

ABSTRACT

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Many nonprofits set out to challenge social inequalities by addressing contemporary problems, such as unemployment, homelessness, and domestic violence. Yet, nonprofit organizations and practitioners must engage with ideologies that justify stratification. Paternalism often underscores unequal relationships when dominant and subordinate group members interact in socioeconomically and racially diverse settings. Even in nonprofits, the appearance that privileged individuals care hides and preserves inequality. What factors promote the adoption of paternalistic versus empowering ideologies? This study emphasizes race, religion, and organizational focus, relying on content-coded qualitative data from a random sample of 40 nonprofit organizations in the United States. Analyses suggest that paternalistic ideology emerges when majority (white) staff serve minority (Black or Latino) participants, as well as when organizations display religious ties, or missions related to employment, family, or housing issues. In contrast, empowering ideology develops when minority staff serve same-race participants, as well as when organizations focus on advocacy or domestic violence issues.

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Paternalistic and Empowering Ideologies among Nonprofit Organizations:
The Effects of Race, Religiosity, and Organizational Focus

by
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Introduction

In an increasingly segregated society (Massey 2007), participation in nonprofit organizations stands out as one of the few remaining social settings where individuals engage in regular interaction across race and class lines (LeRoux 2009). Many nonprofits set out to solve social problems, and they appear to challenge contemporary forms of inequality. For example, some employment-focused organizations address labor market inequality by providing reskilling and job-matching services to unemployed and underemployed adults. Still, nonprofit organizations and practitioners operate within a social structure, characterized by stratification and the various ideologies used to explain and justify it. As a result, stakeholders may incorporate broader ideas into programming, inadvertently reproducing the very ideologies that legitimate existing inequalities.

Dominant groups use paternalism as a primary ideology for maintaining positions of privilege (Jackman 1994). In the United States alone, paternalistic ideology holds historical linkages to unequal relationships along lines of race, class, gender, and religion. When nonprofit organizations bring together individuals from different sides of unequal relationships, paternalistic tenets often structure individual interaction and organizational operation. On the other hand, some nonprofits purposefully counter prevailing ideologies by resisting dominant ideas and practicing self-definition. Social scientists concerned about the legitimation and reproduction of inequality are compelled to study ideology in change-orientated, nonprofit organizations. It is in these settings that diverse individuals come together to create change. Yet, like other organizations, nonprofits must confront and

manage the tensions that arise when race and class inequality undergird interactions. What factors promote the adoption of paternalistic versus empowering ideologies?

This paper uses content-coded qualitative data to identify nonprofits' overall approaches to ameliorating inequality. I examine the extent to which nonprofits employ paternalistic and empowering ideologies in explanations of programs, as well as broader social issues. I also investigate how these ideologies correspond to 1) provider and recipient race; 2) organizational religiosity; and 3) organizational focus. First, I review theoretical and empirical work on ideology, paternalism, and empowerment, paying particular attention to how these concepts relate to class and race relations, as well as nonprofit operation. I then explain the sampling, coding, and analytic procedures used in my content analysis of 40 nonprofit organizations. Quantitative and qualitative data suggest that organizations tend to subscribe to paternalistic ideology if they have a majority (white) staff serving minority participants, if they are faith-based, or if they focus on employment, family, or housing issues. In contrast, nonprofits tend to display empowering ideology if they have minority staff serving minority participants, or if they focus on advocacy or domestic violence issues. Finally, I discuss how these findings extend current understandings of ideology and stratification.

Paternalistic Ideology

Ideology contributes to the reproduction of inequality. The term 'ideology' describes a flexible and dynamic set of ideas, narratives, phrasings, and interpretations, which

dominant group members use to understand and direct the social world (Bonilla-Silva 2010; Jackman and Muha 1984). Marx argued that the dominant class in a society disseminates ideologies that justify its privileged position (Giddens 1971). Dominant groups avoid ruling by force, which exposes expropriation. Instead, powerful people solidify their advantages by institutionalizing beneficial rules and norms that govern social life. All of a society's members interact with common institutions, and they often communicate across the groups that occupy dominant and subordinate positions in the social structure. As a result, individuals' ideologies become relatively similar and typically suppress outright hostility. This process lends legitimacy to the status quo (Jackman 1994), meaning that the social order appears reasonable and fair to the vast majority of citizens (Della Fave 1991).

Dominant groups exercise power through ideological hegemony. Hegemony refers to the cultural symbols, images, and ideas that pervade the knowledge of society's members. Because dominant groups control social institutions, they retain influence over the ideologies available (Hill Collins 2000). These individuals possess the power to characterize solely members of their own group as good people, who deserve the privileges that they enjoy (Jackman 1994). These ideologies do not develop organically or unintentionally; dominant group members instead design them as social control mechanisms that maintain structures of oppression (Hill Collins 2000). However, individuals and groups from a variety of social locations adopt dominant ideologies. For example, the "one-drop rule" originally developed in the U.S. as a cultural and institutional tool for preserving white racial purity. Yet, this form of racial classification persists today as commonsense knowledge among individuals of all races (Khanna 2010).

Although subordinates may espouse hegemonic ideals, their willingness to do so is structured by unequal relationships. Many subordinate group members express insight into, and dissatisfaction with, their circumstances but find it difficult to exercise resistance in everyday life, due to the risk of repercussions (Jackman 1994). Individuals within any social group interpret the world in a wide variety of ways, but those who experience systems of oppression retain unique potential for gaining insight into their operation. While all remain vulnerable to the lure of hegemonic ideologies, subordinate group members most often contest their validity (Hill Collins 2000). For example,

U.S. Black women have generated alternative practices and knowledges that have been designed to foster U.S. Black women's group empowerment...the struggle for a self-defined Black feminism occurs through an ongoing dialogue whereby action and thought inform one another (Hill Collins 2000:30).

Individuals always maintain the ability to create self-definitions. But families and communities, as well as institutions within civil societies, can serve as settings where group-centered resistance occurs. When oppressed groups control these settings, members work towards a collective consciousness, which draws on the shared experiences of individuals. For example, African-American-led groups, including the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), and countless Black churches, facilitated group consciousness and organized mass confrontations during the Civil Rights Movement (Carson, Garrow, Gill, Harding, and Hine 1991; Morris 1986).

The hegemonic ideological repertoire in the contemporary U.S. includes paternalism. Broadly defined, paternalism structures relationships between dominant and subordinate group members (Jackman 1994). In a paternalistic relationship, an individual's choices are directed or constrained in the name of his or her best interest, as defined by another party. In effect, this denies people the opportunity to declare their own wishes. Sometimes paternalistic behavior is developmentally necessary; it often structures relationships between adults and children (Reamer 1983). However, paternalism operates as a form of social control when exercised in adult relationships (Jackman 1994). It can even prevent individuals from fully understanding available choices. For instance, a prison warden might bar prisoners from participating in research studies based on conventions about vulnerability. The warden thus makes decisions on behalf of prisoners, under the assumption of superior insight or rationality (Reamer 1983).

Some relationships not only lack paternalism, but actively counter it. I use the term "empowerment" to describe arrangements that incorporate self-determination, or allow individuals to act on their own goals and desires (Reamer 1983). Empowerment does not preclude the existence of dominant and subordinate groups, but it does counter paternalistic ideologies that justify structural inequality. Rather than framing subordinates as dependent and incompetent, empowering ideology characterizes individuals as autonomous and capable. According to Hill Collins (2000), ideologies like empowerment, which resist the hegemonic model, most often emerge through collective standpoints developed through dialogue around the actual experience of oppression.

Scholars examine paternalism and empowerment from various approaches and in several settings. This study emphasizes class, race, and religion in the context of nonprofit organizations. In the sections below, I present three fundamental dilemmas that materialize as nonprofits confront social inequality in the issues that they address, as well as in their own ranks. I argue that paternalism emerges in organizations based on categorical distinctions between groups, but empowerment surfaces when nonprofits find strategies for negotiating differences. In the former case, leaders exercise paternalism by creating an ideal and offering conditional love. In the latter, they facilitate empowerment by building on strengths and offering comprehensive love.

Making Categorical Distinctions versus Negotiating Differences

Categorical distinctions can exist along any number of dimensions, including race, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, gender, sexuality, and age. Regardless of category content, individuals hold differential access to resources based on group membership (Tilly 1998). Dominant groups institutionalize categorical inequality in order to hide exploitation, and hegemonic ideologies promote distinctions between groups as justification (Jackman 1994). Paternalism is one such ideology. Dominants and subordinates are characterized as fundamentally distinct in ways that necessitate hierarchical social arrangements. Group boundaries can be explicitly spelled out, like racial lines on a Southern slave plantation (Genovese 1976), or they can be implicitly understood, like gender roles in a

corporate firm (Kanter 1977). Whether overt or covert, manifestations of paternalism reflect the maintenance of group boundaries, as well as the legitimation of inequality.

