though even with this in mind Terry admits the limited impact JP may have as an organization. However, the direct care of homeless women and social protest efforts were not the only avenues of social change taken by JP.

The feminist Discursive translation of the IL of social welfare provided the basis for another method of social change through consciousness raising efforts. When defining hospitality in her interview, Danielle stated that she believed that the hospitality they provided was not only to the guests but also to the volunteers and house takers:

Our hospitality is not only to, uh, men and women that find themselves unhoused but it also, um, to folks who are raised with privilege an understanding of how to deconstruct that privilege and build a world where we are more compassionate and feel responsible for taking care of one another.

By extending the notion of hospitality (which could be broadly construed as JP's mission) to include the educational efforts, Danielle expands JP's mission from simply caring for the homeless to making small systemic changes. These educational efforts can

be seen as a consciousness raising effort tied to a feminist Discursive understanding of JP's social welfare IL.

The anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of a social welfare IL was a draw for many of the workers and regular volunteers. In particular, the structures that created the opportunity for consciousness raising also provided the basis for meaningful relationships to develop between volunteers and guests. Julia, a white woman in her early 50s who regularly cooked for the guests at JP, explained her decision to stop working with other shelters:

I... I just felt that it [working at other shelters] wasn't really a good chance to meet people. It was like, here's the food! And... and there wasn't really a chance to like, sit down and chat with the women in the shelter. Like, you get told you can't sit down and eat with them, and that's what I want. I really don't like the whole, like, serve your food and get... get out of there, uh, it's like just this whole charity way of serving homeless people.

Other volunteers who came to JP expressed a similar sentiment in regards to why they chose to volunteer at JP instead of at other shelters. They felt that the way other shelters in the area were organized prevented opportunities to build meaningful relationships with the guests. This breaking down of hierarchical barriers and creating the conditions where equality was at least more possible, if not fully realized, reflected a more anarchistic understanding of the social welfare mission. Rather than maintaining paternalistic structures that reinforced difference between homeless and privileged populations by actively preventing them from eating together, JP sought to lessen the gap between these populations.

**Conclusion: Social welfare.** The IL of social welfare was primarily translated from anarchist and feminist Discourses. The translation of these Discourses led to an emphasis on organizational flexibility based on the anarchist principle of personalism that allowed the organization to tailor treatment to individual guests but limited possible sources of financial support. Furthermore, these Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility manifested in attempts to address the systems that created homelessness. The effort to address these imbalances occurred primarily through consciousness raising efforts by giving volunteers and volunteer groups opportunities to spend time with the guests.

**Market.** The practices associated with a market IL did not directly manifest at JP. Anarchist and feminist Discourses are largely incompatible with a market IL. However, workers at JP were clearly aware of the kinds of practices that were engaged in at other shelters that used a market IL, and often discussed these practices to contrast the work that they did at JP. The anarchist and feminist Discursive translations of a market IL then manifest in the antithetical organizing practices in which the organization engaged. To explore this process of organizing through contrast, I first discuss how the use of the term guest structured interaction at the organization. Second, I examine how the organization supported individual goals and resisted more quantifiable measures. Third, I discuss the resistance to more bureaucratic and hierarchical organizing practices. Finally, I examine the role that volunteers played in the resistance to market IL.

**Resistance to market language.** Anarcho-feminist resistance to the IL of the market most obviously emerged with the deliberate use of the term guest at JP. Julia, the dinner volunteer, claimed that the term guest was meant as an honest thing. I asked her

about rules at JP and what she thought about the rules there:

Like, they say guest, and I really feel like they mean that. There's like, um... there's this idea of hospitality, like, "Welcome to our home!" and that's something that's really important to people here. So like, we want to welcome you in and really, uh, really help you. You know, and so there's, there's rules, but you know guests when they come into your home, whether it's family or friends or whatever, you know, they have rules too, right? So it's... it's like this big thing where we're here to serve the guests, just like you serve a guest in your house.

Julia's reflection on what was meant by the term guest helped me to better understand how the term guest alters relations. The idea of having a guest come into my home and that structuring of the relationship reveals a great deal about JP's organizational orientation towards the women who came into the house. Especially important is how the term guests reinforce the division of the services offered at JP from the market ILs.

By referring to the women they served as guests, the workers and volunteers at JP structured interaction in a manner that sought to provide more equitable footing. Rather than seeking to structure itself as a service provider, workers and volunteers took the idea of welcoming the women into "their home" very seriously. Furthermore, as JP's organizational structure shifted to implement more shared governance (which I discuss below), some questions began to arise as to whether or not the guests would still be guests. As Olivia told me, the workers were becoming increasingly interested in finding homeless women who wanted to be "a part of the project."

***Resistance to quantification.*** Anarcho-feminist Discursive resistance to the IL of

the market also emerged in the resistance to more quantifiable ways of measuring the work that was being done. Market ILs often necessitate a more quantifiable measure of progress, and this orientation often led to an attitude that focuses on quantifiable measures (e.g., number of services provided). While talking about the challenges of convincing long-term supporters and volunteers to support changes in the organization, I asked Danielle what she believed those supporters might want from JP, Danielle replied that:

I don't know. I mean, you know, I think sometimes, I think sometimes our society as a whole pushes doing more, um, or pushes the idea of, like, quantity rather than quality. Um. I mean I, I notice that same pull inside myself. Like, we should be doing more. We should be doing, um, but also, you know, being surrounded by this much need it's hard to negotiate. It's hard to say what we do is enough, ever. . . I think now, you know, sometimes with what the women, or the people in the house choose might mean, for example we stopped doing lunches, open lunches where the men come in. That was a really hard decision but it was reflected to us that the folks that live here that there's three hours a day that there's a lot of strangers in the house and it's often folks we don't really know.

Danielle continued that the decision to stop serving an open lunch on weekdays was one that came from a desire to both lessen the load for the workers and to respond to requests from the women who stayed at the house full time. The decision reflected a focus on the quality of care as opposed to the quantity.

The anarcho-feminist resistance to institutional market logics through quantification also emerged in the length of stay that the guests were allowed. Rather

than seeking to push the guests out as quickly as possible into housing, many guests were given opportunities to seek employment or educational opportunities that enriched them. For example one of the guests, a black woman in her 30s named Tara, would often discuss her school assignments with me as she pursued her degree in social work.

The fact that Tara was able to stay at JP for an extended period of time (more than a year as of my observations) to focus exclusively on her educational goals, and at times even receive financial support for school outings, displays a very different attitude towards education than at MSF. The workers at JP saw Tara's continued progress towards her degree as a method by which they could support her as she forged a path for herself. Rather than seeking to force her to seek work she might find demeaning, JP enabled her to progress in a direction that adhered to her own desires. Tara was an proud black woman, who refused to be interviewed on several occasions, and who was clearly distressed by her homelessness. However, she was clearly grateful for the support and accommodations she received from the workers at JP. Tara's length of stay without pursuing employment would not be seen as a good use of resources in an organization that sought more quantitative and market-based measures of success.

Due to the anarchist Discursive resistance to institutional market logics, JP's funding was not tied to outcomes. Because the organization was not a 501(c)(3) organization, it did not have to report how it used its funds to the federal or state government. Additionally, as it did not seek support from organizations like United Way or HUD, it was able to maintain autonomy and ownership over what its organizational goals should be. Finally, by not engaging with organizations like HUD or the federal

government, organizations like JP are able to resist market logic practices related to bureaucracy, which I next discuss.

*Resistance to bureaucracy.* Anarchist and feminist Discourses at JP both resisted a push to become more bureaucratic. Freed from an organizational structure that would have required bureaucracy (e.g., the need to report to external agencies, or using formal write-ups as a disciplinary measure) JP was free to engage in direct interpersonal as opposed to textual interaction. JP actively resisted engaging in more bureaucratic practices, and some members took pride in the lack of bureaucracy within the organization. Edward told me that one of the things that drew him to the Catholic Worker movement was that it was not as caught up in bureaucracy. Bureaucratic organizing is meant to negate the role of the individual and apply standardized rules across all cases, and Edward claimed that he liked being able to respond to situations as an individual as opposed to as “part of some organization.” As opposed to having a standardized write-up and appeal process like MSF, when there was a problem with a rule violation, for example, someone not doing her chore, a different tactic was taken. At one point, I noticed that one of the guests at JP had not done her lunch cleanup chore. I made a note of it in the logbook, and the next day I saw a response from Theresa, a worker, stating that she had discussed the chore issue with that guest. The guest had asked if she could be assigned a different chore because of a schedule conflict with her treatment schedule. Although this process has a “bureaucratic element” in the textualizing of the interaction, the emphasis remains on individual interaction.

JP also resisted the bureaucratic and hierarchical structure through the use of anarcho-feminist Discursively informed practices like consensus and dialogue. However,

paternalism continued to manifest in the organization as these practices seemed largely reserved for the workers. Largely, the guests were left out of the decision-making process. However, even at these early stages of observations, the organization took steps to seek to empower the women. Multiple guests informed me that during the monthly meetings they held, any suggestions made by guests were taken very seriously. In fact, one guest, a black woman named Monica, told me that this responsiveness was surprising and often happened very quickly.

Monica: It's really, like, um, house meetings that you had at home. Like, being young, like, everybody gets together because everybody's always moving around, like, all, everywhere, doing their own thing and it's like, one time to get together and talk. Yeah.

Peter: Wow. Do you feel like, any suggestions or anything that are brought up during those house meetings by the guests are taken seriously?

Monica: Yeah. They take them real seriously. And, um, they take them real seriously, like, it's funny because, like, they'll do suggestions and like, they'll take it seriously. Like, the next day, do exactly what was said and then like, people say, like, we have problems, so it's kind of funny. They're really, like, on the job.

The responsiveness of workers to guest suggestions was strongly contrasted with the more paternalistic bureaucratic leanings at MSF where similar meetings were held.

Unlike at JP where guests felt their suggestions were taken seriously and implemented, clients at MSF expressed doubt that their suggestions were ever really attended to.

