SOCIAL THEOLOGY AND RELIGIOUSLY AFFILIATED

NONPROFITS IN MIGRATION POLICY

by

ROBERT LANE HOOVER, B.A., M.DIV.

A DISSERTATION

IN

POLITICAL SCIENCE

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty

of Texas Tech University in

Partial Fulfillment of

the Requirements for

the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

approved by the Graduate School

August, 1998

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am grateful for the faculty and students with whom I have been associated in the Political Science Department of Texas Tech University. Professor Clarke Cochran is both a joy to work with and to know, in the academy and outside. I express gratitude for faculty members who have served on my committee. These include Jyl Josephson, John Tuman, and Paul Johnson, chair of the Department of Sociology. Reading and thinking with me can be a challenge at times.

I also wish to express gratitude for parents, my family, my extended family, and members of the congregations I have served while attending class, conducting research, and writing. Members and friends at Community Christian Church have been particularly supportive and helpful, most notably Nancy Kastman-Scott and Scott Cunningham. Thank you. In the deepest moments of production SueZanne was most hospitable and a continuing inspiration. Thank you.

I dedicate this dissertation to the clergy and volunteers referred to in this study, especially the Reverend Feliberto Pereira. Together, each day, you do impossible work to help so many with so few resources. Amen.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ii

LIST OF TABLES iv

CHAPTER

I: INTRODUCTION 1

II: LITERATURE REVIEW 18

III: THEORETICAL MODEL 57

IV: METHODOLOGY 74

V: FINDINGS FROM COMPENDIUM DATA 104

VI: FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEW DATA 122

VII: CONCLUSIONS 172

BIBLIOGRAPHY 179

LIST OF TABLES

1: Elements of a Social Theology 34

2: Denominational Classification Schemes 106

3: Percentage of Organizations Providing 110

Service by Affiliation

4: Average Budget and Age by Affiliation 116

5: RANPO Practices regarding Migration Law 149

and Human Services

6: RANPO Practices regarding Sanctuary and 151

Contracting

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At the heart of the study of religion and politics is the observation made by generations of scholars that theologies have important political implications. Religious people, activists, organizations, and denominations have beliefs or theological orientations and traditions often accompanied by implicit or explicit political preferences (Leege and Kellstedt, 1993, xi). Recent scholarship has clearly linked worldviews to theology. The links between worldviews and theology are what scholars are now calling social theology. Guth et al. (1997,8) define social theology as a set of beliefs that link theology to public affairs. Social theology is a significant component of any explanatory model of the politics of religious behavior.

The results of the links between theological orientations, social theology, and political agendas are considered by scholars to be largely responsible for the dividing of people, institutions, and denominations into two camps labeled by scholars variously as right and left, “orthodox” and “modernist,” “Evangelical” and “Mainline.” This emerging “two-party” model is characterized by alignment of church members, clergy, institutions, and denominations into two camps. In this model religious denominations are seen as having generally declined in importance over time. Also, denominations are seen as less relevant or important to understanding political behavior than in previous generations. My research challenges both the inclusion of the social theology variable in the “left-right” division of religious actors and the diminished view of the relevance of denominations. I find social theology to cut across actors on the political left and right. I also find social theology to cut across denominations.

In this dissertation I present argument and evidence that social theologies do not neatly divide religious groups into two camps, especially along a one-dimensional “liberal-conservative” continuum. Instead, I offer evidence that social theology in large measure accounts for the political behavior of a wide variety of denominations that create and maintain nonprofit organizations to work in public policy areas. Social theology counts, but not in the ways usually depicted. I offer evidence that social theology is mediated through denominational organizations. The organizational context is a significant factor in the process. Elements of this context include: the executive directors, governing bodies, mission statements, denominational affiliations, funding sources, legal considerations, and denominational accountability structures.

Some religious denominations are active in particular public policy areas, and other denominations are not. Some denominations create organizations to work in particular public policy areas, and others do not. This research asks the question, why? Do the denominations that enter a particular policy area share commonalities or a single characteristic that explains their presence in the policy area? If a denomination has an institutional presence in a public policy area, how is the presence manifest? What accounts for the differences? I point to social theology as a possible answer.

Denominations differ in what scholars are now calling social theology. This research examines the possibility that the social theology of denominations explains, in part, the presence of denominations in a public policy area and also explains, in part, the reasons that the denominations vary in their activities within the public policy area. In order to narrow the scope of this investigation, one public policy area, migration, was chosen.

Migration is a particularly good choice of policy area because religious denominations are active in a variety of direct human service delivery activities within the migration area. Denominations collectively create a large number of religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations (RANPOs) in a number of public policy areas, such as health care, education, indigent care, and others. Due to the growth of governmental services in areas where religious organizations have traditionally had a presence, denominations have a number of choices that reflect beliefs about both theology and public affairs. Denominations entering or working in a policy area are afforded numerous opportunities to engage in direct political activities and in activities with less direct political implications.

Migration is both a very old public policy area, one of the first in the United States, and it is a very new public policy area insofar as the sheer volume of recent legislation and public interest is concerned. Laws governing the status of new arrivals or controlling their arrival in the United States have been written and

re-written for many generations. Religious groups have had a presence in North America since the first ships arrived from Europe bringing migrants (O’Neill, 1989). Thus, religious denominations have had a long time to make up their minds about how they think about migrants and their legal rights, and about the moral obligations to provide for the needs of particular groups of people.

Denominations have also had a long time to implement their beliefs about the links between theology and public affairs and to express their social theologies through the creation and maintenance of nonprofit organizations to work in the area of migration. Denominations have also had a long time to determine the mission, governance, finance, and other elements of RANPOs to work toward their understanding of the well-being of migrants and of the denominations’ public policy preferences.

The topic of this research is the influence of social theologies of religious denominations on the public policy area of migration. Religious organizations are significantly involved in the migration policy area in the U.S. Involvement includes provision of goods and services and, in some areas, actually participating in policy implementation. The dynamics of service provision and the interactions between nonprofits in this policy area and the agencies and personnel of both the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the Border Patrol provide a dynamic context for studying the influence of social theologies.

The focus of this research is on the influence of social theology upon both the presence and the size and scope of the activities of religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations working in migration policy. The majority of all nonprofit organizations working in migration are affiliated with denominations or umbrella religious organizations, usually ecumenical, supported by denominations. The presence of RANPOs in this area provides an opportunity to examine social theology both theoretically and empirically.

The purpose of this research is to analyze the explanatory contribution of social theology relative to existing theories explaining political involvement by denominations in public policy. More specifically, this research will consider whether a particular kind of social theology is an essential requirement for a denomination to have an institutional presence in a public policy area and a contributing influence upon both the size and scope of activities once the decision is made to enter.

The justification of this research is quite simple. A better understanding of the influence of social theology on public policy is needed. It does not appear obvious why certain denominations have an institutional presence in the migration policy area and others do not. The social theology of a denomination appears to be the main reason for its presence in the policy area. Social theology may be a cleavage between and within denominations that represents a significant departure from the theoretical understandings and analytical frameworks most frequently employed by scholars in the religion and politics subfield.

Generally, scholars describe a major cleavage between denominations, particularly Protestants and increasingly other denominations as well, which divides denominations along a continuum to create what is commonly known as a “two-party” system. If social theology represents another and quite different way to divide denominations into groups, and if a new and different cleavage actually better describes the denominational presence in a policy area, then understanding this new cleavage will lead to an improved understanding of the influence of religion in matters related to public policy. Guth et al. (1997) use the concept of social theology to create a more precise instrument. More work with this variable is needed, however.

Smith (1990) has reviewed the major ways scholars have classified denominations into groups to conduct social scientific research, and his review is instructive at this point. Scholars frequently classify denominations by dividing them into groups or families that share certain similarities, i.e., theology, history, or polity. Smith, however, concludes that,

Social scientists in the United States have found the most useful classification to be one that discriminated denominations along a continuum from Fundamentalism to liberalism (or in similar schemes with different labels from the orthodox, conservative, or Evangelical to the secular, modern, or humanistic). (1990, 225)

Smith notes that scholars have difficulty in arraying denominations along this continuum.

The problem with the liberal-conservative classification scheme is that it does not explicitly account for social theology. And the problem with dividing denominations into families or groups based on theology, history, or polity—at least for studying RANPOs-is that social theology may cut across all three of these categories as the theologies of the denominations and their political preferences are implemented.

According to Guth et al. (1997), social theologies are best conceived of as worldviews. On the right are individualists; on the left, communitarians. However, these are portrayed as polar opposites on a continuum. This suggests that there are at least a number of possible locations for a denomination to appear along this continuum. And since worldviews are characteristic of individual members of denominations, it is quite possible that any given denomination can have differing percentages of individualists and communitarians within the denomination. The aggregate combination, then, would serve to locate the denomination along the continuum, were this measure available. One would naturally assume that more left-leaning, communitarian denominations would be the denominations with an institutional presence in migration.

I will demonstrate in this dissertation that denominations most scholars consider Fundamentalist can also have so-called liberal social theologies. Apparently, conventional classification schemes, especially

single-dimensional classification schemes, do not capture the diversity of the possible combinations of theology, social theology, and political agendas of denominations.

Placing denominations along a single continuum may discount or ignore some of the information we have about denominations, reducing what in reality is a

multi-dimensional model to a single-dimensional one. For example, some so-called Fundamentalist denominations have what most scholars would call a liberal social theology. This is particularly true of the so-called Peace Protestants which includes the Society of Friends (Quakers), Mennonites, and the Church of the Brethren. A denomination can exhibit a Fundamentalist theological orientation, liberal social views, and an activist orientation toward public affairs. This would certainly be the case of the Society of Friends. Any scheme that forces denominations into two categories, such as the “two-party” model, does not capture this kind of situation. Additionally, forcing a large denomination into a dichotomous classification scheme can be a significant error. The denomination can manifest more than one social theology in its institutions. Forcing a classification is a failure to capture the diversity that exists within denominational membership and leadership.

For example, most scholars would recognize the United Church of Christ denomination (UCC) and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) (DOC) denomination as being very similar on political and social issues. However, the UCCs and the DOCs differ significantly on issues of congregational autonomy, denominational polity, and financial accountability. They differ, too, in the ways they support organizations within and related to the denomination. The UCCs have agencies and autonomous, often self-perpetuating, boards that are fully financially endowed, but the DOCs do not. This results in differing ways in which the activities of denominational leaders are held accountable to the churches’ memberships.

Classifying denominations is a daunting task, especially in light of the fact that there are more than 1,200 denominations in the United States. Nonetheless, failing to recognize that social theology may be one of the more important variables when it comes to analyzing denominations with an institutional presence in a public policy area would be a major oversight. Placing 1,200 denominations along a fundamentalist-liberal continuum, or even just classifying the largest denominations (above say, 500 thousand members) along such a continuum may, in part, engender the increasingly common conclusion that denominations are aligning themselves over time into two camps. This is precisely the direction of recent decades of scholarship, and the desire among scholars to simplify is apparently strong. Smith (1990) compared the classification schemes of ten scholars. Five of the classification schemes use a two-cell classification scheme.

Numerous measures are employed by scholars to construct classifications. While numerous characteristics of denominations could be chosen, theology is the most frequent choice. Scholars frequently employ measures of orthodoxy and eschatology to obtain their classification of a denomination. The problem for understanding political behavior in public policy areas is that theology and social theology are two very different and distinct variables.

The argument, in brief, offered in this dissertation is that social theology is a significant influence upon the delivery of goods and services and the political behavior of religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations working within a public policy area. Social theology may in fact be a major source of cleavage between religious denominations and even within denominations which influences in significant ways the behavior of denominational institutions. If this is the case, knowing this facilitates understanding the political behavior of denominations and the dynamics of a policy area of interest to denominations. This understanding contrasts significantly with other theories, namely the so-called two-party theory (Guth et al., 1997) and the culture war thesis of Hunter (1991). The culture war thesis is a version of the two-party theory that will be explored later. Suffice it to note that the social theology cleavage is based neither solely upon theology nor on the locus of moral authority. Social theology is a cleavage based upon worldview and the context in which theology is mediated or translated into politics. The context includes the organizational form and dynamics of the institutions created and maintained by denominations.

One way to consider the significance of this research is to identify in dollars the contributions of denominations working in migration policy. I have estimated that total of financial expenditures made by religious denominations on behalf of migrants are roughly one billion dollars annually. When compared to federal, state, and local budgets providing goods and services to migrants, this is a significant sum. These monies are generated and managed by a very few denominations. Thus,a very few denominations have a very significant impact upon migration policy in the U.S. The influence of a very few denominations in a public policy area raises interesting questions about the role of religion within a democracy.

For social scientists, understanding how to classify denominations by social theology could be critical to understanding the political influence and behavior of religious organizations in other public policy areas, particularly those which similarly provide direct human services and/or those that interact directly with public officials and administrationists.

This research addresses a gap in the literature. There are no in-depth studies of the wide variety of religious groups active in particular political or policy arenas. The possible exception to this is in the area of abortion or reproductive health.

This research contributes to the literatures of religion and politics, the study of nonprofits, the sociology of religion, and social ethics. It expands our knowledge of the influence of social theology upon the institutional behavior of denominations in a human service delivery policy area.

Chapter II reviews literature relevant to the concept of social theology. First, the relevance of theology in distinguishing denominations is reviewed. This review includes the seminal works of H. Richard Niebuhr. Second, I review attempts to explain denominational participation in politics generally and in public policy specifically. Third, the concept of social theology in the religion and politics literature from a behavioral perspective is considered. As Guth et al. (1997) have both the finest and most recent treatment of this literature, the review will focus primarily upon *The Bully Pulpit* (Guth et al., 1997). Finally, the nonprofit organization literature is reviewed at relevant points. Most major social movements in the United States and most human service delivery institutions found their first articulation and formulation within denominations. The nonprofit organization form is the favorite of denominations for accomplishing denominational goals. Theology is translated into political behavior in nonprofit organizations.

Chapter III is devoted to the construction of a model of political behavior of RANPOs that focuses upon social theology in general and the context in which social theologies are mediated or translated into political behavior. This chapter builds upon and transforms the

two-party model of Guth et al. (1997). To this model are added the institutional components or contextual variables mentioned above. The model developed by Guth et al. (1997) is weak at the point of not taking full account of the contextual variables.

Chapter IV presents the research methodology employed in this dissertation. I detail the approach used to test the social theology hypothesis of this dissertation. I describe procedures used in the collection and transformation of available empirical data, primarily from a compendium of U.S. RANPOs providing goods and services for migrants. In order to examine some related questions, these data are manipulated to provide additional measures relevant to the inquiry. Finally, I present the design and approach of using interviews with EDs and staff members of selected RANPOs to explore social theology in context.

Chapter V reports the findings from the examination of the data from the Immigration and Refugee Resource Directory (IRRD) (Schorr, 1990). The data reveal which denominations have an institutional presence in the migration policy area, and the data describe both the size and scope of the provision of goods and services to migrants.

Chapter VI reports the findings from analysis of the interviews conducted with executive directors and staff of RANPOs. All of these organizations have some similarities in organizational form and dynamics. These organizations do vary, however, in their practices. Variations in practices may be explained by the contexts in which the RANPOs operate.

Chapter VII reviews the argument and conclusions. In this chapter, I discuss the future of RANPOs and make suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, I review literature relevant to understanding the concept of social theology. The review includes a brief overview of relevant concepts in the religion and politics subfield, a review of the way theology relates to discerning the roles of religious actors, a review of the most recent literature concerning social theology, and a description of the organizational environment in which denominations operate, namely the world of nonprofit organizations.

Denominations have sets of beliefs, or belief systems, that ground their thinking about things divine and things human. These systems are known as theological orientations. Strongly linked to theological orientations are beliefs about public affairs, now known as social theologies. And strongly linked to the beliefs about public affairs are political agendas and attitudes toward political activism. In the conclusion of The Bully Pulpit, Guth et al. observe that “the social theology measures seem to put a chasm between the conservative and liberal groups, even deeper than that cut by theology” (Guth et al., 1997, 187). The following literature review is oriented toward a better understanding of the chasm. In addition, in the literature review, I discuss the elements necessary to adapt a theory to investigate the organizational context that is influenced by social theology.

The presence and influence of religion in the United States perdures. In spite of repeated predictions of significant decline of both religious self-identification and rates of participation in religious groups due to secularization and other influences, religion remains a major element both in individual life and in the life of religious institutions. The continuing influence of religion remains an important part in the analysis of both political thought and political behavior (Wald, 1992, 7ff). How and how much religion influences politics and public policy is of continuing academic interest across several disciplines. The perdurance of the influence of religion is warrant for continued investigation by social scientists.

Religion and politics are related in numerous ways. Some relationships are more obvious than others. Religion and related institutions influence electoral politics. There are strong associations between religious identification and voting behavior (Stanley and Neimi, 1993). Candidates for political office consider religion in campaigning and in governance when elected to office (Wald, Kellstedt, and Leege, 1994, 121). Religion is a demonstrated component of the worldviews of elected officials (Benson and Williams, 1982). Religious groups often lobby officials and frequently mobilize support for public policy preferences (Hertzke, 1988). All of these phenomena are facilitated by denominations and their related institutions. Continued participation by denominations in these activities serves to strengthen the ties between theology and thinking about public affairs.

Denominations and their related institutions, like political candidates, take positions on issues, prepare policy statements, engage in public information campaigns, coordinate communication to officials, and organize demonstrations. Their behavior is often similar to that of interest groups and social movements in general (O’Neill, 1989; Hertzke, 1988). Denominations frequently create organizations and build institutions to provide goods and services, to promote agendas, and to influence policies that are of interest to the groups. In many ways, religious groups act like miniature, even alternative, political parties (Kellstedt and Green, 1993).

Denominations sometimes support social mobilization. Most of the major social movements in U.S. history were either birthed in or found early articulation in religious organizations, particularly local congregations (O’Neill, 1989, 16). O’Neill cites social service, advocacy and legal services, arts and culture, international assistance, health care, and numerous other examples. Notable exceptions include the feminist movements and the gay rights movement, though both of these have found significant support in some religious groups (Hunter, 1991, 188ff).

Denominations change over time. Religion is not monolithic, but many of its dynamics are very stable across time. Religion and related institutions are frequently considered in the development of both cultural and political theory. Weber, Durkheim, Wildavsky and many others have considered religion important in theory construction. The influence is sufficient to be a source of both political stability and political change over time, contributing to the interest in the study of religion in politics, public policy, and public administration (Leege, 1993, 14ff).

Denominations and related institutions form a buffer between individuals and the larger legal-political institutions in the U.S. political system. A very similar dynamic occurs between individuals and large market structures. “Mediating institutions” (Berger and Neuhaus, 1990) are of particular interest to those who study interest groups, nonprofits, and political theory.

Religiously affiliated nonprofit organizations (RANPOs) are modern expressions of early voluntaristic associations in the U.S. Well before the United States became a nation, religious groups and denominations formed numerous voluntary associations, sometimes ecumenically, to provide a host of goods and services locally, nationally, and internationally.

With the advent of the Internal Revenue Code, all religious congregations, denominations, faiths, and related institutions were automatically extended the classification of nonprofit organizations for federal tax purposes which usually led to similar treatment at state and local levels. Religious nonprofits continue to emerge today at a prolific rate. Denominations continue to create and maintain nonprofits to accomplish particular goals and/or to embody part of their missions (O’Neill, 1989; Smith and Lipsky, 1993).

Through these nonprofits, a vast and diverse array of goods and services are provided, not only to members and constituencies, but also to many non-members and the general public. Numerous nonprofits, frequently RANPOs, provide services to persons in foreign countries. Many areas of public policy have religious groups working within them to achieve some particular goal within the policy area. This is particularly true where religious nonprofits provide human services. Where these actors are present, any analysis of the public policy area that omits religious nonprofits is incomplete (Clotfelter, 1992, 1).