Nonprofits face a dilemma with regard to categorical distinctions because categories pervade the social issues that organizations seek to address and the programs that they create. Nonprofits set out to challenge inequality, but they also emulate inequality in fashioning solutions (Tilly 1998). Organizations respond to this dilemma in distinct ways, which depend on their ideological approaches. Paternalistic organizations incorporate and reinforce categorical distinctions between groups. They create programs that emphasize the differential social locations of dominants and subordinates. Many mentorships, for example, operate on the assumption that staff possess abilities or competencies superior to those of participants. This goes beyond a simple skills transfer because mentors treat mentees with paternalism – as if they display dependency and crave guidance (Biebricher 2011). At the same time, organizational leaders typically use language that offers compliments, minimizes differences, and espouses inclusion. When structural inequality underscores flattering language in this way, individuals exercise paternalism and reinforce group boundaries. Empowering ideology does not mean denying categorical distinctions, but *negotiating differences*, or wrestling with their origins, meanings, and consequences. Empowering language neither hides differences, nor reifies them. It instead reveals a complex balancing act that includes acknowledging different group standpoints, promoting intergroup understanding, and building inclusive climates.

Creating an Ideal versus Building on Strengths

While the first dilemma draws on distinctions between groups, the second employs the substance of categories' content. In order to construct hegemonic ideologies, dominants *create an ideal* by disseminating stereotypes and controlling images. These simultaneously act as claims about who group members are, and ideal types regarding who they should become (Hill Collins 2000). When they invoke paternalism specifically, dominants paint subordinates as having fundamentally different attributes and needs that are inferior to their own (Jackman 1994). Nonprofit organizations enact paternalistic ideology when they portray participants as lost children gone astray. In these cases, staff members define the attributes and needs of the target populations. They also create specific role expectations based on dominant ideals.

Conversely, empowering organizations believe that individuals occupying a variety of social locations possess insights and abilities. As a result, they emphasize *building on strengths*. This reflects a participant-centered approach, since staff members consult participants and their communities with the understanding that they bring key assets to the table. Subordinate group members define their own goals, and they play integral roles in fashioning solutions to individual problems and social issues.

Offering Conditional versus Comprehensive Love

Finally, the third dilemma addresses the conditional nature of support that nonprofits offer participants. Determining who should have access to organizational support involves more than straightforward, bureaucratic rationality. It entails incorporating and asserting beliefs about deservingness (Jennings 2000; Monnat 2010). Many nonprofit leaders and volunteers express positive feelings about, and exhibit benevolent behavior towards, subordinates (Einolf 2011; Pawlak and Finn 1990; Unruh and Sider 2005). In paternalistic organizations, however, dominants' kindness is designed to evoke deference from subordinates, and it is quickly retracted when such is not received. Thus, *offering conditional love* means rewarding and punishing participants based on their performance of role expectations. Dominants use compliance as a condition for friendship or social acceptance (Jackman 1994).

In contrast, empowerment organizations display *comprehensive love* by supporting without judgment, as well as in a comprehensive manner. These nonprofits provide information and services to participants without underlying agendas or role expectations. In addition, they purposefully support "the whole person" by addressing multidimensional challenges.

Paternalism in Class and Race Relations

Depending on the type of categorical distinction between groups, variations arise in the content of the ideal that dominants create and the nature of the conditional love that they offer (Jackman 1994). I focus on two enduring dimensions of inequality in the U.S. – class and race. These categories arise in nonprofits, when the rich offer help to the poor and when whites provide services to racial minorities. Yet, organizational landscapes also offer variation on these dimensions; sometimes subordinate groups serve their own communities.

Class

Paternalism pervades class relations when dominants criticize subordinates' traits while idealizing their own (Jackman 1994). Upper- and middle-class Americans construct an ideal around their beliefs and experiences by glorifying the traits that they perceive as responsible for their success. They praise individual ambition and ingenuity, while characterizing subordinates as dependent, irresponsible, and unskilled (Jennings 2000). During the civil rights movements of the 1960s and 70s, for example, many elites felt exceptionally equipped to analyze social problems and lead poor people's movements. They employed conventional, middle-class ideals by assembling the poor into unions and organizations (Piven and Cloward 1977). When dominants believe that they know best, they possess the power to institute the ideal of their choosing.

Historically, dominants extend support only to poor individuals who display obedience by striving to fulfill the ideal (Bendix 1956). Contemporary policies codify conditional love by providing formal ways for dominant group members to withdraw benefits from subordinates who do not fulfill role expectations. Researchers refer to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and other welfare programs as “new paternalist” because they operate around the beliefs that participants lack skills and require supervision (Ben-Ishai 2012; Bruch, Ferree, and Soss 2010; Schram, Fording, and Soss 2008). The State institutionalizes control and sanction based on the paternalistic understanding that recipients must receive instruction on how to become proper citizens (Bruch et al. 2010). Work requirements, time limits, and client penalties all act as conditions for support. Caseworkers determine the legitimacy of recipients’ reasons for failing to meet requirements, and families experience reduced or eliminated benefits for a wide array of infractions (Monnat 2010). While they adamantly oppose “handouts,” dominants usually back the idea of an organization lending support to individuals they perceive as deserving – those who face hardships but also display a strong work ethic and a sense of personal responsibility (Jennings 2000). This approach, however, epitomizes the key components of paternalistic ideology. It establishes *categorical distinctions* between those who need help and those who do not, it creates an *ideal* that subordinates must strive towards in order to be perceived as deserving, and it offers *conditional love* dictating that only some individuals should receive help (Jackman 1994).

Race

Some scholars find that paternalism arises in same-race relationships. For instance, widespread paternalism developed in southern mill towns populated by whites. Employers hired displaced white farmers, protecting them from interracial competition and building towns around them. In so doing, employers mobilized the imagery of the white family to facilitate both dependency and obedience among their workers (Leiter 1982). Others conceptualize paternalism as underscoring interracial relations when individuals from structurally unequal racial groups interact in everyday life. In this context, dominants use paternalism to justify privilege, casting themselves as benevolent father-figures who necessarily care for, but also discipline, subordinates (Genovese 1976; Jackman 1994).

Segregated social life prevails in the contemporary U.S. (Massey 2007). Paternalism weakens as an explanation of racial inequality when dominant racial groups do not interact with subordinates on a regular basis (Jackman 1994). However, some nonprofits provide settings where individuals of different races interact on a regular basis (LeRoux 2009). Paternalistic ideology likely emerges in this environment. The imagery of a multiracial family might be especially relevant in faith-based organizations, where leaders sometimes describe a single, unified family under God (Unruh and Sider 2005). It can also emerge in unaffiliated nonprofits, when they are populated by individuals who understand multiculturalism as a unifying identity, rather than as a source of division (Edgell and Tranby 2010).

When exercising paternalism, nonprofit employees characterize participants as dependent and expect them to exhibit deference. Staff may anticipate gratitude because their organizations provide benefits that are not widely available elsewhere (Wilson 1996). In light of indirect and institutionalized forms of discrimination (Massey 2007), participants of color likely depend on nonprofits for access to basic support services and may be compelled to act out deference when necessary. Thus, staff act as gatekeepers, shaping participants' life chances as they determine deservingness and allocate benefits (Monnat 2010).

Nonprofit leaders pull paternalistic tenets from mainstream racial rhetoric. Today, white Americans draw on code words to inject racial meanings into their expectations for subordinates' behavior (Kinder and Kam 2010). Dominants create an ideal that is not only middle class, but also white. For example, employers regularly praise and reward male workers who speak "proper" English, dress in "appropriate" ways, and display "non-threatening" mannerisms (Tilly and Moss 2001). They mention a few exceptional minorities who meet these expectations but candidly criticize those who do not (Kirschenman and Neckerman 1991). Similarly, dominant narratives demonize black women as lazy, undeserving "welfare queens", who purposefully reject mainstream lifestyles in order to collect government assistance (Monnat 2010). Ultimately, dominants facilitate social control by constructing a white ideal centered on personal responsibility and traditional morality.

For race relations, conditional love requires that subordinates strive towards the ideal while espousing colorblind rhetoric (Bonilla-Silva 2010). By suppressing race-related dissent, dominants offer praise and support for compliant subordinates, while maintaining power (Jackman 1994). Typically, support takes the form of colorblind assistance; minorities

sometimes receive benefits on par with whites if they interact effectively with dominant institutions. On the other hand, dominants disparage subordinates who acknowledge the continuing significance of race. They portray these individuals as radical or underserving in the media (Bonilla-Silva 2010). In addition, they revoke supposedly colorblind benefits but disguise the process by using neutral language. For example, local officials target black women for welfare sanctions most often (Monnat 2010), highlighting the conditional nature of their aid.

Paternalism in Nonprofit Organizations

Existing scholarship suggests that some dominant group members challenge paternalistic ideology, while others reinforce it. When nonprofits tackle class- or race-based inequalities (Schmid 2004), they still operate in the context of paternalistic ideologies that feed relations of domination and subordination. Some nonprofits, however, facilitate meaningful change by countering dominant ideologies, recruiting diverse allies, and writing innovative legislation (Block 2003), as well as by encouraging self-determination among participants (Reamer 1983).