Furthermore, during observations, JP began to implement new organizational practices to increase shared governance and reduce paternalistic structures within the

organization. Some of these changes have been mentioned earlier (e.g., the providing of keys), but a more fundamental shift was occurring as the workers sought to reduce power imbalances in the organization and make the women more active participants in the decision-making process. When I asked Danielle how she felt about the changes that were happening, she responded:

I feel really excited. Um, it is, it, yeah, it's long been a challenge for me. Because, because community is also really transitional, like, most people live here for a year, two years, maybe three. So, it's often felt a little bit strange to be making a decision with a new community member as opposed to Ms. Peggy who's lived here for two years, where, uh, yeah, so it's, it's often been hard for me to reconcile some of that and then, often, you know, I'm thirty-seven and closer in age to all the women that live on the second floor than the folks that live on the first floor and so, uh, yeah, class wise, I'm a little bit closer to the folks on the ... Yeah, I don't know. So, I, I personally feel really excited, yeah, and apprehensive. Yeah. Uh, all that.

Danielle continued that she felt apprehensive because the change was hard, but she and the other workers affirmed that they felt that the changes were both good for the workers and the guests. Olivia and Danielle reinforced that they believed the changes were reflective of deeper commitments to combatting systemic issues that can be tied to paternalism (e.g., racism, sexism, social class).

The rejection of bureaucratic practices, particularly the attempt to reduce hierarchy and the push back against textualized rules is one of the most easily visible areas of alternative organizing practices at JP. The market logic of bureaucratic practices

and the role that bureaucracy plays in a neoliberal economy has become a normative assumption within all types of organizations, including NPOs (Sanders & McClellan, 2014). The next section details a similarly important and central area of “obvious” resistance to a market IL.

*Voluntary labor.* Emblematic of the anarchist Discursive resistance to a market IL at JP was the exclusive use of volunteers at JP (rather than paid staff) to maintain the operations at the house. Where wage labor is tied tightly to neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL, Goldman (1969) claimed that the wage labor relationship between employer and employee was antithetical to anarchist organizing as it was, by necessity, not a relationship between equals. Furthermore, by not turning to wage labor to staff the house, the financial burden on the house was drastically reduced, which allowed JP to resist the need to embrace an institutional market logic in its organizing practices.

However, a lack of wage labor was not without its negative consequences. Several workers at JP lamented the fact that because most of them worked at least part-time to support themselves they were unable to devote themselves fully to their work in the community. The heavy reliance on volunteers for housetaking and cooking duties created its own set of problems for JP. For example, some housetakers did not follow many of the rules that had been set by community members in terms of admitting guests. Often, a new guest would not be read the full rules for the house for their first few days. Also, since volunteers did the majority of dinner cooking, there was often anxiety about whether or not anyone would come to cook. On a few occasions during my observations, I began making preliminary preparations to cook when a dinner volunteer hadn't shown

up by 5:30PM. While I never had to cook the meal, my anxiety is reflective of the sometimes unreliable nature of volunteer labor.

The anarchist resistance to market ILs that led to the reliance on volunteer labor may have diluted worker focus on their service to the homeless and created irregularity and uncertainty at JP. However, the preference for volunteer labor was the primary organizational practice by which they were able to resist needing to adopt a market IL. From a more fundamental level, the reliance on volunteers is also reflective of an anarchist resistance to neoliberal ideals. Where neoliberalism champions paid labor as the best method to ensure quality service in a market economy, JP's anarchist personalist ideals reflect an ethic of solidarity and personal connection that refutes neoliberal arguments about the links between payment and quality.

**Conclusion: Market.** Although a market IL was not truly present at JP due to its incommensurability with the primary anarcho-feminist Discursive organizing, the contrast to the market logics was revealing. At times, JP used a market IL as a deliberate contrast to their organizing practices, and engaged in organizing practices that were deliberate antithetical to a more marketized nonprofit organizational form (in particular in response to bureaucracy and quantification). The use of volunteer labor provided much of the organization's ability to resist adopting a market IL, but drawing on volunteers created strain for workers and, at times, uneven results from the use of volunteers to cook and take house.

**Conclusion: Judy's Place.** Throughout the second part of this chapter, I have examined how anarchist and feminist Discourses informed the translation of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare at JP. I have also examined how anarchist and feminist

Discourses manifested in a resistance to market ILs. The translation of anarchist and feminist Discourses had implications for how the social problem of homelessness was perceived and how solutions to the problem were conceptualized. Likewise, these Discursive translations led to alternative organizational practices like the reliance on volunteer labor, resistance to bureaucratic forms of organization, and more individualized treatment of guests.

The first two sections of this chapter offered an overview of how the Discourses of neoliberalism, paternalism, feminism, and anarchism manifested in the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market at both organizations individually. The final section of this chapter will provide direct comparisons to more closely examine how these Discursive translations resulted in normative or alternative organizing practices.

### **Comparison of the Discursive Translations of Institutional Logics**

The purpose of this section is to provide a more direct comparison of the two organizations. To show these comparisons, I continue with the same structuring elements that I have used thus far. Thus, I first compare the IL of responsibility and how it was enacted as a “responsibility for self” at MSF and a “responsibility for other” at JP. Next, I explore how the translation of the social welfare logic and subjectification and religion did or did not function in each organization. Finally, I examine how a market IL was enacted or resisted at each organization.

**Comparison of responsibility institutional logics.** At MSF, the neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility emphasized each individual’s personal responsibility to take care of themselves. In contrast, at JP the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to every individual’s responsibility to

take care of one another. Both of these Discursive translations had consequences for how homelessness was constructed as a social problem, how individual agency was enabled or constrained for the guests/clients, how responsibility impacted staff/worker emotional labor, and how relationships between clients/guests were structures in the organizations.

At MSF, the neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility constructed homelessness as an individual problem. Because of the Discursive influence of neoliberalism on the “American Dream,” individuals were positioned as having had an equal opportunity to make themselves into viable commodities in the market (Conrad, 2011). Thus, anyone who was homeless had failed to take advantage of their equal opportunities, and, therefore, those individuals must be personally responsible for their own problems. The discussions of personal responsibility at morning focus meetings at MSF reflected this belief, as any talk about systemic barriers was dismissed as “making excuses” and the repeated message was that proper planning and effort could achieve any end.

In contrast, at JP the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to a more systemic explanation for the social problem of homelessness. Workers at JP expressed their belief that homelessness existed because people did not take responsibility for one another. They argued that, instead of letting outside agencies handle those who had been abandoned by the system, individuals should care for one another. Olivia described how she believed people opening their spare rooms to homeless individuals and families could solve homelessness.

Neoliberal and paternalistic Discourses resulted in contradictory translations of the IL of responsibility in regards to individual agency at MSF. From the neoliberal

translation, the clients at MSF were discursively positioned as having complete and total agency regarding the kinds of choices they were able to make in life. However, the organization's paternalistic Discursive translation simultaneously led to a limiting of the ability for clients to make meaningful choices through organizational practices and policies like mandatory budgeting and job search. However, because agency was framed from a material and financial standpoint, these policies were meant to increase individual agency after leaving the shelter. Thus, the paternalistic translation of the IL of responsibility that limited individual agency while in the shelter because guests could not be trusted to take accountability for themselves, was meant to result in increased individual agency when leaving the shelter.

Anarchist Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility at JP resulted in a great deal of autonomy being given to the guests at the house. In particular, near the end of observations, the guests being given keys (and serious discussion about dismissing the curfew policy) highlighted the freedom the guests had in comparison to MSF. Although both organizations had curfews during observations (which reflected some of the paternalistic Discursive translation cutting across both organizations), JP's was much more flexible, with guests frequently calling in when they were unable to make it home on time. However, in spite of JP's acknowledgment of systemic issues leading to homelessness, the lack of material and financial resources meant that guests were largely on their own in their quest for housing and/or employment. Workers offered what help they could, but they were not able to provide the kind of undivided attention that was possible through the use of paid staff at MSF. Although the workers and volunteers at JP

could offer referrals to outside organizations that provided some of these services, reaching the locations where these services were located could be difficult for guests.

The neoliberal translation of a responsibility IL allowed staff at MSF to distance themselves from client failures by discursively positioning themselves as “providers of tools.” This discursive positioning meant that clients were constructed as entirely responsible for their own failures, and staff could “sleep well at night” feeling that they had done everything they could and that the responsibility for failing to complete the program was entirely on the clients.

At JP, however, anarcho-feminist translations of the IL of responsibility emphasized the need to be responsible to others. This Discursive understanding of responsibility pressured the workers to be constantly available and made even going to the restroom while they were home difficult. According to the workers, being constantly available led to higher degrees of burnout and turnover at the house during my observations.

Finally, the neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility led to clients at MSF being encouraged to look out only for themselves. Sarah’s advice to be selfish both in the shelter and once they left reflected the Darwinist mentality that is a byproduct of neoliberal social structuring (Giroux, 2011). This neoliberal translation encouraged a structuring of relationships that emphasized each client, as Janet put it “minding they own business” instead of offering support through the difficult time in the shelter.

Rather than encouraging their guests to stick to themselves, the workers at JP actively encouraged the guests to support one another. This encouragement of support

reflected a feminist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility by encouraging an ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982). The guests being encouraged to reach out to and help a difficult guest like Yolanda instead of being told to ignore her represents how this feminist translation of the IL of responsibility structured a much more communal sense of care.

**Comparison of the social welfare institutional logics.** A social welfare institutional logic in an organization is concerned with how to provide services to marginalized populations. The Discursive translation of a social welfare IL directs organizational energy as organizations seek to provide services to a marginalized population. At MSF, neoliberal and paternalistic Discursive translations of a social welfare IL resulted in the organization directing its efforts towards the (re)subjectification of its clients and the interaction of that social welfare IL with a religious IL. At JP, the anarcho-feminist social welfare IL emphasized direct action through individualized treatment, and the attempt to address systemic imbalances. To compare the manifestation of these social welfare ILs I discuss the role of mission and religion in each organization and issues concerning subjectification.

