Wedding Gown and the Town: The Culture of Inter-Organizational Collaboration in University-Community Partnerships

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Abstract

Increasingly, Universities and Community Organizations are engaging in dynamic partnerships built on ideals of reciprocity and mutual benefit. When initiating such partnerships, organizations face the difficult task of merging distinct organizational cultures and missions; integrating different missions and organizational processes without overtaking them. This merging of organizational ideologies generates a "partnership culture" that exists outside of the individual organizations; the successful creation and maintenance of which can lead to eventual partnership success and longevity. Past research typically views these partnerships as relationships at the organizational level, between university A and organization B. However, little consideration is given to the ways in which individuals within the organizations actively create and maintain these partnerships through their personal relationships. I argue that the creation and maintenance of successful inter-organizational partnerships between universities and their community partner organizations (CPOs) hinges on the formal and informal processes between individuals as representatives of their organization. Using an in-depth qualitative methodology, grounded in concern for community voice and agency, this paper highlights university-community partnerships in the context of service-based programs at a medium-sized, faith-based university in New England (Northeast College). Through interviews with university program directors and CPO directors and volunteer coordinators responsible for these partnerships, I investigate the processes of establishing relationships and mechanisms for continued success and partnership longevity. This study shows that the formation and identification of a "partnership culture" based on perceived mission alignment, trust, respect, and mutual investment has led to the cultivation of long-standing partnerships between Northeast College and its CPOs. Additionally, through the development of personal relationships built on open communication and viewing each party as "co-educators," it presents specific mechanisms that contribute to the successful cultivation of such a culture. By specifically highlighting the perspectives of the CPOs, this study seeks to contribute directly to the growing concern in the area for community impact, and the development of CPO agency and feedback in the partnership creation process.

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INTRODUCTION

Collaboration and partnerships have long been mechanisms by which organizations attempt to drive their forward progress. Public institutions partner with private, nonprofit social-service agencies with for-profit companies, large with small, all in the pursuit of advancing their missions (Austin, 2000; Barman, 2016, Salamon, 2015). Historically, collaborations have existed between organizations from the same sector, sometimes resulting in predatory relationships typified by mergers and acquisitions as organizations seek sector dominance (Alter and Hage, 1993; Glasakiewicz, 1985). However, increasingly, organizations have begun to recognize the benefits of mutually beneficial relationships and reaching across sector boundaries in partnerships built on ideals of reciprocity (Herlin, 2015).

In this style of partnership, organizations face the difficult task of merging distinct organizational cultures and missions; integrating the disparate missions of each organization without overtaking them. From this integration a "partnership culture" emerges. Hanscomb and colleagues (2014) refer to partnerships as the "third space distinct from the culture of the partnering organizations." Understanding the development of this "partnership culture" is crucial to our ability to construct meaningful, mutually beneficial partnerships between organizations of all kinds.

Partnerships between organizations are easily thought of as just that, "Organization A" is in partnership with "Organization B". However, what is missed in this simplified view is the work and negotiation of individuals tasked with establishing and maintaining those partnerships throughout their duration. Rather, certain individuals become representative of their organizations in partnership and actively construct and manage the partnership culture between themselves, and thereby their organizations. Given the challenge of creating effective

"partnership culture", and the particular role that individuals play in its creation it is important to ask several questions. Firstly, what are the motivations and missions of partnering organizations? Secondly, what are the mechanisms that key individuals use to negotiate, establish and maintain effective partnerships? Finally, what is the resultant shared "partnership culture" that emerges from partnering?

This paper utilizes the case of university-community partnerships, specifically through service-learning programs, to highlight the linkage of higher education and nonprofit organizations. The ubiquity of service-learning programs throughout institutions of higher education represents a major source of partnerships between organizations aligning their missions and cultures in pursuit of mutual benefit. This case offers an ideal location to study the emergence and maintenance of inter-organizational partnership culture for two reasons; 1) The large variety of organizational partnerships that exists within the context of service-learning, 2) The explicit focus by service-learning programs on building "reciprocal", or "mutual", partnerships (Miron and Moely, 2007; Stoecker et al., 2009; Stoecker, 2016).

Through the use of qualitative interviews with Community Partner Organization (CPO) directors, volunteer coordinators and university-based service learning administrators, this study examines the "partnership culture" and the mechanisms required for its generation and operation. I argue that a genuine reciprocal "partnership culture" in service learning programming emerges from the active social construction of partnerships between individuals, representative of their organizations (Stolte et al., 2001), and that they transition constantly between formal and informal methods of negotiation and evaluation in order to ensure partnership longevity. Additionally, this process relies on an alignment of needs and missions from both sides, and results in a partnership culture of trust, open communication and shared direction. This study is

grounded in organizational theories of symbolic interaction and culture (Bourdieu, 1991; Hallet, 2003, Dobbin, 2008), negotiation (Strauss, 1978) and collaboration (Wood & Gray, 1991). This theoretical framework is paired with service-learnings' community-oriented perspective and desire for agency building for CPOs (Stoecker et al., 2009; Stoecker, 2016). This project examines the partnerships of three service learning programs operated by Northeast College; SPARK Service Learning Program, NGAGE Weekly Service, and the Office of Civic Engagement and Community Based Learning (OCECBL)[*] and a thirteen CPOs throughout their surrounding city. (TABLE 1: See Section on Research Design).

1.0 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Organizations are traditionally understood to be networks of social relations created for the completion of tasks, to continually "get things done" (Parsons, 1956; Stinchcombe and March, 1965). Past research on organizations is wide-ranging and covers both internal and external dynamics of organizational behavior [a comprehensive review is well beyond the scope of this project]. However, pertinent discussions of internal operations have led to the study of organizational culture and its emergence and formation through both individual informal personal practices and habitus as well as formal organizational structure and rules (Bourdieu, 1986, 1991; Hallet, 2003). Studies of external dynamics have examined the ways in which organizations relate to, are impacted by, and interact with one another. Examinations of collaboration, resource dependence, and organizational ecology have all contributed to a greater understanding of organizational interdependence (Pfeffer and Salanick, 1978; Strauss, 1982; Dimaggio and Powell, 1983; Levi Martin, 2003). A growing literature addresses this further through examinations of the "partnership culture" (Frank, Smith, and King 2000; Handscomb et

[*] All program and individual names and identifiers have been changed for confidentiality in accordance with IRB approval.

al., 2014; Vidotto, 2014). However, relatively few studies have examined the ways in which representative individuals utilize theories symbolic interaction to create and maintain this culture (Vidotto, 2014). This study seeks to address this lacuna by examining the processes and mechanisms that individuals use to construct mutually beneficial partnerships between their organizations. In linking these literatures, I argue that a successful partnership is built through the successful interaction work done by individuals, not the simple partnering of the larger organization itself. This review will outline relevant theories of organizational culture and mission, inter-organizational collaboration and partnership, and an examination of power and the field service-learning (the focus of this study).

