

A Grounded Theory for Building Ethnically Bridging Social Capital in Voluntary Organizations

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The study of diversity in nonprofit organizations is at a nascent stage. Using a grounded theory process centering on the racial composition of Girl Scout troop members and volunteers, this study proposes a two-pronged theory of diversity in voluntary organizations. Building upon Adler and Kwon's three aspects of social capital—opportunity, motivation, and ability—the study concludes that even when sufficient opportunity and mission-based motivation exists, social capital of the bridging type will likely be insufficient to sustain interactions among diverse members. To remedy this problem, the theory suggests that a voluntary organization can first rely upon the bonding type of social capital to increase representational diversity, then structure mission-relevant interactions among diverse members to create bridging social capital, and sustain pluralistic diversity. New directions for research and practice are also discussed, with the theory indicating that many nonprofits possess characteristics favoring the creation of bridging social capital.

Keywords: social capital; diversity; voluntary organizations; grounded theory; Girl Scouts

The role of voluntary organizations in America with regard to diversity is problematic, especially with respect to cross-racial diversity. On one hand, claims are made that many types of associational activities create bridging ties across races (Briggs, 2003). These claims are consistent with the more general arguments of Robert Putnam (2000) that voluntary associations create social

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capital and sustain democratic society. Enhancing such capital has become a goal of some organizations funding nonprofit activity. On the other hand, it is well known that much associational activity is exclusionary. For example, religious associations, ethnic fraternal organizations, and country clubs reflect the bonding type of social capital (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). The bonding form of social capital relies on strong ties that can work against the weaker ties bridging across racial lines. A major concern for the nonprofit sector, then, is whether and how voluntaristic associational activity builds or erodes the bridging form of social capital in interethnic contexts. To this end, we ask the following research questions: Does voluntary associational activity help to build bridging social capital along racioethnic lines? What types of practices by voluntary organizations accomplish this?

The reader is warned that the article does not follow the customary format of an empirical paper. It pursues the above research questions in order to develop theory. Toward that end, it selectively uses several types of data—quantitative, qualitative, and experiential—plus contemporary concepts of social capital. From these various stimuli, it strives to fashion an understanding of persistent societal problems of diversity and to develop new and practical concepts for addressing them through voluntary action.

This study found that voluntary associational activity does *not* necessarily create racially bridging social capital, even in best-case situations in which an organization with a strong commitment to diversity is functioning in communities having a history of successful racial integration. Using Adler and Kwon's (2002) three components of social capital—opportunity, motivation, and ability—we argue that even when significant opportunity exists to build bridging social capital, and even when actors are so motivated by the mission, their lack of shared experiences and interethnic interaction skills can impede the development of bridging social capital. Building on these analyses, we propose a theory of social capital formation. The data reported here do not constitute a test of the theory but rather, as part of a process of grounded theory development (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), are suggestive of a promising theory. Stimulated by that theory, a subsequent phase of the research explicitly examined bridging practices; the findings on racial bridging practices from that phase, which were supportive of the theory, are the subject of a separate paper. The present article, then, develops the rationale for, and specifies, the proposed theory.

Our findings, and the problematic experiences of many dedicated practitioners, indicate the need for more sophisticated and grounded theory to better guide the creation of ethnically bridging social capital, not only in America but in the many societies and global conflicts that involve serious ethnic divisions. This article attempts to contribute by developing theory applicable to a range of nonprofits operating in these situations. It proposes a theoretical framework integrating diversity and social capital in voluntary associational activity. Pursuing our research questions as they apply to the Girl Scouts of Lake Erie Council (GSLEC) indicates that voluntary associa-

tional activity, in relying upon the bonding type of social capital, can increase *representational diversity* within the organization but may fail to achieve *pluralistic diversity*—based upon mutually respectful relationships—due to a lack of bridging social capital. Examining Girl Scouting practices that foster bridging, we then explore how voluntary organizations can more effectively build bridging social capital, as a by-product of their efforts to achieve the organizational mission. This theory suggests how voluntaristic organizations can become part of the diversity solution for society rather than part of the problem.

In the following section of the article, we define the concepts of diversity, social capital, and racial bridging and review the extant diversity literature relevant to this study. Then, we outline the grounded theory methodology used in the article. Next, we build our framework by analyzing the dearth of bridging social capital, using Adler and Kwon's (2002) three aspects of social capital, and then propose a two-prong representation-pluralistic interaction theory of diversity in voluntaristic organizations. Finally, we discuss the limitations of our theory development and suggest implications and directions for future research.

CONCEPTS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT, SOCIAL CAPITAL, AND RACIAL BRIDGING

Diversity has been defined in various ways in the management literature. Cox (1994) defines cultural diversity as "the representation, in one social system, of people with distinctly different group affiliations of cultural significance" (p. 6). Group affiliations include race, gender, religion, and culture, among others, and can include nondemographic variables such as personality type and political party (Cox, 1994, p. 246). The term 'managing diversity' (R. Thomas, 1990) means facilitating interactions among diverse members to achieve organizational effectiveness. Diversity management can more broadly be defined as "the commitment on the part of organizations to recruit, retain, reward and promote a heterogeneous mix of productive, motivated, and committed workers including people of color, whites, females, and the physically challenged" (Ivancevich & Gilbert, 2000, p. 77). Many U.S. private sector organizations have adopted the management of diversity as a complementary, strategic paradigm intended to leverage the skills and talents of diverse organizational members for competitive advantage (Cox & Blake, 1991; R. Thomas, 1990). A multicultural membership is expected to yield greater creativity and innovation and improved decision making and problem solving (Cox, 1991; DiTomaso & Thompson, 1988), but can also delay decision making and increase interpersonal conflict (cf., Knight et al., 1999; Wanous & Youtz, 1986). In fact, Rosabeth Moss Kanter (1993) notes that managers rely on comfort with similar others, "picking those with whom they feel most comfortable to serve as confidantes or trusted aides" (p. 16). It is not

entirely clear how nonprofit and voluntary organizations have approached such problems of diversity management. Although studies exist on issues of integration and ethnicity in educational settings (cf., Noblit & Hare, 1988; Schneider & Coleman, 1993) there seems to be little research on the topic in nonprofit management publication outlets. In a recent search of diversity and nonprofit organizations in several major article databases,¹ few published articles were found. These addressed various aspects of diversity in nonprofit organizations, such as diversity in board member composition (cf., W. A. Brown, 2002; Duca, 1996; Rutledge, 1994; Siciliano, 1996; Widmer, 1987), organizational diversity in social service agencies (Metzler, 1998) and hospitals (Mott, 2003), and in nonprofit management more generally (Knowlton, 2001). Furthermore, few successful attempts have been made in organizations to assess whether the proposed benefits of diversity have been realized.

