Recruiting for Sanctuary: Explaining Involvement in the Original and New Sanctuary Movements of Philadelphia

Daniel Schwartz
University of Pennsylvania
Recruiting for Sanctuary: Explaining Involvement in the Original and New Sanctuary Movements of Philadelphia

Abstract
This paper, by using a combination of theoretical approaches, seeks to explain why and how people get involved in social movements. To answer this question, I chose to investigate the recruitment strategies and circumstances of the Original and New Sanctuary Movements (OSM and NSM, respectively) within the greater Philadelphia metropolitan region. Though distinct movements, both the OSM and NSM can be defined as faith-based initiatives that brought together collectives of Americans to fight against the U.S. government for increased immigrant and refugee rights. Their manifestations within Philadelphia, which have previously been ignored in the academic literature, provide a suitable comparative case study for this topic. With data gathered through qualitative methods, such as interviews, archival research, and participant observation, I argue that despite similar religious and political cultures contributing to social protest involvement in both sanctuary movements, the NSM must make better use of other recruiting factors like story-telling, political networking and active civil disobedience if it wishes to replicate (or even exceed) the OSM’s success. I also argue that many existing sociological accounts for social movement involvement rely too heavily on rational, utilitarian explanations. These theoretical approaches to understanding collectivized protest behavior are useful to a point, but movements like the OSM and NSM indicate that humans operate within a web of complex and dynamic forces resistant to static categorization.

Keywords
Urban Studies; Philadelphia; sanctuary

Disciplines
Social and Behavioral Sciences | Urban Studies and Planning

Comments
Suggested Citation:
Recruiting for Sanctuary
Explaining Involvement in the Original and New Sanctuary Movements of Philadelphia

Daniel Schwartz
Urban Studies 400: Fall 2009
Professor Eric Schneider
Abstract

This paper, by using a combination of theoretical approaches, seeks to explain why and how people get involved in social movements. To answer this question, I chose to investigate the recruitment strategies and circumstances of the Original and New Sanctuary Movements (OSM and NSM, respectively) within the greater Philadelphia metropolitan region. Though distinct movements, both the OSM and NSM can be defined as faith-based initiatives that brought together collectives of Americans to fight against the U.S. government for increased immigrant and refugee rights. Their manifestations within Philadelphia, which have previously been ignored in the academic literature, provide a suitable comparative case study for this topic. With data gathered through qualitative methods, such as interviews, archival research, and participant observation, I argue that despite similar religious and political cultures contributing to social protest involvement in both sanctuary movements, the NSM must make better use of other recruiting factors like story-telling, political networking and active civil disobedience if it wishes to replicate (or even exceed) the OSM’s success. I also argue that many existing sociological accounts for social movement involvement rely too heavily on rational, utilitarian explanations. These theoretical approaches to understanding collectivized protest behavior are useful to a point, but movements like the OSM and NSM indicate that humans operate within a web of complex and dynamic forces resistant to static categorization.

Preface

Sitting in my bedroom with my eyes closed, I listened to a Pakistani family describe their anguish. The heavily accented English of Faheem Francis, a hardworking husband and father of two, sputtered through my headphones. I heard Faheem describe how—not why—he wound up in deportation jail in 2008 despite having a Green Card. His wife, Zakia, explained the terror and stress that her husband’s disappearance had on her; she had to find new ways to pay for food, housing, and gas, while taking care of her and Faheem’s young sons. Rahul Francis, their eldest child, softly told about the jail wardens who denied him and his brother from seeing Faheem, and how the brothers then held up hand-drawn messages like “We will pray for you,” on pieces of paper outside their father’s window.
Peter Pedemonti and Jen Rock, directors of the New Sanctuary Movement (NSM) of Philadelphia, had lent me this recording of their interview with the Francis family. Under the auspices of a class on immigration, I had volunteered to help NSM research certain issues and stories pertaining to their immigration advocacy agenda. However, in the midst of learning about the Francis family and the broken immigration system in the U.S., my intellectual curiosity turned personal. In short, NSM politicized me.

The immigration debates, which came to a boiling point in 2006, did not seem real to me. I was in high school, surrounded by mostly U.S. citizens and only vaguely tuned into news reports of protests and legislative proposals. It wasn’t that I didn’t care that 10% of the nation’s workforce was undocumented, it was simply that I did not know. But 2010 will be different. As President Obama and Congress attempt to pass major immigration reform next year, I will know the issues at stake and plan to act on such knowledge.

I have several goals in this paper. First, I hope to document the history of the Original Sanctuary Movement in Philadelphia—a history that runs the risk of fading into obscurity and abstraction even as it’s legacy informs and inspires a new generation of activists. In that vein, I would like to document NSM Philadelphia, in a young stage, as a national social movement establishing a local identity. Finally, I hope that by investigating how U.S. citizens begin to civicly engage migration issues, the process might be better replicated.
Introduction

If history is to be creative, to anticipate a possible future without denying the past, it should...emphasize new possibilities by disclosing hidden episodes of the past when, even if in brief flashes, people showed their ability to resist, join together, occasionally to win.

Howard Zinn

The Sanctuary Movement is a term used to describe two distinct, yet deeply connected, American social movements. The Original Sanctuary Movement (OSM) started in 1980 in Tuscon, Arizona and lasted until the early 90s. Religious leaders—of various faiths and denominations—provided refuge to Latin Americans escaping political violence in their home countries. In what some describe as a “new underground railroad” (Goldman and McConnell, 1986), churches and individuals took in a small portion of the thousands of immigrants fleeing countries like Guatemala and El Salvador—countries whose murderous military juntas were supported by the U.S. government. President Ronald Reagan privately conceded that to grant Central Americans asylum would ruin the State Department’s image (Golden and McConnell 1986, 43). The OSM thus worked to provide sanctuary in the face of U.S. policy. In this sense, OSM was a movement of civil disobedience—a public protest that targeted tangible conflicts and a limited number of both foreign and domestic policies. As scholars now argue (Lippert, 2005), this public protest did have an impact, as U.S. foreign policy changed and many of the gross human rights abuses in Central American countries diminished.

The New Sanctuary Movement (NSM), on the other hand, is amorphous. After years of passivity, many of the leaders of the OSM along with new voices, reinvigorated their movement in 2007. Religious representatives came together in order to use faith-based social change to fight against perceived moral injustices in the national
immigration system. Spanning 17 states, NSM has significantly diversified both its targets and their tactics when compared to OSM, though some NSM churches have provided sanctuary to immigrants facing deportation. While NSM workers in Chicago are primarily working to bring fair legal representation to undocumented workers in deportation jail, NSM Philadelphia is focusing much of its energy on changing city policies that dictate how police treat immigrants and interact with federal authorities. Whereas OSM had a unified foreign target and domestic strategy, NSM seeks to confront globalized economic injustices on a frequently fragmented local front. That is, NSM’s tactics and targets vary by local necessity.

But despite differences, the two movements have much in common. Both arose from a religiously informed principle—namely liberation theology’s doctrine of helping the oppressed. Likewise, both movements have operated under the belief that transnational problems can be addressed through local solutions. And, of course, both movements consist of similar actors. It is this last point that I wish to investigate.

No formal research exists on the principle players of the greater Philadelphia metropolitan regions, who have participated in the OSM or are participating in the NSM. Furthermore, the motivations and circumstances that have led these individuals and religious institutions to get involved (or not get involved) with the Sanctuary Movement have not been rigorously explained. Such a study will prove useful when asking the larger theoretical question: why and how do people get involved in social movements?

In this regard, I argue that despite similar religious and political cultures contributing to social protest involvement in both sanctuary movements, the NSM must make better use of other recruiting factors like story-telling, political networking and
active civil disobedience if it wishes to replicate (or even exceed) the OSM’s success. I also argue that many existing sociological accounts for social movement involvement rely too heavily on rational, utilitarian explanations. Human behavior is too complex and dynamic for such reductionist models. This is different than arguing that humans act irrationally; failing to comprehensively understand an actor’s behavior is not an indication of irrationality in the actor, but rather an indictment of the analyst. The recruitment strategies of the sanctuary advocates illustrate such a point.

Background

Within Western religious traditions, the idea of “sanctuary” is neither novel as a concept nor as a practice. The Old and New Testaments instruct faith communities to assist travelers in need. Moses, for example, proclaims that areas within the Promised Land, “shall be a refuge, [both] for the children of Israel, and for the stranger, and for the sojourner among them,” (King James Version, Numbers 35:15). In Psalms 42:1, the scripture reads, “Defend me, take up my cause against the people who have no pity; from the treacherous and cunning man, rescue me, God” (emphasis added). Sanctuary, then, must consist of both physical safety and public advocacy on behalf of the stranger.

Churches were recognized as sites of sanctuary within Roman law, medieval canon edicts, and English common law (Golden and McConnell, 15). North America, as originally conceived by European settlers, was viewed as a land of sanctuary and religious freedom (Noll 2001, 11). During the 19th century, white, abolitionist churches defied the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850 and provided sanctuary to African-Americans
escaping bondage in the South. A hundred years later, many progressive, white churches created a vast support network for the civil rights movement. Such historical experiences set the foundation for a distinct theology that prioritized social justice and the notion of liberation, priming the congregations that participated in both the OSM and the NSM for the liberation theology emanating from Latin America in the 1950s and onward.

**Theology of Liberation**

Developed by Brazilian Catholic theologians and priests in the 1950s, liberation theology prioritizes the need to aid the oppressed and impoverished over all other spiritual goals. Influential scholars in the tradition, such as Paulo Freire, emphasized, “orthopraxis over orthodoxy,” (Gadotti 1994, 63), demanding that Christians reimagine their relationship to God as attainable through good actions rather than good beliefs. Freire, along with other luminaries like Leonardo Boff and Gustavo Gutiérrez, reinterpreted the teachings of Jesus as tools for spiritual and political empowerment meant for society as a whole—not just the privileged few. The movement proliferated across South and Central America, informing much of the Catholic Church’s policies in the hemisphere during the mid-twentieth century (Ellner 1994, 78).

Christian Smith, in his 1991 book, *The Emergence of Liberation Theology*, argues that the doctrine grew out of the Catholic Church’s elite, who worried that their denomination was losing support and membership among disenfranchised populations in the Americas. He writes:

At Medellín [Colombia], where liberation theology was incorporated into official Catholic discourse, Church progressives won over moderates with the argument that the very credibility and viability of the institution depended on its renovation. Eleven years later…church conservatives were able to turn
According to them, liberation theology had jeopardized the interests of the church, and had even identified it with socialism (74).

Frequently associated with Marxist principles of socialism and class struggle, liberation theology became a reviled dogma within the rightist era of Pope John Paul II. Yet, even after it had fallen into disfavor with those higher-ups in the Church’s hierarchy, left-wing groups, both moderates and radicals, used the teachings and symbols of liberation theology to further their causes.

The distinction between political and religious martyrdom collapsed. One powerful example was Óscar Romero, the Salvadoran priest murdered by a government-ordered militia in March of 1980. Romero had become a leading voice that framed Christian ideals in direct opposition to the oppressive Guatemalan and Salvadoran polities; even in death, his name has become synonymous with the imperative for faith-based protest around the world (Smith, 72). Similar to his story was that of three American nuns, murdered by Salvadoran death squad several just months after Romero’s assassination. As U.S.-based practitioners of liberation theology realized their own government’s complicity in these transnational injustices, their religious teachings catalyzed into politico-religious actions.

**OSM on the Border**

Like liberation theology, the OSM came out a specific place and moment in time. In the late 1970s, American church workers in the Southwest, like John Fife and Jim Corbett, began to take notice of the hordes of Guatemalans and Salvadorans that were attempting to enter the U.S. at the time. The political violence that catalyzed these early migrations was largely unknown to the North American public, as the U.S. media
systematically ignored the massacre of hundreds of thousands Guatemalans between
1960 and 1990 along with the half-million “disappeared” Salvadorans in the same time
frame (Golden and McConnell, 14). While the U.N. High Commission on Refugees
(UNHRC) declared that the U.S. was contradicting standards set forth in the Geneva
Convention of 1949 and the Refugee Act of 1980, counter—and even obfuscating—
narratives held sway over what little information the American public heard. Authority
figures, such as Ambassador H. Eugene Douglas, the coordinator of refugee affairs under
President Reagan, labeled the Central American refuges as “migrants,” and
“undocumented aliens,” motivated by economic—not political—reasons (USA Today
April 20, 1984). Such posturing, no doubt, resulted from the Reagan administration’s
refusal to accept culpability, as it was sending billions of dollars in military funding and
dozens of government advisors to both El Salvador and Guatemala in an effort to fight
the perceived threat of communist influence in the region (Golden and McConnell, 45).
Indeed, during this period, numerous reports from the UN, American Friends Service
Committee, and Amnesty International documented far more human rights abuses
perpetrated by government forces than guerrilla insurgents.