Paternalistic Discourses related to a social welfare IL were also translated into the religious IL at MSF. This dual translation was primarily viewable through the frequent recommendations by staff and clients in the organization that they needed to “trust in God” to help them through their time of crisis. Moreover, individual staff made sense of their own place in the broader organizational mission by drawing on religious ILs.

The anarcho-feminist translation of the social welfare logic at JP did not welcome in a religious IL that was central to the organizing process. While religious talk and

symbols were present at JP, religion did not function as an organizing logic as it did at MSF. One issue of the Welcome Place newsletter explored the nature of the relationship between Catholic Workers and the institutional Catholic Church. One of the articles pointed out that during a roundtable discussion at a national gathering of Catholic Workers in 2006, that only 8 of the 50 workers identified completely as Catholic. The article continued to say:

Today, many communities claim to be “in the Catholic Worker Tradition” instead of identifying themselves solely as “Catholic Worker Communities”. The anarchist nature of the movement allows for such variation. Each individual and each community are allowed to define their own relationship with the Church without any oversight.

The autonomy of each individual and each community to make sense of the role of religion in their own way based on anarchist ideals was present in JP’s unwillingness to either endorse or censure any efforts to promote religion in the house. The anarchist organizing Discourse at JP made a coherent religious IL nearly impossible.

The relatively low focus on religion at JP meant that religious values rarely came into conflict at the organizational level while making sense of their social welfare IL. However, at MSF the dual organizational goals to act as an evangelical part of the church and to “do the most good” created opportunities for tension within the organization. In particular, by seeking to “do the most good,” core organizational values as members of the organization understood them, were violated by helping LGBT populations due to HUD mandates.

From a neoliberal Discursive translation of a social welfare IL, the primary goal of organizations like MSF is to provide a mechanism through which deviant nonworking

subjects could be (re)subjectified into compliant working subjects (Wacquant, 2009). The discursive framework of “back on track” that was deployed by several staff at MSF revealed how the manifestation of their organizational mission was to place their clients in the best possible position to re-enter the marketplace as producers and consumers to the best of each individual’s ability. This resubjectification process encouraged the clients to take short term solutions and demeaning labor and discouraged them from making decisions that might have delayed their ability to be immediately rehoused. Thus, clients wanting to avoid bad school districts or seek education while at the shelter were actively discouraged.

Anarcho-feminist Discursive translations of the social welfare IL at JP led to a resistance to forcing the guests into demeaning work. Terry reflected that some people “don’t want to work at McDonald’s,” which contrasts sharply with the earlier arguments by Sarah at MSF, who derided those who wouldn’t take whatever work was available. Terry’s comment reflects a rejection of neoliberal subjectivities and reflects the anarcho-feminist resistance to wage labor. Brown (1993) wrote that “Anarchism’s commitment to the primacy of individual freedom demands that employment be unrestricted by law or custom, and instead be limited only by individual imagination and desire” (pp. 125-126).

**Comparison of the market institutional logics.** The manifestation and resistance of market IL created some of the greatest differences between JP and MSF. To compare the function of the IL of market, I discuss the use of market language, commodifying and quantifying practices, and bureaucratic practices.

The neoliberal Discursive translation of the market IL at MSF emerged in much of the everyday discourse at the organization. The staff at MSF reflected on the pressure

to produce, and the use of the term clients to describe the women they helped structured interactions in a transactional and hierarchical nature. Wendy expressed concern at a lack of empathy at MSF, which she believed could partly be traced to the use of the term client. In response to this concern, she attempted to shift the discourse from client to guest, but during observations, this shift was either not embraced or not understood by other staff.

At JP, anarcho-feminist resistance to the adoption of a market IL was represented through the discourse of hospitality and the reference to the women who stayed there as “guests.” The use of the term guest described the structuring of the services at JP in a less transactional or commodified manner than at MSF. By seeking to treat the women they served as guests, the workers and volunteers at JP provided at least the foundation for an organizational structure that could encourage solidarity and more egalitarian organizing practices.

The practices related to commodification at MSF were, perhaps, the most obvious sign of a neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL. By, in effect, placing their clients in outside housing programs, regardless of whether or not they were ready, MSF transformed its clients into a good that could be essentially sold to agencies like HUD. While the resources that were procured through this practice fueled many of the useful services that MSF offered, they came at the cost of losing sight of what was best for the women who were being housed.

In contrast, JP’s anarcho-feminist Discursive resistance to a market IL rejected even quantifying practices being used to measure organizational success. In fact, organizational success or effectiveness was never discussed at JP. Rather, the

organization sought to attend to individual needs, even when attending to those needs limited the number of homeless people the shelter could provide services for.

## **Conclusion**

Homeless shelters in the United States face a variety of challenges as they pursue their organizational goals. Nonprofit organizations are, by their nature, contested affairs as they seek to balance their need to serve a mission while also having to successfully secure sufficient funds to maintain their operations. Often, to secure the resources necessary to maintain operations, NPOs find themselves pressured to adopt more marketized and neoliberal organizational forms. The adoption of neoliberal ideals into a NPO is not without its advantages. As MSF demonstrated, acting as a more marketized nonprofit provides substantial material resources that can be directed to great effect towards the target population.

However, adopting those normative organizing ideals, while they are reflective of social Discourses, comes with high potential costs. The turning of homeless women into a market commodity, to be “sold” as a product to the federal government to ensure continued funding reflects a disturbing distortion of MSF’s mission. Furthermore, the neoliberal emphasis on personal responsibility that pervaded MSF led to missed opportunities to turn those resources towards broader social problems that created homelessness. In effect, MSF and other shelters like it are dealing with the problem of homelessness only at the surface level.

JP provides an attractive, but limited alternative to the marketized nonprofit model used by MSF. Opportunities for shared governance and empowerment, and at least small attempts to address systematic issues that contribute to homelessness all serve

as steps towards making the organization more equitable. However, while members at JP sought to find avenues for empowerment of guests, paternalistic attitudes (e.g., the continuation of curfew) continue to linger within the organization.

Communication played a central role in the everyday (re)production of cultural Discourses at the organizational and individual level. Neoliberal and paternalistic Discourse clearly dominated at MSF and manifested in market focused translations of ILs.. Unsurprisingly, few organizing practices at the normative MSF reflected anarchist ideals, and very few feminist Discursive organizing practices could be identified. Although the workers at JP envisioned the house as a potential alternative to a degrading system of wage labor, tension remained around concerns of enablement within the organization.

## CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This project explicates how alternative and normative organizing practices resulted from the translation of the organizing Discourses. Based on my data, I focused my analysis on the Discourses of: neoliberalism, paternalism, feminism, and anarchism. As I discussed in the previous chapter, neoliberal and paternalist Discourses dominated at Midwest Safe Family (MSF). In contrast, feminist and anarchist Discourses dominated at JP. These organizing Discourses were translated into different manifestations of the institutional logics (ILs) of responsibility, social welfare, and market. This chapter shows how my findings answer my research questions and discusses their contributions to the practical and theoretical problems I have explored in my dissertation. I begin this section by answering my research questions. Next, I discuss the theoretical and practical implications of my project. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the project's strengths, weaknesses, and possible future directions.

### **Research Questions**

In this section I explain how my findings answered my research questions. These questions are: 1) How are multiple Discourses drawn from in the organizing process, creating more normative or alternative organizing practices 2) How do nonprofit organizations enact and/or resist communicatively constructed organizing practices related to the Discourse of neoliberalism and its translations of institutional logics? And 3) How do organizational/individual translations of ILs constrain or enable agency in the organizing process?

**Research question one.** How are multiple Discourses drawn from in the organizing process, creating more normative or alternative organizing practices?

This question addresses how the Discourses of anarchism, neoliberalism, feminism, and paternalism manifested in the organizing process at two homeless shelters. Specifically, these Discourses were translated into ILs that served as the basis for organizational practice. First, I discuss the Discourses that were central to the organizing processes at each organization and how those Discourses flowed into the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market.

*Organizing Discourses at Midwest Safe Family.* Neoliberalism and paternalism were the primary organizing Discourses for the determination of organizing practices and policies at MSF. However, the relationship between neoliberal and paternalist Discourses was not always an easy one and gave rise to tensions and paradox in the organizing process. In particular, the complete market freedom of neoliberalism often jarred strongly with the limitations imposed by paternalistic disciplining.

First, neoliberal Discourse translated clearly into the IL of responsibility and its attendant daily discursive practices at MSF. Staff at MSF regularly encouraged their clients to hold themselves individually accountable and dismissed any reference to systemic issues that contributed to homelessness as “making excuses.” The neoliberal translation of the IL of responsibility positioned the women as solely responsible both for their own homelessness and for improving their status.

Although the manner in which the IL of responsibility was articulated at MSF reflected a neoliberal translation, the paternalist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility clashed with the neoliberal translation. Rather than emphasizing clients’ personal responsibility and agency like the neoliberal translation, the paternalist translation limited individual agency because clients could not be trusted to act

responsibly. For example, clients were forced to budget and report their savings to their case manager because they were perceived as being fiscally irresponsible.

Additionally, neoliberal Discourse emerged in the translation of a market IL at MSF. Most obviously, this IL emerged in discursive practices like the use of the term client and the language of production. However, the most impactful manner in which this Discursive translation manifested was in a less explicitly articulated organizing practice. Specifically, MSF commodified the clients at MSF by sending them to external housing programs before they were ready. This practice allowed MSF to meet the outcomes required by the organization's contracts with external funding agencies like Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and reflects a neoliberal attitude towards engaging in nonprofit organizing, whereby the mission itself becomes coopted and undermined by amassing financial resources to serve that mission.

Also, the neoliberal translation of the market IL was complemented by paternalistic Discursive organizing practices. Paternalistic bureaucratic practices enabled MSF to discipline clients to achieve its desired outcomes. In particular, the paternalistic bureaucratic practices enabled MSF to help put its clients "back on track". The discursive framework of "back on track" that the staff used to describe their goal for clients drew on both neoliberal and paternalist Discourses to (re)subjectify the clients at MSF into productive subjects. In this instance, paternalistic Discourse complemented neoliberal organizing practices. The paternalistic disciplinary measures employed at MSF provided an avenue through which clients could be coerced into trajectories that may have run counter to their desires.