1.1 ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND MISSION

Organizational culture has been defined generally as a set of values, norms, assumptions shared by the individuals within an organization, recognizable by observable artifacts (i.e. products, technology, style, published values), that in turn differentiates the organization from others (Robbins, 1983; Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1990 and 2010; Tharp, 2009). Internally, this culture leads to the routinization of practices and values, while externally it affects how companies communicate their values to an outside market, particularly toward consumers, partners, and competitors. Often, this external communication takes the form of published values and mission statements (Babnik et al., 2014; Tharp, 2009). Organizational culture emerges from a duality of an organization's formal rules and norms and the informal interactions and values generated by its members. Scholars Hallet (2003) and Dobbin (2008), utilizing Bourdieu's (1977[with Nice], 1986, 1988) theories of practice and habitus, argue that organizational culture is *continually* constructed by the micro-level actions and dispositions of the individual actors in conjunction with the organization's rules and structure, requiring repetition to maintain itself.

This creates a dualistic and cyclical model with the informal realm creating change in formal structure and the formal structure stating how individuals can acceptably interact informally. This constant, repetitive maintenance is a type of negotiation, leading to the establishment of a stable order over time that dictates how organizations define themselves in relation to others (Strauss, 1982; Hallet, 2003).

As the organizational culture is solidified through this negotiated order, it is often expressed as an organization's "mission." Denison (1990) establishes mission as one of his four keys to effective organizational culture; stating that mission provides unity of purpose which creates "a sense of direction for the organization as a whole," leading to more an effective pursuit of organizational goals. Missions, often oversimplified in grandiose mission statements, are an "ideal-type" of organizations goals; representing an often lofty and unattained standard, yet still the ideal of organizational values. Missions are used internally and externally to communicate and sell their values to others (Cady et al., 2011). In the case of higher education, universities use their mission and values to "sell" themselves to prospective students and their parents, donors, and partner organizations (Molesworth et al., 2010). While it is important to acknowledge the market-oriented nature of these missions, it is undeniable that they come to be imbued with an immense symbolic value that impacts buy-in and acceptance by internal members and external partners (Bourdieu, 1991). For this case, it is important to note that Universities have, among other goals, the primary mission of educating students. Service-Learning represents a growing pedagogical tool that universities use to accomplish this goal. The Community Partner Organizations (CPOs), typically non-profits, have myriad missions but generally share a goal of providing social services to a constituency base, be it people who are homeless, youth in need of tutoring or mentoring, the elderly, or those seeking healthcare. It is

through communication and alignment of these missions that such organizations are able to establish partnerships. Just as unified mission plays an important role in internal organizational culture, so too does it stand as a necessity for creating partnership culture where two distinct missions are aligned.

1.2 COLLABORATION AND PARTNERSHIP CULTURE

Studies of inter-organizational partnerships focus particularly on the premises of negotiation and collaboration (Strauss, 1982; Wood and Gray, 1991; Roberts and Bradley, 1991; Alter and Hage, 1993; Abramson and Rosenthal, 1995; Mulroy, 2003; E. Proulx et al., 2014). Collaboration occurs when organizations engage in an interactive process that utilizes their unique knowledge and resources to achieve outcomes neither could on their own (Wood and Gray, 1991; Selsky, 1991; Roberts and Bradley, 1991, Alter and Hage, 1993). Thomson and Perry (2006) state that

> "Collaboration is a process in which autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interactions."

In collaboration "organizations negotiate, develop, and make assessments about their commitments based on their own interests and on the interests of the collective" (Thomson et al., 2008). The management of self-interest and communal interest is crucial to developing functional relationships (Wood and Gray, 1991). In working towards the interests of the collective it is necessary to deny some measure of self-interest. Scholars of altruism and prosocial behavior cite external norms and relationships as main factors that influence actors' choice to act in ways that benefit others, as opposed to their own self-interest (Simpson and Willer, 2008, 2015). Egoism (i.e. pure self-interest) and altruism (i.e. the interest of other at the cost to oneself) serve as endpoints on a spectrum of collaboration, with both ends representing

vast resource power imbalances (Simpson and Willer, 2008). Reciprocity, balancing these two approaches, is the social exchange of giving and receiving equal levels of both instrumental value and symbolic value (Molm et al., 2007). Instrumental value is defined as the "utilitarian value of the goods, services, or social outcomes" received and repaid; representing the resource power mentioned above. The symbolic value "refers to the value conveyed by an act of reciprocity itself, over and above the instrumental value" (i.e. the presence of symbolic power) (Molm et al., 2007). It is in this existence of symbolic values in the literature of both organizational culture and collaboration that we see an opportunity to link the previously separate fields of inquiry. As these symbolic values grow, less emphasis is put on evaluation and formal structure, allowing personal relationship, confidence, and understanding to take over the management of partnerships. (Meyer and Rowan, 1977).

When organizations collaborate a partnership culture emerges; a "hyrid space [which] not only draws on the knowledge and discourses of two distinct communities but also facilitates them" (Handscomb et al., 2014). In order to establish this space, organizations must commit to a certain level of cultural flexibility in order to properly accommodate the missions and methods of their potential partner. However, this is not an easy proposition. "Because culture is so deeply embedded in each of us, this process [partnering] must confront the fundamental reality that each member of each culture begins with the assumption that what he or she does is the right and proper way to do things." (Schein, 2004 [in Vidotto, 2014]). Frank, Smith and King (2000) outline that engaging in partnerships involves of understanding of four dynamics; power, self-interest, resources, and being open to doing things differently. Acknowledgement of power differentials, setting aside self-interest, sharing resources, and being open to different practices have long been a hallmark of the field of service-learning. Keys to establishing successful

partnership culture include open communication, development of trust, joint working and development, ability to work with others and learn new ways of working, and mindfulness about differences practice and cultural differences (Handscomb et al., 2014; Vidotto, 2014). Additionally, consistent evaluation throughout the partnership process fosters open communication about issues and possible improvements moving forward (Frank, Smith and King, 2000). Evaluation enables partners to assess effectiveness, benchmark the status of the partnership and culture, and allows partners to collaboratively establish plans for future partnership development (Halliday et al., 2004). Crucial to the successful implementation of these keys is the role of individuals tasked with establishing and maintaining these relationships.