The religious community on the U.S. southern border of the U.S. demanded
asylum for the thousands of Central Americans caught in the violent crossfire of these
civil wars. At first, church leaders attempted to provide legal refuge for the Guatemalans
and Salvadorans by navigating the Immigration and Naturalization Service’s (INS)
bureaucratic channels. However, out of the nearly 1,400 asylum applications they
submitted between 1980 and ’82 on behalf of imprisoned Central Americans in
deportation jail, the INS denied every single one.¹ When these activists saw all the legal channels in the system failing—the UNHCR reported that all asylum cases for Salvadorans were reviewed *pro forma* with only the intent to expedite their deportation—the church leaders began to regard civil disobedience as a necessary tactic. By 1982, the Southside Presbyterian Church in Tucson officially initiated their institution as a house of sanctuary, risking the threat of a $2000 fine and up to five years in jail for breaking federal law. By 1991, over 400 congregations had declared sanctuary across the country with 2000 support congregations providing assistance and public support. The congregations were diverse, though prominent denominations included Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Jewish, Quaker and Mennonite communities. In turn, the Sanctuary Movement manifested itself as an underground railroad establishing operations in Mexico, Honduras, and Nicaragua.

While the efficacy of social movements is often difficult to quantify, scholars, media reports, and the activists themselves generally contend that the OSM achieved many of its goals (Lippert, 2005). Even when the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) arrested 11 sanctuary activists in 1986 and sentenced them to jail time and fines, the movement continued to grow and gain publicity. And by the early 1990s, public pressure mounted against the State Department and Congressional leaders to cease funding the foreign civil wars (Gibb 2002). In 1992, President Bush, who had served as vice-president under Reagan, brokered a peace treaty in San Salvador between the right-wing government and the communist rebels, the FMLN. In 1996, a similar peace accord

¹According to U.S. government documents, out of the 30,000 that applied, only 341 Central Americans were granted political asylum between 1980 and ’87. Meanwhile, the INS provided official refugee status to thousands of Eastern European immigrants from Soviet-controlled territories (43).
ended the 36-year-long civil war in Guatemala. OSM congregations, which began the slow process of helping refugees return home or establish new lives in the U.S. and Canada, also moved on to other progressive social causes like the anti-apartheid movement or LGBTQ equality. A decade later, however, activists called for a new movement, invoking sanctuary across the country.

**New Times, New Sanctuary**

The U.S. immigration system, along with the dialogue surrounding it, is broken. Anti-immigration and -immigrant fears dominate much of the political policy-making and discourse, blocking out information regarding the millions of immigrants—both documented and undocumented—that comprise the U.S. population. The country’s economy depends upon immigrants, who comprise 12.4% of the nation’s workforce (FAS 1996). According to, “The New Americans,” an authoritative 1997 study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences, most of those workers, even the undocumented, pay an average of $80,000 more in income tax than they receive in public services over the course of a lifetime. The same study found that immigrants frequently take high and low-skill jobs that other Americans will not or cannot fulfill (5), consequently supporting and creating industries that employ millions of citizens.

Among the undocumented population, 57% of which are from Mexico (Camarota & Jensenious 2009), most immigrants enter the U.S. on temporary travelers’ visas with the intention to work for a period of time before returning back to their home country. Sometimes these migrants stay for several months, and sometimes they stay for several years. The vast majority, however, do not enter with the intention of ever achieving
permanent residence or citizenship (Griswold 2002). Economic forces, such as the North
American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and its Central American counter-part,
CAFTA, have created dramatic unemployment rates within the labor markets of U.S.’s
hemispheric trade partners. As of 2003, an estimated 18 million small-farm workers in
Mexico—nearly a fifth of the country’s population—have lost their jobs to the over-
competitive prices of subsidized U.S. commodities (Rosenberg 2003). Venezuelan city-
planner, Alfredo Brillembourg, aptly describes the effect this trend has had on
transnational labor flows, writing, “the attraction of crossing the border remains the
wage-differential,” (Sur Global 2009).

Concerns regarding national security have largely detracted from the debate over
immigration laws. Government officials and the media increasingly link terrorism to
illegal border crossing despite the face that every single terrorist involved in the 9/11
attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon entered the country on legally
obtained student visas. As Daniel Griswold of the CATO institute writes, “For the last
two decades, U.S. immigration policy has been obsessed with nabbing mostly Mexican-
born workers whose only crime is their desire to earn an honest day's pay,” (2002, 1).
Many of the strict border security programs have proven to be counter-productive and
grossly inefficient. With the thousands of border patrol agents, the 650 miles of physical
fencing, and a proposed “virtual fence” (which will cost an estimated $6.7 billion to
build), many analysts have criticized the U.S.’s attempts to seal its southern periphery as
overly expensive and relatively ineffective (Billeaud 2009).

“Recommendations for Reforming Our Immigration Detention System,” a 2009
report issued by the independent think tank, The Constitution Project, calls for a vast re-
figuration of how law enforcement officials target immigrants, detain them in municipal
and federal facilities, provide legal council, and implement deportation procedures.

Speaking of the 274,000 removal hearings held during 2008, the report writes:

> For many of the individuals involved in these proceedings, the experience was
> marked by confusion and fear. Some of the non-citizens involved in removal
> proceedings are detained in government facilities for periods that may last for
> months or even years. A number of these individuals are seeking asylum and
> may be coping with the aftermath of recent experiences of persecution or
> torture. Some of these individuals have lived in the United States for years and
> face the prospect of removal to countries with which they no longer identify
> and where the language is now unfamiliar. Many others have little or no
> knowledge of English and are forced to navigate a complex body of law and
> procedure without the assistance of an attorney or a translator (13).

Citing thousands of cases of racial profiling, denial of legal aid, and prolonged
incarceration periods, the report faults government programs and agencies for
perpetrating civil rights abuses and gross economic inefficiencies.

> When church leaders declared a new sanctuary movement in 2007, they sought to
> address the issues facing immigrants. But new problems necessitate new strategies.
> Current globalized economic injustices, while carnally devastating, are often more
> complex and abstract than the politically rooted horrors of Central America in the 80s.
> Furthermore, The immigration system is denser than it was 30 years ago. In 2003, the
> INS was separated into three agencies: U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
> (USCIS), Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and Customs and Border
> Protection (CBP). The tangling of bureaucracies demands that sanctuary activists and
> immigrants have a higher level of expertise in order to protest, reform, or merely help
> immigrants navigate the system.

> While federal law governs immigration issues, problems manifest themselves
> locally. Perhaps no better example of this is the detention and deportation system, which
has been the central target of NSM Philadelphia. ICE, which is responsible for identifying, arresting and deporting criminal immigrants, has been particularly active within the Philadelphia region over the past five years (Taussig 2006), conducting raids on undocumented communities and using both formal and informal relations with the Philadelphia Police Department to acquire arrested immigrants.

While the 18 NSM chapters across the country focus on a diverse array of issues, the activists in Philadelphia are focusing on Secure Communities, ICE’s newest program. The program started in July of 2009 and operates as a data linkage system that connects the Philadelphia Police Department’s database to ICE’s. The connection automatically sends all information regarding anyone arrested in Philadelphia—whether they have been proven guilty of a crime or not—to immigration authorities, who can then come to a police station and seize a suspected criminal immigrant and initiate deportation proceedings.

In January of 2009, the U.S. Government Accountability Office issued a scathing report on a different ICE initiative, the 287(g) program, which has trained over 60 state and local police departments to enforce immigration laws within their jurisdictions. The report, titled “Immigration Enforcement,” concludes that this program lacks "internal control standards,"(4). Rather than targeting immigrants suspected of serious criminal behavior, as is its mission 287(g) has largely netted immigrants caught committing minor offenses like traffic violations. Indeed, many local police departments enrolled in 287(g) are facing accusations of and lawsuits over racial profiling (10). Additionally, this program and similar ICE initiatives have proven to be major contributors to the clogging and bankrupting of the nation’s prison system (Bernstein 2009).
While Secure Communities is a different program than 287(g), many fear that its negative consequences will be similar. NSM Philadelphia, in its large-scale goal to reform the national immigration system and dispel unfair trade agreements, has chosen to fight the smaller-scale battle of repealing Secure Communities in Philadelphia and providing various forms of spiritual and material assistance to immigrant families with members caught in the deportation process. This is the local battlefront of sanctuary activism, and its outcome will undoubtedly depend upon the movement’s ability to recruit members and other forms of support.

Previous Literature

Many researchers have coined definitions of the term *social movement*, ranging from those that broaden its application in order to describe any organized effort directed at social change (Jenkins and Form, 2005), to the limiting definition put forth by McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly, which states that government must be the subject or object of a social movement (2001, 5). For this paper’s purposes, I will use sociologist Sidney Tarrow’s definition from his 1998 book, *Power In Movement*, where he states that social movements are “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities,”(4). This framework is an accurate description of both sanctuary movements, and it identifies the actors, goals, strategies, and driving forces behind the movements.

---

2 With this in mind, I concede that social movements and their actors take so many forms and processes that a standard definition is at best a “useful fiction,” (Adams 2007, xii).
Social scientists have sought to explain how social movements come into existence, how they function, and whether they will succeed, fail, or dissipate. Much of the original sociological thought dedicated to the topic employed a rather traditional, functionalist model (della Porta 2007). This type of model, centered on what Jasper calls, “The Crowd Approach” (1997, 20), proffered that humans change their behavior when they morph from individuals into crowds. Gustave le Bon’s book, *The Crowd* (1895) pioneered this philosophy, explaining protest behavior by looking at crowd dynamics, latent patterns of violence, and social causes for collective behavior. Underlying the Crowd Approach was a belief that healthy and mature human beings do not aggregate into protesting masses under normal social conditions.

In the 1960s, an alternative theory emerged that explained social movements in more rational and positive terms. George Rudé, a British historian, pioneered what has come to be known as “bottom-up” history in influential books like his 1964 work, *The Crowd in History*. Rudé analyzed social movements such as the French Revolution and the English agriculture revolts in the 1830s from the perspective of protesters, choosing to look at the social, economic and political motivations for congregation and civil disobedience. As a Marxist scholar, Rudé brought a degree of sympathy to his portrayals of revolutionaries, and thus portrayed crowds as reasonable actors responding to unreasonable stimuli (Singer 1989, 262).

Building upon Rudé’s bottom-up approach, scholars in the 1970s cast the social movement as a regular feature in socio-political cycles—predictable behavior that can be explained based on the rational, self-interested, and utility-maximizing nature of human beings. This line of thought, steeped in neo-liberal economic theory, still holds
considerable sway over much sociological analysis. Rational Choice Theory (RCT), as it is often identified, has diversified into various sub-theories. However, these sub-theories all operate under a Downsian model (Gibson 1990, 4), which describes actors in a collective action as innately tied to self-interests and their perceived abilities at satisfying those interests.

The German sociologist, Karl-Dieter Opp, specifies that there are two versions of RCT—the narrow and the wide (Opp 2009, 4). Narrow RCT contends that humans perceive reality correctly, material incentives matter, individuals calculate their costs and benefits, and the information necessary to do so is freely available. This tends to be the most widely criticized version of RCT, as it excludes error, emotion, and moral agency from the behavioral equation. The wide version of RCT takes a less economic stance, understanding and emphasizing that beliefs and perceptions contribute to human behavior, that people only do what they think is best for themselves, and that “soft” or nonmaterial incentives are important factors in any sociological explanation(5).

But RCT, whether wide or narrow, contains primal flaws. In the social philosopher James Jasper’s 1997 book, *The Art of Moral Protest*, he points out that both narrow and wide RCT assume human beings are constantly seeking to maximize utility—however they define it—despite numerous empirical studies indicating people’s willingness to “satisfice.” He writes, “[humans] aim for a certain satisfactory level of profit or resources and sometimes forgo opportunities for more. After all, information is costly to obtain and humans exhibit various biases in how they process it,” (1997, 24). Likewise, it is clear that RCT is best suited to describe decision-making on an individual

---

3 An example of a RCT would be Value Expectancy Theory (VET), which hypothesizes that actors determine their level of involvement in a social movement by multiplying the expected utility of their behavior by the expected probability that their behavior will bring about their interest.
or inter-personal level—in the range of the cognitive or the psychological—not necessarily how structural formations of power and social organization impact human behavior (Opp 2009, 17).

One of the first and most influential formulations of RCT as applied to social organization came from the economist Mancur Olson’s 1965 book, *The Logic of Collective Action*. Olson works on the simple premise that actors do not participate in collective action unless the self-interested benefits outweigh the costs. This is not actually a sociological theory specific to social movements or protest behavior. Rather, the theory can apply to any scenario in which actors come together under a shared interest; it just so happens that social movements fall neatly under this category. But collective action theory is predicated upon the assumption that actors only respond to cost-benefit analysis and value self-interests (1965, 14). Because actors in religious social movements, like the sanctuary movements, generally do not follow patterns of self-interested, cost-benefit analysis (Udéhn 1993, 240; Opp 2009, 57), collective action theory does not fit into this paper’s context. Indeed, many religious actors maximize utility based on altruistic values rather than self-interested values (Jasper 1997, 24). Even the liberal political philosopher and RCT adherent, John Rawls, proposed that while all actions consist of a degree of egoism, individuals often seek to align personal and collective interests; this desire for cooperation and shared norms is a crucial distinction within RCT that collective action theory dismisses too readily.

