The Thesis Committee for Ana Maria Aguilar
Certifies that this is the approved version of the following thesis:

Time to Ride: Time as Central to the Creation and Maintenance of Shaded Organizations

APPROVED BY
SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:

Supervisor:

Dawna Ballard

Jeffrey Treem

Time to Ride: Time as Central to the Creation and Maintenance of Shaded Organizations

by

Ana Maria Aguilar, BA

Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School of

The University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

May 2016

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this thesis to all of my friends in the Communication Studies Department. Thank you for listening to my coffee fueled rants and for being an amazing community. I would also like to dedicate my thesis to K.F., Barbara Hawes, Leticia and Antonio Aguilar Jr. Your kind words of encouragement and support have meant the world to me.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge my advisor Dr. Dawna Ballard for all her support and guidance not only in the thesis writing process but in my academic career overall. Dr. Ballard has been an amazing mentor, advocate and inspiration. I would also like to acknowledge my reader Dr. Jeffrey Treem who has pushed me to become a better qualitative researcher and scholar. Thank you both.

Abstract

Time to Ride: Time as Central to the Creation and Maintenance of Shaded Organizations

Ana Maria Aguilar, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2016

Supervisor: Dawna Ballard

This study takes a grounded theory approach and examines how time takes on constitutive qualities in a mildly hidden organization or what Scott (2013) categorizes as a *shaded organization*. The organization is a voluntary recreational cycling group, the Thursday Night Social Ride, lacks clearly identifiable leadership and readily available textual elements. 19 participants of the Thursday Night Social Ride were interviewed for this study. The themes that emerged from the data were *time*, level of *hiddenness* of the organization, and the relationship among *organizational identification*, time and hiddenness. This study proposes that in shaded organizations one of the four flows of CCO, activity coordination or time, plays a larger role in creating and maintaining organization while simultaneously acting as an anchor with which members identify.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1
Social Cycling as an organization 5
CCO Perspective of Social Cycling 7
Hidden Organizations 11
Organizational Identification Mediated Through Time 13
Method 17
Thursday Night Social Ride: The Organization 17
Participants 21
Data Collection 22
Data Analysis 26
Findings 30
Four-Flows in Social Cycling 31
Time as an Organizing Agent 33
Shaded Organizations 38
Identification and Time in Shaded Organizations 40
Discussion 44
Limitations 45
Future Directions 45
Appendix A 47
Appendix B 48
References 51

Introduction

It is 7:30 p.m. on a Thursday in Central city.[1] *The temperature is around 90 degrees and the sun is beginning to set. I have ridden my bicycle down to a park on the East side of the city close to a river. The park where I am located is the starting point for this ride every week. At the park tonight, there are currently ten men congregated at one of the six picnic tables spread out in the area. All of them are on road bikes. They seem to know each other: They are laughing and drinking beer, typical behavior of the beginning of the Thursday Night Social Ride.*

It is 7:45 p.m., and more people have arrived. At this time there are about 35 people present. In addition to the ten men on their road bikes, people have shown up on BMX bikes, hybrid bikes and other road bikes. More women show up but there are still substantially more men. For every woman present there are three men. Cyclists vary in age between early 20s and 50s, though the majority of the people present appear to be in their late 20s to early 30s. As cyclists arrive, they lean their bikes against trees or flip them over, so that they are resting on the handlebars and saddle. People are showing up by the dozens every few minutes. Music from multiple bike speakers plays at once. People are gathering together in small clusters around the park based on the type of bike they are riding and the clothes they are wearing. Cyclists in spandex with road bikes are all gathered together. Cyclists wearing cut-off shorts and tank tops on fixie (fixed gear) bicycles are all congregated together. There are two cyclists on custom-made double decker bicycles that seem to be friends, and they are leaning their bikes against one

[1] This section is a description of one of the Thursday Night Social Rides taking place on July 30, 2015 based on observation notes.

another. But these clusters appear fluid and people move from group to group, hugging other cyclists and sharing beers, cigarettes and marijuana.

At 8:00 p.m. the crowd has grown to about 200. People are still arriving in groups. The sun is beginning to set and people are turning on the lights on their bicycles. Some of the bicycles have lights adorning the rims of their tires flashing in blue, green, or red. One cyclist arrives with an LED system placed on his tires. As his tires spin, different images appear (including a day of the dead skeleton). The park feels like a party with music playing, people dancing, drinking alcohol and smoking. I overhear people welcoming someone new to the ride. A group of about five people, two women and three men, tell the new person that they are going to enjoy the ride and explain how it works. A man in the crowd blasts an air horn and yells, "Five minutes!" to signal to the crowd that the ride will be leaving soon. People continue in the same manner as before, unaffected by the announcement. Cyclists continue to arrive.

At 8:15 the air horn goes off again. Someone in the crowd yells, "Chug your beers! Wheels down!" The crowd begins to move around. A group of about 20 people are already on their bicycles on the road leaving the park. Others begin to grab their bikes and follow suit. At this point the crowd has grown to about 300 people. Everyone begins to move and get on to their bicycles, turning on lights and—for those who chose to do so—put on their helmets. The group clears out of the park over the course of 10 minutes.

Once on the road people begin chatting with people next to them. The ride spans about a mile, with those on faster bikes, stronger riding ability, or (possible) leaders[2]

[2] The term leader is synonymous with being a volunteer in all capacities, although the duties vary. Possible roles and duties that occur during the ride may include: a) captaining the ride, being the leader; b) working a corner, being left at a corner to signal

closer to the front and people with slower bikes, less advanced riding ability or other volunteers (known as sweeps) at the end of the ride.

As the group approaches a stop sign, people begin to yell "Stopping!" A group of 50 or so cyclists slow down and eventually stop at the stop sign. A man standing on the sidewalk, holding his bike by the handle bars, signals to cars to go through the intersection. Once all the cars have passed, someone begins to yell, "Rolling!" This signals that it is time to continue on the ride. As the group continues through the city, people come out of their houses to watch and cheer, small children run out to the sidewalk to get high fives from cyclists. The group begins to feel like a parade. Various people standing on the sidewalk ask what is happening, only to get multiple people responding back, "Thursday Night Social Ride!" This continues until the ride reaches a park.

The group begins to ride into a park at around 9:30 p.m. The course of the ride has already spanned about 10 miles of the city. People get off their bikes and begin interacting in a similar manner as they did at the first park: drinking, smoking, dancing and socializing. A circle starts to form in the middle of the park. As I approach this group, I can see that there are three cyclists in the middle on their bikes. They are riding around in a circle and the crowd around them is moving closer and closer together. I asked what they were doing and am told that they are playing a game called Foot Down. The group surrounding the cyclists gets smaller and smaller until inevitably one of the cyclists has to put his foot down in order to avoid falling, the last person to put their foot down is the winner. Eventually two people put their feet down to avoid toppling over.

---

to others the direction of the ride; and, c) being a sweep, making sure no one is left behind at the end of the ride.

The surrounding crowd cheers and they give everyone playing a beer. As it begins to get closer to 10 o'clock, people begin throwing their empty beer cans into a bicycle trailer designated for recycling. An air horn blows again at 9:50 p.m. and someone yells, "Wheels down!" The group begins to leave the park, with members of the group staying back to ensure that no garbage is left behind. (The ride must leave the park before 10:00 pm due to the city's noise ordinance. Staying past that time could draw unwanted attention from law enforcement.)

The ride continues through the town for another 5 miles. About a fourth of those participating have left the ride after the half waypoint. Those remaining on the ride continue until we reach our final destination: a bar. At this point, around 10:30 p.m., many people decide not to enter the bar but instead opt to head home. Cyclists that decide to stay search for parking, many locking their bikes together. As I enter the bar I notice a table set up with beers. The person standing behind the counter is checking IDs and asks if I participated in the ride. When I say I did participate in the ride she hands me a beer and tells me that they are having an extended happy hour for the social ride. As I leave around midnight, 30 or so people are still at the bar.

This narrative was provided in order to provide a glimpse into the coordinated activity that occurs every single week with a voluntary, recreationally oriented, fluid group – The Thursday Night Social Ride I also share this passage to demonstrate two aspects of this activity that attracted to me this site for research. First, is that the Thursday Night Social Ride is characterized by multiple forms of coordination: participants need to know where and when to arrive, how to follow the route, and even when and where they can engage in illicit activities. Second, and somewhat paradoxically, there is little in the story of Thursday night Social Ride that distinguishes them as a formal group aside from the mass of riders that appear each week. This group has 200-500 cyclists attend any single event, and has thousands of participants since its inception. This continued participation signals some process of organizing is present, yet this large group manages to remain hidden from particular audiences including non-cyclists and law enforcement. The study presented here seeks to explore how this group is constituted and sustained communicatively. By studying this unusual context of organizing this research can inform our understanding of organizational communication in non-work related organizations.