Religious nonprofits account for a portion of the redistribution of the wealth that occurs in the United States. These nonprofits derive income from a number of sources including government grants and contracts, private contributions, corporate and foundation gifts, and fees for services. Tax incentives, considered by some as subsidies, encourage contributions (Smith and Lipsky, 1993, 185). In addition to participating in the transfer of money through charitable and humanitarian activity, religious nonprofits participate in the distribution of civil, political, and social rights to target populations (Smith, 1993, 199).

RANPOs are diverse. They contribute significantly toward the provision of health care, education, and numerous programs in the arts and humanities. They maintain a presence in the environmental movement, in migration policy, in the formulation of delivery of humanitarian and foreign policies, and in human rights areas, to name a few (O’Neill, 1989). The provision of human services in a number of fields is financed in part by government contracting with religious groups for services. A taxonomy of religious nonprofits indicates that many have as their raison d’etre the influencing of public policies from agenda-setting through implementation and evaluation (Smith and Lipsky, 1993; Hertzke, 1988).

Though institutional forms and missions vary considerably, denominations do exert influence upon politics and public policy. This influence is achieved and/or expressed through conventional means, including organizing, mobilizing, increasing political participation rates, and fund-raising. The influence of RANPOs is also achieved through the courts, through public policy formulation, and through the conversations, rhetoric, and discourses of persons and groups acting upon faith convictions (Hertzke, 1988).

Sometimes, religious denominations, institutions, and individuals engage in direct conflict. In recent years, a great deal of interest in the religion and politics subfield has been demonstrated in examining the culture war thesis. Simply stated, this thesis asserts that there is a culture war in America being waged by religious groups over the determination of the locus of moral authority and over a variety of religious, social, economic, and political issues. This is a very persuasive argument and even elegant in its explanatory power. Basically, the proponents of the culture war thesis see believers, clergy, and denominations divided into two major camps. Some portray the cleavage as a shooting war (Sine, 1995; Hunter, 1994).

The more conservative or "orthodox" side seeks to ground moral fixity in scripture, the founding of this nation, and a particular understanding of the experience of the divine which is determinative for them. The more liberal or "progressive" camp articulates a form of relativism that is less concerned with foundations and absolutes. These two camps exhibit political ideologies similar to those of the two-party thesis of Guth et al. (1997). The orthodox are certainly conservative; the progressive, liberal.

The result of a culture war is a stormy, sometimes deadly, discourse and engagement over values, human rights, and social responsibility. The orthodox and the progressive groups clash over issues such as abortion, public education, gay rights, and the role of the family. As each group defines positions with greater precision, the lines of the discourse are hardened. Both groups seek to detail conceptions of appropriate, consequent, morally social, and political behaviors. Because these groups translate theology into action, it can be said that both sides have developed strong social theologies.

According to Hunter (1994), social, economic, political, and theological cleavages expressed in the culture wars may represent cleavages in the body politic as deep as race. This is a significant claim because others have claimed that race has been a very large determinant of politics in America since the 1960s (Carmines and Stimson, 1989). The breadth of the culture war thesis is difficult to measure, and some groups do not appear to fall neatly into either camp. Many black Protestants, for instance, have very liberal politics and public policy preferences, while embracing very conservative social values.

The result of the polarizing culture wars, according to the theory, is a major cleavage that runs through social, political, religious, and economic life. For the purposes of this inquiry, however, the location of the cleavage is most problematical. The argument suggests that the cleavage is among individuals, not denominations. That is, the orthodox-progressive cleavage may run through many denominations, creating allies among the members of all denominations. If this is the case, denominations are far less important than previously thought. Jews may continue to align with Democrats, and mainline Protestants with Republicans; but conservative Jews on occasion find they have political affinity with the issue positions of conservative Southern Baptists, conservative Roman Catholics, and even conservative groups among mainline Protestants.

The culture war thesis and other research (Wuthnow, 1988) suggest the declining significance of denominations. Other research, however, suggests their continued vitality (Kellstedt and Green, 1993, 53).

Religious thinking in general and theology in particular are more diverse and fluid than a simple bifurcated model can express. In order to perform the work and accomplish the political goals outlined above, denominations find it vitally important to ground their understandings and justifications in theology or to carefully craft their politics to match theological orientations. But theology differs significantly among denominations.

H. Richard Neibuhr, through a life-time of scholarship, traced some of the dynamics of how religious groups cleave according to theology. His fist major work was *The Social Sources of Denominationalism* ([1929] 1957). In it he attempted to use sociological differences to explain variation between denominations. He found, for instance, that denominations were correlated with various demographic characteristics, social class, and geographical regions. These factors do account for a number of diverse characteristics of denominations, and many of these insights have been refined through generations of studies especially by those studying voting behavior (Green, Guth, and Hill, 1996, 103ff).

In a second study, *The Kingdom of God in America* (1937), Niebuhr argued that the theological concepts concerning how God is at work in the world are stronger determinants of religious groups than are sociological differences. While this work was not quantitative in nature, the language of quantitative research is helpful. All things being held constant, Niebuhr found that theology is one of the most important contributing factors to the differences among denominations. The idea is simple: control for the influence of demographics and theological orientation will come to the fore. While demographics could account for many things, they could not account for the stream of religion in American life itself. Denominations are theologically diverse in nature.

In *Christ and Culture* (1951), Niebuhr described the relationship of Christians and churches with the world as a problem of the perceived normative relationship between Christianity and civilization. Niebuhr notes that Christ is difficult to define and so is culture. There are competing visions of each. Christians can give and have given a number of responses to the question of this relationship. Niebuhr found that the kinds of answers Christians give to what he calls the “enduring problem” account in large measure for the theological differences between denominations. Niebuhr offered five possible relationships, each grounded in historical schools of theology. That is, the groups vary by the ways in which they seek to engage the world around them, and the variation is derived from their understanding of where Christ is. Christians certainly engage the world in more than two ways.

These variations are expressed in the understandings of the churches’ role(s) in the world. The five positions Niebuhr outlined are: “Christ against culture,” “Christ of culture,” “Christ above culture,” “Christ and culture in paradox,” and “Christ the transformer.” Religious groups and related institutions may be more clearly defined for social scientific purposes by these relative positions than they are by sociological attributes. That is, where denominations perceive the divine action, or divine-human action, to be located is where they will most likely concentrate their energies, resources and efforts. Evidence to support this conclusion is found in Guth et al. (1997). They find that theology has a greater influence upon clergy than demographic characteristics.

Most of the studies of denominations such as Niebuhr’s have been limited to Christian denominations. Frequently the studies are limited only to Protestants. Both the size and the diversity of the Roman Catholics represent difficulties for the scholar seeking parsimony or generalization. Religious denominations of all kinds have a body of thought that can be characterized as theological. This is certainly true of all of the historic faiths that use some or all of the Hebrew scriptures, namely, Judaism, Islam, and the Christian faiths. Building upon their theology and reflecting upon their activities, denominations develop a social theology. Denominations articulate a normative role relative to politics and public policy. Admittedly, the role may be that of complete avoidance of anything political whatsoever. Conversely, other denominations may take an activist role. In short, any denomination can choose intentionally to interact politically or to avoid politics all together. Similarly, denominations can choose many different levels and kinds of participation.

Though Christians are greatest in sheer numbers among the denominations in the U.S., the assumption is made in this dissertation that all denominations have both a theology and a social theology. The elements of social theology most commonly studied in Protestant denominations will be used later in this study to build a model of politics that should generalize to all denominations.

Guth et al. (1997) have the most recent treatment of the relevant literature traced to this point. Their study focused on the politics of white Protestant clergy. However, they build upon classic studies of religion and politics that include many levels of data. *The Bully* *Pulpit* (1997) includes many observations about denominations and diversity within denominations that can be used to construct a theoretical model. I review below some of the key points of their study. In Chapter III, I use these elements to construct a model of religiously affiliated nonprofit organization politics.

The major argument offered by Guth et al. (1997) is that there is a cleavage between clergy that divides them into two basic camps. Within the two camps, there are two, more distinct, political agendas exhibited. In addition, levels of political activism vary. Those that are left-of-center tend either to embrace a social theology such as the social gospel or liberation theology. Activists that are

right-of-center tend to embrace the Civic Gospel. This cleavage exists between denominations, religious movements, and institutions in addition to clergy.

Guth et al. (1997) define social theology in at least three different ways, each of which contributes to understanding the concept. First, social theology is defined as the role of the church in the world. Second, it is defined as the beliefs that link theology to public affairs. Third, social theology is virtually equated with worldviews.

In Table 1, I have arrayed two columns of words from Guth et al.’s review of literature that have been used to analyze the behavior of individuals, religious movements, and denominations (Guth et al., 1997, 8ff). Many of these concepts are shorthand ways of referring to major concepts that have been examined through decades of scholarship. A brief explanation of each appears in Table 1.

At the top of Table 1, two theological movements are identified: Evangelical and Mainline. These represent two major theological orientations of Protestant denominations that have evolved over the last century and are in large measure contemporary expressions of the theological conflicts that existed between Fundamentalist and Liberal Christians in the last century.

## Table 1: Elements of a Social Theology

Left-of-Center Right-of-Center

Theological Family Mainline Evangelical

Worldviews Communitarian Individualist

Primary Concerns Horizontal Vertical

Problem Solving Change system Change individual

Agenda Social justice Moral reform

Goals Social Otherworldly

Transformation

Social Theology Social gospel or Civic Gospel

Liberation

Leege and Kellstedt add to this model the concept of worldviews. On the left, communitarians predominate; on the right, individualists. Briefly, communitarians and individualists envision the locus of moral action differently. Individualists express more concern over the relationship between individuals and the divine, what some scholars characterize as vertical relationships. Communitarians stress horizontal relationships. These may include family, neighbors, and civic and political entities. Individualists are oriented more toward individual accountability and responsibility while communitarians focus on interdependency and collective actions.

On the left, emphasis in solving basic human problems is manifest in a desire to change the social system and structures that keep people and groups from realizing their fullest potential. These efforts are characterized as a quest for social justice. On the right, the moral alternation of individuals is the focus, and any collective action would be focused primarily upon moral reform. The goals on the left would be achieved when society is transformed, but the measures of success on the right are otherworldly and involve individual salvation.

Activist clergy, churches, and institutions on the left usually embrace one of two social theologies, each articulating beliefs about the normative relationship between theology and public affairs. The first, and oldest social theology, is known as the social gospel. Walter Rauschenbusch (1917) was a notable early major proponent of the social gospel. The social gospel was rooted in the need perceived by many clergy, congregations, and churches to address systemic evil. Examples in the early part of this century were the struggles of labor groups, the efforts to change child labor laws, and the conflicts resulting from a rampant materialism perceived as destructive to society. The social gospel endured several set backs in this century as enthusiasm for liberal and progressive causes suffered through two world wars. Guth et al. (1997) observe that the social gospel began to flourish again in the lives of clergy and denominations in the rights struggles of the 1960s. The social gospel linked theology to political action. Often this link led to the creation of RANPOs.

The other, newer, leftist, social theology is born of liberation theology. Guth et al. think of liberation theology as the latest revision of the social gospel. This theology grows out of the work of theologians in Central America and South America. Protestant theologian Rubem Alves (1969) and Roman Catholic theologian Gustavo Gutierrez [1973 (1971)] each wrote benchmark works on liberation theology.

Liberation theology focuses upon engaging the world for the sake of transforming it. According to Gutierrez,

theology…tries to be a part of the process through which the world is transformed…in the protest against trampled human dignity, in the struggle against the plunder of the vast majority of people…in the building of a new, just, and fraternal society…. (Gutierrez, [1973 (1971)], 15).

More recently, Wink (1992) envisions liberation theology as a theological orientation toward all the powers and structures of the world which consistently oppress people. Wink writes, “The Powers are good. The Powers are fallen. The Powers must be redeemed” (Wink, 1992,10). A very important feature of liberation theology is the very close link between theology and social theology. That is, liberation theology is grounded in praxis. The measure of liberation theology is orthopraxy (correct practice), not orthodoxy (correct belief). Liberation theology begins with the assumption that the adherent and the church will actively engage the world for the sake of social transformation.

On the right, scholars have described two kinds of social theology. On the one hand, those who choose to have nothing to do with things political or related to policy actually do manifest a social theology. This social theology carries no name. It is simply characterized as avoidance or a type of quiescence. Even this attitude is borne of a theological orientation asserting that things political are profane. Stated in the strongest of language, participation in things political can lead to a kind of religious defilement.

A less extreme, but more involved, even activist, social theology on the right is known as the civic gospel. The civic gospel is perceived by some as being a response by the right to resist efforts of those on the left, creating a new countervailing politics. Proponents of the civic gospel believe that it is permissible to engage in political activism so long as it is directed at moral reform agendas and continues to express Evangelical concerns. There is scant evidence that the civic gospel is associated with the creation and maintenance of RANPOs in public policy areas.

An important feature of Guth et al.’s (1997) model of politics is their discussion of the alleged diminishing influence of religious denominations in the United States. As they see it, religious denominations are increasingly less relevant. The Evangelical-Mainline cleavage appears to cut across denominations and to be manifest individually more than institutionally. Comments by Guth et al., however, about denominations and the two-party system are carefully guarded. Consistent with many classic studies, these scholars frequently retain denominational identities of the persons in their surveys for statistical analysis. And the influence of denominations upon clergy is very significant, especially as the source of professional socialization in graduate education (Guth et al., 1997, 55). These scholars recognize that denominations may be

re-aligning along the same lines frequently manifest among the clergy and institutional leadership. Seen in this light, denominations are increasingly just particular expressions of the Evangelical or Mainline religious movements.

Those who classify denominations tend to force denominations into one of two camps, though some scholars allow for three, four, or five-cell typologies. Guth et al. (1997) tend to push in favor of a two-cell or two-camp theory in their theory of social theology. However, these scholars do allow for varying degrees of activism to be exhibited within the categories they construct. For example, and particularly important for this study, they describe three kinds of liberals. First, there are quiescent modernists. These reconcile modernity with their faith, yet they exhibit low levels of activism. Second, there are Conventional Liberals. Third, there are New Breed Liberals. The New Breed Liberals embrace modernity, and they exhibit strong communitarian orientations and very high political activism. The Conventional Liberals, then, are modern, but they are not as active politically (Guth et al., 1997, 186ff). Guth et al. also construct parallel tripartite categories for conservatives.

When Guth et al. compare eight denominations in their study, they find that denominations exhibit different mixtures of conservatism and liberalism among clergy. They also find that measures of theology and measures of social theology vary according to theological self-identifications of clergy (Guth et al., 188). Thus, while these scholars argue strongly for an overall two-party theory of religion and politics, they implicitly acknowledge that there is significant variation among the denominations and clergy that align along the two-party continuum. Clergy who identify with the Christian Right are about equal in political activist orientation to New Breed Liberals. However, it appears, at least theoretically, that the combination of high orthodox theology and strong individualist social theology would not lead to the creation and maintenance of social service delivery RANPOs, creating a context in which high right-wing activism would be manifest.

In order for a social theology to be examined fully and in context, it is necessary to understand that denominations and activist leadership need people, resources, institutions, endorsements, and a host of other elements for political engagement to take place. The structure and dynamics of the nonprofit organization provide many of these. For the purposes of this study, it is important to review some of the elements and features of the nonprofit environment to understand more fully the context in which the various social theologies find institutional expression.

Denominations have provided goods and services to target populations in North America since the beginning of the first European migration. Settlement houses were established and maintained to meet the growing needs of persons arriving in the U.S. Some organizations were created to provide services to co-religionists, frequently persons of the same ethnicity (O’Neill, 1989).

Denominations create RANPOs for a variety of reasons. RANPOs are created to separate worship and service and to insulate congregations from government examination. Many RANPOs exhibit a long tradition of public-private cooperation in the provision of goods and services to particular groups. Some are formed to be vehicles to receive funds that could not or would not otherwise go to explicitly religious organizations. Some organizations are created expressly to effect changes in society and to achieve mission goals derived from theological considerations. Some RANPOs are created to provide important, often innovative social services that are not being provided in either governmental or market sectors.

RANPOs are non-market, non-governmental organizations that take on a particular form. Nonprofits operate in a restricted environment, yet critics such as Stanley Surrey and Wright Patman (Gies, Ott, and Shafritz, 1990, 19) claim nonprofits to be in a position of particular privilege in the U.S. due to specialized treatment in the Internal Revenue Code. A few of the features of the nonprofit environment are discussed below.

Almost all nonprofits are classified as 501(C)(3)

Organizations (C3s) by the Internal Revenue Code (Milani, 1988, 5.1). The IRS has a number of other organizational classifications for very specialized nonprofits, but the “C3s” are most relevant to this investigation. This provision exempts the organization from federal taxation on all financial transactions except those that engage in activities that produce "unrelated business income.” Many of the activities of these organizations fall under government scrutiny; a host of federal, state, and local regulations; and a requirement to provide certain reports to governmental entities, especially to the IRS.

A special feature of the Internal Revenue Code is Section 170. This provides for donors to receive tax deductions for voluntary contributions to the organizations. In order to maintain these benefits, nonprofits must operate in a restrictive environment. Employees cannot receive inordinate salaries; they must be commensurate with other, usually similar, salaries in the private sector. C3S cannot participate in directly influencing elected officials in the form of partisan activities or candidate endorsement to name two of the many restrictions. The financial management of nonprofits, including the practices of preparation of financial statements and auditing, is strictly regulated through the Federal Accounting Standards Board (FASB). Though nonprofits are in a unique position regarding taxation, all financial transactions must follow strict guidelines. Nonprofits regularly conduct audits. Audits must comply with FASB standards for organizations to receive unqualified audit imprimaturs.

These restrictions, plus the fact that most nonprofits are dependent upon the good will of donors, contribute to an environment in which nonprofits usually monitor all financial transactions for compliance. Governmental oversight comes with the organizational form. Even the threat of the possible loss of tax status is usually enough motivation for nonprofit boards, executive directors, staff, and volunteers to remain in compliance with governmental restrictions upon their activities. This operational environment requires decisions to be made as to how involved an organization wishes to be or whether or not to be involved in certain activities at all.

Nonprofits are usually governed by boards of directors. The social theologies of RANPOs are translated into mission statements, programs, and political agendas in board rooms. It is here that the institutional roles of the organizations are discerned and formed. It is here that appropriate levels of institutional political activism are determined. The form and language varies from state to state and from organization to organization, but the principles are the same. The board is charged with governance and usually determines a collective role relative to the executive director, staff, volunteers, and the organization’s programs. The board of directors is ultimately responsible for the actions of the organization.

The individual board members, as well as the board as a whole, are generally expected to act in ways that reduce the perceived liabilities of the organization. Two points can be made here. First, decisions are usually shared. This is particularly relevant if and when decisions are made to violate either a law or a regulation. Second, activist leadership requires support and, presumably, assent from others. Thus, the activities of RANPOs are collective endeavors and should reflect denominational concerns and considerations.

RANPOs, staff, volunteers, affiliated denominations, and clients are, in effect, small communities. The activities of RANPOs are at least operationally tied to the theology of the denomination or to denominational institutions; thus they are expressions of denominational affiliation and commitment. Kellstedt et al. (1996) find that religious affiliation and commitment are two components for understanding the social embodiment of religion. RANPOs and EDs can be said to embody the social theology of denominations.

Most nonprofit organizations produce at least one major statement concerning their reason for being an organization. This is usually in the form of a mission statement. In large measure, the mission statements can be thought of as statements concerning social theology. That is, the mission statement informs the members, the board, and sometimes the public, of the identity of the organization and the work it is about. Explicit theological rationales frequently are incorporated in these statements. The organization may have other statements such as operating statements and vision statements. The statement(s) or purpose(s) embedded in these documents often are expressed in the corporation files of the states in which nonprofits are chartered. Mission statements are used for new board member orientation, promotions, marketing, and fund-raising. Mission statements can enable and/or restrain executive directors, staff, and volunteers of the organization.