D. Thomas and Ely (1996) suggest that organizations have typically taken three different paths toward managing diversity: (a) a discrimination and fairness path, which equates diversity with equal opportunity and affirmative action; (b) an access and legitimacy path, focused on using diverse individuals to reach untapped markets; and (c) a learning and effectiveness path, wherein diverse views challenge organizational assumptions so as to fundamentally change the organization itself. Either of the first two paradigms, which are the most common paths taken by organizations, reflects a focus on “getting the numbers,” thereby emphasizing recruitment and selection of underrepresented members to enhance diversity within the organization. In fact, Carrell and Mann’s (1995) study of public personnel directors found that the most frequently reported diversity activities were recruitment and selection (77% and 64% reported, respectively). The third paradigm in D. Thomas and Ely’s model, learning and effectiveness, moves beyond the numbers and toward the issue of how diverse members can interact to fundamentally change working assumptions within an organization.

In this study, the national organization, Girl Scouts of the USA (GSUSA), defines diversity using the term “pluralism” to refer to “[a] system that holds within it individuals or groups differing in basic background experiences and culture, . . . [and] a process involving mutually respectful relationships” (GSUSA, 1997). GSUSA’s definition explicitly recognizes that managing diversity is a process, and that this process involves relationship building. In this sense, pluralistic diversity moves beyond the descriptive demographics of representation toward a view of diversity as a *process of relational development*. Hence, a pluralistic view of diversity intersects with concepts of bonding, trust, and reciprocity found in the social capital literature.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Social capital² refers to “connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (Putnam, 2000, p. 19). Social capital has been likened to other forms of capital

such as physical capital, human capital, and financial capital, and thus is presumed to have value. It is defined as a long-lived asset that is appropriable, convertible, and can substitute for, or complement, other resources, but it also needs to be maintained (Adler & Kwon, 2002). The bonding form of social capital is exclusive, whereas the bridging form is more inclusive. Granovetter's (1973) concept of weak ties reflects bridging social capital, which facilitates wider information diffusion and linkage to external assets (Putnam, 2000, p. 22).

Nonetheless, Putnam's distinction between bridging and bonding is useful for examining interracial interaction. Bridging social capital can be developed within a context by creating ties among members who are otherwise not affiliated. However, bonding social capital relies upon the principle that contact between people who are similar occurs at a much higher rate than for those who are dissimilar—the “birds of a feather flock together” phenomenon (McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001). Race and ethnicity are the dimensions of this phenomenon that constitute the “biggest divide in social networks today in the United States” (p. 420).

Bridging social capital can be distinguished from bridging ties. In Briggs's (2003, p. 2) study of interracial bridging, bridging ties are “informal personal networks, formal associations, and other connections among socially dissimilar persons or groups” through which bridging social capital can be created. Furthermore, Briggs states that “associational life is particularly important for the formation of bridging ties, as it enables the recognition of mutuality, as well as the activation and maintenance of tangible ties” (p. 6). Thus, members of formal associations such as the Girl Scouts have bridging social ties to the extent that connections are made between socially dissimilar groups, that is, across racioethnic groups in this study. However, we maintain, consistent with Briggs, that bridging social capital can then only be produced if these social ties engender the mutuality (mutual respect) and the maintenance of tangible ties that are characteristic of pluralistic diversity.

One critique of Putnam's view of social capital is that its potential as an empirical analytic concept has been undermined by its emphasis on norms as held by individuals (Edwards & Foley, 1998). The original characterizations by Coleman (1990) and Bourdieu (1986) view social capital as residing within a context of social relations rather than within individuals. This contextual view emphasizes the *collective practices* that diverse members engage in that sustain their association.

Social capital is a useful concept for analyzing diversity because it presumes that social relations, which are central to the staffing and maintenance of voluntary associations and nonprofits, indeed have value. Furthermore, the distinction between bonding and bridging capital speaks directly to the issue of similarity and difference, a central tension in the organizational diversity concept. In terms of managing organizational diversity, the social capital concept highlights the importance of collective practices of relational interactions,

an emphasis that is currently absent from the contemporary scholarly dialogue on diversity.

Researchers hold various views regarding which particular aspects of social relations actually create social capital. Adler and Kwon's (2002) conceptual framework integrates these varying views by delineating three components of social capital—opportunity, motivation, and ability. First, similar to Briggs's view discussed above, an actor's network of social ties creates the opportunity for social capital. Adler and Kwon's second requirement—motivation—suggests that actors must be motivated to use those ties to produce collective activity. These first two aspects of social capital correspond to our view (from Edwards & Foley, 1998) of social capital as consisting of practices and networks of relations that offer norms of reciprocity and trust as resources to network actors. Adler and Kwon further propose a third aspect necessary for social capital—the actors' collective ability to leverage social ties toward purposeful action. In this article, we analyze the GSLEC's efforts to achieve pluralistic diversity according to these three components of social capital.

METHOD

This study's methods combined a grounded theory approach with a best-case selection process for the focal communities in the study. Grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) calls for a continuous interplay between analysis and data collection in order to produce theory during the research process. This grounded theory development is accomplished using a systematic set of procedures (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 24). Theory may be generated from the data or existing theories may be elaborated and modified by the data. This study utilized both of these theory development processes. An advantage to theory development is the study's reliance on two types of data, statistical and interview, and its comparison of organizational outcomes over an extended period. The statistical data produced unexpected results, requiring us to search out and integrate alternative concepts, eventually developing a theory that is grounded in data, observations, and contemporary concepts.

Our ongoing research with GSUSA was initially stimulated by our roles in teaching in a series of executive education programs for GSUSA council executives and in two GSUSA professional association meetings drawing staff from across a number of Girl Scout councils in one region of the country. These provided forums for focused discussion of pluralism with more than 300 staff members from all levels, up to and including council executive directors, and 30 council presidents (volunteers), over a 5-year period in the mid-1990s. Staff members expressed a deep interest in understanding in new ways the problems that they were facing in pursuing pluralism, and were anxious for new ideas to guide their further efforts. These discussions provided us with a contextual understanding for a more intensive study of the pluralism efforts of

GSLEC in northern Ohio in 1994, the focus of this article. The GSLEC served girls in urban, suburban, and rural settings.