1.3 THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS

As has been shown, reciprocal partnerships are filled with instrumental and symbolic value, formed through formal and informal negotiations. However, these values are not cultivated by the faceless entities of the organizations; rather they are established through the interaction of individuals. The symbolic interaction of individuals has been shown to be crucial for the emergence and maintenance of internal organizational culture, however it has not been critically addressed regarding partnership culture. Vidotto (2014) examined the role that leaders have in partnership development, stating that leaders with developed communication and group facilitation skills, flexibility and vision are best posed to foster successful partnerships. This explanation offers a helpful description of the qualities of an effective leader, but does not shed light on how individuals are the ones to maintain the partnerships.

Social psychologists have examined how individuals can be representative of larger structures above (Harrington and Fine, 2000); taking on the mantle of the organization and communicating the mission and desires of the organization. “The individual sometimes stands in

for the group, and, more important, is taken as standing for that group. The individual is treated as the larger entity, so that individual action becomes recognizable as, and treated as, the action of a collective actor." (Stolte et al., 2001). In this dynamic the individuals tasked with establishing and maintaining reciprocal partnerships come to represent the larger organization (i.e., the University and CPO). Having been enculturated with their organization's internal culture they then work as representatives of their organizations to cultivate the new partnership culture between organizations. The same processes of formal and informal negotiation that resulted in internal organizational culture serve to facilitate the formation and maintenance of partnership culture.

1.4 SERVICE-LEARNING AND PARTNERSHIPS

Discussion of reciprocity in collaboration has long existed in the field of service-learning; discussions that ultimately focus on the power dynamics between the university and the CPOs. The current literature on service-learning is relatively small, yet growing, and is focused primarily on the impact within the university; on the impact for students, and programming effectiveness (Bringle and Hatcher, 1996; Jacoby, 1996; Rhoads, 1998; Elyer and Giles, 1999; Astin et. al, 2000; Vogelgesang and Astin, 2000; Einfield and Collins, 2008; Sherraden et al., 2008; Bryer, 2011; Bass, 2013; Niehaus and Crain, 2013; Yonkers-Talz, 2013; Harker, 2014; Sterk-Barrett, 2015). There is less concentration on the CPOs within these partnerships, with scholars arguing for more focus on the perspectives of CPOs; those with typically less resource and symbolic power (Ferrari and Worrall, 2000; Eyler el al., 2001; Dorado and Giles, 2004; Miron and Moely, 2006; Worrall, 2007; Blouin and Perry, 2009; Stoecker et al., 2009; Sharpe and Dear, 2013; Reynolds, 2014; Srinivas et al., 2015). This paper will expand the current

literature on service-learning by including a grounded approach oriented towards the perspective of the CPOs.

Understanding that reciprocal partnerships seek to have a balance of power between participant organizations, it is important to address the levels of power that organizations have when they enter into a partnership. This is particularly important for the context of Service-Learning partnerships between universities and organizations in their surrounding community. Universities historically are known as centers of intellectual, political, social, and economic capital. In the context of service-learning, universities are known for sending primarily white students from typically high levels privilege to serve in lower resourced organizations that provide social services to their communities (Green, 2003; Dunlap et al., 2007; Lum and Jacob, 2012; Niehaus, 2016). Service-Learning will be defined as "volunteer service opportunity aimed at providing some educational benefit (whether formal and academic or informal and personal) to students." This allows for the examination of a breadth of service programs that are not specifically academic, but that do have an educational benefit.

2.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

This study utilizes a qualitative methodology consisting of in-depth interviews (n=17) with leadership from both Community Partner Organizations (n=13) (CPOs) and university-based Service-Learning programs (n=4). This research uses an inductive approach, allowing the voices and experiences of the participants to inform the theoretical approach to the study. In line with, and in response, to the prevailing literature on service-learning partnerships and power dynamics, my research specifically highlights the perspectives of community partner organizations which, historically, have been under-represented. This dual-sourced approach allowed for data triangulation and the development of a more comprehensive understanding

regarding the nature of inter-organizational partnerships as expressed by those tasked with actively managing said relationships.

2.1 UNIVERSITY PROGRAMS

The three university-based programs incorporated in this study are all programs operated by Northeast College; the SPARK Service Learning Program, NGAGE Weekly Service, and the Office of Civic Engagement and Community-Based Learning (OCECBL). Interviews (n=4) were conducted with the directors of each of these programs as well as the Assistant Director of SPARK. The three programs were selected to represent the variety of service-learning programming and partnership structure as operated within the same university context. The SPARK Service Learning Program is an explicitly academic oriented service learning program with over 50 partnerships, that requires 12 hours of service per week from students, as well as intense supervision and grading from community partner supervisors. NGAGE Weekly Service is a non-academic service-learning program through Campus Ministry with over 30 partnerships that requires 4 hours of service per week from students and active evaluation but no grading portion supervision. The OCECBL operates as a non-academic service-learning networking program and "portal for all service activity at Northeast College" (OCECBL Website, 2017), providing resources for students to engage in service and assist other university departments in connecting with outside community organizations. The demographic data of each university and community partner respondent can be seen in TABLE 1.

