

WORKING AT DOING GOOD: WORKER IDENTITY IN CAREER VOLUNTEERS

by

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Abstract

In the current climate of proliferating nonprofit organizations and demanding social service needs, volunteers play a crucial role. This study looks at career volunteers, who, unlike other types of volunteers, identify with their work as if it were a paying occupation. It examines personal narratives and experiences through interviews in two Kansas communities and in-depth participant observation in one Kansas homeless shelter to find unique identity formation in the way that career volunteers make sense of who they are and what they do. These volunteers show a tendency to reject modern frames around the concepts of work, home, and volunteerism. Instead, they integrate life categories, lending an often counter-cultural conception of identity and meaning to their lives' work.

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List of Abbreviations

1. Little Apple House (Anonymous organization of researcher participant observation).....**LAH**
2. Rescue Mission (Secondary anonymous organization of observation and interviews).....**RM**
3. Non-governmental Organization.....**NGO**
4. International Monetary Fund.....**IMF**
5. Human Immunodeficiency Virus (Considered pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa)...**HIV**

Introduction

Volunteerism underlies the life and vitality of social service providing organizations in the United States. The ways in which volunteers think about their work and construct their own identities is central to volunteer motivation and to the continued labor force necessary to organizational sustainability. Not every volunteer, however, is the same. They vary drastically by experience and function. This project focuses on one such volunteer type, “career volunteers.” These types of volunteers also vary immensely within and adjacent to this category, but are defined here as those who approach their work with regular hours and consistency normally associated with paid occupations. In a word, they consider their work as their career, deriving personal satisfaction and primary identification from it. Literature on volunteerism highlights two historical frames that have been constructed through cultural norms (particularly with regard to the duration of work experiences), political shifts, religious ideologies, gendered beliefs, and economic relations to reify work as paid work and volunteerism as labor that is unpaid. These frames have shifted over time and become increasingly complex, affected by a capitalist tendency to value work over volunteerism, and a gendered tendency to dichotomize public/private, for profit/non profit, male/female spheres.

Participant observation in one service providing organization that occurred during the first stage of research shed light on this type of identity formation, and shaped the second stage of research. The second stage consisted of interviews with individuals who fit this description according to the organizations for which they volunteered. All of the factors involved in the framing of work and volunteerism came into play in the volunteer narratives as they reacted to these frames in several modes of consciousness. Through these reactions, volunteers tended to make sense of who they were by either choosing to identify with the work frame, despite a social

definition that does not include them (often people did this simply by choosing to label their work with a professional label rather than using the word “volunteer”), or by choosing to reject modern frames altogether. Not all aspects of identity formation were voluntary. Some volunteers felt freer than others to construct their own frames. Others felt more constrained by the framing thrust upon them.

Chapter 1 - Literature Review

Volunteers give their time for a wide variety of reasons. These reasons are strong enough intrinsic motivators to make paid compensation take a back seat to the passion that exists for the work itself. Understanding the identities that form around these passions is particularly important in light of the fact that American volunteers exist within a culture and capitalist economy that tends to emphasize paid work in the formation of identity (Sennett 1998, Ackerman et. al 1997); and within a climate of a declining public sector and a proliferating sector of nonprofits, NGOs, and voluntary civil society (Pynes 2006 and O'Connor 2009).

Diverse Frames

Identity is key to understanding what motivates this vital community work, and how it can be fostered. Much research focuses on volunteerism's close cousin, the helping professions, which suggests that complex differences exist between the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards associated with this type of work and different types of work in the for-profit sector (Jurkiewicz 2001), differentially motivating individuals in these professions and helping to shape their identities (Houston 2000 and Wright 2001). However, there is a gap in the research into the motivations of volunteers who function and identify similarly to paid workers in the helping professions because "work" has been defined too narrowly (Ackerman et. al 1997). This gap partially reflects cultural norms and economic conditions that frame what it means to volunteer and what it means to work.

Frames are imaginary lines society collectively draws around conceptions of identity that shape individuals, who further shape these frames. Thus, people choose, to a certain extent, what defines them and the others around them. People tend to make sense of reality through these

snapshots because people, identities, and situations are far more fluid and complex than is possible to consider (Entman 2006). The practice of framing is particularly important to identity construction because people apply frames to themselves and others based on occupation titles (fireman, stay at home mom, volunteer, retiree) that are gendered, and that include an entire set of cultural images that constitute particular identities. While these occupational frames have grown less rigid in the modern era, they have historically been used as primary identifiers, and this still affects how people see themselves and how they feel perceived by others. Goffman (1974) suggests that power structures, rather than individuals, define how occupational frames are constructed and perceived. How a volunteer understands or frames his or her actions shapes the reality of who they are.

1. The Work Frame

How society frames work, especially in American culture, where the spheres of work and home can be heavily differentiated, effects how an individual frames volunteer actions. Dedicated volunteers may choose to identify their volunteerism with the work frame to avoid the marginalization of volunteerism. Work is an ambiguous frame. The U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Labor (2011) define it in terms of paid labor, but much of what people attribute to the “work” frame is not tied to paid compensation. The work frame is primary identifier, source of self-worth, status, motivation, life purpose and power for many Americans (Sennett 1998 and Mills 1959). These are benefits that volunteers may also experience even though their occupational identity originates from an activity to which they devote time, work, and passion, but for which they are not paid. Volunteerism can garner power through authority in an NGO or compound on community status, reputation, or financial influence. Status can be obtained

through identifying oneself with one's voluntary occupation as a position of authority (rather than as a volunteer or unemployed).

2. The Volunteer Frame

Whether volunteerism is framed as work's opposite or extension makes an enormous difference to those who draw their identity from it. The Department of Labor (2011) defines volunteerism as unpaid labor, which is a broad term that could include mothering, collective child rearing, making a meal for a friend, etc. This is problematic because not everyone frames volunteering in the same way. Many African Americans live in communities where community work intertwines with family life (Collins 2000). "Othermothers" care for children outside of the family voluntarily, but do not frame the work as volunteerism (Collins 2000:179). The DOL may miss unpaid labor associated with church, family, or community when it is entrenched in the culture and misses the differential volunteer frame. Overcoming this framing ambiguity, the 2002 General Social Survey uses the variable HLPNEEDY, asking: "Have you given time to help the needy in your community?" excluding people who do not consider the beneficiaries of their volunteering "needy." Neither makes a distinction between long-term career volunteers and anyone engaging in a single event. There may not be an adequate way of encapsulating all voluntary work, so as not to exclude anyone's frame. Still, it is important to recognize that the volunteer frame is socially charged, complex, shifting, and diverse.

Understanding these two frames in their complexity will help to shed light on how career volunteers understand their work and who they are. Entman's (2006) review of Goffman's (1974) framing analysis suggests that public perception is key to framing, even on an individual level. It would follow, that as career volunteers construct their own identities, how they choose to

frame their own work might be contingent on how they feel others perceive them and the work they do.

Shifting Frames: State and Civil Society

Overlapping and shifting volunteer frames developed over the course of history. Before wage labor, families worked together for agricultural sustenance. “Volunteerism” might have been less formal, embedded in church and community.

Industrialization brought with it a greater burden on families and a greater need for the State to address the poverty inherent in capitalist wage labor (Ehrenreich 2001, Gieben 1992, and Eliasoph 1998). The State, civil society, work life, and home became separately framed (Calhoun 1992). Early American progressives, such as Jane Addams formalized volunteering. They framed poverty in terms of social problems: unemployment, low wages, labor exploitation, and disenfranchisement (O’Connor 2009). Addams became a symbol of volunteerism. The typical response to social problems was caring, educated, upper class, and feminine. Although already heavily gendered, volunteerism held legitimacy in its association with the State, with progressive politicians like Theodore Roosevelt, with women’s suffrage, and with abolitionism.

A marginalization of volunteer work paralleling a marginalization of poverty soon followed. Social movements of the 1970s and 80s transferred these State functions to a “Caring Adult Network” of volunteers who were encouraged to “pitch in,” and “lend a hand” (Eliasoph 1998: 48-49). Volunteerism was reframed in a marginalized way. While paid social workers tended to primary tasks, volunteers “pitched in” to “lend a hand,” participating in secondary duties, routine work, and substitute positions. Volunteerism lost its synonymy with “activist,” “advocate,” “crusader,” or “pioneer” (51).

The 1990s saw poverty reframed as an individual problem of dependency on welfare, which concealed the fact that structural issues embedded in the labor market compounded on each other to keep the ruling relations in place and to proliferate the burden on non-profit organizations (Ehrenreich 2001, Smith 2005, and Fisher 1997). Government, multinational corporations, the World Bank, IMF, and NGOs comprise the “ruling relations” that Smith (2005) explains often function to inadvertently perpetuate global inequalities. These actors all contribute to defining poverty (framing it in terms of structural inequality or individual choice); and they all contribute to defining who is responsible for its solution, thereby dictating how volunteerism is framed.

Despite the State’s divorce from social services (Nesbit and Brudney 2010), certain aspects of volunteer work are influenced by the State through grants and social service policies like the 2009 Serve America Act (Nesbit and Brudney 2010), which provided incentives for service learning. Unlike the ideology of the progressive era or the New Deal, modern policies like the Serve America Act recognize volunteers as responsible for social services, not the State (Trouillot 2001). Economic shifts that increase inequalities and social service needs shape policy shifts that reframe how volunteerism fits into the social service providing economy. These shifts, in turn, create conditions for cultural shifts where new norms around volunteer work emerge. The emphasis on service learning and de-emphasis on career volunteerism may be emerging as a new cultural norm (Nesbit 2010 and Lohman 2010).

The national push towards service learning reflects a broader cultural and economic interest in short-term, experiential opportunities. This cultural interest parallels a simultaneous shift away from long-term consistent work. This affects volunteerism and the role of NGOs and nonprofit organizations that rely on long-term volunteers in unique ways. Interestingly, at the

same time the Serve America Act and other initiatives have produced an increase in service-learning student volunteerism (Corporation for National and Community Service 2011), volunteerism as a whole is declining (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011). The 2003 Volunteering in America report showed an average of 37.6 hours of volunteering over the course of the year per resident of the United States. In 2010, that average was down to 33.9 hours (See Figure 1.1). The decrease in the number of hours is slight, because it does not show that the nature of those hours is changing, and less likely to be tied to one organization or project. Lohman (2010) indicates that young volunteers, in particular, are motivated by causes, which can be temporary and multiple. This type of motivation results in short-term engagement. By contrast, older volunteers need less particular cause or experiential motivation, and tend to be motivated by social norms (Okun and Schultz 2003). Thus, volunteering seems to be changing with younger generations who still value service work, but on a more experiential basis. Regardless of the duration of the work, volunteer rates increase with age, after retirement, as might be expected, but they also increase steadily during the working years (ages 20-54). Multiplicities of factors likely contribute to the increase, but also contribute to changing the shape of the volunteer experience.

Volunteering in America (Yearly data)

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Volunteer Rate	28.8%	28.8%	28.9%	26.7%	26.2%	26.4%	26.8%	
Volunteer Hours (Total yearly, per resident)	37.6	37.9	36.3	35.3	34.8	34.2	33.9	
	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	
Volunteer Rate by Age (2008-2010)	18.6%	22.9%	31.7%	30.4%	27.8%	26.5%	20.3%	
Volunteer Hours by Age (2008-2010)	40	39	48	52	60	90	100+	
	Male			Female				
Volunteer Rates by Gender	23.2%			29.6%				
Volunteer Hours by Gender	52			52				

Figure 1.1 Corporation for National and Community Service 2011 Report

Lohman (2010) suggests that younger volunteers who seek to supplement their education and job experience with volunteer work collect diverse short-term experiences with many organizations, not long relationships of dedication to only one or a few organizations. Similar research in the realm of paid work also shows a shift from long term to short term engagement. Ackerman, Goodwin, Daugherty, and Gallagher (1997) suggest that the duration of work engagements over the past 30 years has shortened due to multifaceted economic and cultural factors that have redefined work in terms of stints and not careers. Modern economies proliferated the need for diverse experiences to compete in a global marketplace. Jobs and the technology associated with them changed quickly. Workers are now driven to build their resumes through experiences, network through experiences, and to make themselves more marketable as a commodity. These economic factors, coupled with the increased opportunities for diverse experiences available to people in an increasingly globalized and networked world have increased the importance of multiple experiences as a cultural value. There is now a cultural emphasis on experience that increases the diversity of ways in which time is occupied, but decreases the length of time associated with each task.

Shifting Frames: Gender

Volunteer work is often culturally associated with “women’s work”: an attitude that could have a major impact on career volunteers’ constructions of their own identities. The work of gender scholars sheds light on the gendered beliefs structuring work vs. home labor; these perspectives also provide a lens with which to understand what is occurring within volunteer work.

Cynthia Epstein (1988) notes an overarching preference by society for dichotomies that cause superimposed gendered distinctions over relationships and organizations that are far more

complex than gender categories allow (p. 16). Despite the injustice that dichotomous gendered distinctions do to the complexities of reality, this preference for dualism is reproduced socially in gendered ideas that occur in the frames around work and volunteerism and is, therefore, reflected in individual experiences as people are constrained by these dichotomies to reproduce them in their work and narratives. Culturally constructed dualisms of public and private, work and volunteer, male and female all have an effect on the identity development of career volunteers who often straddle these dichotomous meanings. This work suggests that cultural understandings of gender, particularly oppositional dualism, affect the way individuals feel an ascribed status to paid and unpaid labor.