As clergy are dependent upon congregational members to accomplish work, executive directors of nonprofits are deeply dependent upon other people to implement their work. Nonprofits that deliver human services are particularly dependent upon volunteers to accomplish the goals of the organization. RANPOs characteristically secure the services of large numbers of volunteers to become the hands and feet of the organization. Some RANPOs exist without full-time paid staff. Volunteers fill all the positions in this case. The presence of these persons in the organization is evidence of denominational support, as they often are recruited largely from congregations affiliated with particular denominations.

Those who recruit volunteers must be able to motivate, inspire, and organize. It is important to note that the views of the executive directors of these organizations have to be shared, in large measure, by board members and with volunteers in order for the organization to be productive.

There are other features and dynamics of RANPOs relevant to the concept of social theology, especially to the degree that social theology influences the presence of RANPOs in a policy area and/or the size and scope of activities within the policy area. RANPOs have a history of demonstrated effectiveness in mobilization. They are in a unique social position to mobilize large numbers of volunteers. Mobilization efforts may be directed toward implicit or explicit political behavior and/or toward particular policy preferences, agendas, or other purposes.

Human service delivery nonprofit organizations are vehicles for transferring money across social boundaries. Most of the time, donations and resources are systematically transferred from persons with greater financial resources to persons with fewer financial resources (Clotfelter, 1992).

Smith et al. (­­­­­­­­­­­­­­1993) report many ways in which nonprofits play significant roles in the American political system by distributing political, cultural, and social rights to marginalized groups. This is certainly the goal of many of the nonprofits working in the migration area.

Smith and Lipsky (1993) have traced the practice of many nonprofits that contract with governmental entities to provide goods and services to target populations. Most RANPOs fall into what Smith and Lipsky call the traditional classification. Traditional nonprofits are less likely to engage in government contracting. Many fear entanglement. More entrepreneurial nonprofits will contract for service provision. In the migration area, some RANPOs do contract with governmental entities to provide goods and services to target populations. Examples include refugee resettlement programs and the organizations that co-produce INS policies by helping migrants navigate the legal paths to citizenship or other status. For example, during the recent efforts to legalize many undocumented persons in the U.S. during the so-called amnesty period, many RANPOs chose to become what the INS calls Qualified Designated Entities (QDEs). QDEs provide services and receive a reimbursement fee for each client served on behalf of the INS. Willingness of RANPOs to contract reflects the social theology of the organization.

Critics of nonprofits claim that the power of nonprofits is inappropriately supported through tax subsidies. A perennial question from nonprofit critics is whether or not all nonprofit organizations should continue receiving a special tax status. To this end, certain types of endowments and foundations are no longer exempt from federal income tax, yet the tax status of most nonprofits has been reaffirmed (Scrivner, 1990).

RANPOs are major human service delivery systems. Lester Salmon observes, “the presence or absence of a religious connection should help explain the extent to which a nonprofit” provides services (Clotfelter, 1992, 159). To the degree inputs and outputs of these systems are both based on links to theology, they are important. The assumption is that if the religious groups did not provide the services, then the services would not be provided at all.

Milward and Provan (1993) suggest that in many areas of human service provision, the U.S. Government is a "hollow state." That is, the federal benefit programs are frequently dependent upon nonprofit organizations (including religiously affiliated ones) to actually deliver the goods and services to target populations. The concept is that federal programs would not be successfully implemented without the human service delivery systems of nonprofit organizations. If the social theology of denominations is responsible for the ability of the hollow state actually to provide these services, then social theology is particularly important. Its absence would result in lower levels of goods and service provision.

Human service delivery nonprofits are elastic and adaptable. Private schools, churches, and civic organizations can quickly respond to a perceived need with a variety of resources including funds, volunteers, vehicles, buildings, and organizational expertise. Examples include mobilization and facilities use following natural disasters or the bombing in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, when church facilities and personnel played major roles.

RANPOs, like most nonprofits, depend upon the leadership of EDs. Guth et al. (1997, 55) recognize that the professional and educational socialization-primarily through denominational institutions-has a significant impact upon the development of the theological orientations of clergy. The EDs are likely to reflect the beliefs of their denominations or, at least, the orientations of the particular institutions of higher education attended by the denomination’s leadership. The influence of denominations does not end with the successful completion of formal education. Presumably, the influence of organizational structures and operational environments of clergy working in specialized institutions continues long after graduation from schools of higher education.

The EDs contribute to the mediation of theology into the actual operations of RANPOs. EDs characteristically have extensive networks of relationships that provide for continuing education. Typically, these include attendance at meetings involving volunteers, donors, specialists, clients, colleagues, and professionals. EDs network with other executive directors seeking to work cooperatively on projects of mutual interest and concern. All of these activities contribute to the EDs’ professional development and the continued influence of denominations. Additionally, it is customary for EDs to attend conferences in their fields of endeavor.

Denominations provide significant opportunities and resources for EDs to recruit, train, and organize volunteers to achieve organizational goals. Denominations provide publicity, networking opportunities, and in-house communication including electronic communications and publications. As noted, denominations build, fund, and staff educational institutions, some very specialized, to educate professionals and paraprofessionals for service to the denomination. The educational institutions become a linkage to congregational life. They publish books, journals, and periodicals, which in turn promote the work of the denomination's institutions. Seminary, university, and professional school faculty members frequently serve as board members on a denomination's RANPOs as a way of resourcing the organization.

Denominations can provide RANPOs and EDs with many resources: automobiles, buildings, office equipment, and internet connections. Food, clothing, shelter, medical and legal services, tools, and a whole host of goods and services can be channeled from the denomination to a particular organization. Denominations can also promote volunteerism among their memberships on behalf of their respective RANPOs.

Guth et al. (1997) discount the influences of socio-economic status as being a significant factor in the political lives of clergy. What is the social status of the clergy/ paraprofessionals who serve as EDs? This is a puzzling question. Guth et al. (1997) review Verba and Nie’s argument that it is difficult to classify the socioeconomic status of clergy. Clergy are notoriously paid much lower than persons in the general population with similar years of professional training and experience. On the other hand, clergy are usually trusted, respected, and admired, leading to a high social status. Recent scholarship reveals that this high SES seems to be a misperception. In reality, clergy probably have a much lower SES than previously considered (Guth et al., 19). The political activism of EDs is probably not significantly influenced by SES. Denominational education and relationships probably influence the political thinking of clergy to a larger degree.

The credentialing of the respective denominations and the status of executive director (EDs) alone do contribute to the social status of the EDs. EDs must be generally respected in their communities to capitalize on human and financial resources. EDs can gain access to officials and institutions and are important to the network of organizations working in their fields.

The implementation of U.S. migration policy requires significant involvement of sponsoring families and/or the co-production of services through public/private partnerships. Most migrants are admitted to the U.S. following the priority of family reunification (Schorr, 1990). Refugees and asylees also require sponsors because they frequently do not have family members in the United States. Denominations play a major role by recruiting the required sponsors and providing a variety of resources for immigrants, refugees, and asylees.

Coordinating the production of these services frequently entails close working relationships between religious groups and either state or federal agencies. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Justice sometimes contract with religious organizations and/or the sponsors they recruit, making some federally-funded resources available to migrants and empowering the RANPOs to administer the funds.

The context in which the social theology of a denomination is translated or mediated into behavior in the nonprofit world is filled with decision points. This study examines the role of social theology as it influences decisions in the public policy area of migration. This study is not limited to examination of Protestant religious behavior and related to nonprofit organizations. Most of the studies cited above base the idea of theology and social theology upon Protestant experience.

Roman Catholics and Jews have long, rich histories of participation in politics. Both have also been involved in and maintaining RANPOs. Both denominations seem to be comfortable with politics. Both have educated clergy, with Jews probably more so especially among older clergy. “Judaism is not an otherworldly faith; it emphasizes worldly engagement” (Fowler and Hertzke, 74). Roman Catholics bring many institutional resources to the American political system (Fowler and Hertzke, 68). Both Jews and Roman Catholics have long histories of exhibiting Communitarian behavior.

In this review, I have established that social theology should be expected to be a significant element in the politics of denominations. I have outlined some of the characteristics of nonprofits that are the vehicles whereby denominations provide goods and services to target populations in a public policy area. Combinations of theological orientations, social theologies, political agendas, and political activism find expression in RANPOs. The next chapter presents a theory incorporating all of these elements for the purpose of studying the politics of RANPOs that focus on migration.

#### CHAPTER III

#### A THEORETICAL MODEL

In this chapter, I construct a model for the study of the politics of religiously affiliated nonprofits. This model differs from other models of religious politics because it reflects the operational environment of RANPOs working in the migration policy area. The model would require adaptation to be applicable to RANPOs in other policy areas. The construction of this model begins with the model of pastoral politics developed by Guth et al. (1997). Their work represents the culmination of many years of scholarship and is based on many decades of studies in the field of religion and politics. While their model deals specifically with the politics of clergy, many of the observations in their study generalize well to religious denominations and related organizations.

While Guth et al. mentioned denominations in their study, they note that for the most part, denominations are either declining in importance generally or realigning along line which correspond to the divisions exhibited in individual level data. In either case, the influence of denominations in their opinion is now less that it once was. The clergy in their study were drawn specifically by denomination. The influence of denominations is present in some significant ways, particularly in professional socialization of clergy.

However, overall, Guth et al. (1997) leave the reader with the impression that denominational considerations are far less influential than might be expected. I am convinced that denominations are particularly influential when it comes to participation in a public policy area. For one thing, denominations create and maintain organizations with specific missions to work in public policy areas. Clergy working in these organizations are constrained by organization boards, denominational history and tradition, funding sources, mission statements, and a host of components of the contexts in which they work.

Thus, to this model I add the form and dynamics of nonprofit organizations. The form is that of a nonprofit organized under the rules of the state in which it was chartered. In addition, federal statutes, especially IRS rules, circumscribe the organizations in such a way that many RANPOs share similar characteristics.

The dynamics include the number of “voices” in nonprofits. These nonprofits are, in effect, small communities. At a minimum the voices in nonprofits include: board members, executive directors, staff, volunteers, and clients. In most cases, other voices are present and include affiliated denominations, funding sources, and formal and informal networks with other organizations within the policy area. The addition of these components is essential for understanding the politics of these organizations. RANPOs provide the context in which theology, social theology, political agendas, and political activism combine. RANPOs are the vehicle for the mediation of theology through the worldview and the context of the RANPOs.

The elements of this model are derived from the literature reviewed in the preceding chapter. The first element, theology, is essential for understanding the political behavior of religiously affiliated organizations. In fact, theology is critical for this kind of political analysis. Theology is the keystone for religious politics because religious denominations, institutions, and leaders all exhibit distinct theological orientations, and they frequently align along a left-right continuum. Among Protestants, the cleavage is between Evangelicals and Mainliners. Those on the left are what Guth et al. (1997) call modernists. As such, they are more likely to create and maintain diverse organizations. Mainliners more consistently reconcile “the historic Christian faith with modern science and social conditions” (Guth et al., 1997,9). For example, the belief that modern science and administration can be used to address social conditions may be essential to creating organizations to address social problems, viz. the plight of migrants. One expectation derived from this is that modernist, or liberal, denominations would be expected to manifest an institutional presence in a public policy area.

But theology is insufficient in itself. Theology has to be mediated or translated into action. The social theology of a denomination works to translate theology into political goals and activities within RANPOs. Organizational form and dynamics influence behavior. Denominations birthed the nonprofit sector in the U.S. Nonprofit scholars often claim nonprofits exhibit qualitative differences from market or governmental organizations. While theology is insufficient, it makes a great difference. Theology can even make the difference whether or not the organization exists. Guth et al. (1997) argue that theology is the basis for both social theologies and political agendas. Second, the absence of a social theology that translates “beliefs into political goals and activities” is a critical absence. Without it, denominations and even activist clergy cannot create institutions, and they would not seek to influence public policy. All of the elements must be in place: theology, social theology, political agenda, and an institutional manifestation that translates these elements into a political reality.

Contrary to the model of politics offered by Guth, I suggest that the social theologies of denominations, individuals, and leaders are as diverse as their theological orientations. And while social theologies can be arrayed across a continuum between individualist to communitarian, it is worth noting that there are theoretically a great number of possible positions between these polar extremes. While Guth et al. (1997) offer evidence to support their conclusion that social theologies are strongly related to theological orientations in individual level survey data, there is nothing determinative about this association and no particular reason to believe that denominations cannot exhibit different combinations of social theology and theological orientations.

Social theology helps to determine the kinds of activities in which a religious group (denomination or organization) will engage. Social theology is an implementing theology. Social theologies are used for argumentation and justification for positions taken by organizations. Social theology influences the different mission statements among otherwise similar RANPOs. For example, two RANPOs may resent the work of the Border Patrol. However, the first RANPO may engage the Border Patrol in a very civil manner, even inviting the officers and officials to meetings while the other RANPO may exhibit open hostility. Both RANPOs will ground their attitudes in theological understandings.

Similarly, social theology is probably the determining factor in deciding whether to co-produce public policy with governmental or market entities. Some RANPOs engage in contracting with governmental entities to provide goods and services to target populations. Others do not.

Social theologies are beliefs about the role of the church. At the most basic level, the belief that the role of the church is to avoid or resist civilization in some way is less likely to produce an organization designed to routinely cooperate with a governmental agency. This is particularly true as contracting involves oversight and contract compliance provisions.

On the other hand, belief that the church should avoid or resist the world could just as easily lead RANPOs to routinely and consistently skirt or violate secular law. Thus, similar theological understandings can be associated with very dissimilar social theological understandings. In this sense, a perception that the world is corrupt, for instance, can lead to a posture of avoidance as easily as it can lead to a posture of conflict. Social theology is the connection between theology and public affairs, and as such, a critical link.

More specifically, two RANPOs can exhibit the same basic social theology, say a modernist, communitarian, social gospel social theology. Both organizations agree that there should be structural changes in order to transform society. They may even agree on which changes should be made. Yet the two may diverge on the appropriate strategy to obtain the desired changes. The divergent strategies appear to bear similarities to, but also differs from, the ways Guth et al. (1997) portray political agendas and levels of political activism.

Guth et al. (1997) name and describe two basic agendas which characterize the political agendas of denominations, institutions, and individuals. They are: the moral reform agenda and the social justice agenda. The moral reform agenda is more individualistic. The social justice agenda is focused more on structures and systems that bring influence to bear upon individuals. The moral reform agenda is linked to the individualistic worldview. In contrast, the social justice agenda is more communitarian in outlook. Those pursuing the moral reform agenda are oriented more to changing the heart, mind, and soul of one individual at a time. Those pursuing the social justice agenda want to change laws, policies, procedures, and structures to achieve collective benefits on behalf of others. These agendas are outgrowths of both theological orientations and social theologies, and they lead to differing behaviors within RANPOs.

The context in which theology gets translated into political goals and activities includes the nonprofit organizational form. The nonprofit organizational form, like that of the corporation, is a legal construct. As such, it has many tax and financial benefits. These are familiar and beneficial to denominations. However, the nonprofit organizational form is also accompanied by a host of rules and regulations imposed by federal, state, and local governments. Judgments are made based upon theology, denominational history, and experience about the nature of worldly things. The theological costs of entering into the corporate world, albeit the nonprofit corporate world, may, in the minds of many, preclude participation. Determinations are made by denominations about the proper roles of religious people acting in the world. This is a matter of theological orientation. There is no necessary expectation that denominations with an individualist worldview will have an institutional presence in the migration policy space, yet the EDs of these RANPOs could personally exhibit both agendas in their approaches to ministry.

Based upon a denomination’s theological orientation, it may decide to enter into the corporate world, but only so far. This is a matter of social theology and context. For instance, some may perceive the goals of their organizations to be consonant with the goals of the secular, and even governmental, world. Niebuhr (1951) is correct in arguing that religious denominations, institutions, and individuals rely heavily upon their assessments of the relationship between things religious and things secular in order to determine their respective roles in the world. Political agendas are not likely to be constructed by religious groups if either the theological orientation or the social theology, or both, of the group precludes this behavior.

Once it is determined theologically that an appropriate role in the world is to organize to translate theology into political agendas and create organizations to accomplish these tasks, numerous decision points must be confronted. Creating a RANPO subjects denominations to governmental scrutiny. Governmental scrutiny requires a kind of accountability. Nonprofit corporations are subjected to both state and federal rules and regulations. Many behaviors are proscribed. As previously noted, a considerable effort is required by groups to establish organizations and set their courses.

Some of this tension is evidenced in the so-called church-state literature. A long, rich history of both conflict and consensus is found there. Some denominations are strict separationists. Others are more comfortable with blurring the lines of distinction. But this distinction does not capture the influence of social theology. For example, Southern Baptists are very strict separationists. Yet the Southern Baptists are also very active in the migration policy area. Southern Baptists have made the decision to create organizations to provide goods and services even in the face of possible entanglement. This decision brings leaders and RANPO EDs into regular contact with the rules and regulations of the INS and requires them to conduct their affairs in compliance. Thus, Southern Baptist separationism runs directly into conflict with the desire to work in migration. The social theology of the Southern Baptists, then, demonstrates that a general theological orientation does not dictate the behavior of a denomination in a particular policy area.

State and federal laws governing nonprofits are extensive. They apply to the organizational form, revenue streams, salaries, political activities, and even use of the U.S. Postal Service. Public expectations for the behavior of eelymosynary institutions provide ethical referent systems for boards of directors to make ethical decisions. Thus the milieu of RANPOs provides a reflexive environment in which nonprofits must make many decisions including decisions about the proper role of the organization. Faced with literally hundreds of decisions, boards of directors must determine which decisions resonate with the theological orientation of the organizations.

Nonprofits are heavily dependent upon the leadership and professional behavior of their executive directors. In most cases, the executive director is largely responsible for teaching and orienting volunteers and boards of directors about the mission of the organization and the day-to-day operations of the organization. EDs are in positions to exercise significant discretion in the way(s) their RANPOs operate. Any model that does not include EDs would be lacking.

The new model, with its focus on social theology, suggests several things. Examination of the RANPOs working in the migration policy space should reveal that social theology has significant influence on the behavior of these organizations. A number of expectations are outlined in Figure 1. which is a simple diagram of a model for understanding the politics of migration RANPOs.

Denominations have theological orientations, and they have social theologies. As noted before, social theologies are defined by Guth et al. (1997) as beliefs which link theology to public affairs. While their model for

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | SOCIAL THEOLOGY | |
|  | | LEFT | RIGHT |
| THEOLOGICAL  ORIENTATION | LEFT | RANPO | NO RANPO |
| RIGHT | RANPO | NO RANPO |

|  |
| --- |
| RANPOs |
| Executive Directors  Governing Bodies (Boards)  Mission Statements  Denominational  Affiliation  Funding Sources  Legal Considerations  Denominational  Accountability |
|  |

Figure 1. Revised Model

understanding attitudes projects the idea that social theologies are determined by theological orientations, this model does not.

Denominations of any theological orientation can have a wide variety of beliefs which link their theology to matters of public affairs. If denominations are willing to make the significant number of decisions necessary to create a RANPO, it is exhibiting a left-leaning social theology by definition. Activist social theologies accept the need for structural solutions to structural problems or what can be termed a liberal social strategy for change. The creation and maintenance of a RANPO to implement theological preferences of denomination is the first step toward political behavior in a public policy space.

The context in which the social theology becomes more pronounced is expressed in a number of contextual variables including the roles of the executive directors, the roles of the governing bodies, the mission statements of the organization, the denominational affiliation, the funding sources, legal considerations, and denominational structures which make the organization accountable to it.