Because the nonprofit landscape is demographically diverse, it provides a compelling opportunity for examining how categorical distinctions affect the emergence of dominant ideals and conditional love in organizations. In the following sections, I outline expected relationships between nonprofit organizations' characteristics and ideologies. I consider employee and participant race, as well as organizations' religiosity and focus. Based on

existing theoretical and empirical evidence, I conceptualize each of these characteristics as predicting either a paternalistic or empowering ideology.

Staff and Participant Race

The demographic makeup of a nonprofit's staff and participants may play a decisive role in influencing the ideological stance expressed by that organization. In communities and societies, dominant groups exercise paternalism towards subordinate groups in order to maintain structures of privilege (Jackman 1994). This suggests that paternalism arises most often when dominant group members run nonprofits that serve subordinate group members. Nonprofits display consistent categorical distinctions along class lines; usually middle- and upper-class individuals serve¹ working- and lower-class participants.² This is reason to believe that most organizations exercise at least some paternalism (Salamon 1995). On the other hand, nonprofits display a great deal of variation along racial categories (LeRoux 2009). Race may shape ideology, such that organizations run by whites employ paternalism, while those run by people of color emphasize empowerment.

Accustomed to rationalizing privilege, whites who run nonprofit organizations probably exercise paternalistic ideology. Dominants do not necessarily possess unique social

¹ The word "serve" emerged in vivo, as a way that nonprofit organizations describe their work. Other researchers note that volunteers frame their activities in similar ways (e.g., see Salamon 1995). However, theoretical and empirical data in this study suggest that "serve" is in fact a precarious term. While dominant group members may characterize themselves as helping the less fortunate, this very depiction reflects the exercise of paternalism, which maintains structures of domination.

² Exact data on the socioeconomic status of nonprofit staff and participants are unavailable, as far as I am aware. Many studies on nonprofit organizations make the assumption that social-service-oriented nonprofits are typically inter-class (e.g. Leroux 2009; Salamon 1995). This assumption holds for the cases presented here.

consciousness simply because they work or volunteer at nonprofits. Their activities can instead be motivated by job characteristics (Lee and Wilkins 2011), social acceptance (Shye 2010), or network pressure (Wiepking and Maas 2009). Even when well-meaning, most whites do not assume an antiracist worldview (O'Brien and Korgen 2007) or question structural barriers to social mobility (Brezina and Winder 2003). By emphasizing individual coping strategies that gloss over the structural roots of oppression (Schram 2003), whites create a paternalistic ideal. They suggest that subordinates can overcome hardship by mimicking dominants' attitudes and behaviors. As a result, white-led organizations likely offer conditional support, which requires that participants strive toward a particular ideal.

In contrast, people of color, who personally experience oppression, recognize and resist it most often (Hill Collins 2000). When these individuals lead nonprofits, the organizations may exercise empowering ideology. Empowerment emerges when organizations frame participants as possessing agency and strength, then use this outlook to facilitate self-determination in programming. In a nonprofit run by and for homeless individuals, for example, members referred to themselves as "underutilized" rather than underprivileged. They also set and achieved program goals by communicating with one another, rather than by relying on experts or authority figures (Cress 1997). Empowering ideology does not involve the creation of an ideal. Self-determination means mobilizing individual strengths and making personal decisions, rather than measuring oneself against a single standard. For empowerment organizations, support is comprehensive because, without one ideal, there is little reason to revoke support.

Religiosity

A nonprofit's religious affiliation may shape its ideology, such that faith-based organizations exercise more paternalism. Paternalism justifies the formal and informal hierarchies found in many religions. Evangelical Christian denominations, for instance, vest religious authority in men as leaders in their churches and families. Pastors and lay people substantiate this arrangement based on the paternalistic understanding that men possess superior rationality and wisdom and should therefore protect women (Gallagher and Smith 1999). Applied in an organizational context, this framework promotes dichotomous thinking about intergroup differences in general. Most faith-based organizations assume that individuals lack competency in one or more areas, and they present religious doctrine as a guiding remedy. In other words, staff members characterize themselves as capable individuals with a God-given responsibility to lead categorically different others. Nonprofits then create a clear ideal that they expect participants to meet. This represents a rather extreme form of paternalism: like salvation, participation requires permanent and unquestioning obedience (Biebricher 2011).

The extent to which faith-based organizations' support is conditional depends on religious and political legacies. Protestant individuals typically flock to faith-based organizations (Bekkers and Schuyt 2008). Many subscribe to religious doctrine that emphasizes conversion (Biebricher 2011) and conservative political ideology that stresses individualism (Einolf 2011; Williams 1996). This suggests that faith-based organizations provide stringently conditional support based on the same principles. In contrast, Catholic

and non-religious individuals more often direct their philanthropy toward *non*-religious organizations because of beliefs in altruism and equality (Bekkers and Schuyt 2008).

Nonprofits with no religious ties lack the aim of facilitating spiritual transformation among participants. As a result, these organizations may display less paternalism.

Organizational Focus

Organizational focus – meaning the type of services that an organization provides – may also shape the degree of paternalism that a nonprofit displays. All social welfare agencies operate in a new paternalist climate that emphasizes self-discipline over self-determination (Schram et al. 2008). This belief system stems from the assumption that immoral and irresponsible decision-making lead to poverty. Solutions thus involve promoting family values and economic self-sufficiency (Biebricher 2011). Implementation calls for temporary and conditional support, which subject recipients to a myriad of controls and sanctions (Monnat 2010). Nonprofits focused on issues steeped in this new paternalism, including employment, housing, and family organizations, are most vulnerable to its ideological lure. Because they promote economic self-sufficiency or traditional family values, these nonprofits can easily infuse dominant ideals and conditional love into their everyday operations, and they likely receive substantial cultural and fiscal support for doing so. Alternatively, nonprofits that tackle issues without clear connections to the new paternalism – including advocacy, crisis, and domestic violence organizations – may embrace empowering ideology.

Hypotheses

Existing theoretical and empirical evidence suggests that paternalistic ideology structures the unequal relationships between dominant and subordinate groups in the United States (Jackman 1994). And although nonprofit organizations purport to challenge society's ills, many appear to emulate the new paternalism exercised by the State (Biebricher 2011; Schram et al. 2008). Through their work in these organizations, dominant group members solidify categorical distinctions, construct an ideal around their own values, and set the conditions under which help is available. This has the effect of legitimating structural inequality by allowing dominants to both feel and appear altruistic without actually threatening their privileged positions (Jackman 1994).

Still, paternalism likely emerges in certain organizations to a greater degree. Dominant group members tend to be especially well versed in hegemonic ideologies, such as paternalism (Jackman 1994). On the other hand, individuals who have experienced oppression are the most likely candidates to recognize and challenge it (Hill Collins 2000).

H_{1A}: Organizations led by predominantly white staffs display more paternalism than organizations led by more diverse staffs.

Nonprofit participants' characteristics also matter. Paternalism is a tool that dominant groups utilize to both pacify subordinate groups and rationalize their own privileged positions (Jackman 1994). Both public and private organizations operate within a broader climate of new paternalism (Ben-Ishai 2012; Bruch et al. 2010; Schram et al. 2008), which

includes racially-coded messages about deservingness (Monnat 2010). As a result, paternalism likely arises more often when minority subordinates receive nonprofit services.

H_{1B}: Organizations serving minority participants display more paternalism than organizations serving more diverse participants.

Further, dominant group members tend to exhibit paternalism when they have frequent interactions with subordinate group members (Jackman 1994). Thus, paternalism likely emerges given the pairing of white staffs and minority participants. In contrast, members of oppressed groups more often challenge hegemonic ideologies (Hill Collins 2000). Paternalism may therefore appear less often when minority staff members serve same-race participants.

H_{1C}: Staff and participant race interact, such that organizations with white staffs and minority participants display paternalism, while organizations with minority staffs and participants display empowerment.

Next, faith-based organizations tend to embrace paternalism as a necessary strategy for facilitating the personal and spiritual transformations of those they serve (Biebricher 2011). The individuals who feel compelled to work or volunteer at these organizations tend to express personal and political ideologies that are closely related to paternalism.

H₂: Faith-based organizations display more paternalism than organizations with no religious ties.

Finally, nonprofits that address social issues related to welfare reform, which has been couched in new paternalist arguments (Ben-Ishai 2012; Bruch et al. 2010; Schram et al. 2008), likely display more paternalism. Dominants present hard work (MacLeod 2009),

home ownership (Shapiro 2004), and “traditional” family values as key prerequisites for economic success (Biebricher 2011). When organizations focus on employment, housing, and family issues, they likely draw on such narratives. Conversely, nonprofits that address advocacy, crises, and domestic violence may retain more leeway to deviate from paternalistic norms.

H₃: Organizations that address employment, family, and housing display more paternalism than organizations that address advocacy, crises, and domestic violence.