Finally, in terms of how these Discourses related to alternative and normative organizing practices, the normative organizing practices at MSF resulted from the translations of the organizing Discourses of paternalism and neoliberalism. MSF's use of neoliberal Discursive organizing practices fits with an observed normative trend for NPOs in the United States to become more marketized and "business-like" (Maier et al., 2014; Pache & Santos, 2011; Sanders & McClellan, 2014). By drawing on neoliberal and paternalistic organizing Discourses to make sense of everyday organizing practices, MSF engages in a predominantly normative organizing process.

***Organizing Discourses at Judy's Place.*** The Discourses that resulted in alternative organizing practices at JP were anarchist and feminist. Although anarchist and feminist Discourses dominated at JP, practices that could be traced to paternalist Discourses also manifested. Neoliberal Discourse was present at JP as well, but it was mostly used by workers and volunteers to contrast the work that was being done at JP with other shelters. The primary use of neoliberal and feminist organizing Discourses resulted in a more alternative set of organizing practices than those present at MSF. The alternative and normative organizing Discourses at JP manifested as translations of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare.

Anarchist Discursive translation of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare manifested most obviously in the practice of personalism, a practice which favors direct intervention to combat systems that create poverty and direct care for the poor (as opposed to letting the government or other agencies handle the issue). The rejection of government intervention is central to anarchist Discursive organizing ideals. Workers and volunteers translating an anarchist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility

referenced personalism to explain how they believed everyone taking responsibility for the poor and helping them directly could end homelessness.

The anarchist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility fed into the translation of the IL of social welfare. Workers and volunteers at JP made sense of their organizational mission as their obligation to take responsibility for the women who were the guests at JP. The IL of responsibility was tied to the organizational mission through the direct mission of providing hospitality to women and their children and making them guests at the house.

The reliance on volunteer labor was a primary example of anarchist Discursive incompatibility with a market IL. According to Ward (1966), one of the fundamental principles of anarchist organizing is the voluntary notion of the organizing. While Ward is articulating the importance of the freedom to leave the organization whenever a member desires, other scholars (e.g., Brown, 1993; Goldman, 1969) have built on this idea by emphasizing a break from wage labor as central to transformative anarchist efforts.

Feminist Discursive translations of social welfare and responsibility ILs impacted the anarchist Discursive translations of the same ILs. In particular, feminist Discourse tempered the possible excesses of “pure” anarchist Discursive practices at JP. Neoliberalism and anarchism share an emphasis on personal responsibility, and Shantz (2010) claimed that a pure anarchist ideology was incompatible with organized social projects. Thus, a purely anarchist Discursive translation of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare is insufficient to explain the organizing practices at JP. Feminist Discourse shifts the translation of the anarchist IL of responsibility from a simple focus on the

“self” to a communal notion of “coresponsibility” (Vieta, 2014). JP embraced a feminist Discursive approach to anarchy by highlighting how oppression impacted women in particular, and by reflecting on patriarchal and paternalistic practices within the organization. This reflection could most easily be seen in the decision to bring the guests at JP into the decision-making process, because it provided an opportunity for the women to move, as the worker Olivia put it, from guests to a part of the “project” at JP. This change in practice reflected an understanding of coresponsibility because it meant that not only were the workers responsible to the guests, but that the guests were responsible to the workers and each other.

In addition to the translation of the IL of responsibility to emphasize coresponsibility, feminist Discursive practices could be seen in the translation of the IL of social welfare. Besides their mission of providing hospitality for homeless women, workers at JP engaged in a feminist practice of consciousness raising efforts by educating volunteer groups (Bickford & Reynolds, 2002). These consciousness raising efforts represented the primary means by which JP, as an organization, sought to enact systemic change.

Anarcho-feminist Discourses served as the basis for volunteering and shared governance organizing practices. However, some normative organizing practices, stemming from paternalistic Discourses, still translated into the ILs at JP. For example, even as the move to more shared decision-making in the organization occurred, paternalistic Discursive translations of responsibility led workers to decide to maintain a curfew for the guests. Also, tensions around how long guests were able to stay and

whether or not they were looking for paying work or housing revealed a neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility.

The anarcho-feminist Discourses that provided the translations for the ILs at JP offered an avenue for resistance to normative neoliberal Discourse, leading to more alternative organizing practices. However, resistance to neoliberal Discursive translations of ILs also occurred at MSF. The next research question explicates how both organizations enacted or resisted normative neoliberal Discursive translations of the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market.

**Research question two.** How do nonprofit organizations enact and/or resist communicatively constructed organizing practices related to the Discourse of neoliberalism and its translations of institutional logics?

To answer this question, I examine how neoliberal Discourses and ILs were enacted or resisted at each organization individually. I first examine this enactment and resistance at MSF.

*Enactment and resistance of neoliberalism at Midwest Safe Family.* The enactment of neoliberal translations of the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market were prevalent across MSF. The defining characteristics of neoliberalism are the expansion of market logics into arenas where they had not previously existed (Harvey, 2007) and the leveraging of the government to benefit those who participate in the market (Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2011; Wacquant, 2009). MSF's use of government contracts to "produce" clients who had been placed in non-shelter housing represents an adoption of a neoliberal influenced way of doing nonprofit organizing through the commodification of their social mission. The practices that resulted in the

commodification of clients through the use of government contracts reflect a neoliberal Discursive organizing mentality through which “profit” is generated in the nonprofit sector.

Neoliberal Discursive translations of the IL of responsibility were enacted at MSF by framing responsibility at an individual level and by focusing on personal responsibility. During focus group meetings, the clients were repeatedly told that their homelessness was the result of their inability to take responsibility for themselves or their unwillingness to be held accountable, stances stemming from Neoliberalism. Likewise, clients were encouragement by staff like Sarah to “be selfish” while in the shelter is indicative of the self-focused attitude that emerges in a neoliberal marketplace (Giroux, 2011).

The neoliberal Discursive enactment of responsibility impacted how MSF enacted a social welfare IL. Because homelessness was a problem that was located at the individual and not the systemic level, MSF focused its organizational energy on subjectifying clients without attending to systemic issues. In particular, the discursive framing of “back on track” as the enactment of MSF’s missions showed that daily enactment of the social welfare IL was focused at the individual level instead of challenging oppressive systems. A social welfare IL is principally concerned with the provision of services to a marginalized population, and how the energy of the organization is directed will depend on the Discursive translation of that IL. Thus, the neoliberal Discursive translation resulted in the efforts of the staff at MSF focusing solely on individuals (who were perceived as the source of the problem) instead of at the systemic level.

MSF resisted neoliberalism primarily in its use of paternalist Discursive translations of ILs, which led to an undermining of purely neoliberal organizing practices. The use of paternalistic practices (e.g., forced budgeting and job searching), which limited the agency of MSF clients, contradicted neoliberal Discourse and resultant translations. However, for the staff at MSF, the acceptance of neoliberal ideals seemed, largely, unquestioning. Even with the paradoxical translations of paternalist Discourses that conflicted with and could be viewed as resistance of idealized neoliberal total personal responsibility, reflection and questioning of normative neoliberal Discursive organizing processes did not appear to occur.

*Enactment and resistance to Neoliberalism at Judy's Place.* The use of anarchist and feminist organizing Discourses at JP provided the primary resources through which the organization resisted neoliberal organizing practices. Specifically, I discuss in this section how these Discourses led to resistant organizing processes especially through the use of volunteers, the centering of emotion, and the redefining of value. However, although JP largely resisted normative neoliberal Discursive pressure and the push to become more marketized, neoliberal values at times seeped into discourse at the house.

As I earlier discussed, the use of volunteers is representative of an anarchist alternative to the use of wage labor. Anarcho-feminist scholars have suggested the break from wage labor is necessary to create meaningful social change (Brown, 1993; Goldman, 1969). By using volunteer labor, JP resisted neoliberal assumptions about the relationship between wage labor and civic virtue (Soss et al., 2011) as well as the

neoliberal assumption that wage labor was the best guarantor of quality production (Weeks, 2007).

The foregrounding of emotional attachment and commitment in the organizing process was another manner in which JP resisted neoliberal organizing. The linchpin of neoliberal economics, and therefore neoliberal organizing, is the belief that individuals should act in a rational manner to benefit themselves (Wilkins, 2013). However, emotion was of central importance to the organizing process at JP. As one of the workers, Edward, stated in his interview, the ability to respond compassionately as opposed to having to enforce rigid bureaucratic rules was important to the members of the organization. Anarchist organizing, like feminist organizing, embraces the role of emotion in the process of organizing for social change (Clough, 2012). Embracing emotion, and in particular compassion, provided the impetus for the resistance of marketized bureaucratic structures that would inhibit JP's ability to respond to individuals and their unique needs.

Finally, JP resisted neoliberal Discourse by rejecting market logic notions of value. In particular, JP did not seek to commodify their guests by "selling" their productivity to outside agencies. NPOs that have embraced neoliberal ideals may seek to prove to outside agencies or potential supporters that their work is worth supporting because of the quantity of the services they provide. JP rejected this notion by making no deliberate attempt to track the number of guests it served. Instead of focusing on quantity, JP sought to best meet individual need by providing support for individual goals and adjusting rules and length of stay to meet unique circumstances. Organizing in this fashion would not have made JP an attractive "investment" for agencies like HUD, but JP

did not seek those funds. Without the pressure to show measurable production, JP was free to help its guests in a manner that it felt best attended to the needs and dignity of individuals. The workers at JP articulated a desire to provide the best quality of care to their guests as opposed to being concerned with a more quantitative measure of success that is typically associated with a market IL.