Social Cycling as Organizations

In the past few decades the field of organizational communication has begun to broaden its scope; instead of focusing exclusively on traditional organizations such as governmental agencies, nonprofit and for-profit businesses, a growing trend has been to focus on new conceptualizations of organizations and organizing by examining marginal non-work related entities (Wilhoit & Kisselburgh, 2015). Shifting focus to different sectors allows for the expansion of organizational communication theories and tests current assumptions, such as what is required in the constitution of organizations or collective action (Wilhoit & Kisselburgh, 2015). This expansion of viewing nontraditional sites as organizing events is in large part due to the rise of Communicative Constitution of Organization (CCO) perspective. By using the CCO perspective, scholars are able to look beyond organizations as physical entities in which communication occurs and, instead, to view communicative acts as creating and maintaining organizations (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009).

Through expanding the scope of how organizations are constituted we learn more about organizations that are highly fluid in terms of organizational boundaries, membership, identification and institutional visibility, among other factors—including shaded organizations, a term introduced by Scott (2013) and the focus of this paper. The term *shaded* refers to the extent that an organization is hidden and from whom. For organizations described as mostly shaded, organizations are still recognized as existing though to a minimal exent and typically to a specific section of the community and their members still express some uniform identification. This type of organization tends to hide from the general public and may hide things such as organizational structure and internal messages from its members. Currently, little is known about how shaded organizations operate communicatively and how they sustain themselves with minimal visibility.

In this thesis, I take an inductive analysis approach (based on grounded theory) to describe a study on time in the communicative constitution of shaded organizations. This analysis uses a CCO framework (which will be described in detail in the following section) to look at shaded organizations. Specifically, by focusing on the activity coordination flow of the CCO framework (McPhee & Zaug, 2000), we can recognize the role time, or temporality might have in constituting these organizations. The use of time as a coordinating mechanism may aid organizations that lack textual elements guiding them. In most organizations, physical elements such as organizational-wide schedules or posted rules shape how members interact with one another as well as the actions that they can take within an organization. In organizations in which textual elements are not visible to all members or not continuously present, as is the case in some hidden organization, a specific time frame may act as a material agent that guides activity coordination. In this paper I will first explain the theoretical drivers of this study including: the communicative constitution of organizations, hidden organizations and organizational identification as it relates to time. The second section will be a detailed explanation the methods involved in data collection and the inductive analysis applied to interview data. The third section will elucidate the finding of the analysis. The last section will propose a theory derived from the data and explain implications for this study as well as limitations and future directions.

Theoretical Background

CCO Perspective of Social Cycling

Since the 1980s, communication scholars have shifted from viewing communication as something that exists within organizations to something that creates and maintains organizations (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009). Historically, communicative acts have been viewed as occurring within an organization and often described using a container metaphor (Taylor, Flanagin, Cheney & Seibold, 2001), The container metaphor refers the notion that organizations merely exist as an entity or structure in which communication occurs. This overly simplistic view of communication has lost much of its relevance as a useful conception for understanding communication in organizations in contemporary theorizing and practice. Current conceptions of organizations contend that communication is not something that exists in brick and mortar structures as a mere by-product of organization but rather communication is a fundamental element that creates and maintains organizations. The CCO perspective explicates how organizations are constituted in and by communication (McPhee & Zaug, 2000). Instead of looking at organizations as static structures the CCO perspective provides a process oriented approach in which various audiences, both members and non-member, must negotiate meaning either reinforcing or altering the organization. Despite the consensus that organizations are constituted in communicative acts, CCO perspective is driven by three main schools: Montreal School, Luhmann's Theory of Social Systems, and the Four Flows. Each of the "schools" varies in their epistemological, ontological and methodological approach (Schoeneborn, et al., 2014). The Four Flows highlights the iterative nature of organizational communication processes and can be examined using "discourse-focused and ethnographic methods" (p. 302). This approach was the most appropriate for understanding interview and observational data collected from the Thursday Night Social Ride and various characteristics of this process-centered approach emerged from the data analysis.

In order to understand the creation and continued existence of an organization through communicative practices, McPhee and Zaug introduce a Four-Flows Model (2000). The flows are a group of separate but interrelated communication processes that together form an organization. The four flows are (1) membership negotiation; (2) reflexive self-structuring; (3) activity coordination; and, (4) institutional positioning. However, in this study particular attention is given to the third flow, activity coordination for two reasons. First, the theory suggests that activity coordination may manifest differently in shaded organizations than in the more commonly studied transparent organizations. Second, activity coordination is an area of interest due to its connection to organizational identification. However, despite the primary focus on activity coordination, it is helpful to briefly examine how each flow and their interdependence contribute to constituting organizations.

The first flow in the model is membership negotiation. This flow refers to the idea that for an individual to be a member of an organization there must be a negotiation between the individual and the organization they are joining (McPhee & Zaug, 2000). McPhee and Zaug (2000) argue that, " 'membership' in any one organization is not a natural property of people, and is instead constituted by/in this flow of communication" (Membership Negotiation section, para. 1). For an individual to become a member of an organization they must make organizational routines and structures their own and the organization must reciprocate. This is an iterative process in which individuals negotiate their role within an organization and continuously shape the organization to which they belong (Scott & Myers, 2010). Routine refers to organizational acts that go from, "being puzzling to being things we consciously tell ourselves to do … to being second nature" (p. 90). Alternatively, structure refers to rules both formal and informal that exist within an organization (Giddens, 1984). Membership negotiation includes structures that validate who gets to speak or represent the organization and where the boundaries of the organization lie (McPhee & Zaug, 2000).

The second flow is reflexive self-structuring. This flow relates to how an organization creates and differentiates itself as a separate entity while setting parameters on members' communication, behaviors and work processes. Textual elements often act as a component of self-structuring because they allow for processes of the organization to exist separately of its members. Textual elements may include schedules or posters with specific organizational rules. Once a textual element is created members reference the text in order to understand the intention of the organization. Although individuals may negotiate rules or processes, once these practices or actions have been placed into text, they continue to affect the organization over time by acting as a point of reference for members. McPhee states that a text needs to be a “relatively permanently inscribed symbolic formulation” (2004, p. 365). For example, when a person is acting as the voice of an organization—and posts the rules of the social cycling group onto their website—this creates a textual element that speaks for the organization and, in so doing, creates self-structuring around the rules listed (Taylor, Cooren, Giroux & Robichaud, 1996). The members of the social cycling organization then act in relation to those rules (either upholding or challenging them). This textual element provides permanence beyond the interactions of the individuals.

The third communication flow is activity coordination. “Organizations, by definition, have at least one manifest purpose, and the activity of members and subgroups is partly directed toward it” (McPhee & Zaug, 2000, Activity Coordination section, para. 1). All members in an organization are acting towards a collective purpose in one-way or another. In order to act towards this collective purpose each member must engage in activity coordination. Activity coordination refers to how task roles are negotiated through self-structuring (Brummans, Cooren, Robichaud, & Taylor, 2014). Task role negotiation is dependent on temporal strategies linked to the specific task that members are trying to accomplish and the interdependence between each members’ task (Ballard & Seibold, 2003). For example, if members have little interdependence between their tasks communication may be minimal. On the other hand, if members are dependent upon one another for different stages of a task, their communication frequency may increase in order to accomplish their purpose.

The last flow of the model is that of institutional positioning. Institutional positioning refers to organizational communication with an external audience, including other organizations. For an organization to communicate with an external audience it must rely on boundary spanners that communicate the identity of the organization in visible ways. For example, when an individual acts as a representative of the organization and posts a message on a social media platform on behalf of the organization from an organization page, that individual is acting as the voice of the organization while speaking to an external audience. The organization page may have a logo and would typically lack references to the individual that is posting the message. The message would be interpreted by a reader as an "official" statement from the organization.

Although the CCO perspective does not directly address the issue of how individuals in shaded organizations develop identity towards temporal elements, it does provide a framework to understand time as a material agent in creating organizations. Each of these flows directly mentions some element of material communication: the rules that shape membership; the reification of texts that create structures; the coordinated completion of tasks; and interaction with external audiences to enact institutional orders. This emphasis on material communication raises questions about how these processes of organizing operate when organizations seek to minimize material visibility.

Hidden Organizations

When discussing McPhee and Zaug's communication flow, institutional positioning, there is often an assumption that visibility is desired by organizations.

Visibility refers to the ability of audiences to recognize the organization as an entity, to have an understanding of its hierarchies or rules, and to be able to identify members. The reality is that for various reasons, organizations and their members may choose different levels of visibility (Scott, 2013). Organizations may choose to exist away from public visibility due to their illicit nature or to protect its members (Stohl & Stohl, 2011). For example support groups for stigmatized illnesses or drug addiction often try to maintain annymoity to protect its members. Other more nefarious groups such as gangs may try to operate out of the public eye to avoid law enforcement (Scott, 2013). Motivations vary widely as to why an organization may want to limit its visibility.

