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Authoring Organizational Tensions Within the Roman Catholic Church: Women Religious Organize for Themselves

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**AUTHORING ORGANIZATIONAL TENSIONS WITHIN THE ROMAN
CATHOLIC CHURCH: WOMEN RELIGIOUS ORGANIZE FOR
THEMSELVES**

by

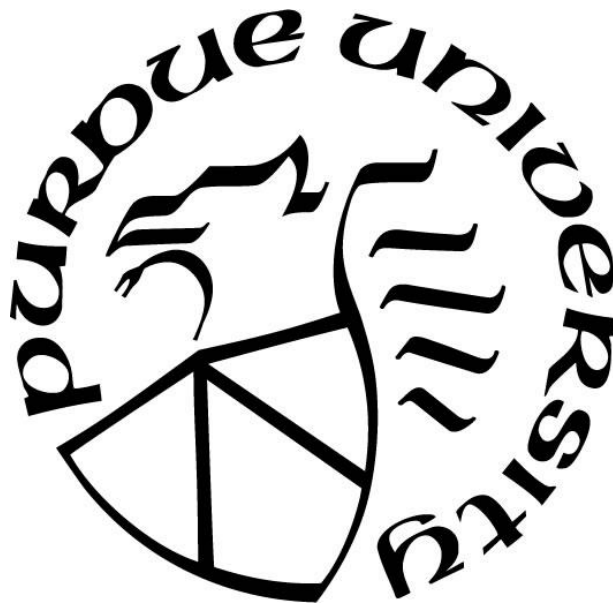
Jessica A. Pauly

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University

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Doctor of Philosophy



Brian Lamb School of Communication

West Lafayette, Indiana

May 2018

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Dedicated to NETWORK, and women religious everywhere.

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ABSTRACT

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Title: Authoring Organizational Tensions Within the Roman Catholic Church: Women Religious Organize for Themselves

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For centuries women religious have faced an uncomfortable tension with the all-male hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church. This tension is underscored today by the Vatican's 2008 assessment and subsequent investigation of women religious in the US. Considering this tension-filled context, this study is concerned with the ways in which women religious organize around, alongside, and in some cases against the Church while also supporting the same beliefs and values as the Church. Specifically, this study recognizes NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice as a unique organizational site operating at the intersection of religion, politics, and authority, and explores how women religious and staff at NETWORK frame organizational tension and construct and stabilize authority for the purpose of their ministry. Embracing a tension-centered approach, along with the lenses of authority/authoring and alternative organizing, this study aimed to contribute to theory by exploring the organizational implications of subunits (i.e., women religious) of larger institutions (i.e., the Roman Catholic Church) authoring new tensions. To do so, this dissertation project relied on the qualitative methods of interviews, varying degrees of participant-observation, and document analysis, and engaged a manual approach to data analysis.

The findings revealed how staff and sisters associated with NETWORK framed tension and manifested authority through their work, as well as how their organizing efforts have historically authored tension(s) within the institution of Church. First, NETWORK identified tension around three central tensional nodes, framed as dualisms, namely: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. In response to tension, NETWORK discursively constructed a third space, or a space between opposite poles wherein tension can be united in creative ways (Janssens & Steyaert, 1999). NETWORK's third space is named *sister spirit*, and it allows staff and sisters to redefine the situation and be productive within the tension. Next, the manifestation of authority happened on two separate levels: the individual, or micro-level (i.e., Catholic sisters who associate with NETWORK) and the organizational, or

meso-level (i.e., NETWORK as an organization). At the individual level Catholic sisters leveraged the support of their religious communities as a means of collective construction of authority in order to dissent from the Catholic Church. At the organizational level, NETWORK invoked authority through the Gospel, as an authoritative text brought to life through their work in engaging politics as an avenue for change. Finally, NETWORK's organizing efforts have authored tensions within the institution of the Church through NETWORK's foundational feminist agenda and its Catholic identity.

This study contributes to theory on tension and authority/authoring by explicitly recognizing the ways tension engenders authoring, and advances theory on the construction and stabilization of authority in third space. Additionally, this work responds to requests for theory development around duality relationships, suggesting the process of constructing third space via trialectics as a strategy to manage tension inherent in dualities. Methodologically, this project contributes to scholarship by introducing the strategic application of authority construction to qualitative data analysis and expands on manual procedures for data analysis through the use of whiteboarding during specific moments of the analysis process. Practical contributions identify third space as a strategically ambiguous form of alternative organizing that may be ideal for other religious or spiritual social change organizations. In addition, the use of religious or spiritual guiding principles, when organizationally appropriate, may offer stability and energy for staff facing a variety of organizational tensions.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Many histories of the Roman Catholic Church (referred to in this dissertation as the Church) in the United States focus on male clergy despite the fact that women religious¹ were and are more active in the daily lives of Catholics (Brekus, 2007; Fialka, 2003; Lindley, 1996; McGuinness, 2013). Indeed, women religious² have been organizing to serve in parochial schools, hospitals, soup kitchens, and beyond, for centuries (Ebaugh, 1993; Lindley, 1996). To this day, many women religious believe their primary mission in religious life is social justice (Fialka, 2003; McGuinness, 2013), which can be defined as providing conditions “that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and their vocation” (Catholic Church, 1997, para. 2832). In fact, all women religious take vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience to confirm their commitment to a life of service (Fialka, 2003; McGuinness, 2013; see also “Vowed Life,” 2017).

In the midst of their honorable efforts and contributions to society writ large, historically, women religious have faced an uncomfortable tension with the patriarchy of the Church which has been referred to as “the nation’s oldest gender war” (Fialka, 2003, p. 15). Church doctrine declares only men may be ordained into the priesthood (see Canon 1024 in Coriden, Green, Heintschel, Canon Law Society of America, & Catholic Church, 1985), which consequently allows only men to exist within the hierarchy of this sacred organization. While the 2016 announcement of Pope Francis’s “Commission of Study on the Diaconate of Women” (O’Connell, 2016) caused some

¹ The context of this dissertation is written with a focus on United States (U.S.) women religious.

² The term “women religious” is a commonly accepted way to refer to nuns and sisters (e.g., Leadership Conference of Women Religious, see About LCWR, n.d.; The Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious, see Who We Are, 2018). Nuns retreat to live a life of physical separation in convents and are therefore formally called contemplative nuns. Their lives are marked by solemn vows, and they focus on prayer and meditation. In contrast, sisters live active lives of ministry and take simple vows (Ebaugh, 1993).

excitement at the possibility of women priests, the Pope has definitively stated the matter is not open to consideration (McElwee, 2016). Thus, women religious remain positioned outside of the hierarchy, left to self-organize, yet expected to abide by Church teaching (Ebaugh, 1993; also see previous mention of vows of obedience).

Well known and recognized by many, this tension rooted in gender differences has been described and told in a variety of ways (e.g., Ebaugh, 1993; Fialka, 2003; Lindley, 1996; McGuinness, 2013; Piazza, 2014; Zagano, 2011). In her book *Women & Catholicism: Gender, Communion, and Authority*, Phyllis Zagano (2011) pinpoints the literal line of division between men and women in the Church: “Depending on which side of the altar rail³ you sit, women are either part of the problem, or part of the solution” (p. xi). Jo Piazza (2014) paints a more desperate picture in her book *If Nuns Ruled the World: Ten Sisters on a Mission*:

American nuns are under fire from the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, an institution whose stance on women can be described as bipolar at best. The Vatican has long grappled with how to keep nuns as loyal servants without affording them any of their own power. (pp. 11-12)

Piazza’s point is underscored today, in a March 2018 investigative report in a Vatican newspaper explaining religious women are often relied upon for various domestic services, such as “cooking, cleaning and laundering for cardinals, bishops, parishes and other church structures, but with little or no little financial compensation to their religious orders, no contractual arrangements and no formal work schedule like laypeople would have” (Glatz, 2018).

Further evidence that this centuries-old tension is alive and well is found in the Vatican’s⁴ recent apostolic visitation, or investigation, of women religious in the United States (Vatican

³ The altar rail refers to the material line of division—often in the form of a wooden or metal barrier—distinguishing the altar in a church from the congregation. As such, the priest and ministers are separated from the parishioners.

⁴ The Vatican is another term for the Holy See, or Roman Curia, which is the central governing body of the Roman Catholic Church, as led by the Pope. As such, the Vatican often communicates for and represents the Roman Catholic

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012). This investigation was aimed directly at the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR), one of the largest groups of Catholic nuns in the United States boasting more than 1300 members and representing about 80 percent of women religious in the country (“About LCWR,” n.d.). Announced in 2008 and concluding in 2012, *The Doctrinal Assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious* revealed “serious doctrinal problems which affect many in Consecrated Life” (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 2). In this document the Vatican cites bishops as the “Church’s authentic teachers of faith and morals” (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 3), thereby claiming bishops hold such a position to call out women religious for behaving in ways that are not in accord with Church teaching. Through examining the Vatican’s assessment language, tone, and conclusions, readers may perceive that the Vatican considers authentic Church teaching to be threatened by women religious and thus views itself as needing to take authoritative action to correct the situation.

This action and its rationale is delineated in *The Doctrinal Assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious* which begins with three areas of concern, namely: (a) addresses given at LCWR assemblies “challenging core Catholic beliefs” (p. 2); (b) policies of dissent that place the LCWR “outside the Church’s teaching” (p. 2); and (c) radical feminism, which includes “some commentaries on “patriarchy” (that) distort the way in which Jesus has structured sacramental life in the Church” (p. 3) (for a complete review of the three areas of concern for the LCWR, see Appendix A). Essentially, the Vatican charged the LCWR with challenging core Catholic beliefs as well as promoting “certain radical feminist themes incompatible with the Catholic faith” (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 3). As a result of the

Church worldwide (“Glossary of Catholic Terms,” 2018). In this dissertation, I use the Vatican, the Holy See, and the Roman Curia synonymously.

assessment, an investigation of the LCWR was launched to review the mission, responsibilities, programs, web presence, and application of liturgical norms and texts over a multi-year period. The issue at heart was *what* women religious were doing, and *how* they were doing it.

In summary, the space in which religious women live and work is and has been highly contested not only because their place in Roman Catholic Church hierarchy does not afford them with legitimate authority (Ebaugh, 1993) but also because their roles as social justice advocates, teachers, health care providers, and other service-oriented roles are not accorded respect because of their feminized supportive nature (Glatz, 2018; Lindley, 1996). Most recently, women in U.S. roles as nuns and sisters have been reprimanded by the Vatican because they have challenged Church policies, practices, and ideological assumptions (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012). This dissertation project operates within this contested tension-filled space because it investigates how women religious organize around, alongside, and in some cases against the Church⁵ while also claiming the same beliefs and values as the Church.

Taking a tension-centered approach, this dissertation is written from the ontological standpoint that organizations are inherently conflicted (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). As such, a tension-centered approach allows for a thorough critique of the problematic nature of organizational practices and processes that contribute to organizational stress (Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004) as well as opportunities for further consideration and change (Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016). Using a tension-centered approach and the theoretical lenses of authority/authoring within the context of alternative organizing enables insights into the ways in

⁵ Perhaps the situation is more complex and in need of further explanation. Women religious may not organize against the Church, per se, but rather, against Church policies, practices and assumptions which they perceive as failing to recognize and support the inclusion of women, and other marginalized populations.

which women religious make sense of, negotiate, and act on their organizational roles in connection with the Church.

Taken together, the three theoretical frameworks of tension, authority/authoring, and alternative organizing may be considered in a variety of ways. The particular foundation I take for this project views tension as the epistemological grounding—the assumption that contradiction exists, as a way of knowing and understanding the world. Authoring/authority is the theoretical lens I take that considers the process and state whereby order, policies, practices, and membership are socially constructed. Alternative organizing is the site or context in which participants situate themselves or interact to organize. That is to say, within the context of alternative organizing I consider how authority/authoring operates out of/as a result of tension.

The goal of this study is to better understand the organizational implications of subunits (i.e., women religious) of larger institutions (i.e., the Church) demonstrating different sources of authority and ways of organizing through their work. This guiding inquiry is relevant to organizational communication scholars because it highlights the uneasy and productive nature of organizational tensions, while also considering if, when, and how authority is (or is not) made manifest for the purpose(s) of organizing.

This dissertation project contributes to theory by exploring the organizational implications of subunits authoring new tensions within larger institutions, and how organizational tension informs and may result in (new) acts of authoring. The pragmatic contributions of this project offer suggestions for when and how religious affiliated organizations can effectively organize for social transformation. To explain this project further, I first review the formal structures of the Church,

and then discuss the context of this study: NETWORK⁶ Lobby for Catholic Social Justice. I then conclude with a summary and preview of dissertation chapters.

1.1 Roman Catholic Church: Structure and Authority

Before proceeding, a basic understanding of Church's organizational structure and operational authority is necessary to review. For such matters, the Catechism of the Catholic Church is a prime source, as it is "conceived as *an organic presentation* of the Catholic faith in its entirety" (Catholic Church, 1997, para. 18). Meant to serve as a valid and legitimate source for teaching the Catholic faith and doctrine, the catechism's main sources are Sacred Scriptures, the Fathers of the Church, the liturgy, and the Church Magisterium. While the catechism is the official point of reference in all matters concerning Catholic doctrine, the Magisterium is recognized as the primary and official authority of the Catholic Church, as professed and exercised by bishops and the Pope (Catholic Church, 1997). More will be shared on the Magisterium in this dissertation after reviewing the organizational structure of the Church.

Outlining the hierarchical constitution of the Church, as well as instruction for the lay faithful and consecrated life, article nine, paragraph four of the catechism explains Jesus Christ gave the Church authority and mission, and named one of his apostles, Peter, as head of the Church (Catholic Church, 1997). As explained in the catechism (1997), "This pastoral office of Peter and the other apostles belongs to the Church's very foundation and is continued by the bishops under the primacy of the Pope" (para. 881). To provide a simplified⁷ understanding of the hierarchy:

⁶ NETWORK is not a pseudonym; NETWORK is the name of the organization I studied. I received permission by NETWORK to use their name in this study and informed all participants that the name of the organization would be used, while names of participants would be changed.

⁷ This review is simplified for the purposes of this overview. Cardinals and archbishops are also included in Church hierarchy, though their involvement is specific to Church administration, and is not directly related to their role as successors to the apostles. For an organizational chart of Church hierarchy, see Figure 1.

Under the Pope the college of bishops works together as an ecumenical council to exercise power in unity with the Pope's directions and wishes. Individually, the bishops are assigned to particular regions to lead the faithful in their own Churches. Finally, the priests fulfill the task, alongside the bishops, of preaching the Gospel to the lay faithful in their home parishes (Catholic Church, 1997) (for an organizational chart of Church hierarchy, see Figure 1). From the Pope to the priests, all individuals involved in this hierarchy are men, as required by Church law (see Canon 1024 in Coriden, Green, Heintschel, Canon Law Society of America, & Catholic Church, 1985).

Represented by the college of bishops under the direction of the Pope, the Magisterium is the authoritative teaching office of the church. To be sure, the term *magisterium* means, "literally, the authority of the master (*magister*) or teacher" (Gaillardetz, 2003, p. 60). The Magisterium, that is, the Pope and the college of bishops, is thus tasked with "interpreting the Word of God authentically" (Catholic Church, 1997, para. 100). That is to say, the pope and college of bishops do not individually decide what the Church teaches, but rather, they protect and govern the mission the Church has received from Jesus Christ. The purpose and expectation of the Magisterium is "to preserve God's people from deviations and defections and to guarantee them the objective possibility of professing the true faith without error" (Catholic Church, 1997, para. 890). As such, the Pope and the college of bishops, operating as the Magisterium of the Church are "endowed with the authority of Christ" (Catholic Church, 1997, para. 888).

Aiding the pope in his governance by performing authoritative duties, the Roman Curia is the central governing body of the Church (Bunson, 2015). This central administrative unit consists of seven facets: congregations, secretariates, tribunals, committees, councils, commissions, and offices (which focus on issues such as Church documents and doctrine, the preservation of Church relics across the world, the Vatican's finances, the canonization of saints, and the pastoral care of

families) (Bunson, 2015). The main governing agencies within the Roman Curia are the congregations, of which there are currently nine. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life is important to note because it is responsible for consecrated life, that is, religious orders and congregations of both men and women across the world (“Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life,” n.d.). Specifically, this operating body looks after the “government, discipline, studies, goods, rights, and privileges” (“Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life,” n.d., para. 4) of consecrated life. In effect this Roman office directs and maintains control over religious orders worldwide (Ebaugh, 1993).

1.2 NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice

Within this fraught context, I am interested in the work of NETWORK, a lobby for Catholic social justice founded by women religious, currently operating out of Washington, D.C. In this section I explain NETWORK’s association with the Vatican’s assessment, and briefly review their organizational history. Then I share the current and past efforts related to NETWORK’s social justice mission. I conclude with NETWORK’s significance in this dissertation.

The Vatican's apostolic assessment specifically mentioned NETWORK, criticizing the organization for failing to promote significant issues within Church teaching and thus taking issue with NETWORK’s relationship with women religious (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012). Specifically, NETWORK was cited as failing to include in its agenda “issues of crucial importance to the life of Church and society, such as the Church’s Biblical view of family life and human sexuality” (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 3). NETWORK was one of only two organizations mentioned in the eight-page document (aside from the LCWR).

NETWORK was founded by progressive Catholic sisters in 1971 representing a “network” of women religious across the United States, and has since expanded to include men and women, Catholic and otherwise, committed to political activism (“NETWORK History,” n.d.). In this sense political activism can be understood as work that aims to shape federal policy to be consistent with Catholic social justice values. As such, NETWORK is rooted in Catholic social justice which is a longstanding Church tradition that incorporates scripture and Church teaching, “but is also broader, including the witness of all Christians and people of faith committed to proclaiming the love of the Gospel and the justice of God’s kingdom in the public sphere” (“What is Catholic Social Justice,” n.d., para. 1). Simply put, NETWORK is guided by Catholic social justice principles that focus on human dignity, the importance of participation in community life, solidarity with the poor, the common good, a people-centered economy, and care for the environment (“Catholic Social Justice,” n.d.).

The current executive director of NETWORK is Sister Simone Campbell, a notable religious leader, attorney, and speaker/educator on public policy (“Simone Campbell, SSS,” n.d.).

Sharing her own thought on the censure, Sister Simone Campbell said:

We were supposedly guilty of focusing on social justice concerns at the expense of opposing abortion and gay marriage and other doctrinal priorities for the hierarchy. They even named our little organization as a source of the problem. Well, yes, social justice is what Catholic sisters do. It is what the women religious have done for centuries. It is who we are, especially here in the United States. And it is specifically what NETWORK was founded for, which is apparently the reason the Vatican edict singled us out for a special mention. (Campbell, 2014, p. ix)

Sister Simone notes—in her notorious lighthearted, humorous fashion—the Vatican’s mention of NETWORK in the censure. Though not visible in her facetious remarks shared above, she also admits utter surprise at the Vatican’s announcement of the censure, indicating the weight of the moment for NETWORK and U.S. women religious writ large.

NETWORK's team consists of 23 individuals operating in one of five areas: leadership, grassroots mobilization, government relations, membership and development, and communications ("Our Team," n.d.). Working to shape and influence public policy by staying up-to-date on issues pertaining to justice and the dignity of all people, NETWORK focuses on issues such as healthcare, housing, immigration, taxes, and more ("NETWORK Issue Areas", n.d.). For instance, NETWORK provides legislative updates on their blog, explaining the 2018 spending bill passed by congress and how it will affect NETWORK's key issue areas. The organization's website (see Figure 2) also offers an "Advocacy Toolbox" from which individuals can learn step-by-step ways to lobby members of congress. As a recent example of their collective efforts in action, NETWORK mobilized around opposition to the United State Senate's Better Care Reconciliation Act. Sending emails, writing letters, and requesting via social media that individuals call their senators to ask them to oppose the bill, NETWORK created and shared via their website and social media channels call scripts as well as detailed information about the Senate's bill (see "Call Congress NOW," n.d.).

As a nonprofit organization, NETWORK is registered in two ways: as a 501(c)(4) (i.e., NETWORK Lobby) and as a 501(c)(3) (i.e., NETWORK Advocates). NETWORK Lobby is focused on legislative advocacy and lobbying while NETWORK Advocates is focused on educating NETWORK members for the purpose of engaging in politics ("Giving FAQs," n.d.). Importantly, NETWORK's designation as a 501(c)(4) nonprofit (i.e., NETWORK Lobby) allows for engagement in political activities and lobbying for legislation,⁸ from which 501(c)(3) organizations are mostly forbidden. NETWORK accepts donations to both NETWORK Lobby and NETWORK Advocates, and heavily relies on donations to fund their operations from year to

⁸ NETWORK is forbidden from advocating for or against candidates.

year. In fact, according to NETWORK's IRS tax filings from 2015 (the most recent year available to date) contributions to the organization accounted for more than 85% of its total revenue (for a complete summary of IRS data, see NETWORK, n.d., and NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice, n.d.).

One of NETWORK's more popular campaigns is Nuns on the Bus (a project of NETWORK Advocates), a group of Catholic social justice sisters that set out on their first bus tour across the United States in 2012 to mark the 40th anniversary of NETWORK and share their mission of social transformation with others (Campbell, 2014). With Sister Simone Campbell leading the pack, The Nuns hit the road in 2012 with the logo: "Nuns on the Bus: A drive for faith, family, and fairness" (Campbell, 2014), and traveled with it for five subsequent years, focusing on specific themes, including: federal budgetary cuts (2012), immigration reform (2013), voter engagement (2014), politics for the common good (2015), and "Mend the Gaps" in income and wealth inequality (2016) ("NETWORK Nuns on the Bus," n.d.). During their tours, the sisters stop in approximately a dozen cities wherein they hold town hall meetings, visit shelters, food pantries, churches, and have discussions with everyday citizens, other religious men and women, and politicians (Gibson, 2015). It is through these journeys that the sisters are able to gain a local perspective of economic issues which fuels their motivation to continue advocating for political justice. As a result, their road trips have become a public phenomenon, receiving a great deal of attention from many communities as well as national media (Campbell, 2014). Moreover, NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus campaign is funded by generous donations, and after their first tour in 2012 contributions to the organization more than doubled, underscoring the success of their work (NETWORK, n.d.; NETWORK Advocates for Catholic Social Justice, n.d.).

The Nuns on the Bus's first tour coincided with the Vatican's 2012 announcement of the results of its doctrinal assessment of women religious, causing some to wonder if Nuns on the Bus was intended as NETWORK's defiant and direct response to the Vatican's censure⁹ (see Gibson, 2015; Murtha, 2015). In reference to such musings, Sister Simone Campbell clearly states in her book *A Nun on the Bus*, "this was not about changing the Catholic Church; this was about advancing our mission for economic justice" (Campbell, 2014, p. x). Thus, NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus was born amidst troubling accusations by the Vatican in hopes of promoting matters of economic justice and political unity for the common good (Gibson, 2015).

Though the Vatican decided to conclude the investigation of U.S. women religious two years ahead of schedule in 2015—an unexpected decision "seen as the latest sign of a shift in tone under Pope Francis" (Poggioli, 2015, para. 1)—the memory of the startling assessment remains and has been referred to by journalists and reporters in a variety of ways. Considered a "crackdown" (Di Lauro, 2012; Poggioli, 2015), and a report that was successful at "raising alarm" (Boorstein, 2012), the charges and following investigation by the Vatican were not treated lightly by media. Similarly, the launch of NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus in reference to the Vatican's announcement has been referred to as "the LCWR (pushing) back against the accusations" (Gibson, 2015), and as an act "in defiant response to Pope Benedict XVI's startling decision" (Murtha, 2015, para. 9). In essence, NETWORK and the Nuns on the Bus campaign are perceived as attempting to renegotiate certain social-structural expectations of what, exactly, the focus of their work and ministry ought to be. Recognizing NETWORK as a unique organizational site operating at the intersection of religion, politics, and authority, this dissertation project explores

⁹ The Vatican's censure resulted in a multi-year investigation and intervention of the LCWR led by an archbishop delegate and two bishops wherein LWCR statues were revised, plans and programs were reviewed and developed, guidance was offered with regard to liturgical texts, and links with affiliated organizations—including NETWORK—were reviewed (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012).

the means of authority by which NETWORK organizes, and the tension(s) experienced by sisters and staff members associated with the organization as a result of their Catholic ministry.

1.3 Summary and Overview of Chapters

As previously reviewed this dissertation project begins with the historic “gender war” (Fialka, 2003) between women religious and the patriarchy of the Church, the remnants of which remain today as a result of the Vatican’s (2012) assessment of women religious. Considering the structure and authority of the Church, and the unique organizing efforts of NETWORK, the general goal of this study is to explore how tension and authority/authoring complicate individual through structural policy¹⁰ aspects of alternative organizing.

The remainder of this dissertation includes six chapters. Chapter 2 begins with an explanation of the metatheoretical position I take as I enter this research project. Then, I offer a literature review on the theoretical frameworks and organizing context guiding this study: tension, authority and authoring, and alternative organizing. Before turning to Chapter 3, I outline the three research questions guiding this dissertation project. In Chapter 3, I review the two phases of data collection. Phase 1 entailed the preliminary work involved in contacting NETWORK and involved participant observation and interviews. Phase 2 focused on visits to NETWORK’s office and archives, and included observation, interviews, and document analysis. I wrap up Chapter 3 with a detailed overview of the manual approach I took to data analysis.