THE FOCAL ORGANIZATION

GSUSA is a leading national organization dedicated solely to the development of girls. The organization provides fertile ground for examining organizational and societal problems related to diversity for a number of reasons. First, it has demonstrated a persistent commitment to pluralism. By the mid-1980s, GSUSA had adopted a national initiative on pluralism, emphasizing the mission of developing all girls by serving previously underserved ethnic and class populations. The initiative was successful, with a tripling of minority membership by 1989. Our focal council, GSLEC, was distinguished for its innovative programming in a dominantly African American school system and was headed by one of the first African American Girl Scout CEOs. Second, GSUSA is a voluntary organization that explicitly recognizes the importance of the *relational* aspect of a diverse membership. As such, this organization magnifies and exposes the types of inclusion problems faced in the broader society. Finally, GSUSA's values of service to others, honesty, fairness, respect, responsibility, and citizenship³ require overcoming these diversity issues and are normative resources for doing so.

FOCAL COMMUNITIES

After discussions with staff, we decided to concentrate our analysis on the most integrated suburbs in the council's region, Cleveland Heights and Shaker Heights, Ohio. For many years, these suburbs had been known nationally for their successful integration efforts, maintaining racial balance at roughly 50%. We examined the council's four "service units" (each unit comprising troops in neighborhoods typically covering 5 to 10 schools) in those two suburbs. Strategic selection of a single case can be potent when examining a general proposition (King, Keohane, & Verba, 1994, citing Eckstein, 1975). Choosing a setting in which a proposition is most likely to hold true (i.e., a best case) can be extremely revealing should the proposition not be supported. This choice of the best-case units within the council was subsequently supported by an analysis that indicated that these two suburbs contained the service units that had the highest retention rates of girl and adult members of any units with comparable percentages of minority girl members. In other geographical areas of the council, service units with even moderate levels of minority girl membership had retention substantially lower than the rates in units with no minorities. These particular integrated suburban areas, for an organization fully committed to improving diversity, served as a best case for examining effective diversity efforts. If bridging social capital were to be found in voluntaristic organizations anywhere in the United States, it should

be present in these integrated suburbs in an organization with a demonstrated history of success in its diversity efforts. However, even in this best case, interethnic bridging among volunteers was found to be problematic. This single case, then, is powerful in calling into question the achieving of bridging social capital in voluntaristic organizations' diversity efforts.

DATA COLLECTION

The initial data for the study were collected in 1994 and included both membership data and volunteer interviews in GSLEC. The council membership data were updated in 2002-2003. The membership data were collected from GSLEC's statistical reports on girl and adult membership in the council overall and on troop racioethnic composition in the two integrated suburbs. The interview data were collected from 19 semistructured interviews conducted in 1994 with the executive director, five staff members, and 15 volunteers (13 of whom were African American, 5 of them troop leaders in the city-based church troops). The volunteer interviews lasted an average of 30 minutes. Interview notes were transcribed and open coded (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) to identify key common themes across respondents. Our primary interest here was in how the council was approaching the diversity issue and whether volunteers from underrepresented groups (in this case, African Americans) were joining as a direct result of these efforts. Consistent with our focus on theory development, we were less interested in the degree to which the interview sample was representative than we were in understanding the pluralism approach taken by this particular council and the potential of the analysis to generate new ideas about achieving pluralism.

Early on in the study we focused on representational diversity, the representation of African Americans (the underrepresented group of interest here) within GSLEC. Different pictures emerged when we examined data at the aggregate, overall council level versus the disaggregated level of the troops. The following section presents these data to illustrate what we subsequently differentiate in our proposed theoretical framework as representational versus pluralistic diversity.

OPPORTUNITY, MOTIVATION, ABILITY, AND BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

The following presentation of data is organized according to Adler and Kwon's (2002) three components of social capital—opportunity, motivation, and ability. This framework points to those aspects of bridging social capital that are in need of theory development.

OPPORTUNITY

Opportunity refers to an individual's social ties, as these provide the opportunity to engage with others. Although racial separation in housing patterns restricts many Americans' opportunities to engage with different others, residents of this study's two integrated suburbs, with their history of racial balance, had numerous opportunities to form racially bridging social ties. In these suburbs, the membership diversity of GSLEC was explored at two levels—for the council overall and at the community level, by troop. Each presents a different picture of the opportunity to build bridging social capital.

First, we found that girl membership was more inclusive of underrepresented minorities than was adult membership. Councilwide data for 1999 indicated that the council served approximately 1 in every 11 (9.4%) African American girls (the principal minority group within GSLEC) of Girl Scout age in the council's territory. This compared favorably with the ratio of about 1 in every 8 girls (12.3%) among Girl Scouting's traditional base of White girls. In contrast, African American representation was problematic for adult (volunteer) members. In 1999, there were 2.88 White girl members for every White volunteer, whereas the corresponding ratio among African American girls and volunteers was 9.0 to 1. The situation was not improving, because from 1998 to 2000 there was a decline in the number of African American adult members, whereas White adult membership remained stable during this period and girl membership dropped more modestly during these 2 years.

The overall council aggregate statistics, then, indicate that the council achieved good minority representation among the group of greatest relevance to its mission, its girl members, though it was doing less well among volunteer members. Such aggregate statistics of their main members' diversity are those that organizations typically use to assess their success in diversity efforts. In this case, we would conclude from them that representational diversity—that is, good representation of historically underrepresented African American girls—had been attained. From a social capital perspective, this indicates that significant opportunity existed within the council overall for the formation of bridging social capital.

However, when we examined membership diversity in a more *disaggregated* fashion within the service units covering the two integrated suburbs, and at the levels of schools and troops where people interact directly with each other, we found results that painted a different and more meaningful picture. For example, in an analysis of 1994 data, we found that even in the four service units in these best-case racially integrated suburbs, troop membership was often homogeneous rather than mirroring the more balanced White–African American composition of the communities and their schools. Approximately half of the troops had dominantly (more than 85%) majority or minority girl composition, and approximately one quarter were composed of either all

majority or minority girls. In the largest service unit, covering the community of Shaker Heights, the public schools had minority compositions (i.e., the percentage of all students in the school who were from minority backgrounds) ranging from 46% to 64%. But in that service unit, fewer than one fifth of the troops showed a comparably balanced minority girl composition of between 40% and 60%. One of the service units in Cleveland Heights reflected a more balanced racial composition in about half of its troops. Even for that service unit, however, the percentage of minority volunteers consistently fell short of that of minority girls. For the four service units together, fewer than half of the troops had any minority volunteers.

