COOPERATIVE COLLECTIVE ACTION: FRAMING FAITH-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT[*]

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Drawing from social movement and organization theories, data from an in-depth comparative analysis of three faith-based community development organizations (FBCDOs) in the United States are examined as a form of cooperative collective action. *The diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames produced by each organization, and the role these frames play in developing and maintaining relationships with the state, are detailed. These collective action frames 1) link sectarian religious values to broad community development goals, and 2) do not fundamentally challenge the prevailing economic and political systems. Empirically, the findings clarify important issues and dynamics related to emerging movements, the modern welfare state, and church-state relations by specifying how values, beliefs, and structural location shape the actions of FBCDOs engaged in state-sponsored religious social service provision. Theoretically, it demonstrates the utility of more precise analytical distinctions between types of collective action and suggests new directions for research on movements for change.*

Across the United States, faith-based community development organizations[1] are partnering with government agencies in the creation and implementation of community development and social service provision (see Scott 2003; Wuthnow 2004). Although churches have long been involved in providing charity, emerging faith-based community development organizations (FBCDOs) are unique in at least two important ways. First, contemporary FBCDOs have moved from traditional forms of charity (e.g. soup kitchens and temporary shelter) into other forms of social service provision including job training, permanent low-income housing, and small business loans. Second, to accomplish these expanded goals and programs, many religious organizations have established non-profit corporations separate from the churches where the programs originated.

The extant literature has left the structural location, actions, and orientations of these organizations under-theorized. Important questions remain regarding connections between religious values, organizational action, and state activity. To rectify this deficit, I draw from both collective action and social movement theory and organizational theory to analyze three FBCDOs in the United States. Empirically, the findings clarify important issues and dynamics related to emerging movements, the modern welfare state, and church-state relations by specifying how values, beliefs, and structural location shape the actions of FBCDOs engaged in state-sponsored religious social service provision. Theoretically, it demonstrates the utility of more precise analytical distinctions between types of collective action and suggests new directions for research on movements for change.

This paper unfolds in the following stages. First, I provide a brief history of state-sponsored religious social service provision and situate my study in relation to Alberto Melucci's (1996) programmatic call for greater precision in distinguishing between different types of collective action. Specifically, I provide the rationale for provisionally

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conceptualizing faith-based community development as a form of cooperative collective action. Second, the empirical cases are introduced and their organizational activities and collaborations with government agencies are described. Next, the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames produced by each organization and the role these frames play in developing and maintaining relationships with the state are detailed. It is argued that these frames (a) link sectarian religious values to broad community development goals, and (b) do not fundamentally challenge the prevailing economic and political systems. Thus, both the organizational activities and the collective action frames demonstrate that these organizations are indeed engaged in *cooperative collective action*. These findings illuminate important dynamics within state-sponsored religious social service provision and also advance the study of movements for change by expanding empirical analysis to movements that do not embrace contentious or disruptive political action.

BACKGROUND AND THEORY

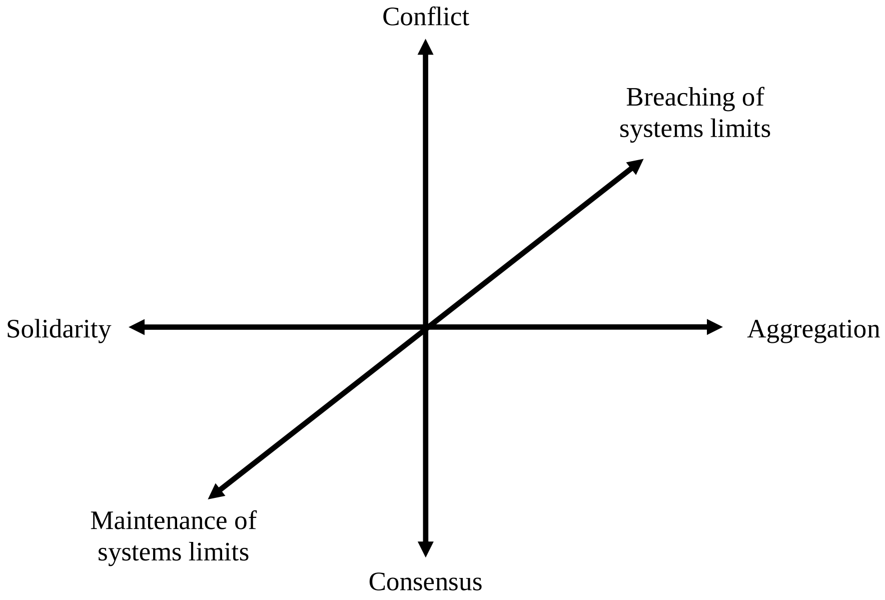
All major religions have developed theological teachings on helping the needy (Cnaan, Wineburg and Boddie 1999) and religious communities have long been at the forefront of movements for economic justice (Zweig 1991). There is, however, tremendous variation in how teachings are interpreted and translated into action: religious involvement with the poor ranges from individual charity (Allahyari 2000) to the creation of large-scale social welfare organizations (McCarthy and Castelli 1997); from institutional programming (Cnaan et al. 1999) to radical protest (Smith 1991, 1996). The history of faith-based social service provision in the United States is a complex weave of shifting roles for religious organizations, the state, and civil society (Cnaan et al. 1999; Greenberg 2000; Hall 2001; Katz 1996; Skocpol 2000; Wineburg 1993). In contemporary society, the majority of congregations provide some form of social service—most often this is limited to providing emergency food, clothing, and/or shelter (Chaves 2004). Large, national non-profit organizations, such as Catholic Charities and Lutheran Social Services, provide extensive long-term services (Vidal 2001). It is estimated that the number of people served by "religion-sponsored social service organizations" exceeds 60 million (McCarthy and Castelli 1997) and an estimated $21.1 billion of *non-religious* programs are provided by religious organizations (Hodgkinson and Weitzman 1993).