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6 I present the findings of this study. Chapter 4 focuses on how tension is experienced and discursively framed, in addition to explaining the development and use of third space as a response to organizational tension. Chapter 5 focuses on how authority is manifested at

¹⁰ In this case, policy can be understood as “general principles or courses of action that are operative in a venue over which the policymaker has legitimate authority to make an operationalize policy” (Osher & Quinn, 2003, p. 52).

both the individual level (i.e., through collective construction) and the organizational level (e.g., through invocation). Chapter 6 offers findings from archival research, showcasing how NETWORK has authored tension within the Roman Catholic Church via its historically feminist agenda and its Catholic identity. I summarize this project's findings in Chapter 7 before delineating the theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions to communication scholarship. Then, I acknowledge the limitations of this dissertation before offering directions for future research and finally, concluding.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Through their organizational efforts, NETWORK highlights social justice concerns that are ignored, overlooked, or marginalized within the broader political landscape, and aims to bring them to the forefront so that everyday citizens will take notice and take action. Sister Simone, as executive director of NETWORK, claims Catholic social justice has always been the work of women religious; yet, the relatively recent Vatican censure suggests women religious have not upheld their obligations to the Roman Catholic Church/Catholic doctrine (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012). The results of this moment suggest there exists an authoritative conflict between women religious and the patriarchy of the Roman Catholic Church.

This dissertation project takes a tension-centered approach in considering the organizational implications of subunits of larger institutions unveiling alternative sources of authority and organizing through their work. Specifically, as previously mentioned, this project explores the tensions experienced by women religious and staff at NETWORK, particularly with regard to the ways authority/authoring operate through their organizing work.

In this section, I first explain the metatheoretical underpinnings that guide my research inquiry. In doing so, I surface the values and beliefs that influence my research process to make them explicit and consider them for further examination. Second, I provide an overview of tension within organizational communication literature, including the constitutive approach to tension, the various forms tension can take, and a few empirical studies. I then turn to the topic of authority and authoring as a communicative phenomenon, reviewing how past understandings of authority compare to the constitutive constructions today, as well as the related concepts of *presentification*, *ventriloquism*, and *invocation*. Finally, I consider organizational scholarship on alternative organizing, including conceptions of organizing, specific features of alternative organizing, and

empirical studies, as well as feminist organizing as a type of alternative organizing. I conclude this chapter with the research questions that guide this study.

2.1 Metatheoretical Underpinnings

In order to position myself within this dissertation project, I believe I must share my perspective and reflections of the phenomenon(s) at issue within this study. In doing so, I aim to make clear the assumptions with which I enter the research process. To do so, I first share my orientation to the study of communication, as I make sense of it. Then, I briefly review theory and metatheory as it is understood within the discipline of communication studies. Finally, I synthesize these understandings and explain my own metatheoretical positioning, which informs my interests and approach to this dissertation project.

Broadly speaking, my conceptualization of communication is fundamentally based in a dialogical approach. Opposed to the idea that communication is something that simply *happens* (as its own phenomenon, disentangled from deeper meaning), I conceive of it as a *shared process*, co-constructed by two or more individuals that ultimately results in a new understanding about the world and how it works. Such a perspective is closely aligned with that of Leslie Baxter. Baxter's (2006) dialogic view of communication recognizes that different standpoints commingle to construct a new representation of reality. According to Baxter, communication as dialogue allows for three things to happen: (1) it recognizes and welcomes difference (as Baxter specifies, difference "of all kinds" (p. 102)), (2) it is open to the creation of new meanings and understandings, and (3) it moves the focus from the individual to the co-constructed interaction.

Such a conceptualization of communication lays the foundation for a particular orientation to metatheory. First, to provide an understanding of theory I will refer to Dance (1970) who offers a simplified definition: theory, in and of itself, is simply a way to understand or explain something

that happens in the social world. Thus, a metatheory can be considered a general theory of theories; it may connect various sub-theories under one umbrella of orientation. How one orients to metatheory can influence the research process by recognizing (or failing to recognize) the existence of certain realities, possibilities, or limitations. Scholars within the communication studies discipline recognize three overarching metatheoretical approaches which each take a unique perspective on social reality and how it operates: post-positivism, interpretive, and critical (Krone, 2000). It is expected that academics orient to one of the three approaches, perhaps with varying degrees of alignment.

Considering the dialogic perspective I take to communication studies, my metatheoretical leanings most closely align with the interpretive approach. Specifically, I identify as a feminist interpretivist scholar. I break down and explain this identity by first reviewing feminism, then turning to review interpretivism, and finally explaining why I identify as a feminist interpretivist scholar.

First, the term *feminism* is French for “woman” and “political position”. Coined in the late 1800s, this term essentially means *a political position about women* (Wood, 2007). Scholars have long debated definitions and understandings of feminism; despite such arguments, a general foundation does exist. Whether conceived of as a belief, a movement, or a commitment, the common thread throughout various conceptualizations of feminism is the recognition that patriarchy and sexism exist, and changes must be sought and engaged in order to achieve equality and respect for all (Buzzanell, 1994; hooks, 1988; hooks, 2015; Wood, 2007). Inherent in this understanding is the notion that feminism requires work or activity aimed at deconstructing

patriarchy¹¹ and/or oppression, and building new community-based, connection-oriented possibilities within various sectors of society.

An interpretivist approach generally relies on an understanding that one individual's experience of the world is not the same as another's experience of the world, and that meanings arise from social systems (Allen, 2005; Gergen, 1985). That is to say, an individual's experiences inform both how they perceive the world and how they talk about phenomena, and subsequently, the way they talk about phenomena influences or contributes to discursively constructed realities. This notion is often referred to as a social constructionist approach to theory (Allen, 2005; Gergen, 1985). From this perspective, knowledge is historically and culturally specific, and as such, it can only be made sense of when considered alongside social action and experience (Allen, 2005). As such, interpretivism supports a subjective, value-oriented approach to research.

To synthesize these two identities, as a feminist interpretivist scholar I believe socially constructed organizational systems (e.g., patriarchy) and practices (e.g., gender stereotyping) within the world are intertwined with deeper issues of gender as a system of division, based on differences that are not natural to men and women (Ferree & Hess, 1987). In recognizing issues of difference and power, my feminist interests problematize taken for granted assumptions about how the world works and aim to explain why conditions are as they are, and how they might be able to be undone (Shome & Hedge, 2002). The deconstruction of such problematic assumptions begins with discourse, or everyday talk, as a means of reframing or reworking ideologies at a micro level, so that they might influence understandings at a broader scale (both meso- or organizationally, and macro- or societal).

¹¹ Patriarchy can be generally understood as a traditional line of power or authority that follows male lineage, whether in a family context, organizational context, or otherwise.

My feminist interpretivist metatheoretical positioning coupled with my personal identity inspires inquiry of this general dissertation topic. I am a feminist and a Catholic, and this identity problematizes my interest in this work by nature of values and involvement. My metatheoretical positioning encourages me to reflect on this identity, recognize how it makes me feel, and consider how it might influence various steps of the research process. I am a practicing Catholic, involved in my local church, and I was educated at parochial schools through high school. I recognize certain qualms I have with the hierarchy of the Church, specifically with regard to the limited roles and encouragement of women's involvement. Yet, I also love my faith and support my Church, as it is a source of inspiration and hope for me. All of these facts influence the process I take throughout this project. For instance, the interview questions I ask, how I ask them (e.g., tone of voice, assumptions in the moment), whose voices I privilege (and neglect), and what stands out as significant through my analysis are all examples of instances when my Catholic and feminist identities¹² and values may contribute to my decision making. While I aim to keep my subjective influence over the research process to a minimum, I cannot completely disregard it (nor would I want to).

Moreover, my metatheoretical leanings lay the foundation for my interest in NETWORK as a site of tension. I see that the Church contains certain structures that have ways of limiting and constraining women religious, and I believe that as a researcher, I can use my abilities, skills, and knowledge to uncover these issues and contribute to potential change for the better. My interests and education in feminisms makes me especially attuned to the power differentials at play between the sexes within the Church. By asking questions about why such power differentials exist between

¹² Past scholarship has considered the complicated nature of how individuals identify as Catholic and feminist (Pauly, forthcoming). Some individuals see and experience these two identities as separate while others see and experience them as intertwined. I acknowledge the separate nature of these two identities in my own life, while also admitting they often overlap and sometimes conflict in ways that complicate my lived experience.

men and women in the Church, and what, if any, are the resulting harmful effects, I can not only bring attention to these concerns but also potentially contribute to a broader understanding of ways to communicatively deconstruct such sources of power and authority.

In sum, my view of communication is one of dialogue and shared process. It recognizes possibilities around emergent meanings and respects difference. My metatheoretical positioning, as a feminist interpretivist scholar, complements this dialogic view of communication in that it conceives of the world as socially constructed, but also views the world as fraught with power imbalances rooted in gendered differences between men and women. I carry these assumptions with me as I engage the research process, and because they inevitably influence my work, I aim to reflect on them often throughout this project.

2.2 Tension

Organizational communication scholars have taken a vested interest in tension (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2014; Koschmann & Laster, 2011; Putnam, 1986; Putnam, Fairhurst, & Banghart, 2016; Stohl & Cheney, 2001; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). A recent definition provided by Putnam, Fairhurst, and Banghart (2016) concisely defines tension as “stress, anxiety, discomfort, or tightness in making choices, responding to, and moving forward in organizational situations” (p. 69). Generally speaking, the changing nature of organizations, growing ever more complex, means tension is more commonplace (Lewis, Isbell & Koschmann, 2010; Putnam et al., 2016; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004).

With this in mind, this dissertation considers a constitutive approach to tension (Brummans, Cooren, Robichaud, & Taylor, 2014; Putnam, 1986; Putnam et al., 2016) by situating tension at the center of organizing. In the process of communicating an organization into being through social practices (e.g., rules, policies), individuals experience various constraints, stressors,

and power dynamics that influence behavior, and thus, the organizing process (Putnam, 1986). From this perspective, tension is viewed as emergent, constructed through social processes (e.g., talk and interaction) and organizational practices.

The topic of tension is significant within organizational communication studies precisely because tensions exist both within *and* as a result of the organizing process (Smith & Lewis, 2011). As Smith and Lewis (2011) point out, when organizational leaders make decisions about how they will operate, they also make decisions about how they will *not* operate. Indeed, organizational actors are often quick to recognize and communicate the existence of tension (Putnam et al., 2016).

Because tension can evolve to take on more complex forms, such as dualism and duality, contradiction, dialectics, and paradox (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2014; Putnam et al., 2016; Stohl & Cheney, 2001) organizational tension may call for immediate attention via action/interaction (Putnam et al., 2016; Trethewey & Ashcraft, 2004). Each of these related constructs and their association with tension are reviewed next.

Dualism and duality refer to opposite poles and linked opposites, respectively, that can fester tension (Putnam et al., 2016). While dualism is fairly simple in theory, considered two opposites that remain opposite, duality is more involved. Dualities can be understood as “polar opposites that often work against one another” (Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004, p. 124). Importantly, dualisms organize opposites that sometimes develop into dualities (Putnam et al., 2016). Smith and Lewis (2011) offer the symbolic figure of the Chinese yin-yang as an example that may best represent duality because of the two opposite parts, light and dark, delineating an internal boundary, but existing as a unified whole.

Contradiction shares similarities with dualism and duality in that it is concerned with opposite poles, that are linked, but contradiction is more complex in that the bound poles are also

mutually defining (Putnam et al., 2016). Moreover, contradiction is unique in that the two poles render the other ineffective (Baxter, 1990). Putnam (1986) offers the example of “stop” and “go,” because it is not possible to adhere to both commands simultaneously; one option must be chosen in this scenario.

Dialectics build on the concept of contradiction (Baxter, 1990), because they exist as a result of the necessary tension inherent in unified opposites (Fairhurst & Putnam, 2014; Putnam et al., 2016). Yet dialectics perhaps more favorably engage in interplay, or push and pull, rather than working to negate each other as is the case with contradiction (Baxter, 1990; Putnam et al., 2016). Originating from interpersonal communication scholarship, dialectical theory situates paired opposites as opportunities for growth (Baxter, 1990; Kramer, 2004).

As an extreme example of tension, paradox exists when two mutually exclusive, incompatible goals exist and *persist* over time (Putnam et al., 2016; Smith & Lewis, 2011), thus developing “seemingly irrational or absurd situations” (Putnam et al., 2016, p. 72). As such, they share similarities to contradictions, though evolve into a constant struggle whereby ongoing oscillation occurs between the opposite poles. Stohl and Cheney (2001) view paradox as an organic outcome of participation, stating “the webs we weave will come to constrain us, often in unforeseen ways” (p. 352). Extreme cases of paradox can develop into a double bind, wherein “both parties involved in the bind depend on the relationship and both are unable to comment on their predicament” (Putnam, 1986, p. 158). Scholars have long studied and debated types of paradox, the nature of paradox, and theories and models of paradox (see Smith & Lewis, 2011 for a comprehensive review; also Lewis, 2000).

Empirical studies have considered the implications of organizational tension. For example, utilizing qualitative methods, Tracy (2004) explores how officers in two correctional facilities

respond to and negotiate workplace tension specific to role conflict. Tracy's findings theorize employees frame organizational tension in one of three ways: as contradictions, as dialectics, or as paradoxes or double binds. What is significant about Tracy's findings and theoretical model is that they highlight the importance of framing techniques (e.g., suspect vs. respect, nurture vs. discipline, flexibility vs. rigidity, autonomy vs. solidarity) associated with workplace tension, and the subsequent consequences. In essence, Tracy argues it is in the best interest of all parties involved for organizational members to reframe tension(s) as complementary dialectics—which are most closely associated with positive organizational outcomes—as opposed to contradictions or double binds.

Similarly, Lewis, Isbell and Koschmann (2010) study how participants of a collaborative interorganizational relationship (IRO) deal with tension communicatively. Drawing on a dialectical approach to tension, their findings reveal tensions exist at two levels: relational (e.g., internal/external, me/we) and structural (e.g., formal/flexible). A noteworthy distinction of this study is that while participants in IROs garner strong organizational influence and control as a result of self-governing, the authors point out that participants' coping strategies result in simplistic conflict-avoidant strategies (i.e. ignoring or avoiding tension), similar to those mentioned in Tracy's (2004) study (Lewis et al., 2010). Such strategies are less than ideal, suggesting “dialectical tensions may present as puzzles that even if recognized by participants are not readily rationalized in practice” (Lewis et al., 2010, p. 476).

As one final example of recent empirical work focusing on tension within the organizational setting, McNamee and Pederson (2014) considered the dynamics at play in volunteer-manager communication. Utilizing a tension-centered approach to their study the authors reveal how four dialectical tensions (i.e., attraction-adjustment, ownership-oversight,

formalization-flexibility, and intimacy-distance) emerge from volunteer membership in the third space—understood as taking place in neither the home nor work setting. Specifically, because volunteers are different from paid organizational staff and volunteer activities are often accomplished across physical spaces and at varying times of the day, it can be said that they enact their volunteer membership in third space. Before sharing coping strategies, the authors clearly note practitioners must “accept that ignoring or attempting to eliminate one pole in the four dialectics is neither sustainable nor constructive” (McNamee & Pederson, 2014, p. 229), suggesting these tensions can be productively engaged to benefit the organizing process. Moreover, the productive use of tensions within the third space is an important contribution to understandings of communication and organizations.

2.3 Authoring/Authority

The notion of authority has been studied in multiple ways by many scholars (Benoit-Barné & Cooren, 2009; Brummans, Hwang & Cheong, 2013; Cheong, 2013; Fairhurst & Cooren, 2009; Koschmann & Burk, 2016; Taylor & Van Every, 2014; Weber 1968). Authority is fundamental to our human nature to “act in concert, whether with regard to the basis of government, the establishment of social bonds, the process of organizing, or the sustenance of communal life through rhetoric” (Benoit-Barné & Cooren, 2009, p. 6). As such, authority can be said to be “a property of relationships” (Taylor & Van Every, 2014, p. 20), inevitably involved in the process of organizing and the establishment of organizations. Thus, authority may generally be understood as a means of making order, and it is important in establishing practices and processes within organizational systems and structures.

While multiple definitions of authority exist, a thorough understanding of the concept—how authority is achieved, revoked, etc.—remains of interest to communication scholars (Benoit-

Barné & Cooren, 2009; Brummans et al., 2013; Koschmann & Burk, 2016). Indeed, as a feature of relationships, authority is recognized as a communicative phenomenon (Taylor & Van Every, 2014). Past scholarship within communication studies suggests authority is linked to organizational stability and sustainability because of its association with power (Benoit-Barné & Cooren, 2009; Taylor & Van Every, 2014), and consequently, authority must be (re)established often—through processes of successful negotiation—in order for an organization to endure (Taylor & Van Every, 2014). Conflict can occur when organizations fail to negotiate their organizational purpose(s) and order successfully, thus failing to (re)author the organization. The consequence, as Taylor and Van Every's (2014) suggest, “is a breakdown of authority and a loss of corporate coherence” (p. 205).

Understandings of authority and how it operates have evolved over the years. Classic understandings of authority view it as something an individual owns or has as a result of various organizational structures and arrangements (Kahn & Kram, 1994; Weber 1968). This perspective is specific to traditional hierarchical workplaces which operate according to agreed-upon understandings of positional and/or systemic power and influence (Kahn & Kram, 1994; Weber 1968). Authority dynamics may operate differently in non-traditional organizations wherein pre-established understandings of authority may not be found, are not enforced, or are irrelevant. Accordingly, newer understandings of authority recognize emergent, negotiated, and shifting capabilities of this phenomenon (Cooren, 2010; Koschmann & Burk, 2016). Examples may be found in organizations that do not follow a hierarchical or bureaucratic structure, such as alternative organizations, collaborative work, and certain nonprofits.

Understood in this way, authority can be co-constructed through collective understanding and influence (Brummans et al., 2014) (re-)generating configurations of an organization. This

ontological perspective of organizations lends itself to be studied from a communicative constitution of organizations (CCO) approach (Brummans et al., 2014; Taylor & Van Every, 2014). In particular, the Montréal School developed a CCO approach to organizational communication emphasizing the translation of communication practices as a means of organizational manifestation. The translation process generally occurs as follows: organizational activities translate many voices to one voice, which is then turned into text, effectively authoring the organization into existence and ultimately constituting the organization as an actor, capable of presence and agency (Brummans et al., 2014). Agency is the means by which an organization is able to take on authority; “agency is an *acting for*, or one actor who voices the position of another, a principal” (Brummans et al., 2014, p. 180).

Following this approach and the notion of *acting for*, Fairhurst and Cooren (2009) explain “macro acting,” or “making many become one” (p. 474) by channeling authority of a larger organization into an individual via objects, texts, or other. Macro actors are able to situate themselves as the authority figure, speaking and/or acting on behalf of others (Fairhurst & Cooren, 2009; Taylor & Van Every, 2014). Examples of this phenomenon have been named *presentification*, *ventriloquism*, and *invocation*, three related but distinct concepts (Brummans et al., 2014). All three concepts contribute to understandings of authority.

Presentification is a term which offers “a view of authority as an effect of presence” (Benoit-Barné and Cooren, 2009, p. 7; see also Cooren, Brummans & Charrieras, 2008). This concept identifies objects and individuals as sources of authority, made present through organizational interactions. An instance of this might be seen when an employee refers to workplace policy or procedure (i.e., texts) to provide reasoning for something to happen (or not to happen). By making these organizational policies or procedures present in the moment as a source

of authority, an employee may be able to wield influence over the situation at hand (Benoit-Barné and Cooren, 2009). Thus, authority is perceived to exist in the text, but is communicatively brought to life and effectively acquired through interaction.

Similarly, *ventriloquism* considers how individuals are able to make others say or do things, in the same line of thinking as a performance ventriloquist is able to animate a dummy to act and speak (Cooren, 2010, 2012). While the idea of ventriloquism may incite thoughts of one-way manipulation (e.g., the ventriloquist has control over the dummy), Cooren (2012) argues the act of ventriloquism, as a communication phenomenon, works bidirectionally. To provide an example, referring back to the instance in the previous paragraph, if an employee refers to workplace policy as a means of ventriloquizing the policy, the employee uses the policy as a means of influence, but the policy also urges the employee to take action. This two-way influence is deconstructed to refer to both downstream and upstream forms of ventriloquism (Cooren, 2010). The former is specific to interactions of everyday communication (e.g., conversations, written communication), or as Cooren (2010) says, “the semiotic beings we produce in interaction *make us do things*” (p. 135); the latter focuses on speaking or acting in the name of something, or positioning “the interactant as incarnating or embodying something that they claim to represent” (Cooren, 2010, p. 9).

Clearly related to the notion of upstream ventriloquism, *invocation* is defined as the “calling upon, imploring, or appealing to rules, principles, people, etc.” (Brummans et al, 2013, p. 350). What makes this concept unique is the inherent tie to that which is spiritual (Brummans, 2011). As Brummans (2011) explains, “while incarnation implies the transference of agencies or powers to things or persons, these agencies or powers cannot be *reduced* to these material things or person *in themselves*” (p. 197). Indeed, the process of invocation involves channeling something

or someone and performing, or constituting, their existence (Brummans et al., 2013). Acts of invocation work to shape shared understandings of an organization by enabling actors to re-incarnate “revered figures,” thereby allowing them to transcend physical and/or material forms (Brummans et al., 2013).

Taken together, *presentification*, *ventriloquism* and *invocation* showcase how authority can be more than something a person continuously *has* or *owns*, but rather, can be acquired and accomplished through communication and interaction (Benoit-Barné & Cooren, 2009; Brummans et al., 2014).

2.4 Alternative Organizing & Feminist Organizations

In their book *The Dictionary of Alternatives: Utopianism & Organization*, Parker, Fournier and Reedy (2007), in alignment with CCO perspectives, conceptualize ‘organization’ as a verb, stating that it is not simply a fixed entity, but rather, “the processes through which human beings pattern or institutionalize their activities in order to achieve a fairly stable state of affairs” (p. ix). In other words, every human activity includes an element of organization. Additionally, recognizing organization as a verb uncovers the decisions involved in the act of organizing; organizing is a political activity (Parker et al., 2007).

Involving questions of means and ends, organizing is inherently communicative (Parker et al., 2007; Putnam & Mumby, 2014). As McClellan (2011) states, “communication not only creates predefined understandings of organizational reality, but maintains them in conversation through the suppression of alternative meanings and articulation of mutually aligned discourses” (p. 470). In effect, communication can be used as a process by which organizational participants can create and recreate meanings and practices of organizing. This perspective extends the notion of organizing *beyond* what takes place after decisions have been made; organizing is thought of as a

communication-based decision that “prefigures and shapes what follows” (Parker, Cheney, Fournier & Land, 2014, p. 635).

Within organizational communication studies, there exists a growing interest in “alternative organizing” (Buzzanell, 2000; Cheney, 2014; Jensen & Meisenbach, 2015; Parker et al., 2014)—understood as organizational efforts that are “in opposition to the familiar, traditional, mainstream, predominant, or hegemonic institutional arrangements” (Cheney, 2014). Indeed, while many organizations share similar qualities, such as striving to be seen and easily identified, it would be a false assumption to assume all share the same interests (Scott, 2013). Alternative forms of organizing suggest a break away from hierarchical, recognizable, bureaucratic organizations toward more creative, untried organizational processes and practices (Buzzanell et al., 1997; Cheney, 2014). As a result, the notion of ‘alternative’ may include anything different from traditional or typical organizations and/or ways of organizing, which can make the process of distinguishing an alternative organization, or alternative organizing, somewhat challenging.

As an attempt to define the phenomenon of alternative organizations, scholars have outlined various principles, reasons, and attitudes central to alternative organizing. Parker, Cheney, Fournier and Land (2014) point to a set of three principles associated with the politics of organizing: autonomy, solidarity, and responsibility. Specifically, these principles are alternative in relation to capitalism and managerialism. The notion of autonomy considers how individuals should have a say in the choices they make for their lives; solidarity recognizes the need to work, live, and act in conjunction and community with each other; and responsibility acknowledges the care and concern of our collective future. Parker et al. (2014) claim that all three principles are necessary in order to deem organizing as ‘alternative’ because:

Too much concern for ourselves ends up as possessive individualism and selfishness; too much direction from others and bending to the collective will is a

form of coercion; and too many promises about the ideal future neglects the mucky problems of the present. (p. 633)

Adding to this understanding of what constitutes ‘alternative’, Buzzanell et al. (1997) distinguish three primary reasons for alternative organizing in relation to leadership processes, specifically: to resist bureaucratic structures and place power in members as employees/owners, to resist instrumental relationships and develop caring, community-based relationships through inclusionary networks, and to resist privileging individual and/or corporate ethics and refocus values on democratic practices. As alternatives to traditional corporate process, Buzzanell et al. (1997) suggest these shifts in practice offer room for negotiation within leadership processes and allow organizational members to achieve their goals communicatively.

Broadening this foundational understanding of alternative organizing, Cheney (2014) offers a set of four attitudes that accompany alternative organizing. First, he says, is “not taking for granted assumptions about organizing” (Cheney, 2014, para. 6), but rather recognizing the possibilities within organizational change and transformation. Second is developing imagination and visualization, because while few good examples of alternatives exist, it is possible to think beyond normative practices and traditional ways of organizing. Third, Cheney explains, is encouraging experimentation through tests and trials. And finally, entrepreneurship is the fourth attitude, because this set of skills and energies is necessary in order to move toward new possibilities.

Taken together, these principles of, reasons for, and attitudes toward alternative organizing showcase both its dynamic nature, and exercise of control (Cheney, 2014). Indeed, alternative organizing is a result of an organization’s interests and self-structuring (Buzzanell et al., 1997), allowing organizational members to define and direct processes.