To refine this analysis, we compared minority girl composition in troops with minority student composition in the schools where many of the troops were formed, examining the degree of congruence between these two compositions. We found high congruence in 50% of schools and low congruence in the other half. In the low-congruence group there was either a lack of minority girls in the troops or separate troops that were dominantly majority and dominantly minority. These results might be explained in terms of history, with insufficient time having passed for troops to have progressed from their traditional base of majority girl and volunteer composition to racially mixed composition. However, the indications from 2002 membership data were overwhelmingly similar to those from the 1994 data. With the most recent data, we attempted a more sophisticated analysis of congruence, defined as a troop's minority membership percentage falling within plus or minus 20 points of a particular school's percentage of minority students. This permitted a very wide range of troop compositions to be categorized as congruent. Congruence was calculated for each troop within a school, for both the girl and the volunteer minority composition.

The 2002 data, presented in Table 1, showed no meaningful improvement over 1994. In 2002, about 50% of the troops (column 5, total) and less than 40% of the schools (column 3, total) in the best-case service units showed good minority congruence for girls. Consistent with earlier findings, volunteers fared worse in diversity than girls. Only 22% of the troops (column 6, total) were judged to have racial congruence between the volunteers leading them and the percentage of minority students in the schools. In most cases, incongruence meant that minority volunteers were underrepresented, as would be expected from their overall numbers. However, there were several troops in which minority volunteers were overrepresented. And in more than half the schools there were adequate numbers of minority volunteers (column 7) to create congruent troops. In the service units having school minority composition of 75% or higher (Units B and C), eight of nine schools had adequate numbers of minority volunteers to create volunteer racial congruence in troops, yet only 7 of 13 troops (column 6) in these schools showed congruence for volunteers. Hence, minority volunteers in these service units were not spread proportionally across the troops. Detailed examination of data at the troop level revealed that the incongruence within a given school was often caused by

Table 1. Congruence Between Minority Percentage in Each Public School and Minority Membership in the School's Troops, 2002

(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Service Unit	Data for Schools in Service Unit		Congruence ^a			
	No. of Schools	Average % Minority	of Schools		of Troops	
			Girls	Volunteers	Girls	Volunteers
A	4	54	1/4	0/4	3/8	0/4
B	4	75	2/4	1/4	3/6	2/4
C	6	79	5/6	4/5	7/9	5/5
D	10	57	1/10	0/10	21/47	6/38
Totals			9/24 (38%)	5/23 (22%)	34/70 (49%)	13/59 (22%)
						10/19 (53%)

a. Racial congruence of a troop is defined as its percentage of minority girl membership falling within + / - 20 points of a particular school's percentage of minority students.

minority volunteers being paired or trioed together in a single troop, rather than being spread across several different troops. In fact, we found that troops with a high representation of minority girls (e.g., more than 75%) also had a high representation of minority volunteers (79%). In other words, minority girls and minority volunteers tended to “flock together,” evidence of potential *bonding* social capital.

Thus, analyzing membership data at a disaggregated level tells us more about patterns of membership relevant to bridging social capital. We find that although overall minority adult membership was much lower than minority girl membership, adult minority representation was good in troops that were dominantly minority. Furthermore, White adult representation in these troops was not necessarily diminished when minority adults paired or trioed as troop leaders, because there was at least one White volunteer in each of 6 of the 10 dominantly minority girl troops. From a social capital perspective, we see evidence of both bonding and bridging social capital, though these troops being located in well-integrated suburbs and schools and with good representational diversity suggests that racially bridging social capital should dominate.

Another perspective on the opportunity to develop bridging social capital can be gained by analyzing interview data on why African Americans join the Girl Scouts. Girl Scouting’s association with schools enables it to tap into the network of weak social ties that exist among parents with children in the same school. When volunteers in these integrated suburbs were interviewed ($n = 13$) and asked how they themselves were recruited to volunteer, nearly half of them had been asked by an adult they knew who was already involved in Girl Scouting; if we include being asked by a daughter, then almost all of those we interviewed became involved through their own social network. (A summary of key interview data is presented in Table 2.) Furthermore, when asked how they themselves recruited others to volunteer, more than 60% of them said that they recruited others primarily from their own social network—for example, family members, friends, other parents, teachers, coworkers, and church members. This is consistent with Hodgkinson, Weitzman, Noga, Gorski, and Kirsch’s (1994) findings from their volunteerism study, which concluded that people become volunteers in three ways—by being asked by someone, through their participation in a social organization, or because a family member or relative would benefit.

Interestingly, although council staff had encountered ongoing difficulties establishing troops in the inner-city neighborhoods of Cleveland adjacent to the two integrated suburbs, two stable, self-initiated and maintained troops existed in these neighborhoods. Both were established in churches, with church volunteers leading the troops. In one church, the pastor received a mailing from GSLEC and suggested to some congregation members that a troop be established. The existing strong-tie volunteer network of congregation members then took over, and the troop became a reality, without any direct initiation by GSLEC staff. Thus, in this case, volunteering was highly

Table 2. Summary of Selected Responses From Volunteer Interviews, 1994

<i>Selected Interview Question</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
How were you recruited to become a Girl Scout volunteer? (<i>n</i> = 12)		
Was asked by an adult I knew who was involved in Girl Scouts	5	42
Was asked by my daughter	4	33
Saw a Girl Scout flyer/brochure	2	17
Attended a school open house where Girl Scout information was available	1	8
How have you recruited others to volunteer for Girl Scouts? (<i>n</i> = 13)		
Usually asked people I know (e.g., friends, family, teachers, coworkers, church members, parents)	8	62
Asked others (e.g., parents) whom I did not really know	2	15
I don't recruit others	2	15
Sometimes ask those I know well, sometimes not	1	8
What do you think Girl Scouting is about? (<i>n</i> = 13)		
Skills building (e.g., planning, leadership)	6	46
Exposure and broadening of opportunity	5	38
A secure place for girls to grow and develop	4	31
A social outlet for girls to have fun	4	31
Service (i.e., helping, caring, etc.)	4	31
Community and belonging (including "sisterhood")	4	31
Is there anything fundamental about Girl Scouting that should not change? (<i>n</i> = 12)		
The Girl Scout Law and various provisions therein	9	75
The Girl Scout Promise	7	58
Everything	2	17

Note: Percentages do not add up to 100 due to multiple responses to the questions.

dependent upon personal relationships, the strong ties of family, church, and friends. In fact, only one volunteer whom we interviewed was effectively recruited through a staff-led council outreach program.