However, in spite of its resistance to normative neoliberal Discourse and market logics, neoliberal discourse seeped in to the talk at JP. Most often, the manifestations of neoliberal ideals occurred in regards to tensions between providing an alternative space and the need for the guests to find paying work or feeling compelled to help more people. For example, the workers Terry's statement that a guest was allowed to stay in part because the workers knew she was seeking employment indicates the tension that some workers felt. Terry pointed out during his interview that pushing people out into jobs they didn't want would give them an opportunity to help more people, but he claimed that would make them a part of "oppressive systems." Although JP clearly resisted the primacy of wage labor and the need for their guests to debase themselves at menial jobs, the tension around this topic remained present at the organization.

In summary, JP used anarcho-feminist Discursive organizing practices to resist the normative neoliberal organizing Discourse. The anarcho-feminist translations of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare, and the resistance to adopting market ILs manifested through the use of volunteers, the centering of emotion, and the rejection of quantifying or commodifying practices. Unlike at MSF, when tensions arose in reference to more neoliberal organizing practices, workers at JP were able to articulate (if not resolve) the tension.

**Research question three.** How do organizational/individual translations of ILs constrain or enable agency in the organizing process?

My third research question examines how organizational translations of ILs enabled or inhibited the organizations and organizational members' ability to make meaningful decisions, which is how organizations and members positioned themselves as active or passive agents in interaction. To answer this question, I show how each IL and its translations impacted agency at the organizational and individual level at each organization.

***Organizational agency at Midwest Safe Family.*** For the staff at MSF, agency was primarily understood in material transactional terms. In other words, agency was understood as being able to make meaningful decisions that were empowered through financial resources. When discussing what MSF did best, nearly all the staff I interviewed referenced the number of resources that the shelter had to offer to their clients. At MSF, the number of resources the organization possessed was seen as providing unique opportunities. The larger financial resources allowed MSF to act in a manner that was otherwise impossible for some of the smaller shelters in the area.

However, to obtain these resources, MSF positioned itself as a passive agent. Because agency was understood in financial, transactional terms, the organization was pressured by government agencies like HUD to embrace policy and decisions that violated organizational values. Because the contracts with funders that the organization signed were the primary source of transactional resources for MSF, the adherence to these contracts at times limited the viable options for the organization.

The most obvious issue of organizational agency at MSF could be perceived in how the organization appeared to passively accept decisions from outside funding agencies (exemplified by the administrator Lana's statement that, "we help who HUD tells us to help"). Most obviously, the HUD mandate to provide services to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) populations were perceived by multiple staff as violating organizational values. Despite, as one staff named Sarah claimed, feeling like God was going to be mad at them for providing these services, MSF continued to serve LGBT individuals in a limited capacity. However, by accepting LGBT women at the organization, MSF was able to maintain a high level of financial agency. The decision to help populations that violated organizational values to secure financial resources is indicative of the neoliberal Discursive translation of a market IL that influences the social welfare IL. The neoliberal translation of a market IL focused on agency in material financial terms. Thus, in order to maximize its agency, MSF was predominantly concerned with maximizing the financial resources it had available.

However, at times the passive stance that MSF manifested in regards to its external agency could allow the organization to protect its core values while still receiving HUD funding. Due to a contract with the county, MSF received its client referrals through the Housing Hotline (HH) that allowed MSF to "resist through consent" (Ashcraft, 2005). Because HH shared many of MSF's core organizational values, LGBT individuals were rarely referred to MSF. Staff at MSF and workers at JP both expressed to me the belief that HH did not adequately serve LGBT individuals. This lack of service by HH enabled MSF to largely adhere to its religiously motivated organizational values while simultaneously adhering to HUD standards.

Organizational agency at MSF was both enabled and constrained due to its use of predominantly neoliberal organizing Discourse. Although MSF could certainly *choose* to not help LGBT populations or not send clients out into other housing before they were ready, the organization continued to do so in a reluctant manner. The need to continue to accrue financial resources to maintain the services that MSF provided resulted in compliance with institutionalized pressures that limited what appeared to be the viable choices for MSF.

***Individual agency at Midwest Safe Family.*** As I have discussed, the clients at MSF were positioned (via neoliberal Discourse) as having total agency in regards to their ability to make meaningful choices, be responsible for themselves, and direct their own lives. This message of agency was repeatedly reinforced through focus group meetings, interactions with staff, and with the decorations on the wall. However, in spite of this repeated message, it was clear that the staff at MSF did not trust their clients to act responsibly. This lack of trust manifested in the creation of paternalistic policies to limit the agency of the clients in the shelter. Coercive and disciplinary measures (write-ups, threats of expulsion) were used to pressure the clients at MSF to adhere to policies that would supposedly increase their agency at a later date by providing them with more transactional resources after they left the program.

Thus, agency was positioned for the clients at MSF as being tied to material resources. Forced savings policies at MSF were indicative of this understanding of agency, as case managers and other staff would inform clients that savings would allow them to have more options once they left the shelter. However, as was emphasized in focus group meetings, the only way the clients at MSF could achieve the necessary

financial resources was to hold themselves accountable. The neoliberal Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility was framed as the source of financial success and, therefore, was discursively linked to the capacity to act as agents in the market economy.

The discursive framing of “back on track” also limited the agency of the clients at MSF because it imagined a relatively small number of possible futures for them. They were discouraged from pursuing educational goals and were limited to housing options that would be immediately available to them. Often, the housing options that were available would place them in neighborhoods with much higher crime rates and schools that would limit the likelihood of the success of their children. Ironically, while MSF would seek to position their clients to be successful market actors in the short term, the solution to the long-term problems (e.g., education) were subsumed under the need to meet external funding agency outcomes and help as many women as possible even at the expense of the quality of the care.

***Individual/organizational agency at Judy’s Place.*** The anarchist organizing Discourse that played a central role in the organizing process at JP often made it difficult to differentiate between individual and organizational agency. JP emphasized individual autonomy, which meant that workers, volunteers, and even guests were able to bend or break rules in order to be able to act compassionately. For example, although there was a rule about guests not storing their own food in the pantry, workers would regularly break this rule for guests (especially if there was a special occasion like a birthday). These small gestures reflect the importance of compassion and flexibility instead of adherence to written or unwritten rules, as Erica the volunteer told me, “people are more important than rules.” Moreover, many of these rules began to be phased out during observations

and guests were explicitly given freer access to the kitchen and pantry for personal use.

The ability for the workers and volunteers to be flexible and respond with compassion to unique circumstances was one of the most prized agentic resources at JP. Rather than framing agency in terms of financial resources like MSF, workers and volunteers framed their agency in terms of their ability to make decisions based on individual values and feelings of compassion. The ability to be flexible could also be understood as a pressure to be flexible based on the anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility, which encouraged responsibility towards others. However, this flexibility could also pressure guests to be flexible as well. For example, asking the other to be accommodating of the irritating guest Yolanda placed additional stress on them.

The anarcho-feminist translation of the IL of responsibility could also pressure workers or volunteers into feeling like they lacked agency. Often, this translation of responsibility encouraged them to respond to requests from guests even when they were not working a shift at the house. For example, one worker named Terry remarked that he often found it difficult to go to the bathroom without being bombarded with requests. To navigate this, workers would either leave the house entirely or when they were in the house they would often sequester themselves upstairs or in their rooms (where housetakers like me would be less likely to seek out their help).

The flexibility at JP also provided a platform that increased guest agency in some areas. For example, allowing the guest named Tara to attend school full time while staying at JP was something that would not have been possible at MSF due to that organization's requirement that all clients spend their days seeking paid work. Without

the support of the JP workers, there is a possibility that Tara's educational goals would have been deferred (as they surely would have been at MSF).

The translation of anarchist Discourses into the ILs that guided JP emphasized individual agency over adherence to organizational rules and standards. However, certain standards could be maintained even without making explicit rules via the selection of workers and housetakers who were more likely to "buy in" to adhering to discursively embedded organizational values. Likewise, most housetakers underwent at least a brief "training period" that occurred while shadowing a worker while they were "on house." Although I did not undergo this training period (I think because of my previous experience with another Catholic Worker house), working shifts with established community members provided an opportunity for housetakers to be vetted and socialized into the perceived "best practices" at the organization.

Finally, reflexivity in the organizing processes at JP led to organizational changes at the organizational level that led to increased agency for guests in the shelter. Critical self-examination by the workers at JP led to the realization that despite the anarcho-feminist Discursive translation of a social welfare IL, which sought systemic change, JP was continuing to reify relations of power that echoed systematic oppression. In particular, discussions around racism and oppression and how the relations between the predominantly white workers and the predominantly black guests reified racist structures that marginalized black women in the United States. The reflection on these power relations within the organization led to changes in practice that sought to provide more avenues for empowerment (e.g., providing keys and shared governance).

The anarcho-feminist Discursive translations of the ILs of responsibility and social welfare impacted individual agency, which was of central importance at JP. However, while the workers and guests at JP had agency in their ability to be flexible and make decisions on an individual basis, their agency was limited in other ways. Most importantly, the capacity to be flexible came at the expense of being able to attain funding from organizations like HUD or United Way, which would have provided opportunities for more support for the guests. Moreover, the translation of the IL of responsibility at JP left workers feeling pressured to attend to the need of guests at all times, which resulted in feelings of burnout and high turnover at the organization.

**Summary of research questions.** My research questions have explained the interactions between feminist, anarchist, neoliberal, and paternalist Discourse and the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market at two homeless shelters. In this section, I explained how these Discourses were used in the organizing process, how neoliberal Discourse was enacted or resisted at the organizational level, and finally how the translation of ILs impacted agency at the organizational and individual level. The next section of this chapter discusses how my findings contribute to theoretical discussions concerning: the communicative constitution of organization, alternative organizing, ILs, and nonprofit organizing.

### **Theoretical Implications**

In this section, I highlight the primary theoretical contributions of my project. First, I discuss how my project contributed to the study of the communicative constitution of organization (CCO), and in particular I develop the concepts of meta-ventriloquization and examine the impacts of a poststructuralist view of language on the theory. Next, I

discuss my project's contribution to the study of alternative organizing. Third, I examine the theoretical implications of my project regarding ILs. Finally, I briefly discuss the potential contribution to the communicative study of nonprofit organizing.

