

Chapter 9

Translating Religious Traditions into Service: Lessons from the Faith and Organizations Project

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Contrary to assertions that religious involvement in social service is a new development of the neoliberal state, faith communities have always been an integral component of the social welfare system in the United States (Cnaan, Wineburg, and Boddie 1999; Hall 1990; Trattner 1994). The various social welfare, health, and educational institutions translate each religion's theology into practice through system design and day to day agency practice. Over time, these organizations reflect changes in theology, such as the shift from charity to justice after Vatican II for Catholic institutions. Often, change involves ongoing adaptation between various theological traditions, government regulation, and other issues influencing service provision strategies. At other times, agencies can become battlegrounds for arguments about appropriate theology and the use of faith community resources (Schneider, Day, and Anderson 2006).

While most social and political scientists presume that religious symbols and practice indicate religiosity in these organizations (Sider and Unruh 2004), ethnographic analysis shows that each religion's culture and theology is embedded in organizations' systems and practices. This chapter describes how different religious traditions translate their theology into practice by comparing main-line Protestant, Evangelical, and Jewish organizations studied as part of the Faith and Organizations project (Schneider, Day, and Anderson 2006; Schneider et al. 2009). The Faith and Organizations Project is a comparative, multidisciplinary research/practice project designed to assist faith communities and the nonprofits they create in understanding their relationship to their founding faith, the role of religious tradition in agency activities, and faith-based organizations' relationship to the people they serve and wider social welfare, health, and educational systems in the United States (see www.faithandorganizations.umd.edu). In this chapter, we describe how religious tradition, theology, and culture foster

social service systems that reflect the religious culture and practical theology of the founding faith. *Religious culture* refers to the current subculture of the religious community that fostered particular nonprofit organizations. *Practical theology* means the formal and informal mechanisms a faith community uses to enact its theological teachings through its religious culture and structures. We conclude with suggestions on strategies for anthropological contributions to understanding faith-based service within its sociopolitical context. The second study, in particular, focused on strategies for *stewardship*, defined as the faith community's efforts to maintain its practical theology of justice and charity in the activities of the nonprofits affiliated with that religion or denomination through a combination of strategies to guide the organization and resources (funding, in-kind donations, space, volunteers) acquired through faith community social capital.

Methods

Data come from two studies by the Faith and Organizations Project. The pilot study, conducted between 2004 and 2006, included eleven organizations in Philadelphia and the Washington D.C. metropolitan area, founded by Mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals, Peace churches (Quaker and Mennonite), and African American churches. The subsequent "Maintaining Connections" study (2008-2009) focused on the support and guidance that faith communities provided to organizations, comparing Mainline Protestants, Catholics, Jews, Evangelicals, Quakers, and African American churches. This second study included in-depth work with eighty-one organizations from Philadelphia to Northern Virginia, plus less intensive research in additional organizations in the south and Midwest (see Schneider et al. 2009).

In both studies, research included participant observation in organizations and faith communities, interviews with key staff and faith community leaders, and analysis of agency documents. The pilot study looked at both governance issues and day to day activities, with researchers observing daily agency operations as well as board meetings and faith community events. The Maintaining Connections study focused on governance and stewardship of organizations, with observations focusing on board meetings, volunteer events, and other activities that indicated the connections between the faith community and related nonprofits. Interviews provided some limited data on staff and program participants, but this was not the main focus of the study. Analysis in both cases involved discerning patterns among organizations, identifying both similarities across organizations from different religious traditions and aspects unique to each faith's approach to service.

In contrast to traditional ethnography, comparative multi-methods ethnographic projects like these focus simultaneously on many organizations (see

Schneider 2006b for a discussion of methods used in this project). In each case, a researcher or team of researchers concentrates on a small number of organizations, producing an ethnographic case study similar to a traditional ethnography of an organization or socially defined community. The research used in this chapter involved between three months and two years of data collection in individual agencies and faith communities. Through ongoing conversations among members of the project team and formal analysis of all project data, our analysis develops a comparative portrait for each religion and across the various religions in the study for a particular community or region. Combining results from the pilot and Maintaining Connections studies allows both time depth (diachronic) analysis of several organizations/faith communities that have participated in both studies and further (synchronic) cross-organization comparisons of findings.

Faith Communities and Organizations

This chapter draws from organizations located in Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington D.C., Annapolis, and the surrounding metropolitan areas of each city. Both the pilot study and the Maintaining Connections study found much in common across communities in the Northeast, but significant differences among general religious traditions. That said, the Baltimore Jewish community profiled here is particularly cohesive and does differ from other U.S. Federations to some degree in the strength of the partnerships among organizations and with their supporting community. While drawing from findings from the wider body of data available from the project, this chapter will focus particularly on specific organizations from Evangelical, Mainline Protestant, and Jewish religious traditions:

We focus on two Evangelical Christian organizations: the Pregnancy Help Center and the Urban Center. The Pregnancy Help Center is a multi-site crisis pregnancy center located outside of Washington, D.C. and Annapolis, and the Urban Center is a community based initiative intended to improve conditions in a particular Washington neighborhood.¹ The purpose of the Pregnancy Help Center is to administer aid to women in “crisis” pregnancies, providing alternative solutions to women they perceive as “at risk” for seeking an abortion. The Urban Center began as a ministry in a distressed neighborhood focused on activities developed in a large residential unit bought by the organization’s founders. It consists of three separate entities: a clearinghouse of services that meet the practical needs of the community on a case by case basis, a partnership that reaches out to the youth in the community, and the actual house in which interns and volunteer groups are housed. Although each of these entities has a unique role, there is often overlap in the programs that are offered and the staff and volunteers who are involved.