Communication scholars have studied and identified forms of alternative organizing. As a recent example, Jensen and Meisenbach (2015) considered the ways in which a homeless shelter's visibility was manipulated based on its communication strategies and organizational goals. Intentional hiding and invisibility, such as this, rendered it an alternative organization. Similarly, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) has been identified as a hidden or shadowed organization, primarily because of the anonymous nature of its members (Scott, 2013). What makes AA an example of alternative organizing is its locally-based, decentralized nature, and nonhierarchical organizing (e.g., no governing officers). Beyond organizations that aim to conceal or attain a certain level of privacy, alternative organizations may be identified based on their privileging of participatory practices and avoidance of strong leadership structures. Buzzanell et al. (1997) explored two such cases: a food cooperative and a women's quilting guild. While both examples enact equality differently because of the contextual differences of the organizations, there is a shared interest in and focus on democratic practices and shared leadership.

Feminist forms of organizing may also be viewed as alternative (Buzzanell, 1994; Cruz, 2015). Some scholars claim feminists were experimenting with forms of alternative organizing long before critical scholars took notice (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004). Indeed, feminism is inherently concerned with patriarchy's oppressive nature that marginalizes women, and works to make collective change (Buzzanell, 1994). When put in conversation with organizational communication theory, one can see the disruptive influence feminism embraces. As Mumby and Putnam (1992) explain:

A feminist perspective on organizational theory exposes this male-centered, or patriarchal, worldview. By virtue of incorporating masculine systems as normal and rational, builders of extant theory produce and reproduce certain ways of understanding organizational life. (p. 466)

Feminist organizational communication theory aims to deconstruct this perspective, and build more inclusive, alternative ways of organizing, that improve women's lived experiences (Buzzanell, 1994).

With this consideration in mind, feminist organizing can be defined as “processes that are enacted within different types of organizational structures but conform to core feminist principles” (Buzzanell, 2000, p. 262). Such principles include a pro-woman perspective, undergirded with improved living conditions and opportunities for women and their collective status (Martin, 1990). In a similar vein to alternative organizing, feminist organizing provides a fruitful foundation in which structure and interaction can unite for novel possibilities.

While feminist organizing employs processes and interaction to ground feminist values, feminist organizations are generally considered to be counter-bureaucratic structures (Ashcraft, 2014; Cruz, 2015). As touched on previously, feminists have long taken issue with bureaucracy because of its “structural manifestation of male domination” (Ashcraft, 2001, p. 1302) which engenders oppressive relations while marginalizing the needs and interests of women. Feminist organizations, on the other hand, tap into social change as an attempt to reconsider and recreate possibilities. Examples of feminist organizing and organizations can be found in groups focused on issues of domestic violence and rape crisis, organized through democratic, participatory practices (Ashcraft & Mumby, 2004).

To further clarify understandings of what counts as a feminist organization, Martin (1990) identified ten dimensions that qualify an organization as feminist. The ten dimensions are: feminist ideology; feminist values; feminist goals; feminist outcomes; founding circumstances; structure; practices; members and membership; scope and scale; external relations (p. 190-191). Martin (1990) clarifies that any of the first five dimensions may recognize an organization as feminist,

and the latter five “are not unique to feminist organizations but are widely discussed in the feminist literature” (p. 189).

Buzzanell (1994) echoes Martin’s (1990) recognition of feminist values as a significant alternative to traditional values within organizations. In her article on feminist organizational communication theorizing, Buzzanell (1994) contrasts three themes that guide conventional organizing in the United States—specifically, competition, cause-effect linear thinking, and separation or autonomy—with three themes of feminist theorizing—namely, community, integrative thinking, and connectedness. When brought to the forefront, these feminist values can aid in acknowledging and honoring women’s lived experiences, providing an alternative to traditional structural features of organizations (Buzzanell, 1994).

Mumby and Putnam (1992) provide an example of feminist values within organizations. In their article on bounded rationality, Mumby and Putnam (1992) suggest traditional organizational practices often minimize emotional displays. In contrast to ‘bounded rationality’—which perceives rationality as restricted by and in align with institutional practices, thereby contributing to patriarchal ways of organizing—‘bounded emotionality’ is offered as an alternative form of organizing that introduces caring and interrelatedness to the workplace. As such, this essential feminist value allows for a broader understanding of workplace organizational culture. “By shifting rationality to include intersubjective understanding, community, and shared interests, insights into alternative forms of organizing are created” (Mumby & Putnam, 1992, p. 480).

2.5 Research Questions

Recent scholarship in organizational communication recognizes that tension is not uncommon in organizational life, nor is it inherently bad; rather, it can be productive to acknowledge and work with organizational tension (McNamee & Pederson, 2014; Tracy, 2004).

What remains ripe for understanding is how organizational tension is continually constituted and fluctuating over periods of time and changing contexts (Putnam et al., 2016). In a similar vein, the notion of authority is perceived as a constituted phenomenon, emergent, and shifting (Brummans et al, 2014; Cooren, 2010; Koschmann & Burk, 2016) making it a potentially rich site of tension within organizations. Communication scholars call for a deeper exploration of the way(s) tension and authority can be embraced within alternative organizations by challenging and/or resisting norms and allowing participants to understand their organization in new and useful ways (Jensen & Meisenbach, 2015; McClellan, 2011). In particular, more attention is directed to the area of religious or spiritual nonprofits to understand how these organizations are authored (Brummans et al., 2013), and the tensions involved in the process.

This dissertation project takes a tension-centered approach to consider the ways in which issues pertaining to authority and organizing are ever relevant for women religious today. Changes over the course of Church history have caused women religious to renew understandings of how and why they organize, as well as reconsider perceptions of how authority operates within the Church (Ebaugh, 1993). Authority is said to sustain “collaboration in any hierarchical configuration of relationships that can be said to be organized” (Taylor & Van Every, 2014, p. xiii). If some women religious turn to sources of authority different from the Church as a means of organizing, this may result in dire consequences for collaboration within the Church.

Specifically, in researching the tenuous relationship between NETWORK and the patriarchy of the Church, NETWORK aims to both connect with the Roman Catholic Church and support its authority, but also works to challenge it in important ways through social justice teaching. The resulting tension on Church authority is worthy of study by communication scholars to understand the micro implications on organizational actors and their organizational work, as

well as the perceived macro implications on the organizational institution. Moreover, NETWORK's alternative ways of organizing (e.g., Nuns on the Bus) have the potential to both reinforce and problematize the sustainability and strength of the Church. Organizing is considered a communication-based activity (Parker et al., 2007; Putnam & Mumby, 2014) and as such, this project can potentially inform new ways of organizing within communication scholarship, as well as serve to inspire others to employ similar practices when aiming to cultivate social transformation. Based on these considerations, the following research questions guide my study:

RQ1: How do women religious and staff at NETWORK discursively frame the organizational tension(s) they experience with the Church as a result of their work?

RQ2: Within the context of NETWORK, how and why is authority made manifest at times for the purposes of organizing? And how and why is authority stabilized at times?

RQ3: In what way(s) have the organizing efforts of NETWORK authored tension(s) within the institution of Church?

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This project is broken down into two phases. The first phase sets the foundation for my study, and the second considers the plan ahead, based on what was learned in Phase 1. Phase 1 took place during April 2016-March 2017 and entailed the preliminary work involved in contacting NETWORK, requesting and receiving access to follow the 2016 Nuns on the Bus tour, as well as initial interviews with the sisters associated with Nuns on the Bus. Phase 2 took place from August 2017-March 2018, and included a visit to NETWORK's office in Washington, D.C., to interview staff associated with NETWORK, as well as two trips to NETWORK's archives at Notre Dame University for archival research purposes.

For an overview of Phases 1 and 2, see Table 1. Each phase is described in detail below, along with the associated methodological strategies. To be clear in how the methodological strategies proposed respond to my research questions, I have included Table 2 for reference. After explaining both phases of this project, I conclude this chapter with my detailed data analysis procedures.

3.1 Phase 1

Phase 1 took place from April 2016-March 2017 with the goals of connecting with and establishing strong professional relationships with NETWORK and collecting preliminary data by following the 2016 Nuns on the Bus tour and engaging the sisters affiliated with Nuns on the Bus. The research questions for this phase were closely aligned with RQ1 and RQ2, though the focus was on Nuns on the Bus instead of NETWORK. This change in focus is explained further below. Phase 1 included two methods of data collection: participant observation and interviews.

3.1.1 Phase 1: Design and Implementation

Phase 1 began with a letter I wrote in April 2016 to Sister Simone Campbell, Executive Director of NETWORK, requesting permission to engage NETWORK as the context for my dissertation project. In addition to the letter, I included a research proposal I had written in fall 2015 outlining my interests and intentions for studying NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus. This project's initial aims were to explore the tension(s) experienced by sisters affiliated with Nuns on the Bus as a result of their Catholic ministry. In particular, I was interested in how these women organize, how they enact the practices involved in this work, how they constitute the authority with which they engage this work, and what might be the subsequent implications on identity and identification of their work. The aims of my project were revisited for Phase 2 as a result of learning that Nuns on the Bus would not have a 2017 tour.¹³ This process resulted in revised research questions. I share a more detailed explanation of this change in plans in the next section.

Paper copies of the letter to Sister Simone and the proposal outlining the intentions of my study were mailed to NETWORK's office in Washington, D.C. A few weeks later, I was contacted by the education and mobilization manager at NETWORK, asking me to call her regarding my dissertation research. This individual acted as a gatekeeper (Creswell, 2009; Lindlof & Taylor, 2011) for me in my early research plans, granting me access and approval to follow Nuns on the Bus, sharing the detailed schedule of site visits and locations, and even inviting me to join the sisters for a dinner one night during their tour. She was my main contact, and a valuable source of information.

¹³ Due to a large amount of policy proposals (i.e., health care changes and tax reform) NETWORK remained in Washington, D.C., during summer 2017 to engage in conversations with lawmakers and focused on lobbying.

To provide detailed context, Nuns on the Bus consists of a group of Catholic sisters, led by Sister Simone Campbell. Each year since 2012 approximately 10-12 sisters would join the bus trip to advocate for NETWORK's mission, and while some sisters have traveled every year since 2012, others have only traveled once. That is to say, participation in Nuns on the Bus varies from year to year. Additionally, while Sister Simone is a part of the community called Sisters of Social Service, not all sisters who travel on the bus share this same community (e.g., some are with Daughters of Charity, Dominican Sisters, and School Sisters of Notre Dame). In 2016, a total of 18 sisters traveled with Nuns on the Bus, but not all eighteen were traveling at once; mid-way through the three-week period, some of these sisters returned home to other obligations associated with their religious communities, and others took their physical spot on the bus.

The sisters traveled through 13 states in 2016, including: Wisconsin, Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New Jersey (see Figure 3). They stopped in 23 cities with planned events, including stops at the Democratic National Convention and the Republican National Convention. Other organized stops included: community caucuses,¹⁴ visits to shelters and transitional housing facilities, schools, food pantries, parishes, congregations and social justice ministries, meetings with Catholic sisters, faith leaders, community leaders, individuals, and families. The total distance covered was 2,400 miles across a three-week period in July. Nuns on the Bus annual trips are supported by donations from NETWORK members and non-NETWORK members. Nuns on the Bus is nonpartisan, and their goal is to focus on inclusive conversation and dialogue as a means of advocating for just federal policy (NETWORK Nuns on the Bus, n.d.).

¹⁴ Community caucuses were events organized around community discussion. Held at community centers or churches, caucuses were structured around the issues areas for which NETWORK advocates as they apply to local community problems. Such events offered community conversation, dialogue, and engagement with NETWORK and Nuns on the Bus.

I received Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct this research. Data were gathered over a one-week period in July 2016. I met up with Nuns on the Bus in Springfield, Illinois, and followed them, attending most of their daily events, to Cleveland, Ohio (further clarification is provided below). I spent approximately 50 hours traveling and/or attending events with the sisters through Illinois, Missouri, Indiana, and Ohio.

Data were based on participant observation, which is a “craft of experiencing and recording events in social settings” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 135). Participant observation is ideal for this project because of its focus on being present to observe and experience the events facilitated by Nuns on the Bus. Tracy (2013) suggests there exist various standpoints of participant observation—such as complete participation, play participation, focused participant observer, and complete observer—providing different opportunities and limitations for data collection. With these different forms of observation in mind, I determined that play participation would be most appropriate for my research goals, as this approach “suggests a stance in which fieldworkers play at becoming active members” but also “they can opt in and out in ways unavailable to a complete participant” (Tracy, 2013, p. 109). The play participant approach provided me an opportunity to see the sisters in action and participate in the activities of the events with other community members (i.e., community discussion), while also allowing space for me to opt out of participation to note event details (e.g., who was speaking, what was being said, how it was being said, how the events were structured).

An instrumental part of observing social reality is describing and interpreting what is happening, often in the form of written notes, which is known as taking field notes (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). The events I attended as a play participant were active sites in which participants and attendees were expected to participate in discussion. Therefore, as a play participant, I did not

openly or thoroughly take field notes during events, to assure my full attention and involvement. Instead, I would type notes on my cell phone a couple times during an event, and/or type notes on my laptop in my car immediately following the event. Such practices are referred to as scratch notes, written somewhat hastily in the moment (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011), and memos, providing more depth upon reflection (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Both practices aid the process of completing field notes. At the end of a day of travel, I revisited scratch notes and memos, adding details, description, and reflections based on what I observed. Some days included more detail and length than others, depending on how much energy I had left after a full day of travel and activity.

I attended a total of eight events during this time, resulting in eight pages of single-spaced notes. The eight events included three caucus events, one rally, one site visit, one Catholic Mass, one city-wide event, and one private dinner. Aside from the dinner, all events were public events. Reflecting on the eight pages of single-spaced field notes, I am disappointed I did not write more. The length of these notes was a result of multiple factors, including: the decision to privilege my participant status over my observer status, meaning I chose to pay more attention to, and actively engage in, events instead of dividing my attention between participation and notetaking; exhaustion at the end of a day of travel, inhibiting my ability to recall details and encouraging rest for the next day of travel; the assumption that the 2016 tour would be the first of two tours, and that my travels during the 2017 Nuns on the Bus tour would be more detailed and produce more field notes. Unfortunately, the Nuns on the Bus did not tour in 2017 which was unexpected.

I began the process of scheduling interviews with sisters associated with Nuns on the Bus once the 2016 tour concluded. As a qualitative method of inquiry, interviews are appropriate tools used to understand “the social actor's experience, knowledge, and worldviews” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 173). As such, including interviews in my dissertation project enables my participants to

explain their own perceptions, understandings, and meanings they have associated with the work they do, in their own language and phrasing. This strategy for data collection recognizes the knowledge and expertise within the participant as central to the research problem, requiring me, as the interviewer, to ask questions as a means of understanding certain phenomena from my participant's point of view (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

My contact at NETWORK suggested I draft a request for interview participation that she could send via email to the sisters who had traveled on the bus in 2015 and 2016.¹⁵ In total, this amounted to 23 women. Out of the 23 contacted, 10 sisters reached out to me, indicating their willingness to schedule an interview. While I had originally hoped to conduct interviews in person, recognizing the benefits of visual cues (e.g., expressions, gestures) and the ease of establishing trust during an in-person interview (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011), I could not do so because of the disparate locations of my participants. As a result, I settled for phone interviews. I emailed back and forth with my participants to determine a time and date for a phone interview. Because of the varied schedules of my participants, I conducted eight interviews with seven sisters between November 2016 and March 2017. One sister was interviewed twice; due to our lengthy first interview and her scheduled commitments, we arranged a second interview to complete the remaining questions.

The interview protocol was semi-structured and centered on how the sisters associated with Nuns on the Bus organize, the practices involved in this work, and the subsequent implications on identity and identification. Specifically, I was interested to know if and how expectations and understandings of religious life and identity influence political activity, and if and how they

¹⁵ My contact at NETWORK admitted she only had names and no contact information for the sisters who toured in 2012, 2013, and 2014, although she offered a contact who could potentially put me in touch with some of the sisters from those trips. I did not pursue the contact she offered because I expected to participate in the 2017 tour and collect more interviews at that time (though the Nuns ultimately did not travel in 2017).

experience identity and identification tension as a result (e.g., with their religious community, with the Church). Interview questions were organized into two sections: religious identity and Nuns on the Bus experience (for complete sister interview guide, see Appendix B). To provide a few examples, some of the questions and inquiries I included within the section on religious identity were: What does your role as a religious sister entail? What would you say is expected of you as a religious sister? Tell me about the opportunities available to you as a woman in the Catholic Church. Tell me about the limitations of opportunities available to you as a woman in the Catholic Church. Additionally, some examples from the section on Nuns on the Bus experience included: Tell me about your experience as a sister associated with Nuns on the Bus. In what way(s) do you feel supported in the work you do with Nuns on the Bus? Who or what makes you feel this way? In what way(s) do you feel discouraged in the work you do with Nuns on the Bus? Who or what makes you feel this way?

The eight completed interviews were transcribed by a third-party service, thanks to funding support from my advisor. I had 154 pages of interview transcription, coupled with nine pages of notes taken during the interviews. Preliminary data analysis began immediately, as I read through all transcripts with the goal of gaining a general sense of the data, and particularly noticing what emerged as seemingly significant to my research questions. Data analysis is an ongoing, iterative process (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Creswell, 2009) and continued as I moved forward into Phase 2 of the project.

3.2 Phase 2

Phase 2 took place from August 2017-January 2018 with the goal of interviewing NETWORK staff members during a visit to NETWORK's Washington, D.C., office, and conducting archival research during trips to NETWORK's archives located at University of Notre

Dame, in Notre Dame, Indiana. The research questions in focus for this phase were RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3. This phase included three methods of data collection: interviews, observation, and document analysis.

3.2.1 Phase 2: Design and Implementation

Based on challenges encountered—and information learned—during Phase 1, the original plans for Phase 2 were adjusted and the IRB for this project was amended accordingly. The two particular challenges that arose during Phase 1 include: (1) learning my contact at NETWORK was leaving her position, and (2) learning Nuns on the Bus would not be traveling in 2017.

First, I learned my contact at NETWORK was leaving her position as of September 2016. This caused concern for me as this individual had been my only contact at NETWORK, and I was uncertain about whom I could turn to as a new contact. After emailing Sister Simone's executive assistant to explain the situation and request direction, I was put in touch with a new contact who was able to guide me through Phase 2.

The second challenge I encountered in Phase 1 occurred when I learned NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus would not be traveling in 2017, as NETWORK planned to remain focused in D.C. for lobbying purposes. As a result, I would not have the opportunity to travel with Nuns on the Bus again. To address this concern, I broadened the context of my dissertation project from focusing on the Nuns on the Bus campaign to focusing on NETWORK as an organization.

After amending my IRB for my study, phase 2 proceeded with sending emails to NETWORK staff to schedule interviews. I was instructed by my contact at NETWORK to email staff members individually via contact forms on the website. In total, I sent 23 emails to staff listed on NETWORK's website and I received responses from four individuals (for the staff recruitment email, see Appendix C). While I cannot be sure why the response rate was so low, it might have

been due, at least in part, to two known factors. First, I received an error message upon submitting a few email messages via the NETWORK website. I noted this error message in a follow-up email sent directly to my contact at NETWORK. Despite this error message, I later received confirmation through automatic out of office replies that some of my messages had been successfully delivered. Another contributing factor to the low response rate could have been the busy time of season for NETWORK. A few individuals expressed to me via email that it was a “crazy” and “VERY busy time” for them at NETWORK, which could have influenced interest in participating in an interview during work hours.

From interview correspondence with various NETWORK staff members, I was able to confirm five interviews for my one-day visit to NETWORK’s office on December 14, 2017. One staff member, in particular, was very helpful in organizing a schedule for me, confirming schedules of the individuals I planned to interview. The goal of these interviews was to gain an understanding of how staff members associated with NETWORK’s ministry frame various organizational tension(s), with particular attention to the broader context of the Roman Catholic Church. Additionally, I aimed to better understand how and why authority is made manifest and stabilized at times through their work (for complete staff interview guide, see Appendix D). As such, the interview protocol was organized around three sections: NETWORK experience, NETWORK overview, and NETWORK and the Church. To provide a few examples, some of the questions and inquiries I included within the section on NETWORK and the Church were: How would you describe NETWORK’s relationship to the Roman Catholic Church? How does NETWORK draw from Roman Catholic Church doctrine to advocate for their work? What might be an example of NETWORK drawing from Church doctrine to advocate for their work? How does NETWORK

operate outside of, or perhaps resist, contemporary interpretations of Roman Catholic Church teaching to advocate for their work?

The five completed interviews were transcribed by a third-party service. I had 54 pages of interview transcription, coupled with almost three pages of notes and observations from my visit to the NETWORK office. Preliminary data analysis began immediately.

During my time at NETWORK's office in D.C., I collected observational data to note staff interactions, the office environment, and the general social and organizational reality of NETWORK. For this purpose, I approached this work as a complete observer in which "observers stand at the periphery, merely watching the scene unfold in front of them" (Tracy, 2013, p. 113). These data gave me insight into how NETWORK operates when staff are not traveling with Nuns on the Bus, but rather, are focusing on typical everyday work in the office. Specifically, I noted and studied individuals and conversations taking place, the general office setup, décor in the office (e.g., a large wall display of photos and news articles delineating the history of NETWORK by decade), and so forth. In total, I took almost three pages of single-spaced notes during my time at NETWORK's office.

Document analysis also began during Phase 2. This method of research offers a glimpse into material culture, or the artifacts humans produce for various reasons (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). Such artifacts influence our social reality and create a "duality of being—objects as both things that are acted upon and things that act upon us" (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011, p. 219). The aim of incorporating document analysis during Phase 2 was to consider how NETWORK's organizing efforts are perceived as authoring tension(s) within the Church. Below I detail how I approached and engaged this process.

NETWORK's archives are physically located at Notre Dame University and extend 54 linear feet in length. The archives are not available online and must be visited in person to view. To determine how best to identify and select key documents of interest from the archives, I emailed an individual at the archives for guidance and information. Based on email correspondence, I was directed toward an online finding aid¹⁶ and planned my first visit to the archives. After reflecting on my research interests and inquiring advice from my contact at the archives (i.e., relying on his familiarity with and knowledge of NETWORK's documents), I identified 30 folders and one file to request for review. My intention with the first visit was to orient myself to the archives and become familiar with how they were organized so that my next visit could be planned more carefully and intentionally.

Due to time constraints with a one-day visit, I spent three hours at the archives but did not have time to review all folders I had requested. I took notes on my computer during this first visit, noting the folders and files I was reviewing, and mentioning any interest in revisiting these documents upon my next visit. My notes totaled five pages, single-spaced.

After this initial visit, I reviewed my notes taken during my archive visit, my research questions, and I revisited the Vatican's censure. The Vatican's announcement of the censure of U.S. women religious in 2008 resulted in an investigation of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious (LCWR) to review the mission, responsibilities, programs, web presence, and application of liturgical norms and texts over a multi-year period (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012). Based on the three areas of concern identified in the censure (for the three areas of concern for the LCWR, see Appendix A) I decided to highlight keywords that may

¹⁶ In the context of archival research, a finding aid is a document including all information from a particular archival collection. Via Notre Dame's online finding aid I was able to view all files, folders, and series included in NETWORK's archives.

be useful in identifying documents for analysis during my next visit to the archives. Specifically, I noticed that certain keywords and terms used in the censure may be helpful in tracing tensions within the Roman Catholic Church as authored by NETWORK since the beginning of NETWORK's existence. I determined the words I would use to search the NETWORK archives, via the finding aid, would be: LCWR, Leadership, ordination, New Ways Ministry, sexuality, feminist, patriarchy, and bishops.

A keyword search of NETWORK's archives using the above eight words produced seven "files" of NETWORK board meeting documents (e.g., minutes, guidelines, topics, policies), 31 "folders" of various NETWORK documents (e.g., association and interaction with LCWR, New Ways Ministry, interactions with bishops), and one "series" on NETWORK's 15th anniversary project.¹⁷ I requested to view these files, folders, and the series upon my second visit to the archives (for requested archive files, see Appendix E).

The second visit to NETWORK's archives lasted five hours, and I was able to review all requested documents. Similar to the first visit, I wrote detailed notes on my computer about my process as I moved through these documents at the archives. My notes included both report-style information about what was in the folder/file/series, and personal reflections of what I was finding. For example, one of my report-style notes includes: *"Includes information about board members (addresses and such), board meeting minutes, expenses, etc. Board Report from December 1981 to June 1982 by Carol Coston begins with her personal reflections and sharing that she is stepping down."* One of my personal reflection notes includes: *"I'm noticing that the 2002 directory includes a LCWR representative (Judy Cannon). I'm not sure if NETWORK has always had a LCWR rep, but...if I had more time, perhaps I should track the board members/leadership for*

¹⁷ After confirmation with my contact at the archives, there is no literal visible difference between "file" and "folder." The "series," too, was confirmed to be just one folder, and perhaps misleading in how it is identified in this listing.

NETWORK over the years to see who was leading *NETWORK* and who was affiliated.” When I decided to have a document copied for analysis I would write and highlight the word “copied” in bright green in my document, so that I would have a record of the documents I would request to have copied. My notes totaled nine pages, single-spaced.

Before leaving the archives, I completed paperwork on all the copies I requested. One week later I received an email with a link where I could download my requested documents. The total documents copied resulted in 125 pages.