Data and Methods

Sampling

I compiled a sample of nonprofits using the GuideStar online database of charity and nonprofit organizations in the United States. GuideStar pulls data from Internal Revenue Service (IRS) files to create a directory of over 1.8 million tax-exempt nonprofit organizations. The database lists basic information about each organization, including website, phone number, location, income, assets, organizational affiliation (e.g., corporate, independent), and foundation type (e.g., corporate-sponsored, government-supported). Because data are gathered directly from tax forms, many nonprofits are not included, specifically: 1) those that have not been recognized by the IRS; and 2) those that do not file

their forms by the GuideStar date. The sample therefore over represents larger, more formalized, and compliant nonprofits.

I established selection criteria for eligible organizations (see Appendix A) based on a survey of scholarly literature, as well as a pilot study that I conducted at a local nonprofit. First, I selected only organizations that were classified as 501(c)(3) public charities. The IRS uses the 501(c)(3) category to denote the tax-exempt status of nonprofit organizations that operate as 1) public charities, such as the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, which receive most financial support from government or the public and provide a public service; 2) private foundations, such as the Ford Foundation, that receive financial support from a few donors but do not provide programming to the public; and 3) private operating foundations, such as the Museum of Modern Art, that receive financial support from a few donors and do provide programming. The 501(c)(3) designation is appropriate for organizations considered in this study because it ensures that they do not explicitly lobby on behalf political or corporate interests. While this certainly does not preclude nonprofits from being influenced by such interests, it makes for a more interesting case – an examination of organizations that claim to be charitable and at least somewhat politically neutral.

Second, I limited my sample to independent organizations. Each nonprofit eligible to be selected for my sample was an independent organization that was neither an off-shoot of a for-profit enterprise, nor a branch of a nonprofit hub. This criterion was important for my particular research questions because it allows for a greater range of ideologies that are grounded in the perspectives of local practitioners. Nonprofits that grow out of corporations or are accountable to national charity organizations, likely experience constraints on the ideas

and goals that they can express. Independent organizations retain more autonomy in this regard.

Third, I selected nonprofits that reported an annual income of between \$500,000 and \$2.5 million in 2010. Many nonprofits under the half-million-dollar mark lack detailed, online information and would therefore be less useful for a content analysis of publicly available documents. The \$2.5 million cutoff emerged as a natural breaking point for the maximum. GuideStar measures income as a categorical variable in \$500,000 increments (for less than \$1 million) or \$1.5 million increments (for greater than \$1 million). Most organizations were captured in those categories between \$500,000 and \$2.5 million. Overall, then, eligible organizations were mid-sized – not as big as full-fledged governmental agencies or large healthcare nonprofits, but not so small that they serve a tiny population and have limited influence.

Fourth, I filtered nonprofits based on GuideStar-provided categories that classified the organization's main focus. I included all of the categories describing a nonprofit that provided a social service to adults (see Appendix A). Beyond this initial filter, I excluded organizations that served only adults with disabilities, psychiatric disorders, and drug or substance addictions, as well as organizations that served exclusively minors. I did this because these nonprofits can be expected to display paternalism in ways that are medically or developmentally necessary; the organizations of interest in this study are those that may or may not display paternalism towards reasonably healthy and mature adults. However, I did include organizations if they served the aforementioned populations but also addressed

another social issue; for example, I selected one non-profit geared towards adults who had developmental disabilities *and* adults who were unemployed.

Over 27,000 nonprofit organizations met my selection criteria. I wanted a final sample of 40-50 organizations – a number that would allow for heterogeneity in organizations’ demographics, affiliations, and social problems, while also allowing me to conduct an in-depth, qualitative analysis for each organization. To arrive at my final sample, I first randomly selected 1,000 organizations from the list of 27,000. I then downloaded a GuideStar spreadsheet that displayed all the information collected on each organization. Every organization had a National Taxonomy of Exempt Entities (NTEE) classification, assigned by the IRS, which indicated the organization’s primary purpose. The NTEE codes were more specific than the original GuideStar categories; examining these allowed me to eliminate organizations whose emphases were beyond the scope of the current study. For example, GuideStar’s “Community Improvement” category produced organizations with a multitude of NTEE codes. By sorting and examining these codes, I excluded nonprofits coded “W61: Credit Unions” but included those coded “W70: Leadership Development.”

I consolidated the list of 1,000 organizations to 441 by examining NTEE codes. In order to narrow my sample to 40-50 organizations, I randomized the list and randomly selected 150 (approximately one-third) of the 441 organizations. Next, I tested each of the 150 organizations against my selection criteria by researching each organization in more detail. I visited each organization’s website, where I read the mission statement, history, and program information. When these descriptions did not meet the selection criteria, I eliminated the organization from my list of 150. For example, Oregon HEAT had an NTEE

code of “P60: Emergency Assistance (Food, Clothing, Cash).” Upon further investigation, this organization provides financial assistance to community residents struggling to pay their energy bills, but it does not offer in-person programming to community members; therefore, I eliminated this organization. My final sample consisted of 43 nonprofits, which are representative of the population described above.

To begin the coding process, I compiled the online, publicly available documents published by each organization. For every nonprofit, I copied the headlines, text, and images available on the organization’s website. Typically, organizations presented a mission and/or values statement, an “about us” section that included the organization’s history, a description of programming and services, and information regarding eligibility and enrollment. In addition, about half of the organizations published annual reports and/or client testimonials. When available, I transcribed videos, but only when these were created by or for the organization. For example, I did not include news segments or TV specials that organizations recommended but neither created nor sponsored.

Paternalism and Empowerment

I developed a coding scheme to recognize and explore the dependent variable of paternalism (see Appendix B). First, I created broad paternalism categories based on Jackman’s (1994) definition and description. This work was the most appropriate starting point for the present content analysis because her conceptualization of paternalism contains the breadth and flexibility necessary to accommodate diversity within my sample. Jackman

identifies three principle components of paternalism, which I use as categories. They include *Making Categorical Distinctions*, *Creating an Ideal*, and *Offering Conditional Love*. During the coding process, 3 empowerment categories also emerged. They include *Negotiating Difference*, *Building on Strengths*, and *Offering Comprehensive Love* (see Appendix C). These dimensions align with the paternalism conceptualization in that they provide an alternative to each category.

Staff and Participant Race

To assess H_{1A} , H_{1B} , and H_{1C} , I coded staff and participant race for each organization (see Appendix D). When I refer to “staff,” I mean a nonprofit’s paid employees or long-term volunteers (in cases when organizations are volunteer-run). When I refer to “participants,” I mean individuals who participate in a program, or receive a service, at the nonprofit organization.

White staff is a dichotomous variable indicating that at least 70% of an organization’s staff are white. I chose this particular cutoff point because it represents a clear majority, but it is also low enough to ensure that the incorrect racial classification of one or a few staff members would not misclassify the majority race of an organization’s staff. To determine race, I relied on individual and group pictures that were posted on organizations’ websites and social media pages. In some cases, there was a picture for each staff member. In others, there was a full-staff picture or a media gallery composed of many small-group pictures.

When an organization published no pictures, or too few pictures to draw conclusions about the entire staff, I coded the item as missing.

Minority participants is a dichotomous variable illustrating that at least 70% of an organization's participants are people of color – Black/African American or Latino. I chose 70% because it again emerged as the highest cutoff point that allowed a margin for error. I originally coded separately for each nonwhite racial category. I counted Jewish Americans as white (Brodkin 1998) and Black and Latino individuals as nonwhite. Other non-white participants are absent from the sample by chance. I combined the Black and Latino categories into *Minority participants* after preliminary analyses indicated that there were no significant differences between the correlates of the two.

To code for *Minority participants*, I recorded explicit accounts from organizations' "who we serve" statements, current website statistics, and recent annual reports. When these records were missing, I examined images and code words. For example, I coded an organization as *Minority* if it purported to serve "inner-city residents" and posted pictures of predominantly minority participants. When I could not come to a conclusion based on multiple sources of evidence (i.e. pictures consistent with code words), I coded the item as missing.

Religiosity

To test H_2 , I created the dummy variable *Faith-Based* to describe organizations that existed as a ministry within a church, as well as organizations that grew out of a partnership

between a number of congregations. All of the nonprofits that I coded as *Faith-Based* identified their own religious affiliations in the “About Us” sections of their websites. Most also included a religious reference in their name, such as “Interfaith Cooperative Ministries” or “Gospel Rescue Mission.” I did not count organizations that received donations or volunteers from church groups, yet lacked a specifically faith-based component to their missions or services.

Organizational Focus

Finally, to test H_3 , I created six exhaustive and mutually exclusive categories to describe *Organizational Focus*. The categories include Advocacy, Crisis, Employment, Family, Housing, and Domestic Violence. I coded each organization by considering the goals and services described on its website, alongside its IRS-assigned NTEE code. A focal point emerged from each organization’s public documents. For example, Housing with a Heart, Inc., offered family-focused services to residents of particular rental properties. As such, I ultimately coded it Family, rather than Housing, because its programs were designed to strengthen families and actually had very little to do with housing. By conducting a holistic investigation into every organization, I was able to settle on a code for each nonprofit.