These two organizations represent a new kind of Evangelical ministry, independent of any particular congregation, founded by college educated Evangelicals in order simultaneously to fulfill a theological mission and to meet a perceived need in the wider community. Both are sophisticated operations with professional outreach staff and ties to all socioeconomic class sectors of their communities. Our general observations about Evangelical practical theology and stewardship strategies will include both these two focus cases and other Evangelical Christian organizations, some of which were grounded in particular congregations, as is more typical of traditional Evangelical initiatives.

Observations regarding Jewish organizations profiled in this chapter come from the wider set of organizations in the study as well, but we will focus on the joint activities of a constellation of organizations in Baltimore as specific examples for this chapter. Baltimore's Jewish community remains very cohesive both geographically and institutionally, despite acknowledged splits among descendants of German and "Russian" Jews, ultra-Orthodox and others. Due to the presence of an ultra-Orthodox seminary, Baltimore has one of the largest percentages of Orthodox Jews (20 percent) of any U.S. city. Baltimore's Federation, a planning and fundraising institution, is one of the strongest in the country, and maintains cohesive partnerships with its member organizations. We have selected examples from Chai, a community development and senior housing organization; the Jewish Community Center (JCC), which provides social services and early childhood education as well as recreational and general educational facilities; and Sinai Hospital. While the hospital is largely independent of the Federation, it is still a member agency and works with other Baltimore Jewish organizations to provide services. For example, these three organizations, along with several Jewish social service and senior services agencies that were not part of this study, have collaborated on holistic supports for the elderly and culturally appropriate services for Baltimore's Orthodox population.

Our Mainline Protestant examples consist of three organizations that provide housing supports, emergency services, and other forms of community enrichment through nonprofits founded by coalitions of Mainline Protestant congregations, sometimes working with Catholic parishes and Quaker Meetings. One of these organizations now also includes Jews and Muslims among its supporters.² These organizations are similar to many local Mainline Protestant initiatives, and the strategies we outline here were echoed by other Mainline Protestant affiliated organizations in the study. The Baltimore area Habitat for Humanity chapter was founded independently of a particular denomination, but draws on a specific set of congregations (Lutheran, Disciples of Christ, and other Mainline Protestants). While its general mode of operation is shaped by the international organization, it draws resources, guidance, and volunteers locally. In 2007, Baltimore Habitat developed a program for Muslim and Jewish congregations to contribute to their work independently of the Christian groups that form the bulk of its supporters.

The other two organizations focus on specific communities. GEDCO, “Goven’s Ecumenical Development Corporation,” provides housing and job assistance, operates two food pantries, and provides long-term housing services specifically geared toward the homeless, low-income seniors, and people with mental disabilities in a changing Baltimore neighborhood. Initially the project of a few Protestant congregations and one Catholic church, its stakeholders now include a wide array of area congregations and a few secular organizations as well. Frankford Group Ministries (FGM) served a similar neighborhood in Philadelphia, having been started through a collaboration of four United Methodist congregations in the 1970s. Always located in church properties, with its executive director a minister appointed by the denomination, it offered a variety of programs for youth and emergency services. Unfortunately, with its founding congregations closed or dwindling, and the economic downturn of 2008-2009 cutting supports from government and other sources, FGM closed in late 2009.

Drawing from these case examples and data from the larger studies, we turn now to compare the three religions’ unique approaches to providing services in their communities and supporting their nonprofits. We focus first on the impact of U.S. society on these faith-based initiatives before exploring the practical theology behind each religious tradition’s work and its governance and stewardship strategies. We also briefly examine the ways that practical theology influences agency structures and activities. Finally, our conclusions suggest ways that anthropologists make a distinctive contribution to a multidisciplinary understanding of the role of faith-based organizations.

Understanding the Confluence of Society-Wide Structures and Religious Traditions in FBOs

Analysis of organizations founded by religious groups necessarily must observe similarities across organizations based on their role as key service providers in the U.S. social welfare system as well as differences based on religious traditions. With the exception of some Evangelical organizations and small congregation-based programs, most nonprofits in our study received some funding from government sources. As a result, their program structures adhered to government regulations relevant to particular types of services, and all programs had some elements in common. For example, all practiced federal government equal opportunity policy regarding equity in who received service, except for religious schools designed specifically to provide faith-based education to people of a particular religion. Most also followed EEOC guidelines that prevented employment discrimination based on race, gender, and religious belief, although the majority expected staff to share the general cultural values of the organization. Best practices shared among organizations also led to a certain degree of similarity among organizations providing the same services, or institutional iso-

morphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1988). However, contrary to Smith's assertion that government funding forces faith-based or community based organizations toward isomorphism (Smith and Lipsky 1993; Smith and Sosin 2001), our research discovered that faith-based nonprofits simultaneously borrowed strategies from each other and maintained unique characteristics (Schneider, Day, and Anderson 2006).