Traditionally, society reinforces one of these dualisms by associating unpaid work with reproduction and with selflessness. Unpaid work has been culturally constructed in an opposing relationship with paid work, which is perceived as masculine, and associated with production and capitalism. In a capitalist society, economic organizations are given privilege over non-profit and family organizations, “masculine” work is given privilege over “feminine” work, and paid labor is given privilege over unpaid labor, despite many sentiments to the contrary (Acker 1998). Within globalized capitalism, similar patterns of gender framing emerge. Deborah Mindry (2010), for example, found that the profound response to HIV in southern Africa followed this construction. HIV was framed as ‘virile’ and ‘violent’: an essentialist picture of African masculinity (p. 556). Pitted against this phenomenon, the silent, motherly power of the humanitarian organizations stands as the feminized response. This false essentialism frames social problems and their responses in gendered terms. Instead, Mindry calls for a caring by shared humanity: a call to “balance rights, justice, and care in ways that attend to the webs of relationships through which lived realities are shaped” (p. 555). Perhaps lived realities within the

social problems that volunteers in the U.S. face are also far more complex than their gendered frames allow.

Volunteerism in the U.S. is framed as an extension of feminized labor. Strong cultural beliefs about the natural nurturance of females pervade this system. Women are expected to be selfless, to elevate the needs of the children, and to care for others around them (Risman 2001:26). Unpaid, household labor has been perceived as feminine due to its connection with mothering. However, much of the feminine qualities of the work are only feminine because men and women understand the behavior as feminine. Similarly, paid labor is perceived as masculine because men's work is culturally associated with being the primary breadwinner (Hall and Gieben 1992). This perception emerges from industrial conceptions of the home labor as feminine and factory work as masculine, but was redefined and reemerged as women entered the labor force in subservient and substitute roles to men in the World War II era, and persisted in the redefining of certain paid jobs as feminine. Feminized jobs still tend to earn less than masculinized jobs, and women still earn less than men in comparable jobs, because men are still perceived as primary breadwinners (Reskin and Padavic 2001). Status is often arbitrarily assigned, not on a job's concrete merit, but on its gendered associations. Even as these roles change, as men take on mothering tasks and women are working in the for-profit sector more than ever, the expectations and the gender framing remain. Ann Willard (2001) describes motherhood scripts, in which women are expected to follow culturally prescribed methods of acting that exemplify the selfless wife and mother. Within these scripts, the distinction between the self and the role is blurred (p. 35). The selflessness and care for others is mirrored in volunteer work, and possibly adds volunteerism as a character dimension on the motherhood script.

This framing of volunteer work is shifting. Historically, volunteerism allowed women to gain agency outside of the private sphere, but this, in turn, veiled a deeper cultural attitude of distinction. Industrialization began the sexual division of labor in terms of devaluing unpaid domestic work. Colonialism exported this framing of employment and domesticity all over the world (Reskin and Padavic 2001). However, the dichotomy of work and home does not include volunteer labor (unpaid labor outside of the home), making it an area of potential equality. As women moved into this new sphere, the sphere was then framed as feminine. Reskin and Roos (1990) explain this phenomenon in terms of queuing. They notice a queuing affect on how employers rank men and women and how employees rank jobs, which can easily be applied to volunteerism. Understood through the framework of the queuing model, shifts in spheres are accompanied by shifts in the shape of queues. Women tend to be ranked lower in the queue and jobs associated with them are also ranked lower. Research differs as to exactly how different groups rank particular jobs, but there is no stark discrepancy in women's and men's preferences for different types of work in the public sphere (Houston 2000). Reskin and Roos (1990) found in the for-profit sphere that "most workers try to maximize income, social standing, autonomy, job security, congenial working conditions, interesting work, and the chance of advancement; and they rank occupations accordingly" (p. 38). So, if desirability does not cause women to rank volunteer or caring work higher, then something else is at work.

Joan Acker (1990) found that the framing of gendered work similarly affects perceptions of women working in paid or unpaid spheres. She conceptualizes that "doing gender" on the job creates fluid distinctions between types of work. She found that certain jobs could be devalued once associated with women or perceived to align with childbearing (Ibid. p. 152). The types of work associated with women were devalued in terms of salary and in terms of prestige (Ibid. p.

163). Volunteer work is often culturally associated with “women’s work”: an attitude that could have a major impact on career volunteers’ constructions of their own identities. In their study of women volunteers in rural America, Petzela and Mannon (2006) found that women’s volunteer work provided the primary volunteer benefit to the local community. Despite this fact, women tended to minimize their efforts in comparison to the men who volunteered (Ibid. p. 236-237). Women tended to frame their volunteerism as an expression of the maternal nature, as a way to socialize, or as a contribution to the local economy (Ibid. p. 257-258). This expression of maternal nature aligned volunteer work with the private sphere and caring work by extension; it affords volunteerism a very gendered tinge.

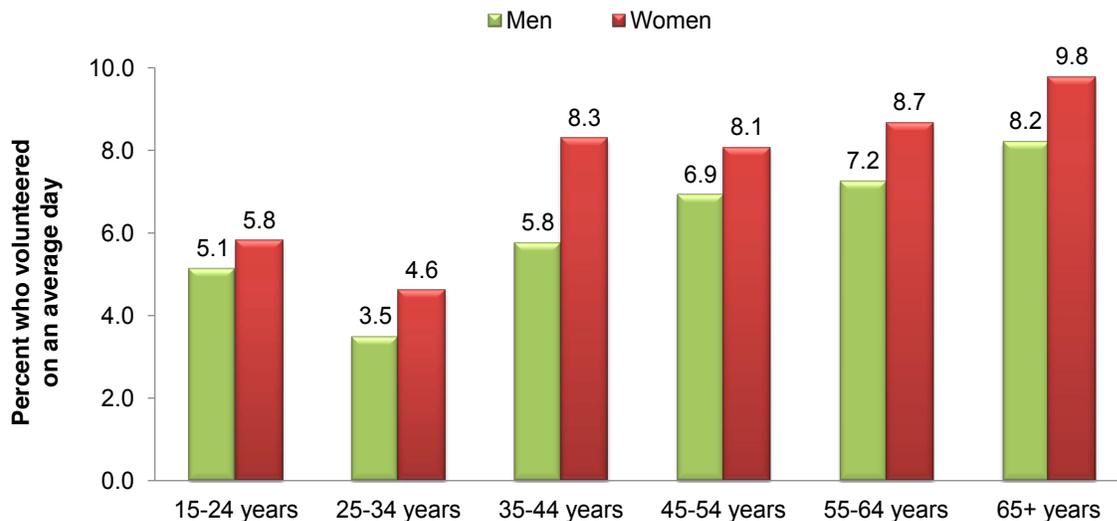
In our culture, feelings of altruism, care-giving, or even guilt are often associated with female characteristics, behaviors, and natural aptitudes. Epstein (1988) argues that this attitude is biologically unfounded (p. 60, 86, and 92). So, if women choose altruistic professions, the choice likely results from gendered cultural constructions or from what women think they should feel (Hochschild 2003). Epstein found (despite this evidence) an adherence to very distinctly feminine and masculine characteristics of what men and women do to occupy their time (Epstein 1988:96). It may follow that traditional gendered assumptions about motherhood and housekeeping as unpaid labor would carry over into the unpaid labor of volunteerism. These attitudes might further cause a schism between the for-profit sector and the non-profit sector: masculinizing profit as competition-based (an extension of production) and feminizing non-profit as service or needs based (an extension of reproduction). These studies confirm how people assign status based on salary when the labor is paid.

In a study of volunteers in youth sports, Messner’s (2009) findings support gendered status assignments. Even in volunteer activities, where pay could not be used as a measure, there

seems to be more value placed on higher status positions associated with “maleness.” Coaches were usually male and were given preferential treatment, the authority, respect, and role-model statuses, and these were not given to the “team moms” who were usually female. The natural difference thread that Messner notes was laced throughout coaches’ narratives typifies the attitude that male coaches should be a model for both boys and girls because leadership is seen as an inherently male characteristic (p. 151). Even without pay as an indicator, he found that the work associated with males (coaching) was attributed a higher status by youth and adults. Women coaches tended to teach both boys and girls respect (p. 148), but the same phenomenon was not found to be occurring for women in “team mom” positions because this position was culturally devalued.

Gendered privilege and disadvantage occur at multiple levels (Risman 1998). For volunteers, it may occur at the community level of work status, at the family level of dependence, and at the organizational level when the organization is organized according to gendered constructs. More women than men volunteer on average, particularly in the “working years” age 35-44 (see Figure 1.2).

Percent of population who volunteered on an average day, by age



NOTE: Data include persons age 15 and over and are averages for 2006-10. Volunteer activities are those done for no pay for or through an organization.

SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics, American Time Use Survey

Figure 1.2 Bureau of Labor Statistics 2011 report of volunteering by age and gender

It is important to ask why more women volunteer, but it is also important to ask how they are privileged or harmed within this type of labor, and how this labor fits into their conception of self.

Obviously, removing income (the highest standard for ranking) from the attributes of work would be detrimental to the status evaluation of a job. Still, attributes like social standing, autonomy, security, congenial working conditions, and interesting work (Reskin and Roos 1990:56) could be potentially quite high. Social expectations regarding how men and women should feel, how they should display those emotions, and how they should behave in particular circumstances (feeling rules) could provide a secondary explanation (Hochschild 2003). Even at

work, where job descriptions could be exactly the same, women might be expected to care more for other's feelings, to lend a listening ear, make small talk, apologize for rude clients, etc. Men are subject to fewer of these expectations, and might instead be expected to withhold personal feelings around other men, avoid certain topics, or self-inflate their own accomplishments. Like Hochschild's indication that women tend to be constrained by the expectation of emotion work (in which they must manage their own emotions and the emotions of those around them more than men), women tend to make more inroads into occupations when something about the occupation consisted of "tasks already labeled as women's work" (Reskin and Roos 1990:303). These tasks then lose status as they are re-ranked according to the feminized and emotionalized label. Since volunteerism, as a whole, is associated with caring, it can be expected to be women's work. However, even within volunteers, women's work would likely deal more directly with clients and be governed by feeling rules that involve more personal care.

Part of the dichotomous framing involves a parallel framing of "rational" work as masculine and of "emotional" work as feminine. Fraser and Gordon (1994), for example, found that social services aligned with emotional terms from two directions. Recipients of the services were framed within feminine constructs according to feminized emotional expectations. Their problems were labeled as "dependency." In "welfare reform," many of the social and public problems addressed by these women were stigmatized and given connotations that were extremely racial, sexual and misogynistic. "Naming the problems of poor solo mothers and their children 'dependency', moreover, tends to make them appear to be individual rather than social problems, as much moral or psychological as economic" (Ibid. p. 4). From the other direction, service providers were also framed within feminine constructs and according to feminized

emotional expectations. As their gendered framing delegitimized the problems, the work in alleviating those problems was also delegitimized.

The implications of these shifting spheres could prove complex. On the one hand, Reskin and Roos (1990) found work perceived as “women’s work” to be devalued (p. 80). Since much volunteerism falls into this category, it is possible that volunteer work would be relegated to a lower status as a result. On the other hand, if the other factors affecting job status were high enough to outweigh the lack of salary, it is possible that volunteers could enjoy a high status due to community gratitude or enhanced social standing. After all, a slight renaming of “volunteer” to “missionary” could entail the same occupation, but conjure an entirely different status. U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics (2011) show that women are volunteering at a higher rate than men (see Figure 1.2), but what they do not show is how this labor is perceived, and whether it is identified with as a career label.

Objectives

Considering previous research on two key concerns: how work and volunteer identities are framed, it is likely that career volunteers construct their own identities by combining these two frames. Framing is particularly constraining in modern society where spheres of work and home, public and private, male and female, can be heavily differentiated. Historically, work has been culturally constructed to create the foundational sense of status, identity, and motivation in life, yet career volunteers identify intensely with their unpaid work, and they must make sense of this countercultural contradiction.

How the frames have been constructed with regard to economic and cultural changes manifested in the State and civil society, and how they have been constructed with regard to

gendered ideologies provide important background information to understanding how career volunteers make sense of the frames as they consider themselves and their work.

The objective of this paper seeks to understand how diverse factors help career volunteers form identities around their work. Does the literature surrounding the work and volunteer frames adequately describe how career volunteers make sense of who they are and what they do? It also seeks to understand a gap in the literature that remains due to prevailing conceptions of two distinct categories, one too narrow, the other too broad: “work” as *paid*-work and the resulting focus on paid labor (Ackerman et. al. 1997) and “volunteerism” as a lump sum generalization for a gambit of conditions ranging from court-appointed service to service-learning (Nesbit 2010 and Brudney, 2000) to what I define here as “career volunteers”; those who approach their volunteerism with regular hours, consistency, and all of the dedication that a paid job might require. It also attempts to fill a methodological gap. The Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011) shows a decrease in the average number of hours of volunteer work from 37.6 hours to 33.9 hours from 2003 to 2010. By asking how this decrease in consistency affects people, this study looks at the individual identity formations that cannot be discovered through analysis of the larger trends.

Chapter 2 - Data and Methodology

Conceptualization

For this project, volunteering is defined as unpaid labor a non-profit, non-governmental public service providing organization. This excludes home labor, but includes church involvement if it involves a public service. Defining volunteerism according to these constraints diminishes the variance in the framing of “volunteer” by different social groups. It also allows a narrowing of the study by excluding mothering and unpaid work within the family or neighborhood, unless it is associated with a nonprofit organization. It also excludes voluntary service that is compensated with a stipend in some way, such as volunteer firefighters, military, or Peace Corps volunteers. The public service portion of the definition includes church activities, but only those that are providing a service to the community (ie. a church sponsored soup kitchen), and not for the purpose of proselytizing.