---

4 Jasper points out that in addition to self-interest (pleasure from our own pleasure) and altruism (pleasure from other people’s pleasure), other incentives drive social actors’ behaviors. Jasper cites two: envy (pleasure from other people’s set-backs) or simple pleasure from the process—rather than the outcome—of social action.
Starting in the late 1970’s and early 80’s, many social scientists began to grow dissatisfied with micro-sociological theories explaining macro-level phenomena, whether explicitly or implicitly. These academics designed approaches, sometimes referred to as *constructionism* (Jasper 1997, 10) that prioritized systemic forces as determining factors in social movement behavior and recruitment. Many of the macro-focused explanations for social movements depend upon the dialectical materialism that dominates the modern political left. As espoused by Marxist thought, movements of the discontent and oppressed (the proletariat) are catalyzed by their specific positions within the structures and institutions of capitalism (Piven and Cloward 1978, ix). It therefore makes sense that the American industrial workers movement originated in factories (96) and that the Civil Rights Movement originated in the South (181). In short, constructionism proffers that all protest movements are products of their specific place and time—a salient point that I use in my analysis of the sanctuary movements.5

Resource Mobilization Theory, first proposed as a unified model by John McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1977), serves as a useful constructionist perspective on social movement development. The basic assumption of resource mobilization is that social movements grow in relation to the flux of resources, their availability or absence. Resources are goods with utility that actors can conceivably control (1977, 1214). These

5 The environment in which social movements emerge and operate is arguably more influential—or, at the very least, complex—than it once was. As society has grown increasingly post-modern, so has academic analysis of social movements. It is little coincidence that the late-1970’s, a period in American history when the foundations of our political and economic system shifted (Castells 1996), brought forth more curiosity of macro forces. Issues like labor organizing, environmentalism, and human rights had to function in the convoluted webs of globalization, post-industrialization, and deregulated government norms. And indeed, researchers began noticing that a new branch of social movements—the transnational social movement—deserved its own focus. As the Sanctuary Movement can be classified in transnational terms, I will later return to some of the relevant macro-oriented perspectives proposed over the past thirty years that inform my research.
may include tangible resources like money, facilities, and weapons, or immaterial resources like intelligence, charismatic leadership skills, and social networks.

While researchers have demonstrated resource mobilization’s explanatory powers, proponents often run the risk of over-extending the perspective’s reach. Immaterial resources do not function in the same manner as material resources—nor do their mobilizations result in identical consequences. Jasper lucidly cites several instances of resources—such as the pleasure derived from protest actions (rather than the pleasure derived from protest’s goals), moral visions, symbol making/sharing, and emotional fortitude (1997, 33)—that are not easily quantifiable or even identifiable in the same way as finances and access to communication technology are. For my research, I intend only to refer to the resource mobilization perspective when speaking of material goods, as opposed to cultural, cognitive, or emotional concepts.

Political Opportunity Structures (POS) is a necessary extension and specification of the resource mobilization perspective; POS confines the definition of resources to adhere to the framework of the political actors and structures in which they operate. Outlined by P.K. Eisenger in 1973, the POS perspective holds that the political environment is accountable for when, where, and how social movements emerge and operate. As Eisenger writes:

such factors as the nature of the chief executive, the mode of aldermanic election, the distribution of social skills and status, and the degree of social disintegration, taken individually or collectively, serve in various ways to obstruct or facilitate citizen activity in pursuit of political goals (11).

Eisenger goes on to cite more nuanced political opportunity structures, such as the responsiveness of a government administration to criticism and encouragement or the amount of community resources that that a government offers to its citizens.
Opp provides valuable analysis of Eisenger’s theory, delineating several important features. First, Opp explains that variables of the political environment can only be considered POS if they are somehow linked with goals of the social movement’s actors (2009, 162). This, of course, requires that a researcher assess a social movement’s goals. Additionally, Opp stipulates the need to define a causal relationship between selected POS and their effects on a social movement’s actors (165). In summary, the POS that a researcher selects as a variable for analysis must be related and causal (in a perceived and/or objective sense) to the goals of a social movement. For the purposes of this paper, I intend to use POS to look at how the OSM and NSM have interacted and negotiated with local and national policy and political actors, and how such interaction endows the movement with legitimacy and momentum in their recruiting efforts.

In attempting to map the complex socio-political landscape in which social movements operate, social scientists have grown increasingly wary of the dichotomy between macro and micro-level analyses. As Donatella della Porta writes, “in a historical situation where deprivation, contrasts, clashes of interest, and conflicting ideologies seem ever present, the rise of social movements cannot be explained by these factors alone” (2007, 18). Instead the two levels of analysis must be used in tandem. Della Porta’s ultimatum demands that researchers look at how larger circumstances transform incentives into actions (macro-to-micro) and how incentives can in turn transform larger circumstances (micro-to-macro).

Opp, who himself is a proponent of RCT, writes, “the basic theoretical model that social movement scholars implicitly accept is that changes on the macro level have an impact on individual incentives which, in turn, change their protest behavior,” (2009, 19).
In other words, RCT, itself explicitly micro-oriented, must be embedded within in much of the macro-level (social, political, and economic level) perspectives as well (Opp 2009, 22). Or, conversely, many macro explanations for protest, such as McAdam, McCarthy and Zald’s study on the anti-globalization movement’s resource mobilization capabilities (1996), took as a given fact that larger political structures activate simple patterns of self-interest and calculated risk management within the psyche of individual actors.

![Figure 1](image.png)

*Figure 1* The basic diagram of the structural-cognitive model (Opp 2009, 17)

Opp proposes a theoretical structure called the structural-cognitive model (2009) that, in his estimation, bridges the macro- and micro- more accurately than any RCT-derived model to date. As shown in Figure 1, the model employs both RCT and constructionist perspectives. I argue that Opp’s call for a hybridized theoretical approach to social movement studies is a move in the right direction but is ultimately misguided. Opp works under the flawed assumption that actors will always respond to incentives and disincentives, whether macro- or micro-, in a rational and self-interested manner. While this surely is sometimes a defining characteristic of humans behavior, I believe Opp limits the complexity of protests and social movements by ignoring other forms of
incentive responses, namely how such responses are rooted in culture, narrative, biography, and networking. Without considering such factors, researchers risk limiting, or failing to account for, protesters’ agency.

**Moving Past RCT**

The theoretical model I intend to use to study the sanctuary movements uses the RCT-derived approaches of resource mobilization and POS, but also takes into account more nuanced macro- and micro-level models of protest involvement. Working from what the post-modernist Jasper refers to as “The Basic Dimensions of Protest” (1997, 43), this paper takes into account how power structures may shape a social movement through factors that do not necessarily lend themselves well to rational, self-interested conceptions of human behavior.

Jasper’s approach is grounded in post-structural theory, which holds that people are symbolic creators and innovators, who define their own social realities. He writes that:

> We proliferate metaphors and language for describing the world; we elaborate theories, hypotheses, and predictions to satisfy our curiosity…Into this roiling cognitive activity we mix emotions and moral evaluations, constructing heroes, villains, and comic jesters (10).

Jasper argues that out of this process of reality construction, humans create systems of meaning that compete with one another. Such competition not only creates protest behavior, but channels it into organized social movements. Thus, Jasper’s model rehashes the crowd approach to explaining social movements, but does so without assigning inherently negative or unhealthy connotations to such behavior. Humans are

6 While Jasper surely owes much of his theoretical underpinning to Foucault and other post-structuralists, curiously, he does not address or credit them explicitly in his book, *The Art of Moral Protest* (1997).
“artful” creatures, to use Jasper’s phrase for agency, that creatively craft their world as much as they respond to it.

Jasper, who provides valuable criticism of RCT, does not wholly dismiss the notion of protestors as rational actors. Rather, he believes theorists have unfairly created a “false-dichotomy” between approaches that characterize social movement actors as rational or irrational. “Irrationality is not the making of mistakes; it is an inability to learn from them,” (27) he writes. As such, he goes on to critique the work of Mancur Olson, a pioneer of Collective Action Theory, who has managed to theorize agency out of theories of collective behavior, thus reducing decision-making to the mathematical equations of game theory (29). Jasper believes this is a theory of convenience, as Olson dismisses culture and biography, which “thicken” human rationality into far too complex of an entity for any game theoretician to strategize adequately. But if theorists are willing to concede that even rational behavior can only partially be explained in rational terms, Jasper believes that there are valuable lessons to be taken from RCT. Taking the strengths of various macro and micro theories, I propose that culture, biography, narratives, and networking are necessary to understanding social protest engagement.

Looking at the idea of culture, Jasper appeals to both Weberian and Durkheimian definitions of this amorphous concept (48), stating that culture is both individual and collective. While in one sense he lists “shared understandings (emotional, moral, and cognitive) and their embodiments”(44). Jasper also “divides culture in discrete pieces,” (49) of concepts and moral packages used for interpreting and assigning meaning to the world. For obvious reasons, this kind of definition presents a difficult variable to study in either quantifiable or qualitative terms. While external expressions of culture, such as
language, rituals, slogans, and art may provide a unit for analysis, Jasper’s definition mandates that inner-states must be observed. For this, he suggests researchers should use interviews with subjects and analysis of other public embodiments, with varying kinds of correspondence between the two” (50). While this highly qualitative and interpretive type of methodological framework doesn’t allow for uniform data sets, looking to the religious cultures of the sanctuary movements will reveal key explanations for recruitment efficacy.

**Biography, Narrative, and Networking**

If culture consists of the meaning-making constructs shared across various layers of human social groupings, whether implicitly or explicitly, then biography must consist of those constructs particular to individual histories. Biography encompasses the multitude of experiences and constructs humans accrue and store in their heads, that are active (though often neither stated nor recognized) factor into the ways they see, judge, and feel about the world around them (55). And while biography may seem to obscure valuable psychological insight—surely, not even a pure constructionist can claim that all behavior is experientially derived—biography does provide a valuable foundation on which to question why individuals and collectives respond to perceived moral injustices and other stimuli. According to Jasper, “moral identity ultimately derives from cultural contexts, but once created it can have considerable context from them” (56). For the purposes of my study—explaining moral membership to a religiously informed movement—this is a valuable framework to work with. Like cultural analysis, biographical insight calls for a research methodology of in-depth interviews and macro-
structural analysis. Key biographical factors in the sanctuary activists, such as prior experience with activism and international travel, will likely point to useful indicators of recruiting success.

Increasingly, scholars are turning to the use of narratives as a key strategic component in social movement recruiting. Sociologist Francesca Polletta, in her 2006 book, *It Was Like a Fever*, analyzes how story-telling became an instrumental tool amongst American abolitionists in the 1800s, civil rights activists in the 1960s, and women’s rights leaders during the 1990s (3). Polletta contends that narratives function to accomplish important tasks, such as imparting key facts that frame perceived problems in similar terms (6), overcoming indifference through empathetic coercion (24), and add to a canon of principled interactions that guide audiences to specific courses of action (64). Polletta argues that successful recruiting stories must be “invested with moral meaning through emplotment” (10) and must contain identifiable points of view that reference previous stories and their lessons. The right actors must tell the right narratives at the right time and in the right venue, otherwise moral imperatives may be dismissed as illegitimate or inappropriate by story-receivers. As storytelling was a key component of the OSM, Polletta provides a useful theoretical groundwork for my research.

Networking, the final factor I consider in my paper, encapsulates inter and inner-organizational structuring and communication. British sociologist Clare Saunders uses a “relational approach” to network analysis in social movements, arguing that inner- and inter-organizational bonds within social movements “must be more than informal or cursory, and should bind individuals and organizations into collaborative networks” (2007, 227). This will be an important point to keep in mind when looking at the OSM
and NSM, as both individuals and congregations have varying levels of involvement that constitute the movements’ formal and informal networks. Such levels of involvement, Saunders argues, are often defined by the perceived efficacy and identity of activists in leadership positions.

In translocal movements like the sanctuary movements, operating on local, national, and even international levels, networking relies upon (often-mediated) communication between designated leaders and their ability to orient themselves toward unified goals through a plurality of means (Keck and Sikkink 1998, 16). In recent years, many researchers have focused on the ways new communication technologies have facilitated novel networking practices between translocal, social-activist. Jeffrey Juris, who follows the anti-corporate globalization movement—a movement with ties to the NSM—identifies how web sites, online forums, emails, text messaging, and web video have all profoundly influenced the ways in which social activists now relate to one-another (2005). This paper takes such considerations into account, looking at the discrepancies between the OSM and NSM in their use of strategic communication technology to expand their network.

**Turning Heads with Sanctuary**

If street protesters seek to turn heads on the nightly news, they also frequently turn heads in academia. The Sanctuary Movements have been slight exceptions to this trend, drawing only a limited amount of formal research. Most of this research relies on micro-level variants of Rational Choice Theory (RCT) and none of it has focused on the

---

7 To date, there have been no academic articles or books on the New Sanctuary Movement.
Philadelphia manifestations of the movements.