TABLE 1: Interviewee Descriptives

University Interviews (n=4)	*Style of Programming*		*Level of Education*	*Gender*	*Race*
SPARK Service Learning Program	Academic				
- Director – Hannah			Doctorate	Female	White
- Assistant Director – Jane			Master's	Female	South Asian
NGAGE Weekly Service	Non-academic faith-based				
- Director - Sarah			Master's	Female	White
Office of Civic Engagement and Community-Based Learning (OCECBL)	Non-academic				
- Director - Mark			Master's	Male	White
Community Partner Interviews (n=13)	*Supervisor*	*University Partners*	*Level of Education*	*Gender*	*Race*
Elder Companions (Elder Care)	Sophie	SPARK	Master's	Female	White
YOUTHCARE (Tutoring/Youth Education)	Chris	SPARK	Bachelor's (NC Alumnus)	Male	Latino
Southern Adult Education (Adult Education)	Grace	SPARK	Master's	Female	White
Stone Oven (Soup Kitchen/Food Services)	Caroline	SPARK	Master's (NC Alumna)	Female	White
Ignatius House (Shelter/Homeless Care)	Emily	SPARK/NGAGE	Bachelors (NC Alumna)	Female	White
Sarah's House (Women's Shelter)	Jenny	SPARK/NGAGE	Master's	Female	White
Peter's Homeless Initiative (Homeless Outreach/Shelter)	Trena	SPARK/NGAGE	Bachelor's	Female	White
Children's Alliance (Tutoring/Youth Education)	Brittany	NGAGE	Master's (NC Alumna)	Female	White
St. Agnes After School Program (Afterschool/Youth Education)	Mary	NGAGE	Bachelor's (NC Alumna)	Female	White
Federal Mentors of the Greater Northeast (Youth Mentoring)	Scott	OCECBL	Master's (NC Alumnus)	Male	White
Park Mentors of the Greater Northeast (Youth Mentoring)	Christa	OCECBL	Master's	Female	White
Christian Advocacy Network(Humanitarian Aid)	Rachel	OCECBL	Master's (NC Alumna)	Female	White
Common Table Living (Community Living/ Disability Support)	Chase	OCECBL	Master's (NC Alumnus)	Male	White

**All individual and program names have been changed to ensure confidentiality.*

2.2 COMMUNITY PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The connections with university program administrators were used to cultivate a list of community partner organizations with leadership that would be suitable for interviews and would be able to provide substantial insight on the CPO perspective of partnerships. 13 total interviews were conducted with CPO leadership known as "supervisors", who are directly involved with partnership maintenance and university student supervision. Of the organizations examined in this study, SPARK was partnered with 6 CPOs, NGAGE was partnered with 5, and the OCECBL was partnered with 4. Three of the community partners were actively partnered with both SPARK and NGAGE. All community organizations are considered Non-Profit Tax-Exempt Organizations, maintaining a tax filing designation of 501(c)3. Despite the relatively small sample size of this study (n=17) the university program directors (n=4) and CPO supervisors (n=13) that participated represent a variety of program specialties, organizational missions, and structures. Individual participant demographic data, as presented in TABLE 1, shows the majority of respondents in this study were women (n=14), white (n=16), with high levels of education ranging from bachelor's degrees to Ph.D.

2.3 PROCESS AND ANALYSIS

Following IRB approval, initial interviews were conducted with university program directors in April and May of 2017, with CPO interviews following between June and July 2017. Interviewees were contacted via email utilizing a *Letter of Recruitment* (Appendix A) outlining the nature of the study. Once contact was established an interview was scheduled for a time and place convenient for each participant with specific consideration given to their individual schedules and desires regarding confidentiality. Before each interview, participants were asked to fill out and sign a *Consent Form* (Appendix B), which outlined research design, possible

points of risk/discomfort, as well as the confidentiality policy. Additional consent was given for audio recording which was later transcribed to ensure a more accurate representation of each participant's perspective. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format following a rough interview guide meant to cover topics such as: organizational mission and structure, history and structure of partnerships, assessment of partnerships, mission alignment, hopes for future interactions. Interviews ranged from approximately 45 minutes to 75 minutes, averaging roughly 56 minutes in length. Interview files were transcribed and entered into ATLAS.ti, a qualitative data analysis software that enabled organized management and generation of thematic codes. Using both deductive and inductive approaches, codes were generated based on findings from previous literature as well as unique emergent themes. The following discussion of findings address the most prevalent and consistent themes across both CPO and University program perspectives.

2.4 LIMITATIONS

One major limitation to this research is that it is contained to the setting of one university, one that is private and faith-based. This limited setting, a single university case study, will realistically result only in a theoretical understanding of the management university-community relationships that demands further application in various other settings to be generalizable. Further research would do well to include the study of service-oriented organizations from a variety of universities to see if there are differences between university settings depending on varying factors such as private vs. public or religious vs. non-religious, or urban vs. rural for example. It is also important to note that the relationships that were examined are the positive cases for partnerships between CPOs and NC. Each of the CPOs, through the course of their evaluations, has elected to continue their relationship with NC, some having done

so for nearly 40 years. An examination of negative cases, where partnerships failed would shed light on particular areas of growth and poor partnership management.

3.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this section, I present the findings that resulted from my analysis of the in-depth interviews with supervisors at the CPOs as well as the service-learning professionals at Northeast College. By using an inductive approach, I allowed the data to lead to the application of the theories discussed above. My analysis led to the classification of core and subthemes that help to illuminate the nuanced definition and creation of a "partnership culture" through individuals' interaction. This "partnership culture", like the aforementioned internal organizational culture is constructed through a duality of formal structure (i.e. needs and requirements) and informal interactions (i.e. personal relationships). Broadly my core themes are threefold, *Establishing Partnerships, Partnership Culture* and *Mechanisms in Practice.* These three categories address the initial reasons for partnering, formation of partnership culture and joint mission, and the ways in which partnerships are maintained.

Generally, partnership culture is defined by both university administrators and CPO supervisors as one of trust, respect, and reciprocity. The latter address the mechanisms by which "partnership culture' is cultivated. This is done through a heavy emphasis on open communication, evaluation, and building of personal relationships. In order to come to an understanding of the inter-organizational collaboration, we must first examine the initial process for establishing these partnerships, which is the essential first step towards their development.

3.1 ESTABLISHING RELATIONSHIPS (REASONS FOR PARTNERING)

Establishing any inter-organizational partnership is based on an initial transactional, resource-based conversation, that establishes what each party expects (Bringle et al., 2012).

Rachel at the Christian Advocacy Network (CAN) stated, "the starting point of these formal partnerships are always value propositions… But that's kind of a transactional approach. If you want to be partnered at kind of a lower level, I think just saying 'we do this, and you want that' that's pretty easy to set up." On both sides of the partnership, interviewees noted that their initial reasons for partnering are based upon structural, utilitarian, needs for their programming. This emphasis on structure was particularly true for the directors of NC's programs. Sarah, the director of SPARK said,

"When we vet new partners, what we are looking for is a place that can give students at least 75% exposure, direct exposure to the clients being served… We know that this sort of mind and heart transforming…learning won't happen if there is not the opportunity for relationships to be developed. Another thing we look at is the willingness and ability of supervisors…to satisfy the things we need them to do… in terms of writing evaluations so that students can receive academic credit."