Voluntaristic social tie organizing provides one explanation for the lack of racial bridging among volunteers that is evident in the troop-level membership data. Even in two integrated communities, birds of a feather flocked together to form racially homogeneous units. For adult members (as opposed to girls), this happened in far more cases than not, indicating that the social tie networks that they used for organizing were not reflective of the weak-tie opportunity for racial interaction that was characteristic of their racially diverse communities and schools as a whole. Indeed, our interviews indicated that some minority parents who lived in these two integrated suburbs chose to have their daughters be members of troops in the inner-city churches discussed above. This is consistent with other research indicating that racial minorities have ties primarily to similar others, even in majority-White situations (McPherson et al., 2001).

The preference to affiliate with racially similar others accounts for the fact that minority volunteers were present in good numbers only in the troops that had dominantly minority composition among girls. One could say that minority volunteers clustered with minority girls in groups where they were both in

the majority. Or it might be that the minority volunteers were flocking together more specifically with other minority volunteers. This latter explanation is more consistent with our observation that minority volunteers tended to pair up in troops even in schools that were dominated by White volunteers, rather than assume sole leadership across a greater number of troops with minority girls. And the fact that White volunteers were present in half of the troops that were dominantly minority (in both girls and volunteers) indicates that this preference to flock together here truly did mean being attracted to each other rather than excluding majority volunteers. These interview data suggest that the minority volunteers' strong-tie networks provided them with the opportunity to develop and leverage the bonding type of social capital.

In sum, the evidence with regard to the opportunity factor in bridging social capital formation is mixed. If one understands opportunity in terms of the chance for contact through proximity and weak network ties, as it is understood in the sociological literature (cf., Briggs, 2003), then opportunity for bridging social capital formation was abundant in our best-case communities and schools. If, instead, one understands opportunity in terms of strong network ties, ones that our respondents relied upon for voluntaristic organizing, then indications are that even best-case situations are problematic for racial bridging—adult volunteers relied for their organizing on the stronger ties associated with the bonding form of social capital rather than the weaker ties of bridging social capital.

MOTIVATION

For Adler and Kwon (2002), motivation relies on “normative commitments . . . shared interests, a common identity, and a commitment to the common good” (p. 25). Following Portes (1998), they differentiate *instrumental* motivations that involve rational calculation and enforced trust from *consummatory* motivations that rest on more deeply embedded norms of mutual obligation based on life experiences of shared destiny (Adler & Kwon, 2002, p. 25). In our terms, the instrumental motivation issue is whether African American volunteers, as the underrepresented group, felt a motivation to join Girl Scouting, to engage in associational activity with others with whom they shared values and commitments related to their girls' development. When the African American volunteers whom we interviewed were asked what they thought Girl Scouting was about, their responses fell into thematic categories very much in line with traditions of Girl Scouting that have always attracted members: skill building (46%), exposure to other opportunities and people (38%), developing a sense of community in the Girl Scouts, neighborhood, or world (31%), and so on. Furthermore, over half of the volunteers interviewed had themselves been Girl Scouts, and most of them mentioned explicitly the Girl Scout Promise and Law as fundamental Girl Scout traditions that should not change, even as diverse members become included in the organization (see Table 2).

Not only did the African American volunteers want to volunteer for their girls, as do most Girl Scouting volunteers, they also displayed a great deal of support for Girl Scouting activities that would allow their girls to experience other cultures, religions, and races. Several African American interviewees mentioned that they thought Girl Scouting was also about “getting along with girls from all cultures,” “diversity, new customs,” and “values recognizing diversity.” Thus, we found that minority volunteers identified strongly with the specific values and traditions of Girl Scouting. They were attracted by its long-standing and respected identity and felt that experiencing cultural diversity in the organization was important.

A similar indication of African American volunteers’ motivation to organize was the readiness of the two African American churches, discussed earlier, to form volunteer troops. In one case, the stimulus for troop formation was as simple as a flyer from the council headquarters staff. From these experiences, and the responses of our interviewees, it is clear that those African Americans who volunteered to participate in troops shared the traditional normative commitments that had historically led Girl Scouting volunteers to join with others in pursuit of the mission of girls’ development. We conclude, then, that instrumental motivation was not a factor that hampered the creation of bridging social capital in our study’s two integrated suburbs.

However, consummatory motivation, concerning deeper rooted sources of trust, is more problematic, as evidenced by those African American residents of our focal integrated suburbs who chose to join troops in the two inner-city churches that they attended rather than troops formed in their schools. Similarly, some majority (White) members may have had a greater willingness to join with other majority members. Our councilwide finding that girl and volunteer retention rates were lower in service units having even modest percentages of minority girls is consistent with these interracial service units experiencing difficulty in finding the means to create norms of trust and reciprocity with racially different others, to engage in sustained association. In interracial settings, it appears that this creation of trust was a challenge, even when people were engaged in activities that they jointly valued in an organization fully committed to pluralism and the creation of meaningful and respectful relationships. These findings are consistent with theories of collective action positing that individuals, based on their life experiences, have greater expectations of mutual obligations when engaged with similar others (Olson, 1971). In sum, we have some indication that consummatory motivation contributed to the dearth of racially bridging social capital.

ABILITY

Ability refers to “the competencies and resources at the nodes of the network.” Adler and Kwon (2002, p. 26) cite Leana and Van Buren’s (1999) term “associability” to refer to “both the motivation and the ability of a collectivity to define and enact its goals.” Thus, the meaning of ability in social capital

terms is varied. Adler and Kwon suggest that there is a “narrow” view of ability—that it reflects resources that exist at the node of the network and is a complement to social capital—and a “broad” view—that ability is constitutive of social capital. Associability is important in social capital formation because it by definition presumes that the collective actors have goals—some mutually desirable end. The ability to relate well to others in a network is then a means to those collectively defined ends.