This study focuses on volunteer identity as a way of expanding, in a particular way, upon the macro data on trends in volunteering. Realizing that volunteerism is shifting in its duration (towards the shorter term) and in its goal (towards education), it is important to study the identity developments (within that trend) for those that contradict this trend, but nonetheless remain vital to the non-profit community. This approach places this study within a much more meaningful framework by addressing the intersections of micro, meso, and macro types of explanation (Goldstone, 2004: 46). Locating this study in a university community allowed the observation of career volunteer identity development as it relates to the growing phenomenon of service-learning and the influx of short-term student volunteers. In this community, many of the career volunteers were white, middle to upper class women, who have the time and affluence to pursue unpaid labor. Since this precludes the experience of career volunteers in lower income

communities where volunteers might surround the church, be racial minorities, or be male, interviews from a more diverse Capital city location were also included.

Data

This study focused on two types of data: interviews with self-defined “career volunteers” at non-profit service organizations in the Manhattan and Topeka, KS communities, and participant observation in a homeless shelter that has been named “The Little Apple House.”

Defining “career volunteers” as those that have demonstrated long-term, regular weekly hours committed to a particular organization, and who refer to the volunteer work as their job, a series of in-depth, personal, biographical interviews were conducted with individuals identified by local agencies that match this description and who chose to participate. There were 18 interviews from 8 organizations (See Appendix A). The Manhattan interviews were strategically placed in a community that experiences the shift towards educational volunteerism intensely, since it is a college community. The few who fit this role are a small sample that represents larger implications because these individuals straddle the line of work and volunteerism. This case study should be more generalizable because these factors of identity development were intensified in these individuals. John Walton suggests that this theoretical plane of the sample will increase its generalizability when the case study represents a bigger phenomenon or it represents some unique historical instance (Walton 1992: 132). In this case, results should be generalizable to people situated in the same structural position as these career volunteers, and it should provide one layer of explanation for what is occurring in this unique historical shift in volunteer culture.

The participant observation portion of the data collection employed the method of “institutional ethnography” in which observations were made over a period of 3 years while

participating in a non-profit organizational structure. Dorothy Smith (2005) advocates this strategy of understanding institutional dynamics through a critique of the bureaucracy of the ruling relations, existing on multiple organizational levels. Following her example, my position within the nonprofit organization, and the standpoints of the other volunteers and staff provided a doubly reflexive lens with which to examine the ruling relations of nonprofit organization. The institutional ethnography focused on the elements of bureaucracy the organization employs, the directions of influence, how the organizational structures operate within the organization and relative to the community, and global networks of services and resources. This examination of the organization allowed a deeper understanding of the identity development of the volunteers within it. I relied on my own field-notes and experiences in conjunction with those of others working as a career volunteers in this nonprofit organization to examine the relevant processes of identity formation.

Variables

In order to look at how career volunteers construct their own identities, I examined how identity varies with gender, with how these people perceive their own status and identity, and with how they balance various aspects of their lives. In addition to these variables, I asked open-ended questions like “how did you come to volunteer and what do you feel really inspires you to do so?” and “how do you explain this work to others?” to try to get at the existing social and gendered meanings of work affect, how they limit, or constrain the way that non-profit “career volunteers” make sense of what they do, and who they are in ways that cannot be predicted by the literature on work and on volunteerism.

After transcribing the interviews, answer topics were categorized according to open codes that summarized each concept using Strauss and Corbin's (2007) method of extracting repetitive and meaningful concepts.

“Concepts are derived from data...and represent an analysts impressionistic understandings of what is being described in the experiences, spoken words, actions, interactions, problems, and issues expressed by participants [and they] provide a way of organizing data...Concepts vary in levels of abstraction...Open concepts are grouped into greater abstraction...while gaining in explanatory power, they begin to lose some of their specificity...[and] connection to the data” (Strauss and Corbin 2007:52).

These concepts were derived directly from the data, observed from the language and terms that described the motivations and meanings of work and aspects of identity formation that were used in the individual narratives. For example, any references to blessing others by providing spiritual blessings, “I was being obedient to God’s call,” and “Jesus teaches that we should be compassionate toward the poor” were coded into a code category with the label, “spiritual motivation.” About 35 prominent and repetitive open codes emerged through this analysis. Although they were interrelated, they could be grouped into three overarching axial codes (a secondary level of abstraction), which specified the extent to which these categories represent individual, community, or structural modes of identity formation. These codes utilize a grounded theory method (Strauss and Corbin 2007) to simplify into an abstract model a very complex and infinitely variable set of interrelated motivators and nuances of volunteer identity.

Chapter 3 - Findings and Results

Portrait of an Organization: The Little Apple House

“They like us out front. We make it look authentic.” These were the words that Victor used to describe why he, a Mexican-American, was working for a tip jar at the local Mongolian

barbecue. That tip jar allowed the restaurant to pay its full-time workers less than minimum wage, and landed Victor, and several of his coworkers here in the Little Apple House (LAH). Victor shared this story during his 3-week stay in 2009 before finding permanent, affordable housing. Victor's experience reflects a phenomenon noted by Ehrenreich (2001) and others, in which structural conditions of the American economy, minimum wage, social welfare, and the housing market prevent financial success even where full time employment is available.

Mindi, the director, explained that Victor's story is fairly representative of the type of clients received by the shelter, which is why it is officially registered as an emergency shelter, not a homeless shelter. While comparing LAH to a shelter in a similar community not far away, Mindi explained that other shelters often have the side effect of promoting a "culture of homelessness" (July 12, 2009). By providing more than just a bed and food, Mindi and LAH's few staff members seemed intent on their mission of promoting self-sufficiency and community organization. Recognizing a "culture of homelessness" seemed to reflect societal views that homelessness, like poverty in general, is an individual choice: a lifestyle that can be bought into or rejected.

At the same time that they affirmed cultural views about the individualism of poverty, they also affirmed contradictory observations about social structures that created conditions for poverty. They recognized the influx of "new homeless" in this community, partially due to unemployment, underemployment and the lack of a living wage, and partially due to the relatively expensive housing market here. Not only is rent typically 20-30% higher than the surrounding communities, public housing is in short supply (often requiring a year's wait for short-listed families). Housing is typically accompanied by a slew of barriers like first month deposits, credit checks, etc. Thus, the shelter exists, not to house the homeless, but to overcome

some of these barriers through transitional housing that provides services for gaining access to and supporting people in keeping their housing long term. In this way, LAH fought against the marginalization of poverty and the feminization of its response by ascribing responsibility to the public and the conditions of the housing market.

[The Little Apple House] believes that all people are valuable members of the human family, and when treated with respect and dignity, they are more likely to respond positively toward themselves and the community. It is with this spirit that [LAH] promotes self-sufficiency and community integration by providing a safe and nurturing transitional shelter environment, supportive housing programs, housing stabilization, and homelessness prevention services for the homeless of Manhattan. (Mission Statement, LAH Website, June 2011)

LAH has been incredibly successful in this mission. However, their success in placing people into permanent housing and providing adequate support was tempered by the gendered culture of the organization that compelled the women to justify their work through hyper-professionalism. While the men tended to do this work as a charitable donation on the side of their more prestigious lifestyle, or as a college experience foreshadowing a “legitimate” career, many of the women tended to do the work as their primary career choice, where the importance of their work was under constant threat and scrutiny from unstable, bureaucratic funding sources. Efficiency and success require professionalism, rules, demands, and expectations. Treating people with dignity and respect, another strength of the organization and its staff members, requires that individuals maintain their autonomy, their lifestyle choices, and their freedom—something that institutional living with such a clear purpose renders more difficult.

[LAH] continually responds to several hundred incidents of homelessness and requests for emergency services every year. In 2010, [LAH] provided 11,672 nights of service to 410 unduplicated individuals. While these numbers have remained consistent with 2009, [LAH] has seen a substantial decline in individuals denied shelter due to lack of shelter accommodation from 272 in 2009, to 107 in 2010. The reasons behind this decrease can be attributed to additional services provided by [LAH] with the Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP) and two supportive housing programs—Transition in Place Program (TIPP) and Opportunities Program.

[LAH] has created a unique programming approach which integrates HPRP into the Caroline Peine Transitional Shelter—shifting focus to emergency shelter diversion and homeless prevention for families on the brink of homelessness. Since its inception in November of 2009, HPRP has screened nearly 500 households in need of emergency assistance in Riley County alone. In 2010, [LAH]’s HPRP prevented 96 households from becoming homeless and quickly re-housed 35 homeless households—totaling 349 unduplicated individuals, 179 of which were children. By creating a unique system of outreach and diversion, [LAH] has been able to decrease shelter demands to those who have no other options.

In 2009, [LAH] introduced the Opportunities Program to help individuals with severe and persistent mental illness, and the Transition in Place Program to assist families with dependent children who have excessive housing barriers which prevent them from obtaining housing on their own. These programs help some of the most susceptible populations to poverty and homelessness in Riley County. [LAH]’s Supportive Housing Programs have assisted over 90 individuals with stable housing and case management.

The services [LAH] provides to this community extend beyond transitional and emergency shelter to prevention and future housing stability. According to the 2009 Kansas Statewide Homeless Coalition, Point-In-Time Homeless Count, Riley County has the highest percent of population living in poverty in Kansas at 20.2 percent. While households living in poverty may not necessarily be in need of transitional shelter, any financial setback could result in long lasting periods of fluctuating instability.

[LAH] provides a unique service in Riley County, as it is the only emergency shelter available to homeless men, women and families. In addition, [LAH] is the only agency in the region offering permanent supportive housing programs, and a model of HPRP implementation (LAH Brochure, received July 2011).

While the shelter is proud of providing shelter to over 400 people per year, their greatest sense of accomplishment stems from the sustainable nature of their work. They successfully help people overcome barriers to permanent housing. Their programs transition people into lifestyles that can withstand the financial pressures of retaining housing, and provide people with support along the way. Most of the changes in the organization over the past three years (additional staff, new programs, new grants) reflect these priorities.

1. Structure

(a) Structure of relations among the community

A symbiotic relationship seems to exist on a community level between LAH and other organizations. They share donations with the food bank and Salvation Army; they refer clients to the free clinic, a mental health center, and workforce center. These relationships are improving as the organization improves its communication. When I started to volunteer in 2009, confidentiality requirements mandated that LAH would never confirm or deny the identity of a resident, often preventing the free clinic from contacting residents about lab results, for example. Conflict arose out of situations like these proliferating. By 2012, appropriate exceptions had been made to the privacy policy, and the receptionists alerted. A change like this can take a long time when the front desk is staffed by volunteers, or student workers, where quick turnover and short shifts make communication an enormous challenge. In 2009, there were only a few other regular volunteers that were introduced to me, and we never worked at the same time since we all fulfilled the same role (front desk receptionist). One additional volunteer was working to manage and inventory the basement storage area. Sometimes, the communication barrier arose as a byproduct of an attempt to formalize organizational processes so that they would conform to State mandates or standardized social service policies. Other times, it was associated with an attempt to conform to bureaucratic organizational structures. Joan Acker (1990) suggests that bureaucracy is a gendered construct, indicating that bureaucracy can also be used to legitimize and masculinize an organization that could easily be perceived as female. In this case, the entirely female staff could use bureaucratic processes to legitimize their authority within the community, over male and female volunteers, and justify their work for male and female board members.

Few of the front desk volunteers worked long term at LAH, but I would often run into former volunteers at other organizations. These people felt that they were able to interact with people more, were more appreciated, and were given clearer instructions at other organizations (Conversation with Free Clinic volunteer at Bluestem Bistro). This need for appreciation confirms Dym and Hutson (2005) and Lohman's (2010) claim that appreciation is key to feelings of satisfaction that motivate people in caring work. As a result of being unable to provide this motivator to career volunteers, LAH relied almost exclusively on short-term service learning volunteers and court appointed volunteers. Career volunteer absence and high turnover that resulted from this motivational deficit further confirmed the assertion that career volunteers identify and are motivated similarly to people in paid labor.

Court appointed volunteers were often serving a sentence for a DUI or similar charges that allowed them to engage in community service in lieu of jail time. Although termed "volunteers", there was nothing voluntary about their actions. A parole officer gave them a list of organizations; they then called to set up a schedule for volunteering until their time was completely served. While "volunteering", they had no control over what tasks they were required to perform, and were often given the least desirable tasks such as cleaning and stocking. When I was working, I would sometimes oversee these people, but only the director had the authority to sign off on their participation. On the one hand, the status and quality of the organization caused them to make the list for parole officer use and this was helpful in providing the staffing that LAH needed. On the other hand, the lack of motivation, low morale, and high turnover in these types of volunteers made it difficult to communicate which tasks needed to be done. This hurt consistency, and created redundant work for staff and other volunteers, who appeared stressed about the extra work.

Being a longstanding community organization, LAH enjoyed an enormous amount of respect from the community. Employees seemed proud of the status of their organization and went out of their way to mention that they worked at LAH when out in the community.

Like many non-profit organizations, LAH is operated on a community basis, through an interaction of federal, state, and local private funding.

In 1984, citizens of Manhattan responded to a community wide survey overwhelmingly proclaiming that a homeless shelter should be at the top of the community's priority list. Following the survey, more than 20 Manhattan residents formed a committee to accomplish this task. On January 8, 1985, with the help of the First Presbyterian Church, [LAH] opened it's doors for the first time. As the number of guests served each year increased, the development of a transitional living program to bridge the gap between independent living and permanent housing became apparent. In 1993, the Sunflower House was purchased at 901 Leavenworth and a transitional living program was established. After 10 years of progress, it was clear that transitional living was a great addition to the community and the need for expansion was evident. In July of 2003 the Fremont House, leased from the Manhattan Mennonite Church for \$400 a month, was added to the transitional living program creating an environment more suited to house women and families. In 2006, the Fremont House was sold to allow the Mennonite Church to grow and [LAH] began the task of raising funds to complete construction of a new facility. In 2008, [LAH] sold the Sunflower House and returned 831 Leavenworth to the First Presbyterian Church and moved into a new 47-bed facility at the corner of 4th and Yuma. In 2009, [LAH] expanded to include permanent supportive housing programs in place of the transitional living program, and a homelessness prevention program to provide rental assistance (History, LAH website, June 2011).