3.3 Data Analysis

3.3.1 A Manual Approach

I approach coding manually, as I believe I am able to best process data when I can touch and read physical copies of documents, suggesting this approach is most beneficial to my analysis (Tracy, 2013). Moreover, touching and interacting with the data in a physical way provides freedoms not available through computer-aided approaches. For instance, a manual approach to data analysis allows the option and ability to physically sketch out ideas and/or connections that emerge from the analysis process (i.e., for sketch examples from data collection and coding, see Appendix F), use various colors, pens, and markers to represent different ideas, notions and themes as I code and analyze (i.e., for a color coded example from data coding, see Appendix G), and integrate other mediums such as whiteboards and sticky notes to cross-connect and/or layer ideas (i.e., for a whiteboarding example from data coding, see Appendix H). Such strategies illuminate connections that otherwise might be missed. Generally speaking, this process is naturally innovative and full of possibilities, developing and emerging alongside the analysis. Indeed, not only am I interacting with my data; the data are interacting with me. Together we are creating a way forward to respond to the research questions.

This manual approach complements the approach I take to my study as NETWORK and Nuns on the Bus are material and physical phenomena. During the Nuns on the Bus tour, the sisters are embedded with the people and their materials lives, meeting them where they are. Similarly, I approach my data where it is instead of entering it into a computer program, further distancing myself from its materiality. This approach aligns with my interest in immersing myself with NETWORK and Nuns on the Bus: I traveled with them; I visited their Washington, D.C., office to conduct interviews in person; I visited NETWORK's archives located at Notre Dame to physically review documents.

I used a manual approach to data analysis with all three types of data I have for this project: interview data, observational data, and archival data. To organize and prepare my data for manual analysis, I first printed all transcripts of interviews (and notes), participant-observation field notes, and archival documents (and notes). To keep track of all types of data, and to record the number of pages for all sets of documents, I created a checklist to assure I did not miss any sources of data.

Giving consideration to this organization process is important seeing as it can "encourage the researcher to notice some comparisons and overlook others" (Tracy, 2013, p. 185). Ultimately, I organized my data according to type. Specifically, I organized my interview data separate from my participant-observation data, and both separate from my archival data. This organizational decision allowed me to immerse myself in the different types of data, thinking and recalling these moments as I read and analyzed my data. Had I jumped between types of data (e.g., reading an interview, then reading archival documents), I may have lost the deep thought and reflection I was able to achieve through my organized analysis. Within the different types of data, I organized interviews according to group, separating NETWORK staff interviews from interviews with sisters

from Nuns on the Bus; I organized participant-observation data chronologically by event date; I organized archival documents chronologically by document date.

Below I explain how I systematically analyzed all three types of data, providing step-by-step accounts of my process and analysis. Charmaz (2006) and Tracy (2013) inform the analytical framework I use as well as the direction and process I take for data analysis. Charmaz (2006) considers the research process a journey, and emphasizes “flexible guidelines, not methodological rules, recipes, and requirements” (p. 9) making for a thorough and thoughtfully developed process of data inquiry and analysis. Following Charmaz (2006), grounded theory methods offer “a set of principles and practices” (p. 9) to engender deep data inquiry and make for incisive work. As such, I utilize grounded theory methods as analytic framework to develop my process of analysis and guide me to insightful findings. I also rely on Tracy (2013) to make sense of specific phases of data analysis (i.e., coding cycles) as well as for additional strategic guidance for codebooks and analytical questions to ask throughout the process.

3.3.2 Interview Data

I consider interview data my primary source of data in this study and spent more time and attention on interview data analysis than I did with my participant-observation data and my archival data. I had 200 pages of interviews total, and nearly 12 pages of single-spaced notes. My interviews were separated into two groups: interviews with sisters who had traveled with Nuns on the Bus (eight interviews with seven women), and interviews with NETWORK staff members (five interviews with five participants). One of my interview participants was both a NETWORK staff member and a sister who had traveled on the Bus. This person was interviewed twice, allowing me to maintain separation between these groups. I decided to organize and approach my data with sisters and staff separately in order to stay true to what each data set illuminates. Seeing

as the sisters have a different experience with NETWORK—as Nuns on the Bus participants—as compared to staff—who may or may not have experience with Nuns on the Bus—I argue it is better to consider each independently before looking for themes that cross over between groups.

It is important to note I did not provide pseudonyms for my participants before analyzing my data. This decision was made in line with my general approach to the analysis process; I aimed to maintain an authentic connection with my data. By retaining the actual names and initials of my participants as I analyzed I was able to also retain a closeness to their lived reality. Pseudonyms were provided after analysis was completed.

3.3.2.1 Primary-Cycle Coding

Primary-cycle coding (Tracy, 2013) began with line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2006) for all my interviews. I read the sentence to identify what my participant was saying. Specifically, line-by-line coding means “naming each line of your written data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 50). To aid in this process, I asked questions to further identify what was happening in the data. Additionally, I followed Charmaz (2006) in using gerunds as much as possible when coding, to highlight the action and movement within what was being said. For instance, during an interview, one participant responded to a question, saying, “Eh, we don’t worry about it,” which I coded as “dismissing concerns.” In some cases, I used *in vivo* codes (Charmaz, 2006; Tracy, 2013) to accurately reflect the jargon used by participants in making sense of their experiences (e.g., “sister spirit”). This detailed process of line-by-line coding is useful in that it “contains correctives that reduce the likelihood that researchers merely superimpose their preconceived notion on the data” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 51). Initial codes developed through line-by-line coding were written in the left-hand margin of the page.

After line-by-line coding I returned to each interview transcript to engage focused coding, wherein “codes are more directed, selective, and conceptual” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 57). I re-read my transcripts and the initial codes I developed as a means of considering what my participant’s response, as a whole, was saying. In some cases, line-by-line codes I had already written expressed the ideas developed through focused coding. When this was the case, I would underline the phrase or word(s) I had already written, using a purple marker to clearly indicate difference from my original black pen. In other cases, I would write a different phrase or words in the right-hand column with a purple marker to make comprehensive sense of the paragraph. Because focused coding is not a linear process (Charmaz, 2006) I would occasionally return to previous codes and clarify or edit them based on understanding that developed as I continued analysis.

Once I completed focused coding I used a whiteboard to transfer all the codes from multiple pages to one large space. Through this process of physically transferring codes from one space to another, I was able to refine codes and extrapolate ideas to move the analysis forward. I started with the staff interviews, choosing to focus my whiteboard process on one group (staff or sisters) at a time. The staff interviews resulted in approximately 124 initial codes (some codes included related notes/words that I chose to include on the whiteboard for nuance), which I organized on the whiteboard according to participant (i.e., codes were written underneath participant’s initials). Because my analysis at this point in time remained open and emergent, once I had all my codes on the board I revisited RQ1 and RQ2 to sharpen my focus and maintain my attention. Re-reading my research questions helped guide my analysis.

Once my codes were written on the whiteboard I began considering connections between and among the codes I had developed. Specifically, I used symbols and words to identify connections and similarities across my codes (for the symbols and words used to make sense of

my codes, see Table 3). I also noted an emerging theme of the phrase “sister spirit” used when talking about NETWORK, although I did not create a symbol for this; instead, I mentioned this in an analytic memo (Tracy, 2013) to assure it was noted for further development later on. I heavily relied on analytic memos throughout my analysis process as a reliable way to “write first and understand later” (Tracy, 2013, p. 196).

Because I was engaging this whiteboarding process in a public space I took photos (5) of my completed primary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard and erased this work. Taking photos of this whiteboarding work allowed me to print the images for further reference and analysis as I continued moving through my data.

Next, I turned to my interviews with the sisters. I followed the same process of physically transferring the codes identified in my transcripts to the whiteboard. This process resulted in approximately 155 initial codes (some codes included related notes/words that I chose to include on the whiteboard for nuance), which I organized on the whiteboard according to participant (i.e., codes were written underneath participant’s initials). Following the same steps taken with coding data from NETWORK staff, I revisited my RQ1 and RQ2 to refocus/maintain my attention.

Once my codes were written on the whiteboard I began considering connections between and among the codes I had developed. Once again, I used symbols and words to identify connections and similarities across my codes. Not all symbols I had used for analysis in the previous group were relevant to this data set (e.g., the red arrow, the red jagged line). This is because NETWORK staff have a different level of involvement with their work in comparison to the sisters who have traveled with Nuns on the Bus. As a result, I used a few new words and symbols to determine emerging themes across this data (i.e., number of stories and black star; see Table 3). Similar to the last whiteboarding session with NETWORK staff members, I did see at

least one instance of the “sister spirit” which was noted as an analytic memo for development later on.

I took photos (5) of my completed primary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard and erased this work. I printed the photos I took of my whiteboard and read through the initial codes once again, both from the staff board and the sisters board, to refresh and to make sure I could read the whiteboard writing without troubles. I used black pen to touch-up some codes I was not able to read clearly as a result of glare on the whiteboard when I took the photo.

The primary-cycle coding process outlined above resulted in first-level codes, which “focus on “what” is present in the data” (Tracy, 2013, p 189). To synthesize my codes and move up levels of abstraction, I engaged a brainstorming activity during which I unpacked my research questions, breaking them down into multiple questions to better specify my interests and aims in asking the question (for engaging questions with my data, see Appendix I). This process allowed me to define the scope of the question, stay focused, and avoid distractions (Tracy, 2013). Such questions aided me in refining my considerations to further develop my first-level codes into themes.

3.3.2.2 Secondary-Cycle Coding: RQ1

Secondary-cycle coding engages deep analysis and “begins to organize, synthesize, and categorize” (Tracy, 2013, p. 194) codes into second-level codes. I used a whiteboard to focus on RQ1 and the sub-questions I developed to further my analysis. During my primary-cycle coding, I identified codes pertaining to tension. My decision to begin secondary-cycle coding with RQ1 (focused on tension) and the previous code “tension” provided the organizational grounding/process orientation necessary to begin the next phase of coding.

Utilizing the whiteboard, I wrote all first-level codes identified as “tension” on the whiteboard totaling 34 phrases, some included additional detail/information which I retained in the form of a sub-bullet. From here, I revisited my first-cycle coding whiteboard photos to make sure I did not miss any codes that should have been identified as “tension.” This resulted in an additional 13 codes from the staff whiteboard and 12 from the sisters whiteboard, bringing the total codes identified as “tension” to 59.

I took a photo (1) of this stage of the secondary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard, and revisited RQ1 and sub-questions to work out themes. The goal of the secondary-cycle coding process is to “explain, theorize, and synthesize” (Tracy, 2013, p. 194) data, working up levels of abstraction to make sense of what my data are telling me. I used blue and purple whiteboard markers to identify themes across these phrases. Initial themes included: relationships, identity, role, context, and focus. I also underlined key terms indicating tension, as a way to showcase my connection to this larger theme of tension. I took a photo (1) of the completed secondary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard and erased my work. I printed the photo I took of my whiteboard.

To aid this process, I revisited notes taken during the interviews. I have 2.5 single-spaced pages of notes from my interviews with NETWORK staff, and 9 single-spaced pages of notes from my interviews with Nuns on the Bus sisters. The notes from my interviews with sisters are more in-depth and reflective as compared to my notes from the NETWORK office visit. My office visit notes focused on the surroundings of the office and my in-person experience of the visit rather than reflections from my interviews. I wrote a few themes I noticed from my interview notes, including: Sisters are well educated; Nuns on the Bus=living the Gospel; Church and state

relationship; Sisters can be critical of the Church; Nuns on the Bus transcends identity politics; and Sisters' role has evolved over the years.

From here, I returned to the whiteboard to draw a flowchart indicating connections between emerging themes. Reflecting on both the picture I took from my “tensions” whiteboarding and the themes I noted from my interview notes, I engaged a deeper analysis as I reflected on RQ1. The resulting cognitive map display is a “representation of concepts about a particular domain, showing the relationships among them” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 134) (for the cognitive map display, see Appendix J). The process of drawing connection and linkages between ideas, themes, and concepts allows the complexity of the analysis process to be visible and encourages emergent possibilities. I identified three essential relationships that are highlighted in my secondary-coding cycle (based on/developing further from the tensions I had originally identified above): (1) NETWORK's relationship to Catholic; (2) NETWORK's relationships to Church/institution; (3) NETWORK's relationships to bishops. Much of what I coded relates to or may fall under one of these three general relationship types. I also identified a fourth relationship— (4) NETWORK's relationship to nuns—though it is not referenced as often as the other three. However, because nuns are included as key informants/participants in my study, and they are central to the Nuns on the Bus campaign, I included them. Out of these four relationships, I pulled phrases/words from my coding cycle to identify/make sense of these relationships. For instance, with (1) NETWORK's relationship to Catholic, I wrote: YES; fraught; imperfect; uncertain; more than/transcends; downplay; strategic. I see these keywords as strong identifiers associated with the relationship NETWORK has with Catholicism. I did the same with the other three relationships.

To the left of these four relationship types, I wrote notes regarding how tension is involved. General notes included: tension necessary to do the work?; tension central to the work (causing

tensions with bishops?); “engaging conflict as a frame of dialogue”; religion is political. Finally, I also wrote a few additional notes that came to mind as important during this process, below the four relationship types. This included: Bishops can’t control NETWORK, and sisters’ role evolving over years. I drew circles around these themes, using a circle hierarchy chart (of sorts) to develop relationships and associations. I took a picture (1) of this whiteboarding session and printed it for further analysis.

3.3.2.3 Secondary-Cycle Coding: RQ2

I followed the same analytical process I took with RQ1 as I entered into secondary-cycle coding process for RQ2. I used a whiteboard to focus on RQ2 and the sub-questions. During primary-cycle coding, I had identified codes pertaining the complicated nature of Catholicism within NETWORK’s understanding of self, drawing an asterisk next to codes. I used this same symbol with both the staff and sisters’ transcripts. With the sisters’ transcripts, I also used a black star to reference moments of authority/credibility as sisters, in/through their work. As a similar code, I also included the red arrow from interviews with staff, indicating how staff at NETWORK make sense of the complicated relationship between the Catholic Church and policy. The black star and the red arrow identify a similar theme across the two data sets; the distinguishing factor is that the sisters’ work through Nuns on the Bus relies on their credibility as sisters, while NETWORK’s staff work relies on clarifying the difference between their work on policy and the Church’s work on doctrine. Taken together, I wrote all codes on a new whiteboard to unite them in one place for further analysis. I unite this step of secondary coding with RQ2, which is focused on authority.

Codes identified with an asterisk during my first-cycle coding totaled 13, some including additional detail/information which I included in the form of a sub-bullet. I revisited my first-cycle

coding whiteboard photos to make sure I did not miss any codes that should have been identified as pertaining to the complicated nature of Catholicism within NETWORK's understanding of self. This process resulted in the addition of 6 codes from staff and 5 codes from sisters, making the total codes for asterisk 24. I then added codes identified with the black star from the sisters' transcripts, which totaled seven. Revisiting my first-cycle coding, I identified an additional 10 codes, making a total of 17 codes for the black star.

I aimed to avoid duplicates through this whiteboarding process. That is to say, if a code was identified with an asterisk and a black star, it was placed in only one category. The avoidance of duplicate codes on my whiteboard facilitated an effective and focused analysis. Finally, I added codes identified with the red arrow, which added up to 11. I read through my first-cycle codes and identified an additional 5 codes to add, making the total for the red arrows in staff transcripts 16.

Adding 24 codes from asterisk to the 17 codes identified with the black star and combining them with the 16 codes identified with the red arrow, the final count for the "authority" board was 57. I took a photo (1) of this stage of the secondary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard, and revisited RQ2 and sub-questions to continue working out themes. To engage deeper analysis, I used a purple whiteboard marker to identify themes across the codes listed. Some of the general, initial themes were: self-directing, exploring, faith, TRUST, and reputation. I also underlined key terms that indicated authority (also responding to a sub-question below), as a way to showcase my connection to this larger theme of authority. I took a photo (1) of the completed secondary-cycle coding process as depicted on the whiteboard and erased my work. I printed the photo I took of my whiteboard.

To aid this process, I revisited notes taken during the interviews. Since I had previously reviewed and reflected on themes from these notes, I considered these initial themes as I continued to move through the RQ2 analysis.

3.3.3 Participant-Observation Data

Once I completed my interview data analysis, I turned to participant-observation data from my 2016 travels with Nuns on the Bus. This data set is considered a secondary source of data for my RQ1 and RQ2. That is to say, I relied on it to confirm or debunk initial themes from my interview data. This is important to note because while my observations provide important nuance to the information collected through interviews, because they are filtered through my perspective (and therefore, my biases, subjectivity, etc.) it is possible these data are not as reliable as other data (Charmaz, 2006). My participant-observation data totaled 11 pages of double-spaced notes. Because of the small amount (in comparison to the interview data) I decided against using a whiteboard to organize and make sense of my data. Moreover, because these data were written by me, based on my experiences and reflections in the field, I decided the deep analysis approach I took with my interview data was not necessary.

Before analyzing my participant-observation data, I read through my analytic memos from the interview data analysis as a means of focusing my attention for the participant-observation data. That is to say, reading through my previous analytic memos directed my attention to notes pertaining to tension and/or authority. I specifically looked for key words I had highlighted from my previous analysis, such as: trust, faith, support, freedom, Catholic, beyond, Church, outside, roles, bishops, and hierarchy. To stay consistent with my analysis methodology, I used green and purple marker, red pen, and a yellow highlighter to underline, circle, and draw on my paper copies as I analyzed to make notes, comments, and sketches when necessary.

After reading through participant-observation data a few times, I returned to my whiteboard pictures, specifically, the final secondary-cycle coding whiteboards. Remembering that “coding is part work but it is also part play” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 70), I aimed to try out some ideas based on what was emerging from my data. By revisiting my secondary-cycle coding I refocused on the themes that were beginning to emerge from my analysis, and further refine them through this participant-observation data.

To connect back to my theories and general focus of my study, I revisited my literature review, making analytic memos as a means of “free writing, creativity, and writing as a method of inquiry” (Tracy, 2013, p. 196). To aid this process of reflection, contemplation, and analysis, I engaged discussions with three individuals to attempt to “talk it out” and continuously revisited my whiteboard pictures and memos to grapple with what my data were telling me.

3.3.4 Archival Data

My archival data documents totaled 125 pages, including materials like NETWORK board minutes, policies, and files, LCWR information, documents from New Ways Ministry, and correspondence with bishops, among other things (for requested archive files, see Appendix E). Additionally, I had 14 pages of notes taken during my archive visits. All documents were printed to manually note and highlight as I analyzed. I underlined in purple and highlighted in yellow as a means of identifying interesting details that pertained to my RQ3. In addition to manually noting and highlighting, I typed notes on my computer for added organization and deeper analysis.

To push analysis forward, I re-read these notes in addition to the notes taken during both of my archival visits, while making comments in the documents and indicating connections and themes. Specifically, I used the Vatican’s three main areas of concern as a lens to identify contributors to tension over the forty years of NETWORK’s existence. Themes emerged through

the process of constant comparison in which I repeatedly turned from my documents to the Vatican's censure to my RQ3. This process is "circular, iterative, and reflexive" (Tracy, 2013, p. 190), encouraging the analysis to sharpen and take focus. Some of the emergent themes included: women's interests, feminism, and Catholic concerns.

CHAPTER 4: CONSTRUCTING THIRD SPACE

In this chapter I respond to the first research question (RQ1): *How do women religious and staff at NETWORK discursively frame the organizational tension(s) they experience with the Church as a result of their work?* NETWORK frames the tensions they experience according to three specific sites of tension: Catholic values and beliefs, authority of the Church, and the spaces they occupy. Interview and participant-observation data suggest these tensions are experienced in the form of dualisms, namely: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. As Putnam et al. (2016) suggest, “dualisms lie at the heart of contradictions and paradox” (p. 73) creating boundaries within polarized relationships. In effect, NETWORK experiences discomfort specific to the boundaries of these dualities.

NETWORK staff and sisters discursively frame this tension in terms of *boundaries* and *moving beyond boundaries* and utilize this discomfort to construct a third space where they are able to hold the tension they experience from dualisms and be productive within it. Third space can be understood as “a liminal and performative site of disruption, invention, and enunciation that enables organizational members to live with paradox” (Putnam et al., 2016, p. 129). As such, third space is discursively constructed between opposites in order to “help redefine the situation and to create space for the interaction between two realities” (Janssens & Steyaert, 1999, p. 134). NETWORK names their third space *sister spirit*, which is reviewed further below (for NETWORK’s sister spirit as third space, see Figure 4).

In this chapter I first provide specific examples from interviews with NETWORK staff and sisters showcasing how tension is framed in terms of boundaries and moving beyond boundaries. Then, based on findings from the interview data, I review three main sites of tension for NETWORK: Catholic values and beliefs, authority of the Church, and the spaces they occupy.

Finally, I explain the concept of sister spirit as NETWORK's organizational third space, and as such, their response to the tensions they experience as a result of their work. Sister spirit is both a discursively constructed principle that guides their work and manages their position in relation to institutional Catholicism and secularism, as well as a way of organizing that situates NETWORK to embrace the tension experienced with the Church hierarchy and be productive within it.

4.1 Tension Framed as Dualisms

Interview and participant-observation data suggest three sites of tension exist for NETWORK as a result of their work: Catholic values and beliefs, authority of the Church, and the spaces NETWORK occupies. NETWORK frames these tensions they experience as dualisms, specifically (and respectively): Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. To be sure, NETWORK discursively frames said tension in specific terms of *boundaries*, and how they experience *freedom* in moving beyond boundaries, suggesting there exists a duality at play. Dualisms boast bipolar relationships that "have clear-cut boundaries between poles" (Putnam et al., 2016, p. 73) while duality suggests an interdependence is involved between the poles.

Utilizing the discursive frames of boundaries and freedom in moving beyond the boundaries suggests NETWORK staff and sisters have effectively created a *third space* within the dualisms (for depiction, see Figure 4). It is important to note, NETWORK is not transcending the tension; they are not moving *outside* of the paradox (Putnam et al., 2016), but rather, creating new space within it. As Janssens and Steyaert (1999) suggest this third space makes it possible to "keep the tension alive and...embedded in the complexity of the context and its relational interactions" (p. 136). Not only is NETWORK existing and organizing within this tension; they welcome it, find it helpful to their efforts, and are being productive within it. The third space, which is reviewed

later in this chapter, is effectively constructed as a response to the tension they experience, and it is named *sister spirit*.

Below I provide examples of NETWORK staff and sisters identifying and problematizing boundaries within/as a result of their work, and how they construct the freedom they experience in moving beyond these boundaries. Then I explain how these discursive constructions reflect three central points of tension for NETWORK and the Roman Catholic Church as a result of their work, which effectively construct the three dualities at play.

4.1.1 Moving Beyond Boundaries and Experiencing Freedom

All staff members I interviewed at NETWORK mentioned they are currently working to identify what their relationship to Catholicism looks like. One NETWORK staff member, Sister Catherine, talks about NETWORK's connection to Catholicism, and how it is complicated. She concludes,

But it's all this organic development, which is very different than institutional. And I think one of the things that makes some at the USCCB nervous about us is that it is so organic. And they have no control. 'Cause we have no formal relationship with them. So it gives us a great deal of freedom.

Sister Catherine identifies two tensions at play here: tension around the way NETWORK identifies as Catholic, and tension in the relationship NETWORK has with the Church. First, in making a distinction between how NETWORK orients to Catholicism and the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of Catholicism, Sister Catherine suggests NETWORK's Catholicism is ever in flux, growing from the bottom up, and existing in the midst of this tension. While some bishops of the USCCB (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops) may feel nervous about NETWORK's identification with Catholicism, Sister Catherine admits they cannot do anything about it—

referencing the second tension at play. As an independent organization, NETWORK can experience freedom from the Church's direct control.

Another staff member at NETWORK further articulated the freedom they experience beyond the boundaries. Responding to a question asking about NETWORK's relationship to the Church, Esther explains:

I think our tagline does a really good job of it. We are "activists for justice inspired by Catholic sisters." Which to me signifies that there is no formal tie to the Roman Catholic Church, and it just so happens that our founders and significant portion of our population feel some sort of membership tie to the Church. But it's pretty freeing.

The freedom Esther is referring to is the nuance provided in existing as an organization with a Catholic foundation, though with no direct ties to the Church. NETWORK can experience the best of both worlds in identifying with Catholicism through its founders and members, and experiencing freedom through self-direction and organizing.

This freedom carries over to NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus campaign. In asking Sister Catherine how she would explain the relationship NETWORK has with the Roman Catholic Church, she responds by mentioning the Vatican's censure:

With the censure, there were places – still are places – where [we] can't speak on a Catholic property. But here's what the Spirit does with those kinds of things: because of that, then we've been to all these other venues, all these other places...so what's happened is: we're much broader.

Sister Catherine is referring to her experience with Nuns on a Bus, traveling around the country visiting different communities and holding events. Because NETWORK was named in the censure, there are some diocese¹⁸ (more specifically, some bishops) that do not welcome Nuns on the Bus. By identifying Catholic property, Sister Catherine acknowledges the difference in

¹⁸ A diocese may be considered a Catholic Church community within a geographical area under the leadership of a bishop (Catholic Church, 1997).

authority between the Church and NETWORK. Sister Catherine explains literal physical boundaries such as these, while frustrating, require Nuns on the Bus to find other physical places to spend their time, resources, and values—beyond the boundaries. But as she suggests, she believes the Holy Spirit plays a part in this work, making sure Nuns on the Bus—and thereby, NETWORK—is reaching certain people and populations.