Recent attempts by the federal government to encourage greater collaboration between the state and religious organizations (e.g. "charitable choice" legislation and the Bush administration's "faith-based initiatives") have received mixed reviews. There remains considerable political and academic debate regarding organizational and program effectiveness, the constitutionality of government sponsorship of religious social service provision, and the effects of government funding on religious identity and autonomy (Bane, Coffin, and Thiemann 2000; Black, Koopman, and Ryden 2004; Davis and Hankins 1999; Dionne and DiIulio 2000; Jeavons 1994; Monsma 1996; Wuthnow 2004). An increased reliance on government outsourcing (Salamon 1995; Smith and Lipsky 1993) and political rhetoric that extols the good works of the religious community and denigrates both the size and effectiveness of government social service programs (see Donaldson and Carlson-Theis 2003; Olasky 1992) has set the stage for an emerging movement that draws from religious values to offer an alternate model to addressing issues of poverty and justice. As a founder of the Christian Community Development Association—a network organization claiming over 600 organizational members—writes, "The desperate conditions that face the poor call for a revolution in our attempts at a solution…The most creative long-term solutions to the problems of the poor are coming from grassroots and church-based efforts—people who see themselves as the agents of Jesus here on earth in their own neighborhoods and communities" (Perkins 1995: 17). To accomplish these goals a growing number of churches have established separate, non-profit organizations that are eligible for a wide range of government funds—it is this type of organization that serves as the unit of analysis in the current study.

According to Alberto Melucci (1996), renewed attention to how, and at what levels, different types of collective action[2] emerge and decline is a crucial component of advancing theory. At the heart of his argument is the conceptualization of social movements as (a) an analytic category, rather than empirical fact, and (b) one particular form of collective action amongst many others. Melucci writes, "An analytical approach to those phenomena currently called 'movements' must be firmly placed within a theory of collective action, and it must break down its subject according to *orientations of action* on the one hand and the *system of social relationships affected by the action* on the other" (Melucci 1996: 21, original italics). These orientations and social relationships can be plotted along the axes in Figure 1.[3]

Social movements, located in the upper-left quadrant of Figure 1, are defined as "the mobilization of a collective actor (i) defined by solidarity, (ii) engaged in a conflict with an adversary for the appropriation and control of resources valued by both of them, (iii) and whose action entails a breach of the limits of compatibility of the system within which the action itself takes place" (Melucci 1996: 30). As discussed below, the FBCDOs in the present study do not meet this definition of social movements because they are not oriented towards conflict and their actions do not appear to breach the limits of the compatibility of the economic and political systems in which they are embedded. Rather, these FBCDOs are more accurately placed in the lower-left quadrant of Figure 1. This combination of axes represents cooperative collective action and is defined as action that is (i) based on solidarity, (ii) *not oriented toward conflict*, and (iii) *entirely located within the limits of the current political and economic system* (Melucci, 1996: 30-31, emphasis added). To be clear, my conceptualization of FBCDOs as a form of cooperative collective action is the result of the empirical analysis presented below.

Figure 1. Collective Action Orientations



Source: Melucci 1996: 26.

Despite early calls (Zald and Ash 1966) for greater attention towards the organizational environments and capacities of social movements, the social movement literature has only recently begun to draw directly from organizational theory. The literature includes ecological studies of women's and racial minority organizations (Minkoff 1993, 1999, and 2002); ecological and institutional treatments of the peace movement (Edwards and Foley 2003; Edwards and Marullo 1995); institutional examinations of the rise of public interest groups (Moore 1996); and assessments of organizational structure and effectiveness (Gundelach 1989). These studies and other recent publications (see Davis, McAdam, Scott, and Zald 2005; and the 2005 volume of *Mobilization* edited by Beth Schaefer Caniglia and JoAnn Carmin) have begun to systematically bring organization theories into the study of social movements. This paper complements this growing body of work by combining social movement theory with organization theory to examine organizations engaged in social change through pre-existing and emergent channels (Lofland 1996).

Faith-based community development organizations are uniquely located in their environment. Community members, even those who are not members of a church, often view the local church as the symbolic anchor of the community (Dudley 2000). Local clergy involved in community development face a variety of pressures and constraints from congregation members, community members, local and state public officials, business elites, and church officials (Tschirhart and Knueve 2000). Prior research on faith-based social service has provided systematic analyses of organizational procedures, strategies, and ideologies (Jeavons 1994; Vanderwoerd 2004).