Martha Liebler Gibson’s 1990 paper on the topic, "Public Goods, Alienation, and Public Protest,” reviewed the development of original sanctuary movement from a RCT approach called the “public goods” model. Originally defined by Muller and Opp (1986), the public goods model hoped to situate altruistic protest behavior within a RCT framework, though manages to do so by essentially “defining away altruism,” (1986, 33). After two years of surveying OSM activists in several U.S. cities, Gibson concluded that the public goods model does not take enough factors—such as cultural and biographical complexity—into account. Her study indicates that further research on sanctuary activists must deviate from the narrow-framework of RCT in order to better explain recruitment efficacy.

Political scientist Anne Hildreth, another RCT proponent, is the most recent scholar to focus on the incentives that attracted or repelled sanctuary activists to the original movement. In her 1998 paper, “When is Collective Action Political Action?” Hildreth uses a scheme of specified solidary, material and purposive incentives to investigate recruitment motivations. Solidary incentives refer to associative relationships such as the desire to please and conform to friends, family and congregations. Material incentives describe tangible benefits and costs of protest behavior. And purposive incentives refer to inducements based on a sense of perceived group efficacy (454). After surveying ten sanctuary congregations in the Midwest, she found that solidary and material incentives were not as important as purposive incentives. Thus, Hildreth found that the most powerful recruiting incentive seemed to be the individual expectation of social action’s effectiveness.
Hildreth, however, poorly premises her approach to understanding successful sanctuary recruitment incentives. By relying methodologically on a survey privately administered to individual members of sanctuary congregations, Hildreth's short questionnaire was more likely to encourage answers that evoke desires to maximize independent decision-making over group solidarity, as she herself concedes (456). Theoretically, Hildreth operates with implicit faith in RCT, as her incentive-driven study relies heavily on micro conceptions of self-interest maximization. While the categorization of incentives reveals trends within protest behavior, it does not allow for the complexity and nuances that go into forming such incentives and determining how people react to them.

To date, no study has compared recruitment methods for social movements using both the original and new sanctuary movements. Furthermore, Philadelphia has been historically ignored in studies on the original sanctuary movement. For these reasons, I believe both a descriptive and analytical account of the resources, strategies, cultures, and biographies of sanctuary participants in Philadelphia will reveal enlightening information and contribute to the theory behind sociological accounts of social movement.

For this paper, which aims to describe recruitment strategies and circumstances in the Sanctuary Movements in the Philadelphia region, I plan to draw upon a hybrid of rational, constructionist, and post-structural theoretical approaches. Such a mix will focus on factors tailored to the social actions of sanctuary activists in my study’s scope. By looking at religious culture and biography, I hope to explain not just the prominence of solidary incentives as Hildreth and Gibbons did, but how such incentives develop, spread, and function within sanctuary communities. By focusing on storytelling, this paper will
examine an observed recruiting strategy amongst social movements (Polletta 2006) that has yet to be identified within the OSM or NSM. Examining the political operating structures of the sanctuary movements and their ability to mobilize resources will point to the macro forces that impact micro behavior. And finally, this paper will look at how networking and leadership play into the movement’s development within congregations, Philadelphia, and on the national level.

Methodology

At the onset of this study, I approached OSM and NSM research with different perspectives. Regarding OSM, I faced a greater challenge. While many Philadelphians remember the sanctuary movement of the 1980s, I could find no comprehensive record of which institutions and individuals were involved. Relying on a few initial leads, I found myself cold-calling congregations in the hope that current clergy or secretaries could direct me to suitable sources. In many cases, desired contacts had either moved out of the community, were no longer engaged in their religious community, or had passed away. Furthermore, the 30 years separating the OSM and my interviews had frequently erased both colorful and key details from the memories of participants.

Regarding the NSM, however, I found myself in an opportune position to gather data with greater flexibility. Because NSM of Philadelphia is a cohesive coalition—albeit a young one—I was able to place myself within a tangible community that allowed for a more compressive and unified view of the movement’s members. And having
volunteered as a student researcher with NSM several months prior, the group leaders
granted me liberal access to individual members and organized meetings. Such access
was crucial—particularly for a developing organization that has yet to fully brand and
market itself to outsiders.

During the course of my research on both OSM and NSM participants, I used
several different strategies to understand better who, when, how, and why people joined
the sanctuary movements in the Philadelphia region. The research design included
interviewing former and current members of the movements, participant observation in
NSM meetings and rallies, archival research, and gathering past and present news
articles.

The primary source for my data came from one-on-one interviews—mostly
conducted in-person, though several were conducted over the telephone. These
interviews, generally lasting between one and two hours, were all structured around a
similar set of biographical, institutional, and immigration-related questions and topics
(see appendix). With this standardized guide, I was able to ask consistent questions while
allowing for necessary deviations and tangential story telling.

I aimed to get a diverse group of interview subjects for a total of 19 individuals,
who spanned various ages, faiths, denominations, and levels of involvement. Within the
group of 11 OSM participants I interviewed—three of whom have also been heavily
involved in NSM—I spoke to community leaders of sanctuary churches like First United
Methodist Church of Germantown (FUMCOG), Chestnut Hill Friends, Germantown
Friends, Tabernacle United, Wayne Baptist, and Mishkan Shalom Synagogue. Sister
Margaret McKenna, who was one of the leaders of the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary,
was my only contact for the extra-congregational organization that hosted a Salvadoran refugee. Included in this group are two Guatemalan immigrants, Joel Morales and Manuel Portillo, both of whom were hosted by sanctuary churches. Within the group of NSM subjects, I interviewed the two current leaders of the group, four members of its advisory board—all of whom are also religious or organizational leaders in the city—and one younger member, who is not affiliated with any specific denomination or church. I also interviewed one person, Janet Hinshaw-Thomas, who has no formal ties to either sanctuary movement, but has been working in ecumenical refugee resettlement since the early 1980s and was recently arrested for illegally ferrying Hatian refugees into Canada. Her interview provided a valuable comparative model for new forms of sanctuary work compared to that of NSM’s.

I attended four NSM coalition meetings, a rally held outside City Hall, and an information session with a partner organization in South Philadelphia. Such experiences allowed me to look beyond the rhetoric and individual accounts of sanctuary involvement, and analyze the cultural and environmental dynamics of NSM Philadelphia.

Other data came in strictly textual forms. Much of my data regarding the involvement of Chestnut Hill Friends in the OSM comes from a scrapbook of historical documents, internal memos, and newspaper clippings compiled by an unknown church member sometime in the early 1990s. The current secretary at the meetinghouse found the notebook while cleaning a closet last year, prior to which most members of the meetinghouse were not aware of the church’s involvement in the OSM. I also reference the memoir-style account of the sanctuary movement written by FUMCOG’s then-senior pastor Ted Loder. This autobiography, while not data that I personally collected or
recorded, provided valuable insight into a prominent activist’s decision-making process to join and recruit others for the movement.

Finally, I verified much of the information garnered through various sources by cross-referencing facts with news stories in local publications. Journalistic accounts of OSM churches in the 80s, along with more recent articles in local and national media outlets, inform and guide NSM members. Where appropriate, I have used these texts as primary data.

Data and Analysis

Sanctuary was never particularly popular. Of the thousands of churches in Philadelphia (Taussig 2006), only seven participated directly in OSM, and only three currently identify as official supporters of NSM. These were Tabernacle United, FUMCOG, Chestnut Hill Friends, Germantown Friends, Mishkan Shalom, Central Baptist in Wayne, and the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary, which was not affiliated with any specific church. According to some OSM participants, there were about 10-15 “supporting churches,” which assisted the sanctuary congregations in various ways. I was not able to get a definitive count or list of these churches, and the level of their involvement seemed so diverse (for example, several members from Riverside Church volunteered on a semi-regular basis at FUMCOG) that I have not included them in my list of sanctuary congregations.
I interviewed ten leaders or active members from the OSM congregations that hosted Central American refugees during the 1980s and early 90s. Likewise, I interviewed eight NSM members and observed several coalition gatherings, though the cohesive nature of their group meetings obscured the fluidity of their membership. NSM is a young organization, and thus it seemed that at every meeting I saw new faces—representatives of churches and organizations or individuals who had heard of NSM and wanted to learn more about its work but were not “official” members.

I attempted to gather data that would accurately capture the many motivations and circumstances that influence recruitment in both movements. Accordingly, I have organized the data so that each movement appears separately and distilled into themes and patterns.

The OSM in Philadelphia

Religious Culture

Considering the OSM was based in communities of religious worship, it is hardly surprising that participants regularly cite theological teachings as motivational sources. But the specific theological texts and tenets described by sanctuary activists reveal important moral guidelines that determined recruitment in the movement.

The current senior pastor at FUMCOG, Reverend Michele Bartlow, describes the impetus for getting involved as a component to the philosophical and spiritual underpinnings of her Christian identity. She states that the sanctuary movement “was actually a resurrection that goes back to a religious and philosophical ideal of the church in Rome. A person could be in a safe place, and not be picked up in a church.”
Rabbi Linda Holtzman of Mishkan Shalom Synagogue echoes this religious tradition in a Jewish historical context. Jewish traditions and culture, she instructs, are perpetually embedded in migration and the self-conception of Israelites as exiles. This theme has been emphasized at the synagogue since its 1988 founding as a sanctuary congregation in Northwest Philadelphia. In fact, Brian Walt, the founder and first Rabbi of Mishkan Shalom, left Congregation Beth Israel in Media, Pennsylvania, after his requests to practice a more progressive and socially oriented form of Judaism became too unpopular. In this vein of religiosity, Rabbi Holtzman credits liberation theology as having a profound impact on many of the synagogue members’ motivations despite the theology’s foundation in Christian traditions. While the theology was not central to the Jewish community’s recruitment, “its appeal helped connect certain Jewish principles with the actions of local Christians,” says Holtzman.

Nearly every OSM participant I interviewed listed liberation theology as a monumental source of inspiration. As FUMCOG member Marion Brown phrased it, “Liberation theology gave the sanctuary movement a standard text,” in its leftist interpretation of Jesus’ teachings and call for demanding more orthopraxis than orthodoxy. Dick Cox, another prominent FUMCOG member, emphatically describes his own liberation spirituality, saying that, “I’m a very spiritually developed person and left of socialist. Some people wouldn’t find those things compatible, but I do.”

It is no coincidence that many of the churches that had active liberation bible study groups in the early 1980s were later declaring sanctuary. The common moral visions led to similar explanations for sanctuary involvement such as Germantown
Friends member, Marlena Santoyo’s, insistence that “the meetinghouse decided to follow God’s law above the government’s.”

This prioritization of spiritual over legal imperatives was, in fact, the driving force behind the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary’s founding in 1987. Because the Archdiocese of Philadelphia forbade local congregations to declare sanctuary—presumably due to fears of entangling with the law (McKenna and Shields)—Catholics in the area could not work within the official hierarchy if they wished to host Central American refugees. The Peacemakers Reflection Group, an independent assembly that taught Bible classes on non-violence, assembled the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary and provided refuge for a Salvadoran man in the late 80s. Sister McKenna, who was one of the lead planners of the Catholic Coalition, explains it succinctly, saying, “we all believed that our faith was calling us to do this—to help the Salvadorans—more than we believed it was illegal and therefore wrong.”

In all of these faith communities, I observed that members describe a religious culture that emphasizes a communal perspective on moral good. Phrased in sociological terms, these congregations largely consisted of members who align self-interests with collective interests, thus falling under the heading of altruistic actors. Whether this altruism is learned, imposed through social pressure⁸, or biologically innate is beside the point. What’s important is that this spiritual culture creates the ideal environment for the next factor of recruitment to take hold.

---

⁸ Only one interviewed subject, Anne Ewing of FUMCOG, professed an initial lack of spiritual motivations. However, Ewing did come around to phrasing her moral convictions in more explicitly religious terms. “When you’re doing these things in the church, you’re searching scripture and looking for justification. It was the activism that informed by religion.” This indicates that for some OSM recruits, the theological teachings were important but secondary causal factors in their involvement.
Narrative

Stories, as much as moral framework, guide OSM recruitment. Take, for example, the frequently cited narrative of the Archbishop of San Salvador, Óscar Romero, who was assassinated by right-wing death squads in 1980 for aligning with left-wing liberation theologians. Unwittingly, Romero’s murderers strengthened his influence by catapulting his story into the international public sphere. “We heard about the assassination of Archbishop Romero,” says Vic Compher, one of Tabernacle’s leading sanctuary organizers. “That was a lightening bolt for many people, and in a short period of time, Romero became a representative for people there getting murdered. For him to take a bullet and die, while presiding over mass, that was very shocking and disturbing.”

Stories do shock and disturb, but they have other affects on listeners. I found that the stories told by OSM participants and in newspaper articles from that period, fell into two categories that worked in tandem: narratives of education and narratives of empathy.