In this model, revised to study the political behavior of RANPOs in a public policy area, the contextual variables listed above (and shown in the second box in the figure) are very significant variables. Executive directors may see themselves as bureaucrats or entreprenuers. Governing bodies may only set policies, or they may have a hand in day to day operations. Mission statements may be derived from denominational policies and written in stone, or they may be flexible, working documents reflecting more of the local organization’s desires than those of the denomination. Funding sources may be multiple or single, designated or unrestricted, national or local. The legal constraints of the nonprofit form vary some by size of organization and they may be perceived as restrictive or enabling. Denominations vary considerably in terms of accountability. Some RANPOs may be directly accountable to denominational structures, while others may be virtually autonomous. The combination of these factors produces considerable variation in the behavior of religious actors and groups engaged in public policy.

Given the variability embraced in this model, a number of expectations emerge. First, only a few of the denominations in the United States will be found in the list of denominations working in the migration policy area. In fact, only a small percentage of the total number of denominations should be expected to have said “yes” to the long list of decision points needed to create and maintain nonprofits translating theology into a ministry of goods and services provision in this or any other specific public policy area.

Second, the possible permutations from the combination of theology, social theology, and political agendas are many. It is possible that denominations on the theological “right” and the theological “left” could be working in the migration area. This observation is reinforced by the Guth et al.’s (1997) statement that “neither communitarian nor individualist social theology is inherently political or apolitical” (Guth et al., 14). It should be reasonable to expect to find one or more denominations with high levels of orthodoxy having an institutional presence in the migration area. In these cases, social theology which is the role of the church in the world, has a reflexive effect: out of the desire of the group or small community shaping the RANPO, theological rationales will emerge.

Third, because of the many choices that can be made, the denominations which have affiliated nonprofits will manifest their theologies in different ways. Because denominations vary according to theology, the size and scope of activity within the policy area should vary by denomination.

Fourth, denominations can be considered to be communities, some of them large and some of them small. The larger the denomination, the more heterogeneity should be expected. Even large, generally liberal denominations like the Methodists have sizeable conservative renewal groups. Size alone should be sufficient to create diversity among the RANPOs with the same denominational affiliation.

Fifth, the decision tree necessary for a denomination to construct a nonprofit in a field of public policy is large, and it has many forks in the branches. Unlike the countervailing politics of interest groups characteristic of many policy areas or the values contests characteristic of the culture war politics, the RANPOs in a policy area which provide human services should not be expected to oppose one another.

Sixth, RANPOs should be expected to exhibit different political agendas and differing levels of political activism.

To explore these expectations, it is necessary to collect and analyze data. It is to this task that I now turn in the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Chapter IV is devoted to reporting the methodology employed in this study. In previous chapters I have explored social theology as a concept relevant to the study of the influence of religion in a public policy area, and I have constructed a simple model suitable for studying the politics of RANPOs. More information is needed to fully explore the relationship of social theology to the political behaviors of denominations working in public policy. In this chapter I explain which kinds of data have been collected, why, and how this data will be analyzed.

The questions to be addressed focus upon which denominations have an institutional presence in the public policy area of migration and why. That is, who are the players? What do the sponsoring denominations have in common? How are they different? What is the size and scope of activities of these denominations collectively and individually? What does the list of players indicate about the political behavior of denominations in a public policy space? Do they belong to one party or the other of Guth et al.’s (1997) two-party model? If not, why would denominations from both parties be engaged in similar political activities?

Examination of the religious groups and institutions working within a particular public policy area and examination of the size and scope of activities should reveal several things if social theology is a major component. First, differences in the forms of engagement (for example, provision of goods and services) are to be expected. If denominations vary by theology, and vary perhaps even more by social theology, the denominations should manifest their activities in different ways.

Second, some denominations should be expected to have no institutional presence in the policy area whatsoever. If denomination X can be characterized by the extreme right wing of Guth et al.’s two-party description, it would belong to the Evangelical or even Fundamentalist tradition, express an individualist worldview, be more concerned with vertical relationships, be focused on individual salvation, and so on.

Denominations bearing these kinds of classifications should not be expected to have a presence in the migration policy area. Even strong activist clergy in these denominations would have difficulty mustering the resources of their respective denominations to establish and maintain organizations to provide goods and services to migrants. However, it might be feasible for activist leaders within similar denominations to work together, ecumenically, to produce agencies to provide goods and services.

Third, if most of the denominations are providing a very similar array of goods and services through RANPOs, then one would expect them to be primarily those exhibiting the social gospel or liberation social theologies. According to the two-party model, one would expect to find generally left-of-center denominations. According to the revised model, one should expect some participation from so-called right-wing denominations.

The first major data source employed in this study is the Immigrant and Refugee Resource Directory 1990-1991 (IRRD). The IRRD contains the most comprehensive data available for describing the activities of denominations working with migrants. There are more recent editions, but this one describes in greater detail and variety what goods and services were being provided by RANPOs at the time of publication. The IRRD lists 958 organizations providing goods and services to migrants.

The IRRD includes information about location, types of services, budget, religious affiliation, and the date the organization was established. In most cases, a brief descriptive narrative about the organization is included in the publication. The description usually represents

self-reporting by the organizations. The directory also includes information regarding primary affiliation of the organization.

Organizational affiliations include: governmental, denominational, ethnic (no known religious affiliation), ecumenical, legal, and none. The directory indicates thirteen possible kinds of services that can be provided. Data from the compendium were coded and analyzed. Coding was achieved as follows. If the organization provided a particular service, such as community education, the entry was coded “1”. If not, it was coded “0”. This simple method facilitated use of the data to create new variables that will be discussed as they are presented. The percentage of organizations in each affiliation that provide each service indicated was also calculated.

The second major data source is a publication of the INS Outreach Office of The Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. Every few years, the INS produces an updated directory of organizations, mostly RANPOs, which come in contact with the INS. I was able to obtain a photocopy of the updated but unpublished in-house edition in early 1997. It is used as a combination telephone and address directory for INS personnel. This document is known as the Directory of Voluntary Agencies. The organizations listed in the directory are called “VOLAGS,” for short, both by the INS and many international migration organizations. A comparison of the VOLAGs from the directory and the RANPOs of the IRRD compendium reveals a very high degree of correspondence. The entries for three states in the IRRD and the VOLAG directory were compared, and the lists are very similar. An agency may have changed its name or address, but supporting information indicated that both data sources were very similar upon examination. Thus, the VOLAG directory supported the conclusion that the IRRD is probably the best secondary source of data available.

A third major data source is on-site interviews I conducted with 22 executive directors and staff members of RANPOs in Texas. Most are located along the Texas-Mexico border in the area known as the Lower Rio Grande Valley (Valley). The need for the interviews, their design, and relevance to this study will be discussed later.

In this section I describe the types of data reported in the IRRD. Each organization reports the goods and services it provides. The first variable is advocacy. The IRRD says advocacy "refers to supporting equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment.” This variable reveals information about the attitudes of the organizations toward the INS, Border Patrol, and other organizations and personnel which provide opportunities for and treatment of migrants. It also indicates possible positions taken in the communities served toward other organizations, including other churches and congregations. All of the types of organizations listed in the IRRD provide advocacy services. Governmental agencies provide by far the lowest percentage. On average, half as many governmental organizations provide advocacy services as the other types of organizations.

The second variable is community education. This refers to “lobbying, workshops, and public awareness programs.” One of the major provisions of the 501(C)(3) status for organizations is educational activities. Mailings to membership groups, testimony before legislators, and other activities are permissible under the educational provisions of the C3s so long as the percentage of organizational revenues committed to these activities is not "substantial.” Legal opinions have been written creating some working guidelines, but the term “substantial” has never been fully defined and/or explained by the IRS. Forty-one percent of all organizations provide some sort of community education.

The third variable is cultural services. This "refers to programs/activities to share/preserve cultural values.” Forty-one percent of the organizations provide these services, but it appears that the one hundred ethnic organizations in the list account for this high average among organizations. Seventy-eight of these organizations provide cultural services. Only one of the 55 federal organizations provides cultural services for migrants. Twelve percent of the states provide some services. RANPOs in general offer higher levels of cultural services to migrants than governmental organizations. The data indicate that very few legal organizations provide cultural services. RANPOs seem to be a natural place for migrants to seek cultural services, especially as most RANPOs have a network of local congregations with which to work.

The fourth goods and services variable is economic. The IRRD says this "refers to jobs programs, counseling, and development". Approximately one-third all of the organizations provide these services. A higher percentage of governmental organizations provide economic services than denominational, ecumenical, ethnic, legal, and non-affiliated organizations.

The fifth variable data compiled by the IRRD is education, which "refers to academic and general training programs." Forty-four percent of federal and 56% of state affiliated organizations provide some kind of education program. Overall, only 31% percent of the organizations provide education services.

The sixth variable is health services. Health care is expensive. Only fifteen percent of all the organizations provide health services to migrants. Federal and state affiliated organizations provide health services more frequently than RANPOs. Only one percent of the legal organizations provide health services. INS data indicate that migrants use fewer services over all, including health, than the general population in the U.S. Refugee resettlement programs and immigrant sponsorship programs require many families to provide basic funding for health services.

The seventh IRRD variable is legal services, including “court representation, legal advice, and paralegal assistance.” Most of the legal organizations provide these services with 94% of these organizations reporting legal service provision. Governmental legal service provision is low, and RANPOs characteristically are moderate to low legal service providers.

The eighth goods and services variables is religious services. Religious services “refers to a host of religious activities including provision of worship services.” None of the governmental entities provide religious services for migrants. Perhaps unexpectedly, only between one third and one half of the denominational RANPOs and ecumenical RANPOs provide religious services.

The ninth variable collected in the IRRD is research. Research “refers to data gathering/analysis activities." Very few of the organizations of any kind provide research services. Research is used in a variety of ways to help migrants. Migrants vary as to motivation to leave a country of origin to enter the United States, but the U.S., as the country of destination, bases most of its policies on family reunification. Successful applicants frequently need genealogical information to demonstrate family ties. Refugee and asylum applicants must provide documentation of identity plus justifications of fear of persecution or loss of life if the applicant were to remain in the country of origin. Once data are gathered for one migrant or one family, it is easier to keep this data in a centralized area. The RANPO or legal organization that either represents refugees or asylum applicants or provides advocacy services can access a central database quickly through electronic communication. Few organizations provide this service, but it would certainly not be necessary for all organizations to regularly engage in this activity. Some assistance is available through the internet. Numerous web sites exist to assist in researching finer points of the law, regulations, rulings, and recent changes.

The tenth variable is sanctuary services. Sanctuary “refers to provision of sanctuary services or information and referral to providers." No federal or state organizations provide sanctuary. Seventy-three percent of the local organizations provide sanctuary. Out of all the organizations, only nine percent report providing sanctuary. Four denominations (Brethren, Disciples of Christ, Mennonite, and Unitarian) report that at least 80% of their organizations provide sanctuary. Together, these represent only 22 of the 958 organizations. Only two of the legal organizations (three percent of the total) report that they provide sanctuary. It is likely that some organizations understated their participation in sanctuary service provision as this would call attention to possible legal liabilities.

The eleventh variable is social services. As reported by the IRRD, this appears almost to be a catch-all category. According to the IRRD, social services “refers to emergency services, casework management, substance abuse programs, counseling, housing assistance, orientation/ acculturation, information and referral, and placement and resettlement." Over two-thirds of the organizations report that they provide social services.

From the data in the IRRD, I have created another statistical variable I call “average” which reports the average number of services provided by the organizations within the respective affiliation. Finally, I present the number of organizations, “N”, reported in the IRRD for each of the affiliations. As a group, RANPOs provide a wider array of goods and services than governmental entities. Ecumenical organizations provide the highest average number of services of all organizational affiliations.

Additional data were assembled from the IRRD. These are reported in Chapter V. They include the average budget, average number of staff, and the average age of the institutions reported by affiliation.

The IRRD provides a great deal of information about the size and scope of activities of RANPOs working in the migration policy area. It also provides clear evidence of differences between denominations as to levels of public activity. The data do not tell us much about the inner workings of these organizations or the relevance and influence of social theologies to these organizations. Additional kinds of information are needed to further explore the concept of social theology.

Neither the IRRD nor the VOLAG directory provides an exhaustive listing of agencies working in migration. Clergy and laity form associations, committees, and various kinds of networks which address issues relevant to particular target populations. Small groups often provide goods and services, though on a smaller scale than the larger organizations listed in the directories. Some organizations are not listed because they choose to avoid contact with the immigration authorities and the media. For instance, individuals, congregations, and some organizations providing sanctuary or underground transportation services have significant incentives to avoid public or official exposure.

In order to gather more data about RANPOs, I conducted twenty-two on-site interviews with EDs and staff members of RANPOs in Texas. Most are located in or near border or port cities. The majority are located within the Harlingen, Texas, Boarder Patrol District. The largest INS detention facility in the U.S. is located near the small community of Bayview, Texas. Many of the RANPOs are located here because of the location of this facility where deportation flights originate. Persons processed in Bayview may have been apprehended anywhere in the U.S., the majority being those who have over-stayed their visas. The countries of origin of the persons detained there are a cross-section of the world’s countries. On a given day, there may be people there from 25 different countries.

The kinds of legal situations of the detainees are very similar across the U.S. Thus, these 22 RANPOs are representative of the clientele and RANPOs across the U.S.

Some data were gathered by telephone, usually following an interview. Clergy and paraprofessionals were interviewed. All of the interviewees were executive directors of RANPOs except for two persons who were “paid volunteers” working as part of the staff of two of the RANPOs whose executive directors were also interviewed. The two paid volunteers, one of them a Mennonite and the other a member of the Church of the Brethren, were contract volunteers who worked for the respective agencies for a period of one year. The RANPOs paid each approximately $6,000 per year for living expenses. All of the clergy interviewed were ordained, and the paraprofessionals all had significant education/training and experience. All interviewees had at least a bachelor’s degree.

Twenty EDs were interviewed. Ten of the RANPOs were Roman Catholic, three were Disciples of Christ, two were Presbyterians, and one each was ecumenical, Quaker, Lutheran, and United Church of Christ. The interviews included seventeen open-ended questions. Below, I list the questions which were asked relative to the organization and to the role of the executive directors of the organizations in the study.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What are you/your organization doing in migration work?

2. Why are you/your organization doing these things?

3. Are you affiliated with a religious organization?

4. Is your organization religiously affiliated?

1. Do you/your organization network with religious organizations?
2. Is your organization a nonprofit corporation?

7. What goods and services do you provide?

8. What is the annual budget of your organization?

9. What is your educational/experience background?

10. What are the theological rationales for this ministry/organization?

11. Are there particular scriptural texts which support the work being done here?

12. Does your organization have a mission statement?

13. Do you receive collegial support in your work?

14. What strategies for change in public policy are being employed?

15. In what ways do you/your organization engage the public?

16. Which service populations do you target?

17. What would you change about migration policy?

One of the organizations is primarily a legal service organization. Two focus primarily on advocacy. Most of the others provide a variety of goods and services to migrants. Because the organizations vary in their mission, the questions had to be general enough in nature that they could be asked of each of the organizations. The questions also had to be specific enough to address the focus of this inquiry.

For instance, regardless of the primary function of the organization, all of the organizations were known prior to the interviews to have some religious affiliation, and the questions asked of the executive directors were designed to inquire about how the religious affiliation influenced the operations of the organization. EDs were asked what goods and services were provided by their organizations so that the list could be compared to the goods and services list in the IRRD. In the cases where the RANPO EDs who were interviewed were also listed in the IRRD, the information from the interviews and the compendium could be compared. The IRRD data appears to be accurate in these cases.

The interview questions were designed to: explore the work of nonprofit organizations in the migration policy area; to inquire about the extent, nature, and role of religious affiliation; to assess general information about the size and scope of activities; and to explore the executive director's perception of the appropriate role of the organization within the policy area.

I interviewed all of the executive directors of the immigration and refugee organizations of any size in the Valley. All of these interviews were granted because a number of conditions were met. First, I was acquainted with a few executive directors dating back to the late 1980s when I made two trips to the Valley with a colleague, the then president of the Texas Conference of Churches. Second, I was personally and professionally associated with the Cuban-born executive director of one refugee shelter who had been naturalized as a U.S. citizen in the 1970s. He had been heavily engaged in migrant ministry in the Valley since 1979 when the massive migrations from Central America began. Third, both the past president of the Texas Conference of Churches and the Cuban-born director made introductory phone calls and wrote letters assuring the interviewees that I would not jeopardize either their position or their operations by inappropriate use of the data gathered. Fourth, I was introduced as a pastor of a congregation that supported refugee ministry through agencies of my own denomination. Fifth, directors were assured that the interviews were for academic purposes.

Some of the organizations and personalities in the organizations had been profiled in local papers; some executive directors had previously given print, radio, and television interviews before. However, extreme secrecy was required in a few cases. A few directors had to be assured more than once that information given in an interview would be used with the utmost discretion. For instance, there is a shelter in the Valley known as the Refuge (not its real name). In August 1987, I interviewed and photographed a number of persons in the Refuge which is literally a socialist enclave or "compound.” I was allowed into the facility, past armed guards, only because one Roman Catholic deacon and one Disciples pastor had previously provided a number of one hundred pound sacks of rice to feed up to 250 people each day at this shelter. At the time of that interview, I was only the third "journalist" to ever have been allowed into the shelter. At the time of that interview, only Sandanistas from Central America were welcomed. Upon my return for this interview in 1996, I had to promise to exercise caution in how information was shared. Many times I was asked to turn off my cassette tape recorder to get answers to sensitive questions, usually involving what some would perceive to be illegal activities including sanctuary activity and the regular transportation of undocumented persons into the interior of the U.S. In my opinion, these interviews could have been obtained by only a few persons who were very well connected to the informal network of executive directors of agencies in the Valley.

Once the ground rules were agreed upon, the interviews proceeded. Much to my surprise, I was able to pursue every line of questioning desired.

All interviews were conducted on site, where the directors worked. This meant not only that offices were visited, but also shelter spaces, parish facilities, Border Patrol facilities at river crossing points, migrant crossing points along the Rio Grande, and INS courtrooms where migrant processing takes place. While this was not a true participant-observer approach, the host-guest model provided me with opportunities to observe and record a number of impressions that telephone or office interviews would not have provided.

All of the questions were open-ended discussion questions. Almost every question on the list was followed up by explanatory comments and/or follow-up questions prompted by the prior responses of the interviewees. In every case, the interviews were recorded on both note paper and microcassette. Following the interviews, all but two of the tapes were transcribed by hand by myself, allowing me to insert notes as to where we were relative to facilities, what kinds of interruptions were experienced, and my impressions of the interviewee's emotions. The two tapes not transcribed were those of RANPO staff members who were not EDs. The resulting documents include approximately 300 hand-written pages of notes. Below, the list of questions has been expanded to include some of the typical follow up questions and rationales for asking the questions. All of the names of the organizations and the executive directors have been given aliases to protect confidentiality.

Question one: What are you/your organization doing in migration work? This question goes to the mission of the organization. What is it? Why does the organization exist? What is the purpose of the organization? What work is currently being done? What is being accomplished? It also reflects the size and scope of the organization. Several of the questions were asked in such a way as to get at two responses in the same question and answer period. That is, the question was asked of the organization and of the executive director. In several cases, the personal influence of the executive director has been sufficient over time to substantially shape the current emphases of the organization and its normal operations. For instance, three of the directors were instrumental in the formation of their organizations more than twenty years ago as part of both personal and denominational responses to the presenting situation of large numbers of refugees crossing the borders en route from Central America to large metropolitan areas away from the border.

Question two: Why are you/your organization doing these things? The second question is asked as a way to fish for the theological connections/understandings of the executive directors. Directors were expected to be able to link the practices of the organization to some theological construct of the sponsoring denominations or the network of service providers that financed the operations of the organization. Follow-up questions included inquiries into any theological rationales and/or justifications that support the work of the organization.

Question three: Are you/your organization affiliated with a religious organization? This question was asked of the executive directors to trace lines of correspondence between the role of the executive director and the denomination. In what ways does the director perceive him or herself to be a part of the denomination's ministry? Is the director credentialed in a way that connects the director to the denomination? Is the director active in a local congregation?