New institutional and resource dependence theories of organizations direct attention to the ways that internal and external pressures influence organizations (Zucker 1987). Although an application of these theories to the cases discussed below is beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth noting that a basic tenet of new institutionalism is that organizations incorporate the practices and procedures (or structural differentiation) of proximate institutions (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Meyer and Rowan 1991). Under certain conditions these pressures lead organizations to adopt certain policies and behaviors (e.g. bureaucracies, professional certification, and/or adoption of standard operating procedures) in order to appear more legitimate to outside actors and organizations. The perception that certain organizational policies confer legitimacy contributes to the spread of similar organizational structures and behaviors (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Zucker 1987). However, not all organizational reactions to environmental influences are passive. Organizations can (and do) respond to demands from other organizations that control key resources (Binder 2007). Managers, administrators, and leaders attempt to manage their external dependencies to ensure survival of their organization and attempt to gain more autonomy and freedom from external constraint (Leicht and Fenell 2001; Milofsky 1988; Pfeffer 1982).

While researchers have discussed how organizations in similar environments adopt similar strategies (Dimaggio and Powell 1983; Scott and Meyer 1991; Zucker 1987), vocabularies (Meyer and Rowan 1991), and "sensemaking" strategies (Weick 2001), organizational theorists do not have highly developed tools with which to examine the relationship between ideology, vocabularies, and action. Specifically, while these studies inform our understanding of intra-organizational meanings and behavior, they do not readily transfer to a broader study of collective action (cf. Creed, Langstrat, and Scully 2002). In contrast, during the past decades scholars of social movements and collective action have employed frame analysis to systematically examine vocabularies of action and illuminate the instrumental and multiple functions of these vocabularies in the context of movements for change.

Studies of collective action and social movements have produced a series of interrelated concepts that greatly illuminate important aspects of social movement activity. These concepts (frames, framing, frame alignments, master frames, and frame disputes) have provided researchers with important conceptual tools to capture the role, and importance, of human agency in collective action (e.g. Babb 1996; Benford 1997; Diani 1996; Johnston and Noakes 2005; Noonan 1995; Snow and Benford 1988, 1992; Snow, Rochford, and Benford 1986). Goffman (1974: 21) defined a *frame* as "schemata of interpretation" that enables individuals to "locate, perceive, identify, and label occurrences within their life space and the world at large." Frames enable individuals to interpret their experiences, identify the sources of their problems, and develop responses to these problems. Frames are the products of interaction and reflection and are subject to change. Snow and Benford (1988) introduced the verb *framin*g in order to conceptualize the ways in which frames are produced. One of the things that social movements do is signify and interpret "events and conditions in ways that are intended to mobilize potential adherents and constituents, to garner bystander support, and to demobilize antagonists" (Snow and Benford 1988: 198). Drawing from Wilson (1973), Snow and Benford further specify the function of framing for collective action and social movements: "we suggest that there are three core framing tasks: 1) a diagnosis of some event or aspect of social life as problematic and in need of alteration; 2) a proposed solution to the diagnosed problem that specifies what needs to be done; and 3) a call to arms or rationale for engaging in ameliorative action" (1988: 199). The success of participant mobilization attempts varies to the degree that each of these three tasks is attended to (Snow et al. 1986; Snow and Benford 1988). As faith-based community development organizations strive to increase their volunteer base and attract donors, collaborators, and contracts, they are likely to attend to these key framing tasks as well.

Frames are narrowly conceptualized as conscious and strategic action (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald 1996).[5] The advantage of frame analysis is that it restricts the examination of agency and meaning in collective action to a limited range of observable manifestations (see, for instance, Goodwin and Jasper 1999: 46-51). In this study, I rely heavily on organizational documents (e.g. mission statements, grant applications, press releases) that represent the "public face" of the organization. I assume that organizational leaders *consciously* create organizational narratives (as represented by these documents) and it is through these narratives that these organizations seek to secure external legitimacy and resources. Alternately, a growing body of work examines the stories, narratives, and discourse of social movements (see Davis 2002; Fine 1995; Polletta 1998, 2006). Future research on faith-based community development might gainfully adopt these approaches to elaborate the cultural processes of many concepts presented in the analysis below—such as "neighboring," "efficiency," and "Christ-centered."

DATA AND METHODS

The data are drawn from a comparative case study of three local faith-based community development organizations in the Midwest. To gain greater explanatory power, the organizations were selected following the logic of John Stuart Mill's indirect method of difference (Ragin 1987). This method necessitates selecting cases that have many organizational and environmental similarities and a few key organizational differences.[6] The goal of the selection process was not to find three organizations that were representative of "faith-based organizations"; there is tremendous variation within this population with regards to organizational size, mission, services, funding, and religiosity (Jeavons 1994; McCarthy and Castelli 1997; Monsma 1996; Orr 2000; Sider and Unruh 2004; Smith and Sosin 2001). Rather, I use these cases to illustrate the concept of cooperative collective action by analyzing connections between beliefs, strategies, and resources. Specifically, I demonstrate that the organizational activities and collective action frames of this particular type of faith-based organization (local, non-profit corporations that were established by, but are separate from, a specific congregation) is consistent with the theoretical concept of cooperative collective action. Future research can test whether the observed organizational activities and frames hold for other organizations and populations. My goal here is to use theoretical concepts developed through previous research in a new research setting.