Through this combination of city planning, church resources, and community individuals serving as committee (and later board) members, LAH became incorporated. It continues to operate on a local level, but with assistance from Federal grants that dictate certain conditions of operation.

(b) Structure of relations among the staff

Relations of responsibility between staff, board members, and volunteers were constantly changing. Several private donors, in addition to governmental grants, fund LAH. A board of directors, consisting of prominent community members (50% men and 50% women led by one

man), oversees the operations and decision-making. However, few board members interact with the clients or staff of the House. Mindi (the director) was the only staff member attending board meetings. This put her in a state of stress, but she managed her own emotions for the sake of the board members by attempting to project a calm, caring atmosphere when she was actually overwhelmed by the details of preparing presentations, catering the meetings, limiting interruptions, and balancing client needs in a house of 40 unrelated people: including families with small children, elderly, and some emotionally and mentally disturbed clients. There was never a dull moment, yet she projected an image of calm, consistent with Hochschild's (2003) conception of emotion management. Mindi managed her own emotions and the emotions of those around her through a strategy that made board members feel as though their impact was appreciated. LAH hosts one annual charity event in which female community members (female public figures, business owners, community organizers, or wives of University figures) interact with the board members over a silent auction and party. The event is exclusive. LAH staff members are present in their best clothes. Board members are treated with great deference and respect, and photos are taken for the newspaper.

In 2009, Mindi (the director), a client services director, and a caseworker comprised the only permanent, all-female, staff. Night staff and part time volunteer managers were student hourly workers (80% male). During my stay, two additional staff members were hired (both female): one to oversee two new grants, and another to work exclusively with employment acquisition. Among the staff, the pressure of the board and the outside influences, coupled with the transience of volunteerism and student staff, made communication a challenge. Mindi often failed to communicate job-changing decisions because she was too busy training new people, or

with overwhelming tasks. She forgot who knew what or to whom she had delegated responsibilities.

Thus, career volunteers operated within a complex and gendered structure. Consistent with the assertion that certain jobs are perceived as feminine, and ranked lower in the job queue (Reskin and Roos 1990), high status jobs like director and client services director were perceived as feminine due to their nonprofit and caring labor position, and were therefore occupied by females. The male staff in lower status positions acted as night staff and security. Even though they were lower in the organizational hierarchy, the occupations themselves were perceived as masculine, and the people in them were ranked higher in terms of their potential. Thus, the structure of authority involved complexities for the sake of vying for greater status and legitimacy, something that proliferated feelings of stress (Barbalet 2001). I, and others attributed much of the emotional conflict experienced within the organization to the immense amount of stress shouldered by its director. Realizing this helped all volunteers and staff members to reconcile some of their unpleasant experiences with reality, by making sense of these daily communication struggles in light of the “greater good” of providing warm housing and food: vital sustenance for people who desperately needed it.

(c) Structure of relations among volunteers

Volunteers fit a bit awkwardly into the organization that was already structured in a complex manner according to gender. Contradictions in the roles and authority given to career volunteers made the work confusing at times. Court-appointed “volunteers” did most of the menial work such as cleaning and organizing donations. LAH also needed volunteers who were actually volunteering to do the work, but struggled to keep “career volunteers” because they often used the same task list and managed both types in the same way. This is consistent with the

marginalization of volunteer work that Fisher (1997) outlined, but also shows that the work itself and the people that do it are far more complex than this marginalization allows. One of my first duties, before I felt ready to handle my own tasks, was to develop a standardized instruction manual for the court-appointed volunteers. At one point, after a resident had died in her bed, none of the staff members wanted to clean the bed and discard the possessions. They asked a temporary court-appointed volunteer to do the task without explaining what had happened to the resident, or indicating a need to wear gloves. While I expected the hierarchy within the organization to be based on gender, it seemed to be stratified more according to these “types” of volunteers. Gender created a secondary level of stratification with regard to power within the organization and with regard to the prominence of this type of work in the lives of men and women. Like many organizations that have been constructed as caring, nurturing, feminized responses to poverty, the staff members at LAH were almost entirely female. Women wielded most of the power and authority within the organization. However, they were still monitored from the outside by a volunteer board of directors (7 men and 6 women), who were prominent community members that made most of the decisions, but did not deal with any of the undesirable tasks of day-to-day operations. Under the staff, there were paid night staff people, which were mostly male students. They provided security and worked behind the scenes, without much client or public interaction. Although they were in lower status positions to the paid women, they were also younger, and generally assumed to be on their way to bigger and better careers. Under the voluntary board members and the paid staff, there were a few voluntary (career) volunteers, who were mostly women, the service learning volunteers, and finally, the court appointed volunteers, who were both male and female. While all of the volunteers (except the board members) experienced a great deal of social control, the longer-term volunteers also

exercised a great deal of control over the court appointed volunteers. We were given authority to delegate tasks and oversee court appointed volunteers, asking them to check in, etc. We were also given symbols of authority like keys to the confiscated medications and weapons closet, a seat at the front desk, the clipboard of sign in/outs, etc.

The two male volunteers that existed within this stratum were set apart from the women in their roles within the organization. Larry had volunteered for LAH for well over 10 years. He was a maintenance worker that worked full time doing contract work around Manhattan. He donated his time at LAH weekly to work on repairs, build shelves, and work on other behind-the-scenes tasks. In his words, “This is just an important place, so I try to do my part. I’ve got to do what I can” (Larry, June 2009). He was quiet, and interacted with the clients and other volunteers very little. Said was a graduate student who was temporarily in the United States, on hiatus from his job at USAID. Although LAH was a much smaller scale than he was used to, he volunteered his time in a way that I would not consider service learning since it was not a part of his degree. “I want to stay in practice...use my skills (as a warehouse manager) for a good cause. Plus, I can’t work, and (volunteering) might be a good way to meet people” (Said, August 2012). His work was also isolated. He worked in the basement, taking inventory of all donated items and developing a computer software program for new intakes and cataloguing. For me, observation was often difficult because I was relegated to the basement or the storage closet to work on donations that had gotten out of control and needed to be organized. Usually, I felt like my education and previous experiences allowed me to interact with the staff more than other volunteers did, and my own initiative allowed me to interact with clients. Even with this advantage, the sheer amount of labor required to manage donations, and the understaffing of the organization for these tasks, often mandated that my tasks be isolated and undesirable- either

working in the basement or storeroom. So, interacting with Said in the basement was a very welcome diversion for both of us from the isolated and tedious work of organizing.

While gender played a role in the stratification of volunteers, it also interacted in complex ways with other methods of stratification. The lowest strata of volunteers, who were not actually voluntary at all, were often men, but their service also represented a low point in life associated with a criminal act. They did not need to identify with their volunteerism because this was a marginal, secret, or temporary part of life. They did not feel compelled to construct a work or volunteer identity because they likely already heavily identified with a different life and work outside of the minor criminal offense.

Volunteers who did their work by choice (both service-learners and career volunteers) were primarily women. The choice represented a high point in life associated with a passion for serving others. Since they often performed similar tasks to the court-appointed volunteers, they had to work harder to demonstrate that their work was a worthy choice. They often embraced the work label (if they had the agency to apply it to themselves) and they struggled to give off the impression of holding an important position.

Service-learning volunteers, students who worked for LAH as a part of their social work or leadership programs, sometimes became career volunteers; two later shifted into part-time paid jobs when LAH gained the funding to hire an administrative assistant and case manager. Some of these were reliable, yet temporary. Blake, the volunteer manager in 2009, was a college student. She wore sweatpants and worked on homework at the front desk, but she cared deeply about the residents. Service learners were an important labor force for LAH, but they also only made semester-long commitments. For this reason, LAH was particularly understaffed during holiday periods, when they needed long-term people who could oversee the influx of holiday

donations and event-oriented volunteers. Compounding the stress, these periods also required a re-allocation of duties for the coming semester turnover.

Of the career volunteers, only one worked permanently, during the three years period. She was an advocate for clients who knew their situations their prior successes and failures in depth. She held regular hours, kept an office, and boasted more educational credentials and professional experience than most of the paid staff.

When I began to volunteer regularly in 2009, I answered an ad on idealist.com for a “professional volunteer” to work in lieu of a paid receptionist. My duties at LAH included intake (assigning room numbers, security codes, reading the rules, etc.), confiscating medication and weapons, recording daily medication dispensing and any access of confiscated belongings, and miscellaneous other activities. The latter changed from day to day; I organized the storeroom, took donations, and picked up trunk-fulls of milk. I was charged with saying “no thank you” to Panera Bread, when their donation arrived every morning in trash bags full of mashed cinnamon rolls, bagels, ciabatta, and cake. Later, I helped with fundraising, the newsletter, the website, the Facebook page, and event organization.

Being understaffed, LAH required the help of volunteers, but also struggled to communicate with them. I found emotional labor to be a central part of the job. Without training, I had to interrupt meetings to ask questions all the time. It caused me to wonder, “Am I more in the way than helpful?” but quitting was always delayed by being told “We could not do this without you”. There was a struggle within me, feeling marginalized and isolated in my work, but also feeling as though I was needed and appreciated. Other volunteers felt similar struggles. Bart, at the Free Clinic expressed the sentiment of conflict that was often not explicit at LAH. He explained his personal conflict through frustration with his boss. “[The chaotic chart organization

system] is so frustrating, and she [the director] doesn't know how good she's got it. She's got volunteers doing all this stuff, and not explaining it to them, and then blaming them when its not done the way she likes. She has no idea how good she's got it. I keep wanting to quit. Here I am qualified for a paid job at Ortho [Sports Medicine Clinic], and then I have to remember, that's not why I'm doing it (Bart, October 12, 2011).” Bart felt frustration at being underappreciated and exploited, but he also felt conflicted. He wanted to be motivated solely by the value of the service that the Free Clinic provided to Manhattan residents and not by a salary or gratitude from his boss. There was an overarching need for volunteers at both the Free Clinic and LAH. The director at LAH knew this and knew that appreciation was necessary to management, but was just stretched too thin.

(d) Structure of relations between staff and clients

The structure of relations between staff and clients seemed to be based on both commonalities and differences. Commonalities were initially stressed. “These people are not that different from you and me, we all just need a safety net sometimes” (Mindi, August 2009). I felt these commonalities when I saw clients working at local restaurants and shopping in the places that I shop. One client was an old high school classmate. She had been a decent student, but a series of events and several children later, was not able to make ends meet. One resident who was also a chef taught me to make Tamales and we experienced excellent camaraderie.

The differences appeared in the “othering” that the organizational policies and the special organization of the building mandated. We (staff and volunteers) were not allowed to “be friends” with clients, because staff and volunteers were meant to act professionally. Personal relationships could also cause favoritism, awkward situations regarding confidentiality, or

inappropriate or impractical requests. I signed an agreement to this effect when I began to volunteer (June 2009).

The layout of the building reinforced the dichotomy between the helpers and those being helped, a distinction the Orloff (1996) emphasizes in the framing of poverty and social services. A front office greeted clients and community members. No one was allowed beyond that point unless they had undergone the proper intake procedure as a client or signed in, read and agreed to instructions as a volunteer. A set of offices was clustered in the front portion of the building and was off limits to residents except by appointment. Similarly, the kitchen, living area, and guest rooms were off limits to the public without clearance. Guests received a code to enter their own dorm or family rooms. Adults without children were not allowed in the children's play area. Donations were accepted through a different entrance that also isolated the public from residents. Donation rooms and the basement storage were well stocked with supplies that residents could ask staff members for, but which they were not allowed access themselves.

Other methods of social control existed to reinforce professionalism. Policies, a strict curfew, quiet hours, restrictions on the rooms that adults and children could occupy, mandatory budgeting and life skills classes, no alcohol, no prescription or over-the-counter medications outside of the office, etc., worked to strip clients of their rights, made them different from staff, but also ensured safety and encouraged positive steps towards moving into permanent housing. Several times, it was pointed out to me that people really have to hit rock bottom before they are ready to change. "You have to want [the housing] really badly. If you are intoxicated or just crazy, you'll be turned away" (Bethany, June 18, 2012). For this reason, residents at LAH were alienated, not just from staff, but from the larger homeless community that chose to forego the shelter's help in favor of an informal community at the lake and several shacks in the wooded

areas along the city running trails. Despite the “othering” policies, staff often chose to support these broader homeless communities as well. Shelter at LAH was not available to them, but they often stopped by for supplies.

Despite challenges in the area of volunteer retention, communication, and contradictory ideologies of othering and support, LAH is an efficiently running organization that meets an enormous community need in a sustainable and successful way. It also provides a window into the way in which organizations are stratified according to gender, class, and volunteer “types,” where voluntary board members direct the decision making process, paid staff members oversee day-to-day operations, voluntary volunteers answer to the staff, service learning volunteers garner even less authority, and court appointed volunteers are coerced into volunteering and fall under everyone’s authority except clients. LAH provides a shining example of community agency in the way that it was formed by collective decision, and supported by local churches and individuals. In this sense it acts to provide a social service that is lacking in state provision. However, state funding allows the government to retain some power in how the service is provided, and allows LAH to rely on paid staff members as well as volunteers.

2. Culture

An overarching culture of professionalism permeated the shelter. This seemed to stem partly from government mandated policies for health, safety, and privacy; partly from a strategy of rejecting the warm permanence of a home, and partly from a struggle to legitimize the feminized nonprofit organization through masculinized aspects of bureaucracy.