Question four: Is your organization religiously affiliated? This question is direct and self-explanatory in one sense, but in another, the question and the various follow-up questions reflect a number of other areas. How and when was the organization founded? Who started it? How long has the director been a part of the organization? Was it started by a denomination prior to the director's involvement? Does the denomination of affiliation have much say in the day to day operations or the long-term goals? Does the denomination exercise significant influence in the governance?

Question five: Do you/your organization network with religious organizations? This question and related

follow-up questions explore the influence and resources of religious organizations and explicitly denominational organizations. This question was also asked to explore the religious environment and context of the organization. Virtually all of the organizations network with other organizations.

Question six: Is your organization a nonprofit corporation? This question is related to organizational form. Does the organization have its own 501(c)(3) status with the IRS? Does the organization work under the auspices of a parent organization such as a denomination with its own 501(c)(3)?

Question seven: What goods and services do you provide? This question is designed to gather information that can be used to match the executive director's reporting with the reporting of the Immigrant and Refugee Resource Directory (if the organization is listed in the directory). Further, follow-up questions are taken from the IRRD to facilitate the director's reporting of the goods and services provided.

Question eight: What is the annual budget of your organization? This question refers to the size and scope of the organization and to the financing of the organization. Do the affiliated religious institutions participate in financing the organization? To what extent do they participate? What percentages of the budget are directly attributable to religious persons/organizations? Does the organization receive grants and contracts for service provision? If so, from which organizations and under what circumstances? Are funds designated for specific purposes, such as providing food, shelter, salary, transportation?

Question nine: What is your educational/experience background? This question deals with professional socialization. Was the director educated at a denominational institution related to the organization? If so, where and when? What is the employment experience of the director? Many directors speak of their spiritual journey which brought them to their current vocation or calling to be engaged in this kind of work. As this kind of conversation is a commonplace in religious organizations, the familiarity and comfort level of answering this question refers to the feel of the director for possessing a sense of vocation for the work being done in the organization.

Question ten: What are the theological rationales for this ministry/organization? All of the directors expressed an eagerness to answer this question. They all clearly thought of their work as a ministry of the organization.

Question eleven: Are there particular scripture texts that are used to support the work being done here? Because sacred writing is a major influence in the lives of religious people, occupies a special role in the development of theology, and contributes to the religious practices of denominations, this was a particularly revealing question. All of the executive directors in the Valley were aware of the contribution and the significance of scripture. The question was used to inquire about the theology of the organization as well as the personal theology of the executive director. All directors were familiar and comfortable with this question.

Question twelve: Does your organization have a specific mission statement? This question goes to the heart of the discretion that an executive director has to implement the work of the organization. Does the board or the ED set goals, policies, and procedures? Is leadership shared? Does the organization have specific priorities? Does the RANPO exercise governance in such a way that it requires significant accountability by the executive director?

Question thirteen: Do you personally receive collegial support in your work? This question served several purposes. Who does the executive director consider to be colleagues? If religious, how do other religious and denominational colleagues perceive the executive director? Are there psychic benefits that come from this kind of professional work?

Question fourteen: What strategies for change in public policy are being employed by you/your organization? A battery of follow-up questions was asked in relation to this area of inquiry. Does the organization use the media? Does the director attend meetings where INS, Border Patrol, or elected officials will be present? Does the organization support sending volunteers to such meetings? Is there a deliberate effort to mobilize persons to attend meetings where persons can educate themselves on the issues? Is there a concerted effort to mobilize persons to attend meetings and attempt to exercise influence upon officials and public administrationists who work in the policy space?

Question fifteen: In what ways do you/your organization engage the public? This question was asked to see what forms of political engagement the director would name. Does the organization participate in any direct lobbying? Does the executive director or others (staff or volunteers) speak with or directly contact public officials or public administration staff on a regular basis? Do the organizations encourage political activity or political participation among the persons related to their respective organizations? For instance, some are clergy who have as their primary vocation the responsibilities of leading congregations. Do these clergy solicit the assistance of their congregations in political activity? Here, the word “congregation” refers both to local congregations and to the “order” to which the interviewee may belong. The question was also asked to see if the directors were aware of limitations placed upon their activities as nonprofit organizations.

Question sixteen: Which service populations do you target? This question was asked to find out if the organizations serve people other than co-religionists, or if the organizations see their activities to be oriented in any way toward evangelism. Serving co-religionists and seeking to evangelize the clientele of the organization could be seen as self-serving behaviors on the part of the organization. Are the organizations seeking to serve a particular clientele such as a single nationality or religious affiliation? If so, why?

Question seventeen: What would you change about migration policy? The answer to this question could reveal several things. First it can relate to the mission and goals of the organization and become an opportunity for a re-statement. Second, it can speak to the agenda of the organization: is it, as Guth would say, a moral reform agenda or a social justice agenda? Would the executive director be able to distinguish between the two? Thirdly, this question can speak to the political efficacy of the director and/or the organization. Does the director and/or the organization perceive that it is making a difference by doing the work that it is doing? Finally, the question can go deep into the theological basis for the work of the director and the organization while disclosing more about the vocation of the director.

These questions were designed to gather a wealth of data and impressions for the purpose of exploring the research questions. In the next chapter, I present the findings from the data.

Terminology for referring to religious organizations and denominations varies dramatically in the research literature. For the purposes of this study, I will use Guth et al.’s (1997) definitions for the following terms. Theology is "...an understanding of the divine and humanity's relationship to it.” Social theology is the set of "beliefs connecting theology to public affairs" (Guth et al., 1997,8).

The term “migrant” is used throughout this dissertation to refer to all of the INS classifications of a person’s status including immigrants, emigrants, refugees, asylees, and undocumented persons. Migrant is the inclusive and descriptive, hence, preferred term (Wilbanks, 1996, 21).

“Denomination” will refer to any religious body such as the Assemblies of God; the Episcopal Church; the Seventh-Day Adventists; Jews; and so on. The use of the word “church” in this paper is the same as denomination provided that the denomination is Christian.

The word “congregation” has two uses. The primary use of the word congregation refers to a particular group of people of one denomination in one location, hence a local congregation. Congregation is also used in one other way when the reference is to Roman Catholic religious orders. A group of nuns or priests of the same "order" bound together by vocation to a particular kind or style of ministry is referred to as a “congregation.” It might be said, for instance, that "Sister Julia enjoys the support of her congregation." The reference is in this case to the more than 100 sisters of her order organized as a congregation. There are frequently many congregations in the same order. I will clarify usage when appropriate.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS FROM COMPENDIUM DATA

In this chapter, I report data from the IRRD (1990), and I discuss findings from this compendium of migrant organizations. I find that there is a relatively small number of denominations in the migration policy area, and I find that the denominations represent widely divergent faith traditions. Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, and Protestant organizations are present. Both Fundamentalist and Liberal Protestants have an institutional presence. The goods and services provided by the organizations differ in significant ways. Collectively, the budgets of these organizations are significant. I present data demonstrating that the creation and maintenance of these nonprofits is not a recent phenomenon. These findings are consistent with the theoretical expectations presented in Chapter III. The data reported in the IRRD have been organized in tables and aggregated by denominational or other affiliation.

The theological orientations of denominations appear to be of lesser importance than Guth et al. (1997) suggest. There are no direct connections between theological orientations, social theologies, and political behaviors.

TABLE 2 lists the sixteen denominations with RANPOs working in migration in the United States according to the IRRD. Beside this list are the classifications of these denominations by the ten scholars who have classified the most denominations. A quick look both down and across the table reveals that most, if not all, of the possible classifications of Protestant denominations have organizations working in the migration policy area. There are liberal, non-fundamentalist, moderate, conservative, orthodox, and fundamentalist denominations represented in this work. In addition, there are denominations whose classifications vary. And there appears to be agreement on the part of those who classify denominations. Though the nomenclature differs, and the number of possible classifications employed by each scholar differs, each denomination appears to be classified rather consistently by scholars.

The scholars cited by Smith (1990) classify the Church of the Brethren, Mennonites, and Seventh Day Adventists as Fundamentalist denominations. They all have organizations

Table 2. Denominational Classification Schemes

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| American Baptist |  | N |  | O | C |  |  |  |  |  |
| The Church of the Brethren Church |  | F |  |  |  | C | M | F |  |  |
| Buddhist |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Disciples of Christ | N | N | L |  | M | M | M | F | F | C |
| Episcopal | N |  | L | L | L | L |  |  |  | N |
| Jewish |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lutheran | N |  | C |  |  |  |  |  |  | N |
| Mennonite | F | F |  |  | F |  |  |  |  |  |
| Methodist | N |  |  | L | L | L |  |  | L | N |
| Presbyterian | N |  | L |  | M |  |  |  | L | N |
| Quaker | N | N | L | L |  |  | M | N | F |  |
| Roman Catholic |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Seventh Day Adventist | F | F | C | O | F | F | F | F | F |  |
| Southern Baptist | F | F |  | O |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Unitarian | N | V | L | L |  | L | L | N |  |  |
| U. Church of Christ | N | V | L | L |  | L | L | N |  |  |

Codes: C=conservative, F=Fundamentalist, L=Liberal, M=Moderate, N=Not Fundamentalist or Not Conservative, O=Orthodox, V=Varies

Source: Table adapted from Tom Smith (1990).

Notes: The ten column numbers are for presentation purposes only. They indicate the ten scholars in Smith’s study that classified the most denominations. They are arranged from the first column to the tenth column according to the number of the denominations in this study which were classified by the scholars. Empty cells in the table indicate that the scholar classifying denominations in that column did not classify the denomination. Since Smith reports only the classifications of Protestant denominations, there are no classifications for Buddhist, Jewish, or Roman Catholic denominations.

working in the migration policy area. Reading across the table, the liberal Unitarian Church and the United Church of Christ were rated by the ten scholars in exactly the same way. They, too, have organizations working in this area.

There are Buddhist, Jewish, Roman Catholic, and Protestant denominations reported working in migration through RANPOs. But there is no apparent connection to one type of Protestant denomination such as mainline, evangelical, or the so-called Peace Protestants (Quaker, Mennonite, Brethren). The denominations with migration RANPOs do not fit into any one particular family or cluster of denominations. In terms of theological orientation, both Fundamentalist and Liberal denominations have RANPOs in the policy area. Smith’s (1990) observation that “categorizing denominations along the fundamentalist-liberal continuum” remains the best predictor of a variety of variables used by social scientists studying religion does not hold in the migration case. And to the degree that Guth et al.’s (1997) two-party model is reduced to a similar continuum, it too fails to capture what appears to be the case as far as this public policy area is concerned. Guth et al. (1997) argue that theological orientations, social theologies, and political agendas typically align together along a left-right continuum, which is consonant with Smith’s summary of classification schema. However, if the creation and maintenance of RANPOs is to be understood as an expression of communitarian social theology, then the theological orientation classification typology is insufficient. There are migration RANPOs with left and right denominational affiliations.

Several denominations of size in the United States are notably absent from the list. On the Evangelical Protestant side, the Assemblies of God, the Church of the Nazarene, the Churches of Christ, and the Christian Church have no presence indicated in the IRRD. There are no predominantly ethnic minority denominations indicated such as the African Methodist Episcopal Church. However, there are one hundred ethnic organizations reported in the IRRD. Presumably these are not religiously based. The one possible exception to this observation would be that of Buddhists.

There are also liberal denominations that have no presence. There are no Cumberland Presbyterian organizations, no Unity Church organizations. There are no organizations affiliated with the Pentecostal tradition, and a notable absence is the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (Mormons or LDS). The LDS is a denomination that traditionally has offered a very wide array of social and human services to its members.

Self-interest in the form of serving co-religionists appears to have little influence upon whether or not a denomination would have a presence in the policy area. Before the Christian Church movement divided into three different denominations, the LDS and the congregations of the Christian Church were considered to be the two largest indigenous Christian denominations in the United States. The LDS has no presence among the denominations in the IRRD, and the LDS has more church members outside of the U.S. than it has within the U.S. On the other hand, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)-the liberal denomination growing out of the Christian Church

movement-has almost no congregations outside of the U.S. According to Church World Service, this denomination resettles more refugees per capita than any of the other denominations affiliated with CWS.

I now examine the types of service provided by these institutions. Table 3 summarizes the goods and services provided by 958 organizations in the U.S.

Table 3 lists six different types of organizations in the left column: governmental, denominational, ecumenical,

Table 3. Percentage of Organizations Providing Service by Affiliation

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Affiliation | ADV | COM | CUL | ECO | EDU | HEA | LEG | REL | RES | SAN | SOC | AVG | N |
| Governmental |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Federal | 38 | 2 | 2 | 58 | 44 | 60 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60 | 2.66 | 55 |
| State | 38 | 12 | 12 | 68 | 56 | 53 | 12 | 0 | 18 | 0 | 74 | 3.68 | 34 |
| Local | 33 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 13 | 7 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 73 | 7 | 1.80 | 15 |
| Denominational |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| American Baptist | 100 | 33 | 0 | 33 | 0 | 33 | 33 | 100 | 0 | 66 | 66 | 5.00 | 3 |
| Brethren | 100 | 33 | 0 | 33 | 33 | 66 | 33 | 33 | 0 | 100 | 33 | 4.67 | 3 |
| Buddhist | 33 | 0 | 66 | 33 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 2.66 | 6 |
| Disciples of Christ | 100 | 100 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 50 | 0 | 100 | 50 | 4.50 | 2 |
| Episcopal | 79 | 36 | 50 | 21 | 29 | 7 | 29 | 57 | 14 | 0 | 93 | 4.43 | 14 |
| Jewish | 68 | 25 | 56 | 31 | 19 | 7 | 25 | 44 | 15 | 6 | 88 | 4.01 | 95 |
| Lutheran | 87 | 31 | 62 | 31 | 28 | 8 | 33 | 64 | 10 | 8 | 95 | 4.67 | 39 |
| Mennonite | 60 | 40 | 20 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 60 | 20 | 0 | 80 | 60 | 3.40 | 5 |
| Methodist | 89 | 78 | 44 | 22 | 33 | 0 | 33 | 44 | 22 | 22 | 66 | 5.00 | 9 |
| Presbyterian | 83 | 50 | 17 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 17 | 17 | 67 | 3.17 | 6 |
| Quaker | 60 | 60 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 20 | 60 | 20 | 3.20 | 10 |
| Roman Catholic | 77 | 35 | 40 | 33 | 28 | 12 | 43 | 41 | 13 | 5 | 91 | 4.34 | 173 |
| Seventh Day Adventist | 50 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 50 | 0 | 25 | 100 | 2.50 | 4 |
| Southern Baptist | 38 | 19 | 44 | 19 | 19 | 13 | 19 | 69 | 13 | 0 | 81 | 3.44 | 16 |
| Unitarian | 67 | 58 | 17 | 8 | 17 | 8 | 8 | 33 | 0 | 100 | 8 | 3.33 | 12 |
| United Church of Christ | 75 | 25 | 25 | 0 | 25 | 0 | 50 | 25 | 25 | 0 | 75 | 3.25 | 4 |
| Ecumenical | 80 | 58 | 60 | 29 | 42 | 14 | 44 | 48 | 10 | 15 | 91 | 5.07 | 100 |
| Ethnic | 76 | 59 | 78 | 49 | 44 | 19 | 35 | 14 | 26 | 4 | 82 | 4.16 | 100 |
| Legal | 49 | 42 | 3 | 1 | 9 | 1 | 94 | 3 | 18 | 3 | 15 | 2.61 | 67 |
| No Affiliation | 75 | 57 | 40 | 31 | 36 | 8 | 49 | 5 | 25 | 4 | 63 | 4.16 | 183 |
| Mean | 69 | 41 | 41 | 37 | 31 | 15 | 39 | 27 | 16 | 9 | 73 | 4.10 | 958 |

Coding Notes:

ADV=advocacy Advocacy refers to supporting equal opportunity and fair and equitable treatment.

COM=community education Community education refers to lobbying, workshops, and public policy awareness programs.

CUL=cultural Cultural refers to programs/activities to share/preserve cultural values.

ECO=economic Economic refers to jobs programs, counseling, and development.

Table 3. Continued.

EDU=education Education refers to academic and general training programs.

HEA=health Health refers to medical, dental, etc.

LEG=legal Legal refers to legal services, including court representation, legal advice and paralegal assistance.

REL=religion Religion refers to a host of religious activities including provision of worship services.

RES=research Research refers to data gathering/analysis activities primarily to support claims of migrants in the courts.

SAN=sanctuary Sanctuary refers to provision of sanctuary or information and referral.

SOC=social Social refers to emergency services, casework management, substance abuse programs, counseling, housing assistance, orientation/acculturation, information and referral, placement and resettlement, etc.

AVG=average Average is the arithmetic mean number of services provided by affiliation.

N=number N is the number of reported organizations by affiliation.

Mean is the percentage of all reporting organizations providing the service indicated.

ethnic, legal, and no known affiliation. Column headings are abbreviations for services defined in the notes. The definitions of these services have been discussed previously. In each cell of the table, the percentage of the reporting organizations providing the service is indicated. “0” indicates missing or non-reported data. The next to the last column marked by “AVG” indicates the average number of services provided by organizations by affiliation. The last column marked “N” is the number of organizations reporting by affiliation.

An example of reading across TABLE 3 indicates that there are 173 RANPOs that are affiliated with the Roman Catholic denomination. The organizations on average provide 4.34 services out of a possible total of 11. Seventy-seven percent of Catholic RANPOs provide advocacy services, 35% community education, 40% cultural services, 33% provide economic benefits, 28% provide education, 12% health services, 43% legal, 41% religious, 13% research services, 5% sanctuary, and 91% provide social services.

An example of reading down TABLE 3 indicates that among the reporting RANPOs, the average number of goods and services provided range from a low of 2.50 (Seventh Day Adventists) to a high of 5.07 (Ecumenical). One hundred percent of the Church of the Brethren, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Unitarian churches provide sanctuary services of one kind or another.

Analysis reveals that sixteen different denominations have an institutional presence in migration. The two denominations with the largest number of RANPOs are: Roman Catholic and Jewish. Together they have 268 RANPOs. The ecumenical, ethnic, and nonsectarian RANPOs total 383. Together these five affiliations account for over

two-thirds of all the RANPOs. RANPOs provide, on average, at least four types of goods and services. The ecumenical and ethnic organizations generally provide slightly higher levels of service than those organizations affiliated with a single denomination. Federal, state, and local governments provide a much narrower range of services than the religious groups. In the descriptive narratives in the compendium, several of the ethnic organizations indicate provision of religious services. However, unless the affiliation was explicitly ecumenical or an identifiable denomination, it was not included as religiously affiliated. The total number of religious nonprofits may be understated.

Some of the data are skewed. This is particularly true of American Baptists, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and the United Church of Christ denominations. These three denominations work with Church World Service (CWS), an agency of the National Council of Churches and Churches of Christ. These denominations participate with CWS, have very small organizations, and they rely heavily upon CWS to provide the organizational services provided independently by other denominations. Thus some of the influence these denominations manifest is included within the ecumenical category. In addition, since only these denominations’ national offices are indicated in the compendium, the work of sub-national organizations and congregations is probably underrepresented.

The data from TABLE 3 tell us that the denominations’ RANPOs perceive different needs of migrants. At least the RANPOs reflect different organizational priorities for meeting the needs of migrants.

The IRRD also reported (data not shown) the target populations of migrants served by the RANPOs by country or region of origin. None of the RANPOs indicated preferences; only ethnic organizations indicated preferences.

Together, these data suggest that social theology is a stronger determinant of the organizational efforts of denominations than their theological orientations. How these organizations perceive their role(s) in the world appears to have a more critical influence than their general perceptions of things human and things divine.

More information derived from the IRRD is presented below in Table 4. This discussion includes expenditures in the public policy area of migration by denominations and the age of the organizations.