Data were collected during a seven-month period beginning in November 2001. *Organizational histories* were created for each organization by triangulating data collected through multiple sources, including: semi-structured interviews with directors, staff, and board members (Zion Development Corporation (ZDC)=12, Rockford New Hope (RNH)=5, Urban Hope Ministries (UHM)=5);[7] internal documents (e.g. mission statements, incorporation statements, memoranda, minutes of meetings, budget records, and grant applications); external documents (e.g. promotional materials, press releases, publications, and newspaper articles); and direct observation of meetings, day-to-day activities, public events, and associated religious services. Approximately 2,900 pages of organizational documents were examined. With each organization treated as a unit of analysis, I read through the data (i.e. internal and external organizational documents, field notes, and transcribed interviews) identifying all references to issues and problems faced by the neighborhood and the reasons provided for the organization's existence. Next, I re-read these marked entries searching for themes, commonalities and contradictions. These observations provide the basis for identifying the diagnostic frame offered by the organization. I then repeated this process, this time identifying all references to programs and possible solutions (i.e. prognostic frames). Finally, I identified all explanations, justifications, or rationales (i.e. motivation frames) offered by the organization for the work that they do or advocate.

The Cases

Each organization has 501(c)(3) tax-exempt designation and provides some form of social service and/or community development programming. Rockford New Hope was founded in 1995 and provides low-income housing and is developing a mentoring program for first-time homeowners. Zion Development began in 1982 and provides job training, low-income housing, small business development, as well as supportive services for the homeless. Founded in 1995, Urban Hope conducts intake evaluations and connects clients with an array of social services, provides computer training, and is developing a housing program. Each organization emerged from an urban, Christian congregation and continues to maintain ties to their respective churches. The organizational history data reveal that the three organizations have *not* been involved in protest activity (e.g. boycotts, marches, pickets). As Table 1 indicates, all three organizations accept government funding. The acceptance of government funding is a defining characteristic of this type of faith-based social service provision, in part because some secular non-profit leaders (Chaves et al. 2004: 297) and some religious leaders, such as Richard Lamb of the Southern Baptist Convention (Laconte 2001) refuse to accept government funding. Thus, accepting government funding provides *prima facie* evidence of the collaborative, rather than contentious, orientation of FBCDOs towards the state.[8]

Table 1. Funding Sources by Organization and Type

	City/County Government	*State/Federal Government*	*Other Non-Profits*	*For-Profits*
Zion Development	Grants	Grants	Contract, Grants, Donations	Contracts, Grants, Donations
Rockford New Hope	Grants	Grants	Grants, Donations	Contracts, Donations
Urban Hope	Contacts	Contracts	Grants, Donations	Donations

FINDINGS

Organizational narratives and religious meaning are particularly important in the study of faith-based organizations (Baggett 2000; Jeavons 1994). To many participants in this arena of community development, the religious and/or humanistic values underlying their more pragmatic tasks are the central reason for doing the work they do. Frame analysis can provide one tool for understanding how movement organization leaders incorporate, modify, and respond to political and ideological influences in their organizational environments. In this section, I document and analyze the diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational frames created by each organization by examining: a) the identified problems/issues faced by the community, b) the solutions offered in response to these problems, and c) the reasons offered for why action should be taken. The analysis reveals the connections between beliefs and strategies within each FBCDO, and also provides further evidence of cooperative collective action. Specifically, taken together the collective action frames produced by these faith-based community development organizations: 1) link sectarian religious values to broad community development goals, and 2) do not fundamentally challenge the prevailing economic and political systems.

Diagnostic Frames

Rockford New Hope and Zion Development identify the existence of a "housing gap" in their community as a major issue of concern (see Table 2). The housing gap, the difference between community housing needs and available units, persists despite the efforts of the city government, community development programs, and non-profit housing groups in the area. Low-income residents searching for housing are faced with high rents and units in various states of disrepair—many of which pose serious health risks to tenants. Therefore, there is a significant demand for both *affordable* and *safe* housing in the area. According to both organizations, the preponderance of high-rent, high-risk units are owned by absentee landlords that consistently ignore tenant requests for maintenance and improvements. Zion Development also identifies a variety of factors that have led to the deterioration of the neighborhood. Drugs, prostitution, public intoxication, and establishments that facilitate these (and other) illegal activities are often cited as major problems in the neighborhood. Although there is an implied moralistic argument (i.e. illegal drug use, prostitution, and public drunkenness are problems *per se*), Zion Development focuses on the negative effects these behaviors have on the community by contributing to high levels of violence and property crime in the neighborhood. This, in turn, drives away remaining family-friendly and "respectable" businesses in the area. When these businesses leave the community, the cycle of deterioration is continued because now the area becomes even more dominated by "troublesome" establishments and behaviors.

The diagnostic frame offered by Urban Hope differs significantly from the other two organizations. Urban Hope identifies three byproducts of the American welfare state as the key problems facing their neighborhood: 1) bureaucratic waste and duplication, 2) disempowerment and dependency, and 3) "loss of hope." Urban Hope's clients, many of whom are former welfare recipients, are in a difficult position. New eligibility requirements and time limits have forced them into the labor market, yet they are unequipped to successfully compete because of prior dependency on a welfare system that did not provide job skills or training. Thus, the prior system has led to serious disempowerment of community members and has led to a loss of hope. Further, according to Urban Hope, these problems continue because the existing service network is inefficient and ineffective.