Scott (2013) provides various ways of identifying and categorizing organizations in terms of their visibility. By understanding the level of visibility an organization desires, we may better understand how organizational identification is affected. Scott describes organizations as existing in terms of four realms of visbility: transparent, shaded, shadowed, and dark. Each of these realms is dependent upon visibility ranging from annoymous (dark) to recognized (transparent). Within each of these realms of visibility, Scott discusses how members identify with the organization on a spectrum from expressed to silent. Additionally, the relevant organizational audience, from mass to local, also contributes to understanding the organization.

It is important to note that even if members are more covert in terms of their affiliation or membership with a specific organization this does not mean that they do not experience identification (Scott, 2013). In voluntary, loosely structured organizations identification may be even more important for the sustained existence of the organization as the other factors that are typically associated with work-organziations are not present.

In work-organizations some indivuals continue to be members of the organization because they need a continued income. Alternatively voluntary organizatons must rely on different factors for continued participation and membership. Broadening the scope of organizaitonal communication to focus on organizations that vary on visibiilty would enhance the understanding of behaviors such as organizational identification.

Organizational Identification Mediated Through Time

The CCO perspective provides a different way of understanding what components individuals' may identify with through the process of organizing. Kuhn and Nelson (2002) define identification as a, "*discursive process* implicating, shaping, expressing, and transforming identity structure that occurs during coparticipation in coordinated (i.e., organization) activity" (p. 7). Identification is, thus, inherently linked to coparticipation in coordinated activity, the third flow in McPhee and Zaug's model. As a person engages in activity coordination, their role and task is negotiated with other members of the organization. It is through this interaction that individuals develop a sense of their role within the organization and the extent to which they agree with it or not. Organizational identification can be thought of in relation to how much overlap exists between an individual's identity and the organization's identity (Kuhn & Nelson, 2002). Strong organizational identification often manifests in the form of believing in the organization's mission as your own, defending the organization from outside threats, and commitment to the organization's goals, among others. Most organizations strive to cultivate strong organizational identification in order to retain members (Dick, et al., 2004).

In order to understand how organizational members become identified with an organization we must understand the site of this identification. For a member to understand how their own identity relates to an organization, they often reference textual materials, such as mission statements, organizational policies, or—in the case of the Thursday Night Social Ride—social media posts explaining the rules of the organization and events and compare them to their own values or practices (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998). If an organization's mission, policies and work practices mesh well with a member, this may create strong identification with the organization. An individual's identification with an organization may fluctuate over time, and it is this constant comparison from one's personal identity, to one's lived organizational experiences, to the textual elements guiding one's organization, which shapes organizational identification (Scott, Corman, & Cheney, 1998).

Traditionally, organizational identification has often been studied as something that occurs within the confines of an organization (Taylor, et al., 2001), in which organizations were understood as having particular components such as a physical location, a mission statement, and some sort of formalized hierarchal structure for its members. As we shift to non-traditional organizations they may lack formalized hierarchy and identifiable leadership (Dobusch & Schoeneborn, 2015). Additionally, they may lack a physical location and textual components such as a visible mission statement may not be present. In these settings, the idea of identification becomes more nuanced, while the role of material components becomes highlighted (Ashcraft, Kuhn, & Cooren, 2009).

Most conceptions of what it means to be an organization tends to highlight visible factors that contribute to an organization. Company names, products, services and a physical location are some of the elements that Scott (2013) lists as helping organizations identify themselves. Most CCO literature makes the implicit assumption that organizations want visibility; yet, for various reasons, organizations may be hidden to external audiences and particular sections of the organization may even be hidden from their own members (Stohl & Stohl, 2011). When organizations are unable to clearly identify themselves in the form of textual elements, other material components that help create the organization take on a larger role. For example, Wilhoit and Kisselburgh (2015) argue that material components such as bicycles take a central role in the constitution of an organization of bike commuters when the individuals themselves do not necessarily identify as members.

Stemming from the understanding that material components take on an organizing role when textual elements are not readily available; we can begin to examine time as a material component that individuals may use for identification. McGrath and Kelly's (1986) social entrainment model proposes that a dominant external pacer may disrupt groups of people's temporal patterns and result in the group synchronizing with the dominant pacer. If the dominant pacer were something quite voluntary, such as a recreation activity occurring in a consistent frequency, we can begin to examine time as a material component for members to anchor to. Based on McPhee and Zaug (2000) and McGrath and Kelly's (1986) social entrainment model, it is possible that, for organizations that lack visible leadership and have limited textual elements, time may act as a material organizing agent with which members identify. This leads to the guiding research question of this study:

In organizations that lack both clearly identifiable leadership and readily available textual elements, what are the constitutive qualities of time (the activity coordination communication flow)?

Method

Thursday Night Social Ride: The Organization

Between the years of 2000 to 2009 the number of cyclists in the United States has nearly doubled, and their primary reported motive has been for recreational purposes (Pucher, Buehler & Seinen, 2011). Cycling has been studied in terms of competitive cycling, individualistic cycling for recreation, or collective action (typically referring to politically motivated rides such as Critical Mass[3]) (Aldred & Jungnickel, 2012). With the rise in popularity of recreational cycling, there has been an increase in informal social cycling groups (Aldred & Jungnickel, 2012; Stehlin, 2014). Informal cycling groups have voluntary membership, are typically held at a regular frequency (e.g., every Thursday night), require coordination, and do not have a formal competitive or political agenda.

The focus of this study is the informal social cycling ride called the Thursday Night Social Ride. In 2008, at the time of the Thursday Night Social Ride's inception, most social rides in Central City (this is a pseudonym) fell into one of three basic categories: shop rides (typically held by bicycle shops with the intention of training for races), critical mass (a politically motivated ride with the goal of disrupting commutes to draw attention to cyclists rights), or social rides (informal group rides which occurred infrequently). It was this lack of consistent social rides that compelled two individuals to create Social Cycling City (this is a pseudonym for the social riding group which encompasses the Thursday Night Social Rides ride, the focal point of this study).

[3] Critical Mass is a monthly mass bicycle ride that occurs in over a hundred cities all over the world. This ride has decentralized leadership and routes are not preplanned. It is often portrayed as a social movement or protest, attempting to draw attention to cyclists' rights by disrupting traffic during peak automobile commute hours (Blickstein & Hanson, 2001).

Social Cycling City is a loose group of volunteers that host a variety of social rides in Central City. Rides occur every day of the week, but their flagship ride—the Thursday Night Social Ride—is the most populous. The Thursday Night Social Ride was selected as a site of study due to its consistency and ability to exist as an organization without the auspices of Social Cycling City, which cannot be said of the other rides. The Thursday Night Social Ride was created with the intention of being a safe, consistent, noncompetitive ride for the founders and members of the cycling community. The founders no longer participate regularly in the Thursday Night Social Ride. This ride meets every week, year round, rain or shine from 7:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. at the same location, i.e., a park by the river in Central City. Figure 1, taken from the Social Cycling City Facebook page regarding the Thursday Night Social Ride, demonstrates this group's dedication to meeting every single week regardless of the weather conditions. The ride typically has between 200-500 members present at any single event.

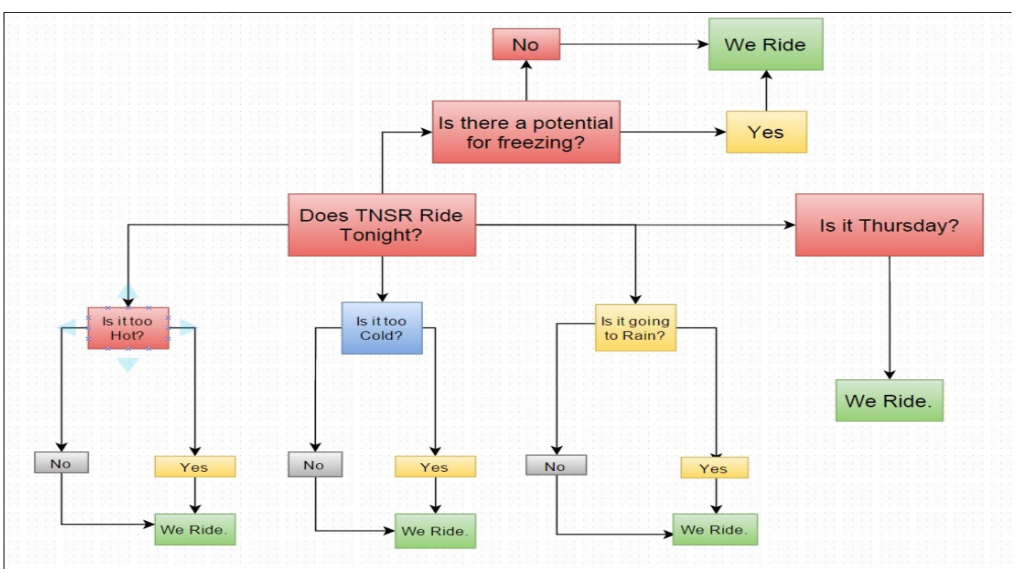

Figure 1: Taken from Social Cycling City's Facebook page this chart demonstrates when the Thursday Night Social will occur based on weather conditions.