Analysis

I tested each hypothesis by combining quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitatively, I created paternalism scores to capture a snapshot of each organization's overall display of paternalism. I calculated this score by considering the proportion of lines that were coded either paternalistic or empowering for each nonprofit. This method rendered organizations' scores comparable, even when they provided different amounts of information about their programs and services. To calculate each score, I first counted the total number of lines in each organizational document. I included bulleted lists and picture captions in the totals because these lines sometimes received codes. However, I did not count miscellaneous lines that never received codes, including contact information, titles and subtitles, references and external links, and donation forms. I then created separate tallies of the number of lines in each organizational document that received paternalism codes versus empowerment codes. When one line contained multiple codes, I counted a maximum of one code per classification. For example, a line with two paternalism codes and one empowerment code was counted as one mark for paternalism and one mark for empowerment. Finally, I used the formula:

$$[(Paternalism\ Coded\ Lines / Total\ Lines) - (Empowerment\ Coded\ Lines / Total\ Lines)] * 100$$

Positive percentages indicate that a higher percentage of an organization's lines were coded paternalistic, while negative percentages indicate that a higher percentage of an

organization's lines were coded empowering³. Of 43 total organizations, 3 were not assigned paternalism scores because very few lines received codes. These cases were counted as missing and dropped from the analysis.

Next, I compared the means of paternalism scores between groups (e.g., predominantly minority staff versus more diverse staff) using independent group t-tests. H_1 tests the effects of staff race, participant race, and staff-participant race interaction⁴, while H_2 tests the effect of religiosity. H_3 then tests the effect of organizational focus. Here, I use a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the means of paternalism scores between the six organizational categories (i.e., nonprofits that focus on advocacy, crisis, employment, family, housing, and domestic violence). I then use t-tests comparing each category to illuminate significant differences in means of paternalism scores between types of organizations.

Qualitatively, I followed Charmaz's (2006) procedures for line-by-line coding, describing each line of the compiled data. I took the resulting descriptions to a greater level of abstraction by going back through the data a second, third, or fourth time to apply paternalism or empowerment codes that fit an organization's text. When more than one code was applicable, I listed all that were relevant. Throughout the results section, I weave qualitative patterns and examples into more quantitative descriptions of organizations'

³ I also examined paternalism and empowerment separately and arrived at similar conclusions. The one difference arose for religiosity; I discuss findings and implications in the results section.

⁴ I elected not to use ANOVA to test the four categories of staff-participant race interaction due to a small sample size. The two categories not presented here, including white-serving-white and minority-serving-white, had a combined size of only four organizations.

displays of paternalism. Beyond concrete numbers, this approach demonstrates how nonprofits create and reproduce social realities.

Results

Table 1 demonstrates that, of 40 organizations that were given paternalism scores, the average score was 3.46 ($s = 8.62$)⁵. This score means that 3.46% of lines were coded paternalistic even after subtracting the percent of lines coded empowering. The most paternalistic organization scored 20.16, while the most empowering organization scored -12.89. Overall, all nonprofits displayed some paternalism in their coded lines.

-Table 1 about here-

Staff and Participant Race

Of the 40 organizations, 14 employed predominantly *White staff*. H_{1A} predicted that organizations led by predominantly white staffs display more paternalism than other organizations. Results display no significant difference between mean paternalism scores for organizations with a high proportion of white staff, versus those with more diverse staffs (see Table 2).

⁵ The distribution is positively skewed, meaning the scores of paternalism outliers are greater in magnitude than the empowerment outliers. The two-sided t-test used in the analyses is robust against violations of normality if $N > 15$. This many cases are present in only two of the explanatory categories tested. As I reiterate in the conclusion, analyses should be replicated with a greater number of organizations in categories of interest.

-Table 2 about here-

Organizations' served predominantly *Minority participants* in 18 of 40 cases (see Table 1). H_{IB} predicted that organizations serving minority participants display more paternalism than other organizations. Results indicate no significant difference between mean paternalism scores for organizations that serve mostly minority participants, versus those that do not (see Table 2).

Analyses reveal significant differences, however, when staff and participant race are considered in tandem. H_{IC} predicted that staff and participant race interact, such that organizations with white staffs and minority participants display paternalism, while organizations with minority staffs and participants display empowerment. In 6 organizations white staff served minority participants, and in 7 organizations, minority staff served minority participants. Table 1 demonstrates that the paternalism mean for white-serving-minority nonprofits was 10.72 ($s = 8.71$), but the mean for minority-serving-minority nonprofits was -2.83 ($s = 7.58$). This negative paternalism score indicates that, on average, 2.83% more of the lines published by minority-serving-minority organizations were *empowering*. With p-value of 0.01, the data provide strong evidence in support of H_{IC} , indicating that white-serving-minority nonprofits display greater degrees of paternalism than minority-serving-minority nonprofits (see Table 2). Specifically, white-serving-minority organizations score approximately 13.56 points higher on the paternalism scale than minority-serving-minority nonprofits.

In fact, when white staff served minority participants, the paternalistic organizations tended to emphasize group differences. Sometimes this involved explicit “othering” of participants. Interfaith Cooperative Ministries (ICM), a crisis intervention nonprofit, told the following story in its organizational history section:

At the end of 2006, the ICM Board and staff decided it was time to stop service to the street homeless. After many incidents of stealing and minor violence, a staff person was hurt by a homeless man. Discussions with local police were started, and the realization came about that many of the street people were dangerous, armed with weapons and on a variety of illegal drugs. We continue to serve homeless with referrals...Our primary focus since that time has been on the working poor, physically and mentally disabled, and the elderly poor.

This narrative draws rigid boundaries between staff and clientele, suggesting many homeless individuals – specifically the “street homeless” – should be feared. Conversely, the police, as well as local agencies able to refer more appropriate participants, are identified as allies or in-group members.

Other white-serving-minority organizations displayed paternalism by making more subtle distinctions between groups. The Workforce Initiative for Supportive Housing (W.I.S.H.) Program, a North Carolina-based nonprofit that addresses homelessness, characterized diversity as a strength in its program description:

[Our] “mutual dependent” innovative volunteer model has created much excitement within our community...Our homeless families are much more

likely to gain and maintain financial stability and stem the tide of generational poverty if a long-term relationship is established. In addition, we strongly feel our relationship oriented model creates an equal gift to our middle and upper middle class volunteers.

The organization praises subordinates for their unique contributions to mentor-mentee relationships. The “compliment,” however, has paternalistic undertones for two reasons. First, a power differential exists in the “long-term relationship” mentioned. Mentors usually occupy a higher class status than mentees. And although it goes unacknowledged in the passage, mentors are typically white, while mentees are usually African American. Second, by definition, a mentorship is not a relationship that involves mutual dependency; rather, a mentee depends on a mentor for guidance, and a mentor expects from a mentee obedience. While the language used here seems affectionate, it simply represents a potent, if inconspicuous, form of paternalism.

In contrast, organizations that served minority participants but were also led by minorities were more often empowering. Whereas many of the white-serving-minority paternalistic organizations seized on group differences, these minority-serving-minority empowerment organizations conveyed a message of unity. *Conexión Américas*, for example, is a Latino organization that helps immigrant families become adjusted to their new community. The nonprofit states:

One of *Conexión Américas*’ guiding values is the belief that to achieve true social change, people affected by a problem or situation should be at the center of any efforts aimed at designing solutions. In 2003, we established the

Hispanic Council to nurture grassroots leaders among the low- and moderate-income Latino immigrants in Middle Tennessee served by our organization. Rather than fearing or glorifying the differences between staff and participants, this organization minimizes group differences. While any nonprofit can accomplish this task with inclusive language, Conexión Américas decreases power disparities by creating overlapping roles for staff and participants.

Religiosity

Seven out of 40 total organizations were *Faith-Based*, meaning they acknowledged religious faith as one of their guiding organizational principles. H_2 predicted faith-based organizations display more paternalism than organizations with no religious ties. Table 1 illustrates that faith-based nonprofits had average paternalism scores of 10.80 ($s = 8.51$), while unaffiliated nonprofits had average scores of only 2.26 ($s = 7.76$). With a positive test statistic revealing a p-value of 0.01, the data suggest that faith-based organizations display higher paternalism means than unaffiliated organizations (see Table 2). In fact, the results illustrate that faith-based nonprofits display paternalism scores that are 8.54 points higher than the scores of their unaffiliated counterparts.

Follow-up analyses that test paternalism and empowerment lines as separate dependent variables (not displayed) produce different results. The data suggest no significant paternalism difference by religiosity. But, if the confidence level is relaxed to 90%, there is a significant *empowerment* difference by religiosity ($p = 0.067$), such that unaffiliated

nonprofits display 9.50% more empowerment lines than faith-based nonprofits. This finding may emerge when considering paternalism and empowerment separately because a substantial amount of paternalism pervades unaffiliated organizations, but very little empowerment emerges among faith-based organization. Combined with the small number of faith-based organizations (n = 7), it may be difficult to detect differences in paternalism by religiosity. However, these results affirm the relative absence of empowerment among faith-based organizations.