Table 2. Collective Action Frames by Organization

	Rockford New Hope	*Zion Development*	*Urban Hope*
Diagnosis	• Housing gap • Absentee landlords	• Housing gap • Absentee landlords • Neighborhood decline • Drugs and prostitution	• Dysfunctional welfare system • Disempowerment • Loss of hope
Prognosis	• Mentoring • Safe and affordable housing	• Safe and affordable housing • Partnering with the state • "Neighboring"	• Efficiency • Accountability • Churches "step-in"
Rationale	• Service (religious)	• Service and neighboring (religious) • Community (social)	• Salvation (religious) • Respond to needs (social)

Prognostic Frames

The need for mentoring is an important part of the prognostic frame set forth by Rockford New Hope. Accordingly, providing housing is a crucial part of the solution, but simply providing the "bricks and mortar" is not enough. Individuals and families living in poverty can benefit from building *relationships* with volunteer mentors. One goal of this mentoring relationship is to facilitate first-time homeownership of owner occupied multi-family housing. Throughout its organizational documents, Rockford New Hope emphasizes the neighborhood benefits of increased home ownership, particularly the eventual displacement of absentee landlords and the creation of a sense of "rootedness" in the community. Specifically, since absentee landlords are associated with a variety of negative household effects (e.g. unjust rents and unsafe conditions) and negative neighborhood effects (e.g. transitory populations, community disrepair, and disorganization), the reduction of the number of absentee landlords will have a positive effect for individual households (new property owners who no longer have to rent from absentee landlords) and the community as a whole (by encouraging longer tenures and community engagement).

By identifying the negative impact of absentee landlords and consequently encouraging homeownership, Rockford New Hope offers a "problem" and "solution" that resonates with the dominant ideology of American society. The ideal of homeownership is a ubiquitous and extremely powerful component of American ideology. One need not look very far to see examples of the importance Americans place on homeownership—whether it is the fabled American dream of owning a suburban home with a white picket fence or a tax code that provides significant incentive for homeownership. The solution offered by Rockford New Hope taps into this mythos by offering to help struggling low-income families reach the goal of homeownership. The only divergence from the traditional homeownership ideal is the encouragement of multi-family housing. Yet, this divergence from the ideal is unlikely to produce significant resistance from potential supporters or funding agencies because it may be viewed as appropriate given the class position of potential homeowners. Members of this neighborhood are both financially and culturally outside of the middle-class (see, for instance, Bagget 2000). Financially, the income level of neighborhood residents is extremely low.

Culturally, in the eyes of some organizational respondents, many residents do not exhibit cultural traits consistent with middle-class values. One respondent told a story of a woman who had bought a home that had been developed by a non-profit organization and apparently did not meet her financial obligations despite opportunities to rent out an upstairs apartment. After a period of time, the non-profit re-acquired the property. The respondent's involvement in this situation led to the following conclusion: "[We need] education for the people that are going to be the tenants, especially if they are going to buy the property. [We] ought to have some kind of information go with it, that there are taxes to pay, and upkeep, and maintenance and things like that" [RNH 02].

Another noteworthy element of the prognostic frame offered by Rockford New Hope is the absence of a direct challenge to the fundamental logic of the dominant economic and political systems. The problem is identified as "absentee landlords" rather than an economic system that produces absentee landlords or a political system that does not discourage or prevent the profit-maximizing practices of this type of real estate investor. As such, these criticisms do not fundamentally challenge the prevailing economic and political structures.

The prognostic frames offered by Zion Development revolve around ways to create healthy neighborhoods. Addressing issues of employment, safe and affordable housing, business development, and building a greater sense of community through "neighboring" can accomplish this. In addition to offering employment and job training, Zion Development builds and manages affordable, safe housing in the area. Good housing is a necessary component of a healthy and vibrant neighborhood:

> In recent years, middle class people have moved to suburban areas. With primarily poor residents and aging housing stock left in the neighborhood, it has declined dramatically. Like all economically distressed neighborhoods, it is also subject to attacks of urban crime and social demoralization. Therefore our efforts have always been to create housing that is excellent in quality, i.e. the value for the dollar and operating costs (energy efficiency and maintenance) that are lower than average so people can be proud to be in the neighborhood and can continue to afford their housing. That pride translates into lower turnover ratios and in turn fosters community organizing and the formation of social support networks so essential for people to survive and thrive in at risk neighborhoods. [ZDC external document, circa 1998]

The above example represents the multiple functions of Zion Development's approach to housing development. As is the case with Rockford New Hope, Zion Development identifies the lack of a sense of ownership in the *neighborhood* that results from lack of ownership of a home. This lack of neighborhood ownership can be countered by encouraging families to become homeowners and to build the types of skills that will promote cohesive neighborhoods.

As discussed above, part of Zion Development's diagnosis of the affordable housing shortage is the effects of government retrenchment and the restructuring of the welfare state. In turn, they offer a prognostic frame that encourages a cooperative response to this shortfall, directed through Zion Development and other non-profits:

> Leveraging public dollars with private dollars is our forte. When we built 12 town house units, we assembled funding from four sources plus hundreds of hours of volunteer time. The rehab of 528 Seventh St. is using a record eight funding sources plus volunteers. Generally, we involve at least three funding sources: the City, the State and a bank loan. We have become very sophisticated at doing these deals. [ZDC external document, circa 1995]

In response to the physical and spiritual decay of neighborhoods, Zion Development advocates for the re-establishment of economic diversity in currently poor neighborhoods. Central to their conception of mixed-income neighborhoods is, once again, the concept of neighboring. It is not enough for builders to simply put up a "low-income" house next to a "middle-income" house, or to create a block of affordable housing in a predominately well-to-do neighborhood. In order for mixed-income neighborhoods to work, "people of faith and goodwill" must be the ones who move back into these previously abandoned neighborhoods. One newsletter invited "into the neighborhood those families and individuals who have sufficient discretionary time, money, abilities and other resources and who are willing to utilize these blessings to intentionally love their neighborhood" [ZDC external document, circa 1996]. These people of faith and goodwill must be committed to neighboring—to building relationships with their neighbors.