**Contributions to the communicative constitution of organization.** A primary theoretical goal in this project was to expand the communicative constitution of organizations (CCO) “beyond the organization.” Cooren has argued that the Montreal School (TMS) of CCO is interpretive in nature (Schoeneborn, et al., 2014). However, my project is a critical and poststructuralist one, and I believe that CCO has great potential to be used as a theory that reveals links between Discourse, materiality, and power. I argue that CCO can be enriched through a closer attendance to the role that Discourse plays in the discursive formation of organizations. With few exceptions, poststructuralist and critical perspectives have been neglected in CCO theorizing (for exceptions see Kuhn, 2008 and Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, 2011). Based on my findings, I propose two theoretical concepts to build upon extant interpretive CCO theorizing. The first, which I call meta-ventriloquization, explores ventriloquization as a layered process that emerges in daily interaction. The second examines the non-neutrality of language, and how non-neutral language impacts constitutive organizing processes.

***Meta-ventriloquization.*** Cooren (2012) defined ventriloquism as “The activity that consists of making someone or something say or do something” (p. 5). In general, CCO scholars have used ventriloquism to examine how speakers can mobilize (or be mobilized by) texts (Brummans, et al., 2014). While some work has begun to tentatively explore how the concept of ventriloquism can be used to narrow the gap between the micro and macro levels of discourse, much of this work has not fully explored the

concept (Cooren, 2012; Kuhn, 2012). Unfortunately, by largely ignoring the role that Discourse plays in the constitution of organizations, CCO scholars have neglected to examine how Discourse informs relations of power through the organizing process.

I suggest here that all ventriloquism is actually a double ventriloquization (or a ventriloquization of a ventriloquization), which I term as *meta-ventriloquization*. The first step in this double ventriloquization occurs as organizations themselves are ventriloquized by cultural Discourses. This ventriloquization at the meso or organizational level by macro level Discourses manifests as the organizational adoption of policies, practices, and values that are reflective of that overarching Discursive framework. Although I theorize that this process of ventriloquization can flow in both directions (meso to macro, and macro to meso), during my observations the move between macro and meso only flowed down from Discourse to organization in the form of policies, practices, and values. I did not find evidence of meso level organizations ventriloquizing macro societal discourses. The second part of meta-ventriloquization occurs as these meso-level policies, practices, and values are themselves ventriloquized by organizational members. For example, an anarcho-feminist Discourse being translated to a responsibility IL that results in changes from hierarchical decision-making to shared governance. I use the term meta-ventriloquization to highlight that ventriloquizations within organizations are, in fact, double ventriloquizations. I provide a detailed example of this process below.

At MSF, the paternalistic Discursive framework within which the organization operated led to the creation of policies that limited the agency of the clients in the shelter “for their own good.” One example of these paternalistic policies that aptly demonstrates

a meta-ventriloquistic perspective is MSF's policy on saving money. The "Clients Saving Policy" is outlined in the case manager intake packet, and states that it is a mandatory requirement for clients to save 80% of their income during their stay. This policy was often ventriloquized by being mentioned in interactions with clients who were accused of not adhering to the savings plan. The case manager Janet's interaction with her client, Mary, who had started to receive her disability income but was using the money to purchase new clothes and other items that Janet deemed unnecessary, featured the savings policy prominently. Once Mary admitted that she had begun to receive her disability checks, Janet reminded her of the savings policy at the shelter that Mary had signed and agreed to. Mary refused to comply with the policy, and Janet began to write-up Mary for her noncompliance as well as several other infractions. Janet ventriloquized the policy by making it into an actor that spoke through her during the interaction with Mary. However, because the policy was the result of a paternalistic Discourse, Janet was also structuring the relations of power in the interaction through that paternalistic Discursive ventriloquization.

By drawing on an ILs perspective and attending to how Discourses are able to ventriloquize and be ventriloquized by organizations, and then in turn how organizations ventriloquize and can be ventriloquized by individuals, I argue that scholars can highlight how issues of power manifest in the organizing process. By interrogating the role that cultural Discourses play in the everyday constitution of organization, CCO scholars may be better positioned to examine how relations of power within organizations echo and reify relations of power external to the organization.

The findings in this project have shown how Discourses, ILs, and practices are mutually constitutive in the organizing process. The poststructuralist stance, combined with CCO theorizing highlights issues of power that emerge in the translation of Discourse to logic, logic to practice, and vice versa. Specifically, my findings show how normative and alternative organizing structures at macro, meso, and micro levels impact empowerment for organizational members. The one element of the constitutive process that did not seem susceptible to change was societal level Discourse. These findings raise questions about the role of societal Discourse in CCO, and in particular examine how Discourse is brought into interaction and made present through a process of meta-ventriloquization.

*The non-neutrality of language.* Likewise, the examination of Discourse and its impact on the organizing practice from a constitutive standpoint opens another avenue of inquiry. A common argument by TMS regarding other schools of CCO is that the other schools treat the organization as a taken-for-granted element (Cooren & Fairhurst, 2009; Brummans et al., 2014). I argue however that to date, the relative inattention (for exception see Leclercq-Vandelannoitte, 2011) by TMS to more closely attend to the function of Discourse in the organizing process has led to Discourses also being taken for granted. Ironically, although CCO is closely concerned with the function of discourse in the organizing process, the lack of attention to cultural Discourses has led to language being “taken for granted” in the organizing process. Macro-level Discourses constitute and are constituted by the everyday use of discursive resources (Kuhn, 2009; Kuhn et al., 2009) which are used in the organizing process. These discursive resources have implications for the nature of power and subjectification in the organizing process (Kuhn,

2009), but have thus far been ignored by CCO scholars. To explore this issue more closely, I believe a poststructuralist analysis of language may productively articulate the relationship between everyday language use and power in the organizing process

My second contribution displays how a poststructuralist understanding of language contributes to conversations concerning the links between language and power. To highlight this relationship, I first offer a brief overview of the theoretical groundwork that contributed to this theoretical implication. Next, I describe the specific relationship between language and power in the organizing process. I conclude by offering specific examples from my dataset.

Bakhtin (1982) viewed language as embedded in particular environments and times, and argued that an “utterance” (which is the term he used to highlight the historically bounded and dialogic nature of language) can only be fully analyzed in relation to its authentic environment, “the environment in which it lives and takes shape, is dialogized heteroglossia, anonymous and social as language, but simultaneously concrete, filled with specific content and accented as an individual utterance” (p. 271). Bakhtin argued that every utterance grows up and comes of age in a particular environment that makes it concrete, but only in the moment of speaking. Bakhtin argued that language is constantly alive, changing and evolving with the world in which it lives. When an individual puts words into use, they immediately cease to be neutral.

Foucault (1970/1994, 1977) takes this historical view of language and contributes a thorough analysis on the links not only to language and its manifestation as shaped by the socio-ideological landscape, but makes explicit links to the ways that language is linked to the production and maintenance of knowledge, ideologies, and power. The

organizing process is accomplished through the communicative deployment of discursive resources that are linked to macro-level Discourses (Kuhn, 2009; Kuhn et al., 2008). The use of these Discourses in the organizing process manifests in relations of power that are embedded at the societal level. These relations of power then can be echoed within organizations that draw upon these Discourses in the organizing process through the use of non-neutral language.

I argue that the non-neutrality of language is linked both to ideological assumptions about how organizing functions (e.g., preference for capitalist organizational forms) and how power functions in those organizations. A CCO approach takes as its most basic assumption that humans coorient through the communicative process. Therefore, because the signs used to enable coorientation are non-neutral and linked to Discursive frameworks that create and maintain systems of power, the organizing process engaged in through those signs will be likewise power-laden.

To examine how the non-neutrality of language impacts the organizing process, I reexamine the use of the terms “clients” and “guests” at MSF. MSF predominantly used the term clients to describe the women they served. Although the administrator Wendy sought to make a change in organizational culture by instituting the use of the term guest instead of client, staff continued to use the term, and signage and forms still referred to the women as clients. Wendy told me that she believed the change in terminology was necessary because it would help orient the staff at MSF to interact with the women in the shelter differently. Wendy’s statement reflects an acknowledgment of the “weight” of the term client and its impact on how MSF functions as an organization. By referring to the women at MSF as clients, the cooriented activity of the staff at MSF is directed

towards particular (often unsympathetic according to clients and Wendy) ends. As I have discussed, the use of the label “client” emphasizes a transactional and marketized organizing orientation because the word client carries a historically bound and grounded meaning within the United States. From this perspective, the term client ceases to be a neutral signifying discursive resource and instead becomes a label that structures the organizing process in a manner that has consequences for relations of power within the organization. In other words, the use of the discursive resource of “client” invites neoliberal market subjectivities and their implications for power into interactions at MSF.

The findings here show how the use of non-neutral discursive resources manifest in the communicative constitution of organizing processes that structure relations of power in organizations. The poststructuralist view of language combines with CCO to highlight how discourse used in the organizing process brings with it the sociohistorically embedded norms and values tied to the dominant discursive framework. Specifically, the findings show how the use of market language in the nonprofit organizing process structures NPO relations to mimic market rationalities.

The use of the language of clients and guests was central in the daily organizing practices at MSF. As I have briefly discussed here, guests and clients are both terms that are laden with sociohistorically bound interpretations. By drawing on a poststructuralist understanding of the non-neutrality of language, I have highlighted how non-neutral discourse impacts communicative constitution of organization. Next, I discuss my project’s contribution to the theorizing of alternative organizing.

**Contributions to alternative organizing.** My project has explored the links between macro-level cultural Discourses and daily organizing processes. By highlighting

the role of Discourse in the organizing process, I have sought to link how dominant Discourses result in the perpetuation of normative organizing practices. Furthermore, I have argued that the use of alternative Discourses can result in alternative forms of organizing (e.g., the use of anarchist or feminist Discourse instead of neoliberal or paternalist Discourse in the nonprofit organizing process).