His Helping Hands, Inc. (HHH), a nonprofit in Wichita, Kansas, displays a key element of paternalism that was common among the faith-based organizations in my sample. By providing crisis assistance and ministering to participants, HHH's primary goal is to instill values in participants to facilitate a complete personal and spiritual transformation. In a recent newsletter, the program's director explained that individuals "in some type of lifestyle poverty require more than just a hand-out. They need help and mentoring in the areas of their lives that are dragging them down." To explain the concept of lifestyle poverty, the director went on to quote the Christian magazine, *WORLD*:

Lifestyle poverty comes about when people don't do four things: 1. stay sober; 2. stay in school at least through high school graduation; 3. stay out of bed in situations likely to lead to pregnancy or abortion; and, 4. stay with a job even if it lacks thrills. When people don't follow these basics, the result is often alcoholism and addiction, single parenting, and lack of the skills or perseverance needed to get and hold a job (Olasky 2011).

In addition to making an explicit link between immorality and poverty, the director suggests that participants need a complete lifestyle transformation. Individuals can avoid the outcomes that he describes only by adopting the values that HHH outlines and displaying a strong sense of personal responsibility. While there is a religious slant to this message, the argument also relies on new paternalist assumptions in suggesting that undeserving individuals cannot be helped with a handout.

Organizational Focus

H_3 predicted organizations that address employment, family, and housing display more paternalism than organizations addressing advocacy, crises, and domestic violence. As outlined in Table 1, Housing nonprofits were the most paternalistic with a mean of 9.02, followed by Employment (7.22), Family (5.10), and Crisis nonprofits (3.00). In contrast, Advocacy and Domestic Violence organizations were the most empowering at -8.07, and -3.20, respectively. The ANOVA produced a p-value of 0.005 (not displayed), suggesting that two or more means of paternalism scores between the groups significantly differ. Therefore, organizations' average paternalism scores significantly differ based on organizational focus. However, the results do not lend insight into which groups significantly differed. I turn to this discussion next.

Mean comparison tests⁶ of paternalism scores for each organization type illustrate statistically significant differences between specific types of organizations (see Table 3). Crisis nonprofits display paternalism means that are not significantly different from other organizational types. However, as predicted, employment, family, and housing organizations display statistically significantly higher paternalism means than advocacy and domestic violence organizations. Housing focus exerts the strongest effect. These nonprofits score 17.10 points higher on the paternalism scale than Advocacy nonprofits, as well as 12.22 points higher than Domestic Violence nonprofits. Not far behind, Employment nonprofits score 15.29 points higher than Advocacy nonprofits and 10.42 points higher than Domestic Violence nonprofits. Still relatively large, Family nonprofits score 13.17 points higher than Advocacy nonprofits and 8.29 points higher than Domestic Violence nonprofits. In sum, these results indicate employment, family, and housing organizations tend to display more paternalism than advocacy and domestic violence organizations⁷.

-Table 3 about here-

Housing and Employment organizations construct goals centered on social mobility. Instead of simply utilizing individualistic or achievement ideologies, they exercise

⁶ Test statistics were calculated as contrasts of marginal linear predictions, comparing means with one degree of freedom.

⁷ Follow-up analyses using Bonferroni multiple comparisons test suggest significant paternalism differences only between Housing and Advocacy nonprofits, as well as Housing and Domestic Violence nonprofits. Bonferroni provides a conservative estimate by incorporating a higher confidence level for each interval calculated (Agresti and Finlay 2009). I instead focus on mean comparison tests, which align with the qualitative data presented next.

paternalism. They suggest that successful staff members can train incompetent, dependent participants, to facilitate economic self-sufficiency. The Corporation to Develop Communities of Tampa, Inc. (CDC) engages in community improvement through job training and development initiatives. The CDC pitches its Career Resource Center as a starting point for social mobility:

Learn how to overcome barriers of getting hired! You will receive support from intake to employment...[The Center] explains workplace expectations about dress, absences, lateness, dealing with supervisors, managing childcare issues and even some financial expectations. Developing the motivation to become a successful individual is the key topic in the orientation sessions.

This advertisement suggests that participants can attain successful careers if they are willing to put forth enough effort. CDC first asserts that its strategies enable participants to overcome any obstacles to becoming employed. It then explains that understanding employer expectations and developing personal motivation are the primary components involved in this process. Interestingly, the posting acknowledges the childcare concerns and financial constraints that can hinder social mobility but characterizes these as small complications to be managed.

The Gwinnett Housing Resource makes similar claims alluding to the achievement ideology. This nonprofit offers transitional housing and homeownership counseling to homeless families with children. Its Fiscally Fit workshop “is designed to empower you to take charge of your financial situation by teaching financial management and planning skills needed to make the most of both your income and savings.” Like the CDC advertisement,

this description suggests that even homeless families can become homeowners if they pick up a few money management skills. While financial planning is undoubtedly an important part of owning a home, this makes no mention of the invisible resources that help many dominant group members achieve their American Dream. For example, white Americans more often receive down-payment assistance from their relatives than Black Americans (Shapiro 2004).

While less focused on mobility per say, family organizations emphasize the immorality-poverty link that is a fundamental component of the new paternalism (Biebricher 2011; Monnat 2010). Gracewood is a Christian nonprofit in Houston that serves single mothers and their children through shelter, mentoring, and a variety of support services. Each family interacts with a case management couple, rather than a single case manager. As a result, Gracewood posits:

Families in residence acquire life skills that are necessary to improve and strengthen family structure. Mothers care for their children within the residence. They also prepare meals for their families and participate in cottage activities. Although church attendance is not required, it is encouraged as there is a program emphasis on spiritual development as a tool for strengthening the family.

While no organization clearly defined what makes a family “strong,” this passage conveys the image of a traditional, white and middle-class family. Although the single mothers at Gracewood have already failed to live up to this standard in one important way (caring for children inside of a heterosexual marriage), the organization nevertheless emphasizes the

parts of this ideal that remain available to them. The mentor couple seems to act as the model to which mothers should aspire, as they learn the importance of caring for children, preparing meals, frequenting socials, and attending church. The paternalistic structure of this program is particularly striking because working-class and non-white mothers have long been chastised or ignored for failing to live up to an ideal that dismisses their everyday realities (hooks 1981; Hurtado 1997).

Advocacy and domestic violence organizations displayed the most instances of empowerment. The achievement ideology was rarely a point of emphasis among these nonprofits; instead, they tended to emphasize the *self-determination discourse* that Reamer (1983) identifies. Casa de Esperanza is a Latina-run and Latina-centered domestic violence organization in St. Paul. The nonprofit states that,

Each woman knows what is best for her and her family, so Casa de Esperanza follows her lead. Working from the starting point of her goals, we offer options and flexibility to support her decisions.

The support that Casa de Esperanza provides revolves around self-determination because it builds on the assumption that participants have insight into their own lives and their own needs. Clients create personally relevant goals instead of following predetermined guidelines. This represents a clear departure from housing, employment, and family organizations, which typically advertise a calculated set of steps that individuals must follow to achieve success.

Theorizing Paternalism and Empowerment

My data illustrate unambiguous, qualitative differences in how paternalistic organizations and empowerment organizations characterize participants and social issues. First, paternalistic nonprofits tend to refer to their clients as “victims” who exhibit some sort of dependency. They depict individuals as stuck in a cycle of dependency, due to their participation in state assistance programs or their involvement in unhealthy lifestyles. These nonprofits also depict clients as dependent on the organization itself, looking for it to provide something that the clients are unable to provide for themselves. BETA Center, Inc. is a nonprofit that seeks to build strong families through crisis intervention and family education. According to the organization, its programs:

help stabilize families in crisis within [a] safe and friendly environment. Services decrease the immediate crisis and chance for future crisis, help establish self-sufficiency and promote and strengthen healthy family functioning....With a focus on parenting, teen moms and at-risk families, BETA Center changes behaviors and lives.

While this passage contains no explicit mention of dependency, it portrays clients as individuals in crisis who desperately need the organization’s help to survive and someday thrive. BETA’s participants may very well describe their situations in similar ways; however, the Center suggests that the key to transformation is behavioral modification. Monnat (2010) argues that terms such as “self-sufficiency” and “personal responsibility” act as code words, which allow powerful groups to refer to individuals as undeserving in covert

fashion. Based on this reading of the text, participants are made to appear weak, lazy, and in need of serious intervention.

In contrast, empowerment nonprofits typically use language that frames participants as possessing agency – referring to them as “survivors,” rather than “victims,” for example. The domestic violence organization Women’s Safe House provides extensive information on safety planning. The nonprofit recommends that women use what they already know:

If you are a woman who has been abused, you probably know more about safety planning and risk assessment than you might realize. Being in a relationship with an abusive partner---and surviving---requires considerable skill and resourcefulness.