Denominations, like other political entities, often make political pronouncements, take positions, and express normative judgment on issues. They do not always fund efforts to implement these sets of beliefs. Both the budgets and the ages of the RANPOs in this study tell us that the denominations are serious about the plight of migrants, and that the creation and maintenance of RANPOs in this policy area is not a recent phenomenon. These data are indirect measures of the denominations’ beliefs about public affairs.

Data are presented for each denomination in the table, with missing data appearing in only four locations, twice in the row for Disciples of Christ, once in the row for Southern Baptist which is an anomaly of reporting to the IRRD, and once in the Unitarian row. The Methodist organizations may be fairly typical of all the RANPOs. The average budget of the Methodists’ organizations is approximately $150,000 per year. The average age of the Methodist RANPOs is 22.5 years as of 1990.

The budgets do not appear to be particularly large, but multiplying the average budget of one denomination’s organizations times the number of organizations reveals

some sense of the total expenditures by each denomination.

Table 4. Average Budget and Age by Affiliation

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Denomination | Budget | Age | N |  |
| American Baptist | 17908 | 43.3 | 3 |  | |
| Brethren | 38046 | 23.3 | 3 |  | |
| Buddhist | 38288 | 10.0 | 6 |  | |
| Disciples of Christ | 0 | 0 | 2 |  | |
| Episcopal | 17214 | 16.0 | 14 |  | |
| Jewish | 256160 | 27.5 | 95 |  | |
| Lutheran | 256669 | 25.0 | 39 |  | |
| Mennonite | 7400 | 15.0 | 5 |  | |
| Methodist | 151333 | 22.5 | 9 |  | |
| Presbyterian | 60099 | 13.3 | 6 |  | |
| Quaker | 33460 | 10.0 | 10 |  | |
| Roman Catholic | 242316 | 26.0 | 173 |  | |
| Seventh Day Adventist | 31250 | 10.0 | 4 |  | |
| Southern Baptist | 1612937 | 21.5 | 16 |  | |
| Unitarian | 0 | 30.0 | 12 |  | |
| U. Church of Christ | 5000 | 50.0 | 4 |  | |
| Ecumenical | 139977 | 15.5 | 100 |  | |

Notes: The IRRD data source reports that the Southern Baptist affiliation total has a high average budget because one state convention reported its entire convention budget of which immigration services is but a small portion. “0” represents missing data.

For instance, Roman Catholic organizations annually spend $242,316 per organization, and there are 173 organizations. Thus, Roman Catholics spend approximately 42 million dollars per year through these organizations. Some organizations have missing data, and it is known that local congregations help provide goods and services. In addition, some of the expenses, often staff, are at least partially paid through related organizations such as the diocese. Accounting for off-budget contributions, missing data, and the pass-through contributions that can and do come through an organization or go directly to recipients in the form of designated money, the total expenditures of Roman Catholic organizations is surely understated.

In order to get a very rough estimate, I made some calculations which probably present a better overall picture than the data in the table. First, I estimated budgets for agencies that did not report budget amounts to the IRRD by taking an average of reporting RANPOs and inserting the average where missing data appeared. Second, having tallied these numbers, I factored in an adjustment for inflation since the 1990 reporting period. These calculations produced a conservative total estimate of approximately $350 million per year for the operations of these organizations.

A number of other factors, as in the case of the Roman Catholics mentioned above, make even this estimate appear to be significantly understated. Intuition and anecdotal evidence suggest that religious groups participating in the sanctuary movement would not be likely to report expenditures to anyone. In light of these kinds of factors, it does not appear to be unreasonable to assume that denominations probably approach spending 500 million dollars annually. O’Neill estimated that expenditures for all kinds of denominational ministries approach 50 billion dollars annually (O’Neill 1989). These figures suggest that approximately one percent of all the monies received by all U.S. denominations goes to the provision of goods and services for migrants in the U.S. through RANPOs. The few denominations participating in this kind of ministry probably spend, on average, more than one percent of their total income to benefit migrants.

The average age of the organization is indicated for each denomination in Table 4. The average age of the Seventh Day Adventist organizations is 10. The four organizations affiliated with the United Church of Christ average 50 years in age. Some of the organizations reported in the IRRD have founding dates extending back to the 1800s. The creation of these organizations can in no way be said to be a recent phenomenon.

There are one hundred organizations in the ecumenical affiliation category. A number of these are known to have affiliations with Church World Service. A growing number of RANPOs affiliated with World Relief appear in the data. These are newcomers to the field of migration. There are more World Relief affiliated organizations reported in the Directory of Voluntary Agencies than in the IRRD. The World Relief organizations are supported primarily by Evangelical Protestants. Ecumenical work, whether of a more liberal or more evangelical bent presents several problems to the church leaders trying to establish organizations. How a denomination sees its role in the world affects the way it cooperates with other denominations. Ecumenism is not a function of theological orientation as much as it is of social theology. Guth et al. note that very liberal clergy often exhibit very moderate “political ecumenical” participation (Guth et al., 1997, 145).

In this century denominations have split over questions of the role of the church and how best to be organized to conduct the work of the church. A notable

example is the Christian Church movement split which resulted not in two, but three denominations: The Church of Christ, the Christian Church and Churches of Christ, and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). The significant, fairly recent, growth of World Relief could represent several possibilities. Evangelical denominations may be increasingly willing to work cooperatively with other denominations, albeit like-minded ones. A trend may be developing; Evangelicals may be more willing to work with a group of other Evangelicals before establishing their own denominational institution.

Data presented in the first part of this chapter reveal that only a few denominations in the U.S. have an institutional presence in the migration policy area. These organizations have widely divergent theological classifications. Together, they provide very significant amounts of goods and services when dollar denominated. Individually, they provide different kinds of services to target populations.

The theory of Guth et al. (1997) is linear: theological orientation leads to a complimentary social theology which leads to a complimentary political agenda which varies only slightly in consequent political activism. This scheme with its consequent two-party structures does not seem to explain the agencies reported in the IRRD. These agencies have very different theological orientations, yet each has a presence in the migration policy area. They also have widely varying activities within the policy area which do not fit neatly into the two-party scheme.

While these data point to a variety of differences, they do not present a complete picture of social theology in practice. In order to explore social theology more fully, I conducted interviews with EDs of migration RANPOs as described in the previous chapter. The interviews provide significant additional information.

CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS FROM INTERVIEWS

This dissertation is concerned with two primary questions. The first concerns the influence of social theology upon whether or not a denomination will enter the migration policy area with an institutional presence. The second concerns the influence of social theology upon the variation of RANPO behavior within the policy area. This chapter addresses both questions, however it emphasizes the second.

The second question deals with the ways theological orientation and social theology are mediated into political behavior in migration RANPOs. Denominations exhibit both theological orientations and social theologies. Theological orientations vary from left to right as do social theological perspectives. These are also informed by the context in which they operate. Thus, one denomination can have a far-left theological orientation and a moderate social theology. Conversely, a denomination can have a far-right theological orientation and a liberal social theology. Numerous combinations can be envisioned, and some of the possible combinations are evident in the data presented in Chapter V. When political agendas and levels of political activism are added to the list of variables, the number of characteristics that could be used to describe the politics of a RANPO becomes long indeed. Social theology is not a constant. It is a set of beliefs that link theology to matters of public affairs. As such it represents a cafeteria of choices from which a RANPO can select.

Social theology does appear to be a significant determinant of whether a denomination will establish and operate a migration RANPO. It also appears to be associated with variation of goods and services provision within the area. But more information is needed to understand how social theology influences the political behavior of a denominational RANPO.

In this chapter, I report findings from interviews with EDs of migration RANPOs in Texas. A total of 22 interviews were conducted. Twenty of the interviews were conduced with EDs, one with a Brethren volunteer staff member of one of the RANPOs, and one with a Mennonite RANPO volunteer.

Some of the RANPOs in the Valley are located there because of the close proximity to the Texas-Mexico border with its heavy stream of migrants. Several, however, are located there because the Port Isabel Processing Center of the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Justice is located there. This center is located some 12 miles from the northeast edge of Brownsville, Texas near the small community of Bayview, Texas. Locals refer to this facility simply as Bayview or “El Corallon.” “El Corallon” in Spanish is “the corral.” This detention center is the largest in the INS system. Many deportation flights originate from this facility. The facility was formerly a military installation. Flights originating here provide transportation for detainees being returned to countries in Central America and South America. Mexican nationals are simply released at one of the nearby border crossings.

The detainees kept in this medium-security facility have been apprehended from all over the U.S. and brought to Bayview for processing in the INS courts. Many have been apprehended at the border or applied for asylum at the border. Daily census reports from the facility read like an international directory. Detainees in the facility may originate from Europe, Africa, Asia, Central America, and South America. The largest number is typically from Central America. However, the RANPOs in the Valley serve persons from all over the world.

Comparing the 22 RANPOs in the interview portion of this study to the organizations listed in the IRRD, I find that these 22 fairly parallel the distribution of affiliations. For example, there are significant numbers of Roman Catholics in both. The organizations in the Texas interviews, however, have fewer ecumenical organizations and no Jewish groups.

In the next section, I present thumbnail sketches of the RANPOs studied in the interviews. Each RANPO, except Casa Oscar Romero, has been given an alias to protect the organization. Casa Oscar Romero has not been protected through the use of an alias because it is no longer in operation and because it was well known even in the international media. I have interspersed a few quotes from some of the EDs. All of these quotations come from the interviews unless otherwise noted.

RANPO descriptions

Mercy One is a shelter and service organization run by a Roman Catholic nun who in 1979 began providing sanctuary for Central American refugees. By the late 1980s, she and her organization provided food, clothing, shelter, and transportation into the interior of the U.S. for up to five hundred refugees each month. By 1997 the flow of refugees declined significantly, and her mission shifted to provision of hospice care. When asked why she was involved in this work, she replied,

I didn’t go looking for it; it’s just in your face. People were sleeping on the street, on sidewalks, …of course I don’t like the Border Patrol anyway, but that’s not a motivating factor. It’s just when people need food and shelter, they need food and shelter…It wasn’t just something I dreamed up.

In her opinion borders should be abolished, and governments around the world should get out of the business of running peoples’ lives.

Liberty House (Roman Catholic) provides legal services for migrants being processed in INS courts, particularly refugee and asylee applicants. Funds come in the form of grants primarily from lawyers’ trust funds in the State of Texas that are for the purpose of providing equal justice. At the time of the interview, the organization had represented over 8,500 detainees in the Bayview detention facility in the past year alone. Significant levels of funding come from Mainline and Peace Protestant denominations that provide both money and volunteer staff. Liberty One works very closely with migrant shelters and local pastors.

Shelter One is a Disciples of Christ facility that tries to “help the very needy…refugees, the undocumented, and the poor people in the colonias.” Refugees make up the primary clientele because of their special needs. They cannot go home, and no government programs exist to help these people. Of all the agencies in the Valley, this one has the closest relationship with the INS. INS judges routinely consult with the ED of this RANPO, and they frequently release entire families to his unofficial custodial care. Even as this ED has a close working relationship with the INS, he freely admits that he altered documents to enable refugees to travel in the U.S., and he has frequently provided sanctuary.

Community One is an extensive, ecumenical, social service organization that provides a very wide range of goods and services. However, it provides no food, clothing, or shelter. Founded by local pastors and denominational executives in 1979 as a protest against Central American wars, the agency has grown to be the largest provider of information, referral, advocacy, education, legal, and other services to migrants on behalf of pastors and congregations in the Valley. Community One provided adoption services for more than six hundred unaccompanied minors in the 1980s until enjoined by the State of Texas from operating an unlicensed adoption agency. Community One is operated by a former Industrial Area Foundation organizer, and the organization stresses the need to involve INS officials and personnel in all of their public meetings.

Casa Oscar Romero (not an alias) (Roman Catholic) was perhaps the best known shelter in the Valley for almost a decade. It provided food, clothing, shelter, counseling, religious services, and connections for refugees seeking illegal transportation farther into the U.S. At the height of its operations, it provided shelter for up to five hundred persons a night. It has gone through two name changes, and it is now operated as a homeless shelter.

The School (ecumenical) is a nonprofit that operates under contract with the Justice Department to provide comprehensive services for children and youth who arrive in the U.S. as unaccompanied minors. Numerous services are provided through churches. Fifty percent of all unaccompanied minors enter the U.S. through this facility. Most of the children and youth are placed in custodial care with families in the U.S., many through families recruited by an informal network of churches and congregations. One INS official said, “We use the place of origins of these kids as a barometer to tell us what is going on in Central America.”

Committee One (Quaker) is a legal advocacy organization located in Houston, Texas. I interviewed both the director in Houston and the staff member in the Valley. This organization primarily monitors INS and Border Patrol practices for compliance with civil rights issues. Committee One has participated in several lawsuits, some resulting in consent decrees requiring changes in INS practices. This RANPO publishes its findings and advises denominational bodies. Information and referral services are also provided to migrants being processed in the small Houston detention center.

The Observer (Roman Catholic) monitors border activities of INS, Border Patrol, and employer practices on both sides of the Texas-Mexico border. This RANPO brings delegations of interested persons, mostly religious groups, from all around the world. Delegations from four continents have come to study how the U.S. and religious groups respond to the conditions and circumstances of border life. Related church groups and paralegals seek to educate and mobilize persons to serve as a conscience to the Justice Department. The ED of this RANPO serves on the board of three other RANPOs in the Valley.

Shelter Two is run by an order of Roman Catholic nuns from a congregation in the Midwest. It provides food, clothing, shelter, and respite care for refugees and asylees being processed in the Bayview detention facility. It works very closely with the two major legal service agencies in the Valley by providing transportation and advocacy services. This religious community was strongly influenced by a German theologian early in this century, William Emmanuel Von Kettler, who offered his approach to social life as an alternative to Marxism. The primary mission of the organization is to provide hospitality. In recent years, however, the order has conducted many studies in the field of Latin American liberation theology that borrows heavily from Marxist analysis. The nuns say that they understand the structural problems that contribute to the plight of the migrants, and they are increasingly willing to take proactive actions to engage the INS.

The Refuge (ecumenical) is primarily the project of one Marxist attorney, but it is assisted by a host of religious groups. During the 80s, it sometimes housed four hundred people in old military tents. Currently, the Refuge houses a few persons seeking legal status in the U.S., and the ED provides some community education and advocacy services.

Church Two is a Roman Catholic diocese-sponsored ministry that networks with at least ten other organizations, including other denominations, one Central American congregation, and one congregation in Chiapas, Mexico to provide ministry to migrants. It regularly holds meetings attended by service providers, INS staff, Border Patrol, community leaders, and activists to promote the human rights of migrants. Church Two publishes position papers, and it intentionally maintains a position of high public visibility to keep the plight of migrants in the minds of local people, with the intention of changing public policy if possible. One current and one former U.S. Representative are both members of one of the congregations in the diocese. Other members include INS officials and Border Patrol officers.

Church Three (Roman Catholic) is heavily involved in migrant ministry. The ED, who is a religious order priest, is considered one of the most radical supporters of migrants. He reports that ironically, he agrees with persons on the right who say people should not migrate to the U.S. He supports this position for two reasons. First, he thinks the U.S. is not the best place for a migrant to start a new life. Second, he thinks the most radical position, which he supports, is to stay at home and participate politically in making the country of origin a better place to live. He said, “This migration business makes strange bedfellows.”

Denomination One (Disciples of Christ) provides a national office expressly for immigrants and refugees. It provides grants to various local entities, including congregations, to provide goods and services to refugees, particularly human services such as food, clothing, shelter, and transportation. It also provides services to congregations desiring to sponsor refugees who have been processed through INS facilities. Denomination One strongly supports the largest shelter in the Valley by promoting the shelter and its activities through denominational publications and programs that in turn raise significant sums of money for the shelter operations.

Ecumenical Two is in Houston, Texas. Though ecumenical, it is primarily sponsored by Lutheran Social Services. It is very similar to Denomination One. Most of its resources are devoted to promoting family and congregational sponsorship of migrants entering the U.S. Ecumenical Two works closely with INS officials.

Facility One is a large, comprehensive Roman Catholic organization in Houston, Texas that devotes a portion of its programming and ministries to migrants, particularly the rights of the undocumented. Facility One is noted for its strong support of sanctuary.

Church Four is a Presbyterian congregation that supports and promotes the sanctuary movement in the Fort Worth-Dallas area in Texas. Members protesting in U.S. Representatives’ offices have been arrested. Members network with Valley organizations to provide illegal transportation for migrants.

Facility Two is a Roman Catholic RANPO located in northwest Texas. The primary mission of the organization is to provide services to the poor. However, this organization was recognized as a Qualified Designated Entity by the INS, and it facilitated the legalization of over 50,000 undocumented persons during the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Ecumenical One is a Disciples of Christ facility in Dallas that provides care for persons who have suffered torture either in their country of origin or en route to the U.S. It has a small volunteer staff that screens the populations of shelters in the Valley and connects the victims of torture with volunteer professional caregivers.

Church One is a small Roman Catholic RANPO. It provides a narrow range of goods and services, primarily to the undocumented living in colonias in the northern end of the Valley. Approximately 30 households are assisted each month.

Committee Two has affiliations with Roman Catholic, Disciples, United Church of Christ, and Presbyterian organizations. The primary mission of Committee Two is to provide advocacy services for workers, including farm workers and maquiladora factory workers, especially women. However, other RANPOs in the Valley credit Committee Two, especially its Executive Director, with providing critical leadership in migrant ministry in the Valley through networking.

RANPO similarities

There are numerous similarities and differences among the RANPOs in this portion of the study. In this section, I discuss several of the similarities.

First, all of the EDs reported a high degree of familiarity with the liberation theologies of Central and South America, some citing more recent theological scholarship within the U.S. Theological

self-identification was universally left-of-center, though several did not consider their denominations to be

left-of-center, and several of the EDs reported that they came from conservative backgrounds. There are always problems with self-reporting, and theological

self-identification is no exception. As Guth et al. (1997) note, a liberal Southern Baptist is more conservative than a liberal Unitarian, yet both respondents may use the term to locate themselves within their denominations or affiliated movements. For example, the Cuban-born ED who served five years in prison for his preaching in which he was an outspoken critic of communism classified himself as an Evangelical. Upon further examination, he and other Hispanic clergy reported that this term is used by them to distinguish themselves from Catholic or Pentecostal religious groups. It is not the same as the term used to describe the conservative religious movement in the U.S. Each reported being more liberal and activist in their environments, but each also reported having to find ways to use the more conservative language and religious thinking of congregations, sponsors, and others in their networks to further their own, more activist, agendas. This indicates an awareness of how theological thinking operates in the lives of the EDs and of those around the EDs.

When asked, each interviewee could quickly list

theologians with whom they identified in their work. These frequently included Leonardo Boff, Jurgen Moltmann, Ruben Alves, Juan Segundo, and Gustavo Guiterrez. All of these are liberation theologians. A few EDs expressed hesitation to say they were in full agreement with any one particular theologian or school of thought. Kellstedt and Guth (1996) consider liberation theology to be the most recent and most extreme expression of the Social Gospel. In the work of these theologians, the interviewees found heavy emphasis on liberation-oppression motifs, the need for material ministry in the form of humanitarian assistance, and a quest for human dignity and human rights.

An important part of liberation theology is the

concern for socio-political structures. Consistent with

these concerns, the EDs expressed numerous suggestions for policy reform, ways to hold government officials accountable, and even the need for more law suits to change Department of Justice practices.

Each director was asked if any particular scriptural texts inform his or her work or serve to "nourish" him or her in the migration ministry. Some of the directors are also pastors of congregations. Some of the clergy are responsible for Bible studies for their religious groups, and some regularly lead worship services, studies, devotionals, or other activities in which scriptures are important. The EDs reported using texts that referred to themes of hospitality (welcoming the stranger), pastoral concerns (one is never alone), and significant concerns for social justice in general.