Another sister who spent time with Nuns on the Bus also mentions the censure and how it impacted the Nuns' work. In talking about the success of Nuns on the Bus, Sister Edith reflects on the moment Nuns on the Bus emerged:

The whole thing began at a time when there was a lot of criticism of American nuns coming from the Vatican and it was an attempt to say, we need to get the word out there who we really are. We're not who you think we are. We want you to know who we really are...we are not just contained in convents or in Catholic schools teaching little children and being obedient, but we're there with you. We care about you. We wanna help you.

Sister Edith talks about Nuns on the Bus as an opportunity to show the world that American nuns are more than what most people understand them to be. Explaining nuns' role within society in this way frames the sisters as moving into a new understanding of what it means to be women religious. Not only are understandings of nuns' and sisters' identity expanding but so, too, are they physically moving beyond their convents into communities to meet the people through Nuns on a Bus.

In a similar tone, sister Joan talks about experiencing consequences within the Church for “taking stands that rock the boat,” such as having to meet with the bishop, and having their hands slapped. Sister Joan, who rode with Nuns on the Bus in 2016, admits that as sisters, they have learned to construct a particular orientation to this kind of tension:

But that was a great thing. I think sisters have kind of said, well, whatever happens, happens. And the fact that we've really tried to enter into conflict, is sort of a frame of reference and dialogue. And give serious thought and prayer to what we do, not

just, you know in your face kinda thing...going against the bishops just for the sake of going against them.

Referring to the tension experienced with the all-male hierarchy of the Church, Sister Joan alludes to an ability to be intentional and productive within the tension. In effect, the consequences they have experienced as a result of their work as sisters has taught them to grow accustomed to the conflict and tension. They have learned to be comfortable existing within it and find clarity within the tension despite the struggle.

In one final example, Sister Bridget talks about how her role as a sister has evolved over the years. When she took her vows decades ago, she wore a habit and lived a life of separation. She says, “it was almost an expectation when I entered the community that you don't go beyond where the church tells you where to go.” Over the years, expectations shifted, particularly after Vatican II. She sums up saying:

When I entered religious life, the context of my world view was very much the Catholic church. And I loved the church, and basically want to be part—my best self in that church. Needless to say, as time went on, at times there was an image expected of sisters that we should stay within certain boundaries, both of thinking as well as how we lived and dressed. And I found myself not able to do that.

This quote aptly summarizes the longing these women have to devote their lives to the Church, and simultaneously points to the tension involved in experiencing authoritative limitations. Sister Bridget identifies different kinds of boundaries she has experienced: boundaries related to her thoughts and perspective on the world, as well as boundaries associated with her lifestyle and her attire. In doing so she makes clear that she has outgrown the boundaries and expectations set by the Church, although she desires to remain a member. Such tension is commonplace for women religious.

4.1.2 NETWORK's Developing Tensions

Based on how my participants discursively construct the importance of boundaries and moving beyond boundaries (as reviewed above), interviews with NETWORK staff and sisters suggest there are three primary sites of tension for NETWORK: Catholic values and beliefs, authority of the Church, and the spaces they occupy. Such tensions can be expressed as dualisms, respectively: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. Below I elaborate on these tensions and connect them to the respective dualism.

First, NETWORK has a fraught relationship with Catholicism. Established by Catholic sisters and guided by Catholic social justice teaching, NETWORK has no formal tie to the Catholic faith despite often being referenced as a Catholic organization. In fact, NETWORK's efforts are often directed at expanding reach to other faith traditions, secular individuals and organizations, and so on. Yet, NETWORK is not a secular organization, seeing as its aims are rooted in Catholic social justice and focused on applying their beliefs in the Gospel to the world. As a result, the discomfort and uncertainty involved in *how* NETWORK identifies as Catholic is a site of tension for the organization, and the dualism of Catholic/secular emerges.

Such a hazy relationship with Catholicism subsequently contributes to an uncomfortable association with the authority of Roman Catholic Church. Needless to say, NETWORK is not supported or directly affiliated with the Church, despite its establishment by women religious and current employment of a few Catholic sisters as NETWORK staff members. While women religious have a direct affiliation with the Church, they have no formal position within Church hierarchy as compared to priests and bishops. The difference between women religious and the all-male hierarchy is authority; women religious are allowed to self-direct within their communities or convents, while priests, bishops, and other male religious, are expected to remain

organized and focused within their work as it relates to the hierarchy of the Church. For NETWORK, tensions develop around how women religious and staff construct authority to self-organize around their policy work, illuminating a dualism of the authority of the all-male hierarchy in the Church/Catholic laity (which includes women religious).

Finally, the changing nature of women religious' roles—expanding to new spaces—is also a site of tension for NETWORK. Post Vatican II roles for women religious took on nuance as they became more involved with their communities and the world (rather than focused inward and on prayer) (Ebaugh, 1993). As a result, many communities are now devoted to being out with the people, helping make change for the lived realities of others. Being involved with communities, marginalized populations, and those generally struggling, many sisters have a keen perspective of the challenges individuals face within society. In essence, NETWORK and women religious recognize the importance of being with the people who are marginalized and struggling. NETWORK's concerns in this regard are realized through the Nuns on the Bus campaign, physically traveling to communities in need. Yet with certain bishops refusing to welcome NETWORK to their communities, the resulting tension around space emerges in a dualism of religious convents/society.

4.2 Sister Spirit

Making productive use of the tension they experience as a result of their work, my analysis suggests NETWORK constructs a third space—named *sister spirit*—wherein tension can be retained and a dynamic approach to the dualities they experience is able to develop (Janssens & Steyaert, 1999). Specifically, Janssens and Steyaert (1999) explain this third space perspective in relation to dualities:

Development becomes possible, as the “third” element provides a means for playing with the boundaries of the two realities. The “third” element is not then a goal in itself, but rather a means for connecting the two realities. (p. 134)

Such an approach to managing dualities creates space to maintain social interaction between conflicting poles rather than transcending beyond them.

Before proceeding, the phenomenon of *space* should be explained briefly. In her review of literature on organizational space, Wilhoit (2016) points out the importance of recognizing and treating space as both a material feature (i.e., the physical reality of space) and a social construction (i.e, symbolically created through language). In uniting the material with the social, space can be understood as having a dynamic nature constituted by physical locations and/or the presence of organizational members, internal and external elements (e.g., instant messaging systems for employees and the geographic location of an organization), as well as a virtual presence online (Wilhoit, 2016).

As a third space socially constructed between the three dualities previously reviewed, NETWORK’s sister spirit is realized as both a guiding principle for the organization and a way of organizing. NETWORK’s sister spirit is based on their close association with Catholic nuns and sisters, and the fact that they were founded by women religious. Mary, a staff member at NETWORK, provides a conceptual understanding of sister spirit as well as an example of how they make sense of this guiding principle within their work, explaining:

As we move farther and farther away from being an organization by and for Catholic sisters, we have really identified qualities of sisters that's important to live out. And we call it "sister spirit" which seems kind of silly sometimes, but I think we all take sister spirit very seriously. I mean, it was definitely part of our--we're all wrapping up our end-of-year, or if you're an associate, your mid-year evaluation. And there is a question, both for the team lead who's doing the evaluation and the person who's doing their self-evaluation: "Here are all the qualities of sister spirit. Where have you lived out sister spirit? What's easiest for you? What do you find a challenge?" And really challenging ourselves to root ourselves in encounter, not ideology, meet others with hope, and approach others in situations with hope and

welcome, right? Different qualities. Those are on the wall in our conference room as well.

Sister spirit—and more generally, NETWORK’s relationship to/with nuns—lays a foundation for NETWORK that reaches beyond traditional understandings of Catholicism; the way these women live out their Catholicism, committed to working with/for the people as a Gospel mandate, is central to sister spirit. Mary also infers that sister spirit is a movement away from “being an organization by and for Catholic sisters,” emphasizing the importance of decentralizing Catholicism and Catholic sisters within the organization, and simultaneously holding sister spirit as central.

A prime example of sister spirit enacted is NETWORK’s Nuns on the Bus campaign, wherein religious sisters travel on a bus to visit communities across the country as a means of connecting with the people NETWORK’s efforts aim to support. Sister spirit is evident in the willingness to meet people where they are (i.e., everyday citizens in their hometowns), which is focused both the values of the Catholic Church and putting those values into action. As such, sister spirit is embodied in Nuns on the Bus, allowing the third space of sister spirit to be realized in physical locations.

Sister spirit is more than a guiding principle of their work and essence, but also a way of organizing, or constructing authority. While wrapping up my interview with Sister Catherine, who is a staff member at NETWORK and has also participated in Nuns on the Bus, she made a point to explain NETWORK organizes around a collaborative leadership style, which she references as “a little surprising.” She says:

Especially when you compare it with other *[laughing]* Roman Catholic organizations that're so hierarchical...I mean, we come outta Catholic sister style so. So, sister spirit...'Cause that's a big part of who we are. We're not institutionally religious. We're sister spirit.

Distinguishing sister spirit from a kind of institutional religious organizing style (e.g., the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church) Sister Catherine underscores the importance of collaboration within their work and organizing. As such, sister spirit—when talked about as a way of organization—may be considered a kind of alternative organizing, marked by inclusionary and democratic practices (Buzzanell et al. 1997) which Sister Catherine suggests is noteworthy within the context of Roman Catholic organizations.

Taken together, as both a guiding principle and a way of organizing, sister spirit develops into a discursive and material third space in which NETWORK is able to unite dualisms—and consequently manage tensions—experienced through their work in playful and productive ways (for NETWORK’s sister spirit as third space, see Figure 4). Specifically, sister spirit unites the values of Catholicism with a secular world; sister spirit is embodied through Nuns on the Bus, bringing women religious from their communities to various communities across the country; and as an organizing factor, sister spirit can be used to construct collaborative authority, different from that which the Church relies upon and recognizes.

CHAPTER 5: MANIFESTING AUTHORITY

In this chapter I respond to the second research question (RQ2): *Within the context of NETWORK, how and why is authority made manifest at times for the purposes of organizing? And how and why is authority stabilized at times?* My analysis suggests women religious and staff at NETWORK manifest authority in two ways, at two different levels. First, women religious collectively construct authority in order to dissent from the Roman Catholic Church (at the individual, or micro-level), and second, NETWORK invokes the Gospel to engage politics (at the organizational, or meso-level).

As previously reviewed, NETWORK frames the organizational tension it experiences with the Church as a result of its work in terms of dualisms, specifically: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. These dualisms, which my participants talk about in terms of boundaries and moving beyond the boundaries, result in the construction of a third space, or place where organizational members can engage dialogue around disruption and (re)invention as a way to keep the energy from tension alive and productive (Putnam et al., 2016). NETWORK's third space is called *sister spirit*—recognized as a guiding principle of their work, as well as a way of organizing—and it allows them to address the organizational complexity of their work by uniting opposites.

It is within this third space that NETWORK is able to manifest authority to dissent from the Roman Catholic Church and also engage politics. Dissent has been identified as one way organizational members can make sense of ongoing dissonance within faith organizations (Hinderaker, 2017), and thus, can be defined as an interactive process in which organizational members express “disagreement with policies, practices, or imperatives” (Garner, 2013, p. 376).

Such a definition recognizes the dynamic context in which dissent takes place, underscoring the relational and ongoing iterations of this phenomenon.

For NETWORK, the manifestation of authority to dissent happens on two separate levels: the individual, or micro-level (i.e., Catholic sisters who associate with NETWORK) and the organizational, or meso-level (i.e., NETWORK as an organization). At the individual level Catholic sisters leverage the support of their religious communities as a means of collective construction of authority in order to dissent from the Catholic Church. Specifically, religious communities offer a kind of organizing power based on women religious' many decades of building trust and collective action in society. The support and freedom sisters have in their individual communities scales up to influence and benefit NETWORK at the organizational level, particularly through Nuns on the Bus. At the organizational level, NETWORK invokes authority through the Gospel, as an authoritative text brought to life through their work in engaging politics as an avenue for change. By calling upon the Gospel, understood generally as the life and times of Jesus Christ, NETWORK staff and sisters enable the Gospel to direct and author their political activity (Brummans et al., 2013).

Taken together, NETWORK is authoring the Catholic Church in ways that neither the bishops nor the hierarchy of the Church often support (e.g., the censure; Nuns on the Bus not being welcomed in certain dioceses). Yet, because they operate from this third space—between Catholic/secular, all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity, religious convent/society—both the bishops and the hierarchy of the Church are unable to exercise control with NETWORK and the sisters associated with the organization. By constructing authority to dissent and invoking the Gospel to engage politics, NETWORK manifests authority from third space—from sister spirit, a grassroots level of organizing, self-defined and self-directed.

In this chapter I first provide examples of how Catholic sisters associated with NETWORK collectively construct authority (at the individual level) in order to dissent from the Church. Then, I provide examples of how staff and sisters associated with NETWORK invoke the Gospel (at the organizational level) as a means of engaging politics through their work.

5.1 Sisters: Collectively Constructing Authority to Dissent

Historically, women religious have lived in community with each other. While religious life for nuns and sisters has, generally speaking, evolved and changed over the years (e.g., expectations regarding attire, roles, living arrangements), women religious have often relied on their shared community with each other to make sense of the world and their work within it. Indeed, each community or congregation is directed by a mission with specific intentions and values that frame their livelihood.

One sister shares the history her community has experienced over the course of the 50 years she's been a religious sister. Sister Bridget talks about how her congregation has influenced her understanding of self and the work she is involved in, including Nuns on the Bus:

I belong to an international community...we had sisters who had lived under Nazism, in Germany. And we knew their story, their heartache. Same for communism. And then, as people went into third world countries, we heard the stories of poor women struggling with so many children in Latin America, wherever. And it just ... you realize these things from personal story, that it isn't what you were getting, necessarily, either from the church or other media. So you began to realize, we got our own experience. We have to trust our own inner authority.

In sharing her community's history, Sister Bridget expresses the importance of personal story informing and guiding her life's work as a sister. Drawing from women's personal ways of knowing (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986), she builds knowledge and makes connections that illuminate a new perspective for her. Ultimately these stories—these lived

realities of sisters in her community—construct an authority that provides a foundational understanding of the world, nuanced from what the Church or other resources provide. In co-constructing space for sensemaking, these sisters are able to unite through dissent (Hinderaker, 2017)—recognizing the stories they are told by the Church and by the media are not always reliable. Built on trusting oneself and each other, Sister Bridget implies women religious construct authority to direct their attention to areas of life, individuals, and issues that may otherwise be left out or forgotten.

Another participant explains how she came to understand this authority. Speaking to how her religious identity influences the political work of Nuns on the Bus, Sister Clare shares her personal experience orienting to this calling:

You grow up and you continually, as a woman--you are taking the teachings of the Church and the Scriptures and your experience, and what is happening in the world around you, in society, and you're constantly balancing and getting your own direction as to where you need to go with that. And so the Church, sometimes likes saying, "Oh, I don't know if we should do this"--and when you look at what they were doing, it just kind of solidifies what we *do* need to be doing, and so "Here I go."

Once again, making sense of her own experiences has led Sister Clare to recognize when to follow the Church's lead, and when to decide to trust herself and do otherwise. She alludes to the complicated nature of sensemaking involved in identity work, striving for balance and understanding, and finding her own direction. Beyond recognition, Sister Clare refers to a moment in which it all comes together (i.e. "it just kind of solidifies") ultimately constituting authoritative action.

This construction of authority is built into NETWORK's Nuns on the Bus. After inquiring with Sister Lucy about how her identity as a religious sister influences the political work of Nuns on the Bus, she responds with:

I think it allows us to risk a little more boldly...not too many people can get on a bus and raise money to drive across the country for 18 days, including two stops at conventions. That takes some resource and some creativity and time and intention and women who were just great at all those things, making connections, raising the funds, doing the PR, getting the message out there, being able to risk and put themselves out there in that way, I think that that's part of what allows us to be successful in some of those areas.

By utilizing their strengths and resources—effectively constructing authority through their organizing efforts—women religious find success in their efforts. In mentioning risk, Sister Lucy acknowledges the caution, or chance involved in the work of Nuns on the Bus; yet their identity as religious sisters lends itself to taking a chance.

As another example of this work in action, Mark, a staff member at NETWORK, mentions the development of the Nuns Letter—a letter to Congress supporting the 2010 Senate healthcare bill, in which more than 50 Catholic women's orders across the nation “took sides against not only the Republican minority but against their own church hierarchy, as represented by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops” (Landsberg, 2010)—which he references as a turning point for NETWORK. Mark says:

Once that Nuns' Letter came out and it gave Catholic Republican members of the House sort of permission to vote for it. Even though they had been told by the bishops that a vote for it would be supporting abortion, that the nuns say, "No, we've read this bill and it doesn't do that."

This example demonstrates NETWORK's process of authoring themselves into being as a legitimate reason for Catholic Republican members of the House to vote in a particular way. By generating widespread, concerted support of Catholic sisters, NETWORK was able to leverage influence and ultimately manifest authority to dissent in a productive way.

This work later paid off for NETWORK, once the Affordable Care Act passed. Mark elaborates on how this success contributed to NETWORK's leadership development:

We're able to see ourselves as leaders, and then, by putting out that persona, others then do as well. So if there's an issue we care about, that we're strong enough to be the only faith partner on a secular coalition. Whereas historically my understanding is that we were much more always just working the faith angle.

In trusting their self-directed efforts, NETWORK is relying on their own authority to guide their work with other D.C. partners. Mark suggests this is a change in how NETWORK has organized in the past, previously attending to primarily faith-specific issues and concerns. Identifying NETWORK as “strong enough,” Mark illuminates the success NETWORK has achieved in constructing authority.

5.2 NETWORK: Invoking the Gospel to Engage Politics

For NETWORK, constructing authority to engage politics is imperative to their success. That is to say, if they cannot be taken seriously through the political advocacy they engage, NETWORK fails at constructing authority to influence social transformation. In order to be successful, NETWORK invokes the Gospel as a means of engaging politics. In specific terms, by invoking the Gospel NETWORK allows it to “become inscribed or voiced into members authoring of the organization” (Brummans et al., 2013, p. 351). An apt and succinct example of invocation is provided by Sister Bridget when she says, “Action for justice is constitutive of the Gospel message. ...that’s key to understanding NETWORK, in my book.” Sister Bridget provides some historical context in explaining that this statement—*action for justice is constitutive of the Gospel message*—emerged during a 1971 gathering called the World Council of Catholic Vision, held at Villanova University.¹⁹ Such lays the foundation for NETWORK to engage in politics, acting as a channel through which women religious and staff at NETWORK can invoke the Gospel and work towards justice.

¹⁹ She is referring to the 1971 World Synod of Catholic Bishops which, in part, focused on “Justice in the World” (see World Synod of Catholic Bishops, 1971).

Similarly, Mary shares the significance of Catholic nuns and sisters within the context of NETWORK's efforts: "I see sisters in general, Catholic sisters, as...keepers of the purest meaning of the Gospel, our baptismal call of creating justice in the world and building God's Kingdom. I mean, and NETWORK certainly takes the lead in that." Recognizing Catholic sisters as individuals who are able to invoke the Gospel in its purest meaning directs NETWORK's attention to politics as a means of positive change in society. In no uncertain terms Mary suggests the Gospel is "our baptismal call," imploring all to follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ and identifying NETWORK as the leader in this regard.

Considering Catholic sisters, and NETWORK generally, do not have legitimate authority within the Catholic Church, they are able to focus on the Gospel as a means of invoking authority to engage politics. After asking her about the relationship between NETWORK and the Roman Catholic Church, Sister Catherine replies:

We don't worry about it. Here's the thing: We're true to what we're called to...we're fighting *for* [emphasis added] a common good, for where our people flourish, for what Jesus said in the Gospel. What a radical thought. That's what we're about. But what it takes I think is some spiritual maturity and not looking to outside sources for reference. Being confident inside ourselves and faithful to the spirit.

Sister Catherine mentions being "true to what we're called to," and "being confident inside ourselves," suggesting the ability to manifest authority to do the work resides within. Her words illuminate the united efforts of NETWORK, focusing on their goals, rather than allowing their attention to drift to consider what the Church hierarchy advises they do. This way of thinking highlights the centrality of the Gospel in and through their work, as well as their ability to channel the spirit (i.e., the Holy Spirit) through it. The Gospel is their source of authority, providing confidence that they are pursuing their work as Jesus would pursue the work.

Sisters who have participated in Nuns on the Bus reference this invocation of the Gospel through their work, too. Responding to a question about whether or not religion and politics should intermix, Sister Edith states:

I don't think we need to go any further than the Gospel...There's so many examples in the Gospel where the ministry of Jesus was the kind of thing that we're talking about. It wasn't just about praying to God and being a nice person. It's about responding to the needs of our brothers and sisters and for me, it's that concrete that I can't call myself a Christian or never mind a Catholic, if I'm not responding to needs of my brothers and sisters.

Sister Edith points to the Gospel to provide purpose for NETWORK's political activism. In taking action to respond to the needs of her brothers and sisters—through participation in campaigns like Nuns on the Bus—she is able to bring the ministry of Jesus to life. In essence, political engagement is viewed as the avenue for social transformation, and the Gospel provides the authority needed—in terms of the direction, guidance, and support—to put this work into action.

Other sisters responded similarly to this question, referencing the Gospel as key to engaging politics, thus, underscoring the relationship between religion and politics. Sister Bernadette admits perhaps it is not about religion and politics so much as it is about religious values and politics. She explains:

The gospel has political ramifications or if we want to turn it into even--forget the religion piece of it--but do unto others, the common good, all of that, which is underlying our high religious values. Others may not be religious, necessarily, but they have those values of respecting persons, equality, and all of that. So I think [it's] political, whether we care to engage in the process or not, because if we do not engage in the process that is being political by letting certain policies happen without our standing up for our values.

Sister Bernadette suggests religion is inherently political, whether or not the religion or religious values are acted upon. It is better to invoke the Gospel and take action than to allow the consequences of inaction play out (e.g., through legislation that may end up benefiting the wealthy and depriving the poor).

Invoking the Gospel as a source of authority allows NETWORK staff and sisters to engage politics with conviction. By calling upon or appealing to the Gospel NETWORK is able to make order of their organizational efforts and aims. As a result, NETWORK is able to construct authority, or influence, to engage politics and affect social transformation.

CHAPTER 6: AUTHORIZING TENSION WITHIN THE CHURCH

This chapter is focused on responding to the third research question (RQ3) of this dissertation project: *In what way(s) have the organizing efforts of NETWORK authored tension(s) within the institution of the Church?* The organizing efforts of NETWORK have authored tensions within the institution of the Church through NETWORK's foundational feminist agenda and its organizational Catholic identity.

As a brief review, there are three main concerns the Vatican outlines in its censure (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012) (for a complete review of the three areas of concern for the LCWR, see Appendix A). First, "problematic statements and serious theological, even doctrinal errors" (p. 2) made during addresses at LCWR assemblies. The censure mentions an example from an address "about some Religious "moving beyond the Church" or even beyond Jesus" (p. 2), which is problematic, as the censure states, because it challenges core Catholic beliefs and is perceived as a rejection of faith.

Another issue the censure outlines is "policies of corporate dissent" (p. 2). This pertains to letters received from leadership teams of various congregations "protesting the Holy See's actions regarding the question of women's ordination and of a correct pastoral approach to ministry to homosexual persons" (p. 2) and specifically identifies letters about New Ways Ministry conferences. Such information suggests, as the censure states, congregational leadership is ineffective and places affiliated communities "outside the Church's teaching" (p. 3).

The final concern as mentioned in the censure is "radical feminism" (p. 3). Such a concern identifies "themes incompatible with the Catholic faith" (p. 3) in LCWR programs and presentations. Additionally, "some commentaries on "patriarchy" distort the way in which Jesus

has structured sacramental life in the Church” (p. 3) indicates an offense to the organizational structure of the Roman Catholic Church on earth.

Taken together, these three concerns underscore a central issue: the bounded nature of the Roman Catholic Church’s structure. U.S. women religious are perceived to be threatening the Church’s organizational existence and limitations by “moving beyond the Church” (p. 2), placing themselves “outside the Church’s teaching” (p. 3), and distorting “the way in which Jesus has structured sacramental life in the Church” (p. 3). Such comments highlight the Church’s keen interest in maintaining control of the Church, both theologically and doctrinally, surely, but also organizationally.

With these concerns in mind, analysis of archival documents proposes NETWORK’s organizing efforts have authored tensions within the institution of the Church through its foundational feminist agenda and its organizational Catholic identity. In this chapter, I first review NETWORK’s early feminist agenda as influenced and organized by NETWORK’s first executive director, Carol Coston. This focus on feminist issues, perspectives, and activities has arguably contributed to a developing tension between women religious and the Church, in the form of “radical feminism” as identified in the Vatican’s censure (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 3). Then, I share how NETWORK’s employment of the term Catholic contributes to tension within the Church. Based on the organization’s ongoing struggle with its Catholic association, NETWORK has both currently and historically been called out for its contested use of the term Catholic (i.e., who gets to control the use/meaning of this term).

6.1 NETWORK’s Support for a Feminist Agenda

Over the course of its existence NETWORK has maintained a feminist interest, both in how it organizes as well as the efforts (i.e. policies, activities) on which it focuses. Based on

archival research analysis, NETWORK's first decade of organizing suggests a keen interest in feminism from the organization's inception. In this section I first review the organizational foundation NETWORK takes with its work, as explained in meeting minutes from 1972. I then refer to two indications of feminist interests from NETWORK's early years, building on NETWORK's foundation, before sharing personal reflections from NETWORK's first executive director in 1981/1982 confirming the central importance of feminism within NETWORK's organizational history.