The membership of the group is skewed by having higher participation rates from men than women, with ages ranging from 16 to 70 years old, and members' cycling abilities ranging from beginners to competitive cyclists. Interviewees often described the group as being very inclusive and having participants from all walks of life. Occupations of members include: IT personnel at tech companies, dentists, undergraduate and graduate students, chefs, photographers, nonprofit managers, scientists, engineers, computer programmers, accountants, bike messengers, baristas, construction workers and various other occupations. The diversity in appearance of the riders also varies from individuals riding in spandex cycling gear, to people in costumes, to people wearing cut off shorts and tank tops.

The Thursday Night Social Ride's Facebook page provides a description of the ride for those who are new to social cycling:

> The Thursday Night Social Ride is a very casual cruise around town with around 300 cyclists attending every week! The pace is social (easy). Typically, we ride to various locations where we socialize, swim, play games or just hang out. We then ride some more before arriving at one of our many generous host bars that supply our riders with hospitality and good times ("Social Cycling City," n.d.).

Each volunteer or "leader's" specific roles vary during each ride. Leaders vary from week to week and tend not to be easily identified by participants of the ride, based on my observations. By design, most members and participants of the ride are incognizant of the leadership and the amount of coordinating efforts required for the event. Non-volunteer members of the social ride are often unaware of how you become a leader and the specific duties of a leader. Even the individual tasked with captaining, leading the entire group on a planned route, may not be identifiable by participants. According to interviewees the lack of clear leadership is due, in part, to the illicit nature of activities associated with this organization. This social ride blocks traffic due to its large number of participants and it is not officially sanctioned by any formal or traditional organization. A large percentage of the participants of this social ride engage in activities such as alcohol consumption in public spaces and recreational drug use. Due to the sheer size of the group, the wide spectrum of riding ability and possible inebriation of some cyclists, accidents on the Thursday Night Social Ride are a common occurrence. By not allowing one individual to claim responsibility or ownership of the entire group, leaders or volunteers avoid being held responsible in a legal capacity for participants' injuries that result from taking part in the ride. The illicit activities that members engage in contributes to the necessity of having an informal loose structure of leadership to avoid legal liability (Scott, 2013).

The Thursday Night Social Ride's substantial weekly attendance (200-500 cyclists) and participants' affiliations to bike shops, pedicab companies, and bicycle advocacy groups, results in a large community presence outside of the event itself. Individuals in the cycling community in Central City are aware of the existence of the Thursday Night Social Ride but most community members are unaware of the leadership and organization (i.e., Social Cycling City) behind it. This dichotomy between being *visible* to some parts of the community—i.e., cyclists—and being *hidden* to others—i.e, non-cyclists—in conjunction with having hidden leadership may provide unique insight into the role of communication in fundamental organizing processes, including organizational identification. As Stohl & Stohl (2011) argue, an implicit assumption exists in CCO literature that organizations are inherently transparent or highly visible (p. 1198). According to Stohl & Stohl this assumption unnecessarily circumscribes our understanding of organizations and results in under-theorizing of concepts and theories. Additionally, taking a CCO perspective may help reveal which of the constitutive flows of communication are most central to hidden organizations.

Participants

The roles and frequency of participation of those interviewed ranged from one of the Founders of the Thursday Night Social Ride (who participated in every ride for three years) to an individual who had only participated twice. (See Figure 2 for additional information regarding each participant including demographic information and duration of interviews). All participants provided verbal consent to allow the researcher to audio record the interview sessions. The researcher did attempt to have an equal representation of self-identified female and male participants but resulted in having more male (N=13) than female interviewees (N=6). No apparent differences were found based on gender in regards to the findings of this study. Female participants' did however express direct issues of harassment based on gender that were not as commonly found in the male participants but that topic is outside of the scope of this study and does not ultimately have an impact of the findings of this analysis.

Figure 2 *Description of Interviewees*					
Participant	Gender (Self-identified)	Age	Occupation	Duration of interview	Single-spaced Transcribed Pages
Claude	Male	42	Bicycle shop employee	40:45	13
Myrna	Female	32	Lab technician at a hospital	61:38	15
Angelo	Male	33	Pizza delivery person	46:59	11
Irene	Female	60	Bicycle advocacy organizer	38:37	15
George	Male	28	Scientist/Engineer	45:26	14
Lana	Female	29	Technical Support Staff	52:19	16
Clyde	Male	38	Futurist/Researcher	52:34	16
Darlene	Female	31	Copy editor	54:39	14
Bill	Male	30	Volunteer coordinator	35:09	14
Annie	Female	28	Study abroad program manager	56:52	17
Tyler	Male	38	Web design/ landlord	57:42	14
Robert	Male	37	Owner Pedi-cab company	56:04	18
Betty	Female	39	IT consultant	50:28	18
Javier	Male	42	Web developer	66:02	17
Dave	Male	36	IT	56:05	18
Gene	Male	28	Network Engineer	73:15	22
Stan	Male	28	Carpenter	100:36	27
Steve	Male	47	Self-employed	71:36	19
Levy	Male	21	Café worker	53:21	19
*All names provided are pseudonyms		$\bar{x} = 35$ Range: 21-60		$\bar{x} = 56.13$ Range: 35:09-100:36	$\bar{x} = 16.6$ $\sum = 317$

Figure 2. This chart provides detailed information about interviewees and interview times.

Data Collection

In order to gain a thorough understanding of this complicated and fluid site, data was collected through participant observation, interviews, and a review of social media content. First, taking the role of a participant-observer refers to the methodological practice of establishing a long-term place in a natural setting to investigate, experience and represent the social life and processes taking place (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001). I became an active participant of the Thursday Night Social Ride by participating in 15 rides over the course of 6 months. In participating in the Thursday Night Social Ride, I was able to understand the complexity of the organization and observe the natural fluctuations of the group based on the season, while building rapport with riders including both leaders and non-volunteer participants. By choosing to be a participant, a researcher is able to, " …become [an] active and involved member of an existing group, adopting roles that other members recognize as appropriate and nonthreatening" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p.3). This site would have been incredibly difficult to analyze as just as an observer due to the mobile nature of the organization. Taking the role of a participant observer allowed me to have a deep understanding of the ride that assisted in the organizational data analysis and offered access to interviews.

Participant observation was used as a way to corroborate and triangulate any findings from the interviews (Denzin, 2012). I would take notes during the ride either on a small note pad or on my phone as notes or voice recordings. I took notes during the breaks, typically at the halfway point and during any pauses in the ride that lasted more than a few minutes in which something notable had occurred. My notes reflect salient details of the ride as well as times in which particular events took place, such as the start of ride times: from the starting point, halfway point and end times, and number of participants present at various points. Once I left the ride, I transcribed my notes and recorded as much detail as possible for future use. The Thursday Night Ride's Facebook page was also used as a site for observation in addition to the ride. Observation notes were used as supplemental material to compare and see if the researcher had also observed any of the behaviors or interactions described by interviewees. This was used as a validity check for the data collected during interviews.

As Glaser argues, “Observational data is not enough. The researcher should provide interviews along with the observations so the analyst can get at the meaning of what is observed. Observations do not in and of themselves have the meaning or the perspective in them of the participants (p. 49, Glaser, 1992).” The meaning of the situation is derived from interviews from the participants. Thus, interviews were a central aspect of data collection and analysis due to their ability to elicit language as it is used by those being observed, collect information about things or processes that cannot be observed effectively by other means, and to corroborate or validate information obtained from other sources (p.173, Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Interviews provide access to participant’s perceptions and interpretations of events and to their understanding of the organization to which they belong. Interviews were collected in two phases: a preliminary study and a second phase.

The first phase was a preliminary interview stage. Interviews were collected during three different segments of each ride: the pre-ride meet up at a park, the midway point at a different park and the final destination, a bar. Initially, sixteen brief interviews were conducted averaging 3.75 minutes with a range of 58 seconds to 13 minutes and 5 seconds. I began by asking general questions based on a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix A), in order to begin to develop an understanding of the group and to build rapport with group members. Some of the findings from the preliminary study were how participants learned about the event (social media or word of mouth) and how that related to their perception of the event or organization. Another area of interests was that of the extent in which someone identified with organization as it related to their understanding of the Thursday Night Social Ride.

Based on the data collected from the preliminary findings a longer semi-structured protocol was developed for the second phase of interviews (See Appendix B). Saturation for the second phase had been reached after an additional nineteen (or a total of 35) interviews. By this point in data collection, interview responses had ceased to be novel and responses had become repetitive. The duration of the second phase of interviews ranges between 38 minutes and one hour and 40 minutes with the average interview lasting 56 minutes. Participants were recruited using a mix of convenience sampling and snowball sampling techniques (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011; Bryant & Charmaz, 2014). In order to gauge an understanding of what was occurring at the site, convenience sampling allowed me to access individuals that had participated at least twice and then use their understanding of the organization and leadership structure to continue my interviews.