Although it was a product of the hierarchical structure of the organization, bureaucracy also emerged as important to the cultural norms of LAH. This is consistent to Acker’s (1990) assertion that bureaucracy is not just an organizational structure, but also a construction of

gendered ideologies. Ideologies and gendered beliefs manifested in small indicators of operational functioning. For example, as I developed a volunteer duties list, I also recorded formulaic protocols for answering the phone, which were later replaced by an automated voice directory, complete with hold music and directory assistance. Upon my initial “hiring”, I signed official papers of confidentiality and policy agreements. When one conflict of interest arose with a personal acquaintance of mine, I was asked to withhold information from immigration for the sake of privacy. I complied with the privacy policy even though knowing the information that I was privy to could have saved many people hours of work and frustration. This sacrifice was important for maintaining the professionalism and policy structure of the organization and another community organization to which it was connected. One police officer was a regular at LAH, because the policy involved calling the police for any doubtful situation, and recording all incidents in detail: another example of a bureaucratic inefficiency that was vital to organizational culture and functioning.

In addition to strict policies, programs established by government grants cultivated an air of professionalism, overshadowing any home-like atmosphere. *Housing on My Initiative* and *Transitions into Permanent Housing* were two government grants that LAH acquired in my first summer of work. My responsibility involved data entry and keeping up with the financial records. I went through backlogged receipts and helped develop a database system to keep track of expenditures and payroll for the new staff members. Mindi felt that my status as a volunteer kept financial accountability free from any bias. However, being only a part time volunteer, I missed out on communication that we had moved on to a new system and continued my data entry after it was obsolete. This lack of communication could represent a barrier that volunteer

and paid staff based non-profits face as they attempt to operate with the professionalism of a business without the permanent staff that a business might have.

The approach and practices of LAH were partly program oriented and partly bureaucratic; this was reflected in unintentional power relations between staff and clients. On the one hand, there were reasons to be cautious. Many of the clients had minor criminal records; the police were called often to handle unruly clients, incident reports were filed, etc. The clients were not trusted from the beginning of their residency and were often treated as criminal. This “lifestyle change” approach seemed to reflect a sense of implementing rehabilitation as if the lifestyles were inherently flawed. Mindi seemed to confirm this attitude when I asked her about a neighboring town’s homeless shelter, which clearly operated using a different approach with fewer regulations.

You’ll notice that there is a lot bigger culture of homelessness over in Lawrence, and I really think that’s because of their (the Lawrence Homeless Shelter’s) approach. They will let pretty much anybody in. You can be drunk. You can have a history of violence...that’s really not a safe environment for kids and for families. They have employment counselors, but it’s just an option- it’s not a mandatory thing. And then there is the whole Jubilee Café (a free breakfast café), where you get a waitress and all the luxuries as if you were a paying customer. I get it. Treating people with dignity and respect. I love it in theory. But then you see that people never get off the street. It’s the exact same people year after year sitting on that front porch or begging on Mass Street. It seems like a good approach until you realize it’s not conducive to change and it’s not good for the homeless (Mindi, January 15, 2010).

Clearly, she seemed to see a problem with choosing to be homeless when it was a choice, and this was reflected in the policies of LAH that were so strict, because they wanted to empower people to choose to not be homeless and to encourage them in that direction.

On the other hand, the law enforcement strategy contradicted an underlying recognition of structural factors that create poverty and homelessness, particularly in this community and at this time.

The homeless are not who you'd think. In this economy, they're people that were doing just fine a couple of months ago, and all of a sudden, somebody lost a job, and didn't have the safety nets they thought. Plus, Manhattan is awful- there is no living wage, the college students will work for anything and take all of the entry-level jobs, plus, housing is just astronomical. Sometimes, when somebody is a good worker and is really trying to end their situation, we just have to advise that they go someplace else where the housing is more affordable (Mindi, August 2009).

By reframing poverty as a social problem and rejecting the marginalization of its response, Mindi worked to deconstruct the feminization of nonprofit work. Still, as a female nonprofit director, her advocacy for a social (male and female) response to homelessness could still be perceived as feminine. I heard Mindi's observations echoed by other staff members who would often point to full-time employed people who still couldn't make ends meet in the current environment, and explain that this was a community failure or a State failure, not an individual one. Staff members and volunteers agreed that this was an injustice that should not be tolerated in our society by anyone, not just the "bleeding hearts" (Emma, September 2009). Clearly, it was important to them that poverty represented a social failure and one that should be brought into the public eye to be addressed as a serious issue, and not just by people with extraordinary selflessness or people that could not be successful elsewhere.

A Contrasting Organization: Rescue Mission

The Rescue Mission (RM) was not studied in depth through institutional ethnography. However, interviews there prompted an invitation to spend a few days volunteering there and getting to know the staff, volunteers, and residents (July 18-20, 2012). The service it provided to the homeless in Topeka provided an obvious parallel to LAH, but there were many more career volunteers working there, and the way that they made sense of their work was very different from what had been observed at LAH. Due to the different type of organization, the size of the

organization, its religious affiliation, more comprehensive record keeping, extensive use of career volunteers, and the brevity of my time there in a researcher-only capacity, the two organizations cannot be thoroughly compared. However, the RM provides a few important contrasts to LAH that allow career volunteers to construct their identities using different ideologies. These contrasts are important because they represent variance in organizational ideology that exists between the 7 organizations at which the 19 career volunteers that were interviewed did their work.

Unlike the structural approach to poverty at LAH, RM framed poverty as a spiritual issue, which allowed the volunteers to frame their work as ministry. The Rescue Mission (RM) alluded to individualism in its title and in its national network of support. Despite the tendency to see poverty as an individual problem, clients (called guests here) were treated with much more freedom and respect than at LAH. RM was located in a much larger city, and by extension, served more people. In 2011, “2,201 un-duplicated individuals received shelter: 1,188 men, 661 women, 352 children. 95,658 total nights of shelter (were) provided. 262 individuals sheltered on average each night” (RM Handout, received on June 18, 2012). In addition to shelter, they provided food services and a distribution center of supplies that provided 2,972 people with clothing and 8,384 people with household items and large appliances. They provided a clinic, bus transportation vouchers, rental and utility assistance, and miscellaneous items. This was provided by “32,000 volunteer hours, from 985 volunteers”. RM estimates that “at minimum wage (7.25/hour), these hours would have cost \$232,000” (Ibid.).

Like LAH, RM’s use of space and policies separated guests from volunteers and staff. Separate buildings housed the offices, warehouse, and distribution center, the main shelter and cafeteria, and the women’s and children’s shelter. However, in contrast to LAH, volunteers were

not banned from being friends with guests. In fact, relationships were encouraged. Volunteers and staff ate together with the guests. On my visit, I also joined in on the chili dinner, and was included in conversations with everyone present. Still, the “Expectations of Volunteers” (RM Handout received on June 18, 2012) encouraged them, among other things, to “contribute to the overall purpose... We are here to help the poor and homeless by providing physical necessities... and by proclaiming the Good News of forgiveness of Jesus Christ”. It also alerted them to “Be wise!”

We want our volunteers to feel free to get to know the people here and hope they will take the opportunity to strike up conversations with the guests. However, we caution our volunteers that there may be some people here who might take advantage of kindness. A few cautions may be in order:

- *Do not give rides to anyone without prior approval from your supervisor.*
- *Do not give money to anyone!*
- *Dating a guest at the mission is not allowed.*
- *Get clearance from the staff for inviting a guest to your home or to any outside activities (Ibid.).*

These policies worked to bring people together in relationships, but also to “other” them, by implying that such people need to be rescued. The “rescue” part could be interpreted as rescuing from sin, in the sense that all Christians feel, or it could be interpreted as rescuing from a lifestyle of poverty where only Christianity offers the solution. Framing poverty in this way changes the framing of its response to the responsibility of missionaries and people called by God.

A major difference between the two organizations is reliance on the State. RM refuses to accept any State funding because of a political/ religious ideology that rejects State interference. Despite this ideology, churches only provide 5.9% of their overall income. In 2011, 72.4% of their income came from private individuals. This aligns well with Fraser and Gordon’s (1994) and Walsh and Zacharias-Walsh’s (2005) assertions that wealth inequalities concentrate power in

the hands of a few individuals and corporations and not in the hands of the State. This fierce individualism may perpetuate patterns of inequality through the blaming and “othering” of those who fail to provide for themselves, but it also provides a strong enough conservative ideology for RM to garner enormous volunteer and community support.

Three Modes of Consciousness

Through the process of data analysis, over 35 re-emerging open codes described themes with which career volunteers seemed to identify. These themes vary by gender, class, organizational structure, and individual experience, and also constantly shift from one to another and back again. Although they are key pieces of identity, they exist more in the realm of consciousness, which is more dynamic than identity and projects individual agency surrounding what is most important in a single moment onto the outside world. People used these modes of consciousness to make sense of the way that work and volunteerism is framed by critiquing societal priorities that value work that is paid more than work that is unpaid. This critique occurred through an evaluation of themselves and the value of their own work in individual (self realization), community (inter-personal relationships), and structural (holistic) modes. One warehouse worker’s description of his organizational structure exemplifies the occurrence of multiple modes of consciousness at once.

This organization is very clear about who is at the head, it is lead by God, under the direction of [the director] and the board and various management staff. There is a wide ‘buy in’ by everyone I have met so far of acceptance of the mission and vision of the agency (Anonymous RM Interview 2, July 9, 2012).

Here, a 61 year old male worker (See Appendix A), who is volunteering in his partial retirement, speaks in relation to the consciousness mode of self-realization when he references spirituality. For him, the work is about obedience to God, which is a very personal motivation. He also thinks

about his work in the consciousness mode of interpersonal relationships, where he speaks about the common goal and camaraderie of all the workers because they all “buy into” a common mission and vision. In this moment in time, these two modes of consciousness seem to shape his identity within the organization. However, only a few sentences earlier, he explained a different aspect of self-realization. He explained how he prioritizes his volunteer work over his paid work if there is ever a scheduling conflict, reflecting a sense of personal pride in his voluntary work, and a stronger sense of identification with it than with his paid work.

In this example, these modes of consciousness are not contradictory. They compliment each other and affect each other. They also represent a fluid identity construction in which the work does not mean only one thing at a time. Through the process of developing overarching axial codes surrounding aspects of these meanings, open codes were grouped into three modes of consciousness: self-realization, interpersonal relationships, and holistic work (See Figure 3.1).

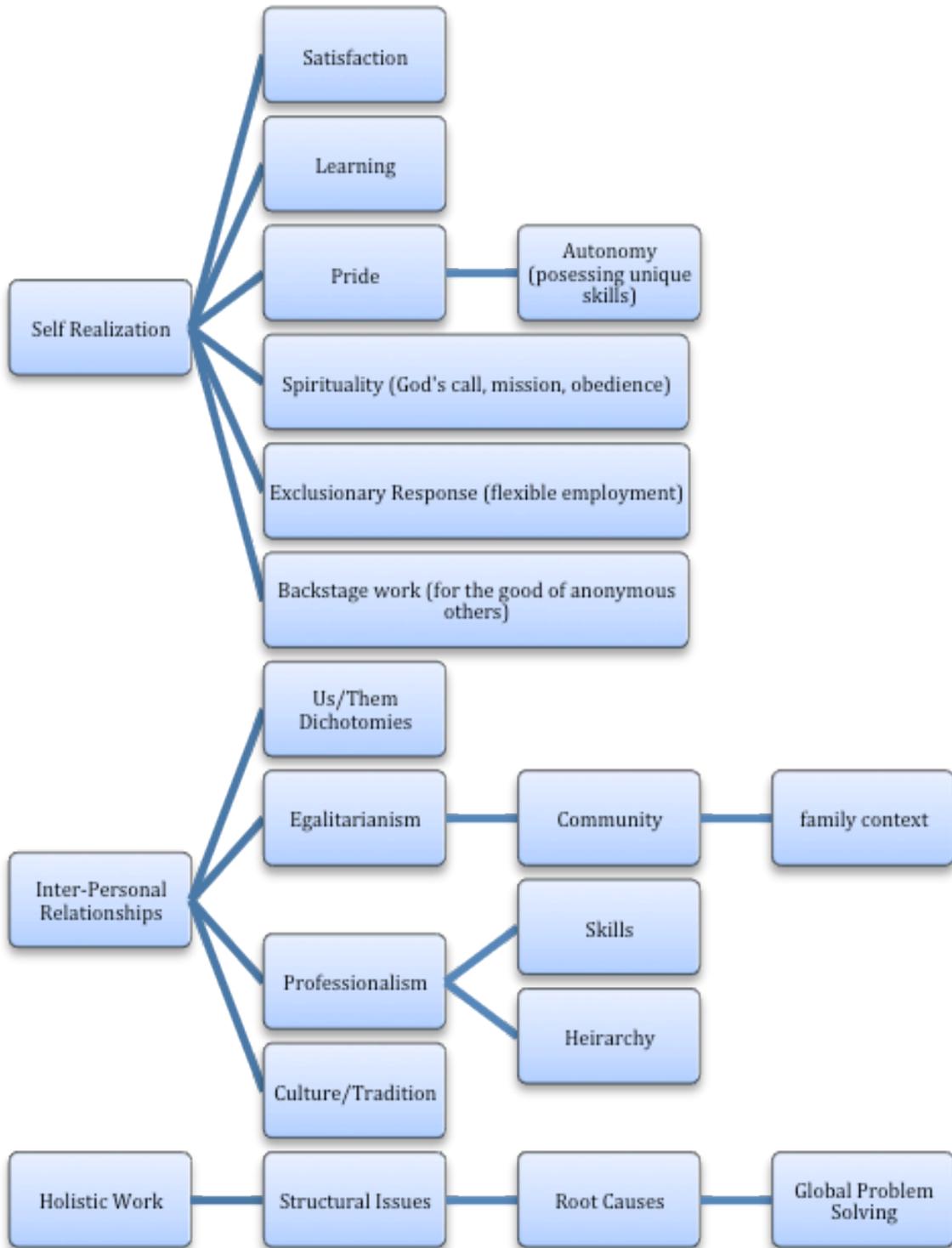


Figure 3.1 Three modes of Consciousness: An interrelated model

In any single moment, volunteers seem to identify with each of these modes to a certain extent. They often work to reinforce each other, as seen in the experience of the warehouse worker. Still, each mode contains important aspects of identity that project more powerfully than others, depending on who people are and how they relate to their work.