The level of engagement is important for the university recognition of the work being done by the students.

For CPOs, their principle requirements are the levels of commitment by the student volunteers. Brittany, from Children's Alliance, and Scott, from Federal Mentor's (two student mentor/tutoring organizations) both, noted that they require a one-year commitment from their student volunteers in order to have a positive impact on their young clients. Scott stated, "the research suggests that one-on-one relational mentoring… doesn't have its long-term effect if the relationship lasts under 12-months." Long-term mentoring and tutoring, due to the extremely "relational: nature of the work, requires a greater commitment than the weekly or bi-weekly commitments needed by a soup kitchen such as Stone Oven, or a homeless shelter such as Ignatius Home. Regardless, for all of the CPO supervisors, student commitment was important because NC students take on the role of auxiliary staff in organizations that are unable to finance much needed full-time staff positions.

3.1.1 IMPORTANCE OF STAFFING

The use of student volunteers as an auxiliary staff was one of the primary reasons for CPOs seeking out a partnership with Northeast College's service-learning programs. As social-services formerly handled by the government are increasingly turned over to non-profits, increased workload without an increase in funding has resulted in staffing shortages for many non-profits throughout the United States (Barman, 2016). All 13 supervisors and volunteer coordinators remarked, in some way, that the presence of NC students allowed them to fulfill their organizational missions beyond what their current staff levels could allow. Brittany remarked, "there's literally no way that we would be the size that we are without, without NGAGE". Some organizations such as the Park and Federal Mentors of the Greater Northeast or Children's Alliance specifically rely on college-age students for one-on-one mentorship and tutoring roles; primary aspects of their missions. Others rely on volunteers as a major source of staffing which allows them to operate. Jenny, the supervisor at Sarah's House stated,

> "Volunteers are why and how we're able to do everything that we're able to do. So having volunteers and interns and students participate in that in our community is really important. We have over 60000 volunteer hours a year. So, you think about that at about 27-28 (people)…of full-time staff equivalency."

It is important to note that the importance of staffing plays a role regardless of organizational size. Sarah's house is a large-scale Women's Shelter that serves thousands of guests per year. Having student volunteers serving the same as paid staff allows for increased operation. In smaller settings such as YOUTHCARE or St. Agnes After School Program, the presence of even one or two volunteers allows for the minimal operation of their whole program. Chris, at YOUTHCARE remarked that based on the nature of their organization's physical space (two separate rooms for programming) and lack of full-time staff (only 2 staff members), having

students from SPARK allows them to keep both rooms open if one staff member is unable to work for some reason.

The structural needs and expectations of both CPOs and university programs result from the internal mission of each organization. In partnering those needs are communicated in the initial steps of relationship building and lead to the eventual creation of joint culture. In this case, the extreme needs of the CPOs and the university programs lead to increased strength of partnerships and the "partnership culture".

3.2 PARTNERSHIP CULTURE

Having discussed the reasons for the establishment of these partnerships, I turn now to an examination of the "partnership culture" that exists within them. Overwhelming, the partnerships were described as positive by interviewees from both the CPOs and the university service-learning programs. The culture was described as being one of mission alignment, respect, and trust. CPOs saw their partnership with Northeast College as one that actively supported their individual missions, had aligning values and was a relationship of equals. University program administrators stated that they trust the expertise of their partners and view them as co-educators.

3.2.1 MISSION ALIGNMENT

For many of the CPO supervisors and university program administrators the "partnership culture" was seen through the alignment of each organization's unique mission. Rachel stated, "You have to make sure that your partners are aligned with your key interests, with your institutional priorities, and your value statement, your mission statement… Distilling and recognizing those commonalities are important." This sharing of common goals and values allowed for the shared "sense of direction" in the culture, as described by Denison (1990). In this case, the unique missions of each organization varied substantially, as such their common

"mission" with NC's programs varied as well. This variation took several forms; faith-based, education and student-formation, and inter-personal relationship-building.

Both Rachel at CAN, and Chase at Common Table Living (CTL) perceived mission alignment through the lens of faith. Rachel stated, "So obviously between us servicing humanitarian needs all over the world and NC's mission as a [faith-based] campus we have so much in common. We're guided by the [religious leaders], you know and NC falls in, is a [faith-based] institution." Chase, noted

"The whole, sort of, the heart of [faith-based] education [at NC] seems to be about helping us to recognize that we need to use our intellectual gifts for the building up of the kingdom of God for. bringing the poor from the margins to the center. So, that's where I see the alignment in a major way."

Other supervisors at organizations like Southern Adult Education (SAE) and St. Agnes' After School Program, among others, saw their mission alignment with the programs of NC via education, and the learning emphasis of service-learning. Grace, at SAE stated, "I think the missions of NC and our organization are aligned in that education is at the forefront. Holistic education is a hallmark". Mary, at St. Agnes' remarked "[The founder's] focus, was on education… and ensuring that the children understood that they needed to be in school and learn because that was the key to their future. And so, having college students… they're proof that you [St. Agnes' students] go on to college and then on and into the world." This inter-personal relationship building was echoed by supervisors at the majority CPOs as well as the administrators of the NC programs as a key factor aligning their missions. The ability for students to have substantial time to develop relationships with the mentees, clients, or guests of each organization was impactful not only for the university students but also the supervisors in assessing the strength of their relationship with NC and the "partnership culture" between them.

Even with the variety of factors influencing mission alignment, one factor was espoused by all respondents in some way in their description of the partnerships; an orientation towards social justice. Each of the university program administrators specifically used the terms social justice to describe their mission, as well as the language of sending students to work among oppressed and the marginalized. Hannah, the director of SPARK noted: “the mission of SPARK is... for students to have more lived experiences with individuals who are suffering from various forms of oppression to better understand the social justice issues at play.” This language was echoed by directly Chase at CTL (as seen above), and a general orientation towards social justice was expressed by the other CPO supervisors. Jenny, the supervisor at Sarah’s Place said, “NC and Sarah’s House are very social justice oriented. So the students that come in that are looking to participate in programs like SPARK or NGAGE are very social justice and community service-minded folks. So it fits a lot, it fits, it aligns with our mission here and what we're doing.” This culture of mission alignment is bolstered by a culture of trust and respect.