Despite numerous similarities, we found significant differences among organizations, differences that could be traced back to their founding religion. Community development and emergency services organizations for Mainline Protestants drew their boards, volunteers, and other support through individual congregations. For example, Baltimore Habitat for Humanity depended upon key churches that each developed one house per year. Boards at most of the Mainline Protestant organizations consisted of representatives from founding congregations. Even a recently independent pastoral counseling center still drew its board from among pastors of local congregations. In contrast, Chai, the Jewish community development organization in the study, was supported by the community's central Federation, drawing board members from within the close-knit Jewish community and volunteers from the Federation's volunteer bank. Evangelical organizations relied on networks of people sharing similar beliefs for all types of support, and expressed a strong reliance on divine guidance for resources. Similarly, the expressed motivation for volunteering differed across organizations, with Mainline Protestants volunteering either because of concern over a need or as a practice of individual faith, Jews volunteering to fulfill an expectation of bettering the community through service, and Evangelicals to spread the gospel or to fulfill a gospel-inspired interest such as preserving life through mission activities.

These differences arise out of the practical theology of each religion and its history of nonprofit activity in the United States. We found theology and religious culture embedded in the individual program style of each organization, influencing missions, support strategies, organizational structure, and programming choices. Often, these founding religious values were invisible to most people seeking services from the organization unless they specifically looked for them. However, the overall style of each organization often reflected its founding ethos. Front line service providers at Mainline Protestant and Evangelical organizations were more likely to be volunteers, while Jewish organizations used professional staff. In both cases, staffing choices reflect practical theology, with Mainline Protestants seeing volunteering as opportunities for congregants to minister to those in need while Jews believe that providing the highest quality services through highly trained professionals reflects Talmudic injunctions.

Some differences are best seen through examples. Catholic and Jewish hospitals in the project had few religious symbols or other indicators of their religious tradition visible to the average patient. Below the level of executive directors and other key management staff, few staff came from the founding religion.

Except for abortion,³ both provided a similar range of services and had good reputations in the local community. However, in the Catholic hospital, front line professional staff (nurses, lab technicians, aftercare counselors) had limited authority and information, turning to their supervisors to handle situations requiring any deviation from standard practices. One Jewish professional, now a leader in a Jewish healthcare institution, recalled being told that she would not fit into a more hierarchically based Catholic institution. In contrast, even the lab techs at the Jewish organization were able to explain agency policy and make suggestions to address a patient's unique needs. These differences arose from the Jewish emphasis on shared decision making and professionals at all levels having authority for their work, in contrast to the ingrained Catholic sense of hierarchy which limited the amount of information given to front line workers, emphasized established procedure, and granted only to supervisors the authority to permit deviation from the norm.

Differences in Practical Theology

Mainline Protestant organizations emerged from a theology of individual faith, with congregations as the central organizing structures for both worship and nonprofit activities. As Hall (2005) describes, Mainline Protestants have made a conscientious effort to spread their founding values throughout U.S. society, and much of the Mainline Protestant religious ethos is similar to that found in secular organizations. At some point, the majority of nonprofits in the study were started by key individuals affiliated with a particular congregation or by an inter-faith initiative. While some of the emergency services initiatives like soup kitchens and homeless shelters were operated by a single congregation, most Mainline Protestants tended to incorporate their nonprofits separately, with governing board members appointed from among the participating congregations. Our study included a number of these interdenominational collaborations. Pastors of the participating congregations sometimes served on these boards, but appointments were just as likely to come from among church lay leaders, chosen by congregational committees to represent the congregation. Individual religious calls to help the needy through participating congregations were used to garner donations and volunteers for the organizations, and most relied heavily on volunteers in various capacities.

Based on concepts of practicing faith through works, Mainline Protestants also underplay outward signs of religion in service provision in an effort to welcome people from all backgrounds to their organizations. The same is true of their partnering with neighboring congregations, as Mainline Protestant organizations often included Catholic parishes, and sometimes Jewish congregations, in their support networks. GEDCO, for example, was founded by a coalition of six Mainline Protestant churches and one Catholic church. Together, the congre-

gations started a food pantry and other neighborhood-based emergency services initiatives, drawing in-kind goods and volunteers to run the initiative from the founding congregations. Over time, the congregations collaborated to provide housing services for local seniors and other low- to moderate-income people, with congregational representatives serving as the board for the organization. Funding for the housing initiatives came from a mix of federal, state, and local government sources, with significant supplemental money coming from the member congregations. While the religious background is an important part of the organization for its board and volunteers, it is not visible in service provision. The organization's name reflects its ecumenical nature and its neighborhood focus. Likewise, FGM was founded by a visionary pastor in Philadelphia who brought together a coalition of four United Methodist churches. As with many faith based organizations, it provided non-sectarian programs to its neighborhood but was housed in church property and drew on its founding congregations for board members, volunteers, and other resources.