All stories contain educational qualities, though some transmit more information than others. For example, most eventual participants in the OSM had heard stories of the human rights abuses in Guatemala and El Salvador prior to joining the movement. As FUMCOG pastor Ted Loder recounts in his memoir, these stories came in the form of newspaper articles and NGO reports covering the thousands of deaths and “disappearances,” of suspected enemies of these Central American governments (Loder 1986, 23).

One of these NGO reporters was Angela Berryman, a worker with the American Friends Service Committee, who was stationed in Central America until 1979. Berryman
and her husband, Phillip, who is a Catholic Priest and renowned liberation theologian at Temple University, lived in Guatemala, El Salvador, and Costa Rica while violence began to escalate. As Berryman explains, “part of our work was to really know what was happening in these countries and interpret those situations for an international audience here in the US and media in Europe. We were observers and then communicated our observations.” Berryman desired to change the political reality in Central America, and used information as her instrument for doing so. And while AFSC did not physically offer sanctuary in Philadelphia or elsewhere, the organization supported OSM refugees in the hope that they could “get their stories out.”

Informative stories, however, were not always the most successful recruiting devices. As Dick Cox explained, FUMCOG’s socially aware members were all aware of the Central American violence several years before the church’s Sanctuary Committee formed. It took a different type of story—that which induced strong empathy—to recruit FUMCOG into the OSM.

In this empathy category of recruitment narratives, Betsy Morgan’s stands out. An active member of Central Baptist Church, Morgan taught English at Eastern College outside of Philadelphia in Wayne, PA, and would occasionally have non-U.S. students in her classes. Almost 30 years later, she describes the effect that one monumental class had on her, saying:

As an English teacher, I would give the assignment to write about something that was dramatic in your life. We had a Salvadoran student. And she told a story about how she saw her brother dead in the street and she had to just walk by him because it was dangerous to let the authorities know she knew them. It kind of blew everyone away, because there were students writing about a big football game or something, and this girl comes along and no one knew what hit them...But so she had come to Eastern…and I got interested in her stories and why she came. And meanwhile our church—a pretty liberal church—was having an adult class for liberation theology. I think it was the simultaneity of hearing these stories just at the time the congregation
was learning about liberation theology. If you find out about something that’s happening that horrible, you address it.

This story highlights a crucial and consistent theme in successful empathy narratives: the refugee was physically present. Churchgoers, despite possessing war statistics and a moral framework that condemned violent U.S. and Central American governments, only began to take action when the story became that of an individual. The incarnation of a literal face to the struggle—a human form that encapsulated a transnational conflict—became the most potent weapon in the OSM’s arsenal. Indeed, it was not until members of Congress met refugees and OSM participants in person that the movement gained political allies (Loder 1986, Santoyo 2009). The OSM’s primary recruiting strategy—giving refugees a legitimate platform on which to speak—was absolutely successful.

The OSM centered its recruiting strategy around stories about “the truth” and stories that tugged on the strings of hearts. Sometimes these stories were one and the same, while other times educational stories had to precede empathy stories. Which combination of stories equated into effective recruitment depended on the credibility of the narrator and receptiveness of the audience. In short, some audiences were more ready to listen than others.

Stories did not always work. The U.S. government, in official press conferences and authoritative pressure on media outlets, put a spin on the thousands of Guatemalans and Salvadorans spilling out of their countries by labeling many of them as both communists and economic refugees undeserving of asylum. That the Reagan administration would initially attack the OSM through the immigrants, as opposed to the American activists, demonstrates the government’s understanding of a which point of
view stood to lose the most credibility. The government knew to undermine the Central Americans narrators.

Joel Morales, one of the Guatemalan refugees hosted by FUMCOG, remembers speaking at a college in 1985 and encountering a counter-narrative embodied by a professor. He says:

I remember one time—I think it was a professor—he said that I was so naïve that I didn’t see that communism was really taking over Central America. He said this because when they were told, here in the media, that the government in Guatemala was fighting communism, they were given some examples of communist guerrillas. But if there were, let’s say, only two communists in a community of ten thousand people, that doesn’t mean that eleven million Central Americans were thinking the same. He labeled me naïve, but I think he got the message that I was not that dumb...I said... if demanding education and health for everyone makes me a communist, then I am a communist.

Morales, who had been a target of the Guatemalan death squads for working as a union organizer, was particularly adept at injecting his captivating stories into the OSM discourse. This ability to confront a counter narrative by redefining its terms—“communism,” for example—came in handy when federal agents arrested Morales and his wife, Gabriela, and put them on trial in 1984. The judge, in the federal trial held in Texas, had forbade Morales to testify about his political persecution in Guatemala, but Morales managed to slip in part of his story anyway. Dick Cox recounts that, “the prosecutor asked Joel something about slipping across the border, and Joel put his hand
to his ear and said, ‘I’m sorry, I couldn’t hear you because soldiers in Guatemala beat me so hard I’ve gone deaf in this ear.’”

In fact, the story of federal agents arresting the Morales family at FUMCOG revealed an important dynamic in activists’ cost/risk decision-making processes. As word of the crackdown spread in Philadelphia on January 21st, 1985, the local OSM network rippled with fear. But most of this fear was altruistically held for the refugees and the danger they faced if arrested and deported. After months of pro-bono legal preparation and media campaigning, the Morales were acquitted and allowed to stay in the country. Their story and FUMCOG’s sanctuary work reinforced the plotline that OSM recruiters had been using—“Do what is morally right, whether it is risky or not, and you will prevail,” (Garretson).

The narrative gained reliability and more people paid attention to what these refugees had to say.

Morales, now 52, is a U.S. citizen, lives in Mt. Airy, and works as a carpenter at Haverford College.
Biography

OSM recruits did not lead boring lives. Their histories generally revealed a predisposition to protest and civil disobedience that informed their OSM involvement. Such data cannot be easily quantified, though I have drawn out a basic table below, which indicates notable biographical factors in numerical fashion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previously Involved in:</th>
<th># OSM Participants (Total of 11)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social Actions</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Movements</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Travel</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin American Travel</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All OSM participants I interviewed, except for one, had previously been involved in some form of social action. One of these people, Marlena Santoyo, had only loosely attended some protests prior to joining the OSM, but again, the large majority of these people had devoted significant amounts of time and effort to a specific movement.

Marion Brown of FUMCOG, illustrates this point. Describing her worldview growing up, Brown admits that she functioned under the belief that, “God, Government and my father were always right.” But halfway through college, her husband was drafted to go to Vietnam and subsequently went to military jail as an in-service conscientious objector. This radicalized Brown, pushing her into the anti-Vietnam War movement and into a new worldview. “Once you tune into one particular global aggression situation, it makes you more aware and tuned into others. You have a framework that it makes sense in” Brown says. When the OSM came to her church community in the 80s, Brown was an easy recruit.
Interviewed subjects also repeatedly mentioned traveling outside the U.S. as important components in their life histories. While not as strong of a determining factor as previous social action, leaving the U.S. and seeing another cultural, political, and economic reality helped frame the issues revolving around the OSM (Ewing).

More specifically, travel to Latin America conjured a sense of solidarity with the Guatemalan and Salvadoran refugees. Marlena Santoyo, previous to joining the OSM with Germantown Friends, had lived in Mexico for eight years, did not have to stretch her imagination very far in order to picture the destitution the Central Americans were fleeing. Her familiarity with their cultural traditions, language, and geographical originations, positioned her to be a willing recruit.

Networking

Sanctuary never occurred in a vacuum. The movement arrived in Philadelphia as nationally active organizers brought refugees to tell their stories and resources to help interested congregations take action. All sanctuary organizers in Philadelphia that were able to recall, cited the Chicago Religious Task Force on Central America (CRTFCA) as a guiding force in their preparations to host a refugee or family. Furthermore, meetings such as the 1985 Inter-American Symposium on Sanctuary held in Tucson, Arizona, played a vital role in the expansion of the sanctuary network and distribution of knowledge and skills (Loder 1986). Such meetings were necessary, as the leadership structure of the OSM depended on national organizers communicating with congregational representatives. Without competent and initiative-taking clergy or
congregation members, groups like CRTFCA would not have had the networking effect they did.

Within Philadelphia’s OSM network, Tabernacle and FUMCOG were monumental players as the first and second congregations, respectively, to publicly declare sanctuary. Known as churches already invested in social activism, the two congregations held influence over the orthopraxis of other churches like Germantown Friends and Central Baptist (Morgan). Numerous interviewees cited these relationships as successful pathways to official and unofficial recruitment of congregations to the movement.

As mentioned earlier, the Archdiocese’s hierarchical barrier forced progressive Catholics to work outside of established congregations. The members of the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary, most of whom lived in Philadelphia and took queues from churches like FUMCOG and Tabernacle, resorted to hosting a Salvadoran family in a private residence in Fox Chase, Pennsylvania. Other Catholic churches like St. Vincent’s in Germantown provided funds, human resources, and other forms of assistance to the official sanctuary churches (McKenna).

*Political Operating Structure*

While the OSM’s interaction with the POS locally and nationally was primarily a concern for its over-all efficacy, the movement’s relationship with structural forces impacted recruitment in certain key ways. For example, as the OSM gained political leverage, their recruiting gained traction as well. By lobbying local politicians like Congressman William Gray, who was also a Baptist Minister in Philadelphia, and
Senator Arlen Specter, OSM of Philadelphia gained powerful supporters and legitimacy (Bartlow and Santoyo). Like many other social movements, the OSM’s increased membership begot more members in a self-reinforcing system.

The OSM also had a clearly defined political target. Their protest was explicitly against President Reagan’s support for the Central American right-wing governments. Ted Loder of FUMCOG clearly identified this sense of alienation, describing it in his memoir as, “a patriotic impulse to question the government and demand a change in their foreign policy,” (1986, 60). By breaking the law and telling refugees’ stories, OSM activists were pushing back against a unified target in a unified manner.

One such target was the INS, which as a politically controlled government agency influenced OSM recruiting. Knowing that their form of civil disobedience would likely require interaction with the INS and thus specialized knowledge of immigration law, sanctuary congregations specifically recruited lawyers and individuals willing to “get their hands dirty” (Ewing). Such expertise required that OSM activists raise funds in order to fight against the POS, as seen in Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting’s expense sheet (Appendix Figure F).

**Material Resource Mobilization**

Like the structural interaction with POS, the OSM would not have found recruits without persistent human labor, financial donations, and physical infrastructure. While such resources ostensibly influenced the over-all goals of the movement, they also made the difference between a congregation that wished to be recruited and a congregation that had the ability to be recruited.
The demands and limitations of churches as institutions frequently created material constraints in the recruitment process. At FUMCOG, for instance, the sanctuary committee had to jump through a series of hoops before they had access to the spatial and financial resources of the church. For about a year, they hosted information sessions for FUMCOG members in the church and at people’s homes talking about the spiritual and historical underpinnings of the Sanctuary Movement. They also published questions and answers about the movement in the church’s monthly newsletter (Ewing). The committee then had to convince the administrative council of the church—an oversight board of trustees that is responsible for the church as a property and building—that a refugee family should be allowed to live there. When the committee finally secured approval from them, the congregation had to take a vote. Out of the 150 people at that vote, Dick Cox only remembers one person who objected—the mother of a man who worked for the federal government and felt her approval could reflect poorly on her son’s career. After that, the institution’s many resources opened up for the Sanctuary to utilize.

Sister McKenna, who eventually founded the Catholic Coalition for Sanctuary, first attempted to recruit the local community of Medical Mission Sisters, of which she was a long-time member. In many regards, the group fit the bill of likely recruits: a homogenous community of progressive Catholics, aware of the U.S. government’s influence within Central America and often with first-hand experiences dealing with refugees in the region. But as McKenna explains, “people feared meeting the service requirements and pulling it off—prudent people, who think of all the possibilities of what could go wrong…After many discussions, the group decided not to declare.”
Chestnut Hill Friends faced few institutional barriers but many financial ones. In 1984, when the congregation first heard of the OSM, they were down to about 12 regular members—a miniscule fraction of their once robust size. The declaration of sanctuary was easy as many of the members had done refugee assistance after World War II in Germany and were eager to help Central Americans (Garretson). But it was only after numerous fundraising events—many of which had a Latin American cultural theme—did the meetinghouse achieve its material needs to host a refugee. According to archival records many residents in the neighborhood became interested in their work and donated money after stories about their sanctuary declaration appeared in local periodicals like the Germantown Courier (Appendix Figures C, D, E, and F).

The NSM in Philadelphia

Religious Culture

Religious culture is the strongest link between the to sanctuary movements, though I argue that the NSM is attempting to expand its interfaith recruitment efforts.
from those of the OSM. For the most part, however, I observed many of the same liberation theological tenets, moral frameworks, and Biblical passages that guided sanctuary churches in the 1980s. This came out poignantly at a coalition meeting held this past October.