Referring to women as individuals who have experienced abuse, rather than as victims, is a relatively small semantic shift. However, it has substantial implications in this case because it also implies that participants have ingenuity and agency. This framework is not limited to domestic violence organizations. The Phyllis Wheatley Community Center targets Minneapolis families and describes its services in the following way:

Family strengthening programs build upon participants’ personal strengths by providing intensive, nonjudgmental support and assistance.... Participants identify and build their own networks of support and are connected with appropriate community resources.

Again, organizational leaders assume that participants already have strengths, and that they require support rather than judgment. Far from characterizing clients as undeserving, this language actually frames individuals as being the best purveyors of their own destinies.

Second, paternalistic organizations usually identify a set of decisions and behaviors that are either morally right or realistically correct. The assumption here is that participants seek help from a nonprofit's programs because they have weaknesses or lack skills and stand to benefit from those insights that the organization can offer. For example, the Gospel Rescue Mission of Grants Pass is a Christian nonprofit that addresses housing through shelter and support services. When individuals arrive at the Mission they are assigned to the men's, women's, or family shelters. Unemployed men undergo a 30-day "detox" process. They are assigned chores and shelter-based jobs, but they are not allowed to search for employment or leave the shelter during this initial period. According to the Mission:

These 30 days function primarily as a means of learning about each resident's (strengths/weaknesses) so that we can discover where the real work of change needs to take place. Watching a man interact in both social and work environments helps us learn more about his real needs rather than his perceived needs.

The justification for this rather extreme approach revolves around identifying the attributes and needs of participants in order to create a proper course of action. Much like children, the men are presumed to have ended up in their predicaments because they have confused frivolous wants and desires with their true needs – needs that the Mission is uniquely able to diagnose.

Conversely, empowerment organizations tend to focus on facilitating informed decision-making – that is to say, the organizations ensure participants fully understand all of the choices and options available to them before coming to their own decisions about which

of those are best. Many nonprofits that employ this approach refer to it as “asset-based” because it revolves around discovering and developing participants’ strengths. Any course of action within these organizations begins, then, from the assumption that all people have inherent abilities and insights. This foundation is important because it supports a program centered on self-determination. The Palo Alto Housing Corporation, for instance, created a program that allows participants to access support services even after they have established permanent housing with the Corporation’s help. The program’s goal is to “foster community connections, facilitate access to resources, and provide opportunities for personal goal achievement.” This acts as an exemplar of programming centered on self-determination because the organization 1) acknowledges the variety of challenges that arise as families pay for housing; 2) creates support services based on participant-identified needs; and 3) allows individuals to access the support that they perceive to be relevant.

Third, paternalistic nonprofits offer conditional support. While most of the organizations in the sample included at least some eligibility criteria, paternalistic nonprofits were especially strict on this front. They frequently mentioned that programs were designed to empower “responsible” and “hard-working” individuals, implying that those who appear otherwise are automatically excluded. If individuals are perceived as appropriate and sufficiently motivated participants, they typically encounter conditional support in the form of incentive-centered programming. W.I.S.H. explains its “personal accountability” focus in an “About Us” section:

Each ‘step’ in the W.I.S.H. process involves client responsibility and action. By taking such a step, the family is provided a key incentive to

empower them toward self-sufficiency. Supportive incentives are earned by maintaining full-time employment, attending "Getting Ahead" workshops, eliminating non-essential spending and increasing savings.

In a very straightforward manner, then, W.I.S.H. requires clients to achieve pre-established goals in order to receive supportive services. The program design is based on two paternalistic assumptions. First, program leaders know what is best. They understand what it means to be economically self-sufficient, and they have identified a standardized set of steps that lead to self-sufficiency. Second, participants must be motivated to complete each step with incentives. They do not have a right to receive services if they fail to, or refuse to, comply with the program model. W.I.S.H. characterizes this as a "tough love" approach, suggesting that, while seemingly harsh, it works in participants' best interest.

Empowerment nonprofits offer comprehensive support that is less conditional. Reach Beyond Domestic Violence, Inc. illustrates this pattern in a program description:

Because we take a survivor-centered approach, we believe that these decisions are deeply personal and up to the survivor to make. The Community Program makes it possible for these survivors to get help when they need it most, without having to leave their home and community ties behind. They can come to us for help with safety planning, finding a job or housing, or accessing benefits. We accompany them to court, and support them through any other important steps on their journey to independence.

The assistance offered by this organization is comprehensive, since participants are not required to make a singular decision or follow a particular plan in order to access help.

Organizational leaders certainly maintain the ability to shape programming by deciding what kind of resources and aid to offer; yet, they do not presume to know the best decision for each survivor.

Finally, paternalistic nonprofits sometimes incorporate structural-level analyses and inclusive language; however, they heavily emphasize individual and cultural solutions that shift the onus to participants. CARES of Washington, for example, is an employment-assistance organization that acknowledges the difficulties that individuals face in achieving economic self-sufficiency. The nonprofit posits that “people with lower incomes are not afforded many of the tools and knowledge that people with higher incomes can leverage to increase their financial stability and assets.” Similarly, organizational leaders perceive that the entire community “benefits from the diversity of talent, ideas and perspectives which our participants offer.” But underneath these broad philosophies, the concrete nature of CARES appears to include highly conditional elements. An excerpt from the organization’s program overview reads:

The CARES Self-Sufficiency Program provides continuing holistic support for people motivated to advance along a career path and to achieve long-term self-sufficiency...Individuals come to the project with a readiness to work toward a better job or career, and for assistance with other barriers that affect their ability to become self-sufficient for the long term.

The organization uses structural-level explanations to account for individuals’ economic woes, yet immediately shifts to a personal responsibility framework. This projects an image of a nonprofit offering second chances to people ready to take advantage of opportunities,

rather than charity to those unwilling to put forth effort. Leaders perceive that eager participants can learn the skills necessary to secure employment and become financially self-sufficient through participation in CARES programs. Although systemic constraints exist, this framework suggests that changing one's life is as simple as making the right choice.

While tackling structural barriers to success is notoriously difficult, many empowerment nonprofits incorporate strategies for doing just this. Casa de Esperanza gives more than surface-level acknowledgement to the oppressive mechanisms that affect participants' everyday lives. Leaders describe connections between spheres of life, assert that everyone is obligated to challenge domestic violence, and advance organizational and political agendas. This approach illuminates an understanding that the problems participants face arise out of much more than individual shortcomings. Rather, they are connected to the ideas and behaviors of other community members and can only be addressed when everybody's role in the matter is fair game.

Discussion and Conclusions

My analyses suggest that *who* participates in a nonprofit and *what* issues they address each influence the degree of paternalism that an organization displays. Regarding race, paternalistic rhetoric was most common when white staffs served minority participants. In both explicit and subtle forms, boundary work (Massey 2007) allowed whites to characterize minority clients as different, incompetent, and in need of their help. The matching of minority staff with minority participants still produced paternalism in two cases, but it

resulted in empowerment much more often. Because dominant ideologies are institutionally embedded (Monnat 2010), well-meaning people of all races can easily internalize paternalistic ideas about an organization's participants; however, my data suggest that minority staff are less likely to do so.

An organization's religiosity and focus also mattered. A faith-based component rendered organizations even more paternalistic than would otherwise be expected. These nonprofits went beyond mentoring and attempted to completely transform participants' attitudes and behaviors. Further, nonprofits that addressed housing, employment, and family exhibited the most paternalism. Housing and employment organizations subscribed to the achievement ideology, understanding social mobility as a matter of individual effort and skill. Borrowing the new paternalist ideas prevalent in government policy (Ben-Ishai 2012; Bruch et al. 2010; Schram et al. 2008) and public discourse (Jennings 2000), they depicted participants as dependent children gone astray. Exercising paternalism, then, was framed as the logical and kind solution. Although family-centered nonprofits focused less on social mobility, they latched onto an ideological link between immorality and "lifestyle" poverty. This again called for mentoring and skill-building as the appropriate response.

Paternalistic organizations rarely blame culture or oppose group advancement in explicit ways. Instead, they identify structural problems and espouse inclusive principle but offer culture-based and conditional solutions. Qualifiers and code words act as important tools in this respect. By specifying that participants should be "hard-working" or characterizing a program's goal as "self-sufficiency," organizations reinforce the new paternalist belief that individuals who experience disadvantage do so out of their own

choosing. Framing participants as undeserving dependents acts as a specific call for a paternalistic approach. As part of this technique, paternalistic organizations tend to emphasize a singular decision or set of steps that participants should follow in order to achieve success. However, modeling “solutions” after white and middle-class experiences has long been a pitfall of social movements led by elites (Piven and Cloward 1977).

Is it possible for dominant group members to challenge inequality in the nonprofit sector without displaying paternalism? Others have answered “yes,” if dominants work to mobilize, rather than organize (Block 2003; Kling 2003). My analyses echo this claim. Some organizations served as exemplars of resistance, informing their programming with empowering ideology. These nonprofits depicted participants as survivors, who possess abilities, insights, and agency. As a result, they facilitated informed decision-making, offered nearly unconditional support, and incorporated structural-level solutions. These findings are particularly significant because incorporation tends to have a moderating effect on social movements (Cress 1997). Nevertheless, some nonprofits in my sample found ways to challenge dominant discourse.