Like Mainline Protestant organizations, Evangelical organizations in this study grow from the personal vision of their founder(s) to provide a particular ministry, but these organizations generally lack the formal congregational support systems seen in Mainline Protestant organizations. Instead, organizations rely on networks of people who share similar beliefs and want to support a given ministry. All of these organizations represented in our study had a core leader who carried the organization's vision forward and served as the center of the network that supported it. This leader may be the pastor of a core congregation or an individual lay leader with a calling to perform a particular service. The Evangelical organizations profiled here are reflective of the diverse ways that such organizations form: one was founded by two individuals who were active in their own faith communities and held many social ties within the city; the other was started by a single evangelical church but is now supported by multiple churches in the area that share a common belief in the organizational goal. Both organizations claim to have no prior denominational criteria for those who wish to join them to move the work of the ministry forward; however, closer examination finds that many of those who are active as staff, volunteers, or supporters with them hold beliefs that are generally congruent with those of the organizations.

Evangelical organizations frequently make reference to concepts such as divine "appointment" and "intervention," reflecting a belief that much of their work occurs through the hand of a higher power. The success of these organizations is rarely measured in quantifiable terms. Traditional metrics of self-evaluation such as charts and graphs are often rejected; rather, emphasis is placed on the relationships that are formed and the effect that the work has on the lives of the clients served. Individual interactions between volunteer and paid staff and people in need are the primary form that service provision takes, with programs openly sharing Evangelical approaches to scripture in a belief

that sharing the gospel is an important part of healing both individuals and communities. Both the Pregnancy Help Center and the Urban Center seek to live out their Christian witness through actions; whether it is through advocating for the poor, leading a Bible study, mentoring young women in crisis pregnancies, or other ways to meet the needs of the community.

For Evangelicals, theology inflects the work that they do, but it is not often emphasized, or even called “theology.” Personal and individual stories of hope and of lives being transformed are often used as tools to raise funds and to recruit congregations and churchgoers to a particular cause. Scripture is most often cited as the basis for an evangelical organization’s beliefs, but it is sometimes unclear how specific Bible verses relate to the work of the organization because the theological concepts run background to its work.

For example, the Urban Center was founded as a place where people from the community could go to experience hospitality. The vision for the house was to be a “presence for Jesus in the community,” as well as be “in fellowship with the people in the community.” Founders sought to establish a relationship with residents in the surrounding neighborhoods and, through those relationships, to begin to meet the needs that arose. The Center’s programs evolved as individuals came to the house with ideas and as volunteers from various Evangelical networks brought resources and ideas. The Urban Center engages in fundraising primarily through telling a series of what they term “miracle stories.” These are composed of accounts of ways the center has obtained items for the house, donations of labor, staff and volunteers; as well as individual stories of lives that have been affected through the programs that the center offers.

Jewish communities and their organizations present a notable contrast to mainline Protestant and Evangelical strategies of maintaining relationships with their nonprofits, in large part because education and social supports are seen as the responsibility of the entire community, with a heavy emphasis on community wide planning and collaboration across agencies through Federations, umbrella organizations responsible for community-wide fundraising, planning, and other supports for community organizations. The Jewish support system also differs from that of other religions because the Federation system of support for Jewish nonprofits was not formed by synagogues or temples, and is in fact considered a neutral entity where Jews from various branches of Judaism and secular Jews can work together. While most Federations today have some form of outreach to synagogues/temples, the worship communities remain separate from the Federations.

The Jewish theology of charity, justice, and support for those in need comes from a combination of the Torah and the Talmud (the Hebrew scriptures and commentary on them), and is regularly reinterpreted in Jewish communities and their institutions. It starts with a moral sense of responsibility for the community and each other, taught through a combination of family practices and religious education. Carp (2002, 182) comments that “the responsibility for those in need

is a Jewish requirement that is rooted at the very foundation of our communal processes. . . . Jewish people have always understood that caring for the poor and sick was too important to be a matter of individual conscience alone.” This sense of community responsibility also influences the nature of service, with Jewish organizations relying heavily on trained professionals in order to provide the highest quality of care. Jewish community service programs provide graduate training to Jewish professionals, and people from other religions with similar values also work at these organizations. While some organizations involve volunteers, direct service is more likely to be provided by professionals.

Three key concepts embody Jewish philosophy on social welfare: *tikkun olam* (to heal the world), *chesed* (loving-kindness), and *tzedakah*. While the Hebrew *tzedakah* roughly translates as charity, the concept more accurately combines charity, justice, and righteous duty. English translations cannot encompass the full theological or cultural meanings of these words. *Tzedakah*, *chesed* and *tikkun olam* are all *mitzvot*, which literally means commandments, but often is translated as “good deeds.” Jewish law obliges community members to provide for others, whether through regular financial donations, volunteering, or professional work. One organizational staff member stated, “I feel that in a way I’m doing God’s work through this organization and there is some scripture that says, ‘Working for the Jewish community or working for the good of humanity is equivalent to being in prayer.’”