Problems of associability, of a competence to sustain engagement, can be expected in American race relations. Consider the following experience, relayed to us by a colleague⁴ from a community in another region of the United States:

My church started a Brownie Girl Scout troop a few years ago. In fact, my area is now home to a very nice, brand new Girl Scouts headquarters. With a new building and growth in the region, a new troop was warranted. Our church was chartered. The region is only fifteen to twenty percent African-American, and the area in which I reside and the church my husband pastors is perhaps only three to five percent African American. Therefore, when the new troop was created, I believe that most parents assumed that the troop leader and the majority of the girls would be white. To the dismay of many of the parents on the first day (I did not sense despair in the children), the troop leader was African American, many of the girls were African American, and the meetings were held in an African American Church. To my surprise, the parents and children stayed in the troop for the entire first year. However, parental participation in sleep-overs and other activities common to the Girl Scouts did not occur, with many excuses being given. The next year, none of the white parents or children participated in the troop. They moved to another troop where I suppose they felt more comfortable. Many African American girls left the troop also. Now the remaining members have sleep-overs, they go places, and there appears to be less tension in the troop.

The failure to sustain this troop appears to have been rooted in problems of consummatory motivation, discussed above, and in a lack of interethnic interaction ability. Despite common instrumental motives and the success of weak ties in creating this troop, adults from different racial backgrounds lacked the cross-cultural competence and knowledge to sustain interaction with each other to, in Adler and Kwon’s terms, collectively define and enact their goals. There was discomfort in interacting with ethnically dissimilar others. In Anthony Giddens’s (1984, pp. 5-7) terms, there was a lack of *practical consciousness* of how to monitor and adjust one’s own behavior when interacting with different others; there was insufficient interpersonal skill to sustain the troop, to sustain racial bridging. The troop’s members lacked the practical ability to interact with each other in a manner that would have engendered trust (Garfinkel, 1963) and permitted the troop’s members to sustain joint activities.

The consequence was a splitting of the troop, with less bridging social capital existing in the community after the troop split than had the troop never been formed.

CONNECTING DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL CAPITAL

The foregoing analyses lead us to posit an interaction between the opportunity, consummatory motivation, and ability sources of social capital—namely, that lack of cross-cultural competence and the shared destiny experiences required for consummatory motivation may lead volunteers to rely on strong-tie, bonding social capital rather than weak-tie, bridging social capital. When diverse volunteers organize on the basis of weak ties, they may lack the competence to sustain their activities jointly, so they learn to rely instead on strong-tie organizing where selective incentives (Olson, 1971) more readily sustain collective action. Consequently, representational diversity at the aggregate level of the council as a whole did not translate into pluralistic diversity at the operating unit level—the troops.

Although many organizations would be satisfied with representational diversity at the aggregate level, subunits that are seriously imbalanced, for example, racially, fall short of Girl Scouting's pursuit of diversity as pluralism, that is, a process involving mutually respectful relationships. Consequently, Girl Scouting proved a stimulating setting for grounded theory development because there were settings in GSLEC where interracial organizing ability was created and bridging social capital manifested. These were achieved through pluralistic interactions that relied upon and adapted the basic traditions and values of Girl Scouting.

JOINT EXPERIENCES, COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT, AND SUCCESSFUL BRIDGING

Treating social capital as residing in the social relations and collective practices of the social system (Edwards & Foley, 1998) suggests the value of organizational practices that guide diverse members toward joint action. Intertroop interactions in GSLEC constituted just such practices. For example, we found that the custom of camping had been extended to regional intertroop get-togethers or overnights in indoor settings. Girl Scouting's goals of helping girls better relate to others and to experience opportunities for leadership (Hwalek & Minnick, 1997) have traditionally been realized in such gatherings. In addition, members of GSLEC furthered pluralistic interactions by placing members of diverse troops into joint groups to plan activities that are customary for all members. An example was a one-night sleepover camp created by seven senior Girl Scouts as their Gold Award project.⁵ These girl members recruited adult volunteers as well as girl campers to engage in their project. More than 40 elementary school girls came to the camp, at which they were formed into diverse groups. The girls engaged in a sequence of group activi-

ties designed to promote friendship and other learning. The structure of the camp's activities enabled girls from different racioethnic groups to be *recategorized* (Gaertner, Mann, Murrell, & Dovidio, 1989) into temporary, secondary groups. The recategorizing allowed them to jointly participate in tasks and ceremonies fundamental to Girl Scouting, creating new (if temporary) group identities built upon their common identity (Gaertner et al., 1989) as Girl Scouts. We found that other types of interunit activities were also desired. The CEO of GSLEC reported that volunteers in suburban troops were interested in having their girls receive programs that were initially developed in inner-city troops concerning such issues as dealing with violence or teen pregnancy. The routine processes of intertroop activities within GSLEC are desired by members and are capable of fostering pluralistic interaction, experiences of shared destiny, and the ability to bridge racial differences.

A THEORY OF DIVERSITY DYNAMICS

The results of the foregoing analyses suggest that bonding social capital outweighs bridging social capital in voluntary associational activities among diverse groups, based on findings in a context conducive to bridging social capital—namely, integrated communities and a representationally diverse association. More specifically, the Adler and Kwon (2002) analysis points to a lack of relational comfort due to (a) an insufficient history of experiences of shared destiny with ethnically dissimilar others to engender confidence in mutual obligations, and (b) insufficient interpersonal know-how to produce comfort and effective mission attainment in cross-racial interactions. From this perspective, the issue for the production of bridging social capital is not whether people simply want to interact with diverse others, it is whether they are willing and able to do it in order to get something done. These problems of relational comfort, in the form of willingness and interaction competence, are those with which any theory of bridging social capital must deal.

To address these problems, we propose using social capital to foster diversity by *sequencing* its bonding and bridging forms. Building upon the analyses above, our theory has two related prongs, one emphasizing increased representational diversity through bonding social capital and the other emphasizing pluralistic interactions through bridging social capital. For each prong, we consider processes and conditions for the creation of racially bridging social capital.

DIVERSITY'S FIRST PRONG: REPRESENTATION THROUGH BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

It is the very ubiquity of bonding social capital—here in the form of racial flocking together—that leads to majority-dominated voluntaristic associations and the consequent need to attract underserved groups. However, this

study's findings indicate that it is the same process that also leads to effective attracting of these groups to such organizations. Adult minority members were recruited and organized primarily through preexisting social tie networks. In our preceding analysis, minority volunteers tended to be most present in troops that were dominantly composed of minority girls. The two Girl Scout troops established by churches in inner-city neighborhoods of Cleveland are useful exemplars. The churches' successful reliance on a strong-ties model was remarkable—volunteers initiated and expanded the troops with ease. And once the troops were created, they attracted neighborhood minority girls from outside the congregation. Volunteer-staffed organizations expand by utilizing the already existing and vibrant strong-tie social networks found in the community, often in other voluntary associations.