During the first two years of NETWORK's existence, meeting minutes indicate purpose and direction for NETWORK. Taken from meeting minutes at a January 28-30, 1972, weekend retreat for NETWORK staff:

Given the historic situation we are living in and the dehumanizing situations/institutions which victimize all people, it is necessary for those who believe in and live by the Mystery of the Incarnation to respond. Sisters can do this by concentrating the corporate power of their Religious Communities on the political process as a means of promoting liberation. (para. 1)

Such strong language to describe the challenging times and ability of religious communities to respond in an effective way lays a foundation for NETWORK to "serve as a catalyst to action rather than as another organization" (NETWORK Minutes of Meeting, 1972, para. 3). The same document notes NETWORK will operate in service to "individuals as well as to established organizations, such as...LCWR" (para. 3). Leveraging the collective power of individual Catholic nuns and sisters across the U.S., NETWORK aims to improve living conditions and change policies for the common good.

NETWORK's meeting minutes from 1972) identify Carol Coston as one of the first NETWORK staff members, and later documentation confirms her as NETWORK's first executive director. NETWORK's archival documents include many mentions of Coston and her influence

on the organization. Some documents allude to Coston's feminist leanings and interests. For instance, NETWORK's archives included correspondence between Coston and an individual from an association named *Christian Feminists*²⁰ requesting \$2.00 in order to keep Coston's membership active (Christian Feminist Newsletter, 1975). Records indicate Coston asked to remain a member and mailed the funding. This, in addition to archival documentation of notes from an LCWR address given by Coston at an August 1979 assembly focusing on the book *For Her Own Good: 150 Years of the Expert's Advice to Women*,²¹ suggest there is a strong foundation of women's interests in NETWORK's early leadership (i.e. Carol Coston), even though NETWORK is an organization not solely concerned about women (Coston, 1979).

Of particular interest in this regard is NETWORK's board report from December 1981 to June 1982, in which Carol Coston includes personal reflections announcing the end of her 11 years on NETWORK's staff, as executive director. From Coston's personal reflections:

When I first agreed to begin NETWORK's staffing and programs, I was only dimly aware of the legislative process, but keenly aware of the energy that women were discovering within themselves to move into new areas, to name their own values and to participate in decisions that were going to affect their lives...I still experience women's energy, but I believe we are wiser today about where we want to use it and with what values do we hold ourselves accountable. My years at NETWORK have challenged me to develop a historical feminist perspective and to choose feminist values. Working as part of the staff, I have experienced a feminist model of operation. (Coston, 1982, Personal Reflections section, para. 3-4)

Coston's reflections identify feminism as central to her work as NETWORK's executive director.

Mentioning "the energy that women were discovering within themselves to move into new areas,"

Coston provides grounding for women religious to confidently enter into spaces of policy and

²⁰ While I cannot be sure of this association (nor its existence today), a basic internet search suggests it may be the same as a Christian Feminists club out of Wheaton College (the address on the correspondence matches the address for Wheaton in Massachusetts).

²¹ A book by Barbara Ehrenreich (1978) reviewing the ways scientific expertise has been applied historically to women's health, often from the point of view of intervention and correction (e.g., menstruation was once considered an illness).

legislation that, while unfamiliar to her at first, were not an impossible challenge for the women of this illuminating period in time.

Within this same board report Coston announces the person who will be taking over her role at NETWORK. The report reads, “The Search Committee then recommended Nancy Sylvester to the Executive Committee to be the new Coordinator...She has a deep appreciation of both the feminist perspective and a participatory management process. I am delighted with the choice” (Coston, 1982, Transition section, para. 2-3). Once again, the feminist perspective is acknowledged as an important element of NETWORK’s past and future organizing.

The board report concludes with a listing of dates and events, presumably for the upcoming year. The specific relationship between these events and NETWORK is unclear, though they are listed under the subheading “Activities,” suggesting at the least that they may be of interest to NETWORK staff and members (Coston, 1982). Mentioned here are two dozen activities running from January through July, 1982, including:

- March 26-28: “Goddess Rising Conference” - Feminist Spirituality, Sacramento, CA
- June 25: “Feminist Values in the Workplace,” Religion and Labor Conference, Milwaukee, WI
- July 10-17: “Women’s Spirit Bonding for a World in Need,” Grailville, OH, A Feminist Approach to Alternative Enterprises

Promoted as such, these events further support the feminist agenda directed by NETWORK’s early years of organizing.

NETWORK’s early organizing processes around a feminist agenda—a point of pride for the organization’s leadership—can be recognized as the beginnings of NETWORK, and U.S. women religious more generally, authoring a source of tension within the Roman Catholic Church. Based on the Vatican’s censure of U.S. women religious, specifically identifying “radical feminism” as an issue of concern, NETWORK is organizing in ways that develop into more than

a minor discomfort for the hierarchy of the Church; NETWORK's feminist inspiration and guidance has evolved into a point of grave contention within the Church. By concerning themselves with feminist energies, perspectives and activities, NETWORK is authoring an understanding of U.S. religious women that is not in line with the Vatican's expectations of their mission and purpose. Such departure from previously established understandings of U.S. women religious, as explained in the censure, indicates a loss of control for the all-male hierarchy of the Church.

Moreover, such a focus on feminist interests may direct energy away from "issues of crucial importance to the life of Church and society" (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012, p. 3). Specifically, pro-life issues, family life issues, and human sexuality issues are not part of NETWORK's agenda, though these issues are highlighted as central concerns of which the Vatican censure suggests women religious should be active proponents. As a result, it is possible tensions developed out of the difference between NETWORK's actual interests, efforts, and outcomes and the Vatican's expectations of NETWORK's interests, efforts, and outcomes.

6.2 NETWORK's Catholic Identity

Though NETWORK has no formal connection to the Roman Catholic Church it remains focused on its connection to Catholicism in and through women religious. NETWORK's archives offer clarification on its organizational independence, and also include records challenging its Catholic affiliation. In this section I share NETWORK's organizational orientation to Catholic, starting with foundational meeting minute notes from its early years, and recent changes regarding how they identify as Catholic within their tagline. Then, I delve into correspondence between the New York State Catholic Conference and NETWORK questioning the organization's use of the term Catholic.

As previously reviewed in responding to RQ2, while NETWORK was established by 47 Catholic sisters across the U.S., as an organization it has no formal connection to Catholic or the Roman Catholic Church (i.e., it is not supported or regulated by the Church). Archival documents clarify the independent nature of NETWORK. Specifically, meeting minutes from 1972 state “It is important the NETWORK be independent, clearly a service to all sisters and not tied to any one group or organization” (NETWORK Minutes of Meeting, 1972). In service to women religious but independently operated, NETWORK is able to root itself in the interests and concerns of the Catholic women who lead it.

Despite this clearly stated pursuit of organizational independence, NETWORK has experienced challenges associated with their Catholic nature. For instance, it should be noted that over the duration of this dissertation data collection and completion, NETWORK changed its tagline from *NETWORK: A National Catholic Social Justice Lobby*, to, *NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice*. As it was described to me, this emphasis change from a *Catholic lobby* to a *lobby for Catholic social justice* reframes the Catholic descriptor to focus on the social justice as opposed to the lobby itself. This recent example of the consideration and thought process behind how NETWORK identifies as, or with, Catholic is indicative of the struggle NETWORK continues to have in order to clarify this important distinction.

NETWORK’s archives illuminate another key moment in the organization's history when their association to Catholic was called into question. A memorandum dated March 8, 1996, from Kathleen M. Gallagher, Associate Director for Communication of the New York State Catholic Conference, to NETWORK begins this correspondence with:

It has recently come to our attention that “Network,” which describes itself as a “national Catholic social justice lobby,” has distributed press packets and ratings of elected officials to the Catholic press. For your background information, we offer the following thoughts. First, “Network” is not a Catholic organization. It has no

formal connection to the Roman Catholic Church and does not represent fully the social teachings of our Church...the 1983 Code of Canon Law requires associations which use the name "Catholic" in their title or description to obtain the permission of competent ecclesiastical authority to do so. "Network" has obtained no such authority. (Gallagher, 1996, para. 1-2)

Gallagher accuses NETWORK of improperly using the term Catholic in association with its organization and attempts to debunk the essence of NETWORK. Moreover, Gallagher explains NETWORK has not been authorized to claim itself as Catholic, further problematizing the organization's interests and associations. The letter continues, pointing out additional concerns: "It is my understanding that "Network" officially takes no position on the issue of abortion. Personally, it baffles me how an organization can purport to "put the Catholic faith into action" and "promote Gospel values" without opposing abortion" (Gallagher, 1996, para. 3). By exposing arguable failures on NETWORK's behalf, Gallagher is questioning the organization's commitment to the Catholic faith and efforts focused on its best interests.

As a final point of contention with NETWORK, Gallagher's letter mentions the organization's activities specific to distributing press packets and information about elected officials. The letter states: "The USCC Office of General Counsel has continually urged extreme caution in distributing the voting records of elected officials, especially during an election year and particularly when they indicate approval or disapproval of incumbents' votes" (Gallagher, 1996, para. 4). Because NETWORK provides information on elected officials to their members, it is perceived as a potentially problematic practice which, as Gallagher's letter suggests, may be considered unethical. The correspondence continues: "It can be divisive and confusing for Catholic faithful when groups like Network appeal to them through the use of the word Catholic and indirectly urge them to support or oppose candidates" (Gallagher, 1996, para. 5).

A response letter is included in NETWORK's archives, dated March 18, 1996. This letter is addressed to Kathleen Gallagher, and signed by Kathy Thornton, NETWORK's (then) National Coordinator. The correspondence affirms: "NETWORK has strong, authentic and established connections with the Catholic Church" (Thornton, 1996, para. 2). Thornton's letter explains NETWORK receives strong support by the LCWR, "Even though LCWR does not have clerical status, it is firmly grounded in the Church" (Thornton, 1996, para. 2). After correcting understandings of NETWORK's relationship to the Catholic Church and detailing NETWORK's focus on specific issues, Thornton's response states, "NETWORK grounds our analysis of issues in Catholic Social Teaching, Gospel values and the experience of people who are poor" (Thornton, 1996, para. 4).

Furthermore, in reference to Gallagher's concerns about voting records, Thornton clarifies "as a non-partisan organization, we do not endorse candidates or appointees" (Thornton, 1996, para. 6), explaining that NETWORK distributes materials in compliance with federal regulations. Thornton also mentions Gallagher's dismay on the topic of abortion, stating:

NETWORK does not have a legislative position on abortion, and I do not believe that should call into question our Catholic commitment. Numerous other reputable Catholic organizations do not work on every social or economic issue, and their Catholic identity is not lessened. (Thornton, 1996, para. 7)

Finally, to quell the overarching issue of NETWORK's Catholic connection, Thornton writes:

I also know that the section of the 1983 Code of Canon Law to which you referred in the memo is not retroactive for NETWORK. NETWORK began in 1971. It would be important to us at NETWORK if in your next memo you would correct the statement that suggests NETWORK is not officially "Catholic". I look forward to receiving a copy of your clarifying memo. (Thornton, 1996, para. 10)

Over the course of NETWORK's existence, the organization has maintained a significant and distinct Catholic identity. NETWORK's independence is organizationally important in order

for their work to be truly lead by women religious, though their work is grounded in Catholic social justice tradition and Gospel teachings as a clear guiding principle. While archival documentation suggests they have been (and as the Vatican's censure reveals, still are) called out for not being authorized to call themselves Catholic, NETWORK continues to focus on its efforts and grapple with its Catholic nature, as an ongoing journey in its work.

By organizing around its Catholic identity, NETWORK authors tensions within the Roman Catholic Church that create perceived discrepancies specific to who and what can identify as Catholic, and how. NETWORK's use of the term Catholic—creating an association to the Church—authors an organization into being that, as the Vatican's censure suggests, is not fully representing the values and issues of concern for the Church. Such is a point of contention, both historically and currently, for NETWORK and the Church. While NETWORK acknowledges its organizational interests and activities do not address all appeals of the Church, it nevertheless acts on behalf of Catholic social justice teaching. As a result, the authority by which NETWORK employs its Catholic association contributes to tension within the Church.

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION

This dissertation project began with an interest in how women religious organize in different ways than the all-male hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church, and the organizational implications and tensions that result from said organizing. While tensions specific to gender differences between women religious and the all-male hierarchy of the Church are historically well known and well documented (Ebaugh, 1993; Fialka, 2003; Lindley, 1996; McGuinness, 2013; Piazza, 2014; Zagano, 2011), recent events within the Church's history suggest organizational tension remains. Identifying NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice as an appropriate case study, the goal of this dissertation project was to utilize qualitative methods to address three central research questions pertaining to the tension existing between women religious and the all-male hierarchy of the Church.

First, I studied how women religious and staff at NETWORK discursively frame the organizational tension they experience with the Church as a result of their work. My findings suggest three specific sites of tension exist: Catholic values and beliefs, authority of the Church, and the spaces NETWORK occupies. Framed as dualisms, my participants identify the tensions as: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. Because these dualisms are talked about in terms of boundaries and experiencing freedom in moving beyond the boundaries, NETWORK staff and sisters discursively construct a third space in which they are able to continue developing and being productive within the tension. The third space is named sister spirit, which is both a guiding principle for their work as well as an organizing factor. Furthermore, NETWORK's third space of sister spirit is realized in the material form of Nuns on the Bus.

The third space of sister spirit leads into my second research question, which considered how and why NETWORK is able to manifest authority for the purposes of organizing. Utilizing the third space of sister spirit, NETWORK is able to manifest authority in two ways and at two levels. At the individual level, women religious associated with NETWORK are able to collectively construct authority to dissent from the Church through their religious communities. At the organizational level, staff and sisters associated with NETWORK are able to manifest authority by invoking the Gospel in order to engage politics.

For my third and final research question I explored the way(s) NETWORK's organizing efforts have authored tensions within the institution of the Church. Focusing on the three central concerns as identified in the Vatican's censure (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012), NETWORK authors tensions in the church through its foundational feminist agenda, originating from Carol Coston as NETWORK's first executive director. Additionally, NETWORK authors tensions in the Church through its fraught organizational Catholic identity.

Analysis of this project highlights the bounded organizational nature of the Roman Catholic Church and the organic development of NETWORK's guiding principle and way of organizing known as sister spirit. The resulting contrast showcases an all-male hierarchy of authority in comparison to a democratic, grassroots mobilization organization founded by women; an institution dedicated to protecting Catholic doctrine, and a lobby fighting for more inclusive federal legislation in line with Catholic social teaching.

The Church and NETWORK operate and make sense of their organizational work and purpose in drastically different ways, causing tension between the two organizations. Because NETWORK operates at the intersection of religion, politics, and authority, differences between NETWORK and the Church are not limited to gender differences and ways of organizing but are

intertwined with deeper disputes about positions on policy issues and priorities. It can be said that NETWORK may more closely align with issues salient to the left wing, or liberal end of the U.S. political spectrum, while the bishops may more closely align with issues salient to the right wing, or conservative end of the U.S. political spectrum. While this project did not set out to investigate the political commitment and agenda of NETWORK in comparison to that of the bishops, it is certainly worth noting within the broader context of the U.S. political system.

The Church's focus on protecting the boundaries of the magisterium means that it is obligated to address threats to its authority and state of being, if and when issues arise. Such is the case with the 2012 Vatican censure of U.S. women religious. In challenging Church policies and ideologies, NETWORK is authoring the Church in ways that the Vatican cannot support, requiring intervention and assessment (Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2012).

In the remainder of this chapter I offer theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions of this dissertation project. Then, I recognize the limitations of this work before considering future research and concluding.

7.1 Theoretical Contributions

This project contributes to theory in a number of ways. First, while communication scholars have recognized associations and links between authority and tension, the relational dynamics therein have yet to be fully explored. It is known that authority involves managing tensions (Brummans et al., 2013) and that organizational tension may encourage productive organizing and collective action (Koschmann & Laster, 2011, p. 32); yet, scholarship has not fully explored the way(s) authority can manifest as a result of, and effectively out of tension. Specifically, the ways

tension *engenders* authoring (see Janssens & Steyaert, 1999) has often been talked around,²² but has not been explicitly recognized.

NETWORK's main purpose for manifesting authority is to address tension experienced in the Gospel calling. Turning to the Gospel for direction and order, NETWORK staff and sisters aim to influence legislative action so that it aligns with Catholic social justice teaching. The discomfort and frustration they experience with federal policies that fail to consider the interests and needs of all persons effectively causes them to organize for economic and social transformation within society. In other words, they are unable to sit still within the tension experienced and are moved to invoke the Gospel. The implications on organizational communication scholarship suggest sites of organizational tension may provoke not only response (Putnam et al., 2016) but also *order via organizing*, requiring potentially new processes and practices in constructing authority.

This study also showcases how the manifestation of authority, taking place at both the individual level and the organizational level, can work to stabilize an organization's authority. The multilevel approach to manifesting authority works to stabilize NETWORK by grounding it in widespread community support (i.e., the sisters' communities) and providing organizational purpose and direction through invocation of the Gospel, resulting in the accomplishment of a stabilized authority. As Taylor and Van Every (2014) suggest, upon achieving a shared sense and understanding of expectations, an organization's authority "provides stability: a fabric of roles (and rules) that people learn and come to exemplify in their own practice, in this way perpetuating the organization, now conceived of as an imbrication of patterns of complementary" (p. 197). Indeed, individually the sisters are able to knit the fabric of support that is leveraged in order for

²² Communication scholars have acknowledged tension can be productive within organizational sites (McNamee & Pederson, 2014; Tracy, 2004). Considering this project understands authority as a key component of making order within the process of organizing, the direct influence tension can have on producing authority can be said to be a taken-for-granted connection that past scholarship has overlooked.

NETWORK to actively invoke the Gospel. This finding offers a broader conception of how authority can be stabilized when channeling different and/or multiple levels of organizing.

Thirdly, this dissertation project lays the groundwork for future theory contributions regarding the spiritual nature of constructing authority in third space, which has not been fully explored in communication literature. Taylor and Van Every (2014) argue authority can be understood according to the principle of thirdness, wherein a transactional relationship between two actors results in a thirdness, or a kind of meaning production that did not previously exist. Such is the case with NETWORK and the tensions experienced as dualisms, producing the third space—both discursively and materially constructed—of sister spirit. What is noteworthy in the case of NETWORK is the context, or the religious implications of the third space. In specific terms, NETWORK is making order from a discursive and spiritual state of existence (i.e. sister spirit) which offers stability to manifest authority. This phenomenon aligns with Janssens and Steyaert's (1999) understanding of the equilibrium offered in trialectics, which recognizes “dualities are not two forces locked in opposition and conflict, but two forces which must be balanced” (p. 133). Spiritual aspects of thinking about opposites in this holistic way are informed by Taoism, or the belief that wholeness is made possible from dualisms (e.g., ying and yang). Thus, the third space easily lends itself to that which is spiritual, and when considered alongside the act of invoking authority—which is informed by Buddhist mindfulness (Brummans et al., 2013)—third space (in both the socially constructed and physical sense) or thirdness is a ripe context for studying the spiritual dimensions of organizing and the search for wholeness.

As a final contribution to theory, this work responds to the request by Putnam et al. (2016) for theory development around the nature and possibilities of duality relationships. Building on possibilities around dualisms, using NETWORK as a case study showcases the possibilities in

managing duality tensions by creating space within the tension—third space—which essentially transforms the duality into trialectics. While often referred to in change management literature (Ford & Ford, 1994), trialectics can be understood as a creative strategy, “a way of thinking about change that is based in attraction rather than conflict” (p 757). As a possibility-driven adaptation to dualities, trialectics can facilitate growth for an organization, despite tension. NETWORK’s process of adapting the dualism tension experienced into third space mirrors the phenomenon of trialectics. Yet, because the organization maintains and productively utilizes the tension experienced (instead of relying on selection, separation, integration or transcendence—strategies as outlined in Seo, Putnam, & Bartunek, 2004) it can be said that this process of constructing third space via trialectics may offer a new way to manage tension in dualities.

7.2 Methodological Contributions

This project offers two noteworthy methodological contributions. First, in line with the theoretical process of authority construction my analysis took on a “thirdness” (Taylor & Van Every, 2014) in the process of development. In reading and asking questions of my data while whiteboarding, I engaged an emergent relationship with my data which evolved and ultimately illuminated ways forward. Such an application established a type of authority through the process of analysis; the co-dependent, communicative relationship I had with my data illustrate the ordering and subsequent authoring of my findings. What results is a methodological strategy, relying on my relationship with my data as a process of authoring to engage analysis and sensemaking. Indeed, embedded within this triadic relationship (i.e., me, my data, and the resulting analysis) is meaning (Taylor & Van Every, 2014), which essentializes into the third component. As Taylor & Van Every (2014) explain, “thirdness...must first be authored, and then interpreted, if it is to be the basis of all subsequent claims to authority” (p.9). The resulting application of

authority construction to qualitative data analysis is dependent upon opportunities to engage data in multiple ways, such as through structured questions and analytic memos (Tracy, 2013), as well as whiteboarding. Such practices allowed for a deeper association with my data through two-way communication and creative expression.

Another methodological contribution is specific to the use of whiteboards in data analysis. Manual approaches to coding and analyzing qualitative data are not new and not recommended for all researchers nor all projects, though they can be particularly useful to individuals who are drawn to creative projects and physically interacting with the data (Tracy, 2013). I relied heavily on whiteboarding for my manual approach, turning to a large whiteboard half a dozen times in the process of coding and analysis. Specifically, I utilized a whiteboard for primary-cycle coding, secondary-cycle coding, and cognitive mapping. Seeing my codes listed together on the whiteboard allowed me to recognize and identify connections and differences across codes, while also affording me the opportunity to draw symbols as a means of making sense of my data. Moreover, the large space of—and ease of use with—a whiteboard facilitated my work in cognitive mapping (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Whiteboarding, as a methodological strategy, has not been thoroughly explored in all its capabilities for the process of qualitative analysis. By suggesting the use of a whiteboard for particular steps of the qualitative analysis process, this project offers one way of engaging whiteboarding as a means of strategic analysis.

7.3 Practical Contributions

In terms of practical contributions, this study shows how authority is constituted so that effective resistance with a dose of complicity can be enacted productively, that is, in ways to achieve multiple goals that can satisfy different stakeholders at least at a minimal level. NETWORK manifests authority in order to stay true to its organizational mission while also

refusing to conform to the wishes of the institutional Church. Because NETWORK positions itself to have a relationship to Catholicism without being a Church organization it is able to construct and stabilize said authority in its own right. Practically speaking, NETWORK's relationships with the Church, its staff, its members, and so on, is satisfactory because while it may not meet all demands by all stakeholders (e.g. Vatican censure), it remains secure within third space, avoiding definitive identification with any one extreme. Such a non-committal organizational position, based in alternative organizing, supports strategic ambiguity within organizing as a favorable and attractive style of organizing for many stakeholders (see also Koschmann & Laster, 2011). Organizations that focus on a religious mission or faith tradition without being directly controlled by a larger institution may find similar success in operating within, and navigating, a third space.

Another practical contribution this study makes is specific to the embodiment of third space as a type of alternative organizing. NETWORK is an organization dedicated to dialogue and unity as a means of social transformation. As Putnam et al. (2016) point out, this is precisely what third spaces aim to do: "third spaces offer a sanctuary for dialogue or communicative practices that seek energy from tensions, engage in ongoing interplay between opposites, and keep paradoxes open" (p. 129). Operating as a third space—via Nuns on the Bus and otherwise—NETWORK engages everyday citizens and encourages them to take an active, communicative role in politics. By embodying and encouraging the communicative possibilities in thirdness, NETWORK illustrates the value organizations can offer individuals interested in participating in social transformation. Organizations interested in connecting to social change efforts, broadly defined, would do well to organize around a model of thirdness and/or alternative organizing, attending to the dynamic possibilities found in productive tension(s) directed toward new meaning (i.e., the development of a "third" element).

Third, this dissertation project offers insight to the benefits of religious and/or spiritual related guiding principles and ways of organizing. While religious organizations/organizing may seem distinct in many ways from secular organizations/organizing, scholars argue much can be learned from meaningful engagement with religion and religious organizing (Molloy & Heath, 2014; Tracey, 2012; Ward, 2015). Particularly, “the effects of religious beliefs and practices on secular organizations” (Tracey, 2012, p. 88) has been identified as an area ripe for exploration. This study’s findings suggest religious guiding principles and ways of organizing, when in line with an organization’s mission and purpose, can offer productive energy for organizational staff facing a variety of tensions. Secular organizations that operate according to particular beliefs or values may find added stability and energy in recognizing and centering them as an organizing factor.

Finally, this project offers a case study in the ironic possibilities around a larger institution reprimanding a subunit. The Vatican censured U.S. women religious—naming NETWORK in the censure—though, NETWORK used the attention from the censure for its own publicity and benefit (i.e., Nuns on the Bus). The results (in part), as evidenced in media reports, suggests women religious were actively responding to the censure in powerful ways and refusing to acquiesce in moments of frustration. Despite the reality of the situation, implications for institutions and subunit organizers is clear: institutions, nor their subunits, are not without their own agency and power.

7.4 Limitations

As with any study, this dissertation project has notable limitations. For this project I conducted 13 interviews with 11 individuals. My sample size was limited to the number of staff members at NETWORK (23 total) and sisters who responded to my interview request (10 total),

though the response, overall, was lower than preferred. A larger sample size could further validate my findings and potentially add nuance.