Justice and charity are also merged in Jewish thinking. Supporting and improving the community is meant to heal the world: *tikkun olam*. Thus, Jewish organizations participated in policy change initiatives early in U.S. history and continue a tradition of best practices and involvement in policymaking. “Justice” and “charity” are often used interchangeably to describe activities. For example, a rabbi associated with a Jewish day school commented to us: “We have a full department of what we call a *gemilut hasadim* (social justice) work. We send about 700 volunteers a year out into the field and soup kitchens, Habitat builds, any variety of local efforts that we partner with.” However, school recruitment literature translates similar activities (*gemilut hasadim*) as “acts of loving kindness.”⁴ These two translations are two sides of the same concept: through acts of loving kindness, one improves the world, thus promoting social justice.

These values and strategies were integral to the organizations studied here. Most were members of their local Federation or received some support from it. As such, they received a small portion of their budgets from the combined United Jewish Appeal campaign, similar to a United Way campaign but only for Jewish organizations (Bernstein 1983). Most worked together collaboratively with other Jewish organizations in joint initiatives encouraged by the Federations. For example, Chai is involved in a joint program with the local Jewish social service agency, JCC, and the hospital to provide supports for seniors. Similarly, the Washington, D.C. senior services organization has worked with

several synagogues and other Jewish senior services organizations to provide social programs for senior adults in various parts of the DC metropolitan area.

The contrasts between Mainline Protestant, Evangelical, and Jewish practical theology indicate that each has different core beliefs that influence the way they develop nonprofits to address issues of common concern such as poverty, health, community development, housing, and senior services. These differences also appeared in their initiatives to solve a full range of social issues, improve society, and advocate for social change. It is relevant to point out here that Evangelical organizations included both organizations on the political right and organizations stemming from Evangelicals with leftist politics like Jim Wallis's initiatives or organizations following Ron Sider's approaches (Sider 1999; Sider, Olson, and Unruh 2002). While the two organizations profiled here were more politically center-right, the Urban Center in particular reflected a strong goal of fostering equality and uplift that would appeal to left-of-center Evangelicals. We next briefly describe ways that practical theology plays out in the support structures for organizations and organizational systems.

Practical Theology in Governance and Resource Acquisition

All incorporated nonprofits in the United States outline their mission and governance structures in their bylaws. Bylaws may be written by the founder and those s/he gathers to form the first board, or they may be written by representatives of founding institutions through a process unique to those communities. Governance structures described in organizational bylaws reflect potential sources for support and guidance for the organization over time. For faith-based organizations, founding practical theology influences what stakeholders are named in these bylaws and how the organization's guidance systems are structured. As an organization grows and matures, its major constituencies may change, and the organization may change its bylaws to reflect this by altering its mission statement or requiring board representation from newer constituencies. But often these changes occur more informally, through new vision statements, name changes, outreach to new stakeholders, and in response to requirements from funders. For example, many organizations receiving government funds are required to include on their boards a representative from the target group or community being served. If those served come from a different religious tradition, this requirement may alter the nature of boards. Organizations that reach beyond their original faith base and/or shift their focus to the community served may change to the point that they are no longer effectively connected to their founding faith and/or no longer reflect the founding ethos. These changes may be positive or negative, but do reflect shifts from the original founding community's networks or ideals (Cnaan, Wineburg, and Boddie 1999; Smith and Sosin 2001; Jeavons 1994; Powell 1988; 1996; Schneider 1999).

These governance and guidance systems also can serve as key sources for the support organizations need to fulfill their goals. Resources take several forms: funding; in-kind resources like office space, furniture, equipment, or goods to be given away to people served; or human resources in the form of volunteers or networks to find appropriate paid staff. Faith communities often play an active role in providing these supports to the organizations they sponsor. For example, almost every organization in this study started out in buildings provided by the faith community—often churches or synagogues—or land donated by faith community members. Many still are housed in space owned by the faith community. For example, GEDCO and FGM are located in churches, while the Baltimore Federation owns the real estate for all its member organizations.

Social capital from the founding faith community is often an even more important resource than direct financial support. In our work, *social capital* refers to networks based on reciprocal, reinforceable trust that provide access to resources (Schneider 2006a; 2009; Portes 1998). People and organizations gain access to a network through cultural cues, described by Bourdieu and others as cultural capital (Schneider 2006a; 2009).⁵ Access to religious network resources for organizations is powerfully tied to their ability to maintain the culture of their founding community (Schneider 2009; Schneider, Day, and Anderson 2006). In the case of faith-based organizations this may include board members who know people with money or how to obtain government grants; the ability to solicit donations through member congregations or the Jewish federation campaign; or a volunteer pool available through faith community networks (Schneider 2009; Schneider and Morrison 2010). Faith community networks often serve as a key resource for strong faith-based organizations, while weak ties to the founding community and/or ties only to communities with limited resources often contribute to organizational struggles. For example, Chai and the other Jewish organizations in this study depended on strong networks within the Jewish community to find board members who were able to identify resources and guide the institutions. GEDCO also benefited from similar supports—initially from its founding congregations, and then from the others it drew into its expanding network. FGM, on the other hand, failed after thriving for nearly thirty years because two of its founding congregations closed and the remaining two dwindling congregations had aging members who lacked the connections or knowledge to support the organization.