As is the case with the other two organizations, the prognostic frames offered by Urban Hope follow from their diagnostic frames. A dominant theme running through the organizational literature of Urban Hope is the need for efficiency. Urban Hope articulated this focus from its inception: "The goal of the organization is to be an efficient, community based organization with high moral standards that plans to network social service agencies, churches, and public charities and facilitate communication among them; eliminating unnecessary waste and duplication of services to recipients" [UHM external document, circa 1997]. One way that Urban Hope proposes to deal with the problems of waste and inefficiency is through the creation of a Community Assistance Clearinghouse (CAC) program.

This clearinghouse, in development at the time of my fieldwork, is a computerized database of community resources containing information on clients, volunteers, public/private service organizations, and churches. "Through its CAC database the organization will provide churches and agencies with the ability to reduce the unnecessary duplication of services, establish client verification, and facilitate the teaching of self-help skills to new and individuals chronically dependent of social services" [UHM external document, circa 1997]. The language used in this and other documents describing the program is a striking example of the cooperative relationship between the state and a faith-based community development organization. Urban Hope offers its services as an efficiency enforcer for the state and society. In doing so, the logic of bureaucracy is fully embraced (along with the dominant civic and political culture's criticism of the state's lack of efficiency). Thus, Urban Hope is offering to work cooperatively with the state to increase efficiency and accountability in social service provision. Furthermore, Urban Hope promotes itself as part of an alternative to the traditional welfare system:

> We must replace government welfare with a hybrid of private charity and local-level safety nets and individual responsibility. It is the time for individuals and institutions to help restore contact and forge long-terms bonds between volunteers and people with needs. This program proposal reflects a community-based effort in North Minneapolis to address the need to help current and potential welfare recipients become employable and self-sufficient. With the dismantling of the welfare system, there are and will be an ever increasing number of calls for help which has and will continue to increase the demand for the Christian community to step forward and provide and alternative to the welfare system that will promote life changing attitudes within our community. [UHM external document, circa 1997]

It is important to note that while Urban Hope is critical of the "welfare system" it does not eschew the state. These criticisms echo the political rhetoric prevalent in the United States—criticisms that have been espoused by politicians and pundits within both major political parties, since the 1980s. As such, the criticisms offered by Urban Hope are consistent with institutional politics and policies, rather than being particularly contentious or oppositional, and represent an alignment between Urban Hope's diagnostic and prognostic frames and the political environment in which the organization is situated.

In sum, for Urban Hope the physical and spiritual needs of the community are deeply intertwined. The negative effects of poverty and a dysfunctional welfare system have led to loss of hope and disempowerment. The organization's response to this is to work with government and religious agencies to help meet the physical needs of the community and simultaneously plant seeds for meeting the spiritual needs and creating a sense of hope and empowerment. Urban Hope attempts to play a central role in addressing both sets of needs by working cooperatively with other organizations to introduce greater efficiency and accountability in the provision of social services while at the same time providing a Christ-centered message.

Motivation Frames

The motivation frames for all three organizations draw heavily from religious values and teachings. Rockford New Hope and Zion Development provide rationales rooted in a mainline Protestant conception of Christian service (Lichterman 2005; Wuthnow and Evans 2002). From this perspective, those who claim to be Christians should serve others, particular those less fortunate. It is through service to others that one demonstrates God's love. Urban Hope offers a slightly different rationale for meeting the needs of others. In this frame, creating the opportunity for others to develop a personal relationship with Christ (i.e. become "saved") is the central mission.

Many respondents at Rockford New Hope draw heavily from the United Methodist tradition in providing a rationale for the work being done through Rockford New Hope.

> Interviewer: To what degree does your religious tradition encourage you to become involved in social or political issues?
>
> Respondent: Doesn't encourage it, it requires it!…Jesus called, as he quoted it himself, "set the prisoner free." His instructions: that what we do for the least of these we do for him. I don't think there is much choice…We live in an unjust society basically. Those of us who want to claim Christ's name need to try to do something about that. [RNH 03]

Like Rockford New Hope, Zion Development provides motivational frames that link Christian identity with service to others. Despite many historical differences, the denominations that Zion Development and Rockford New Hope are connected to—the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the United Methodist Church, respectively—share an interest in social action and the pursuit of social justice (Mead et al. 2001). Organization members can refer to historical and contemporary denominational statements of faith and action that stress works over words: "It has always been what we do. It has never been what we talk about. It is not a showy thing to Lutherans but it is the core of what we [do]" [ZDC interview 12]. Given that the diagnostic and prognostic frames offered by Zion Development focus on the importance of developing *neighborhoods* (i.e. not just housing or businesses), it is not surprising that the organization's motivational frames pay significant attention to the religious underpinnings of "neighboring." Organizational documents cite a variety of biblical passages, including Deuteronomy 14:22-15:1, Psalms 41:1, and Romans 15:26 to encourage Christian service. For example:

> We seek to live out Christ's commandment: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matthew 12:31) by fulfilling our mission, "In response to God's command, working together as neighbors building stronger, healthier neighborhoods where people are proud to live, work and worship." Furthermore, service to the materially poor and building up the body of Christ are themes at the absolute core of our understanding of the gospel. The Christian context in which we do our ministry is stressed with all staff and volunteers. We live and breathe it daily. [ZDC external document, circa 1997]

Zion Development draws connections between issues of housing, neighborhoods, poverty, and being Christian. It is essential for Christians "to love our neighbor as we love ourselves," and that is not just a symbolic love—Christians must put their money where their mouths are, so to speak, and move into deteriorating neighborhoods and invest their energy and resources into creating strong and healthy neighborhoods.