Additionally, it is important to note that my analysis is limited to the archival documents I collected for this particular research project. If documentation for noteworthy moments in NETWORK's history was not retained by organizational members, nor added to NETWORK's archives providing evidence of an existing tension of some kind, then my historical analysis may be considered incomplete. Moreover, while I visited the archives with a systematic approach to data collection, if my approach missed important keywords, people, or events, my analysis would be considered lacking.

Finally, my study is limited by the small number of participant observation notes (11 pages) taken during the 2016 Nuns on the Bus tour. Admittedly, I had planned on traveling with Nuns on the Bus in 2017 though NETWORK decided against a sixth consecutive tour. More data from participant observation would have allowed me to strengthen the credibility of my findings via thick description (e.g., additional details of who, what, when, where and how), and would offer stronger triangulation between sources of data (Tracy, 2013).

7.5 Directions for Future Research

Importantly, this project points to avenues for future research within the field of communication studies. With an interest in the ways subunits of larger institutional organizations (i.e., women religious in relation to the Roman Catholic Church) demonstrate different sources of authority and ways of organizing, this work lends itself to future considerations for the resulting dynamics on the process of organizational change. For instance, engaging a longitudinal study focused on third space and trialectics as an effective approach to managing dualities experienced with institutional organizations may reveal long-term implications for the process (or lack thereof)

of organizational change. While past scholarship recognizes the importance of managing paradoxes within organizational change (Nasim & Sushil, 2011), there remains a need for empirical work showcasing how this management can best be done in a variety of organizational contexts (Ford & Ford, 1994).

A second area for future research is specific to literature on dissent. This study considered how and why one organization manifests authority, and findings suggest authority is constituted, at least in part, for the purpose of dissenting. Dissent is a communicative process that should be understood contextually, underscoring the importance of various events that lead up to dissent and also recognizing the subsequent influence on the potential for future dissent (Garner, 2017). While this study identifies the use of constructing authority as a means of dissent, as well as how one organization has authored tension within the institution of the Church, it does not trace the specific moments of dissent from NETWORK's inception through current day. Such a study would add to understandings of dissent from the perspective of connected events (Garner, 2017), and potentially illustrate how key moments in time encourage or diffuse instances of dissent. Furthermore, while this case study of NETWORK offers an instance of dissent from the understanding of 'resistance through difference' (Gagnon & Collinson, 2017) as a way of subtly challenging the authority of the all-male hierarchy, future studies could confirm the effectiveness of 'resistance through difference' as a strategy for organizational dissent, particularly within religious or spiritual organizations.

This study also offers pathways for future studies on organizational membership. Focusing on NETWORK as an organization and highlighting its contested relationship to the institution of the Roman Catholic Church, this dissertation identifies organizational membership as an important feature of participation, connection, belonging, and difference. Future research on religious

institutions managing issues of authority should consider tension-specific implications for organizational membership at multiple levels; specifically, an individual's membership to a dissenting organization could be explored alongside their membership to the larger religious institution. Understanding the individual expectations, realities, and consequences of organizational membership during key moments of tension within an organization's history could inform how and why membership fluctuates, is strengthened, or otherwise, during these challenging times.

7.6 Conclusion

To conclude, this dissertation project considers the historically contested relationship between women religious and the Roman Catholic Church. Using NETWORK as a case study to examine the ways women religious organize around the tension they experience with the all-male hierarchy of the Church, this study provides insight to the manifestation of authority at the cross section of politics and religion. Taking a tension-centered approach in combination with the lenses of authority/authoring and alternative organizing, this study's findings reveal construction of third space as a response to organizational tension experienced in the form of dualisms. This dissertation project contributes to theory by showcasing how organizational tension may engender authoring and how authority can be stabilized within organizing. Furthermore, it offers theoretical development for constructing authority in third space, as well as proposing trialectics as an effective process to manage tensions. Future researchers are encouraged to explore how tension and authority operate, and how they are managed, in relation to organizational change, organizational dissent, and organizational membership.

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APPENDIX A. THREE AREAS OF CONCERN FOR THE LCWR

o Addresses at the LCWR Assemblies. Addresses given during LCWR annual Assemblies manifest problematic statements and serious theological, even doctrinal errors. The Cardinal offered as an example specific passages of Sr. Laurie Brink's address about some Religious "moving beyond the Church" or even beyond Jesus. This is a challenge not only to core Catholic beliefs; such a rejection of faith is also a serious source of scandal and is incompatible with religious life. Such unacceptable positions routinely go unchallenged by the LCWR, which should provide resources for member Congregations to foster an ecclesial vision of religious life, thus helping to correct an erroneous vision of the Catholic faith as an important exercise of charity. Some might see in Sr. Brink's analysis a phenomenological snapshot of religious life today. But Pastors of the Church should also see in it a cry for help.

o Policies of Corporate Dissent. The Cardinal spoke of this issue in reference to letters the CDF received from "Leadership Teams" of various Congregations, among them LCWR Officers, protesting the Holy See's actions regarding the question of women's ordination and of a correct pastoral approach to ministry to homosexual persons, e.g. letters about New Ways Ministry's conferences. The terms of the letters suggest that these sisters collectively take a position not in agreement with the Church's teaching on human sexuality. It is a serious matter when these Leadership Teams are not providing effective leadership and example to their communities, but place themselves outside the Church's teaching.

o Radical Feminism. The Cardinal noted a prevalence of certain radical feminist themes incompatible with the Catholic faith in some of the programs and presentations sponsored by the LCWR, including theological interpretations that risk distorting faith in Jesus and his loving Father who sent his Son for the salvation of the world. Moreover, some commentaries on "patriarchy" distort the way in which Jesus has structured sacramental life in the Church; others even undermine the revealed doctrines of the Holy Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the inspiration of Sacred Scripture.

Note. Adapted from Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. (2012, April 18).

Doctrinal assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious. Retrieved from:

<http://www.usccb.org/loader.cfm?csModule=security/getfile&pageid=55544>

APPENDIX B. SISTER INTERVIEW GUIDE

Religious Identity

1. How many years have you been a religious sister with the Sisters of Social Service?
2. Tell me about your decision to become a religious sister.
3. What does your role as a religious sister entail?
4. What would you say is expected of you as a religious sister? Would you say you adhere to these expectations?
5. What might others be surprised to hear about you with regard to the way you embrace your religious identity?
6. What metaphor best describes how you see the relationship between yourself as a sister and the Roman Catholic Church?
7. Tell me about the opportunities available to you as a woman in the Catholic Church.
8. Tell me about the limitations of opportunities available to you as a woman in the Catholic Church.

Nuns on the Bus Experience

9. Tell me about your experience as a sister associated with Nuns on the Bus.
10. How does your identity as a religious sister influence the political work you do with the Nuns on the Bus/NETWORK?
11. Does your identity as a religious sister and your association with Nuns on the Bus – particularly with regard to Nuns on the Bus being a politically active group – ever cause you trouble? If so, please explain.
12. Tell me about a time during your journey with Nuns on the Bus that was difficult for you all, as the Nuns on the Bus, and how you collectively persevered.
13. In what way(s) do you feel supported in the work you do with Nuns on the Bus? Who or what makes you feel this way?
14. In what way(s) do you feel discouraged in the work you do with Nuns on the Bus? Who or what makes you feel this way?
15. In what way(s) does your feminine identity facilitate the work you do with the Nuns on the Bus?
16. Some people might say religion and politics do not or should not mix. What might you say to someone who holds that belief?
17. Why do you think Nuns on the Bus has been successful?

APPENDIX C. STAFF RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Subject: NETWORK Interviews for Dissertation Research

My name is Jessica Pauly and I am a PhD candidate at Purdue University. Last year I began studying Nuns on the Bus for my dissertation work and followed the 2016 tour through Illinois, Missouri, Indiana and Ohio. This year I hope to continue this dissertation research by visiting the NETWORK office to interview NETWORK staff. As a student of organizational communication studies, I am interested in how NETWORK operates and organizes at the intersections of religion and politics. If you are willing to share your thoughts, perceptions, and experiences as a NETWORK staff member, I am interested to hear from you.

Participation in this research is entirely voluntary. I am interested to interview you in person, but if you would prefer a phone interview instead, that can be arranged. If you are interested and able to participate, please respond to this email. **I will be visiting NETWORK's office on Thursday, December 14th, for an interview with (name of staff member). If you are available that day, please let me know and I will plan to meet with you, too.**

Interviews will last approximately one hour in time. All information shared in the interview will be confidential, though I cannot promise complete confidentiality due to the public nature of NETWORK and the Nuns on the Bus road trips (i.e. media publications about NETWORK and/or Nuns on the Bus).

Thank you for your consideration! I will be happy to answer any questions you might have.

Jessica

Jessica A. Pauly
PhD Candidate
Brian Lamb School of Communication
Purdue University

APPENDIX D. STAFF INTERVIEW GUIDE

NETWORK Experience

1. Tell me about NETWORK.
 - a. What is the purpose of NETWORK?
 - b. What are the values of NETWORK?
 - c. How has NETWORK changed over time?
 - d. Were you a member during these changes?
 - i. If not, how did you learn about these changes?
2. How do you affiliate with NETWORK?
 - a. What does your role entail?
 - b. How long have you worked with/affiliated with NETWORK?
3. What other organizations can you name that do similar work to NETWORK?
 - a. In what ways do you consider these organizations similar to NETWORK?
 - i. How do you define similar?
 - b. How does NETWORK associate with these other organizations?

NETWORK Overview

4. Tell me about some of the key programming at NETWORK.
 - a. How has this programming changed or evolved over time?
 - b. How does NETWORK determine what is included in its programming?
5. During NETWORK's existence, what are some of the outcomes of NETWORK's efforts?
 - a. In what ways have these outcomes been broadcasted/shared with a wider audience? (e.g., have they gained media attention?)
 - b. What other outcomes do you think there could be or should be with regard to NETWORK's efforts?
6. Tell me about a key moment in the history of NETWORK.
 - a. Why was this moment significant?
7. Tell me about the kind of influence NETWORK has on various audiences.
 - a. For instance, what kind of influence does NETWORK have on politics, generally? What kind of influence does NETWORK have on Catholic senators?
 - b. How does NETWORK generate this kind of influence?
 - c. How do you know NETWORK has an influence on a particular audience?
8. Who or what has an influence on the work NETWORK engages?
9. What kinds of instrumental support does NETWORK receive? From whom does it receive this support? (e.g., individuals, companies, institutions, etc.)
10. What kinds of challenges has NETWORK encountered in the course of its existence?
 - a. Tell me about a time when NETWORK faced a significant challenge within the organization. How did it overcome that challenge?

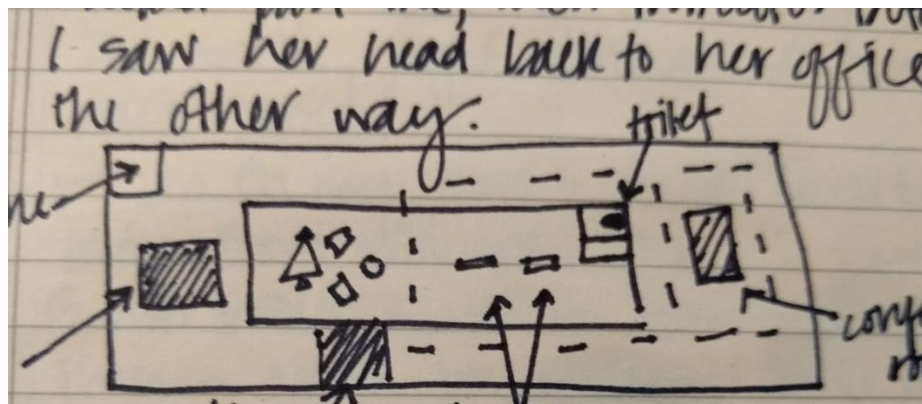
NETWORK and the Church

11. How would you explain NETWORK's relationship to the Roman Catholic Church?
 - a. If it's helpful to think in terms of metaphors, what kind of metaphor would you say best describes how you see the relationship between NETWORK and the Roman Catholic Church?
 - b. In what way(s) has the relationship between NETWORK and the Roman Catholic Church changed or evolved over time?
12. How does NETWORK draw from Roman Catholic Church doctrine to advocate for their work?
 - a. What might be an example of NETWORK drawing from Church doctrine to advocate for their work?
13. How does NETWORK operate outside of, or perhaps resist, contemporary interpretations of Roman Catholic Church teaching to advocate for their work?
 - a. What might be an example of NETWORK operating outside of, or resisting, contemporary interpretations of Church teaching to advocate for their work?
14. As a "Catholic social justice lobby," how does NETWORK communicate with leaders in the Roman Catholic Church?
 - i. How do you define "leaders" in the Roman Catholic Church? Can you provide an example of a leader in the Roman Catholic Church?
 - ii. Explain how this communication takes place between NETWORK and leaders in the Roman Catholic Church.
 - iii. (If the response is "n/a": Why doesn't NETWORK communicate with leaders in the Roman Catholic Church?)
15. We have discussed a number of points related to NETWORK and your involvement. Is there anything we didn't cover or discuss that you would like to add that might help me with interpreting this data?

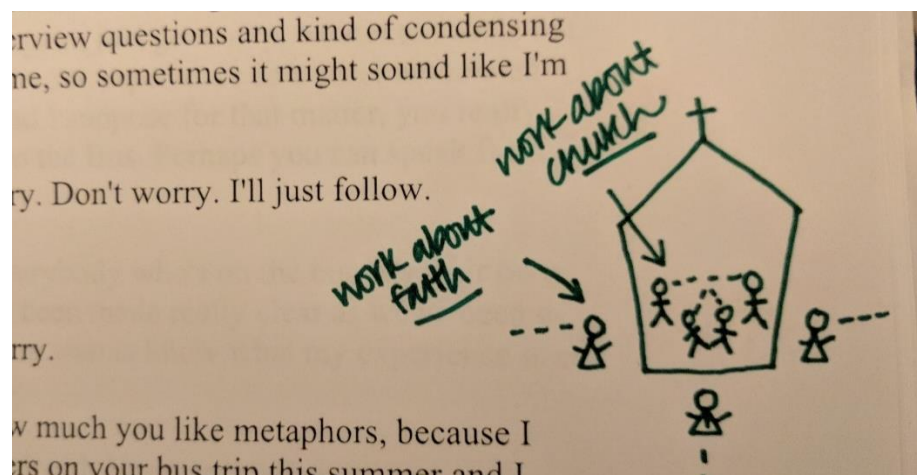
APPENDIX E. REQUESTED ARCHIVE FILES

CNET #2015-395 : 5/05 - file - Network Board Minutes - 1971-1995
 CNET #2015-395 : 6/01 - file - Network Board Files - 1971-2004
 CNET #2015-395 : 6/02 - file - Network Board Policies - 2010
 CNET #2015-395 : 6/03 - file - Network Board Manual Topics
 CNET #2015-395 : 10/01 - file - Network Board Minutes - 2005-2015
 CNET #2015-395 : 10/02 - file - Network Board Committees - 1995-2004
 CNET #2015-395 : 10/03 - file - Network Board Guidelines - 2007
 CNET 36/42 - Folder - Leadership Conference of Women Religious - Conference Report - 1991
 CNET 40/40 - Folder - Disarmament and Feminist Vision - LCWR - 1981
 CNET 16/04 - Folder - "Health Care" LCWR Assembly - San Antonio, TX - 1979
 CNET 17/104 - Folder - Star Wars - To LCWR Committee and Activists Packet - 1986
 CNET 18/63 - Folder - AR. LCWR - After Election - 1980
 CNET 19/01 - Folder - LCWR - ERA Taskforce - 1977-1986
 CNET 19/16 - Folder - Election Articles LCWR - 1984
 CNET 20/78 - Folder - LCWR Co-Signed Pkg - 1981-12
 CNET 20/79 - Folder - LCWR Letter - 1983/04
 CNET 23/16 - Series - LCWR 15th Anniversary Project
 CNET 25/65 - Folder - LCWR - Assembly / Convergence - 1978-1979
 CNET 24/145 - Folder - LCWR - Letters - Sent / Replies - 1976-1977
 CNET 25/36 - Folder - LCWR / CMSM Tax Seminar - 1979
 CNET 8/42 - Folder - Legislative Seminar XV - Mailing to LCWR - [Empty] - 1986
 CNET 28/35 - Folder - Christian Feminists Newsletter - 1975-1978
 CNET 25/42 - Folder - Women's Ordination Conference - 1984
 CNET 22/11 - Folder - New Ways Ministry - 1983
 CNET 29/21 - Folder - New Ways Ministry - 1978
 CNET 19/02 - Folder - A Church Divided - Catholics' Attitudes About Family Planning, Abortion and Teenage Sexuality - 1986
 CNET 18/20 - Folder - RP. Bishops and Political Activity - 1986-1987
 CNET 18/91 - Folder - U.S. Bishops' Consistent Life Ethics - 1984-1985
 CNET 18/93 - Folder - Bishops and ERA - 1984-1985
 CNET 21/36 - Folder - Fund Raising Project: Board to Bishops - 1974
 CNET 23/12 - Folder - 15th Anniversary: Thank You to Bishops - 1985-1986
 CNET 23/14 - Folder - 15th Anniversary - Bishops Mailing - 1985
 CNET 25/67 - Folder - Bishops Mailing - 1978
 CNET 37/43 - Folder - Excerpts From The Bishops' Bicentennial Conference - 1976
 CNET 45/21 - Folder - Economics - U.S. Bishops Pastoral - 1984-1986
 CNET 45/24 - Folder - Disarmament - Bishops - 1981-1985
 CNET 45/32 - Folder - A Statement by the Ten Black Catholic Bishops of the United States - 1985
 CNET 45/34 - Folder - Synod of Bishops - The Ministerial Priesthood - Justice in the World - 1971
 CNET 19/10 - Folder - Women in the Church - 1973-1985

APPENDIX F. SKETCH EXAMPLES FROM DATA COLLECTION AND CODING



Sketch taken from observational fieldnotes



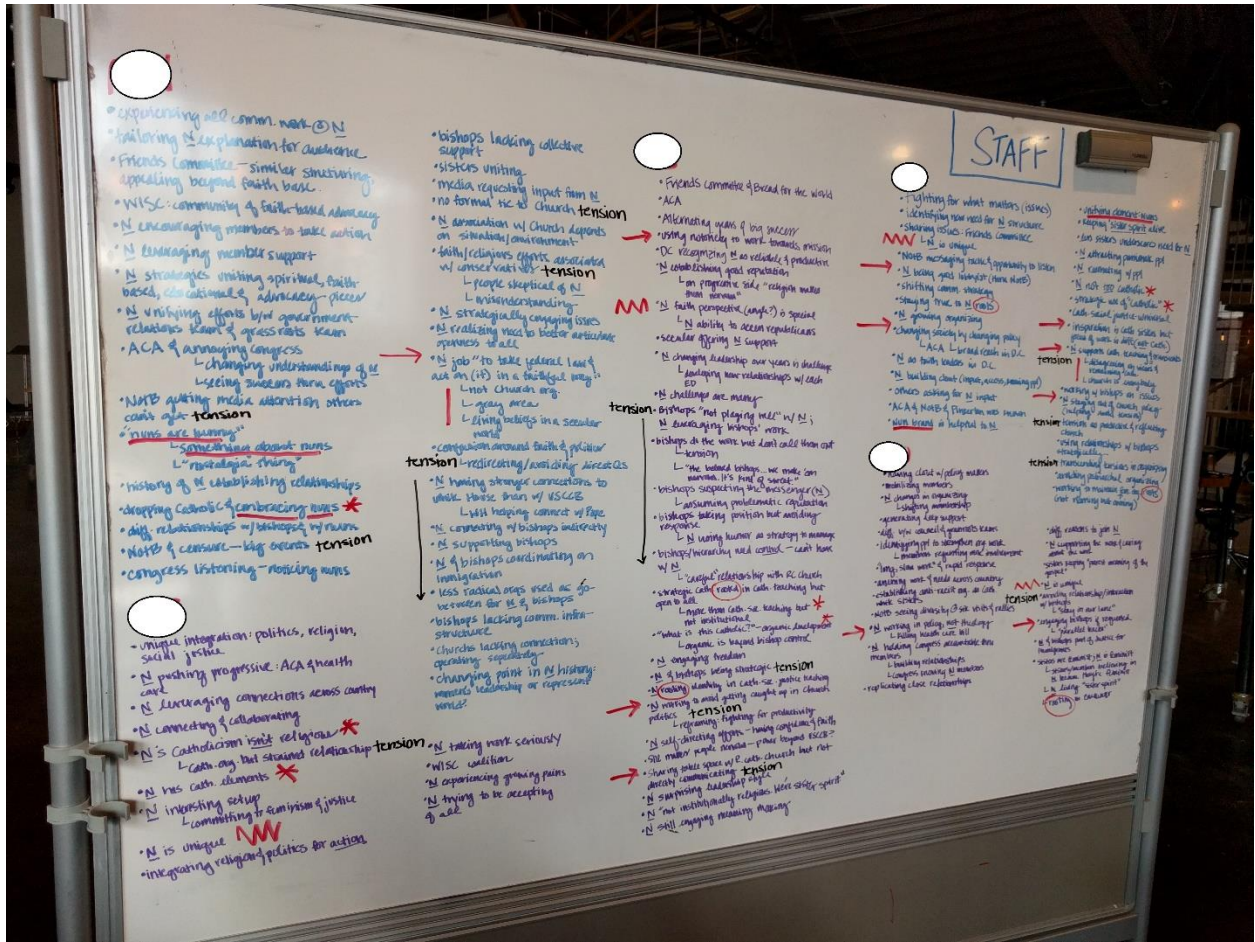
Sketch taken from interview transcription coding

APPENDIX G. COLOR CODED EXAMPLE FROM DATA CODING

(my words), and the sisters questioned
 is was excellent to hear, as my own research
 d a lot about concerns with the church hierarchy, *- consistent w/ intentions*
 l this exciting, because again, my research
 church have nothing to do with their faith, but
 rch. I found it curious that these Catholic sisters
 with certain bishops - and how certain bishops try *- struggle w/ authority ??*
 mentioned that her order had recently been invited
 now what she meant. But after further discussion, I
 ally acting on the review/censure it called for in
idea if/when they were invited back, and many
 pid anyway. From what was said, it seemed poorly
 at the letter her order received from the Vatican had
 rible. Beyond that, it listed three things the sisters
 l out that they already are. It made me think that the
 eally doing and capable of. *seems to resonate w/ intentions tho*

Example taken from observational fieldnotes

APPENDIX H. WHITEBOARDING EXMPLE FROM DATA CODING



Example taken from primary-cycle coding of interview data

APPENDIX I. ENGAGING QUESTIONS WITH MY DATA

RQ1: How do women religious and staff at NETWORK discursively frame the organizational tension(s) they experience with the Church as a result of their work?

- *What tensions are my participants mentioning?*
 - *How do I know these tensions exist?*
 - *What words are used to illuminate tensions?*
- *How do they talk about the tensions they've experienced?*
 - *Are these tensions welcomes? Avoided? Productive? Discouraging?*
 - *From where do these tensions emerge?*
- *In what ways are these tensions involved with the work my participants engage?*
 - *Are these tensions ever-present? Growing? Diminishing? Familiar? Expected?*

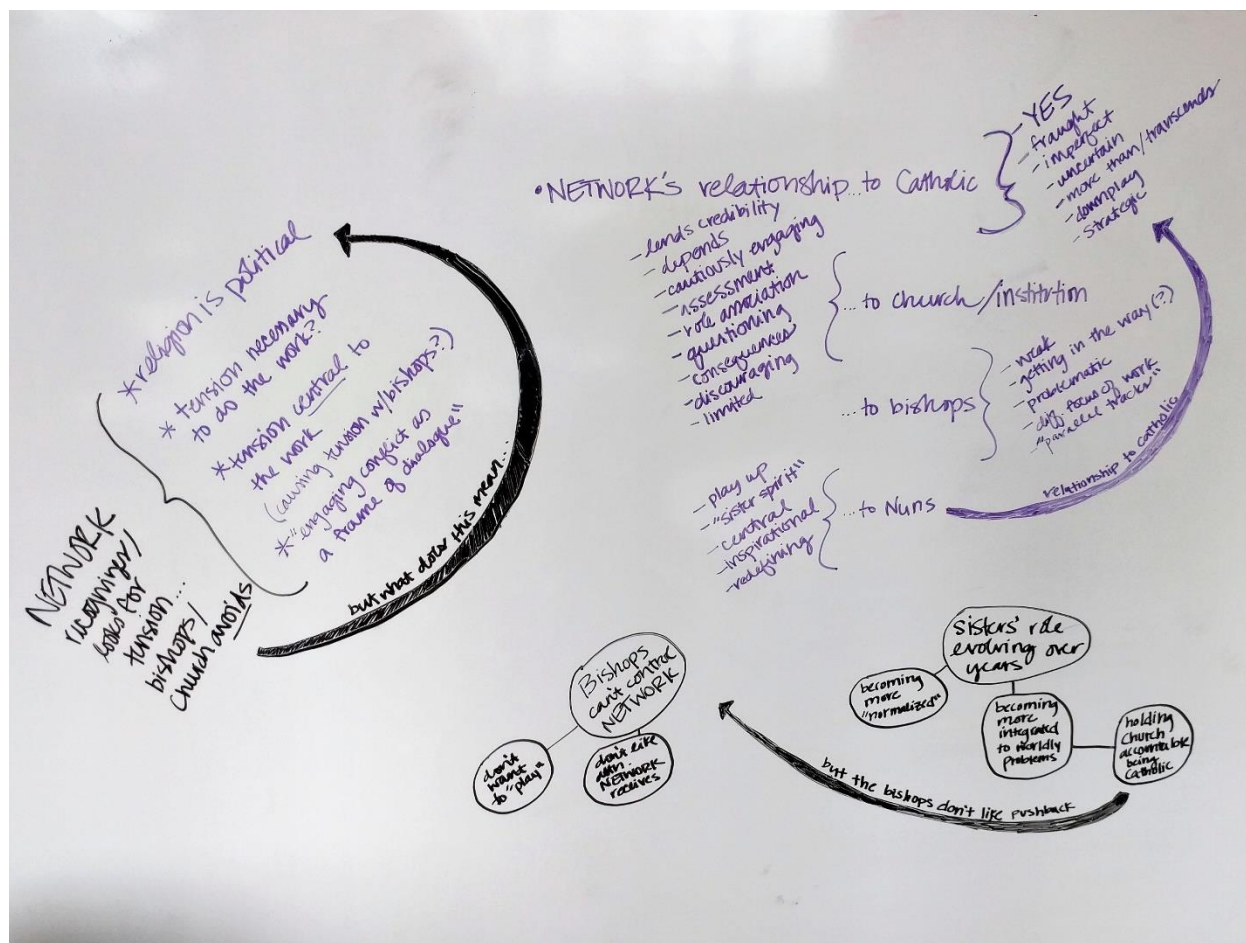
RQ2: Within the context of NETWORK, how and why is authority made manifest at times for the purposes of organizing? And how and why is authority stabilized at times?