Also, I have sought to center the role of communication in the everyday organizing process. By doing so, I have highlighted how certain discursive resources (Kuhn 2009; Kuhn et al., 2008) are linked to particular Discourses and historically embedded interpretation. By joining TMS with an ILs perspective, I have provided a framework for arguing that normative communication creates normative organizations and the use of alternative Discourses and discursive resources lays the groundwork for alternative organizing practices. However, although the use of alternative discursive resources lays the foundation for alternative organizing practices, discursive resources linked to normative organizing Discourses can seep into alternative organizations, as the penetration of paternalistic discursive organizing practices at JP highlighted.

In regards to the use of discursive resources (Kuhn, 2009), my comparative approach to the study of alternative and normative organizing in response to the same social problem revealed some interesting implications. In particular, my project highlights how the same discursive resource, responsibility, can be deployed to very different ends depending on the Discursive framework and institutional logic from which it emerges. Although the term was used at both MSF and JP, the interpretation at each organization was very different, and resulted in dramatically different organizational missions.

Finally, although my project initially sought to analyze how neoliberalism functioned as a normative Discourse in the organizing process, my analysis has suggested that paternalism functions at a similar level among nonprofits that work with the homeless in the United States. What was most interesting to witness at my research sites was how paternalism could both complement and resist neoliberal attitudes. For example, the paternalistic translations of the social welfare IL could complement neoliberal translations by providing the disciplinary tools needed to (re)subjectify clients at MSF. However, tensions arose between neoliberal translations of the IL of responsibility (which emphasized total individual personal responsibility) and paternalist Discursive translation of the IL of responsibility (which emphasized that the clients could not be trusted to be responsible). The tension between neoliberal paternalism in the nonprofit organizing process may be primarily present in NPOs like MSF because of how homelessness is understood in the United States. However, the tension hints at how tensions and contradictions may arise not only between normative and alternative organizing Discourses but also between normative organizing Discourses within one organization.

The issue of paternalist Discourse manifesting and resisting neoliberal Discourse exemplifies the need for caution when studying alternative organizing. Although, as alternative organizing scholars have claimed, the problems with neoliberal capitalist forms of organizing are numerous, alternatives to capitalism are not better simply by virtue of being different. Every organizational form carries with it a set of assumptions that has implications for how relations of power are structured, and while claims can be made about which are more socially just or equitable it remains centrally important that

the process of criticism does not cease. For example, while JP has moved to what I view as a more socially just organizational form by seeking to bring its guests into the decision-making process, the results of that organizational shift are currently unknown. Furthermore, as I have discussed in this project, the organizing practices adopted by JP meant that the organization was able to provide relatively little in the way of services.

**Contributions to institutional logics.** With few exceptions (e.g., Friedland, 2009a, 2009b; Phillips, Lawrence, & Hardy, 2004) the role of Discourse in ILs research has remained relatively untouched. Friedland (2009a, 2009b) used a poststructuralist perspective to construct a theory of institutional substance, which he argued provided the rationality for ILs. Friedland's perspective highlighted how macro-level Discourse manifested in daily practice.

What has remained unexplored, however, was an analysis of how different Discourses could influence the same IL. In my project, I have shown how anarchist, feminist, neoliberal, and paternalist Discourses can function as the Discursive basis for an IL. For example, I explored how neoliberal and paternalistic Discourses lead to a particular kind of social welfare logic (by focusing mission concerns at the individual level) while anarcho-feminist Discourses lead to another kind of social welfare IL (by seeking to address systemic concerns). This Discursive perspective on ILs helps address what Lammers (2011) referred to as a lack of "empirical accessibility" in ILs theorizing. By attending to the role of Discourse in the constitution of ILs at the organizational level, I am able to explicate and productively manage some of the ambiguities associated with the theoretical concepts.

By highlighting how different Discourses translate into varied interpretations of the same IL, I contribute to a theoretical understanding of how ILs are connected to organizational agency within the organizational field. I accomplish this by showing that different translations of ILs highlight different avenues by which organizations may act as agents. For example, MSF's neoliberal translation of market and social welfare ILs made sense of its agency in a reference to its material (financial) constraints. In contrast, JP's anarchist translation of a social welfare IL made sense of agency at an individual level that emphasized compassion and flexibility.

By conceptualizing agency as pluralistic (there is not a singular way to have agency) I have addressed Suddaby's (2010) criticism of the ILs perspective. Suddaby claimed that institutional theorizing either treated organizations as passive and unable to resist or as possessing supreme agency that made them capable of change at a whim. By examining different avenues through which organizations can conceive of their own agency, I have addressed some of the tensions around agency and the institutional field. In other words, organizations like MSF are able to adhere to institutionalized norms and act as agents through the use of financial resources, while organizations like JP are able to resist institutionalized norms and act as agents through their lack of institutionalized constraints.

**Contributions to nonprofit organizing.** My project builds on Lewis' (2005) claim about the central importance of mission to nonprofit organizing by examining how daily discursive practices within NPOs impact organizational mission. These missions are (re)constituted through daily translations by staff and workers, which manifest in the deployment of discursive resources and frameworks. For example, the Discursive

translation of the IL of responsibility at MSF impacted the organization's mission by directing organizational efforts at the individual as opposed to the systemic level. This impact could be felt in the everyday articulation of responsibility at MSF, which narrowed the gaze of the staff at the organization to individual concerns as opposed to systemic change.

By examining the organizing practices at two organizations in the same area that served the same population, I was able to unpack the ways that nonprofit organizing at MSF had been "domesticated" (Thomas, 1992). In particular, I saw how the mission to provide services to homeless women had become focused solely on the (re)subjectification and commodification of the clients at MSF. As such, my research joins a growing body of literature on the increasingly business-like practices at NPOs (e.g., Maier et al., 2013; Pache & Santos, 2013; Sanders & McClellan, 2014). More specifically, by examining the Discursive translations of the ILs at these NPOs, I have extended analysis beyond material pressures (funding) to include the subtler normative Discursive organizing pressures.

Similarly, my project complicates discussions around the professionalization of volunteers (Ganesh & McCallum, 2012) in two distinct manners. First, I complicate the conversation of the professionalization of volunteers through my analysis of MSF that, unlike most NPOs, does not use volunteer labor except when those volunteers have relevant professional experience (e.g., looking for a volunteer with janitorial experience). Rather than volunteers being treated as unskilled labor, volunteers at MSF were relevant because of their ability to fill a skills deficit in the organization. Likewise, the lack of regular volunteer labor at MSF is indicative of a different interpretation of the concept of

volunteer professionalization. Specifically, jobs that would normally be performed by volunteers at an organization like MSF (most notably the preparing and serving of meals) were performed by professionals. This move from volunteer to wage labor is indicative of the adoption of a neoliberal translation of a market IL, which values wage labor over voluntary commitment.

### **Implications for Practice**

My project carries value for any organization that wishes to engage in more socially just organizing processes. Although I focus my discussion in this section on NPOs that work with homeless populations, I believe the suggestions I give here could be transferred across contexts. First, I will provide suggestions for critical reflection on the use of language in NPOs. Second, I discuss the importance for empowerment in NPOs working with marginalized populations and offer reflections about how organizational policy impacts empowerment. Finally, I argue that alternative organizations may need to more closely attend to providing emotional support not only to the individuals they serve, but to the volunteers, workers, and staff who may make up these organizations.

First, organizational decision makers can use this study to reflect on language in use within their organizations to reflect on how language impacts the organizing process. Although language impacts organizing of all types, the precariousness of homeless or other marginalized populations makes a critical reflection on language vital. Entering into a homeless shelter has the possibility to be incredibly destructive for the individual's sense of self-worth. The discursive resources that are employed in the organizing process will lay the foundation for how the individual experiences their time in the shelter. Wendy's attempt to shift the language from "client" to "guest" at MSF reflects the

recognition of the importance of this issue. However, I would challenge organizations to delve deeper into the meaning of words like “responsibility” and “accountability” and understand how these important but innocuous seeming words shape their organizations. The current discursive framework of organizations like MSF that use these terms shift focus away from systemic issues that contribute to the social problems they seek to address. By focusing solely on individual responsibility, social welfare organizations may be neglecting opportunities to productively engage with salient issues that contribute to the problems around which they are organizing.

Second, clients at MSF expressed frustration at feeling like their voices were not being heard at the meetings and that they did not feel like the grievance policy was trustworthy. Providing avenues for participation and empowerment within shelter settings like MSF is insufficient if those avenues are not trusted. Rather, staff and volunteers in organizations that work with marginalized populations should seek more opportunities to engage in dialogue with the populations they serve. I believe that engaging in genuine dialogue with clients may increase trust between staff and clients, and could possibly set service recipients up to be more successful once they leave the program. More fundamentally, providing avenues for empowerment for clients or guests at shelters provides the groundwork for a more socially just organizational form.

Related to this issue, contradictions arose at MSF regarding efforts to empower its clients. In particular, these contradictions arose in the implementation of paternalistic policies that hampered its clients’ ability to act as independent agents. More reflection at the organizational level is needed to understand how these paternalistic policies may undermine efforts to promote “responsible” behavior by their clients. For example, rather

than creating mandatory savings plans, having classes on budgeting and money management may accomplish many of the same goals.

Finally, attention to the emotional labor (Miller, Considine, & Garner, 2007) associated with engaging in alternative forms of organizing need to be more closely attended. At JP, rapid turnover resulted, largely, from a feeling of emotional exhaustion by workers who had only been at the organization for a few years. In comparison, staff at MSF with relatively few exceptions had worked for SG in one form or another for more than a decade. Organizations like JP need to attend more closely to how emotional labor can lead to feelings of burnout (Maslach, 1998). Because emotion plays such a central role in anarchist and feminist organizations in particular, examining the means by which community support can help protect organizational members from becoming burnt out is centrally important.