As indicated in the previous section, the organizations founded by Mainline Protestants, Evangelicals, and Jews developed different governance and resource development systems based on their practical theology. Mainline Protestants anchored their board and resource development strategies in founding congregations. In most cases, organizations were founded by an individual who felt a calling to develop a particular service, but that individual was either a pastor or an influential congregation member able to reach out to other congregations for

support. For example, FGM and GEDCO were founded by pastors who sought colleagues in like-minded congregations as their partners. Their bylaws call for board members to be appointed by these founding congregations. While the Baltimore Habitat chapter was not founded by a specific congregation, its long-term support network has come from congregations that were known to its founders. Most of the houses built by Baltimore Habitat are constructed by members and funds from those churches, with each church building one house per year.

These governance structures, often through the board members, also provide a key mechanism for maintaining ties to the founding faith. For example, when a few members of GEDCO's leadership attempted to change the organization's mission statement to de-emphasize the faith-based nature of the organization, board members from the original churches objected, halting the proposal (Schneider and Morrison 2010). In addition, as we have seen, for many Mainline Protestant organizations volunteers are a key source of staff. These established volunteers also play a significant role in maintaining the faith culture of the organization. As happened with FGM, when volunteers age or die and the supporting congregations fail to generate new volunteers for either board or staff, organizations may close. In the United Methodist Mainline Protestant culture, the denomination sees congregations as the key source for nonprofits, and thus did not step in to save the organization (Schneider and Morrison 2010).

Analyzing Mainline Protestant strategies suggests that organizations rely on a combination of bonding social capital among members within supporting congregations and bridging social capital among like-minded Mainline Protestant congregations or within an interfaith coalition to maintain the nonprofit organizations. Bonding social capital refers to networks among homogeneous groups that share similar cultural traits, while bridging social capital crosses group boundaries but fosters a common cultural or value centered ethos among people from diverse backgrounds (Putnam and Feldstein 2003; Schneider 2009). Cultural capital is particularly important in maintaining all faith-based organizations, and this study found several elements that Mainline Protestants expected to see. Organizations were expected not only to reach out to member congregations for support, but also to provide opportunities for the faithful to practice justice and charity work through volunteering. The creation of such opportunities for volunteers to support those in need themselves through donating to food pantries, serving soup, or building houses, simultaneously allowed Mainline Protestant organizations to obtain personnel to carry out their missions and fulfilled the cultural mandate that nonprofits provide an outlet for individuals to provide faith-inspired service. This reciprocal relationship further strengthened the ties between nonprofits and their supporting congregations or other stakeholders.

Organizations like GEDCO thrive when they are able to meet the cultural expectations of their supporters through improving the lives of people in their neighborhood in a manner consonant with the beliefs and practices of members

of the founding churches. Success bred success as other congregations beyond the founding churches learned of the organization's work and began to contribute to GEDCO themselves. The organizational leadership's strategy of both fostering bonding social capital among its initial congregational base and actively bridging by bringing other congregations or like-minded nonprofits into its operations through expanding board appointments or collaborations is an example of Mainline Protestant stewardship strategy at its best.

The Habitat for Humanity chapter tried to use a similar strategy with less success. In this case, key members from the contributing congregations each relied exclusively on their personal networks to support the organization. As a result, financial and human resources came from limited networks. The organization's leadership did little to make connections across these groups, and effectively reinforced this strategy by having each church build its own house. Instead of expanding bridging social capital through network strategies, organizational leadership used standard marketing techniques such as web appeals and fundraising letters to raise money, and continued to create additional bonding systems by reaching out to specific churches and synagogues. At the end of our research project, the organization was continuing to struggle, although its work went on. As discussed above, Frankford Group Ministry lost social capital as key leadership retired and the membership of churches that formed its base aged, died, or moved away. Older volunteers were less able to support the organization's full range of programs, and fewer new volunteers came from the surrounding neighborhood. Without additional bridging social capital, FGM's initial resources dwindled to the point that it could no longer survive.

Governance and resource acquisition for Evangelical organizations had some similarities to Mainline Protestant strategies. Both drew resources and volunteers from among individual believers and congregations with similar religious outlooks. Both relied heavily on volunteers to carry out the mission of the organizations. However, Evangelical organizations differed in that support systems drew exclusively on the networks of their founders, with supporters even more closely sharing the values represented in the organization than for Mainline Protestants. For example, volunteers serving through Habitat for Humanity could subscribe to a Mainline Protestant theology of providing for the stranger (Good Samaritan) without any expectation that they were witnessing for Jesus, or they could bring to their work the belief that they were being a witness who would actively contribute to the salvation of the family in need, beliefs reflecting Evangelical practical theology. The organization's leadership would be comfortable with either motivation for service. However, volunteers and supporters of the two Evangelical organizations all shared similar approaches to the Bible and to their ministries, with the Pregnancy Help Center drawing from Evangelicals active in the right-to-life movement and the Urban Center from people interested in sharing its ministry of witness.

While Evangelical organizations drew on both congregations and individuals, they relied exclusively on informal network ties rather than institutionalized congregational relationships. Thus, Evangelical organizations depended largely on bonding social capital. Both of the example organizations had small boards drawn from the close networks of the founders. The Urban Center, shunning traditional hierarchical structures, relies on a core group of individuals who serve as accountability partners for the organization. Members of this group are usually community and church leaders, who advise the Urban Center founders. The Pregnancy Clinic relies on a traditional board that is made up of church leaders, local businesspeople, and community members. The board is generally in charge of decision-making regarding the overall goals and strategies of the clinic for reaching out to the community. Although there is no denominational requirement for members, they all hold the same theological and social views. Clinic staff consists of a few paid staff, and several volunteers who carry out both administrative and medical services.