Every second Thursday of the month, about 30 people, NSM members and guests from the Philadelphia community, gather in the basement of Visitation Catholic Church in North West Philadelphia, which now has the full support of the Archdiocese due to more progressive leadership than that of the 1980s (Shields). Each month’s meeting generally consists of an educational presentation on a specific topic, a discussion of the topic, followed by a check-in on what various committees in the group are working on. To facilitate the involvement of non-English speaking members, NSM provides a bilingual (usually Spanish-English) translator, who sits in the corner and interprets into a microphone connected to radio-operated headphones. It’s an impressive system that leads to surprisingly efficient communication.
On October 9th, 2009, the coalition meeting focused on a series of Biblical passages. NSM leaders, Jen Rock and Peter Pedemonti passed around pieces of paper with four excerpts from Exodus, each translated into Spanish on the reverse side of the papers for the non-English readers present. What followed was essentially a Bible study.

At one point, Exodus 2:11-15 comes up. The passage describes how Moses killed an Egyptian guard after witnessing the guard striking a Hebrew. Moses, who recognizes injustice, is moved to immediate action and sacrifices his standing in Egyptian society. Dara, an American NSM member in her 20s, raises her hand and says, “A lot of times, young people connected to oppressed populations but who are privileged, will work into greater awareness to work for social justice. They can then use their position of power to leverage change.” Around the room, head bob in agreement until Caroline, a middle-aged NSM member from Central Baptist, speaks out.

“Moses murdered someone and that complicates the story. You can’t look for easy solutions when someone is in between two worlds and it’s confusing to know what is right and wrong” Caroline says. The discussion continues, as people use Moses’s story
as guiding metaphor for how to convince people to fight against oppression and injustice with non-violence and cultural acceptance.

Later, quotations from other parts of the Bible come up, such as Leviticus 19: 32-24, which reads: “If a stranger lives with you in your land, do not molest him. You must count him as one of your own countrymen and love him as yourself—for you were once strangers yourselves in Egypt. I am Yaweh your God.” Most people at the meeting all seem familiar with such quotations, having read them before and linked them to the fight for U.S. immigration and free-trade reforms⁹.

NSM member, Zac Steele, keeps chiming in with eloquently phrased comments on collectivized spirituality that demands social action. The 29-year-old, white American, is one of the founders and leaders of JUNTOS, a community organization that provides various forms of assistance to the undocumented Mexican population in South Philadelphia. Speaking to me after the meeting, Steele describes how his spirituality led him to community activism:

My father is Jewish, but his family didn’t really practice Judaism. My parents, nominally, were Unitarian Universalists, which I think has elements of the same humanism that is found in different parts of liberation theology. I was not raised as a practicing Christian. I believe in God now, but the process of believing in God was connected to coming into contact with liberation theology. Even in the black community, which I spent time in living in the South, much of human struggle is in fact part of their religious process—standing for what you believe in and putting it into practice…There’s something about the individual spirituality, in traditional religiosity, as opposed to the community’s relationship with itself in liberation religiosity.

⁹ This linkage is a subtle but important difference between the religious dialogue of OSM and NSM participants. While both movements looked for a spiritually derived moral grounding for criticizing structural agents, NSM’s structural targets are different. Whereas the OSM could focus on simple condemnations of those who do not help the politically oppressed, NSM must criticize those who do not aid any oppressed migrants—whether religiously, politically or economically motivated.
He goes on to recite a detailed account of liberation theology’s development in Latin America, use within revolutionary struggles, denunciation within the Catholic Church, and how all of these factors influenced the geopolitical conditions that bore the OSM. Steele is speaking proof that the current of liberation theology running through NSM Philadelphia is emotive, scholarly, and substantive.

Deviating from defining characteristics of OSM activists, today’s sanctuary advocates emphasize principles of inter-faith membership more than those of the 1980s. The reasons for this, I argue, are both cultural and tactical. Culturally, progressively religious communities in Philadelphia increasingly value ecumenism as demonstrated by recent increases in multicultural groups’ membership such as the popular Interfaith Peace Walk, a bi-annual celebration of nonsectarian dialogue (Holtzman). Many of NSM’s members, including co-president Peter Pedemonti, organize and participate in such activities, frequently reiterating their ardent belief that no religious code or tradition is better than any other. Tactically, ecumenism is a wise value to emphasize as NSM attempts to work with immigrant communities that do not practice either Christianity or Judaism, such as many in the Middle Eastern community residing in North Philadelphia. NSM has begun a series of educational outreach programs at Al Aqsa, a mosque located in Fishtown, in hopes that the city’s Muslim community may know more about and feel inspired to vocally engage in immigration activism (Pedamonti). Likewise, NSM members view Muslim participation in the movement as particularly necessary after September 11th, which struck many Americans as a challenge to interfaith understanding (Shields). At a recent NSM meeting, as if NSM is in active preparation for this Muslim
outreach, members were encouraged to draw corollaries of meaning between passages in the Torah, New Testament, and Qur’ran related to social justice.

Narrative

NSM is a story in process. Only two years after its inception, NSM of Philadelphia has not gathered and mobilized the wealth of stories that the OSM eventually deployed. This is largely due to the movements’ different issues, goals, and strategies. The economic injustices that drive NSM activism require more complex storytelling than the political injustices that drove the OSM required. Zac Steele, with a frustrated tone, explained to me that:

The position of the people seeking sanctuary is very different now than it was then. It’s easier to make a case for political asylees, than economic asylees. The analysis is easier. How you illustrate that our government was forcing people to immigrate due to trade policies? It’s more complex. And then, as Americans speaking to Americans, what kind of civil disobedience is called for by those stories? The protest would have to be transnational, which is largely out of reach.

Steele points to the need for NSM to tell stories that are at once clear, human-oriented, and suggestive of a course of action. So far, NSM has not rigorously accomplished this task, though they are trying.

As members continue to develop outreach programming to local congregations, they attempt to tell both educational and empathetic stories. Denise Peterson, a 24-year-old NSM member, has helped lead three outreach information sessions. She describes sessions as discussion-based classes on the statistics and stories of undocumented immigrants. But currently, NSM outreach does not involve immigrants telling stories about themselves—a key step to achieving the degree of immediacy and intimacy that
provoked empathy among audiences of OSM refugees. Furthermore, on NSM’s newly written promotional pamphlet, the organization lists storytelling below five other endeavors, such as educating immigrants about legal rights and accompanying families caught in the deportation process. This prioritization is understandable—NSM’s version of sanctuary is a dispersed and metaphorical sanctuary that involves many resources spread out across more recipients (more on that below). If the OSM had attempted to physically house thousands of additional refugees, surely their story-telling capabilities would have decreased.

NSM, however, recognizes that original stories, told with immigrant voices, must become more central to their strategy if they wish make economic injustice into an empathy-inducing recruitment tool. For now, such narratives are coming from outside sources.

Many members of NSM cite stories in the media that inspired their interest in acting for immigration reform. Peterson, who came to Philadelphia to work for the Office of the Vicar for Hispanic Catholics, did not feel emotionally tied to NSM until she began reading coverage of immigrant hardships on the New York Times website. She remembers one particular article about the inhumane treatment of undocumented immigrants in a Rhode Island jail (December 27th, 2008), explaining that articles such as the one she read “put faces to the immigrant struggle.”

Peterson’s personal account points to a type of storytelling—using personal immigrant stories through new media—which NSM has yet to fully engage. Peter Pedemonti wants to change that. He believes that successful recruiting must consist of immigrant voices and these voices must be heard in today’s public sphere—the Internet.
Several NSM members, including Manuel Portillo, a Guatemalan, who came to the U.S. during the OSM, have started storytelling groups for immigrants around Philadelphia. “Right now, we’re still working to establish relationships of trust in diverse groups of immigrants,” says Peter. Story telling groups, like the one currently meeting at the predominantly Mexican and Philadelphia Praise Center in South Philadelphia, will hopefully increase solidarity within the immigrant community and produce personal accounts of unfair treatment within the labor force and criminal justice system. In the near future, Pedemonti hopes NSM will have packaged some of these stories either on a DVD or a website, both of which can be used for recruiting in outreach programming or indirect promotional work.

This plan, however, comes with a central caveat, as explicated by Jen Rock at a coalition meeting in December. “The ways in which these stories are used will be determined by the storytellers themselves,” she says. Such an edict illustrates how NSM’s storytelling framework differs from that of congregations in the OSM; if immigrants are truly to be self-empowered, they must lead themselves in determining the content, perspective, and venue for their stories. American sanctuary activists will be there to support and provide guidance only as necessary, though how terms such as “guidance” and “necessity” are to be decided has not yet been defined by either Rock or Pedemonti.

**Biography**

I have attempted to identify and analyze parallel key themes in the life histories of NSM participants as those in OSM participants. The similarities are strong.
Again, prior involvement with social actions and movements indicates that activists’ histories with protest behavior increased the likelihood of NSM involvement. International travel experience also appears to have a strong correlation with NSM membership.

My interview with Jen Rock, serves as an illustrative example of how prior involvement in social movements and international travels led her to NSM. At 25, Rock has a keen global awareness. Having grown up in an upper-middleclass family, she had the privilege to travel to 15 countries by the time she was 23, frequently doing volunteer work in locations like Costa Rica. She began to notice a trend among many of the people she would meet abroad. “Consistently, people wanted to know how to get to the U.S.,” she says, “and [I] learned stories about visa applications costing more than annual salaries, which just makes folks devastated. [I
learned that] resources can move freely but people are constricted.” Her realizations, in certain key ways, mirror those of OSM participants, who joined the movement after escaping the “sanctioned” American worldview. The difference between realizations of this nature in the two sanctuary movements was whether an activist defined the questionable U.S. policies as political or economic—either way, American policies were negatively impacting the lives of people in other countries and systemically drawing those same people to come to the U.S.

During a later conversation, Rock spoke to me only several days after returning from the G-8 protests in Pittsburgh. Our discussion turned to her initial politicization. She says:

It happened through the anti-globalization movement. Anti-IMF protests and unjust economic policies throughout the world. Then I started to focus on Latin American solidarity work in Mexico, El Salvador, Costa Rica. Later, I started thinking closer to home. I was living in Vermont and working on anti-nuclear organizing, but when I moved to Philly, I was organizing against gentrification. Through that time I was maintaining immigrant stuff and got involved with JUNTOS. That’s when I heard about NSM.

Not everyone in NSM comes from such a politicized background at Rock, but most have been involved in movements or individual acts of protest. Such a political history reveals, like in the case of Marion Brown, an established willingness to look for structural problems, criticize powers of authority, and sacrifice certain levels of material comfort for moral ideals.

Networking

In 2007, Peter Pedemonti and Margaret Sawyer, an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ, heard about the New Sanctuary Movement’s founding in Washington D.C. of that year. Peter, a recent returnee to Catholicism working at the free
clinic and hospitality center, House of Grace Catholic Worker in Kensington, teamed up with Sawyer, and the two began to research the potential role of an NSM chapter in Philadelphia. They contacted local OSM congregations and organizations working to improve immigrants’ rights and living conditions. Then they looked at relevant political issues on a local level, such as the Philadelphia Police Department’s relationship with ICE and a lack of legal guidance for families of immigrants in deportation jail. When they determined that the city was missing an organization that could network much of the existing pro-immigrant activism and recruit more help from the faith community, Pedemonti and Sawyer declared NSM Philadelphia.

Pedemonti admits now that he and Margaret should have focused more on the number of congregations they brought into the coalition. Currently, three congregations have officially aligned themselves with NSM: Visitation BVM, Mishkan Shalom, and Central Baptist Church. Additionally, four secular organizations, PICC\(^{10}\), JUNTOS, HIAS\(^{11}\), and the recently defunct Open Borders Project, provide support and guidance. While NSM has about 30 dedicated members and 250 loosely associated members, Peter sees church networks as the key to the coalition’s future growth. “When you get a congregation, you theoretically get hundreds of more people who are part of the movement” he says.

Importantly, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia seems poised to commit official support to NSM. The Vicar of Hispanic Catholics, Monsignor Hugh Shields, has played an instrumental role in NSM Philadelphia’s development. The son of Irish immigrants,

---

\(^{10}\) The Pennsylvania Immigration and Citizenship Coalition

\(^{11}\) Whereas only one Jewish community was heavily involved in Philadelphia’s OSM, now Mishkan Shalom and HIAS, a pseudo-secular refugee resettlement agency founded under Jewish auspices, share that distinction. HIAS stands for Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society.
with nearly a decade of experience ministering in South and Central America, Shields unyieldingly supports NSM’s goals and has put them into contact with various religious leaders and community organizers across the city. Acting as a liaison between immigrant rights activists and the upper-echelons of the Catholic hierarchy, he is hopeful that the Church will soon formally pledge their membership to NSM.

NSM also hopes to expand the organization’s network to other types of demographics than those that mostly defined OSM’s congregations—white, middle-class, and Christian. NSM’s interfaith outreach to Al Aqsa and their connections to non-religious groups fall in this line of recruitment. Additionally, most of NSM’s October coalition meeting was spent learning about the U.S. government’s maltreatment of Cambodian political refugees from Mia-lia Kiernan, a representative of the Cambodian Association of Greater Philadelphia (CAGP). Kiernan’s presentation included a documentary on the hundreds of young Cambodian men, most of whom arrived in America as babies and toddlers, who are now being deported to a home country they barely know.¹² NSM members reacted strongly to the presentation evidence by a long discussion on how to potentially incorporate CAGP and the population it serves into NSM’s fold.