In practice I would approach cyclists of different ages, genders, bicycle types, and perceived roles trying to ensure that I had a wide range of participants during the course of the Thursday Night Social Rides and use their knowledge of the organization to figure out whom to contact next. Interviewees were required to have participated in the Thursday Night Social Ride at least twice prior to the interview and be over the age of 18. Once a given cyclist had been interviewed, I asked if they knew of any other participants of a particular demographic—age group, role, or gender—that would be interested in being part of the study. Many of the interviewees volunteered other cyclists without my prompting. Participants were not compensated for their participation in the study.

Data Analysis

Analysis was conducted in two phases: open coding and selective coding. Open coding refers to the initial process of going through all the data and doing a line-by-line comparison of the data with other incidents (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007). During this initial process, Glaser states that certain questions should be asked of the data such as, " 'What is this data a study of?' 'What category or what property of what category does this incident indicate?' 'What is actually happening in the data?' and lastly 'What is the basic social psychological process or social structural process that processes the main problem that makes life viable in the action scene?' " (p. 51, Glaser, 1992). From this initial process, over 150 codes were created using qualitative research software Atlas.ti. The open coding process involved using in vivo coding methods which means that codes were created using the actual language of the participants rather than my interpretation of their responses (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). In the iterative process of coding each line and comparing each incident to other incidences in addition to my theoretical sensitivity, categories began to emerge. Examples of categories include: *hidden*, *prioritizing*, *attachment*, *organization, and consistency*. (It should be noted that various other categories did emerge from the data but the categories listed above provide insight into the categorization process.) The category which I labeled *hidden*, included incidents in which interviewees would state that not every knows certain things or they would explicitly say certain things are purposefully concealed. The category that I labeled *prioritizing* grouped together incidents where participants indicated restructuring their schedule work or otherwise in order to participate in the Thursday Night Social Ride. The category *attachment* referred to incidents where interviewees explained feeling off about not participating or explained not wanting to change anything about the ride including the time in which it occurred. The category of *organization* included incidents where interviewees would discuss the Thursday Night Social Ride explicitly as an organization or in ways that I interpreted as being parts of the four-flows. The last example I will give is that of *consistency* which incorporated instances in which individuals used the term explicitly to describe the ride or would describe the ride as being in the same place and same time and requiring little thought or effort to attend.

Once categories began to emerge, selective coding was implemented to search for specific variables. This second round of coding was more focused on searching for specific categories. This differs from the first round of open coding which was primarily in vivo coding, in that I would no longer use the language used by the participants but rather used categories based on my theoretical sensitivity. “Theoretical sensitivity refers to the researcher’s knowledge, understanding, and skill, which foster his generation of categories and properties and increase his ability to relate them into hypotheses, and to further integrate the hypotheses, according to emergent theoretical codes” (p. 27, Glaser, 1992). After coding for specific categories that I found to be salient and to explain what was happening in the scenario, I would write memos to try to make connections between the categories. The result of this process was the emergence of the themes: *time*, level of *hiddenness* of the organization, and the relationship among *organizational identification*, time and hiddenness.

The CCO perspective became an area of interest when it became apparent that participants struggled to explain what the Thursday Night Social Ride is, with some participants overtly stating it was an organization while others were hedging on if it should be considered one. This tension between whether it should be considered an organization or not was compounded by a mixed understanding of how the ride operates and which individuals are in charge. Participants often referred to different people as “leaders” of the ride, while those in leadership positions explained who were “leaders” and who were volunteers. Interviewees stated to not knowing specific processes, such as how someone becomes a leader or how decisions are made, while leaders explained intentionally veiling aspects of the organization. My interest in hidden organizations originated in a very early phase of the study. It was during the process of listening and transcribing all the interviews that this description of the group and its leadership became apparent. When listening to the audio recordings and transcribing them I wrote memos regarding hidden aspects of the organization. This hiding of particular aspects of the organization drew my attention to how hidden organization or in this case shaded, may operate differently than traditionally theorized in CCO literature.

The last theme that emerged was that of, *identification* as it relates to *time* and *hiddenness,* had a slightly different process than the others. The coding for this category was conducted differently due to my theoretical understanding of organizational identification. This theme looks to Cheney’s (1985) Organizational Identification Questionnaire for guidance in terms of determining instances of identification. The questionnaire was used for guidance but instances of identification are not limited to those that strongly resemeble the questionnaire format. Cheney (1985) identifies three components that mark organizational identification *membership, loyalty* and *similarities*. Each of the constructs was operationalized inline with Cheney’s characterization of each construct and then selectively coded for. For example *loyalty* which could be understood as commitment or dedication. I operationalized loyalty in terms instances in which members prioritized the the ride which included behaviors such as: altering work and personal schedules, attending regardless of poor weather, and altering personal relationships.

Findings

From the data, various themes emerged but three main themes are the focus of this analysis. The theme of *time*, level of *hiddenness* of the organization, and the relationship among *organizational identification, time* and *hiddenness*. The theme of time refers to an *attachment to the time frame* reflected in a tension and possible modification to personal or work schedules in order to accommodate the ride. The second theme of *hiddenness* refers to what was accessible in terms of knowledge of the organization to different individuals (such as structure, leadership, and coordination) or what individuals stated as purposefully obscuring from the general public (such as leader only meetings, decision making processes and private Facebook groups). The theme of *organizational identification* related to participants' interests in the Thursday Night Social Ride continuing every week during that specific time frame, defending it from potential threats (such as law enforcement or disruptive participants), describing the ride as part of who they are and expressions of "feeling off" if they did not participate in the ride or if the ride no longer existed. The findings are described in more detail below.

An overarching finding that preceded the three themes that relate to the process of activity coordination, was that the communicative aspects of Thursday Night Social Ride are more tightly aligned with one of the four constitutive communication flows—activity coordination—theorized by McPhee and Zaug (2000) than traditionally-studied in transparent organizations. For an organization that lacks visible leadership and has few to no textual elements, time (a primary means of activity coordination) acts as an organizing agent with which members identify.

Four-Flows in Social Cycling

One point of contention for many interviewees was the idea that the Thursday Night Social Ride is an organization. From the data, examples emerged that would support the notion that it does indeed exist as a distinct organization. The following section provides examples for each of the flows as enacted in the organizing of the Thursday Night Social Rise. As defined in greater detail in a previous section, membership negotiation refers to the idea that for an individual to be a member of an organization there must be a negotiation between the individual and the organization they are joining (McPhee & Zaug, 2000). For example, an individual who participates in the Thursday Night Social Ride stated, "We ride with traffic. We want to promote a safe and fun environment." This member was, in fact, shaping the boundaries of the organization. By using the pronoun 'we' this individual indicated not only their connection to the organization, but simultaneously created an out-group (i.e., non-members). By mentioning what the organization promotes (riding with traffic, safety, and fun), they act as a representative or agent for the organization and encourage a particular understanding of the organization's aims.

The second flow is reflexive self-structuring. This flow relates to how an organization creates and differentiates itself as a separate entity while setting parameters on members' communication, behaviors and work processes. For example, textual elements such as event reminders or rules of the road posted on the Thursday Night Social Ride's Facebook page may act as a form of reflexive self-structuring. When new members join the organization, they can reference the rules to understand how the Thursday Night Social Ride wants them to behave.

As stated previously the third communication flow is activity coordination. "Organizations, by definition, have at least one manifest purpose, and the activity of members and subgroups is partly directed toward it" (McPhee & Zaug, 2000, Activity Coordination section, para. 1). The relationship between interdependence and task may influence the extent to which individuals communicate. Due to the low level of interdependence in merely participating in the Thursday Night Social Ride the time frame may act as the coordinating agent. For example, in the Thursday Night Social Ride, events are posted on the social media platform, Facebook, but not all members are aware of the Facebook page. Some members find out about the Thursday Night Social Ride through word of mouth. These members begin to associate the specific time frame as the coordinating agent rather than the textual element informing members of the event. The role of time in activity coordination will be discussed in more depth in the following section.

The last flow of the model is that of institutional positioning. Institutional positioning refers to organizational communication with an external audience, including other organizations. For example, the Thursday Night Social Ride Facebook page allows for members and non-members alike to view the organization's identity. Each post about the upcoming ride has a short blurb that includes safety rules and tips on how to enjoy the ride. One could infer that safety is something that the organization is concerned about for its participants. The organization's identity is created, in part, by boundary spanners such as ride leaders that post on behalf of the organization. When boundary spanners invite others to participate in the ride and describe it as a party that reinforces the identity of the organization as a party-like event. This shapes the perception of the ride to an external audience.