3.2.2 TRUST AND RESPECT – VIEWING AS CO-EDUCATORS

An important piece of the development of these partnerships and a “partnership culture” of organizational trust is the valuing of supervisors and developing their own agency as co-educators and partners in forming student experiences. Each of the program directors mentioned that at a certain point they trust the supervisors as experts in their field and that they are the ones that should be directing how students operate within their organization. Hannah specifically notes “We consider our partners, our community partners, our partners in education and they are the experts in their world.” Mark, stated, regarding their partners, “We respect your role in interviewing our students and making decisions about whether they were in or not. Right? We're not going to interfere with that. You've got, we trust you.”

This trust is evidenced in an understanding and acknowledgment of the amount of work being done by supervisors. Hannah remarked, “Their primary job is not to supervise our students. They are professionals in their own organizations with their own jobs and maybe volunteer management is one of their jobs.” Grace, at Southern Adult Education, noted a feeling across the pool supervisors of wearing many different “hats” within her organization; often taking on many roles to support the organization. Interestingly, despite the idea that CPO supervisors are too busy with hectic schedules and their multifaceted roles, many supervisors were interested in expanding their role in the education of students. Several supervisors mentioned a desire to have more access to professors, syllabi, and work written by the students to better supervise and support them while they are serving in their placement. Grace, stated “Being privy to the syllabi or even the questions that are guiding the different courses. Because through one-off conversations I learn more about different classes of approaches that really informed my ability to do my job and to mentor students in a way that reflected that integration of service and classroom.” Sophie, the volunteer director at Eldercare, spoke to the lack of interaction with professors, and how having more in-depth conversations about students’ academics would be helpful.

“At least this past year, I didn't have any relationship with the SPARK professors and I think that was really lacking… We weren't talking about it around, from the perspective from like academic, like what they're learning in the classroom… and I think that might have been really helpful.”

This desire for more involvement supports the strength of the “partnership culture” of co-educators with supervisors buying into the idea put forth by university administrators.

3.2.3 PROBLEMS WITH “PARTNERSHIP CULTURE”

Despite the overwhelmingly positive view that both CPOs and university administrators have of their partnership culture, problems do arise when there is a lack of mission alignment, respect,

trust, or perceived inequity in the partnership. Generally, this occurs differently on each side of the partnership. For the university programs, issues around mission alignment occur when structural requirements are not met, and a CPOs do not have an understanding of the mission or goals of the university programs. Hannah, at SPARK spoke to this saying,

> "We have had to end partnerships because students were simply not getting enough direct service. Or supervisors have not always, we need a good working relationship and it has to be a relationship of mutual respect and trust. And sometimes supervisors have not been particularly understanding of our needs as well. We try not to ask more than we absolutely have to from a structural perspective but then they need to know. They need to respect us too."

In this instance, structural requirements, which are a part of executing the mission of SPARK, were not met, leading to a problematic dynamic within and eventual termination of the partnership.

For several of the community partners, challenges were noted around the areas funding and financial support by NC of the CPOs; financial support of their missions. They clearly acknowledge the support they receive in staffing from the presence of students, but CPO supervisors recognize NC as a capital-rich institution and acknowledge the potential good that increased financial support could lend to their missions. Chase, at Common Table Living said,

> "It would be great for donations to flow too, besides people right… So you know that sounds like capitalistic or something to turn this relationship into a money maker. But the reality is that we need funds to keep doing what we do and we believe in what we do, and it's important to work.

Northeast College's vast pool of resources is acknowledged and the issue of money can put fiscally conscious leaders of non-profits on edge. Scott, of Federal Mentors, gave an anecdote about a joint funder (both a board member at Federal Mentors and funder of NC), when he wanted to make a restricted gift to NC that would benefit Federal Mentors. "It's amazing when someone takes out the checkbook how much all the development staff at my agency are paying attention and wondering 'oh what is this money? and how come he's giving the money to NC?".

Money and financial support play an undeniable role in the management of partnerships and exchange of resources between universities and their community partners. If partners believe their mission is not being supported or could be supported more effectively, particularly in financial ways from highly-resourced universities, they may view that as a lack of commitment to the advancement of their mission by the university programs and lose their sense of reciprocity in the partnership.

3.3 MECHANISMS IN PRACTICE

As has been shown the "partnership culture" of the collaboration between NC and its community partner organizations is one built on mission alignment, trust, and respect. It, as with all partnerships, is not without its challenges. However, it remains a positive inter-organizational dynamic between each party. Having established "what" the culture of these partnerships is, we turn now to the mechanisms by which it is created and sustained.

3.3.1 COMMUNICATION

The creation and maintenance of this partnership culture occur through a variety of practices used to address issues that arise and evaluate the progress on a semester, and yearly basis, thereby maintaining the relationship on a positive course. This management takes the form of inter-organizational and inter-personal communication via face-to-face meetings, emails, and check-in telephone calls, and evaluations. All respondents noted the important structural role of communication and meetings in the maintenance of partnerships between NC and its CPOs. Once the partnerships are established, routine meetings are required throughout the year to respond to issues that arise during the course of the partnerships and to evaluate each year and next steps moving forward. Hannah, the director of SPARK noted that there is a delicate balance in the amount of communication. "I think really good communication is important and try to be

as upfront with emails or not upfront but as detailed as possible and not bombard people with email either."

Communication allows for CPO directors to feel valued in their work, and to voice issues. Trena said, "I think the communication with staff is essential. Jane [Assistant Director of SPARK] has been great. E-mails, always available. We call her, e-mail her, say there's a problem and we need to talk, she is on it, and responds to us. That's what we need. We need that. And just that we feel really valued as an agency." This level of communication is increased in face-to-face meetings. Mark, the director of the OCECBL, actively encourages his staff to have frequent coffee or lunch meetings with their partner supervisors in order to expand levels of communication and deepen the relationships in order to have more positive dynamics moving forward. "Communication's key. And for good communication, you have to have a good relationship. So you're developing a deeper friendship and appreciation for each other for what you do. Right? That makes it easier to pick up a phone and say what was that?"