The diversification of NSM’s network reveals two important facts. First, NSM is trying to create a coalition of Americans and immigrants to fight for immigration reform together. While this occurred in the OSM, the roles that Central American refugees played were more tightly constrained. NSM is looking to put added control in the hands

¹² The Department of Homeland Security is deporting these Cambodians due to their status as convicted felons, despite the fact that the large majority of those deported have already fulfilled their sentences and been out of jail for years. Only one such deportation has occurred in Philadelphia, though ICE has threatened more are likely.
of immigrants, creating a unified network of citizens and non-citizens alike. “We are looking to develop long-term skills in the immigrant population,” says Jen Rock. This also means that immigrants cannot just be the architects of the storytelling initiative, but rather prominent organizers and political actors within the movement. I observed this philosophy in action at an NSM-sponsored rally held outside of City Hall on October 12th. There, more foreign-born speakers took to the podium than U.S.-born speakers, sending a clear message to the people and cameras present that immigrants, as human beings, deserve a prominent role in deciding the policies that impact their civil rights.

Nationally, NSM’s version of networking is strikingly similar to OSM’s. While the movement had a definitive origination spot, Washington D.C., NSM leadership is dispersed into 33 chapters and partnered organizations in 18 states. NSM chapters in Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York are all more developed and thus influential forces throughout the national network, but each branch specialize its goals, tactics, and recruitment strategies based on local or regional needs. Jen Rock explains that:

Albany is working primarily to bail people out of detention. Southern California does organizing around workers rights and provides physical sanctuary to undocumented immigrants facing deportation. New York city is very much based on providing physical sanctuary to six families in six different congregations all of whom are facing deportation….Sometimes it’s hard to say we’re all in a movement together, but we have shared values and establishing a cohesive movement is the next step in the challenge.

Accordingly, Rock and Pedemonti, attended the NSM National Gathering in New York City in early September and a nationally attended, pro-immigrant rights conference in December, where they received praise for being vocal opponents of ICE’s Secure Communities (Rock). NSM organizers, like their OSM counterparts, are hoping that constant communication will efficiently distribute useful information and strategies for recruitment from one local chapter to another.
Political Operating Structure

NSM’s interaction with the POS stands in stark contrast to the model set forth by OSM congregations. The first obvious difference is NSM members’ protest behavior or lack thereof. Because contemporary sanctuary activists are, for the most part, not practicing civil disobedience—few congregations or organizations have hosted immigrants facing deportation—they are not profoundly antagonizing any structural actors. Such antagonism is likely to help their recruitment efforts, as the movement gains a sense of urgency and attention in the media. Zac Steele admits this point, but explains that NSM Philadelphia has yet to identify and fully articulate its protest targets, which is a precursor to protest. He asks:

Are we being disobedient against deportation policy or neocolonial trade policies? Are we protesting human rights abuses in general? Personally, I think what the sanctuary movement in Philly should be built around is the Police-ICE relationship. That model is like a covenant of the OSM—a government practice that is violating God’s law that is objectionable. I think it is easier to show how Secure Communities violates human rights than picking a more obscure economic problem. I think, when you line it up like that, civil disobedience against that is warranted. You have to nail it down to a specific thing.

Steele’s demand for local POS protesting, perceptive as it may be, leaves questions unanswered. What form of protest should NSM activists take and how will it attract supporters and new members? Steele rules out an OSM-like brand of sanctuary, explaining that the immigration system is now too bureaucratic and stagnant for an immigrant or immigrant family protesting Secure Communities to wait in refuge at a church. “Their appeal would take two years before a judge even heard it in court, let alone their case went anywhere. That’d be a lot of strain on both the immigrants and
church community,” he says. Steele does proffer hunger strikes that last as long as Philadelphia is enrolled in Secure Communities, though this would have to be led by immigrants and followed by U.S. citizens in order to qualify as self-empowerment and gain enough sympathy in the skeptical public sphere.

Janet Hinshaw-Thomas, who has no formal ties to either the OSM or NSM, provides one potential model for civil disobedience. Since 1983, Hinshaw-Thomas has run the refugee resettlement organization, Prime Ecumenical Commitment to Refugees, in Landsdowne, Pennsylvania. Prime ECR specializes in legal counsel, representation, and petitioning for asylum seekers from all over the world seeking entry into America. However, as Hinshaw-Thomas describes it, some of their tactics, “have challenged legality from time to time.” In 2007, Hinshaw-Thomas, 65, was arrested and charged with immigrant trafficking by Canadian authorities after she attempted to bring a car of Haitian asylum-seekers across the border. She hoped that the Canadian government, which in recent times has accepted refugee applicants with relative liberality, would designate the Haitians as economic refugees despite the U.S. State Department’s refusal to do so. While she no longer ferries asylum seekers across the border and Canadian immigration law has recently become less welcoming, Hinshaw-Thomas concedes that Prime-ECR workers still “work on the Northern border.”

The search to identify a specific POS foil or protest action may change dramatically in the coming months as President Obama and national lawmakers prepare for sweeping immigration reform. At three of the four NSM coalition meetings I attended, members made announcements regarding their latest predictions of what immigration reform will look like. Consistently, their forecasts included a streamlined
path to legal residency and citizenship, a more humane and efficient deportation system, and a dramatically increased border security and “illegal alien” policing program. In essence, NSM members expect that the Democratic majority will appear to improve the system but will actually institute new and serious problems by compromising with the nativist conservatives in the House and Senate (Rock and Steele). This fatalistic anticipation of POS failure plays into NSM’s perceived need to recruit members as quickly as possible in order to help immigrants cope with more inevitable injustices.

Hoping to gain OSM’s legitimacy and recruiting momentum, NSM Philadelphia is currently looking for politicians who may support policy changes that value immigrant rights. On the national level, NSM Philadelphia has only identified and reached out to Rep. Louis Gutierrez of Illinois’s 4th District, though he is already an avid pro-immigrant rights proponent and author of a progressive immigration reform bill. Within Philadelphia, NSM has no direct connection with a politician as of yet. Councilman James Kenney has publicly condemned Secure Communities, though he has largely failed to put pressure on Mayor Nutter to repeal it (Steele). Councilwoman Maria Quiñones-Sanchez, who was recently voted into office by her constituents densely Latino Kensington, has also called for better treatment of undocumented immigrants within the city. Some NSM members, however, are skeptical whether she has enough political clout to institute any real policy changes. While Pedemonti and Rock are part of a discussion

---

13 According to ICE officials, President Obama has signaled that he wants Secure Communities to have “nationwide coverage by 2013,” (ICE, August 19th, 2009).
14 Other NSM members, wishing to remain anonymous, also question the sincerity of Quiñones-Sanchez’s rhetoric or concern regarding the undocumented population. Tensions between the undocumented population (many of whom are Mexican) and the Councilwoman’s constituents (many of whom are Puerto Rican) have not proven favorable to the former. As the established Puerto Rican community has more power in the social (and now political) arena and views
and interest group with PICC, their presence in PICC’s recent negotiations with Mayor Nutter has largely been symbolic. As Pedemonti explains, “we were at one of the meetings where they discussed Secure Communities, but we didn’t say much.”

**Material Resource Mobilization**

NSM needs significant resources if it wishes to continue recruiting new congregations, organizations, and individuals. The movement, which depends on Visitation BVM for its monthly coalition meeting room, just recently received free office space in North West Philadelphia. The small office, donated by Monsignor Shields, serves the burgeoning needs of Pedemonti and Rock, but the two are attempting to run an ambitious activist organization while also working other jobs to earn a living. Rock, who is in the Americorp program, works at the Philadelphia branch of Habitat for Humanity, while Pedemonti still lives and works at the Free Catholic Workers Clinic. If NSM is to grow as a highly active organization, it must have leadership that works exclusively on aggressive outreach programming and developing strong working relationships in Philadelphia’s immigrant communities.

Last year, right after Margaret Sawyer moved out of Philadelphia and Rock took her leadership position, NSM embarked on a fundraising initiative that also worked as a subtle recruiting tactic. Several dozen of its members wrote letters to friends and family, asking for financial contributions to the organization, while also disseminating information regarding its work and inviting people to attend a coalition meeting. NSM made several thousand dollars—most of which went toward assisting immigrants who

---

Mexicans as an invasive presence, the undocumented population may find it even harder to find allies.
Conclusion

Like all social movements, the two sanctuary movements are products of their place and time. If NSM wishes to replicate the successes of the OSM, it will have to learn from its predecessor’s goals, tactics and achievements while adapting to new structural circumstances. However, the two movements, regardless of their efficacy, provide valuable commentary on broader theoretical perspectives that seek to explain social behavior.

Culture, as my data suggests, creates patterns of behavior amongst sanctuary activists that are only rational within their specific religious context. The use of liberation theology proves how a particular culture of altruism provides the basis for understanding the sacrifices made by upper-middle class congregations like FUMCOG and individuals like Jen Rock. This point also contradicts Hildreth's 1998 article on OSM activists, which argued that purposive incentives significantly determine involvement with sanctuary activism. While I did observe that concerns regarding a group's efficacy to "pull off" sanctuary (Sister McKenna) was a determining factor, I also observed that a
group's willingness to act in solidarity for commonly held values often triumphed over material concerns (Garretson).

Contrary to Gibson’s cost/risk analyses of OSM participants (1990), the specter of federal indictment did not deter most of the congregations in Philadelphia that had already been considering declarations of Sanctuary. In fact, Baptist Church, the Catholic Coalition, and Mishkan Shalom all declared Sanctuary after the arrest of the Morales family. Likewise, Monsignor Shields and Sister McKenna both believe the Archdiocese feared the ire of federal authorities, but this institutional balking did not prevent individual Catholics from engaging in sanctuary activism. This indicates that other recruiting factors besides cost-risk management may have had larger impacts on their behavior. While a true test of Gibson’s article would be to sample each Philadelphia congregation that expressed any level of consideration to declare sanctuary, much of the evidence I collected indicates that fears of legal retribution were not a dominant inhibitor to successful recruitment.

The data I gathered on the use of narrative in the OSM strongly supports Poletta's arguments regarding storytelling as a central recruiting mechanism in social movements (2006). Polletta contends that narratives impart key facts that frame perceived problems in similar terms, overcome indifference through the creation of empathy, and add to a canon of principled interactions that guide audiences to specific courses of action (64). But NSM has not fully made use of narrative's potential for recruiting. This may have to do with the lack of material mobilizing in the form of Internet communication technology and making use of new forms of media, as the anthropologist Jeffery Juris proposes to be an effective form of recruitment in other contemporary protest movements (2005).
However, in a broader sense, NSM’s failure to capitalize on storytelling stems from its indecision over what story to tell and who should tell it (Steele).

Such indecision highlights a central tension in NSM recruitment strategy regarding self-empowerment. NSM seeks to differentiate itself from the OSM and the abolitionist movement by putting much of the movement’s decision-making in the hands of immigrants as opposed to American activists. I agree that NSM is right to move away from paternalistic power structures if it seeks to fight for a better standard of civil rights in the immigration system. Likewise, refugees and immigrants should have power over what stories they tell and what kind of audiences they seek out. But as the OSM proves, stories must meet certain requirements in order to be effective recruiting tools. I foresee that undocumented immigrants, fearful of being identified, will recoil at the notion of revealing intimate details about their lives. Yet, if NSM wishes to recruit American congregations unaware of immigrants’ plight, such details must be made available to create both education and empathy. Without this, NSM’s narratives risk falling into obscurity or losing credibility.

Additionally, the tension of self-empowerment manifests itself in NSM’s plans for civil disobedience. Looking at my data on the OSM, I agree with Steele, who seems confident that NSM will legitimize the urgency of their cause and attract more recruits if they protest against Secure Communities. The OSM found a singular political objective and confronted it with a unified act of civil disobedience that other congregations could identify and replicate. However, as the American members of NSM wish to fight with immigrants, not just for them, they must chose a type of protest behavior that is both flexible for a diverse range of participants and politically meaningful. Whether protest
consists of a form of physical asylum like the OSM congregations, Janet Hinshaw-Thomas’s transnational sanctuary, or a publicized hunger strike, NSM will have to take on more responsibility and make more forthright demands of the POS. This tactical question, I believe, may be a fruitful topic for further historical and sociological research.

As suggested by Jasper (1998), the biography of activists also provides a valuable explanatory factor that Opp (2009) does not take into account. As Americans ride on the civically engaging 2008 presidential election and the recent healthcare debates, the approaching debate over immigration reform may find a receptive and networked audience to hear appeals for political activism. Likewise, international travel has grown more popular in America since the 1980s (www.bts.gov) and is a likely cause for the increased ratio of international travelers in NSM compared to those in my OSM data. With increased globalized awareness, perhaps today’s average American is better prepared for the complex argument that ties much of the undocumented immigrant population to U.S. foreign trade policies. Identifying these biographical trends among activists may both explain and facilitate successful recruitment in the future.