The second fundamental similarity is that all of the organizations assumed the nonprofit organizational form. All of the EDs reported that their organizations either had a 501(c)(3) IRS status or operated under the 501(c)(3) of an affiliated organization. If the RANPO did not have its own C3, they usually operated under the C3 of their denomination or religious order. This is one more indication of the strength of the religious affiliation. Most of the RANPOs are organized under the Texas Nonprofit Corporation Act. One of the important features of this law is the limit of legal liability. For example, if a federal lawsuit were to result from the way that a migrant was served by an organization, the liability would theoretically stop with that RANPO’s assets and not extend to the parent or affiliated denomination.

All of the directors report ways in which they can continue to achieve their objectives even within the constraints of the C3 organizational form. The director of the Community One, which probably offers the largest scope of services said, “Of course we can’t go out and directly lobby and organize. So what we do is have coffee with the women in a home. We have free speech, and we can educate people.” She said,

I may not tell an undocumented person to call up the school board to complain about the school bus service in the colonia, but I can rehearse and role play what the conversation would be like if they chose to call the school board superintendent.

Typical of human service nonprofits, these EDs report heavy use of volunteers to staff their organizations and significant networking with other service providers to expand the scope of goods and services they provide for migrants.

Third, all of the RANPOs receive significant levels of denominational financial support. This is true of the legal services organizations, the shelters, and the advocacy groups. In all of the cases, the budgets of these organizations are separate from local congregation budgets, though congregational budgets may include support for the RANPO. In several cases, the financial support is not limited to the denominations. The diocesan administrator of Church Two writes and administers grants for a variety of programs, including English as a Second Language, citizenship education for persons seeking to be naturalized, and projects for residents from colonias (poor unincorporated residential areas in the county). She receives funds from private sources and from three denominations different from her own.

The executive director of Observer, a Roman Catholic RANPO, writes and administers grants from her own congregation of sister nuns, from the Texas Conference of Churches, and from some private sources. She also manages funds in the form of fees paid by delegations of persons coming to the Valley.

One nun, the ED of Shelter Two, spends most of her time in development efforts for her organizations. Sources of income include her congregation, associate members, and diocesan grants from across the U.S. A nun from Mercy One annually receives funds from anonymous sources amounting to more than $30,000 each year and operational funds from her congregation.

The largest legal services organization, Liberty House, has, over time, received money from the following: Church World Service, Lutheran Refugee Service, the Presbyterian Church (PCUSA), fees for legal services, donations from a variety of small groups including church school classes, individuals, the Texas Equal Access to Justice Foundation, the Texas Lawyer’s Trust Fund Account, and stipends paid by other denominations for denominational volunteers who donate time to this organization.

The fourth fundamental similarity is that all of the EDs report similar professional socialization. All of the directors were educated in denominational institutions except for the former Cuban who was educated in an Evangelical seminary before coming to the United States. The RANPOs have an incentive to employ EDs who are competent in a number of areas. These EDs, like those of most nonprofits, must be able to demonstrate skills, knowledge, and abilities commensurate with the descriptions of their positions. Without these, the EDs cannot adequately represent the denomination’s interests in the organizations.

Fifth, all of the EDs are activists, and they encourage activism among their networks, volunteers, and clientele. The EDs report encouraging persons with whom they work to be politically active by writing legislators and attending local political meetings in which elected officials and INS personnel are present. Guth et al. (1997, 173) describe personal psychological resources of clergy as being a major influence in the political activism of clergy. Several of the EDs quickly offered life stories about their vocations. Directors exhibit a very strong sense of personal involvement with the kinds of work they undertake in the migration area. This is true either from personal life stories or an element of vocation as religious leaders.

The life stories of some of the directors have been very influential. Perhaps the most influential was the story of the Cuban-born minister who operates Shelter One. He was imprisoned for over five years by Castro for preaching the Christian faith as the appropriate alternative to Castro’s version of Communism. This minister personally knew many of the leaders in Castro’s regime including Castro himself, Che Guevarra, and many of the military officers who, over time, became high-ranking officials. Coming to the U.S. on a freedom flight in 1969, he identifies closely with the plight of the refugees entering the U.S. Only in recent years has this shelter helped Cuban refugees. Over time, he was even able to sympathize with the Communists coming to the U.S. from Central America. He reported that his religious faith required him to show hospitality even to strangers he didn’t like.

The administrator of Church Two who carried that organization’s “peace with justice” portfolio reported that her father had been largely responsible for planning and implementing the liberation of one of the German Nazi death camps. She said, “I heard all of his stories as a child, and I remember them.” In the late 1970s several teenagers were being transported illegally into the U.S. by a coyote. They suffocated in the back of a truck only a few blocks from her home. She said she experienced a moral alternation that radicalized her to work on behalf of these people. She did not want her children to grow up and look back, wondering why she didn’t get involved.

Yet another director (Community One) and her husband (Committee Two) had worked for years on behalf of Caesar Chavez and Jose Moises in a nearby city when the Texas Farmworkers Union was beginning its work. For these two, the work with migrants was the same, whether they were immigrants, undocumented, refugees, or asylees. It was a matter of human rights. All of these experiences serve to heighten the sensitivity of the EDs to the experiences of migrants and to strengthen the level of activism of the EDs.

The language of human rights emerges in many of the interviews. Ironically, few of the directors actually questioned the right of the U.S. to exercise its power to be a sovereign nation with proper authority to control access across its borders. However, much of the language used to describe the propriety of their RANPOs’ work on behalf of even the undocumented was often couched in human rights language, sometimes as frequently as religious language. For many of the EDs, the main problems being addressed by the organizations was that the U.S. was not recognizing the broad, general, human rights of the peoples of the world who were without food, clothing, shelter, and human dignity.

The EDs closely identify with the mission of the organizations they serve, the sixth basic similarity. The EDs are very aware of the accountability loops in their organizations. Most of the RANPOs have boards, mission statements, and a number of volunteers who have been recruited from their respective denominations.

Seventh, every one of the EDs identified themselves as Democrats. Each of them considers the prevailing local political climate to be conservative. This was true regardless of the geographical location of the RANPOs. Most of the EDs were natives of their geographical service area. Only one was foreign born.

All of the RANPOs share a number of similarities. Most of these are functions of the organizational form and/or dynamics of the nonprofits. In summary, these RANPOs have striking similarities. The EDs share a very similar liberation theology-style theological orientation. Their theological self-identification is liberal. All believe that the INS needs to be structurally reformed. All find significant support for their positions in scripture. The RANPOs operate as 501(c)(3) organizations, with attendant benefits and constraints. Each of the RANPOs make extensive use of volunteers. All are closely connected with denominations, particularly in terms of funding. Most EDs were educated in denominational institutions. They all exhibit high levels of political activism. Many have life experiences that reinforce their choices to work in migration ministry. All support the missions of their respective RANPOs. All of the EDs identify themselves as political liberals. Taken together, these similarities reinforce the assessment that these RANPOs all exhibit activist social theological orientations. Structural solutions are needed for structural social problems. Liberal strategies for change are necessary for the transformation of society.

The major difference between these findings and the theoretical expectations of Guth et al. (1997) lies in the theological classifications which serve as indicators of theological orientations. Some of the denominations supporting these RANPOs have been classified by scholars as Fundamentalist, Evangelical, and conservative. In this regard, the findings concerning the Texas RANPOs explored through the interviews, reflect in part, findings reported in Chapter V concerning the disparity between the expectations of the literature on social theology and the classifications of the RANPOs in the IRRD and their presence in the migration policy space.

RANPO DIFFERENCES

In this section, I discuss findings concerning differences among the RANPOs in this part of the study. Guth et al. (1997, 187) found variation among clergy in their two-camp model of clergy politics. On the left, they find: Quiescent Modernists, Conventional Liberals, and New Breed Liberals. All of the Texas RANPOs clearly exhibit a communitarian social theology. Guth et al.’s (1997) observations about left-wing denominational social theologies suggest variation in levels and kinds of activities. This is, indeed the case. The RANPOs exhibit differences in both in attitudes of the EDs and in the practices of the RANPOs in several key areas. Yet some variation is far more related to the context than to social theology.

Tables 5 and 6 indicate some of the variation among the RANPOs represented in the interviews. TABLE 5 reports the practices of these RANPOs relative to migration law and the provision of human services. Three possible practices emerge concerning migration law. Only a few of the RANPOs exhibit an adversarial role toward the INS and/or the Border Patrol. About one-half of the RANPOs will help migrants navigate the INS processing system. Most of the RANPOs provide information and referral services to migrants. Several RANPOs are active in all three categories.

Food, clothing, and housing are three of the needs of many of the refugees, asylee applicants, and some of the other migrants who come to these RANPOs either by being released from the detention center or by crossing the border. If the RANPO provides one of the services, it

usually provides all of the services. The major difference in the Human Services category is whether or not that RANPO provides a complete shelter or not.

Table 6 reports two other sets of practices. The first is the provision of sanctuary services. Sanctuary is a phenomenon with several manifestations and traditions. Generally sanctuary means providing a safe haven for persons who are being pursued. Most of the time, the practice of providing sanctuary refers to a person providing shelter or housing for an undocumented person. Traditionally, derived from English tort law, this practice refers to a particular place, such as a church facility. Sometimes, however, religious actors declare that their presence is the sanctuary. That is, sanctuary exists wherever the religious persons is.

Sanctuary is a very controversial issue, not only among religious actors, but also among the general population. Many citizens do not recognize the old English Tort Law, nor do they understand the religious freedom questions related to this practice.

The EDs were asked whether they provide sanctuary or whether they would refer a migrant to a person or an organization which would provide sanctuary. All of the organizations that provide sanctuary would also willingly network with others to provide sanctuary. Only three

of the EDs reported that they would not provide sanctuary or referrals. Each of these claimed that their high visibility would preclude this. This is particularly true of Ecumenical Two, a large denominational agency located in downtown Houston. Of course, more provide referrals than sanctuary itself.

The last practice involves contracting. Most of the

organizations in this sample would not agree to contract

Table 5. RANPO Practices re: Migration Law and Human Services.

Migration Law | Human Services

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| RANPO | ADV | NAV | I&R | FOOD | CLOTHES | HOUSE |
| Observer | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mercy One | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Liberty House | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Shelter Three | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Observer\* | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Shelter Two | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Church Two | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Church Three | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Facility One | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Facility Two | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Church One | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Shelter One | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Denomination One | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Ecumenical One | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The School | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| The Refuge | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Ecumenical Two | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mercy Two\* | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Community One | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Church Four | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Committee One | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Committee Two | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

\* Indicates that the interview was with a staff member other than the executive director.

Coding Notes:

ADV=adversarial relationship with INS officials as indicated either through RANPO participation in law suits or through other activity such as protest.

NAV=RANPO facilitates navigation of migrants through INS system including court appearances.

I&R=RANPO provides information and referral to migrants to legal agencies for assistance.

FOOD=RANPO provides food for migrants.

CLOTH=RANPO provides clothing for migrants.

HOUSE=RANPO provides shelter.

with a governmental agency to provide goods and services to migrants under any condition. The few organizations answering in the affirmative expressed that certain conditions would have to be met before the contracts would be signed. Liberty House, The School, and Denomination One, and Facility Two currently receive some funds and/or reimbursements from governmental sources, federal or state. During the late 1980s, at the height of the refugee exodus from Central America, several large facilities were opened in the Valley through contracts with the Justice Department. The INS would detain the men in the refugee families, and allow Red Cross or church shelters to provide care for the women and children. Some of the RANPOs continue to express resentment over these kinds of practices that separated families.

All of the organizations are willing to engage the world around them in a public way, and all have carved out a role to play over time. They vary, however, in how far

they are willing to go in any particular activity, legal issues being a good example.

Differences in RANPO practices may be significantly influenced by one or several of the contextual variables discussed in Chapter III. These include: the roles of the

Table 6. RANPO Practices re: Sanctuary and Contracting.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| AFFILIATION | SANCT | REFER | CONTRACT |
| Observer | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Mercy One | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Liberty House | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Shelter Three | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Observer\* | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Shelter Two | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Church Two | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Church Three | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Facility One | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Facility Two | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Church One | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Shelter One | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Denomination One | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Ecumenical One | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The School | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| The Refuge | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Ecumenical Two | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mercy Two\* | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Community One | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Church Four | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Committee One | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Committee Two | 1 | 1 | 0 |

\* Indicates that the interview was with a staff member other than the executive director.

SANCT=RANPO directly engages in providing sanctuary to migrants.

REFER=RANPO refers to others who will provide sanctuary.

CONTRACT=RANPO either has or would accept contract with a government agency to provide services to migrants.

executive directors, the roles of the governing bodies, organizational mission statements, denominational affiliations, funding sources, legal considerations, and denominational accountability.

Executive Directors

EDs of RANPOs may agree with each other about matters of theology, social theology, political agendas, and even issues surrounding political activism. They are, however, sufficiently constrained by the contexts in which they work to exhibit significantly different political behaviors. One ED may be a entrepreneur of sorts, while another bureaucratic. Shelter Three has had a series of EDs in the past decade. It began with two nuns who requested use of a diocesan facility to provide a shelter during the height of the Central American refugee exodus. These nuns managed to provide food, clothing, and shelter for up to 500 persons each night. The two nuns were the only persons receiving income for their work. They managed to have other denominations provide rice, beans, and other commodities. The refugees did all of the cooking, cleaning, and grounds maintenance. Members of local parishes provided recreation, sewing machines, tools, clinics, English instruction, and a number of other goods and services. The facility was closed and re-opened as a homeless shelter while remaining a Roman Catholic owned facility. A $40,000/year Mexican-educated M.B.A. was selected to be the executive director, and his first task was to apply for a $250,000/year grant from the City of Brownsville to provide services for a much smaller number of persons.

Governing Bodies (Boards)

The governance of a RANPO can have a dramatic difference in the operations/behavior of the organization. The board of Committee Two reports to the American Friends Service Committee. While the ED of Committee Two frequently files reports on activities, the official board almost never meets except to remain in compliance with state and federal regulations. The board of Liberty House, on the other hand, meets at least every two weeks to look at caseloads, budgets, recent changes in INS regulations, and a host of other items. The ED of Committee Two is governed by policy which almost never changes, while the ED of Liberty House who runs a $300,000/year RANPO must constantly consult with board members about daily operations. In the case of Committee Two, the ED has a far greater sense of freedom and discretion to determine what her organization will be doing at any given moment.

Mission Statements

The missions of the various RANPOs in large measure determine the size and scope of activities. The provision of shelter, including food, clothing, and housing, is a function of the mission of the organization. The mission of Observer is primarily to educate groups of people called “delegations” who tour the Valley, visit with experts on migration and the economy of the border. It does not provide shelter for migrants, even though it is probably the best staffed and equipped organization to assist in the border crossings of undocumented persons. Additionally, the ED of this RANPO serves on the boards of a number of other RANPOs and could easily direct or assist undocumented persons seeking asylum in the U.S. to appropriate shelters. According to the ED, the mission of the organization precludes this behavior. On the other hand, Shelter One will take anyone under any circumstances up to the capacity of the shelter and allow persons to remain in the shelter until they can obtain the best possible legal status in the INS courts.

Funding Sources

Some of the RANPOs, such as the School have single funding sources, in this case a government contract. Others have long individual donor lists with one or more denominational sources such as Shelter Two. As indicated in TABLE 6, some of the organizations are willing to accept government contracts. This is certainly the case of Shelter Three and the School. Others would not accept money from government sources under any circumstances, deeming such activity antithetical to “being church.” Funding sources could have a significant impact on the activities of a RANPO. In Houston, Texas, Ecumenical Two—a Lutheran organization which received contract money from Church World Service—is housed in the Houston Interfaith Ministries offices. The ED of Ecumenical Two reports that there is no way his organization is ever going to be involved in the provision of sanctuary to undocumented persons. By providing sanctuary, he would jeopardize long term ecumenical relationships. Additionally the likely hood of his success would be diminished by location and high public visibility.

Legal Constraints

Almost all religious organizations of any size are either separate 501(c)(3) organizations, or they operate under the C3 of their parent denomination. However, as most U.S. denominations antedate the IRS, the ED of one organization reported that many of the behaviors proscribed in IRS statutes have not been tested in courts as to their applicability to religious organizations which have some Constitutional protection. EDs do vary in how they see their IRS status. The ED of Community One carefully reads IRS regulations, INS regulations, and state laws. She frequently tells Border Patrol officers that they have significant amounts of discretion in their work. She says that she cannot lobby or participate in partisan work, but she says she is free to do community education work including informing citizens where local officials stand on issues of importance. The national offices of Denomination One, on the other hand, frequently point to strict compliance with INS guidelines and IRS rules as a means of securing the broadest financial support from donors.

Denominational Accountability

Accountability within denominations can have a significant impact upon the actual practices of the RANPOs. During the late 80s, the Archbishop of Brownsville openly supported the operation of a large shelter sometimes housing over 500 persons each night, a large portion of which were undocumented. He championed the work of priests and nuns in his diocese who were supporting migration efforts. Much of his support, including financial support, came from out of state. One activist priest, who belongs to a religious order, was not directly accountable to the bishop. Yet the archbishop pointed to this priest, the ED of Church Three, as an exemplary way to follow the biblical principles outlined in Matthew 25. Several groups of nuns similarly received similar recognition. Following the retirement of the bishop, his successors dramatically reversed the practice of providing shelter and other services to migrants. The priest was re-assigned twice as a form of punishment. He is now in the largest colonia in the U.S. and couldn’t be happier, he says, because he is now where he needs to be, “among the poorest of the poor in the U.S.” His work continues.

The groups of nuns also continue their work, though they receive less support from the diocese as a matter of policy. The nuns who operate Shelter Two are part of a religious congregation with offices in a Midwestern state. They are far less accountable to the Bishop than even the priest. They cannot be reassigned to another area of service. Their funding comes almost exclusively from out of state groups and individuals related to the religious order. They will rarely provide sanctuary, however. Their practice is to closely screen persons who come to their facility to see if they are good candidates for successful asylum cases in the INS courts. If they are, they can remain at Shelter Two for up to a year if necessary. If they are not good candidates, they must either move on or be referred. Since Shelter Two provides shelter services for clients of Liberty House, the nuns do not want to jeopardize Liberty House in any way.

The provision of sanctuary is perhaps one of the most risky practices for RANPOs. Though sanctuary itself has never been discerned to be an illegal activity in the U.S., a number of ancillary activities have been. For instance, it is illegal to transport undocumented persons. In order for a person to get to a place of sanctuary, it usually involves transportation. EDs have been arrested, detained, and released by the Border Patrol for providing transportation. Providing sanctuary may appear to be an illegal activity to donors, funding sources, and others important to the RANPOs. The ED of Community One has connections to numerous Lutheran organizations in the Midwest. She facilitated the adoption of over 600 children in the 1980s until the practice was stopped by the State of Texas, which ruled that she was operating an unlicensed adoption agency. Her practices included transporting undocumented persons and providing sanctuary to unaccompanied minors. The financial support for the organization from these Lutheran organizations—mostly congregations and small groups—significantly increased following the stopping of the adoption practices. The reasoning for the higher levels of support focused on her perceived need for help to confront the INS and the State of Texas. The practice of providing sanctuary is a matter of concern to EDs, to governing boards, to donors, and to most everyone working in migration.

The examples above demonstrate that, at least for the RANPOs in this study, the contextual variables surrounding the operations of the RANPOs play an important part in influencing the political behavior of the RANPOs in the migration policy area. The influence of these and similar variables may in large measure explain the variation in RANPOs with otherwise similar theological orientations and similar organizational characteristics. Any model which does not account for these variables would be lacking.

The model of clergy politics developed by Guth et al. starts with theological orientation, moves through social theology, and proceeds on to political agendas and political activism. In their model, clergy tend to exhibit either a moral reform agenda or a social justice agenda, and they tend to exhibit variant levels of political activism. These interviews reveal that most of the EDs in the Valley and other locations in Texas do not neatly separate into two camps divided by such agendas. A particularly good example of the blending of the two agendas is in the leadership of the late archbishop of the Diocese of Brownsville.