1. Self Realization

Self-realization, the first mode of consciousness in which volunteers shaped their identities, emerged in several key concepts: satisfaction, learning, pride, skills, autonomy, spirituality, and belonging (some of which emerged more prominently than others and are isolated out in the following sections). 18 out of the 19 interviewees (95%) related in this mode. The one interviewee (Sophia) who did not relate in this mode drew heavily on spiritual motivations that generally fit into this category, but for her seemed to fit more into the interpersonal mode. For volunteers that view their work as a career, self-realization is central to who they are. They draw identity and self worth from their volunteerism, in much the same way people identify with being doctors or teachers. This type of motivation was similar to the personal motivations of public employees found by Maccoby (1995) and Jurkiewicz (2001). However, the ability to use this individual mode of consciousness to justify choosing to identify as a worker instead of a volunteer depended on the agency, social capital, and gender of the volunteers. Since the concept of selflessness was constructed as a feminine quality, men were freer to place work labels on their work, and they were more influential on others to accept these labels than women were. In this way, they could distance themselves from the femininity of volunteering. Both women and men related to their work in this mode, but women worked harder to legitimize and professionalize their work. Men often contended with a lack of lavish gratitude from clients because they worked in isolation, but they did experience gratitude from the

community who understood their volunteerism in terms of work and who saw their work as sacrificial and important leadership. Since their work was unexpectedly selfless for their gender, they did not feel compelled to explain their work any further than the mode of self-realization: “it feels good” (Larry, July 2009). Women often ended a conversation about selfless motivations involving caring for others with “this is just who I am” (Wilma, July 11, 2012). Women were rarely satisfied with purely personal motivations. This reflects a cultural norm and expectation to be social caretakers consistent with Mindry’s (2010) assertion that humanitarian responses are framed in association with mothering and with Hays’ (1996) assertion that “selflessness” is a constructed as feminine.

(a) Satisfaction

Satisfaction encompasses multiple ways of becoming satisfied and feeling satisfied. Satisfaction varied starkly by gender. For example, many of the men that were interviewed worked behind the scenes. They were not expected to interact with clients, which in one sense is easier- it avoids the work of managing the emotions (Hochschild 2003) of people in desperate situations. In another sense, this was difficult because they were disconnected from the product of their labor (Sennett 1998). They were unable to directly see who their work was benefiting and they were less likely to experience the lavish gratitude that the women were. So, many of the men found personal satisfaction in other ways. “[Volunteering] is the fulfillment of one of my life’s ambitions. I always planned on spending a significant amount of my time volunteering once I retired” (Lou, July 18, 2012). For Lou, at the Rescue Mission, volunteering was about fulfilling a life-long goal of staying active and helping others in his retirement. He and other male volunteers also found satisfaction in success stories, but they were not as personal as the success stories that women often shared. Several of the male workers explained that satisfaction

through seeing success was also an important motivator for those who worked behind the scenes, where the implications of their work were less immediate. These people had to “see success” indirectly through their work or through the work of the organization as a whole. They drew on these indirect success stories to motivate mundane tasks.

At first it did not seem very important to just be building databases [inventory for items in the RM Warehouse], but after you are here a while, you learn how all the pieces fit together to provide a network of support for those in need in the community. One day, I may be helping with updating information on the website, one day filing out documents, and another day I may be working on writing an order of worship for the chapel. I am rewarded every time I see all of the paper work coming through that we have helped a family of 6 get some food and a couple of beds for their new home. Or I find out that a man who came in for shoes and a suit has landed a job. (Anonymous RM Interview 4, July 18, 2012)

This interviewee showed that feelings of satisfaction through success stories were also connected to interpersonal relationships with others in the organization and in a community network. His work was a part of building society and creating social solidarity because it provided a “network of support for those in the community” (Anonymous RM Interview 4, July 18, 2012).

Satisfaction also stems from success or seeing the result of labor in an immediate way. Many female volunteers spoke about personal success stories: being able to find permanent housing, or a job, that changed someone’s life (Erin, July 11, 2012, Deanna, July 15, 2012, and Kate, July 28, 2012).

Bethany: I’m uniquely positioned here to help people in Manhattan and in surrounding communities because people come here in transition...I feel like a total asset here with such a big need and my education fitting in nicely.

Rebekah: What would you say has been a highlight of your work here?

Bethany: Getting to know the people [clients]. The interaction is rewarding. I’m helping out and you get a lot of gratitude for that...And hearing people’s stories. Especially when they’ve really come on hard times, and you’re able to help them get back on track. They’ll come back and be like showing pictures- my first Christmas in the new

apartment- my daughter's room. It's work, but it's doing something meaningful. Makes me feel like I'm giving back" (Bethany, June 18, 2012).

Men and women both mentioned gratitude as an enormous motivator. They change lives and people are thankful for that.

For some, satisfaction came from being included and considered valuable based on their skills and what they could offer, especially in areas where they had been previously excluded. None of the four men in this sample referred to exclusion (although a few mentioned pride in their unique skills outside of the interview times), but it was common among the women. 12 out of the 15 women interviewed (80%) referred to some type of exclusion. Only Deanna, Erin, and Bethany did not. These three were highly educated and experienced; suggesting that other types of social capital earned their inclusion. Julia had been a volunteer, a resident, and a staff member at RM. Inclusion was important to her sense of satisfaction.

Julia: I had been looking for work and praying and one day, K just asked me to take this position. I still get my room and board. This is home, its family.

Rebekah: How do you deal with work and home being in the same place? Are you always on the clock?

Julia: Pretty much! [laughs], no, I get breaks. Work is your livelihood. I'm just lucky that what I love, who I am, and the thing that supports me is all the same thing (Julia, July 28, 2012).

Like many of the volunteers at the Rescue Mission, Julia felt excluded by society because many of her close friends and high school peers had found work or family support after high school graduation. She was embarrassed by her homelessness, and perceived herself as not "fitting in." Before she graduated from high school, she had fit in with others as a student and summer camp counselor; after graduation, she was unable to find employment and took up

residency at the RM. Now, her duties as an overseer in the children's wing are similar to that of a camp counselor: being a listening ear, playing with kids, enforcing rules, getting extra sheets and cots. This inclusion is particularly important for people Julia's age (26) because there was a social norm of employment among many in her age group who were just beginning their careers

We [the staff] try to maintain the rules, signage everywhere, reporting up through security, radios always on- It's a lot like camp counseling. Sometimes, just being an ear that people need to listen to their stories, play with all the kids, enforce rules, always running around, making programs, coming up with ideas (Julia, July 28, 2012).

Walking behind Julia on her rounds, it was obvious that she had formed many relationships with other residents and staff, and felt like an important part of something. "I'm the one with all the keys", she announced proudly. She clearly enjoys the responsibility that comes with her voluntary position.

Other volunteers had been excluded, by themselves or others, or due to a family need for flexibility, from the labor market. A theme of flexible employment and non-traditional small business entrepreneurship seemed to permeate several stories. Although ministry situations provided one exception where I found men engaged in flexible employment, this phenomenon usually appeared in the narratives of women (4 out of the 15 women interviewed had engaged in flexible employment), who considered labor flexibility, and multitasking work experience while caring for others, as traditions of motherhood.

It's hard to come up with a time I didn't want to pursue a lifestyle of community service. It was modeled for me by my parents, especially my mother, who would talk to anyone, including some who were hard to talk to. She also volunteered at church and taught Sunday school...

Another important factor allowing me to volunteer is that we don't NEED me to work full time to meet our financial needs. This is particularly related to our desire to live within our income. Due to my depression, I do much better working part time. Plus, I never did enjoy working full time, even when I was childless. For me, variety is the spice of life (Patrice, September 20, 2011).

Here, Patrice speaks about being excluded from the labor market because of her mental health, but it was also a choice that tied in with her gender, her social class, and her conceptions of what it means to be a mother. It ties with her class and culture, since she chose to live within certain means, and had the luxury of choosing not to be a breadwinner. This is consistent with Risman's (2001) assertion that conceptions of motherhood and how women fit into the economy of families dictates how constrained they feel to engage in "mothering" tasks. Being Mennonite, her religious ideology also involved serving others while engaging in simplicity through financial restriction. Her family needs and the presence of another income earner in her husband allowed her to be included as a volunteer, but also excluded from making choices about her labor on her own.

Similarly, Kate's previous work had been as an entrepreneur, running her own teacher supply business out of her home. This employment had been flexible in terms of time and space because she operated the business out of Wichita, and later, Topeka. However, the decision to keep her work after she found volunteering to be more desirable was her husband's. "He found that we could not make ends meet, without me contributing somehow" (Kate, July 28, 2012). So, she retained her work until the volunteer position transitioned into being paid. Eventually she was promoted to director and hired her husband on as a consultant when he was laid off work. Both Kate and her husband found the reversal of gender roles humorous, suggesting that patterns of gender inequality still exist within their beliefs. Playing up her role as boss allowed them to poke fun at the new power dynamic on display, while he orchestrated decision-making behind the scenes as a consultant. Their situation illustrates Martin's (2001) observation men tend to use their masculinity to hold certain amounts of decision making power over women with authority in the workplace because they feel less constrained by family and the feelings of others in the

work community. She noticed that the masculine ability to dominate is not inherently male, but a product of masculine power differentials and socially constructed expectations of male behavior. In this case, Kate's position of authority was constrained by a strategy of family decision making in which her husband made a career choice for her. This strategy further entrenched gender inequality by suggesting that the abnormality of her authority over him made it funny.

Past and present entrepreneurship and flexible employment were common among many of the career volunteers, suggesting that although they were engaged in the economy, it was often in a nontraditional or exclusionary way. Voluntary positions would often transition into paid positions and vice versa as the need arose, and flexible employment allowed people to earn a living while doing unpaid work. One woman had been a Mary Kay consultant. One sold products through a similar business called Thirty-One. Several had been in church ministry, but were either underpaid or voluntary staff (Anonymous RM Interview 1, July 9, 2012, Kate, July 28, 2012, and Barry September 19, 2011).

Some satisfaction occurred through the experience of learning. Volunteering opened the door for many to be life-long learners without the restrictions of job training or formal education. Many were intimately acquainted with social problems and structural issues that reproduce inequality because they see the effects of these issues every day (Deanna, July 15, 2012). The jobs of volunteers are also much more varied than those of traditional workers. Maccoby (1995) suggests that public employees are motivated by varied and interesting work. These volunteer jobs motivated workers by allowing them to deviate from singular career paths and to experiment with a variety of challenging tasks. They offered a landscaper a chance to do web design and a preschool teacher a chance to apply for grants and learn the ropes of securing disability benefits for someone (Wilma, July 11, 2012 and Jaycee, July 28, 2012).

In cases where volunteers embraced a culture of volunteerism, in which volunteerism was a norm within their family, social networks, or religious groups that had been developed through historical traditions; the list of organizations where they worked became a source of pride. Without prompting, many volunteers offered an informal CV of experience (Patrice, September 20, 2011, Jaycee, July 28, 2012, Barry, September 19, 2011, and Wilma, July 11, 2012). The volunteer experience became a way to justify the use of their time, and to prove self-worth. On a more specific level, pride emerged in relation to the skills and abilities that volunteers brought to their respective jobs. “I feel like an asset, but on the whole, we are a well-educated staff. Everyone is professional” (Bethany June 18, 2012). Feeling needed is important to this type of self-realization, and having certain skills facilitates feeling needed.

(b) Autonomy

In some cases, feeling set apart and free defined the experience and created a sense of self-realization through autonomy. People felt important when others trusted them to make decisions and direct their own work and the work of others. 10 out of the 19 people interviewed (53%) identified with this type of self-realization, and it seemed particularly important to older volunteers. This autonomy was often superior to paid work; something volunteers felt was often too restricted by management and policies to be effective. Deanna, who had formerly worked in paid positions as a social worker and a mental health professional, felt that the autonomy of volunteering allowed her to put her skills to work more freely. “My experience has been all about confidence- confidence from the staff. I am totally self-directed, with the freedom to use my background and skills to make the best decisions around here. They [the staff] have a hands-off attitude about me” (Deanna July 5, 2012). Bart felt the same way about his work at the clinic. His experience in managing volunteer firefighters made him the perfect volunteer to oversee

other volunteers, and he could liaison with clinical workers using knowledge he had gained as an EMT. He took initiative to organize standardized ways of training and appreciating the volunteers and recognized that without these initiatives, it was hard to keep volunteers coming back. Hearing him talk about his work, it was easy to forget that despite this autonomy, he was still an unpaid volunteer.

(c) Spirituality

Volunteerism is synonymous with ministry for many people. Spirituality connects with the drive to volunteer, as well as the definition of volunteering as work, and with how the daily activities are directed and perceived. 7 out of the 19 people interviewed (37%) spoke extensively about spirituality.

For some, this involved a direct call by God into ministry work. Kate experienced a clear voice in a dream that prompted her to call the director of the RM. Others mentioned a less direct biblical mandate that was their call to ministry (Barry, September 19, 2011, Patrice, September 20, 2011, and Sophia, October 11, 2011). Interpreting ministry in this way helped them to define their work on a deeper level.

Spirituality also connected with self-realization in ways that were not directly related to calling. Jaycee's spirituality represented a more private humility that connected with her drive to learn. "It is unfortunate that people are not whole enough to make good decisions for themselves and to help their family members. That is not their fault, though; the system sort of has a lot of self-perpetuating cycles in it that keep people down. The truth is, as a society, we are broken. As God's creation, we are broken. We have so much to learn from each other though. We really HAVE to help each other" (Jaycee, September 14, 2011). Jaycee's sense of spirituality was related to an ideology of social problems and structural issues that have "broken" the world. She

saw the solution as a spirituality that included a sense of community, interpersonal relationships, and a love for humanity.