Given the random sample of nonprofit organizations, the findings are representative of middle-income, independent public charities in the U.S. that provide a social service to adults. The 40-case sample size, however, did not permit additional tests for interactions. For example, it is possible that organizations are especially paternalistic when white staff serve minority participants in a faith-based nonprofit with a particular focus. Future studies can sample based on this combination of characteristics. In addition, scholars should examine the mechanisms behind the relationships outlined in this study. Religiosity and

focus may shape nonprofit paternalism through organization-level policies and values, through individual-level practices and beliefs, or through a combination of the two.

My analyses suggest nonprofits that appear to challenge inequality still invoke discourses and implement policies that support larger structures of domination. This underscores the importance of examining ways that language is used to reinforce group boundaries and reproduce systematic inequality. Notably, this study privileges organizations' perspectives. Presumably, many nonprofit leaders go to great lengths to craft an organizational image that they feel is appropriate for public consumption. Given contemporary norms regarding political correctness (Bonilla-Silva 2010), I likely provide a conservative estimate of the amount of paternalism that organizations exercise. Future studies can first examine whether nonprofits' exercise of paternalism in practice differs from their public portrayals of it. In addition, it will be important to conduct research from participants' view, to determine how they perceive and experience nonprofits' official positions and everyday operations.

In sum, I find evidence for the use of paternalistic ideology in the nonprofit sector, depending largely on who leads organizations and what issues they address. Unequal relationships are often characterized by paternalism when dominant and subordinate group members interact in everyday life; in integrated settings, the appearance that one cares can effectively preserve and disguise domination (Jackman 1994). Encouraged further by the new paternalist principles that emerged with the welfare reforms of 1996 (Monnat 2010), nonprofits cry dependency and eagerly take on mentoring roles. At the same time, they emphasize individual-level attitudes and behaviors as solutions to larger patterns of

stratification. By advocating for equal opportunity but divorcing that principle from an understanding of categorical inequality, paternalistic ideology allows nonprofit employees and volunteers to extend help without sacrificing their own racial and class privileges.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Selection Criteria for Eligible Organizations

GuideStar Search, *National Directory of Nonprofit Organizations, 25th ed., 2010*
(Produces original list of over 27,000 organizations)

Kept if:

- Affiliation Type: Independent Organizations
 - Categories:
 - Arts, Culture and Humanities: service and other
 - Education and Research: service and other; vocational, technical, and adult
 - Health: mental health and crisis services
 - Human Services: crime and legal related; employment and occupations; general human services; housing
 - Public, Society Benefit: community improvement
 - IRS Subsection: 501(c)(3) Public Charity
 - Income: Between 500K and 2.5M
-

GuideStar Spreadsheet

(Detailed information on random sample of 1,000 organizations)

Kept if:

- Foundation Type: Organization which receives a substantial part of its support from a governmental unit or the general public

Eliminated if:

- NTEE code beyond the scope of study (see Appendix B)
 - Website nonexistent or invalid
 - Provides grants or financial assistance without programming for recipients
 - Offers only 12-step program or boarding
 - Focused solely on environmental protection
 - Serves children exclusively
 - Is a credit union
-

Appendix B – Paternalism Codes

Category	Code	Description
<i>Making Categorical Distinctions</i>	Complimenting	Praise subordinates for possessing certain traits that dominants lack.
	Minimizing Differences	Minimize intergroup differences, and rely on averages when making group-based statements.
	Espousing Inclusion	Espouse inclusive principles, but oppose policies that promote group advancement
<i>Creating an Ideal</i>	Defining Attributes	Define subordinates' attributes, and juxtapose them against dominants' attributes.
	Defining Needs	Define subordinates' needs, and juxtapose them against dominants' needs or lack of needs.
	Creating Role Expectations	Create role expectations for subordinates based on dominant ideals.
	Creating Success Story	Suggest that subordinates could change circumstances by subscribing to "the ideal," including dominant ideals and role expectations.
	Blaming culture	Blame subordinates' culture for different attributes or needs, or for their failure to change circumstances.
<i>Offering Conditional Love</i>	Befriending	Exchange friendship and social acceptance for compliance with role expectations.
	Rewarding	Reward subordinates who exemplify their role expectations.
	Punishing	Punish subordinates who fail to comply with role expectations.

Appendix C – Empowerment Codes

Category	Code	Description
<i>Negotiating Difference</i>	Developing Unity	Define challenges facing subordinate group as hurting a broader societal community.
	Fostering Awareness	Help community or public understand subordinate groups' challenges and positive contributions.
	Affirming Difference	Acknowledge intergroup differences, and create partnerships around common goals.
	Teaching Reciprocally	Encourage reciprocal teaching between dominant and subordinate group members.
	Promoting Inclusion	Espouse inclusive principles, and advance explanations that promote group advancement.
<i>Building on Strengths</i>	Defining Strengths	Discover and develop subordinate group members' individual strengths.
	Engaging Community	Recognize and develop group heritage and family/community strengths.
	Setting Goals	Encourage individualized goal-setting that is based on comprehensive information and understanding.
	Creating Solutions	Put subordinate group members in the center of creating solutions for social problems.
<i>Offering Comprehensive Love</i>	Supporting Nonjudgmentally	Provide nonjudgmental information and/or services (independent of subordinates' decisions and goal).
	Supporting Comprehensively	Provide comprehensive information and/or services in order to address multidimensional needs.

Appendix D – Explanatory Variables

Variable	Description
Staff Race <i>White</i>	At least 70% of the organization’s (paid and unpaid) staff members are white.
Participant Race <i>Minority</i>	At least 70% of the organization’s participants are racial minorities (African American, Hispanic or Latino, or Native American).
Religious Affiliation <i>Faith-Based</i>	The organization is part of a church, sponsored by a network of church congregations, and/or professes religious faith as part of its mission.
Organizational Focus <i>Advocacy</i>	The organization provides a broad range of services to a specific group of individuals (e.g., immigrants, HIV/AIDS patients).
<i>Crisis</i>	The organization provides crises services, such as a crisis hotline or emergency shelter.
<i>Employment</i>	The organization provides employment-related services, such as job training, referral, or placement.
<i>Family</i>	The organization provides family-related services, such as parenting and life skills classes.
<i>Housing</i>	The organization provides temporary or permanent housing, including access to financing and home-buying education.
<i>Domestic Violence</i>	The organization provides services related to rape or domestic violence, including counseling and case management.

Appendix E – Tables

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N (%)	Paternalism Mean	Std Dev
<i>Paternalism</i> * ⁺	40 (100)	3.46	8.62
<i>Staff Race</i>			
White	14 (35)	5.07	9.13
Not	12 (30)	0.71	8.54
<i>Participant Race</i>			
Minority	18 (45)	4.15	9.89
Not	6 (15)	5.78	4.03
<i>Race Interaction</i>			
White serving Minority	6 (15)	10.72	8.71
Minority serving Minority	7 (17.5)	-2.83	7.58
<i>Religiosity</i>			
Faith-Based	7 (17.5)	10.80	8.51
Unaffiliated	32 (80)	2.26	7.76
<i>Organizational Focus</i>			
Advocacy	2 (5)	-8.07	2.28
Crisis	4 (10)	3.00	8.87
Employment	6 (15)	7.22	6.11
Family	9 (22.5)	5.10	8.15
Housing	9 (22.5)	9.02	8.17
Domestic Violence	10 (25)	-3.20	5.85

*Paternalism= $[(Paternalism\ Lines/Total\ Lines)-(Empowerment\ Lines/Total\ Lines)]*100$

⁺Paternalism scores could not be determined for three organizations. These organizations were dropped from the analysis, resulting in a sample size of 40.

Table 2. Comparison of Paternalism Means By Race and Religiosity (t-tests)

	Difference in Means	t	95% Confidence Interval	
<i>Staff Race</i> ⁺				
Pred. white staff– more diverse staff	-4.37	-1.25	-11.57	2.83
<i>Participant Race</i> ⁺				
Pred. minority participants– more white participants	1.63	0.39	-7.06	10.33
<i>Race Interaction</i>				
White serving minority– minority serving minority	-13.56*	-3.00	-23.49	-3.63
<i>Religiosity</i>				
Faith-Based – unaffiliated	-8.54*	-2.59	-15.21	-1.87

*p < 0.05

⁺Predominantly defined as 70% or more

Table 3. Comparison of Paternalism Means by Organizational Focus (t-tests)

	Advocacy	Crisis	Employment	Family	Housing
Advocacy					
Crisis	12.07				
Employment	15.29*	3.23			
Family	13.17*	1.10	-2.13		
Housing	17.10**	5.03	1.80	3.93	
Domestic Violence	4.89	-7.19	-10.42**	-8.29*	-12.22***

*p .05 **p < 0.01 ***p < 0.001