The outcome of this prong of the theory is the creation of a more diverse organizational membership overall in the organization, achieving representational diversity. This aspect of Prong 1 can be summarized as

Process 1.1 *Attraction through bonding*: For those who so prefer, the organization facilitates the formation of internally homogeneous subunits of previously underserved members by tapping existing community networks.

Increased minority membership that results in units that are predominantly minority enables those minority members to express the mission and values in ways suitable to them. The organization itself changes during this process, becoming more diverse in both its membership and its culture, even though the basic units of the organization remain quite homogeneous internally, and different from each other. This first representation prong of our model avoids placing the primary responsibility for integration upon minority groups. Minorities choose to participate because they find the organization's mission and values attractive to them, not because they feel that they have a social responsibility to serve as pioneers. Heterogeneity across the organization's different ethnically based units permits minority members to join without having to be assimilated into yet another part of the majority societal culture. A second key process for stimulating bonding social capital and representational diversity, then, is

Process 1.2 *Organizational adaptation*: As minority group members join the organization, the organization gradually adapts its practices to incorporate the needs and preferences of the newer groups.

In sum, representational diversity occurs in ways consistent with the bonding form of social capital. Individuals with existing network connections bond together to form troops, leveraging existing social capital, and their subsequent interactions in those troops create new opportunities for augmenting the social capital. Social capital results because the ethnically similar mem-

bers possess the opportunity, motivation, and ability to sustain associational activity.

DIVERSITY'S SECOND PRONG: PLURALISTIC INTERACTIONS THROUGH BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

Although the first prong of the theory results directly from the findings of the membership data analysis and interviews regarding the tendency to flock together with similar others, the second prong represents a more exploratory effort. Treating intertroop interactions in Girl Scouting as models, we consider how bridging interactions can be structured to create bridging social capital in voluntary organizations. The first step is to create opportunity by forming temporary, racially mixed groups.

Process 2.1 *Recategorization*: Members from internally homogeneous subunits are brought together in settings where they are recategorized from their ethnic primary groups into mixed, diverse groups.

However, as the vignette presented earlier in this article illustrates and the data from the integrated suburbs indicates, opportunity to interact is, by itself, often insufficient to sustain bridging social capital. In everyday troop activities, racially diverse members are on their own to develop the trust needed for ongoing troop organizing, and they can fall short. In contrast, the second prong of the theory calls for carefully structured and temporary interactions to reduce the relational demands on participants and provide motivation and ability for bridging. This can be accomplished by recategorized groups performing the organization's traditional activities. Our interview findings indicate that it is these activities that the organization's minority members find meaningful, providing the motivation to engage with others in those activities. When performing these activities, they manifest and share with fellow members their organizational identity. Hence, Prong 2 requires

Process 2.2 *Performance of organizationally distinctive routines*: The recategorized groups engage in structured interactions involving practices that embody the organization's mission and values.

Combined, the four processes above can create racially bridging social capital. Due to Processes 1.1 and 1.2, diverse members join the organization, where they become skilled in performing its distinctive activities. These skills rest on social tacit knowledge (J. Brown & Duguid, 1991) embedded in the practices of the collective. Members possess this shared knowledge in the form of repetitively enacted routines (Nelson & Winter, 1982), developed in Prong 1 activities. The social tacit knowledge, which is largely hidden from members, enables individuals who come from otherwise diverse backgrounds to interact more easily with each other *when they are performing these*

routines. In a similar fashion, members of the recategorized, mixed groups can develop a social tacit knowledge, a know-how, about how to interact with differing others as they repeatedly engage with each other in performing the organizationally distinctive routines. In this bridging context, performing valued and known routines leverages the motivational and ability components of social capital developed in the Prong 1 homogeneous units.

The above processes are consistent with Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1998) concepts for the creation of social capital. A basic premise for such creation is that social order and social integration flow from shared knowledge (Berger & Luckman, 1966; Giddens, 1984; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998). The shared knowledge includes not only social tacit knowledge but also bodily, cognitive, and emotional aspects of organizational practice (Reckwitz, 2002), all of which are developed through performing an organization's distinctive activities. Interaction in these activities creates social capital as a by-product (Nahapiet & Ghosal, 1998; Nohria, 1992). Mission focus gives members a setting (opportunity) and a reason (instrumental motivation) to develop social capital. Social interaction in organizationally distinctive and familiar routines of practice can be expected to lead members to identify with and be personally attracted to those differing others with whom they are interacting (Hogg & Terry, 2000), leading to the creation of relational social capital (Bolino, Turnley & Bloodgood, 2002). In Prong 1 this occurs with ethnically similar others, in Prong 2 with ethnically dissimilar but mission-similar others. During the interactions in recategorized groups, the focus of all members is on their shared organizational identity. This values-based identity, stemming from shared normative commitments, attracts and holds them together. Furthermore, social capital, in the form of ties, norms, and trust, is appropriable (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998, p. 253), because it provides motivation and capability for exchange. Hence, social capital created in ethnically homogeneous subunits can be appropriated by the mixed groups. The appropriation occurs by the latter drawing upon the former's relational social capital to enhance their consummatory motivation to exchange, and upon its cognitive social capital, in the form of knowledge of the organization's values and mission, to expand their capability to exchange.

Several conditions can increase the likelihood that the four processes presented above will create racially bridging social capital. Discussion of these conditions expands our understanding of the bridging processes themselves. The conditions for Prong 1 are

- 1.1 *Broadly attractive mission.* The organization possesses a mission, values, and practices that attract diverse members to the organization.
- 1.2 *Preexisting ethnic social capital.* Subunits composed of ethnically similar members are formed on the basis of stable social networks characterized by high densities of relationships and high interaction levels, facilitating the development of organization-specific cognitive social capital (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Orr, 1990).