For many years Archbishop Fitzpatrick used scripture in public ways to justify his politics. He was singularly responsible for the creation and maintenance of the then largest shelter in the Valley, Casa Oscar Romero, named for the El Salvadoran bishop who was assassinated while saying mass. He saw the mission of the organization as being the contemporary fulfillment of the 25th chapter of the Gospel of St. Matthew. The bishop had two four-foot by eight-foot sheets of plywood made into signs installed at the entrance to Casa Oscar Romero. On the first, the words on the plaque under the Statue of Liberty were written. On the second sign, the following verses from Matthew 25 were written:

I was hungry and you gave me food. I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.

In my opinion, and in the opinion of several of the EDs in this survey, the plight of the migrants involved matters of personal salvation for the migrants, the volunteers, the EDs and everyone related to the churches’ missions, as well as the legal and political structures which comprise the “system” which creates the need for the ministries in the first place. It is apparent that the persons who participate in creating, organizing, and directing these agencies are concerned with matters of both moral reform and social justice. All of them are quick to discern the proper roles of their denominations in the world. And they try to provide for their clientele as complete a ministry as possible. Often, the focus of an organization is limited only to the extent that a particular service is not provided somewhere in the network of other organizations. It is quite apparent, too, that without the affiliations of religious denominations, these RANPOs would not exist. Several EDs noted that their organizations could not survive if the sole source of their revenue was local contributions. The structures of denominational accountability both facilitate policy activity and channel it in certain directions.

Social theology appears to have a strong influence in the decisions to create and operate the RANPOs in Texas. Social theology appears also to be mediated through the structures of the RANPOs, accounting for variations in the missions of the organizations. In the following section, I present several vignettes of how this variation occurs in the practices.

A Quaker activist said, “It is not a matter of ideology.” She said she ironically agreed with conservative big businesses that favored having no national borders whatsoever. She found that ironic because most of the time she was a very big critic of the existence of the maquiladoras (smaller manufacturing facilities) on the Mexican side of the border through which big U.S. business interests kept down labor costs. She said that for her it was not a matter of economics; it was a matter of human justice. Without the border, everyone would have an equal opportunity for life and family. A priest who had helped thousands flee Central America into the U.S. said he was in full agreement with very conservative clergy who thought it best for persons to stay with their families in the country of origin and participate in the systems there. He said, “I’ve saved lives. And I’ve helped disintegrate many families by providing sanctuary.”

For most of the organizations, balancing serious, complex questions is an ongoing process. All of the organizations have experienced some level of mission shift over time. The organizations have to be adaptive to the changing conditions of the border. This has required the organizations to almost continually re-think their stances toward theology and political participation.

One nun directed Mercy One from 1978 until just recently. During the peak refugee traffic from Central America, she fed and housed as many as 50 persons a night on her very small family-like homestead, supported only by volunteer donations from other nuns and a network of volunteers from other cities, some as far as 1,000 miles away. She received hundred-pound sacks of rice and beans from another RANPO in the area. With the help of the volunteer in the sanctuary movement, as many as 500 refugees were clandestinely transported each week as far as 600 miles into the interior of the U.S. Many clergy across the Valley, from many denominations, brought refugees to her shelter.

Her justifications were two-fold: she knew that refugees from Central America would fare better living underground farther inland and/or fare better in legal proceedings before the highly decentralized INS in metropolitan areas farther from the border. She reported that Border Patrol officers were not unaware of her activities. She suggested that they looked the other way rather than increase their own work load and to avoid confrontations with the network of religious communities. This nun received extensive financial and volunteer support from a network of people from all over the U.S. concerned about sanctuary as a matter of both biblical hospitality and social justice. Here, it must be noted, financial independence may be as influential as her theological convictions in determining her behavior.

Another group of nuns operates Shelter Two, shelter primarily for asylee applicants. They will allow anyone who walks across the border to stop, change clothes, eat, and have a brief respite. However, unless one of the nuns discerns that the border crossers have a good asylum case before the INS, the visitors must move on down the road. Their theology tells them they must help, but these nuns will do nothing to jeopardize their relationship with the INS. The relationship with the INS is more critical in this case because of the close working relationship Shelter Two has with Liberty House, a legal advocacy RANPO. A few of the nuns report that they are nervous or afraid the whole time such visitors are at the shelter.

Committee One focuses entirely on monitoring INS and Border Patrol behavior, looking for and documenting perceived human rights violations and spending a great deal of energy keeping citizens groups, legislators, and public administrationists apprised of current cases before the INS courts. This organization has initiated both lawsuits and appeals. This organization's mission is oriented toward “making the system work with integrity.” It does not refute the proper authority of the Department of Justice. It does believe, however, that its mission includes seeing to it that the INS and Border Patrol do their jobs properly.

Valley RANPOs differ significantly in how they interact with Department of Justice agencies. This difference is a reflection upon the differing social theology of the organizations. For instance, the School participated in helping organize and run a shelter for unaccompanied minors who enter the U.S. The shelter is provided through a contract with the Justice Department, and it has been in operation since the late 1980s.

Another RANPO is considering establishing a new juvenile detention center that would similarly receive funding from a Justice Department contract. The purpose of this new organization would be to run the current shelter out of business. The current shelter systematically generates numerous complaints of abuse and violations of rights. The shelter is now under a consent decree following a lawsuit initiated by a nonprofit legal organization that handles legal work for three different RANPOs in the Valley. Fifty percent of all unaccompanied minors entering the U.S. are processed by the INS in the one facility. Neither of these two groups express any objections to entering into careful contracting negotiations with the U.S. government. All of the parties involved in these discussions share the conviction that the care of unaccompanied minors is the moral and legal obligation of the INS, as it is the same for the adults who are kept in detention in “El Corallon.”

In rather marked contrast, two EDs, one from Mercy One, and one from Church Two, report that they will not have anything to do with the any government official or agency under any circumstance. One states emphatically that the church should never, ever receive money from the government under any circumstance whatsoever. Another echoed similar sentiments and commented that his one goal is to make as many people as possible understand that the refugees have the same blood, the same skin, the same joys and concerns as everyone else. He has a very high disdain for the INS and the political system in general. For these EDs, the INS routinely discriminates against persons of certain countries of origin and certain races. They each see the case of migration as being one of universal human rights. They both easily translate the universal claims of scripture to apply to all persons everywhere.

Yet another group makes a point of inviting local and regional INS officials to every meeting held in hopes of increasing official sensitivity to the local problems of service provision to refugees, asylees, and the undocumented. This attitude is also reflected in their approach to advocacy toward the undocumented living in the colonias. Local school board officials, officials of the health department, and local police are routinely invited to meetings as a form of advocacy. While the organization is prohibited from extensive lobbying, in their judgment these activities are a form of community education and appropriate forms of behavior permitted under their C3 status.

Perhaps one of the most important findings is that the whole group of so-called Peace Protestant denominations has a presence in the migration policy area. Quakers, Mennonites, and Brethren all have a presence in the Valley. Most scholars place these denominations in the fundamentalist category, perhaps for their penchant for interpreting scripture in an almost, if not completely, literal way. In other ways, too, these denominations merit this classification. They are very concerned with personal moral rectitude. Most scholars would place them within the orthodox category employed by Hunter. Yet they are very active in the migration policy area. According to the IRRD compendium, they are significant providers of a host of goods and services across the U.S.

Three of the organizations in the Valley have benefited in significant ways from similar programs in both the Brethren and Mennonite denominations. These include: Mercy One, Observer, and Liberty House. Members of these denominations are solicited to go and work in areas endorsed by the denominations. These "volunteers" are provided a living stipend, sometimes as low as $6,000 per year, by RANPOs wishing to secure their services. Two of the RANPOs in the Valley indicate that they would have to close their doors if it were not for the benefits of having these volunteers often work 60 to 80 hours per week. If the services of these persons were secured at prevailing minimum wage, the expense to the various agencies would be in excess of $20,000.

One reason that we might expect to find these denominations in the policy space is that their behavior in a number of areas, including the historical peace movements, would indicate a more liberal bent to their theology. Nonetheless, if one classifies denominations on their discernment of the locus of moral authority or their level of orthodoxy, then one would not expect to find these denominations in the policy space at all. The case of the Peace Protestants may be one of the clearest cases of denominations which do not necessarily have a combination of theology and social theology which matches the two-party model of Guth and others. This may, in fact, be an example of how a denomination with an orthodox theology can also have a social theology with a social justice emphasis.

The political attitudes and behavior of these RANPOs differ significantly due to the influences of social theology and contextual variables evidenced in the small communities making up the RANPOs.

In Chapter VI, I have presented evidence that contextual variables such as funding and accountability can have significant influence upon the political behavior of denominational nonprofits working in a public policy space. These differences are evidenced between denominations and within denominations.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined the social theologies of denominations and their influence upon the political behavior of religiously affiliated nonprofits working in the migration policy area. The principal theories purporting to explain religious politics divide religious actors and agents into two camps. According to the research of Guth et al. (1997), for example, the division occurs along a fault line that cuts through theological orientations, social theologies, political agendas, and levels of political activism as well as other elements including partisanship. This fault line leads to a two-party system of religious politics. Models which divide groups similarly ascribe to theological orientations the basis for the division and the basis for all subsequent divisions such as those exhibited in ideology, partisanship, and political activism.

I have argued and presented evidence that social theology, defined operationally as the role of the denomination in the world, does not contribute to the two camp theory in ways usually depicted in the literature. Social theology is a cleavage among denominations that strongly influences the behavior of denominationally affiliated organizations working in public policy. It does not cut through denominations in such a way as to reflect the two-party theory, but rather, social theology contributes significantly to the creation and operation of diverse RANPOs associated with diverse denominations. Further, I have argued that social theology in large measure accounts for variation in the political behavior of migration RANPOs, but only as the theological orientations and social theologies of denominations are mediated through the organizational forms and dynamics of nonprofits.

Future models of the political behavior of denominations, organizations, and individuals should take into account the influence of social theology and its organizational context. Denominations have not only theological orientations but also social theologies that are a vital resource for the translation of theological understandings into political agendas. This means that the absence of social theology considerations could lead to significant errors in the understanding of religious political behavior. The error is particularly evident when a theologically conservative denomination embraces a social gospel social theology.

Social theology cuts across denominations and within denominations. Theological orientations are rich and diverse. A person, an institution, or an entire denomination can embrace theological orthdodoxy and conservative eschatology and still embrace a so-called activist social theology which leads to seemingly incongruous levels and styles of political behavior. Denominations have bodies of thought with sufficient diversity to ground multiple social theological viewpoints. The context in which denominations forge their roles plays a critical part in the final form in which social theology is cast.

I have shown that social theology, in part explains the presence of a denomination in a public policy area. I have further shown that both the worldview and context of the small communities surrounding RANPOs explain in part the variation in the provision of goods and services, the general political agenda, and the level of political activism of a RANPO. Social theology is a significant variable that should be considered in the study of RANPOs which deliver human services to target populations. The social theology of a RANPO contributes to both the size and scope of activities.

What Guth et al. (1997) consider to be liberal social theology (though it may be associated with a Fundamentalist theological orientation) frequently is associated with the creation and operation of RANPOs, at least in the migration policy area. This phenomenon suggests that social theology can divide denominations in quite different, even critical, ways from the influence of theological orientations alone.

Social theology is more than simply worldview. It has more to do with the normative assessments of a denomination about its proper role in the world. As Niebuhr (1951) has shown, there are many influences in churches. But neither sociological differences nor concepts of, say, the Kingdom of God, are sufficient to account for the stream of religion itself. Concepts of where ultimacy is to be found within a culture play a significant role.

RANPOs are a vehicle of choice for denominations to implement political agendas. Though there are limits with this organizational form, there are many obstacles that can be overcome by the resourceful, educated organizational leader. An interesting finding in this study which should generalize to the study of other public policy areas is that RANPOs that participate in the delivery of human services rarely find themselves in adversarial positions within the policy area. This is not to say that all organizations choose the same mission or embrace the same levels of political activism or even style of activism. It is to say, however, that competition and/or contestation appears to be rare.

One social theology does not necessarily mean that a RANPO will choose a particular political agenda at the expense of another. EDs of RANPOs in this study considered it inappropriate to separate religious concern for the individual from the political or human rights considerations of the social system which classifies migrants and determines their rights and privileges.

Social theology appears to contribute to differing levels of political activism. The practices of RANPOs differ in many ways. EDs of the organizations are quick to ground their choices in theological language.

The context in which a RANPO that embodies a social theology is a vital influence upon the final output of the organization. EDs, board members, mission statements, funding sources, volunteers, and clientele contribute in many ways to the political behavior of RANPOs.

RANPOs are a major source within the American political system for the provision of goods and social services. The resources of denominations which are committed to service provision greatly enhance the capacity of the U.S. to implement migration policy. The influence of RANPOs upon this process is considerable.

Denominations that have a social theology which leads to the creation and operation of RANPOs should be expected to continue high levels of activity in public policy areas. Conversely, denominations, on the right and on the left, which do not exhibit social theologies leading to significant institutional ministries should not be expected to have a significant presence within a public policy area.

The social theology of migration RANPOs is an activist, communitarian social theology concerned with the structures of the social system in the U.S. that both creates and alleviates the plight of migrants with special needs. The RANPOs in this space provide for human needs in concrete ways. They address human concerns. They participate in the discourses which lead to changes in migration law, and they model appropriate human service delivery systems which will undoubtedly continue to influence migration policy in the U.S.

Future research into the political behavior of RANPOs should explore in greater depth the relationship of theological orientations and social theologies. A significant contribution to the literature would be in the creation of a typology of RANPOs which would facilitate the study of RANPOs in other public policy areas.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alves, Rubem. 1969. A Theology of Human Hope.

Washington: Corpus.

Benson, P.L. and Dorothy Williams. 1982. Religion on

Capitol Hill: Myths and Realities. San Francisco:

Harper and Row.

Carmines, Edward G., and James A. Stimson. 1989. Issue

Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American

Politics. Princeton: Princeton.

Clotfelter, Charles T., ed. 1992. Who Benefits from the

Nonprofit Sector? Chicago: The University of

Chicago.

Fowler, Robert Booth and Allen D. Hertzke. 1995.

Religion and Politics in America: Faith, Culture,

and Strategic Choices. Boulder: Westview.

Gies, David L., Steven J. Ott, and J.M. Shafritz. 1990.

The Nonprofit Organization: Essential Readings.

Pacific Grove: Brooks/Cole.

Green, John C., James L. Guth, and Kevin Hill. 1996.

Faith and Election: The Christian Right in

Congressional Campaigns 1978-1988. In Green, John

C., James L. Guth, Corwin E. Smidt and Lyman A.

Kellstedt, eds. Religion and the Culture Wars:

Dispatches from the Front. Lanham: Rowman and

Littlefield.

Guth, James L., John C. Green, Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A.

Kellstedt, and Margaret M. Poloma. 1997. The Bully

Pulpit: The Politics of Protestant Clergy.

Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. [1973(1971)]. A Theology of

Liberation: History, Politics and Salvation.

Maryknoll: Orbis.

Hertzke, Allen D. 1988. Representing God in Washington:

The Role of Religious Lobbies in the American

Polity. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press.

Hopkins, Bruce R.,ed. 1992. The law of tax-exempt

organizations (6th ed.). New York: John Wiley and

Sons, Inc.

Hunter, James Davison. 1994. Before the Shooting

Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture

War. New York: Free Press.

Hunter, James Davison. 1991. Culture Wars: The Struggle

to Define America. New York: Basic Books.

Kelley, Dean M. 1977. Why churches should not pay

taxes. New York:Harper and Row.

Kellstedt, Lyman A. and John C. Green. 1993. Knowing

God’s Many People:Denominational Preference and

Political Behavior. In Leege, David C. and Lyman A.

Kellstedt, eds. Rediscovering the Religious Factor

in American Politics. Armonk: M.E.Sharpe.

Kellstedt, Lyman A., John C. Green, James L. Guth, and

Corwin E. Smidt. 1996. In Green, John C., James L.

Guth, Corwin E. Smidt, and Lyman A. Kellstedt, eds.

Religion and the Culture Wars: Dispatches from the

Front. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Kerrine, Theodore M. and Richard John Neuhaus. 1979.

Mediating structures: a paradigm for democratic

pluralism. In R. D. Lambert, A. W. Heston, and D.

M. Kelley, eds., The annals of the american academy

of political and social science, V 446. the uneasy

boundary. (pp. 10-18). Philadelphia.

Leege, David C. and Lyman A. Kellstedt, et al. 1993.

Rediscovering the Religious Factor in American

Politics. New York: M.E. Sharpe.

Lipsky, Michael and Steven Rathgeb Smith. 1989.

Nonprofit Organizations, Government, and the Welfare

State. Political Science Quarterly. 104: 625-648.

Milani, Ken. 1988. Nonprofit organizations in a

Technical Perspective. In Connors, T.D., ed. The

Nonprofit Organization handbook, 2nd ed. New

York: McGraw-Hill.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. [1929(1957)]. The Social Sources

Of Denominationalism. New York: World Publishing.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. 1937. The Kingdom of God in

America. New York: Harper.

Niebuhr, H. Richard. 1951. Christ and Culture. New

York: Harper.

O'Neill, Michael. 1989. The Third America: the

emergence of the nonprofit sector in the United

States. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Rauschenbusch, Walter. 1917. A Theology for the Social

Gospel. Nashville: Abingdon.

Schindler-Rainman, Eva. 1988. Administration of

Volunteer Programs. In Connors, T.D., ed. The

Nonprofit Organization Handbook. New York: McGraw-

Hill.

Schorr, Alan Edward. 1990. *Immigrant and Refugee Resource*

*Directory 1990-1991.* Juneau: The Denali Press.

Scrivner, Gary N. 1990. 100 Years of Tax Policy Changes

Affecting Charitable Organizations. In Gies, David

L., J. Steven Ott, and Jay M. Shafritz, eds. The

Nonprofit Organization: Essential Readings. Pacific

Grove: Brooks/Cole.

Sine, Tom. 1995. Cease Fire: Searching for Sanity in

America’s Culture Wars. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Skillen, James W. 1994. Recharging the American

Experiement: Principled Pluralism for Genuine Civic

Community. Grand Rapids: Baker Books.

Smith, David Horton. 1988. The Impact of the Nonprofit

Voluntary Sector on Society. In T. D. Connors, ed.

The nonprofit organization handbook (2.1-2.11). New

York: McGraw-Hill.

Smith, Steven Rathgeb. 1993. The New Politics of

Contracting: Citizenship and the Nonprofit Role. In

Public Policy for Democracy. Helen Ingram and

Steven Rathgeb Smith, eds. Washington,

D.C.: Brookings.

Smith, Steven Rathgeb and Michael Lipsky. 1993.

Nonprofits for Hire: The Welfare State in the Age of

Contracting. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Smith, Tom. 1990. Classifying Protestant Denominations. Review of Religious Research, Vol. 31: 225-245.

Statistical Yearbook of the Immigration and

Naturalization Service, 1987 Edition. Washington

D.C., Department of Justice, Immigration and

Naturalization Service, 1987.

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. 1989.

Directory of Voluntary Agencies M-233, 3rd. ed.

Washington, D.C.:U.S. Government Printing Office.

U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. 1987. 1986

statistical yearbook of the immigration and

naturalization service. Washington, D.C.: U.S.

Government Printing Office.

Wacht, Richard F. 1984. Financial Management in

Nonprofit Organizations. Atlanta: College of Business

Administration Georgia State University.

Wald, Kenneth D. 1992. Religion and Politics in the

United States, 2nd. Ed. Washington D.C.: CQ.

Wood, James E., Jr., ed. 1985. Religion and the state:

essays in honor of Leo Pfeffer. Waco: Baylor

University Press.