- *When do my participants experience authority?*
 - *Is it during particular moments/experiences? It is a result of some other incident?*
- *How is authority constructed/received/generally made sense of?*
 - *How do my participants describe or explain the authority they have?*
 - *What words are used to indicate the presence of authority?*
 - *How is authority used for the purposes of organizing? Is it useful? Is it purpose-driven? What is the relationship between authority and the organizing work?*

RQ3: In what way(s) have the organizing efforts of NETWORK authored tension(s) within the institution of Church?

- *What efforts of NETWORK have cause or contributed to tension(s) in the Church?*
- *How have these tension(s) influenced the relationship between the all-male hierarchy of the Church and women religious, generally?*

APPENDIX J. COGNITIVE MAP DISPLAY



Example taken from RQ1 data analysis

Table 1 Overview of Phases 1 and 2

Phase	Date	Activity
Phase 1	April 2016	Approval to access NETWORK
	July 2016	Participant observation during Nuns on the Bus tour
	September 2016	IRB approval received
	November 2016 – March 2017	Interviews with sisters associated with Nuns on the Bus
Phase 2	August 2017	Submit IRB amendment
	December 2017	Visit (1) NETWORK's D.C. office for interviews with staff members
	December 2017 – January 2018	Trips (2) to NETWORK's archives at Notre Dame

Table 2 Research Questions and Data Collection Strategies

Research Questions	Data Collection Strategies
RQ1: How do women religious and staff at NETWORK discursively frame the organizational tension(s) they experience with the Church as a result of their work?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Participant-observation • Observation
RQ2: Within the context of NETWORK, how and why is authority made manifest at times for the purposes of organizing? And how and why is authority stabilized at times?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews • Participant-observation • Observation
RQ3: In what way(s) have the organizing efforts of NETWORK authored tension(s) within the institution of the Church?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documents analysis

Table 3 Codebook Legend for Whiteboarding

Symbol	Definition/Explanation
Red arrow	Statements that reflect how NETWORK stays focused on its efforts and works to avoid problematizing their work with Roman Catholic theology and/or Church doctrine and beliefs.
Red asterisk	Comments distinguishing Catholicism from Church (i.e. formal institution). Religion and/or spirituality and/or faith can be understood similarly to Catholicism, while bishops are associated with Church and not so much related to Catholicism.
Red jagged line	A statement indicating NETWORK is a unique organization or suggesting there are not many organizations that perform similar work.
Red circle around “root” (and related suffixes)	Comments reflecting the importance of NETWORK’s roots/actively rooting themselves in something/recognizing deep roots of the more than forty-year old organization.
Red underlining	A mention of nuns as key to NETWORK’s brand/understanding/success.
Black text to write <i>tension</i>	Points that indicate clear tension specific to NETWORK’s organizing work.
A number underlined next to a participant’s initials	A recording of the number of stories referenced in each interview with sisters next to her initials on the whiteboard.
Black star	A mention of a moment of authority/credibility as sisters, in/through their work. It indicates trusting self; making a difference/influencing change; taking action.

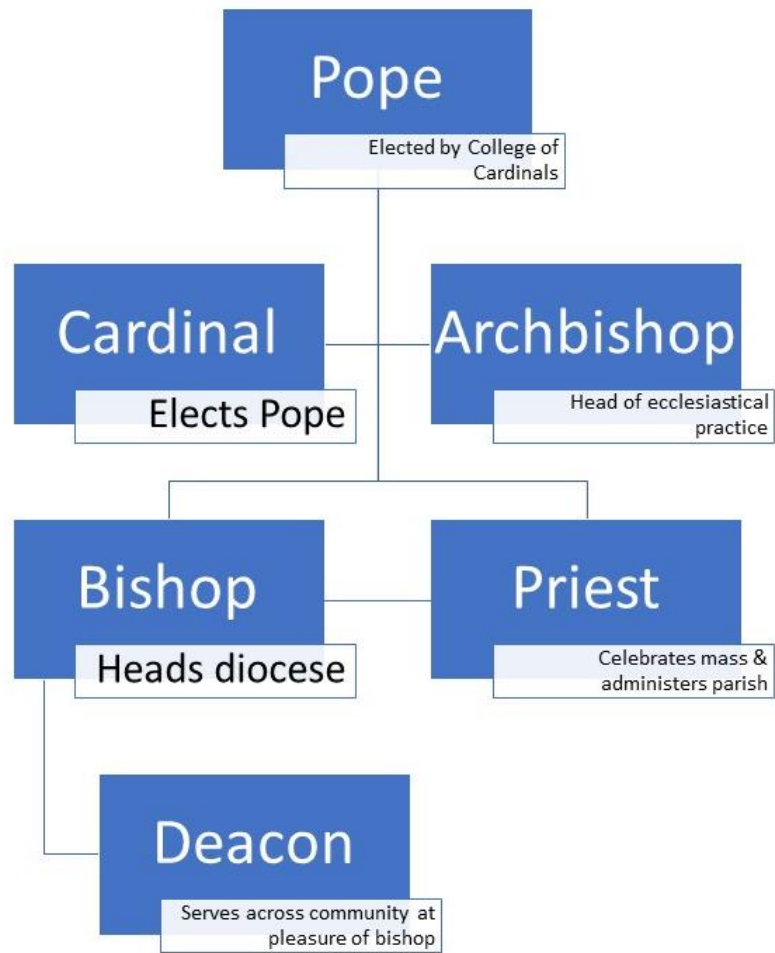


Figure 1 Organizational Hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church

Adapted from Blanchard, J. (2005, April 3). The papal succession. *SFGate*. Retrieved from <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/The-papal-succession-3254774.php>



Figure 2 Screenshot of NETWORK's Organizational Website
Screenshot of NETWORK's website taken April 4, 2018.

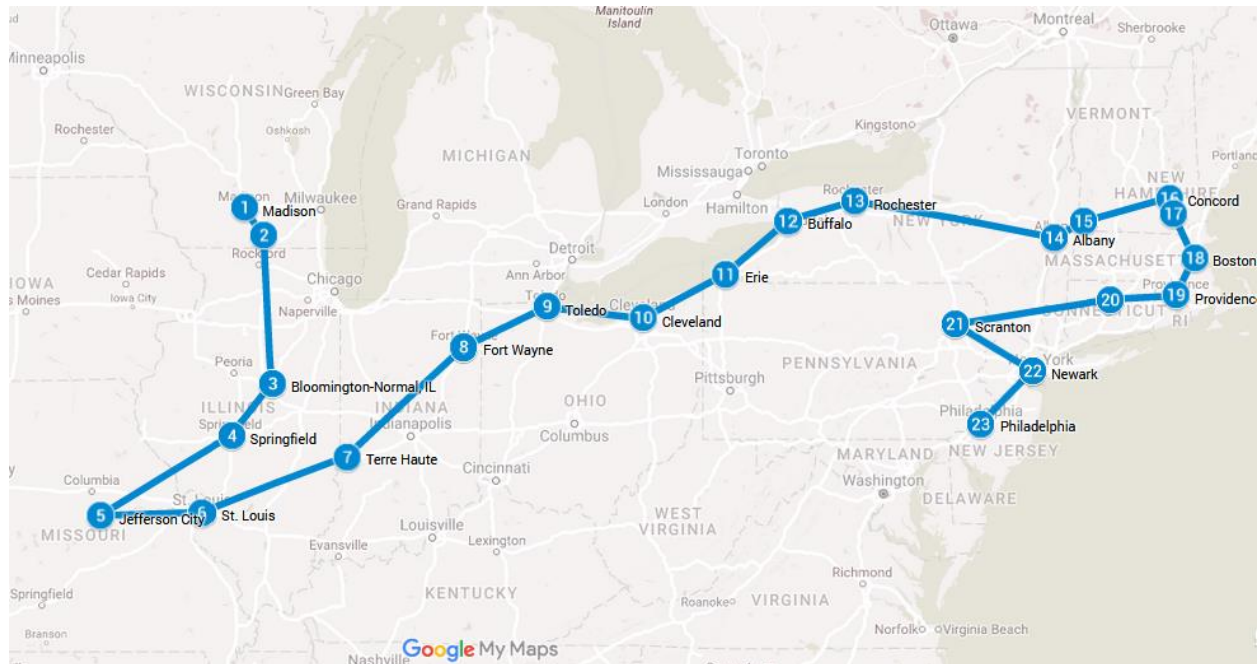


Figure 3 Nuns on the Bus 2016 Tour Route

Chronological tour stops for Nuns on the Bus 2016 summer travels.

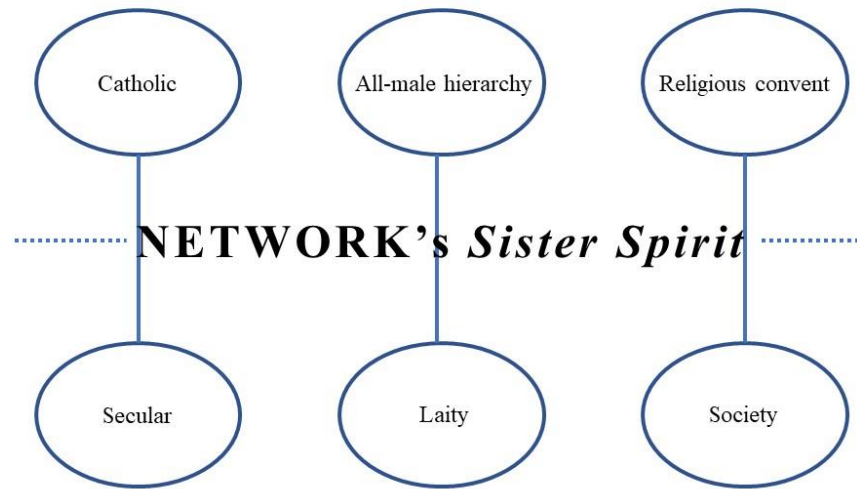


Figure 4 NETWORK's Sister Spirit as Third Space

Visual representation of the tensions NETWORK staff and sisters experience as dualisms, namely: Catholic/secular; all-male hierarchy of the Church/laity; and religious convent/society. Sister spirit is NETWORK's third space, discursively constructed amid the dualities.

VITA

JESSICA A. PAULY

May 2018

EDUCATION

Purdue University in West Lafayette, Indiana Graduation Date: May 2018
 Ph.D. | Communication Studies 3.9 GPA
 Major Area: Organizational Communication | Graduate Concentration: Women's, Gender, and
 Sexuality Studies
 Dissertation: Authoring Organizational Tensions within the Roman Catholic Church: Women
 Religious Organize
 for Themselves
 Advisor: Patrice M. Buzzanell
 Committee Members: Stacey Connaughton, Steve Wilson, Suzy D'Enbeau (School of
 Communication Studies, Kent State University), Thomas Ryba (Theologian-in-Residence, St.
 Thomas Aquinas, Purdue University)

Copenhagen Business School in Copenhagen, Denmark Spring 2016
 Exchange | Focus: Organizations, Leadership, & Corporate Social Responsibility
 CBS project supervisors: Patrice M. Buzzanell, Robyn R. Remke

The University of Kansas in Lawrence, Kansas Graduation Date: May 2014
 M.A. | Communication Studies 3.87 GPA
 Advisors: Suzy D'Enbeau (Kent State University), Tracy Russo (University of Kansas)

Nebraska Wesleyan University in Lincoln, Nebraska Graduation Date: May 2007
 B.A. | Major: Communication Studies | Minor: Spanish 3.59 GPA
 Advisor: Karla Jensen

SCHOLARSHIP

Publications

Pauly, J.A. (in press). "It's not Catholicism that is broken, it's the structure": Exploring how women discursively navigate the identities of Catholic and feminist. *The Journal of Communication and Religion*.

Pauly, J. A., & Buzzanell, P. M. (in press). Gender and sexuality. In J. McDonald & R. Mitra (Eds.), *Organizational communication theory and practice: Current trends and future directions*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Štumberger, N., & **Pauly, J. A.** (in press). Active, reactive, and proactive approaches to corporate volunteering in three countries. *International Journal of Business Communication*.

Pauly, J.A., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2017). Managerial communication. In M. Allen (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of communication research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781483381411.n312>

Pauly, J.A., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2016). Considering difference in diversity management: A critical take on practices and policies around the world. *Scandinavian Journal of Management*. doi: 10.1016/j.scaman.2016.03.001

Pauly, J.A. (2014) Complicating practice with success: Service-learning perspectives at a research-intensive university. *Kaleidoscope: A Graduate Journal of Qualitative Communication Research*, 13, 1-16. Retrieved from <http://opensiuc.lib.siu.edu/kaleidoscope/vol13/iss1/2>

Manuscripts in Progress

Linabary, J. R., Connaughton, S. L., Krishna, A., Vibber, K. S., Ptacek, J., Pauly, J. A., & Anaele, A. 'Soldier on': Navigating gender, vulnerability, and emotions in the field. Journal outlet to be determined.

Pauly, J.A., Štumberger, N., & Lundo, A. "I had a janteloven experience ...": How Danish business students organize around cultural modesty. To be submitted to *Management Communication Quarterly*.

Connaughton, S. L., Linabary, J., Yakova, L., Krishna, A., Kuang, K., Štumberger, N., Pauly, J., & Anaele, A. "Did we get it right?": Navigating emergent tensions in assessing the impact of engaged organizational communication scholarship. To be submitted to *Management Communication Quarterly*.

Štumberger, N., Pauly, J.A., & Connaughton, S. L. A communicative approach to CSR and business-conflict linkages: Constituting and sustaining corporate engagement in peacebuilding through local voices. To be submitted to *Journal of Business Ethics*.

Pauly, J.A., Štumberger, N., & Connaughton, S. L. Serving peace: The role of religious leaders in the peacebuilding process in Northern Ghana. Journal outlet to be determined.

Eddington, S. M., Pauly, J. A., Long, Z., Hughes-Kirchubel, L., Buzzanell, P. M., & Kokini, K. “There is no box”: Ambiguity and contradiction of faculty of practice’s embedded teams. Journal outlet to be determined.

Pauly, J. A., Long, Z., Eddington, S., Hughes-Kirchubel, L., Buzzanell, P. M., Kokini, K. The communicative constitution of Faculty Learning Communities: A four flows approach to new faculty organizing. Journal outlet to be determined.

Conference Papers and Presentations

**competitively selected*

Pauly, J.A., Štumberger, N., & Lundo, A. (2017, November). “I had a janteloven experience ...”: A constitutive approach to organizing among Danish business students. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Dallas, TX.*

Pauly, J.A. (2017, October). Authoring Organizational Tensions within the Roman Catholic Church: Women Religious Organize for Themselves. Paper presented at the Organizational Communication Mini Conference, Athens, OH. *

Pauly, J. A., Long, Z., Eddington, S., Hughes-Kirchubel, L., Buzzanell, P. M., Kokini, K. (2017, May). The communicative constitution of Faculty Learning Communities: A four flows approach to new faculty organizing. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Association of Communication, San Diego, CA.*

Štumberger, N., & Pauly, J. A. (2017, May). Active, reactive, and proactive CSR: Discursive constructions of employee volunteering across three countries. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Association of Communication, San Diego, CA.*

Ashee, K., Belack, L., Eddington, S., Pauly, J. A., D’Enbeau, S., Roman, N., Socha, D. (2016, October). Theorizing transgressive social change among intersectional identities, spaces, and places. Paper presented at the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender, Oak Park, IL.*

Connaughton, S. L., Pauly, J., Linabary, J., Yakova, L., Krishna, A., Štumberger, N., & Ptacek, J. (2016, November). Organizing to identify and identifying to organize: The unanticipated endurance of identifications in a voluntary social collective. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Philadelphia, PA.*

*Conference Papers and Presentations (continued)***competitively selected*

Linabary, J.R., Connaughton, S.L., Ptacek, J., Krishna, A., Pauly, J., Vibber, K., & Anaele, A. (2016, November). 'Soldier on': Navigating gender, vulnerability, and emotions in the field. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Philadelphia, PA.*

Pauly, J.A., Štumberger, N., & Connaughton, S. L. (2016, September). Serving peace: The role of religious leaders in the peacebuilding process in northern Ghana. Paper presented at the International Conference on Communication and Media, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Štumberger, N., Pauly, J.A., & Connaughton, S. L. (2016, September). Communicative approach to CSR and business-conflict linkages: Constituting and sustaining corporate engagement in peacebuilding through local voices. Paper presented at the International Conference on Communication and Media, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Long, Z., Eddington, S. M., Pauly, J. A., Hughes-Kirchubel, L., Kokini, K., & Buzzanell, P. M. (2016, June). Understanding the participation, perceptions, and impacts of Engineering Faculty Learning Communities: A mixed methods approach. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 2016 American Society of Engineering Education (ASEE) Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA.*

Connaughton, S.L., Linabary, J.R., Yakova, L., Krishna, A., Kuang, K., Štumberger, N., Pauly, J., & Anaele, A. (2016, May). "Did we get it right?": Navigating emergent tensions in assessing the impact of an engaged organizational communication initiative. Paper presented at the annual conference of the International Communication Association, Fukuoka, Japan.*

Pauly, J. A. (2015, November). "It's not Catholicism that is broken, it's the structure": Exploring how women discursively navigate the identities of Catholic and feminist. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Communication Association, Las Vegas, NV.*

Pauly, J. A. (2015, November). The precarious nature of religious research: At the intersection of feminism and Catholicism. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Women's Studies Association, Milwaukee, WI.*

Buzzanell, P., D'Enbeau, S., McDonald, D., Glenn, C., Eddington, S., & Pauly, J. A. (2015, October). (Un)contested feminist ideological terrains. Panel presentation at the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender, Bowling Green, KY.*

Pauly, J. A. (2015, February). "I don't generally go there": Exploring how women discursively navigate the Catholic-feminist identity. Paper presented at the Communication Graduate Student Association Conference, Lafayette, IN.*

Pauly, J. A. (2013, November). Complicating practice with success: Service-learning perspectives at a research-intensive university. Paper presented at the National Communication Association, Washington, D.C.*

Pauly, J. A. (2012, October). Game of the sexes: An analysis of power struggle and gender roles in Game of Thrones. Paper presented at the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender, Tacoma, WA.*

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Brian Lamb School of Communication | Purdue University | Lafayette, IN 47907

Purdue Peace Project. Working as a research assistant, traveling to West Africa to aid and assist local efforts in bringing about peaceful solutions to prevent political violence. Tasks include: researching local news in West Africa; communicating regularly with the West Africa Program Manager about eight current projects; developing data collection plans; collecting data in West Africa; analyzing data; writing research and technical reports; presenting PPP work at conferences (August 2015-present).

Brian Lamb School of Communication | Purdue University | Lafayette, IN 47907

America's Best Communities Project. Worked as a project manager with Professor Patrice Buzzanell and Professor Steve Wilson to develop, organize, and facilitate focus group events with children in grades first through third to inform a community proposal for a national contest. Tasks included: developing promotional materials to send to local schools and share within the community; developing activities to engage children during the focus groups; organizing and managing other graduate students as they assisted in focus group events; guiding focus groups/collecting data; analyzing data (August 2015-December 2015).

College of Engineering | Purdue University | Lafayette, IN 47907

Faculty Learning Communities. Worked in a research team with three other graduate students, Professor Patrice Buzzanell, and Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Klod Kokini, to assess effectiveness of a new engineering faculty learning program. Tasks included: building a list of eligible faculty members fit for the study; developing and distributing surveys to faculty; designing and conducting interviews with faculty members; analyzing data; writing research papers (September 2014-May 2017).

Center for Civic and Social Responsibility | University of Kansas | Lawrence, KS 66045

Lawrence Douglas County Health Department. Developed and conducted focus groups and interviews for Project LIVELY to enhance and refresh current marketing materials. (September 2013-November 2013).

Teaching

COM 320 Small Group Communication (COM 320)

Fall 2017

This course focuses on communication within small groups and teams by drawing from communication theory and real-life examples. As the sole instructor for this course, I develop course content, lead in-class activities and lessons, and provide feedback.

COM 324 Organizational Communication (COM 324)

Spring 2017 & Spring 2018

This course focuses on organizational communication approaches, theories, perspectives, and critiques. As the sole instructor for this course, I developed course content, led in-class activities and lessons, and provided feedback.

COM 114 Fundamentals of Speech Communication (COM 114)

Fall 2014-Spring 2016

This is an introductory speech course which focuses on the skills and strategies involved in effective public speaking. As the sole instructor for this course, I led in-class activities and lessons, and provided feedback. Taught Summer Semester 2015 and Spring Semester 2016 sections online.

GRANTS

2017 PRF Research Grant 2017-2018 | The Graduate School | Purdue University | **\$17,645**

Competitively selected award to support dissertation research. The PRF Research Grant provides an annual salary equivalent to half-time funding for graduate students.

2016 PROMISE Award | College of Liberal Arts | Purdue University | **\$419.21**

Competitively selected award to support early dissertation research with Nuns on the Bus. Funding supported my travels (including fuel, hotel stays, and meals) as I attended eight events with Nuns on the Bus in four different Midwestern states.

2016 Purdue Graduate Student Government Professional Grant | Purdue University | **\$700**

Competitively selected award to support attendance at a non-academic conference pertaining to my research interests. The Women Deliver conference is the world's largest global conference on the health, rights, and wellbeing of girls and women.

2015 Global Synergy Research Grant | College of Liberal Arts | Purdue University | **\$7,152.50**

Co-wrote a competitively selected award to support research on the perceptions and experiences of corporate volunteering and CSR in three different countries (Denmark, Slovenia, and the United States). Funding supported travel, transcription, and materials needed to conduct interviews.

2012 Research Grant | Center for Service Learning | University of Kansas | **\$275**

Requested and received funding for service-learning research. Funding supported transcription of focus groups.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Graduate Teaching Mentor

Brian Lamb School of Communication | Purdue | August 2017-December 2017

- Graduate teaching mentors are paired with a first-time graduate student instructor to aid them in their teaching experience during the fall and spring semesters. This position includes bi-weekly meetings and teaching observations. This is a paid position.

Graduate Assistant Program Coordinator

Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence | Purdue | June 2015-May 2017

- Coordinated and confirmed local and national speakers for program events throughout the year
- Reviewed fellowship and award submissions by faculty, students and staff
- Wrote and edited content for redevelopment of the Center's website
- Participated in program development for the Center
- Assisted Director in various tasks, meetings, and projects

Freelance Writer

Lawrence Journal World | Lawrence, Kansas | August 2013-August 2014

- Wrote Mrs. Mass column based on personal blog highlighting the local shops, businesses, and events in Lawrence, Kansas. Column published weekly in print, online, and on personal blog. www.MrsMass.com

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

Assistant to the Director

Center for Civic and Social Responsibility | University of Kansas | January 2012-July 2014

- Supervised and tracked Leadership Studies Certification available to all KU students
- Conducted dozens of class presentations yearly for the Leadership Studies Certification
- Administered \$40k budget for the Center
- Coordinated office schedule and managed supplies

SERVICE

Conference participation

Student Volunteer. Conference for Pre-Tenure Women. Susuan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence. Purdue University (September, 2017).

Student Volunteer. National Communication Association convention. Chicago, IL (November, 2014).

Student Volunteer. National Communication Association convention. Washington D.C. (November, 2013).

Organizational Roles

Vice President of Graduate Relations. Communication Graduate Student Association. Brian Lamb School of Communication. Purdue University (2015-2016).

Treasurer and Founding Member. (Pro)Social. Department of Communication Studies. University of Kansas (2013-2014). (Pro)Social is dedicated to providing social and professional support to Communication Studies graduate students.

Invited Presentations

Purdue University (November, 2017). Organizational Communication (COM 324). Social Movements.

Invited Presentations (continued)

Purdue University (November, 2016). Communication Graduate Student Association in the Brian Lamb School of Communication. Making the Most out of NCA.

University of Kansas (April, 2013). Qualitative Methods in Communication Studies (COMS 855). Focus Groups.

University of Kansas (January, 2013). Center for Civic and Social Responsibility. Identifying Barriers & Bridges: A Qualitative Study of Faculty Perceptions Surrounding Service-Learning.

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

International Communication Association (2017)

National Communication Association (2013-present)

Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (2012-present)

Younger Women's Task Force of Greater Lafayette (2016-2018)