Deanna described this in terms of living life to the fullest, and it connected with her sense of satisfaction and her sense of community. “I’ve had a good life, and I believe in the after life. I believe when we all spend more time caring about the other instead of ourselves, sharing the resources we have, that’s that deep full life” (Deanna, July 5, 2012). The element of spirituality also made backstage, hidden work more rewarding (Anonymous RM Interview 3, July 18, 2012). In the warehouse at the Rescue Mission, the baler operator saw spirituality as the bigger picture for his work. He did not think of his work as volunteering or as baling recyclables and donated clothing. Instead, he thought of it as a ministry that changed the lives of people in need.

2. Inter-personal Relationships

Nonprofit organizations, like organizations in general, are hierarchical in nature. Stratified positions perpetuate dichotomies between members with authority and those without, as well as between members and clients (Acker 1990). 100% of the people interviewed found some of their identity and motivation partially in inter-personal relationships. Volunteers made sense of their work by adhering to these stratified layers or by rejecting them in favor of egalitarian contexts of community influence: either within the organization, or in broader contexts of family, community, and cultural traditions. Often, rejecting the hierarchy requires a rejection of social frames around work and volunteerism because these frames are hierarchical in nature. Frames position paid work in higher strata than unpaid work (Reskin and Roos 1990). Volunteers who saw themselves as no different from the clients also saw the staff as no different from the volunteers (Sophia, October 11, 2011). This carried over into seeing caring for family

as just as important as caring for community. The boundaries between work and home, public and private, paid and unpaid began to blur.

The hierarchy within organizations and the us/them dichotomy constructed with clients helped volunteers feel connected to coworkers. Erin's former tenure in the army ended when she became a mother and went back to school. Her background reemerged in her desire for structure and hierarchy within the organization. She described the programs of LAH in a very organized manner. Although she had obtained a paid position, she started as a volunteer. During her tenure as a volunteer, she had seen her place as belonging in the staff structure. "Katie worked with the HPRP program, which helps people move out. It pays their first month's rent and deposit, and then follows up with them. It's good for people to get that start and then they just need to maintain that situation. We [the staff and volunteers] had run out of money for it, so we were working really hard to renew that grant" (Erin, July 11, 2012). Her greatest challenge was dealing with situations of conflict between clients and the organization's policies, and she expressed a desire for people to show gratitude: "We [the staff and volunteers] are offering a free service, and sometimes you just want them [the clients] to show some gratitude and comply" (Ibid.). This "us and them" dichotomy appeared in a strict adherence to professionalism, which distanced clients from staff and volunteers. Bethany referred to her title as administrative assistant; Barry referred to his title as a ministry coordinator, most of the organizations use acronyms and titles to streamline the work process. Bethany tended to "other" different volunteers as a way of associating her position with the permanence of staff. When asked about her training by the volunteer coordinator, she explained that she had a different training that was not for the volunteers. Still, her attitude towards the community of clients appeared egalitarian. She highlighted getting to know clients, "they're just like you and me- the interaction is

rewarding” (Bethany, June 18, 2012). Much like Patrice and Joy, she enjoyed hearing people’s stories and learning from them. She also made sense of her work in a larger context of community and family life. She defined work as doing something meaningful for the community, but now that her position is paid, it helps her balance home life by supporting her son. “It makes me feel like I am giving back. It is a part of me, but that’s not just it. I like that I’m able to be in various places at once” (Bethany, June 18, 2012).

Sophia epitomized the egalitarian extreme of community. In fact, her reason for choosing to volunteer in general, and with the women’s center in particular, was to develop relationships with the community and with clients. She drew on a prior negative experience volunteering where “they [staff] talked down to girls, and it broke my heart. That condescension- do they not realize how these women [the clients] were just lacking love from any male figure? They [the clients] have fear that is perfectly founded...I love that this organization established concern for the young women- empowering them to make solid decisions” (Sophia, October 11, 2011). Like most of the other volunteers, Sophia felt a sense of reciprocity: giving back to others who had not experienced a safe and happy family life like she had. Unlike others, Sophia also equated the clients with members of her own family, and this connected with her spirituality: “I always wonder ‘if this was my sister, how would I want her to be treated?’ I think I should respond with whatever it takes, because Christ did this for me. I was in the same situation (spiritually) and Christ did this. It just makes me want to watch out for people around me and treat them like family” (Ibid.). Sophia’s spirituality was connected to a sense of reciprocity and thankfulness (Christ did so much for me, so I should pay it forward), but it was also tied to a sense of community and recognizing herself as the same as others.

Bethany's story spans both organizational and broader meanings of community in relation to work. On the particular organizational level, she values the relationships that she shared with coworkers, and they helped to define her as a worker. On the general community level, she was fulfilled by the chance to help others in the community and surrounding areas. "A lot of people come through here in transition elsewhere- I feel like I have a broader impact." For Bethany, it was important to help local people, but she felt that her work had a ripple effect on other communities because her clients were mostly travelers. Ackerman et. al. (1997) asserts that people in caring labor are motivated by altruism, reciprocity, and responsibility. Volunteers who frame their work in terms of caring labor seem to align with these three concepts as they vacillate between these micro and macro poles in terms of which is most important to their identity, but most seem driven by an underlying sense of understanding their own privilege in relation to the community, and internalizing a responsibility to give back.

3. Holistic Work

Several of the volunteers found self worth and fulfillment in being solvers of global, structural problems, which can be addressed more effectively through volunteer work (which is free to apply multiple problem-solving methods to develop complex and holistic solutions) than through paid work (which is restricted by job descriptions and division of labor within the bureaucracy). 9 out of the 19 people interviewed (47%) related in this mode of consciousness. Many used the skills they had gained in paid positions and applied them to volunteering, but they did so in an unencumbered, less bureaucratic way that allowed them to consider solutions that integrated multiple jurisdictions and skill sets not commonly found in a single job. In this mode, volunteers saw themselves as an interrelated part of an ecological and complex solution to a complex social problem. Framing poverty and its response this way counters cultural frames

around poverty as an individual problem and the response as unimportant: the realm of the overly selfless (the nurturing mother) (Dym and Hutson 2005, Orloff 1996). For this reason, people who related in this mode faced the additional challenge of being social justice advocates. Women hold little power to reframe their own work as not feminine, but some were successful in helping to reverse the marginalization of their work.

Deanna (July 5, 2012) was particularly concerned with structural issues and root causes of chronic homelessness and poverty: issues she saw as intricately connected. Deanna's paid work background was immense. As a licensed social worker, she had worked in Family Protective Services, securing foster care and assisting with family preservation and reintegration. But she felt very limited in terms of the amount of time that she could spend with each client. The Kansas foster system is so overwhelmed, she said, that they were facing a major lawsuit for neglecting children since they were so under-resourced, they could barely provide enough beds. Later, she worked to help unemployed people gain access to jobs, skills, referrals, and support networks through Economic Services. This transitioned into working for the Developmentally Disabled Service Agency as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor, until she began to work in state government administration on several committees managing these programs.

In her own words, Deanna "worked a lot of jobs that just put on a Band-Aid; but they didn't provide people with the resources to help themselves" (June 18, 2012). She felt that her work as a volunteer broke down the barriers that defined and confined her paid work, and allowed her to combine the power of many resources to address many root causes.

I see it as a concrete thing that can be done to end a lot of social problems. There are so many underlying issues to poverty. Mental illness creates a vicious circle with homelessness because treatment facilities refuse to treat the homeless. The longer you live without help, the more your situation exacerbates mental illness. Plus, there are structural issues that are a barrier to securing permanent housing...and then there are family issues. Family can be a drain on emotions, finances, and a real barrier to

permanent housing. . I work to help people gain access to mental health resources and try to break some of the multiple bad cycles...There is a lot of overlap between my volunteer work here [at LAH] and with each of my previous jobs, especially with vocational rehab work. I discovered that volunteering here could be more than a Band-Aid. It was 17 or 18 years ago: I was getting my MA degree and was in the thick of all this work, and I started to see that holistic services, a real ecological approach, affordable housing, and vocational counseling could make a difference (Deanna, June 18, 2012).

Deanna's repetitive use of the word "Band-Aid" shows how she feels about solutions that do not consider larger structural factors that produce homelessness, poverty, and mental illness. She considers each of these factors as interrelated: a systematic view of social problems that is holistic in nature.

Joy shared a similar sentiment about her volunteer work at an organization that provided free financial counseling and help with emergency bills. She had worked as a counselor before moving to a more behind-the-scenes position as the organization's accountant. She felt that both jobs were significant, and this connected with her sense of satisfaction and self-realization, but she also expressed the idea that volunteerism uniquely allows global problem solving because people can move more fluidly between positions, and tackle problems from more different angles than paid work allows. Providing counseling at the same time as more physical services addresses poverty more holistically. "You cannot address one without the other. People's physical health is connected to their ability to put food on the table, which is connected to how they relate to money, how constrained they feel by debt, their access to resources, their social and family life, etc." (Joy, September 14, 2011). Joy did not just see these things as independent or factors; she saw them as interrelated. Seeing the connections between physical health, social capital, financial resources, and mental health reflects a holistic lens placed on the role of the volunteer.

Both women felt that the beauty of volunteer work was in the holistic solutions they provided. Still, this attitude of global problem solving could not be disconnected from their sense of relationships with clients and community, and their self-realization: satisfaction and autonomy. In fact, both women experienced extreme autonomy and authority within their organizations, possibly because of their understanding of root issues and broad solutions. Deanna explained how central these structural causes to poverty were to her work. “Our society is broken in such a way to perpetuate mechanisms that keep people down. They need advocates to reverse that. If there is anything you should learn from me, it is to be an advocate for people because some people can’t advocate for themselves” (July 15, 2012). Notice that although she speaks about brokenness, she does not see herself as fixing individuals. Instead, she sees herself as advocating for those individuals on a societal level. Saying that society is broken illustrates an ideology that social problems involve systems of inequality and that the solutions to these problems are multidimensional, complex, and should be addressed on a social scale.

Chapter 4 - Discussion

Joining the career volunteers at the Little Apple House, and conducting interviews with career volunteers in these two Kansas communities, revealed that these people make sense of what they do by, first, interpreting the cultural frames thrust upon them by socially gendered constructions of what it means to volunteer and to work, and by reacting to it in several ways. How these career volunteers make sense of who they are was the complex second step. This step depended a great deal on the gender and social class of the individual, and how constrained or free they were to make their own identity. For example, Bart (September 19, 2011), a former EMT and volunteer firefighter, used his masculinity and work experience to construct his own

position as volunteer coordinator. He was more easily able to reject social constructs of volunteering and identify himself as a worker. Through management strategies like appreciation and volunteer tracking, he could set himself apart physically from the other volunteers, further cementing his “worker” status. By contrast, Julia (July 28, 2012) was constrained by her gender, her socioeconomic status, and her lack of paid work experience. She had to work harder to earn the work label, even though she had earned a position where she worked in exchange for room and board: being practically paid. She was not the only volunteer in this position at RM. Several male workers were also compensated for their work with room and board. Despite their relatively low level of social capital from which they could draw in order to project their identity as “worker” onto others, they accomplished this frame shift with more ease than Julia did. Her gender created a “mothering” connotation to what she did. Although she was proud of her position, she seemed embarrassed that others did not see it as a real job, and did not seem to equate herself or perceive others as equating her with male volunteers in similar positions. To compensate for this, she spent all of her time building relationships with other residents and taking care of everyone. Her boundaries around work, home, and volunteering were blurry.

With regard to the first step of determining how career volunteers make sense of what they do, my findings were consistent with the literature. Volunteers feel the cultural definitions of work and volunteerism, and relate to them by being constrained to choose one frame or the other, trying to explain a hybrid of the two, or dissolving the frames altogether. Bart, Joy, Lou, Erin, and Barry all gave themselves work titles, and were successful in being perceived by others as staff members. Wilma (July 11, 2012) diminished the value of her work by explaining, “I don’t call it volunteerism. I just do what I do to help out.” Others, viewed their work through a ministry frame, but also saw ministry tasks, family time, and labor at the RM as existing within

the same frame of “life” (Anonymous RM Interview 3, July 18, 2012). They were, in fact, experiencing an increase in service-learning and experiential volunteerism as Nesbit and Brudney (2010) suggested. This rise in service-learning put pressure on career volunteers to distinguish themselves. Since the students’ volunteerism was a step towards a career goal, career volunteers felt compelled to justify their life goals in terms of volunteering only. They also contended with organizational structures that simplified work to make it easier for short-term volunteers, but that also made the work less stimulating in all three modes of consciousness for career volunteers. In Manhattan, where most of the population is somehow connected to the University, this was particularly evident. Bethany and Erin began as service-learners fulfilling requirements of their social work classes. They entered a female dominated “caring labor force”, and related to other volunteers that fit the social marginalization of volunteers as less than workers. Like Dym and Hutson (2005) suggested, I also found conflicting views on whether volunteer driven social services are “struggling to make up for” failing government efforts (Patrice, September 20, 2011), or whether they are meant to act in lieu of government because social services are “the responsibility of the church and those who care” (Warehouse Tour, July 19, 2012). Application of these opposing political ideologies was key to how important volunteers felt their work was and whether they felt supported and legitimized by the public sphere.