While resource strategies for these sophisticated Evangelical organizations looked similar to those of other nonprofits, organizational leaders reported that they were grounded in their faith. Some strategies rely on Evangelical belief systems; for example, the Pregnancy Help Center distributes baby bottles with slots for coins throughout their networks as a fundraising strategy, drawing on Evangelical beliefs that every fetus is a baby from the moment of conception. Key resources are attributed to divine intervention; for example, the pregnancy help center director reported that an Evangelical architect and builder contacted the organization to ask how he could help just when they had acquired a new building in need of renovation. Founders of the Urban Center similarly describe the ways in which they acquired furnishings for their building—through the kindness of staff, volunteers, and friends of the Center. In fact, much of their fundraising strategy consists of sharing “miracle” stories of lives that have been transformed by the work of the Center, and/or of items and services that have become available just when needed. One specific example: due to limited funds, the Center once had difficulty paying its electric bill. The founders came in contact with an artist who was looking for loft space to rent. They reached a kind of barter agreement: the artist paid the electric bill in exchange for space. Center leaders point to occurrences such as this as signs that their work must continue.

Jewish strategies differ from these two Christian styles in their reliance on communal structures and differing practical theology to carry out their work. As mentioned earlier, social supports within the Jewish community are organized through community wide structures, which in the United States are institutionalized through the Federations, independent nonprofits that bridge among the various groups in a local Jewish community (Bernstein 1983). Federations rely on the religious cultural belief in a responsibility to support community members and others: *tikkun olam*, *gemilut hasadim* through monetary or in-kind donations (*tzedakah*), and providing leadership for community organizations. As

such, the Federation is an important fundraising and leadership development center for organizations in its community. Both Chai and JCC receive annual allocations from the Federation from United Jewish Appeal funds, limiting their need to run individual fundraising campaigns. JCC hosts a fundraising event, the Jewish Hall of Fame, with the blessing and support of the Federation. Sinai, as a community hospital which is part of a larger hospital system, does hold independent fundraising campaigns, but receives annual legacy contributions from family foundations held in trust at the Federation. The Federation owns the land for all three organizations and is responsible for building and maintenance for Chai and JCC. The Federation's Leadership Development program and religious education activities for board members ensure that these Jewish organizations' boards follow the ethos of the religion, distributing talent through Federation member organizations.

Volunteer and board recruitment style reflects the strong bonding social capital among Jews in this community. Organizations draw from a known pool of individuals affiliated with either the Federation, synagogues and temples, or Jewish business communities to find appropriate board members. While none of the boards required that its members be Jewish, all were either exclusively or almost entirely Jewish because of the strong bonds within the community. The project found significant movement of individuals among boards of the various Jewish organizations and Federation committees, often by design, as the Federation encouraged individuals to contribute to organizations where they felt their talents would be most useful.

Volunteer networks showed a combination of reliance on bonding social capital through Federation and other sources, and limited bridging social capital based on other collaborations. Each of these organizations drew some volunteers through the Federation's centralized volunteer bank as well as relying on their own networks, which drew a combination of program participants and other volunteers through synagogues and the wider Jewish community. Chai also drew a limited pool of volunteers from Christian congregations or secular businesses, but these volunteers were secondary to the Jewish networks. For example, our fieldworker who volunteered at a Chai weatherization event found himself placed with a small group of "unaffiliated" volunteers because most others were in large groups from synagogues, the Federation, or Jewish day schools. This unaffiliated group included some non-Jews drawn to the event through Jewish friends.

Taken together, comparisons show faith traditions shaping the way that organizations from different faiths accomplish the same goals of governance and resource acquisition. Each strategy has varying strengths and weaknesses. While religious practical theology is less obvious in organizational program strategies, it also influences agency structure and approach to service provision. We briefly examine this issue next.

Practical Theology in Agency Structures and Activities

Practical theology was far less obvious in direct services than in governance structures. The small to mid-sized Mainline Protestant organizations in the study resembled similar secular organizations, with a few exceptions. First, those that maintained active ties with their faith traditions tended to have clergy or active members of one of the supporting denominations in the role of executive director. Second, organizations relied heavily on volunteers, drawing them primarily from congregations. This strategy is congruent with a practical theology which sees nonprofits as incorporated ministry arms of congregations that provide opportunities for church members to practice their faith through service. However, this strategy was little different from secular organizations, which also tended to network with faith communities as a key source for volunteers (Schneider 2006a). Our study suggests that Mainline Protestant organizations, regardless of their size, tend to design programs explicitly so that they involve opportunities for denominational or interfaith volunteers. For instance, the large Lutheran multi-service organization in our pilot study and the national Lutheran organization that serves refugees, analyzed in the Connections Study, both designed their refugee services and senior services programs to engage individual congregations to resettle refugees, support at-risk seniors and provide other direct services (Schneider, Day, and Anderson 2006; Schneider et al. 2009). However, reliance on staff or volunteers from the faith community did not generally translate into proselytizing or programs that actively used faith elements. More often, staff or volunteers had worship activities or prayed for clients among themselves, but did not openly include faith elements in their direct relationship with program participants. (See also Bauer and Chivakos in this volume.)