Despite each of the four flows being a distinct and independent process, it is only when they are all present and intertwined that we are able to view all the flows as an organization (McPhee & Zaug, 2000). The Thursday Night Social Ride does in fact have all four flows that would characterize it as an organization but due to its shaded nature the organization appears more tightly driven by the flow of activity coordination. Activity coordination became of particular interest due to its inherent relationship to time. As people began to denote an attachment to time and the consistent, cyclical nature of the event, this particular flow required further exploration.

Time as an Organizing Agent

From the data, it became apparent that there was a link between people's commitment to the activity (cycling) and the specific time frame in which the activity occurs. It is from this relationship that the entrainment processes began to emerge from the data. Entrainment is the process in which different paces or rhythms become synced, and come to match the pace of the more dominant structure (Bluedorn, 2002; Ancona, Okhuysen & Perlow, 2001; Letiche & Hagemeijer, 2004). We can differentiate between the idea of routine, as a reoccurring event for an individual, and entrainment, as the synchronization of two or more pacers. Entrainment reflects the ability of a dominant pacer to override other cycles and to continue to exist outside of a single individual participating in it (Zellmer-Bruhn, Waller, & Ancona, 2004). Thus, based on entrainment processes, this analysis is concerned with how time—reflected in the activity coordination flow described by McPhee and Zaug (2000)—is a critical driver of the communicative constitution of shaded organizations.

In the case of the Thursday Night Social Ride this time period—Thursdays from 7:00 P.M. - 12:00 A.M.—acted an organizing agent that creates and recreates the organization on a weekly basis. Since this event has been going on every Thursday for almost eight years, the time frame has been designated as when the ride occurs. Even when the organization does not announce the event (creating a textual element) individuals continue to attend. Participant Dave explains,

> Doesn't even matter about Facebook promotion because it's every Thursday. Rain, shine, snow, ice, whatever. In the summer time whenever there are students around that aren't doing finals, actually, during finals they probably still come as long as they aren't bogged down by school and the weather is good, we'll still get 300-500 people to show up without any real effort… I don't think that current college kids even look at Facebook and they still come.

This time frame provides presence for the organization beyond textual elements such as information on social media websites. In this regard, the time frame acts as an organizing agent. From the example above, it can be noted that despite inclement weather or other conflicting obligations participants are perceived to prioritize the ride without prompt (textual element). Prioritizing the ride for some of the participants results in altering their work schedules in order to accommodate for the weekly event. It is the entrainment with this specific time frame that enables this organization to continue to exist.

In the data from this study, individuals vary in terms of the attachment they have towards other material factors, such as bicycles or to the organization's textual elements, the rules listed on the organization's Facebook page. The following quote is from Javier who identifies as being a leader of the organization and has close ties with the founders. He has participated in the Thursday Night Social Ride since the second ride they did and has been a consistent presence ever since. Javier explains how many individuals have very little attachment to bikes often not even owning their own but are interested in participating in the event, "So you'll have these people who borrow bikes, they use b-cycle, they rent bikes just to ride, just to go on our ride, our party." This demonstrates little to no attachment to the material element that enables participation in the event. The other material factor that we would traditionally assume has a strong constitutive influence would be that of textual elements or in this case, Facebook posts. The following example would suggest that even if textual elements are not present the consistent time frame still allows for coordinated activity. Steve, a volunteer, was asked what would happen if the leaders stopped coordinating the event, including posting about the ride on Facebook would cyclist still participate?

> I think yeah. I'd say maybe one in five people actually reads the invite because we often communicate… we always communicate the end bar and we often communicate the other things like theme rides in the invitation and judging by the amount of people that are oblivious to both of those I would say one in five of those people have actually read the invite. So if an invite didn't get posted I would say 80 percent of the crowd would still show up.

It became apparent from the interviews that there is connection to the time in which the Thursday Night Social Ride occurs that allows individuals to identify with the event and its sponsoring organization. There are cycling events on every night of the week. There are even other rides that occur on Thursday but individuals continually identify as being members of the Thursday Night Social Ride, specifically. Participants described feeling "off" when they cannot attend the Thursday Night Social Ride. Lana, someone who has been participating in the ride for multiple years, explains, "Like I get a little sanity out of going and doing that ride every week and when I can't, I feel like something is missing or incomplete. It's a hard thing to explain why I keep doing it but I don't miss." In a similar capacity Levy, who has been participating in the ride for a little under a year explained a similar sentiment when asked how he would feel if he could no longer participate in the ride.

> I would be really disappointed. I wouldn't know what to do with my Thursdays, that would really throw me off. That would throw off my Zen just to be quite honest. It's something that I look forward to every week and I have enough friends there that keep me in check. It's a very core kind of … it's rooted in my, not my personality but in my life right now. That would really throw me off.

Levy followed this by stating that if the organization did not exist he would attempt to recreate it during the same time frame. This demonstrates that, despite the lack of organizational leaders or coordinators, individuals will continue to participate in the event because the time frame creates the Social Ride: as with the inertial quality of an entrained rhythm, it continues to exist outside of individual members.

Interviewees not only point to a *personal* need or attachment to this time frame, but said that there is a *community or citywide* need for such an event to occur. Some participants insisted that even if Social Cycling City stopped hosting the Thursday Night Social Ride would continue to occur. When asked how he would feel if he could no longer participate in the Ride, Robert responded, “I guess I could do bike polo but that…if it no longer existed I would be like… I’d feel like [the city] is missing something. But, if for some reason that ride stopped happening, another one would take its place. There is a need for *that* ride. And if that one (the one hosted by Social Cycling City) were taken away or stop happening, something would fill the void.” When asked if he had the ability to make changes in the ride if he would change the day of the ride Robert responded that “But I mean really it’s a great day. No I don’t think I would change it because it’s kind of the perfect day for a lot of other people.” However he was unable to explain why it was the “perfect day”. What can be inferred from this is that the attachment is not to the organization or rather the moniker of the organization (Social Cycling City) but rather to the activity that is exists within a specific time frame. The emphasis in this quote is that the coordinated event must occur during that time frame - its meaning and existence is in large part defined for its participants by its existence during this time.

It is the time frame that has allowed the event to grow in size to the extent that even without the leaders or without support from the city an inertial quality (entrainment) of the ride will allow it to persist. Javier, a self-identified leader of the Thursday Night Social Ride: “The thing is big enough that…it probably sounds cocky but I think that we’re big enough to where we can’t be shut down. We couldn’t stop it if we wanted to. It would keep going without us if we all walked away.” This suggests that activity coordination is indeed a constitutive flow, and that organizing would continue even in the absence of leadership. Particularly, while the four flows are deeply interrelated, it suggests that institutional positioning and self-structuring are less prominent, or central, features of the Thursday Night Social Ride, which exists as a partially hidden, informal organization.

Shaded Organizations

As previously described, organizations that due to their hiddenness may lack textual elements often depend on material factors. As previously explained Scott (2013) provides various categories of hidden organizations. Shaded organizations, the focus of this study, are also referred to as "slightly hidden" organizations. Scott explains that in shaded organizations, specifically mildly shaded organizations, the organization is recognized as existing, its members express identification, but its relevent audience exists at the local level. These sorts of organizations tend to avoid exposure at larger levels, such as national media attention, focusing instead on local interactions.

For organizations described as mostly shaded, organizations are still recognized and their members express identification, but this type of organization tends to hide from the general public and may hide things such as organizational structure and internal messages from its members. This pattern was reflected in the comments of participants in the Thursday Night Social Ride from both the perspectives of the ride leaders and participants. Myrna has been attending the ride for four years with some level of regularity but still indicates a lack of understanding as to how the organization operates. The following quote came at the end of interview when I prompted my interviewee as to what questions I should ask others to get a better understanding of the Thursday Night Social Ride.

> I guess people in the future if they, especially if they are a ride leader, when do they find the time to make a route because that just seems insane. Do they know

> the streets already or are they, I don't know, I just don't know how they would, when they actually take the time to make up the routes to be able to have and be ready for other people lead? …I guess how they organize what bar. How do they convince the bar owners to supply a keg and what's the purpose? Is it for advertising for the bar? Do the bar owners expect more people to start showing up? Yeah what makes the owners of the bar that considerate that they would be willing to sponsor a mass group of people to come and hang out and drink up?

Myrna demonstrates a lack of understanding of some of the key coordinated features of the ride including the route that is taken and the bar destation that varies every single week. Her lack of understanding of the coordinating efforts are due in part to the leadership's intentional obscuring of such information. Betty, a self-identified ride leader explained how the leaders make decisions and plan routes but tend to keep the group at large in the dark:

> So, we talk about it at the event. But there are also some offline groups that everyone's not aware of. I'm not sure how much information other people have been giving you or how much of this, I don't know. I don't know how freely people who are involved have been speaking with you on it…I would say there are some offline discussions that are happening that the main group doesn't know about. It's all the behind the scenes stuff that's like organizing.

Thus, the Thursday Night Social Ride is an organization that exists in this shaded region but varies between mildly shaded and mostly shaded. Morever, this ambiguous, only partially visible nature was seen as a defining aspect of the group.