- 1.3 *Shared routines.* All members of the organization, wherever located, engage in nearly identical, organizationally distinctive routines.
- 1.4 *Strong culture.* All members learn an organizational language, a vocabulary, and the same collective narratives (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).
- 1.5 *Shared identity.* The organizationally distinctive routines enact mission and values, providing an identity with the organization as a whole for all members. The organizational identity is separated from other societal identities (Etzioni, 1996), including ethnic identity. Identity reciprocity (J. Brown & Duguid, 1991; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998) is present, in which an individual who has internalized an individual identity with the organization has, reciprocally, an identity with all its other members, however diverse they may be.
- 1.6 *Relational capital.* Through successful collective performance of the organization's routines, members develop the expectational asset (Knez & Camerer, 1994) of a general trust, a sense of generalized reciprocity, regarding relations with other organizational members (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

Meeting these conditions not only enhances the attractiveness of the organization to minority group members, it also prepares all members to have successful Prong 2 interactions by creating the first condition below. Prong 2 interactions are further enhanced by the remaining conditions:

- 2.1 *Organizational know-how.* All members of diverse groups possess social, bodily, cognitive, and emotional knowledge of the organization's distinctive routines.
- 2.2 *Bounded relational demands.* Initial interaction practices for mixed groups are characterized by
 - performance of organizationally distinctive routines only;
 - no collective action that requires the stronger, bonding form of social capital;
 - no organizational activities that draw attention to or celebrate primary group differences.
- 2.3 *Structure for success.* The interactions of mixed groups are structured to require interdependence among members (Coleman, 1990); enable diverse members to exchange skill and knowledge with each other (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998); facilitate collective success, so that generalized trust is created.
- 2.4 *Sustained, periodic interaction.* Members from diverse groups come together periodically, frequently enough to maintain and accumulate social tacit knowledge about interacting with differing others (Bourdieu, 1986; Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998).

A striking feature of these conditions is that most appear to characterize many types of nonprofit organizations, aiding them in best attaining their missions.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

It is our hope that a two-prong representation-pluralistic interaction theory of social capital can inform improvements in the pursuit of diversity in voluntaristic organizations. Unlike the case of GSUSA, organizational leaders who conceive of diversity only in representational terms are unlikely to perceive the lack of pluralistic diversity at the disaggregated levels of direct human interaction. Their attention needs to be directed to that disaggregated level, to the second prong of the theory. There they can attend to problems of consummatory motivation and ability. They can intentionally and carefully structure interactions around mission-based routines within recategorized groups in order to create bridging social capital.

Counterintuitively, organizational leaders who are pursuing diversity can be misguided in attempting to avoid the flocking-together phenomenon that leads to racial separation within their organizations. This is a more subtle problem. If the tendency to flock together among majority members is the cause of voluntaristic organizations failing to attract and retain underserved ethnic groups, should it not be addressed? One way to do so is for staff to replace volunteers in the recruiting of minority members. Our statistical analyses, as well as reports from staff, indicated that staff-driven recruiting was very difficult to achieve for GSLEC, with attendant problems of poor retention of volunteers in ethnically diverse service units. The two-pronged theory of diversity leads us to argue that a better approach is to turn the tendency to flock together, manifested in the bonding form of social capital, to the organization's advantage. Minority volunteers best organize themselves in the same way that other volunteers do, through use of social tie networks. The resulting relatively homogeneous units can then be brought together to create the opportunity for bridging social capital, with their interactions structured around the traditional activities that manifest the organization's mission and values.

AN AGENDA FOR RESEARCH

For the authors, this study represents a lengthy personal journey through unexpected findings and a search for explanatory and practically applicable theory. The resulting preliminary two-pronged theory suffers from several limitations. The first limitation stems from the very logic of our inquiry. Finding a dearth of racially bridging social capital in best-case situations where one expects it to dominate implies that it would not be found elsewhere. But is

this truly so? Perhaps there are situations in which racially bridging social capital is being sustained in voluntaristic settings. If so, research can more directly investigate the processes that form and sustain such bridging. The theory developed here provides guidance regarding conditions and processes to examine. A second limitation is that the indications of racial homogeneity in our service unit and troop data reflect social processes of organizing that we were able to touch upon only lightly in our interview phase. A productive line of inquiry would be to examine systematically the processes by which minority members are drawn into collective action in organizations that previously had little presence in their communities. Does this most readily occur, as we propose, through the organization insinuating itself into existing voluntaristic networks and utilizing the social capital created by other institutions of voluntary action in a local community? If so, we would profit by knowing just how this occurs and whether it varies by the size of the network and the strength of the ties.

For us, a third set of issues is most important, those dealing with the search for organizational practices that create bridging social capital. We are struck by Coleman's (1990) and Edwards and Foley's (1998) argument that social capital resides in a social network, not in individuals. If so, a voluntaristic organization's practices and norms regarding interpersonal relationships and the appropriate ways to behave with each other would be critically important in the creation or erosion of bridging social capital. In the present study, the pursuit of traditional activities during interunit interactions is confounded with the particular norms of Girl Scouting regarding the developing of respectful relationships. It may be that these specific relational values and norms account for the ability of intertroop interactions to produce cross-cultural interaction skills and racial bridging. Similarly, if carefully structured interactions in recategorized, temporary groups succeed in augmenting consummatory motivation and ability to interact with differing others, can those motives and skills move with individuals to other contexts? Coleman's views suggest they might not, while Putnam's (2000) views and the concept of appropriability suggest that they would be transportable. This is a major issue for nonprofit research, as it involves the potential for voluntary organizing to contribute to ethnic bridging beyond the boundaries of the organization.

PROSPECTS

Despite strong interest in social capital in the nonprofit community and elsewhere, we seem to know surprisingly little about the formation of bridging social capital. Given the preliminary theory of representation-pluralistic interaction outlined here, with conditions that characterize many types of nonprofits, it appears that nonprofit organizations have strong but largely unrealized potential to contribute to improved interethnic relations in American society and even globally. With values and missions that are attractive to diverse members, nonprofits can bring into their overall organizational

structure groups that are typically separated along ethnic lines. The challenge then lies in the pluralistic interaction phase. The common diversity practice of directly addressing differences in identity, whether through sensitivity training or the celebrating of cultural differences, may be counterproductive in settings where diverse members lack the comfort and skill needed to interact with differing others. However, by creating the types of conditions and processes outlined here for pluralistic interaction, ones fully in keeping with mission attainment, many nonprofit organizations might create and sustain forms of social capital that can ameliorate identity-based conflicts in society.

Notes

1. Social Science Abstracts, Expanded Academic ASAP, and Wilson Select.
2. According to Coleman (1990), the term "social capital" was introduced by G. Loury to refer to the resources inherent in family and community relations for the cognitive and social development of youths.
3. The Girl Scout Promise and the Girl Scout Law are basic doctrines in Girl Scouting outlining the core organizational values and behaviors that all members vow to uphold.
4. Our thanks to Valerie Brown for her contribution.
5. The data concerning this activity was provided by our associate Denise Coleman in 1997.

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