In addition to a formalized ongoing conversation, the programs and their partners engage in formal evaluations. In these settings, questions are able to raise about the partnership "How did this go? Are there things that we need to drop from this partnerships? Are there things we need to add? How do we add staff? How do we build capacity?" (Rachel, Christian Advocacy Network). All three service-learning programs have yearly wrap-up meetings where the primary goal is to assess the strengths and weakness of the partnerships and what steps need to be taken moving forward to improve the relationship. In addition, programs offer other opportunities for supervisors to give feedback and share amongst each other. SPARK, for instance, organizes an annual supervisor seminar, inviting several of their new and returning supervisors on to campus for dinner and workshop sessions to share information, positive and negative about the

partnership between the CPOs themselves as well as with the program staff. Among all program partnerships, there is a commitment to consistently evaluating the inter-organizational dynamic. Trena, of Peter's homeless initiative, did lament the lack of feedback provided by the students' perspective. "I think I would love to see evaluations from the kids. A group evaluation and a multiple choice evaluation with a couple of comments. From the kids. For both programs. I'd love to see that. I'd love to be able to share the good and bad with the staff." All these types of formal evaluation and allow for the recognition and addressing of issues. As Mark noted, this communication leads to greater depth inter-personal relationships and the informal trust and respect building nature of these dynamics.

3.3.2 IMPORTANCE OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

Within the context of the formal structural relationships between NC and its CPOs, the personal relationships cultivated by those engaged in the partnership was discussed by respondents on both sides. The growth and importance of personal relationships were addressed in two ways; firstly, in addressing the connection between programs and the individuals actively engaged in partnership maintenance (i.e. administrators and site supervisors), and secondly, in assessing student volunteers' performance while on site. The way in which this topic pervades conversation around these partnerships emphasizes its importance and integral part of the inter-organizational culture.

3.3.2.1 PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

As noted above, the formal structure of regular meetings and communication created fertile ground for the growth of personal relationships between CPO supervisors and NC program staff members. While the relationships are typically thought of as being between the organizations (e.g. a partnership between NC's SPARK Program and Sarah's House), in reality,

they are fundamentally about the relationship and partnership between the staff and administrators. Jenny, the volunteer coordinator at Sarah's House said,

"I think that's important just kind of knowing who each other are as people and then just talk to each other. I think is really doesn't feel like the SPARK organization is telling you to do this. It's like oh Jane asked me to fill out this form. Yeah yeah, of course, I'll do that. It's more of a personal relationship that I don't feel like we necessarily have with other schools."

Grace, the volunteer coordinator at Southern Adult Education noted the importance of personal relationships in managing perceptions of NC as a powerful institution,

"I think what's tricky is it's easy for me to conceptualize NC as the huge institution it is but what I'm so grateful for is that I don't feel like I'm dealing with a huge institution in a negative way because I know you, I know Jane, I know Hannah. You know it's very personal it doesn't feel like I'm just a little head… I think that respect that SPARK and NC has for a service site has been very felt throughout my exchanges with SPARK. I've never felt like this like... we're begging for NCs help. I think sometimes that completely institutionally, where it seems like 'Oh here's this prestigious institution and we're the lowly non-profit. No, I've never felt that way."

Scott, the director of partnerships at Federal Mentors, and Mark from the OCECBL, both spoke of the impact of their long-time friendship on their ability to work together in partnership. "I think it helps that Mark and I are old friends. Because it's because we can sit down and have a frank conversation about what our respective needs are. And I think we both want the same things. That's why I think the conversation goes really easily" said Scott. These interpersonal staff relationships allow for more flexible and respect driven conversations that allow for honest feedback between partners.

Scott also mentioned, "I had actually gone to El Salvador with Mark [Director of the OCECBL] when I was at NC. So we go way back and we started meeting and talking and… came up with NC Mentors which would be like the representative organization on campus for our organization." This points to an interesting sub-finding of this work. Of the 13 supervisors interviewed, 8 are NC alumni who had heard of, or had direct experience in one of the programs during their time at NC. They each noted that their experience there led them to pursue careers in nonprofits and gave them a greater understanding of NC programs' missions and how to best

incorporate them into the work being done at their new organization. Their status as alumni led them, in some cases to establish the partnership with NC, or to continue relationships with staff members that they had developed as undergraduates, leading to greater levels of organizational understanding, trust and respect in the partnership process.

The partnership culture that emerged was one of mission alignment, respect, trust, and investment in the success of both sides of the partnership. This study showcases the nuanced and interwoven dynamics at play between the inter-organizational structures and inter-personal relationships that are required for the establishment and maintenance of these partnerships.

This nuanced dynamic takes shape in the existence of the formal and informal ways that leadership on both sides of the partnerships examine their collaboration. For all of the respondents, the formal structure created a baseline of expectations about how and what they should receive from each other. For the university-based directors, this was particularly prevalent in their discussion of needs regarding evaluations and supervision of their students on a semester and year-to-year basis. Among the CPO supervisors, their primary structural concerns related to the presence of volunteer students as supplementary staff and the necessary investment they make in supervising those volunteers, allowing their organizations to operate fully. Formal structures of consistent communication led to positive views of the partnerships and the ability of both sides to manage issues that arise during the course of the year. The insistence on face-to-face meetings, timely responses, and openness to critique creates a structural framework of support that allows for better partnerships management.

While this formal structuring was crucial to the establishment and general maintenance of the partnerships, the true cultural meaning-making occurred in the informal relations and perspectives shared, especially by community partners. The majority of interviewees spoke about

the importance of personal relationships in their assessment of partnership efficacy. The personal relationships between CPO supervisors and university administrators, aided by open communication, led to mutual feelings of respect and trust, openness to discussing issues, and minimizing feelings of dealing with institutions rather than people. Additionally, a feeling of being valued as co-educators was felt on both sides of the partnership. University administrators made specific notes of trusting their CPO supervisors as experts in their field and acknowledging them as integral members in the team of providing education to university students. The CPO administrators, despite their many roles, showed a surprising level of personal investment in the education of university students. Several expressed a desire to have more interaction with faculty, and have access to course materials that would allow them to better incorporate the university involvement of students with their work while at the community organization. The role of personal relationships and investment aligns with literature on agency development of supervisors and has been shown to lead to better management of partnerships and more positive university-community relationships (Miron and Moely, 2006; Stoecker, et. al, 2007; Stoecker, 2016). By fostering positive personal relationships and cultivating invested participation, CPOs and service-learning programs are able to create a positive inter-organizational culture that informed their continued interaction.