The organization overall exists as mildly shaded but in terms of leadership the organization could be viewed as mostly shaded. The shaded quality of the Thursday night social ride exists, in large part, due to the legality of the activities in which they engage. Consequently, there is no recognized permanent leader due to liability issues, as explained by Irene;

> We work hard to keep it very voluntary only. And not anyone own it in any way because of the liability issues or whatever. Which has never come up but that is why they make a real effort so that no one owns it. Because of liability issues. I mean they've done everything in their power to make it a safe ride but when people don't listen. You know what are you going to do. So nobody wants to own it.

By assuming a permanent and visible leadership role individuals may be held liable for accidents and injuries that occur during the ride. By purposefully hiding leadership and maintaining a loose structure, volunteers are supporting the continued existence of the Thursday Night Social Ride. The importance of time, or activity coordination, as an organizing agent in shaded organizations that lack formal leadership, operate with a fluid structure and maintain little to no consistent textual elements becomes clearer.

Identification and Time in Shaded Organizations

Maintaining membership is an important element for an organization to contine to exist but in voluntary, non-work organizations having members identify with the organization has a much larger role due to the fact that very few compulsory factors may keep an individual in the organization. In work organizations individuals may stay due to their need for a paycheck but in non-work organization individuals must identify with the organization to some extent or else participation would be minimal. As explained previously the themes of identification emereged that could be categorized as organizational identification inline with Cheney's (1983) constructs *membership, similarities* and *loyalty*.

Using Cheney's questionnaire as a guide similar statements were found in the interview data that signal members identification with the organization. For example when Lana was asked to describe the the Thursday Night Social Ride she explained it as, "Me and 300 of my best friends go ride bikes and get drunk at parks." Demonstrating *membership* with the organization. Numerous participants described the ride in such as manner, often referring to the ride as being hundreds of best friends.

Similarity was another construct that participants discussed that would provide indication organizational identification. For example, during a narrative of his first ride Clyde stated:

> Like I had been working at a very professional type of job with boring people. People that are career oriented and you know wear slacks and button up shirts and I saw some people that really reminded me of kind of my punk rock roots and it kind of let me feel more comfortable around them because I knew what they were about. Based on their kind of tribal look. You know. That started making me feel better about the whole scene. These are the type of people that I am familiar with and that I like to hang out with because they like to have a good time.

In this example, Clyde indicates that he feels at ease with a group of individuals due to his assumption of similarities.

The construct of *loyalty* emerged as an area of particular interest due to its connection to temporal elements. The construct of loyalty indicated an attachment to the particular time frame in which the event occurred. Participants described themselves as prioritizing and making sure that they were a continued presence in the event. Irene provided two very clear examples of her loyalty to the ride by explaining, "I only miss if I'm out of town or there is a tornado. I don't even mind rain. I'll go even when its cold. I don't mind when it's cold." She also stated, "Any time I miss, I'm sad. I miss it. I might even plan my vacations around Thursdays. Is that weird?" These examples demonstrate the participant is deterred from attending the event only in extreme cases in which her safety may be in jeopardy. She also explains how she structures other aspects of her life such as vacations around the event. Other examples include individual's prioritizing the event over their paid work. Betty explains, "It can be distracting sometimes. When I'm trying to plan a route or depends like sometimes … I'm helping people plan routes sometimes and maybe I should be like focusing more on my job than planning a route or getting an invite out. Or looking for an image or doing some of the administrative stuff, that people don't think about or know that happens. But not, not like massively. But it is time consuming." In Betty's example we can infer that she is committed to helping the event continue and will prioritize the event over her paid work, often doing tasks that relate to coordination during the same time frame.

Another common statement denoting loyalty was the idea of preserving the organization as it is. When asked what they would change participants stated that they would keep it as is. Claude stated, "I dunno I'm kind of one of those people that thinks, things are what they are and I like them that way because any change might ruin it kind of person." George, an individual who stated he participated in the event infrequently at that point, only participating four times that year, stated "I don't know if I would want to change anything of the TNSR. It is what it is, let it be. The great part about it is, it just is. I wouldn't change anything." Both individuals denote a connection with the ride as it currently exists. Some participants were asked if they would change the time frame in which it occurred. In response participants continually stated, that it was the perfect time frame.

What was made clear was that individuals identified with the time in which the ride occurred and were not limited to the geographical location of Central City in continuing their identification with the time frame. One participant, Betty, even began a similar group in another city during that same time frame. "I reached out to [Name redacted] here in Central City and told him my experience. That I was basically homesick for Central City and especially on Thursdays when I couldn't meet up with anyone and I tried to go on rides and they kept getting cancelled and there was nothing regular and I wanted to try to do it myself." Betty started a ride in another city that occurs within the same time frame as the Thursday Night Social Ride. This demonstrates a situation in which the participant is so strongly identified with the time frame that despite not even being in the same city, she replicated the event. What can be derived from the data is that in shaded, non-work oriented organizations temporal elements act as something that individuals identify towards.

Discusssion

Data discussed in this paper about Social Cycling City's Thursday Night Social Ride suggests that strong identification based on temporal components is critically important to organizations that exist in liminal spaces and—due to the legal or other issues—cannot exist as traditional, highly visible organizations. This identification with a temporal, or coordinative, communication flow can help organizations maintain commitment from members while preserving a fluid, loosely coupled structure and maintaining minimal visibility. Thus, this research study identifies key elements needed to further explicate the role of time in creating and maintaining this and, perhaps other, shaded organizations. As Glaser (1992) states, "The research product constitutes a theoretical formulation or integrated set of conceptual hypotheses about the substantive area under study. That is all, the yield is just hypotheses! Testing or verificational work on or with the theory is left to others interested in these types of research endeavor" (p.16). As is common with a grounded theory approach, the goal of this project is not to *prove* a phenomenon but rather to *propose* an explanation rooted in data .This study ultimately proposes the theory that in shaded organizations one of the four flows of CCO, activity coordination or time, plays a larger role in creating and maintaining organization while simultaneously acting as an anchor with which members identify.

This study can help expand the field of organizational communication to be more inclusive of different organizations such as shaded and non-work oriented organizations. The data from this study could help explicate how certain hidden organizations or hidden leadership manage to coordinate massive groups with little or no communication to their membership. This also provides a point of reference for how time can act as material component to which members of non-work related organizations can become entrained to and develop identification.

Limitations

Due to the narrow focus on one organization certain limitations do exists in this study. One of the limitations is the ability to generalize. This study was not intended to prove the theory but rather to propose an explanation to organizing behavior that was being observed. This study was an inductive analysis based on interview data. Nineteen participants from one organization were recruited via convenience sampling, subsequently snowball, and although I did focused on getting a broad sample some groups may have inadvertently been excluded.

Another limitation was that of the magnitude of identification. Although the data did provide examples in which members exhibit behaviors of organizational identification the extent to which they identify is a factor that I could not determine. It is also important to note that it is difficult to compare individual's levels of identification with the organization based on their comments alone. A scale such as Cheney's (1983) Organizational Identification Questionnaire may be modified and distributed to measure participants' identification.

Future Directions

A logical progression from this proposal would be to follow this inductive analysis with a deductive study that could include a more expansive sample size and possible scale development. In addition to continuing research a in direct line of inquiry stemming from this inductive approach, exploring specific components of this study in greater depth would contribute to the understanding of organizations overall. One potential avenue for continued research is to examine the communicative constitution of organizations within organizations with varying degrees of visibility would test and potentially challenge taken for granted assumptions in organizational communication theories. Another area requiring further attention is an in-depth exploration of the role of time as material. This line of inquiry could allow insight into how time operates as a non-human agent in organizations both creating and maintaining organizations and organizational behaviors.

Appendix A

Age:

Gender:

What do you do?

Profession- (If they talk about their profession) What got you into cycling?

Recreation- (If they talk about cycling)

What do you do for work?

Frequency of Participation:

Duration of Participation:

Why do you participate in the Thursday Night bike social?

Why this and not something else?

How would you describe your interactions with others during the Thursday Night social ride?

Have you ever invited others to participate?

(If yes.) Why?

Could you describe what a typical Thursday Night Social ride is like?

Has anything changed regarding what you do at the ride?

How would you feel if you could no longer participate in the Thursday Night bike social?

Appendix B

How old are you?

What gender do you identify as?

What do you do?

- What got you into cycling?
- How frequently do you cycle?
- For how long?
- When?
    - Why those times?

- Do you have a car?
    - Do you use it? If so, how often?
- Do you live or work near public transportation?
    - Do you use it? If so, how often?

How did you find about Thursday Night Social ride?

(If they mention word of mouth)
- Did they give you all the information,
- How did you get here?

What was your first impression of the Thursday Night Social Ride before you joined the ride?

Tell me about your first ride in the Thursday Night Social Ride in as much detail as possible?