The shifts in volunteer labor identified in the research were also obvious in some of the volunteers’ experiences. These shifts in duration, professionalism, and the public/private sphere were found to extend from the changing way in which poverty is framed in the U.S. (Eliasoph 1998, Calhoun 1992, and Ehrenreich 2001), and its shift away from State responsibility effects how modern volunteers feel about their work and the degree to which it is marginalized. Women,

especially, often see themselves in a supporting role within the family that extends into service organizations: “We don’t need me to work” (Patrice, September 20, 2011). Although they have chosen to do this, caring plays second fiddle to paid work in the for-profit sector. Deanna’s declaration “we need to be advocates” (Deanna July 15, 2012) shows a realization that poverty and society’s response to it are socially marginalized to the point of lacking a public voice. Gendered labor inequality (Reskin and Roos 1990:303) also came into play in determining whether men and women felt allowed to call their tasks volunteering or work. Men felt free to consider their volunteerism as volunteerism when they had another job or a former job that they pointed to as an identity. Dr. Rose was free to remain a doctor, for example, even though his only work was unpaid. He was never called a volunteer at the free clinic, instead, he was a doctor volunteering his time (September 19, 2011). At LAH, men like Larry did the work “on the side” (June, 2009), while the women engaged in the work as their primary identifier. This is consistent with Kleinman’s (1996) finding that men in caring labor are perceived to have other opportunities outside the non-profit sector, have sacrificed more, and are given a higher status.

Beyond making sense of what they do, identity was observed in how career volunteers make sense of who they are. This type of identity emerged in three different modes of consciousness where people were making sense of, mediating between, and/or rejecting work vs volunteer frames: self-realization, inter-personal relationships, and holistic work. Emotions of altruism, reciprocity, and responsibility (Ackerman 1997) were salient within these three modes of consciousness that emerged from the volunteer narratives.

Since I am unable to do manual labor, I do office work where needed. I grew up in a time when there were no rescue missions to help families. I was in a family that needed help and that help came from other family members. Today, the families of the families here are also in need, so they have no place to turn but to the streets and bridges. Families do not live in community anymore- they are scattered all over the country-and hard to get to. We are a mobile society and live apart from those that love and care for us. Thank to the

mission a person/family can receive love and care to move on if they choose (Anonymous RM Interview 1, July 9, 2012).

This Rescue Mission volunteer alluded to exclusion, but also spoke about altruism in loving others, reciprocity in helping others in a way that her family had been helped by other family members, and responsibility to correct a social flaw that she saw emerging from limited family resources.

Along with these feelings, interviewees displayed a sense of contradiction. While society values these feelings, it also values mutually exclusive tendencies of the modern bureaucratic capitalist system that marginalizes volunteer labor. This sense very closely resembles the type of alienation and resentment that occurs in paid workers. Barbalet (2001) describes feelings of resentment that arise when work is marginalized and made less stimulating. Volunteer work is sometimes marginalized in this way, which is something that Said experienced doing tedious storage maintenance at LAH. He felt that his education and job experience demanded work that was more stimulating than moving furniture and sorting through junk (Said, July 2012). By contrast, volunteer work was marginalized when it was considered overly simplistic when the actual work was not. Either way, the sense of needing to control feelings of resentment for the good of society and the sense of being misunderstood were profound.

Honestly, people don't really get what I do. I mean, they think its great- all selfless and everything, they just don't really get it- just like people don't really get social work. Maybe they think I'm just holding the hands of people that screwed up or need a hand out or whatever, but they don't get that there are these complicated mechanisms of keeping people down (Deanna July 5, 2012).

For Deanna, society's marginalization of the problems was closely tied to marginalizing the solutions, and her work by extension. Like Deanna, others felt alienated from the paid working sphere, as though volunteering was not considered important or difficult enough to count as

work. Others felt alienated from their actual labor within the organizations because proliferating paid staff structures and bureaucratic policies marginalized them physically from contact with clients, working in the storeroom or basement. Interestingly, the more people felt alienated and excluded, the more they tended to deconstruct the socially defined frames around what it means to work and what it means to volunteer. Sophia's (October 11, 201) sense of inter-personal relationships and her perspective of clients as sisters deconstructed social frames around family, spirituality, work, and volunteerism. Other narratives echoed this deconstruction.

R: How do you combine volunteering with family life and work or is there a distinction?

A: I do not distinguish between the various work I am involved with. When I am working (whether it is for the RM, my temp job, or sermon preparation), I am committed to the task at hand (Anonymous RM Interview 3, July 18, 2012).

This task-oriented approach to work, whether paid or not, seems to reject modern bureaucratic framing in favor of a more integrated perspective on life's categories.

Chapter 5 - Conclusion: Dissolving the Frames

Underlying each of these layers of consciousness is a partial deconstruction of industrial and post-industrial framing of life's compartments. While the conditions of the industrial revolution encouraged people to draw frames around work life, home life, etc., certain career volunteers, especially women, work to deconstruct these frames and return to a more holistic framing of life: rejecting the compartmentalization of their reality. For some, this involved a minor deconstruction. Deanna, for example, still drew distinct lines between her family life and work, but she made very little self-identifying distinction between her former paid work and her current voluntary work. She also deconstructed the boundaries around each of her previous jobs

to combine them in her new role. Others took the deconstruction a step further. Many at the RM worked and ate meals alongside their families at the mission, so they saw volunteerism, work, and family life as one and the same. The most extreme examples, like Julia, who lived and worked at the RM, physically combined these categories rather than just deconstructing them mentally. Gender and social class constrained the ability to join the work frame in many cases, or to superimpose the work frame over volunteer work. People who felt constrained in their agency also tended to feel alienated from work and excluded by others: the three factors worked to reinforce each other and keep people from gaining the agency to choose their own frames. Thus, feelings of constraint, alienation, and exclusion often encouraged deconstruction of modern frames.

To the extent that they have the necessary agency, career volunteers make sense of their role as workers by making efforts to professionalize nonprofit work. Men, in particular, often have the agency to professionalize volunteer work to the point that it completely sheds the volunteer frame and gains a new frame like ministry or consulting. Both men and women volunteers work to fulfill different layers of consciousness that go unfulfilled in paid work: self-realization, inter-personal relationships, and holistic work. However, men and women experience different constraints on these modes of consciousness. Women are often constrained to feel more connected to others in the inter-personal mode. They experience the most face time with clients in caring positions and roles. They are also often expected to act in managing, visionary, and strategic roles, operating in the holistic mode. Perhaps this expectation is tied to an assumption that, for women, nonprofit work might be the pinnacle of their career; whereas for men, volunteering represents something “on the side” or associated with a low point. Men are often expected to make sense of their work by gaining self-realization and satisfaction less directly

because they work behind the scenes, or in management, without client face time. On the individual level, volunteerism works to help individuals gain self-realization: satisfying a calling, desire, sense of learning, or sense of autonomy and significance that, for them, paid work did not. On a secondary layer: interpersonal, familial, organizational, and community relationships work to give these individuals a sense of belonging and identity in relation to others. Finally, freedom from the constraints of bureaucracy allow some career volunteers to make sense of their work in an even more holistic way through global problem solving focusing on interrelated root causes and structural issues.

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Appendix A - Interviews

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Highest Level of Education</u>	<u>Income Source</u>	<u>Household Members</u>	<u>Religion</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Organization</u>
1. Deanna	7/15/2012	F	MA	Husband's Work/ Retired	Husband	Christian	45-65	LAH
2. Wilma	7/11/2012	F	Some College	Retired	None	Lutheran	65+	Early Learning Center
3. Libby	7/18/2012	F	Seminary	Personal Company	Husband (at RM)	Christian	61	RM
4. Anonymous RM Interview 1	7/9/2012	F	Some College	Soc. Security			75	RM ¹
5. Anonymous RM Interview 2	7/9/2012	M	BA	Retired			61	RM
6. Erin	7/11/2012	F	BA	Social Worker	1 child		25-45	LAH
7. Anonymous RM Interview 3	7/18/2012	M	BS	Retired	Wife (at RM)		61	RM
8. Anonymous RM Interview 4	7/18/2012	M						RM
9. Jaycee	7/28/2012	F	High School	Unemployment			26	RM
10. Kate	7/28/2012	F	College	Personal Company	Husband and son (at RM)	Christian	57	RM
11. Bethany	6/18/2012	F	BA	Social Worker			25-45	LAH
12. Sophia	10/11/2011	F	Some College	Husband's Company	Husband and 2 children	Christian	30	Crisis Center

¹ Anonymous Interviews were held with 4 RM volunteers who preferred to participate via an email questionnaire.

<u>Pseudonym</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Gender</u>	<u>Highest Income Source</u>	<u>Household Members</u>	<u>Religion</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Organization</u>
13. Lou	7/18/2012	M					RM
14. Joy	9/14/2011	F	College	Husband's Work	Husband	Unitarian	60 Shepherd's Crossing
15. Blair	9/12/2011	F		Social Worker		25-45	Breadbasket
16. Barry	9/19/2011	F	Some Post-Graduate	Husband's Work	Husband	Christian	56 Free Clinic
17. Patrice	9/20/2011	F	College				Shepherd's Crossing
18. Bart	10/12/2011	M	College				Free Clinic
19. Warehouse Tour	6/28/2012						RM ²

² Conversations with anonymous warehouse workers occurred during a morning of touring, observing, and eating with volunteers at RM.

Appendix B - Sample Interview

As a part of this study on volunteer identity, interviews with organization-identified “career volunteers” (people who the organizations identify as unpaid workers who place the same value of time, commitment, and dedication on their work as they would on a paid job) will take place according to the following template. Although these interviews will be conducted orally, this gives a general overview of the direction of conversation and the questions to be asked. Questions 1-8 are designed to be opened ended and to get at the motivating factors that might be more complex than the answer that people might want others to hear. They use words like “prompting” and ask about the work itself to avoid judgment statements about “good” or “bad” motives. Questions 9-12 are designed to create a conceptual framework for how work and volunteerism are constructed within these individuals’ lives.

Introduction: Thank you for engaging in such a vital work for the community and for volunteering your time to share your stories and insights into why you choose service as a lifestyle and why you choose to dedicate the time and commitment to volunteering that might be expected in a paid career.

Objectives: Through this project, I hope to gain insight into what drives people on whom communities depend for social services. Volunteers are in increasing demand in a difficult economic climate, and the resources are often lacking for nonprofit organizations to motivate or manage well. Since the extrinsic rewards are often absent in this type of work, this project seeks to understand the intrinsic rewards of this work, the dynamics of social services, and how volunteer identity is developed.

Please respond honestly, and share as much or as little as you like. Feel free to view these questions as a springboard for whatever comes to mind. Your insights and stories are deeply valuable. Your name and organization will be kept confidential.

Interview Questions

- How would you describe what you do for/in this organization?
- When did you come in contact with this organization, why, and/or what was happening in your life around that time?
- What prompted you to get involved?
- What do you do for this organization and what path led to this role within the organization?
- Why did you choose this organization in particular?

- Did you or do you work/collaborate with other similar organizations?
- Do you have interests or hobbies that align with your service?
- What kinds of people do you generally work with and for?
- How many hours do you spend doing what you do for this organization?
- How do you feel about this experience?
- Do you feel that there is substantial social support for such activities?
- Can you tell me about how responsibilities are allocated? Were you trained or given clear directives or is your job mostly self-defined?
- What is the most rewarding aspect of what you do in this organization? What aspects do you dislike?
- How do you support yourself?
- How do you balance your service for this organization with family life? How do you define work?
- What does volunteering mean to you?
- Looking back, why would you say you serve the community in this way?

<p>Demographic Information (Checklist):</p> <p>AGE _____</p> <p>GENDER _____</p> <p>RACE/ETHNICITY _____</p> <p>HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED _____</p> <p>EMPLOYMENT STATUS _____ (do you work? Where? Your position?)</p> <p>INCOME SOURCE _____ MARITAL STATUS _____</p>
--

PARENTAL STATUS _____

NUMBER OF CHILDREN _____

AGE OF CHILDREN _____

HOUSEHOLD STATUS _____ (who else lives with you?)

POLITICAL AFFILIATION _____

RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION _____

Appendix C - Participant Observation Template

As a part of this study on volunteer identity, I will partner with a local nonprofit, service-providing organization that has provided permission and access for me to continue as a volunteer and conduct simultaneous research, using previous and future field notes. I will be working in the volunteer position of “professional volunteer” for 4 hours, twice a week, to observe volunteer management practices, and to gain a detailed understanding of the regulations, components, challenges, and daily realities of volunteer work. The identity of the organization will be kept anonymous in the final study. The following outlines this aspect of the research.

- I. Participation: This will allow the organization to exercise leadership and direction over my tasks and roles within the organization to best meet their present needs. The role of “Professional Volunteer” will include front office, receptionist duties, answering the phone, participating in client intake procedures, publicity, and odd jobs. I will also attend monthly staff meetings. By engaging in regular hours (defined by the organization) over a consistent period of 3 months, I will simulate the career volunteer experience on a small scale.
- II. Observation: Since the outside motivations of a researcher and the limited time and commitment to the organization may present a barrier to understanding the complexity of career volunteer identity, my role within the organization will be a lens for observation of career volunteers within the organizational structures that they operate. I will observe volunteer management procedures, organizational structures and policies regarding volunteers, and the daily tasks of volunteers. Since this study is concerned with volunteer identity and management only, my observations will focus primarily on volunteers and management; they will not focus on clients that are served by the organization.
- III. Field Notes: Daily field notes will examine my own experience and the relationships that I observe. I will record the procedures of volunteering, attending meetings, duty delegation, and other situations that involve volunteers. These notes will pay special attention to the rewards and challenges of volunteerism, as well as to impromptu discussions of related issues. I will note the different types of management strategies and the different goals and outcomes of volunteering. These notes will contain observations about the following conditions:
 - i. Overall description of the organization, including size, projects, number of people served, funding strategies, etc.
 - ii. Efficiency
 - iii. Success

- iv. Problems and Solutions
- v. Authority Structures
- vi. Protocols and Procedures

*My dual-identity as a researcher and volunteer was revealed to the organization when receiving permission to volunteer.