Regarding theories on networking, Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue that effective organizing in social movements like the OSM and NSM relies upon communication between designated leaders and their ability to work toward unified goals through a plurality of means. I found that the sanctuary movements conform to this model, with effective local and national chains of communication that facilitate recruitment strategizing. But if NSM Philadelphia wishes to grow its ranks, I argue that it must make use of new networking technologies like those mentioned by Juris (2005). Without a website and the frequent production of digital media, NSM will not reach the interested
congregations, organizations, and journalists that it seeks to engage. The OSM could rely on news articles published in newspapers like the Chestnut Hill Local, but the NSM cannot.

So what do these claims regarding the OSM and NSM reveal about social movements’ recruitment strategies and circumstances? Primarily, my data demonstrates the monumental complexity that any explanatory framework must take into account when analyzing protest behavior. An undeniable multitude of decisions, factors, and moments of happenstance constitute social movements. The interaction amongst culture, narrative, biography, networking, and structural forces and constraints is both a murky and dynamic process.

In this light, Opp's Structural-Cognitive model (2009) proves to be only partially correct. While any account of protest behavior necessitates both macro- and micro-level analyses, Opp's proposed framework simplifies the dynamics between the two levels of focus into static pathways of cause and effect. Indeed, not only did sanctuary activists shift POS targets between 1989 and 2009, but new cultural strategies (ecumenism) and mobilization of material resources (the Vicar for Hispanic Catholics) indicate that macro- and micro-level forces do not just change within their own realms, but create new pathways of interaction resistant to stable classification.

Rational Choice Theory demands categorization. Though I attempted to collect pertinent data that would explain and predict the sanctuary movements’ recruitment efficacies, I could not reduce my explanation with the purely logical language of the rationalists. While RCT attempts to define decision-making in terms of egoistic self-interest, sanctuary activists consistently demonstrate that collectivized self-interest
informs their moral visions. And whereas RCT proffers that risky civil protest decisions are often made in calculated and utilitarian manners, sanctuary activists seem to steer their level of participation based on emotional impetuses, such as cultural solidarity, hearing refugees speak of their struggles or traveling outside of the U.S. and cutting away the abstraction of distance from the human toll of global trade policies.

People generally act rationally, but as social scientists attempt to fashion rational and coherent explanatory models for human behavior, they transform humans into variables within a grand equation. Faheem Francis, the Pakistani husband and father of two, who left imprisonment in deportation jail with the help of NSM, is more than a variable. After sanctuary activists came to the Francis family’s aid, Faheem began to work with lawyers to provide support for other immigrant families going through similar ordeals. If sanctuary activists like Faheem prove one thing, it is that humanity has agency within the equation it operates, and thus can change its terms and functions. As individuals and communities continue to organize and work for social justice, this would be a wise point to remember.

Appendix

Figure A
Conducted Interviews
1. Reverend Bartlow  
   October 8\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
2. Angela Berryman  
   October 16\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
3. Marion Brown  
   October 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2009
4. Vic Compher  
   November 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 2009
5. Dick Cox  
   October 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
6. Anne Ewing  
   November 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
7. George Garretson  
   November 17\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
8. Janet Hinshaw-Thomas  
   November 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
9. Rabbi Linda Holtzman  
   October 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
10. Sister Margaret McKenna  
    December 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2009
11. Joel Morales  
    November 15\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
12. Betsy Morgan:  
    November 17\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
13. Peter Pedemonti  
    November 19\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
14. Denise Peterson  
    November 20\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
15. Manuel Portillo  
    October 31\textsuperscript{st}, 2009
16. Jen Rock  
    October 13\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
17. Marlena Santoyo  
    November 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
18. Monsignor Hugh Shields  
    October 30\textsuperscript{th}, 2009
19. Zac Steele  
    December 11\textsuperscript{th}, 2009

**Figure B**  
**Interview Questions**

(Confidentiality: Quotation and Citation Concerns)  
**Biographical**
-Tell me about the history of your involvement with the Sanct. Movement?
-What did you do? What was the level of your involvement?
-What does Sanctuary mean to you?
-What other social movements have you been or are currently involved with?
-How would you compare them the Sanct. Movement? Was/Is your involvement with one connected to the other?
-Why do you believe in social work and social movements?
-Do you believe that your actions had or are having an impact on the law and society as a whole?
-Did being a part of the Sanct. Movement ever make you anxious or worried regarding the law?
-Did your involvement in the Sanct. Movement cause you to make any personal sacrifices?

**Institutional**
-Can you tell me about your church/organization? A brief over-view of its history and members?
-Can you describe to me how your church/organization was involved in the movement?
-How did the involvement with the movement evolve?
-Was involvement sustained by particular members or groups in the church?
-Was involvement sustained by particular groups outside the church? i.e. other Churches or law enforcement?
-What happened to the people involved in the movement in your community?
-How did people in your congregation debate and discuss involvement in harboring/assisting refugees?
-Did some members not go along? If so, why?
-How would you characterize these people?
-How did involvement fall into passivity in the 90's?
-If limited resources (i.e. funding) determined your non-involvement in the Sanct. Movement, what defined those limited resources? Where did the strains and motivations that lead to your decision-making and prioritization come from?

**Immigrants/Refugees**
-Do you have any stories of the immigrants and their re-settlers?
-What has happened to the refugees you worked with?
-How much of the transnational story (regarding the refugees) were/are you interested in?
-Did your church have a program that involved sending supplies or aid work to a Latin American country?
-Is that still going?
-Who and how many of congregations and people involved have connections to people and countries in Latin America?
-Did the Sanctuary Movement instigate secondary migration during or after the movement's active state?
-Did former Sanctuary members continue to harbor refugees after the movement had fallen into passivity?
-Would it be appropriate to look at the Sanctuary Movement as a resettlement agency?

**Figure C**
Chestnut Hill Local Article on Meeting’s Sanctuary
18 year old welcomed into sanctuary at Hill Meeting

by Charles Hart

More than 200 people turned out on Sunday evening, September 15, at the Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting for a service welcoming an 18-year-old woman from El Salvador into sanctuary.

Paz is the name she has taken as a refugee, who will live under the protection of the Chestnut Hill Meeting, as part of the Sanctuary Movement. A number of churches have chosen to welcome to their midst people considered refugees from oppressive governments in Central America, particularly Guatemala and El Salvador.

Those participating in the Sanctuary Movement are out of step, however, with U.S. government policy. Washington’s position is that the refugees are not eligible for political asylum, that they left their countries for economic rather than political reasons, and are in the U.S. illegally.

Sheila Purcell of Our Mother of Consolation Church and Kristina Yarnall of Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting are co-chairing the Sanctuary Task Force of the local Friends Meeting. As was brought out at the welcoming service, support from many denominations is sought on behalf of the woman.

Paz was the focal point of September 15. A service at which five other Central Americans now in sanctuary in Philadelphia area churches were on hand to welcome the young woman. People in attendance represented a range of churches and backgrounds. Geographical origins were as varied as South Texas, California and Lehigh Valley.

Visitors at the service were welcomed by Natalie Kempner, clerk of the Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting.

Statements made at the gathering, including those by Paz and others from Central America, presented a picture of terror and destruction inflicted on the peoples of El Salvador and Guatemala by regimes said to be supported by the Reagan Administration.

Americans should feel a sense of guilt and shame. It would appear, in backing their government’s Central American policies, but many, it was indicated, are in the dark as to the state of affairs there.

Missing from the discussion, however, was any condemnation of Fidel Castro’s oppressive regime or of his role in Latin American affairs. One speaker did refer to a priest now serving as Nicaragua’s minister of culture, who had favorable impressions of the Castro revolution after a visit to Cuba. There was no presentation of the U.S. government’s position on Central America.

Paz, who made her way out of El Salvador via a clandestine route before slipping into the U.S. several months ago, together with other Salvadoran refugees, spoke through an interpreter.

She expressed thanks at “being able to arrive at a place where you can express how you feel,” and spoke of the plight of Salvadoran families who’ve had loved ones disappear; at the hands of government forces of the giants — the giant that has many faces and many ways of destroying.”

The use of lethal weapons like napalm, she said, “has caused hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans to leave our country. People there have this question on their minds: are we going to be alive this afternoon?”

Sanctuary, such as provided by the Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting, she said, “provides us with both a means of satisfying our needs and to educate the people here on what is happening in El Salvador. Sanctuary is a commitment to our struggle.”

But it is up to Americans, according to Paz, “to stop the destruction and stop the intervention in Central America. The Salvadoran people are fighting for a new independence. I do believe that little by little, we are winning the peace in El Salvador.”

Another Central American refugee at the gathering stated, “This Friends Meeting has declared a sanctuary. It makes us feel more united spiritually.”

A declaration of sanctuary was adopted by the Meeting on February 10 for Central American refugees from the continuing violation of human rights,” and citing what was termed, “our government’s share of...
February 10, 1985

Chestnut Hill Monthly Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends makes Declaration of Sanctuary for Central American refugees.

We take this stand under the guidance of the 1984 Philadelphia Yearly Meeting Minute on Central America as our response to the continuing violation of human rights in Central America and as an expression of our concern for our government's share in the responsibility for that violence.

Just as Friends believe that "there is that of God in everyone" so do we believe that God is everywhere—no more in our Meeting House than in our homes. We offer, then, a Community of Refuge rather than a sacred building. We offer our Meeting House and our Family Houses as asylum.

We shall continue to call upon our government to grant extended voluntary departure status to Salvadoran and Guatemalan refugees and to abide by the just U.S. Refugee Act of 1980 thus rendering the Public Sanctuary Movement obsolete.

We make this declaration with the hope of support from the wider community.

Natalie Kemper
Clerk

Charles N. Phillips
Clerk of Peace & Social Concerns Committee

Figure E
FIESTA!
SUNDAY, JUNE 9 7 to 9 p.m.
William H. Frederick’s
is giving a
PARTY
to say “Farewell” and “Thank You” to
CHESTNUT HILL
and to benefit
A NEW CHESTNUT HILL PROJECT
Sanctuary
AID FOR
CENTRAL AMERICAN REFUGEES
FOOD, MUSIC, DANCING, FILMS!
DONATIONS GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED
WILLIAM H. FREDERICK’S
8605 Germantown Ave.
Chestnut Hill

Figure F
Chestnut Hill Friends Meeting Sanctuary Expenses

December 6, 1985

Paz, from El Salvador, was welcomed into Public Sanctuary with a Meeting for Worship and Celebration September 15, 1985.

The following report is a summary of Paz’s first 10 weeks with us.

COMPANIONSHIP: Round-the-clock companionship has been provided by 50 volunteers--26 of them members/attendees of Chestnut Hill Mtg., 18 from other Friends Meetings, 6 from 8 different religious denominations and no religious denomination.

INTERPRETERS: 27 Spanish/English speakers volunteered—not all have been called upon. Paz now does her public speaking in English.

FINANCIAL: The June FIESTA (thanks to Mary and Fred Zeranick and a host of community organizers!) gave us a healthy start. Pledges on a regular basis (a specific amount/month or week) will provide us with a projected income of $1,650 the first year.

Donations thus far from individuals and groups: $950

HONORARIUMS for Paz: about $100 so far.

EMERGENCY PLEDGES:
- 24 people have pledged a total of $2,725
- 2 others have pledged indefinite amounts.

MEDICAL: 2 doctors (attendees) have promised support. One of them has already provided eye exam. Two people are working on medical insurance. Back-up drs. and clinics are available.

DENTAL: 3 dentists have offered pro bono service. The dentist of a Meeting family has completed all Paz’s dental work (she had never been to a dentist but required only 3 appointments).

LEGAL: The Immigration lawyer in the law firm of a Meeting member has devoted many hours to Paz. He is thorough, perceptive and sensitive to her position.

We also have the support of lawyers from two other Sanctuary congregations as well as the expert advice of Carole Wood from Community Legal Services, acknowledged expert in the area of Central American Refugees. Furthermore, a lawyer whose child is in the Mtg. Nursery School has volunteered day/night emergency legal assistance.

OTHER: Friends and friends have provided clothing (Paz prefers books to clothing but has discovered new needs such as mittens and thermal underwear), food (Russian tea, fruit and peanut butter are favorites), dinner invitations, concerts, writing and art materials, posters, political events, shopping trips, English lessons, newspapers, books, museum visits, showers, laundry facilities, sewing machine use are being provided in various households. Arthur Benjamin, father of member Caleb, provided material and instruction for an evening of silk-screening in the Meeting House--5 Central American refugees produced 66 posters (graphics by Paz) now being sold for donations to Sanctuary through C.A.R.A. (Central Amer. Refug. A./t)

Paz spent Thanksgiving in Ithaca with Esperanza who is in Sanctuary with Ithaca Friends Mtg. Dec. 8-9 she will attend the N.E. Regional Sanctuary Mtg. at Riverside Church in NYC.

See list for outreach information...

Works Cited