If someone came up to you after that first ride and asked you what you thought of Thursday Night Social Ride, what would you say to them?

Do you feel like the way TNSR was described to you before participating was accurate?
- What was missing?
- Did anything surprise you after joining?

(If they mention website)
What information did you get from the website?

What was your first impression of the Thursday Night Social Ride before you joined the ride?

Tell me about your first ride in the Thursday Night Social Ride in as much detail as possible?

If someone came up to you after that first ride and asked you what you thought of Thursday Night Social Ride, what would you say to them?

Do you feel like the way TNSC was described to you before participating was accurate?

- What was missing?
- Did anything surprise you after joining?

Have you participated in anything similar to TNSR before?

How is the Thursday night social ride similar?

How is the Thursday night social ride different?

How would you describe the Thursday night social ride to a person that has never been on a social bike ride?

If someone asked you why you participate in the Thursday Night bike social, what would you tell them?

Why this and not something else?

*(*If they also do another activity or social ride)* Why do you do both?

Do you interact with others during the Thursday Night social ride?

- If so, describe your interactions?
  Why do you do this?
- If not, Why?

How would you describe other's behavior?

Is this the whole group or specific people?

(If they mention following rules or safe behavior in positive terms) Can you think of any times people have done the opposite?

(If they mention following not following rules or dangerous/chaotic behavior) Can you think of any times people have done the opposite?

Have you ever invited others to participate?

a. (If yes) Why?
b. (If not) Why?

Could you describe what a typical Thursday Night Social ride is like?

Do you discuss TNSR at your employment?

Why or why not?

i. (*If they say they do*) What do you mention about TNSR and to whom?

Does this change depending on whom you are talking to?

(*If they say they don't*) Why do you choose not to discuss TNSR at your employment or with your co-workers?

Would you like to be able to discuss TNSR with them?

Does your participation in TNSR affect your employment in any way?

Has anything changed regarding what you do during the TSNR since you first started?

Why?

How would you feel if you could no longer participate in the Thursday Night bike social?
Why?

What is the most memorable TNSR ride you have participated in?

- What made it memorable

What is your favorite thing about TNSR?
What is your least favorite?
If you were in charge of TNSR tomorrow, is there anything you would change? Why?

Finally, my goal is to get a better idea of TNSR and the people who participate, what should I have asked you but didn't?

References

Aldred, R., & Jungnickel, K. (2012). Constructing mobile places between 'leisure' and 'transport': A case study of two group cycle rides. *Sociology , 46*, 523-539. doi: 10.1177/0038038511428752

Ancona, D., Okhuysen, G., & Perlow, L. (2001). Taking Time to Integrate Temporal Research. *The Academy of Management Review , 26*, 512-529. Retrived from http://www.jstor.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/stable/3560239

Ashcraft, K., Kuhn, T., & Cooren, F. (2009). Constitutional Amendments: "Materializing" Organizational Communication. *The Academy of Management Annals* , 1-64. **doi:**10.1080/19416520903047186

Babbie, E. (2013). The Practice of Social Research. Belmont: Wadsworth, Cengage Learning.

Ballard, D. I., & Seibold, D. R. (2003). Communicating and Organizing in Time: A Meso-Level Model of Organizational Temporality. *Management of Communication Quarterly , 16*, 380-415. doi: 10.1177/0893318902238896

Bimber, B., Flanagin, A., & Stohl, C. (2012). *Collective Action in Organizations: Interaction and Engagement in an Era of Technological Change*. Cambridge, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Blickstein, S. & Hanson, S. (2001). Critical mass: forging a politics of sustainable mobility in the information age. *Transportation, 28,* 347-362. doi:10.1023/A:1011829701914

Bluedorn, A. C. (2002). *The Human Organization of Time: Temporal Realities and Experience*. Stanford , CA: Standford Press.

Brummans, B., Cooren, F., Robichaud, D., & Taylor, J. (2014). Approaches to the Communicative Constituion of Organizations. In L. Putnam, & D. Mumby (Eds.), *The*

Sage Handbook of Organizational Communication: Advances in Theory, Research, and Methods (3 ed., pp. 173-194). Thousand Oaks,, CA: Sage.

Bryant, A., & Charmaz, K. (Eds.). (2007). *The SAGE Handbook of Grounded Theory*. London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781848607941

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Cheney, G. (1983). On the Various and Changing Meanings of Organizational Membership: Field Study of Organizational Identification. *Communication Monographs , 50*, 342-362. Retrived from http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=ufh&AN=9211140&site=ehost-live

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2008*). Basics of Qualitative Research: Techniques and Procedures for Developing Grounded Theory* (3rd ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Denzin, Norman K. (2012). Triangulation 2.0. Journal of Mixed Methods Research, 6 (2) 80-88.

Dick, R., Christ, O., Stellmacher, J., Wagner, U., Ahlswede, O., Grubba, C., et al. (2004). Should I stay or should I go? Explaining turnover intentions with organizational identification and job satisfaction. *British Journal of Managment , 15*, 351-360.

Dobusch, L., & Schoeneborn, D. (2015). Fluidity, Identity, and Organizationality: The Communicative Constitution of Anonymous. *Journal of Management Studies , 52*, 1005-1035. doi: 10.1111/joms.12139

Emerson, R., Fretz, R., & Shaw, L. (2001). Participant Observation and Fieldnotes. In P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delamont, J. Lofland, & L. Lofland (Eds.), *Handbook of*

Ethnography. (pp. 352-369). London, England: SAGE Publications Ltd. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781848608337.n24

Glaser, B. G. (1992). *Emergence vs. Forcing: Basics of Grounded Theory Analysis*. Mill Valley, CA: Sociology Press.

Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Kuhn, T., & Nelson, N. (2002). Reengineering Identity: A Case Study of Multiplicity and Duality in Organizational Identification. *Management Communication Quarterly , 16*, 5-38. doi: 10/CAX0260010000140

Lindlof, T. R., & Taylor, B. C. (2011). Qualitative communication research methods (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Letiche, H., & Hagemeijer, R. (2004). Linkages and entrainment. *Journal of Organizational Change Management , 17*, 365-382. http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/10.1108/09534810410545128

McGrath, J. E., & Kelly, J. R. (1986). *Time and human interaction*. New York: Guilford.

McPhee, R. (2004). Text, agency, and organization in the light of structuration theory. *Organization , 11*, 355-371. doi: 10/CAX0270040001491

McPhee, R., & Zaug, P. (2000). The Communicative Constitution of Organizations: A Framework for Explanation. *The Electronic Journal of Communication , 10*.

Pucher, J., Buehler, R., & Seinen, M. (2011). Bicycling renaissance in North America? An update and re-appraisal of cycling trends and policies. *Transportation Research Part A , 45*, 451-457. doi:10.1016/j.tra.2011.03.001

Scott, C. (2013). *Anonymous agencies, backstreet businesses, and covert collectives*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Scott, C., & Myers, K. (2010). Toward an Intergrative Theoretical Perspective on Organizational Membership Negotiations: Socialization, Assimilation, and the Duality of Structure. *Communication Theory , 20*, 79-105.

Scott, C., Corman, S., & Cheney, G. (1998). Development of a Structuraltional Model of Identification in the Organization. *Communication Theory , 3*, 298-336. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2885.2009.01355.x

Schoeneborn, D., Blaschke, S., Cooren, F., McPhee, R. D., Seidl, D., & Taylor, J. R. (2014). The three schools of CCO thinking: Interactive dialogue and systematic comparison. *Management Communication Quarterly, 28,* 285-316. doi:10.1177/0893318914527000

Stehlin, J. (2014). Regulating Inclusion: Spatial Form, Social Process, and the Normalization of Cycling Practice in the USA. *Mobilities , 9*, 21-41. **doi:** 10.1080/17450101.2013.784527

Stohl, C., & Stohl, M. (2011). Secret Agencies: The Communicative Constitution of a Clandestine Organization. *Organization Studies , 32*, 1197–1215. doi: 10.1177/0170840611410839

Taylor, J.R., Cooren, F., Giroux, N., & Robichaud, D. (1996). The Communicational Basis of Organization: Between the Conversation and the Text. *Communication Theory, 6,* 1-39. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-2885.1996.tb00118.x

Taylor, J. R., Flanagin, A. J., Cheney, G., & Seibold, D. R. (2001). Organizational communication research: Key moments, central concerns, and future challenges. *Communication yearbook*, *24*, 99-138.

Wilhoit, E., & Kisselburgh, L. (2015). Collective Action Without Organization: The Material Constitution of Bike Commuters as a Collective. *Organization Studies* , 573-592. doi: 10.1177/0170840614556916

Weiss, R.S. (1994). Learning from Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies. The Free Press: New York, NY.

Zellmer-Bruhn, M., Waller, M., & Ancona, D. (2004). The Effects of Temporal Entrainment on the Ability of Teams to Change their Routines. In S. Blount (Ed.), *Time in Groups* (Vol. 6). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.