Like the other two organizations, Urban Hope also offers a religious rationale for engaging in community development:

> From our vantage point people have felt needs. They need housing, they need clothing, they need food, they need furniture, they need medical services, jobs, education and I think that Christ was very conscious of those needs for people…However he went about ministering to the needs of people, there was something greater involved. We know that the deepest need of the human heart is for a personal relationship with God. That God has created us for himself. As Augustine said, there is within every man a God shaped vacuum that only He can occupy. And we believe that, and we believe that people in the inner-city are created with that same God shaped vacuum. We believe that hurting people can often not receive the Gospel message until their felt needs are addressed. In turn their true needs cannot be addressed apart from the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As a member of the Universal body of Christ you have much to give and to receive in this transaction. [UHM external document, circa 1999]

The above quote details the connection between religious beliefs and the work of Urban Hope. The connection between "felt needs" and "spiritual needs" is a key organizational theme. For Urban Hope, helping people meet their felt needs is an important part of demonstrating God's love, as a promotional document states, "may the Lord…fulfill your every desire for goodness and the work of faith with power, in order that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in him…(Thessalonians 3:11-12)" [UHM external documents, circa 1999]. Many organizational documents invoke the biblical calling to "let your light shine." This phrase is premised on the notion that by doing good deeds you are making others aware of the bounty of Christ and thereby creating an opportunity for others to learn of Christ (Smith et al. 1998).

In sum, Rockford New Hope identifies the lack of affordable safe housing as a major problem for the community and advocates creating safer and affordable housing through redevelopment and management of properties, mentoring residents, and encouraging homeownership. These actions are justified by drawing from United Methodist teachings of Christian service to others. Zion Development identifies the same problems as Rockford New Hope and adds to this list the issue of neighborhood decline and disorganization. In response to these identified problems, Zion Development advocates a multi-prong approach that addresses issues of employment, housing, and business development. The overarching motivation frame points to the biblical mandate to serve the poor and to "neighbor." Urban Hope identifies the disempowerment and loss of hope perpetuated by welfare dependency as well as inefficient and ineffective social service provision as major problems in the community. To address these problems, the organization advocates for the church to get involved and deal with both the physical and spiritual needs of residents while also creating more efficient and accountable social service provision.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The effects of the structural location of FBCDOs are evident in the similarities and differences across the collective action frames offered by these organizations. Faith-based community development organizations exist at the confluence of the three primary structures of American society: the state, the market, and voluntary sectors. In order to be successful, their framing efforts must align with the values and goals of organizations that control key resources. Because the FBCDOs in this study acquire funding from organizations in all three sectors (see Table 1) it is not surprising that their framing efforts—conceptualized here as a response to environmental demands (Binder 2007; Scott 1991)—reflect the logic of key funding organizations and the religious traditions from which each organization emerged and remains connected. For example, most funding agencies (particularly within the state sector) seek pragmatic, results-oriented projects. Zion Development and Rockford New Hope each identify the lack of safe, affordable housing in the neighborhood as the central problem to be addressed. While each organization acknowledges the lack of employment opportunities as well as individual-level problems (e.g. drug addiction, prostitution, "welfare dependency") of neighborhood residents, both organizations focus primarily on the shortcomings of the housing market in the area. Their proposal of creating safe, affordable housing, done through partnerships between the city government and faith community, is a key step in revitalizing the neighborhoods. This is not to suggest that they claim that good housing will solve all of the identified problems in the neighborhood; rather, each of these organizations view their role as an important, but limited, part of community development activity and societal change.

In contrast, the definition of the problem offered by Urban Hope focuses on: a) the underlying, and ultimately spiritual, cause of residents' current troubles and b) the deleterious effects of a dysfunctional welfare state. The residents of this neighborhood face many of the same problems as residents of the other two organizations in a different city. While "material" problems (e.g. lack of affordable housing, unemployment) are acknowledged by Urban Hope, the organization's frames identify these problems as, ultimately, stemming from spiritual needs. As such, Urban Hope proposes that both the "material" and "spiritual needs" of their clients must be addressed or else they will not be able to escape the cycle of poverty, addiction, and violence. These themes reflect Evangelical understandings of personal salvation (Smith et al. 1998) and also align with dominant political views emphasizing individual responsibility (see Olasky 1992) that have guided welfare policy in the United States since the 1990s.

The conceptualization of FBCDOs as a form of cooperative collective action is the result of the empirical analysis presented above. The organizational histories (funding sources, activities, and collaborations) and frame analyses reveal that these FBCDOs more closely resemble cooperative collective action than social movement activity. This alone is an important finding because it represents, to my knowledge, the first empirical study employing Melucci's concept of cooperative collective action and demonstrates that the analytic category has at least one empirical referent. As I suggest below, one advantage to delineating collective action in this manner is that it may attune researchers to emerging movements for change that take place within pre-existing institutional channels. However, the larger contribution of this study is the insight gained from using organizational theory and frame analysis to examine faith-based community development activity. FBCDOs appear to be an emerging movement for change, rather than simply isolated social welfare organizations. Examining the structural location of these organizations and employing frame analysis to illuminate the ideological basis of their activity and advances theoretical understanding of a particular form of collective action, while simultaneously shedding light on an emergent social phenomenon.