### **Strengths**

The comparative approach to the study of alternative organizing is one of the strengths of this project. To this date, the majority of alternative organizing research has focused solely on the “alternative” organization and has neglected conducting a similar analysis of the normative organization. In my mind, by neglecting the dominant or normative organizational form, scholars (e.g., Cheney, 2014, Jensen & Meisenbach, 2015; Parker et al., 2014a, 2014b, 2014c) are taking what precisely makes the alternative organization alternative for granted.

A particular strength of my methods was similarity between the populations served in the area. During observations, I was able to learn that some of my participants at JP had previously stayed at MSF, or had friends who had stayed there. While none of

my interview participants had stayed at both, I learned through ethnographic interviews about some of their experiences and their reasons for their preference for JP, which they all articulated. Furthermore, the overlap in populations provides a firmer empirical grounding for my argument that these organizations can be compared because there is overlap in organizational goals.

Another strength of this study is its analysis of how multiple Discourses manifest at the organizational level and in turn influence the micro-level interactions within those organizations. To my knowledge, the majority of CCO literature has examined the interactions between micro and meso level discourse but has neglected to situate the organization in its broader Discursive field. Cooren (2012) hinted that individuals could be ventriloquized by larger Discursive ideals. However, with the exception of Szabo's (2016) discussion of city council meetings and their link to larger economic models, no work has sought to expand CCO beyond the organization. In particular, while the work on ventriloquization has examined how individuals are ventriloquized by organizational policies and values, my research has explored how organizations themselves are ventriloquized by cultural Discourses. I therefore situate the organizational policies and values, which ventriloquize interactions within organizations as meta-ventriloquizations. The recasting of traditional ventriloquization as meta-ventriloquization highlights the critical potential of CCO theorizing.

### **Limitations**

While this research has several strengths, there are also limitations that should be addressed. Although the comparative approach has several advantages, my attention, time, and effort were necessarily divided. Therefore, I was unable to spend the

amount of time or conduct as many interviews as I would have otherwise done at each organization individually. However, due to the length of my observations and the variety of sources and voices I captured during my data collections, I was able to achieve a sense of saturation at each organization.

My method of data collection, and in particular my performance approach to ethnography, offered me a great deal of insight and allowed the forging of relationships, but it also created barriers. In particular, at MSF, the relationships I forged with the staff ended up creating a barrier with the clients in the organization. The majority of my interactions with clients happened while I was working with the staff, and in fact, I had many of the “trappings” of staff (e.g., an office, a mailbox, and a sign in on the staff sheet). These trappings were valuable because I feel that they helped the staff identify with me and promoted disclosure in interviews with the staff. However, I fear that my closeness with the staff created a barrier between the clients and myself, which is the population with whom I most wanted to build a relationship. Unfortunately, I did not realize this problem until I began collecting interviews and was well into my data collection process.

Furthermore, the voice of clients and guests is underrepresented in my interview sample. While I was able to collect several ethnographic interviews with the women who received services at both organizations, they represent less than a third of my participants even though they represented the single largest pool of potential participants. Likewise, I am missing the voices of everyday staff at MSF, some of whom consented to be interviewed but could never be reached, and others who would only allow me to speak with them less formally. The limit of my interview participant population has resulted in

a heavier reliance on data I obtained through ethnographic methods than originally anticipated.

### **Future Directions**

This study represents the first step in a long process for understanding alternative organizing in the nonprofit sector and beyond. Below, I summarize some potential future directions for research. I articulate how different contextual, theoretical, and methodological approaches could further enrich the study of alternative organizing.

First, this study looks at the concept of alternative organizing in a very specific context. To date, much of the study of alternative organizing has emphasized “unique” organizations (e.g., intentional communities, local currency groups). However, alternative organizing practices are present not only in nonprofit and nontraditional organizations but also in the for-profit sector. Although these practices (e.g., feminist organizing, workplace democracy) have been studied by scholars across many disciplines, a concerted effort to understand these practices as alternative has not been conducted. I believe engaging with these practices under the overarching heuristic mechanism of alternative organizing has theoretical and practical potential to shed new light on transformative and emancipatory possibilities. In essence, the question of alternative organizing in the for-profit sector may be: what does being a non-capitalist for-profit organization look like?

Second, my project has developed a theoretical framework for understanding the links between Discourse, ILs, and everyday organizing practice. While this perspective was useful in aiding my interrogation of alternative organizing in the nonprofit sector, it is by no means exhaustive or complete. For example, engaging with alternative

organizing processes via the web of power (Dougherty, 2011) may better highlight the role of power within these organizations that I only explored from a poststructuralist position. Likewise, queer and critical race perspectives may better articulate the role of normative organizing Discourses that were not foregrounded in my theoretical framework.

Finally, my project represents an attempt to study alternative organizing from a qualitative ethnographic perspective. To date, all research on alternative organizing has either been conducted from a qualitative, rhetorical, or cultural studies perspective. While I believe research from this perspective is invaluable, the lack of a more quantitative and social scientific perspective limits our knowledge of alternative organizing. Specifically, I believe the lack of knowledge about outcomes surrounding the use of alternative organizing practices is inhibiting the practical value of this research. While I can speak anecdotally about guests enjoying the culture of JP more than the clients enjoyed the culture at MSF, anecdotal evidence like this has little impact on policy or large-scale organizational change. For example, future quantitative research could highlight the advantages and dysfunctions associated with alternative organizing practices (e.g., does dialogue promote higher satisfaction with decisions).

## **Conclusion**

In this study, I comparatively analyzed the organizing practices of two shelters that served homeless women and women with children. I have sought to explore how alternative and normative organizing practices are tied to alternative and normative organizing Discourses that are made sense of in everyday organizing practice through the ILs of responsibility, social welfare, and market. These ILs are translated based on their

links to the normative or alternative organizing discourses, resulting in more or less alternative or normative organizing practices.

My findings reveal how cultural Discourses manifest in everyday organizing practices and shape the constitution of nonprofit organizations as they seek to fulfill their organizational missions. These findings have implications for CCO theorizing as well as the theorizing around ILs, alternative organizing, and nonprofit organizing. My study contributes to a growing attendance in the scholarly community to the study of non-corporatized and non-capitalistic organizational forms. More importantly, my study offers empirical evidence of the possibility of an alternative and social justice minded NPO.

To conclude, I reflect back to the Margaret Thatcher quote with which I began this study, where the claim was made that there was, in fact, “no alternative” to neoliberalism. As my study and others have shown, there are alternatives to neoliberal organizational forms. However, as long as neoliberal capitalism limits imagination and reflexivity in organizing processes, many of these organizational possibilities will either not be considered or dismissed out of hand. I believe that communication, as a discipline, is uniquely positioned to challenge the non-reflexive nature of organizing. Within our discipline, we have long trained our students to be critical consumers of mediated, interpersonal, and political messages. I believe that within organizational communication we have the capacity and the duty to train our students to be critical consumers of organizations, to encourage reflexivity in the organizing process, and to help them imagine alternatives.

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## **APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STAFF/WORKERS**

1. Tell me about how you got involved here.
2. Tell me about your organization's mission
  - a. What does that mean to you?
  - b. What does your organization do to fulfill that mission?
3. What are the things you think your organization is best at?
4. What sorts of things do you think your organization can improve on?
  - a. How would you improve them?
5. What are the biggest challenges facing your organization right now?
  - a. How are you meeting those challenges?
  - b. Who/what is responsible for the challenges?
6. Tell me about what makes your shelter unique from other shelters in the area
  - a. Why do you think those differences exist?
7. What do you think this shelter is trying to accomplish?
8. Tell me about a good experience you had here.
9. Tell me about a bad experience you had here.
10. What does responsibility mean to you?
11. Based on the questions I've asked, is there anything else you expected me to discuss?

## **APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR VOLUNTEERS**

1. Tell me about how you got involved here.
2. Tell me about your organization's mission
  - a. What does that mean to you?
  - b. What does your organization do to fulfill that mission?
3. Why do you volunteer at a homeless shelter?
4. Tell me about other places where you've volunteered
  - a. How is this shelter similar/different?
5. What are the biggest challenges this shelter is facing?
  - a. How do you think you/they are meeting those challenges?
6. Tell me about what makes this shelter unique from other ones in the area
  - a. Why do you think those differences exist?
7. Tell me about a good experience you had here.
8. Tell me about a bad experience you had here.
9. What do you think this shelter is trying to accomplish?
10. What does responsibility mean to you?
11. Based on the questions I've asked, is there anything else you expected me to discuss?

## **APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GUESTS/CLIENTS**

1. Tell me about how you first started using this shelter's services
2. Tell me about the other services in the area
3. What makes this shelter unique from other shelters in the area
  - a. Why do you think that difference exists?
4. Describe the staff/workers at this homeless shelter
5. Describe the volunteers who come here
  - a. Why do you think people come volunteer here?
6. Tell me about a good experience you had here.
7. Tell me about a bad experience you had here.
8. What do you think this shelter is trying to accomplish?
9. What does responsibility mean to you?
10. Based on the questions I've asked, is there anything else you expected me to discuss?

## VITA

Peter R. Jensen was born in Indianapolis, IN, and lived in several places in the Midwest before settling in Omaha, NE. After graduating with a BA in History and a minor in Communication, Peter returned to Omaha for two years. While in Omaha, Peter worked at a nonprofit organization that worked with at-risk youth. Before beginning his graduate career at the University of Colorado, Peter spent a year in Denver working as a case manager at a for-profit halfway house for adult male convicted felons. It was during this time that Peter began to think more deeply about systemic oppression, as well as the problems associated with using a capitalist mentality to confront social problems. After graduating with his MA in Communication at the University of Colorado in 2012, where he focused on rhetoric and discourse and social practice, Peter began his career as a doctoral student at the University of Missouri, where he shifted his focus to organizational communication. At the start of his doctoral program, Peter remained primarily interested in systemic oppression as it related to the prison-industrial complex. However, a project with a local Catholic Worker homeless shelter shifted his focus to examine different ways of organizing around social problems like homelessness. This project led to Peter's dissertation topic. Peter has accepted a tenure-track position at the University of Alabama in its Department of Communication Studies, and he is excited to start this new chapter.