Evangelical organizations most clearly fit the model of faith-based organizations portrayed in the media as institutions that incorporate faith actively into all aspects of the organization. For example, The Pregnancy Clinic's stated mission is: "To impact our community for Christ by addressing the needs of women unprepared for pregnancy, encouraging life-affirming decisions, healing lives traumatized by abortion, and challenging them to embrace a biblical view of sexuality." The clinic operates with the assumption that abortion is emotionally and physically damaging, and that clients can come to them for "healing." When expectant mothers arrive for a consultation, staff and volunteers usually have a checklist of items to ask along with the regular clinical intake, including questions about the client's religious background and a presentation of the Christian message. According to staff and volunteers, they seek to serve people regardless of their beliefs. The clinic offers all services free of charge, and when clients question their motives for this, they use the opportunity to share their Christian faith. However, they insist that this is not emphasized at the beginning, nor is the religious background of their clients a determining factor in whether or not they receive services.

The clinic has recently expanded to a second location, the site of a former abortion clinic. To the staff, this location takes on a whole new meaning to their work of seeking to dissuade expectant mothers from seeking abortions. Of particular note is the symbolism of a room formerly used for late-term abortions. It was ultimately converted into a “prayer room,” serving as type of memorial. This room contains a candle, chairs, and a table covered with a tablecloth. Located in the middle, in place of the procedure table, is a rug covering up an old bloodstain. The walls contain handwritten scripture, as well as a professionally framed old yellow post-it note, left over from the previous clinic, with procedures for closing the room. The staff often shares with pride the stories of numerous clients who have come to the clinic seeking abortion services who have instead become “success stories,” i.e., women who subsequently chose to carry their pregnancies to term.

Jewish organizations tend to be highly professionalized, a strategy that at first appears as secularization. However, this emphasis on trained professionals connects to Talmudic lessons describing the provision of high quality service in order to help someone become a contributing member of society. As with most larger Mainline Protestant organizations, leadership staff tend to be Jewish, but most organizations hire non-Jews with appropriate professional credentials in mid-level and front line positions. In this context, professionalism is seen as a religious value.

The second difference in Jewish organizations is the level of collaboration with other Jewish organizations to provide holistic services. Chai, JCC, Sinai Hospital, and the Jewish social service organization have collaborated on several projects together, including an initiative to provide social, health, and recreational supports to frail seniors in their own homes. Chai, through its subsidiaries, provided both elderly housing complexes and home repair to seniors remaining in their own homes. The social service organization provided case management and various social service supports. JCC provided programs for seniors and some other social supports. Sinai provided health screenings and other senior services through part of its larger hospital network.

While collaborations such as these are not unique, the ease with which they developed stems from the centralized planning in the Jewish community. This particular idea came from a board member at one organization who shared it among his social network and key staff and lay leaders at the Federation. Other initiatives come from the Federation itself, through formal planning processes or discussions among lay leaders about future directions. This strategy comes out of the practical theology of centralized community supports for all those in need.

Conclusion: Anthropological Approaches to Understanding Faith-Based Organizations

This brief analysis of nonprofits affiliated with three distinct religious traditions suggests that organizations simultaneously follow the structures and strategies for nonprofits in the United States while still relying on their founding traditions for guidance, organization, program design, and resource acquisition strategies. Since many of the religious aspects of an organization are embedded in its structures and practices, practical theology may not be evident through research strategies that rely exclusively either on quantitative measures or on the superficial case studies performed in many of the management and policy sciences. Anthropology's contribution to understanding faith-based organizations and their supporting context comes from our ability to recognize the interplay between culture, ideology, and practice through both listening to what people affiliated with faith-based organizations say and watching what they do. The discipline's preference for using theory actively in interpretation, as this chapter uses social capital, is another asset that ethnographic analysis can contribute to research on faith-based organizations.

However, our research will not serve as a catalyst to change policy or practice if we simply produce rich case studies using academic language of interest only to scholars within the discipline. Comparative ethnography focused on practical issues can provide these insights. As such, effective anthropological contributions to the discussion of faith-based organizations depend on our ability to cross disciplines and bring our rich, ethnographic examples into the framework of practical or policy concerns.

Notes

1. These two organization names are pseudonyms. Organizations had the choice of using their own names or choosing pseudonyms. In general, most of the Evangelical organizations used pseudonyms but most of the Mainline Protestant and Jewish organizations used their own names. The other organizations profiled here are actual names.

2. While data on Jews, Evangelicals, and one Mainline Protestant case were gathered by the authors, the other Mainline Protestant cases draw on ethnographies by team members Kevin Robinson and Jill Sinha.

3. Catholic health care organizations are forbidden to perform abortions or offer certain kinds of family planning, based on decisions by U.S. bishops and the Pope.

4. Hasadim is a different transliteration of the plural for chesed (loving kindness).

5. For those interested in the definitions of social capital used in our work, please see Schneider 2006a; 2009.

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