The study of cooperative collective action, in general, and faith-based community development, in particular, can be further developed in multiple ways. First, what are the community and institutional effects of FBCDOs cooperative collective action with the state? Religious participation and beliefs play a role in determining individual involvement in protest activity (Fitzgerald and Spohn 2005; McVeigh and Smith 1999; McVeigh and Sikkink 2001), and disruptive politics can give leverage to marginalized groups and create institutional change (Piven and Cloward 1977), but do disadvantaged communities benefit more from Alinsky-style community development (Marwell 2004; Warren 2001; Wood 2002) that engages in contentious political action or from collaborative partnerships between religious non-profits and the state? Additionally, future research might specify under what conditions "cooperative" organizations, like the FBCDOs in this study, might benefit from positive radical flank effects (Haines 1988) created by the actions of "contentious" organizations.

There are important remaining questions regarding power differentials between organizations engaged in cooperative collective action and the state. While my focus in this article has been to establish the cooperative relationship between FBCDOs and the state by demonstrating the collaborative actions and orientations of FBCDOs, I am emphatically *not* claiming that small, local, FBCDOs enjoy an equal (or privileged) power position vis-à-vis the state, nor that collaborative activities are not marked with many tensions and conflicts. Faith-based community development organizations, like all non-profit organizations, run the risk of becoming dependent upon the resources controlled by the state. One result of this dependence can be the creation of organizational changes that may not be beneficial to the organization. For example, Urban Hope was encouraged to grow at a faster rate than initially planned after receiving a government contract. When the contract was not renewed, the organization was forced to downsize rapidly and lay off nearly half of its staff.

An additional tension, one that is particularly acute for religious leaders seeking meaningful social change through community development work, is whether it is possible to partner with the state *and* be a "prophetic voice" against injustice (Wallis 2001). Chaves et al. (2004) conclude that there is little support for the assertion that religious organizations will lose their prophetic voice if they receive government funds. However, some respondents in my study stated that it is difficult (and perhaps unwise) to publicly challenge or criticize the state when the state is your partner—doing so may jeopardize current and future programs. Follow-up studies can explore whether this constitutes "co-optation" or "channeling" (Jenkins 1998) and how this affects the provision of social services in disadvantaged communities.

These findings also suggest directions for future research on collective action. Melucci's analytic concept, cooperative collective action, appears to have at least one empirical referent. Are there additional historical or contemporary examples of movements for change engaged in cooperative rather than contentious collective action? If so, what implications does this have for the movement society thesis? McAdam et al. (2005) document the transformation, and institutionalization, of protest in the United States over the past three decades—where disruptive protest has largely been replaced by peaceful, routine events. Just as researchers focused only on measuring *disruptive protest* might erroneously conclude that movement activity has markedly declined when it fact it has merely taken on a different form, researchers focused on *contentious action* might be missing other forms of movement activity. By privileging contentious organizations, scholars run the risk of missing important movement work that takes place at the community level within pre-existing and emergent institutional channels.

NOTES

[1] John Orr and colleagues (2000) typology between five types of religious organizations: congregations, denominations, faith-based national networks (e.g. The Salvation Army, Lutheran Social Services), freestanding public benefit non-profit corporations, and faith-based for-profit corporations. The organizations in the current study can be classified as freestanding public benefit non-profit organizations—this category is "the most diverse and least understood" type of religion-sponsored social service organization (McCarthy 1997: 13).

[2] Collective action is "a set of social practices i) involving simultaneously a number of individuals or groups, ii) exhibiting similar morphological characteristics in contiguity of time and space, iii) implying a social field of relationship, and (iv) the capacity of the people involved of making sense of what they are doing" (Melucci 1996: 20).

[3] The categories are: social movements, competition, cooperation, deviance, reaction, individual resistance, individual mobility, and ritual.

[5] There is considerable debate as to the extent with which movement narratives are to be conceptualized as deliberate calculated attempts by movement leaders or more organic shared meanings created through sustained interaction. Generally speaking, frame analysis is appropriate when conceptualizing narratives as calculated, whereas discourse (or textual) analysis is appropriate when conceptualizing narratives as organic. In my opinion, the type of data to be analyzed should be a key determinant of whether narratives should be conceptualized as calculated or organic. At the risk of oversimplifying, data representing "external" narratives (e.g. public speeches, mission statements, press releases, direct quotes published in news articles) should be conceptualized as calculated, while data representing the ongoing creation of "internal" narratives (e.g. discussions between individuals *before* the establishment of movement

organizations or the process of intra-organizational discussions/debates) should be conceptualized as organic.

[6] The organizational similarities include 1) non-profit status, 2) organizational connections to a specific congregation, 3) provision of social service and community development programs, and 4) government funding. The key environmental similarities include 5) neighborhood size, 6) neighborhood socioeconomic composition, and 7) region. The choice of organizational differences was driven by both substantive interests and theoretical concerns. The key differences are 1) organizational age, 2) organizational size [a combination of budget and staff], 3a) religious tradition, and 3b) organizational racial/ethnic composition.

[7] ZDC has twelve paid staff members, UHM has five, and RNH has one.

[8] Of course, receiving government funding does not necessarily preclude political or contentious activity (Chaves et al. 2004).

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