4.0 CONCLUSION

This study responds to calls for further research from scholars in several fields. Firstly, it widens the application of theories used in discussions of internal organizational culture to the external-facing realm of inter-organizational partnerships (Dobbin, 2008). Secondly, it highlights the perspectives and agency of CPO coordinators and supervisors in the development of partnerships with the university programs (Worrall, 2007; Stoecker, 2016). By seeking to address these calls,

this study provides a unique look at how organizations with seemingly different missions and levels of access to resources establish and maintain their partnerships and participate in the co-creation of a joint inter-organizational culture. The field of organizational sociology benefits greatly from an expanded view of partnership culture in the context of inter-organizational relationships, as well as the unique role that individual actions plays in maintaining these relationships. Across the wide variety of industries and organizational fields that exist, the co-creation of a joint culture between differing organizations is vital to their combined efficacy to advance their missions. While the case of university-community partnerships is a particularly unique example, especially in the context of service-learning, it provides an excellent example of the interplay between formal and informal structures that lead to positive relationships and partnerships. This case provides a useful view of how the formal structure of conversations around organizational needs can impact the formation of deep personal relationships that allow for true partnership to emerge. The perspectives provided in this case, highlight the depth that inter-organizational partnerships can reach when there is an investment in the personal relationships between those that are actually involved in their day-to-day maintenance. Organizations that are looking to optimize their partnerships, moving beyond the "lower-level" transactional approach mentioned by Rachel from the Christian Advocacy Network, can develop long-term positive relationships by actively engaging their partners and developing their agency in partnership. This work adds to a growing literature that highlights the perspectives of community-based organizations and their constituent members (Miron and Moely, 2006; Stoecker et al., 2009). Continued emphasis is needed in future research to develop an understanding of how partnerships effect the community members who are impacted by these partnerships. This emphasis will help to give voice to members of society that have been

continually disenfranchised by the hegemonic structures of power, of which organizations are a part.

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6.0 APPENDICES

6.1 A: Letter of Recruitment

You are being contacted on behalf of Jacob Dillabaugh to participate in a study he is conducting for his Master's Thesis at Boston College.

Title of Study: WEDDING GOWN AND THE TOWN: THE CULTURE OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION IN UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Principal Investigator: Jacob Dillabaugh
Boston College

Faculty Advisor: **Dr. Gustavo Morello S.J.**
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Purpose:
The purpose of this research is to examine how community organization partners construct relationships with three different "service-based" program based at Boston College. This study will examine the PULSE Program for Service Learning, The Center for Volunteering and Service Learning, and the 4Boston Program and the ways in which they strive to construct positive relationships with their community partner organizations.

Duration and Location:
This research will occur during the spring and summer and fall of 2017. The interviews will occur at a time and place at the convenience of the participant. It is recommended that the participants choose a location, which they deem private for this one-time interview, which will last approximately one hour.

You are being asked to take part in a research study conducted by Jacob Dillabaugh. Approximately 20 subjects will participate in this research.

If you are interested in participating in the study you can contact the Principle Investigator, Jacob Dillabaugh by phone at 716-512-0966 or by e-mail dillabau@bc.edu You must be 18 years of age or older to participate in this study.

6.1 B: RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

Confidential: **CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

Study Title: WEDDING GOWN AND THE TOWN: THE CULTURE OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION IN UNIVERSITY-COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Principal Investigator Name: **Jacob Dillabaugh**
Boston College

Faculty Advisor: **Dr. Gustavo Morello S.J.**
Department of Sociology
McGuinn Hall 426
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467
Telephone: 617-552-4130

Purpose:
The purpose of this research is to examine how community organization partners construct relationships with three different "service-based" programs based at Boston College. This study will examine the PULSE Program for Service Learning, The Center for Volunteering and Service Learning, and the 4Boston Program and the ways in which they construct positive relationships with their community partner organizations. The hope of this study is to provide all parties in these relationships with a better understanding of their relationships and practical suggestions for maintaining or improving their positive relationships.

Duration:
Participation in this study will consist of taking part in a one-on-one interview with the principle investigator that will take approximately one hour.

Location:
This research will occur during the spring and summer and fall of 2017. The interviews will occur at a time and place at the convenience of the participant. It is recommended that the participants choose locations that they deem private for this one-time interview.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:
Participants for this study are being drawn from 3 service-based programs on a university campus, as well as their direct community partners where students from the university engage in some type of service learning or community service. There will be 6 interviews conducted on the university campus with 2 members of professional staff from the 3 service-based university programs. Off campus there will be 18 interviews conducted with directors of the community partner organizations; there will be 6 community partner organizations per service-based university program. The 6 will be divided into 3 sub-groups of 2 based on length of partnership with their respective university program; Long-term relationship (8 years or longer), Mid-term relationship (2-8 years), Short-term relationship (0-2 years).
You should not participate in this study if you are under the age of 18.

How You were Chosen
Initially, the principle investigator will begin with 2 directing members of the professional staff of each of the 3 university-based service programs. From those initial interviews the principal investigator will develop a list of partner organizations per service-based program and will then contact the directors of each until there are 6 community partner organizations represented per university service-based program.

Risks and Discomforts:
The risks and discomforts involved in this study are believed to be minimal in that subject's may experience some discomfort in answering questions about possible scenarios where they have had negative experiences within the relationship between the university service-based program and the community partner organization.

As with any study, you should be aware that unforeseen problems may occur, however, the likelihood of any serious problem is believed to be low. Your participation is voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or stop your participation at any time for any reason without penalty. You may choose to skip a question or terminate participation at any time.

Use of Research Results:
The data obtained in this study will be used by the investigator in completing a research project for his Masters thesis. Data may be used in publications, presentations or for teaching purposes.

Confidentiality
In order to ensure confidentiality, participants will be instructed NOT to put identifying information on any forms or reveal their name during the interview. All data collected will be transcribed using only the pseudonyms given to the participants. Only their pseudonyms will be used to identity their interview guideline answers.

All confidential information will be contained on a password-protected flash drive that will be kept separate from the data, so that no one will be able to link them together. The flash drive will be stored and secured in a locked file in Jacob Dillabaugh's residence.

No subject will be identified in any report or publication of the study or its results.

Institutional Review Board Approval:
To be approved.

Subject's Agreement
I have read the information provided above and voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. If I have any questions or concerns that arise in connection with my participation in this study, I should contact the IRB office at Boston College: **Phone Number**: 617-552-4778, **Email**: irb@bc.edu

I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form:

_____ _____
Name of Research Participant (Print) Signature of Investigator

_____ _____
Signature of Research Participant Date

I further agree to have this interview (Audio/Video) Recorded.

_____ _____