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Natasha N. Jones

Mediation, Motives, and Goals: Identifying the Networked Nature of Contemporary Activism

Natasha N. Jones

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Reading Committee:

Mark Zachry, Chair

Charlotte P. Lee

Leah Ceccarelli

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University of Washington

Abstract

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Natasha N. Jones

Chairperson of the Supervisory Committee:
Professor Mark Zachry
Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering

Many contemporary work organizations are dynamic, complex entities that are increasingly networked and distributed in nature. Using an activist organization as the site of research, this study examines how a loosely-networked, distributed organization reconciled disparate individual goals and worked to accomplish local, shared socially-motivated goals (SMGs). In addition, this research investigates how the shared goals at the local level aligned with the motivations of the larger, networked organization with which the local group is affiliated. Moreover, this study considers how activists implemented and used mediating artifacts to address specific goals and how mediating artifacts were used in localized communicative practices.

Employing ethnographic research methods, this study incorporates data collected from 7 months of participant observations, oral and written interviews, and numerous collected artifacts in order to present a comprehensive view of the communicative practices of an activist group, the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW). Close reviews of the collected data generated 4 major themes and 9 related subthemes. In addition, subsequent analyses of the data yielded one overarching global theme, which is explored using Kenneth Burke's theory of rhetorical

identification. The findings of the study are presented in the form of a descriptive, ethnographic narrative and are analyzed using two complementary theoretical frameworks: Activity Theory (AT) and Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM). Using AT and GEM, this study investigates how genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies (ICTs) mediated work activities and how these three categories of genres functioned in concert to support the realization of SMGs.

This study demonstrates that an analytical framework that considers the rhetorical concept of identification has value for researchers attempting to understand how networked, heterogeneous organizations communicate and work to achieve common goals. Further, this study emphasizes that genres, as mediating artifacts, are embedded with identification strategies that can implicitly and explicitly promote consubstantiality within a networked organization. Finally, this research points to the need for additional studies investigating the implications of identification in networked organizations, as well as more research that examines how all three major categories of genres (print, speech, and ICTs) interrelate in networked organizations.

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Dedication

To Ania, my purpose for learning and living. Love mercy and seek justice in all you do.

Chapter 1: Introduction and Context

Introduction

In 1993, the lives of Alan G. Northrop and Larry W. Davis changed forever. Both Northrup and Davis were accused of and convicted of rape and burglary. Seventeen years later, in April of 2010, both men were exonerated of the crime and their sentences were vacated. Due to the tireless work of the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) these wrongfully convicted men were able to prove their innocence through DNA testing. This was only the second time in history that the state of Washington vacated sentences due to DNA testing. The first case, in 2007, was also due to the involvement of the IPNW. With these exonerations, the IPNW has begun to build a track record of success as an activist organization dedicated to the exoneration of wrongfully convicted individuals and the reformation of the justice system in Washington State. In addition to their evident success as an activist organization in the legal arena, this small band of lawyers, law students, professors, and volunteers manage the complex and dynamic network of relationships, motivations, and technologies and effectively communicate and collaborate to accomplish their established goals on both local and national levels. This research will explore how loosely-networked, distributed organizations, such as the IPNW, communicate, collaborate, and coordinate in order to achieve local goals and align these local socially-motivated goals (SMGs) with larger organizational motives. In addition, this study investigates how mediating artifacts (namely, genres that are enacted in print, speech and information and communication technologies) can impact local communicative practices and aid or hinder the accomplishment of SMGs and larger organizational motives.

Purpose

My study examines workplace activities of an activist organization in a contextualized setting through an ethnographic field study. The purpose of this study is to discover how a distributed, networked organization communicates in order to reconcile disparate individual goals and accomplish socially-motivated goals (SMGs). My research takes into account how individual local SMGs may differ from or align with larger, networked organizational motives. Further, my study examines how genres as mediating artifacts are used in communicative practices aimed at achieving goals within the network. My primary research questions are:

- In a contemporary activist-oriented organization, where the organizational structure is loosely networked and distributed in nature, how do local instantiations of the larger network communicate to reconcile disparate individual goals and meet local socially-motivated goals? In turn, how do local socially-motivated goals align with larger organizational motives?
- What are the communicative practices of a local instance of a networked organization and how do these localized practices aid or hinder the accomplishment of established socially-motivated goals?
- How are mediating artifacts (specifically, genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies) used in local communicative practices in ways that support the accomplishment of activist-related goals?
- How do the larger organization's motives manifest in genres used at the local level?

In the following sections, I provide background on the concept of networks (presenting a definition and a brief discussion of what constitutes a network). Second, I reveal how the concept of networks connects directly to issues of interest to scholars in the fields of technical

communication and rhetoric (defined broadly). Third, I discuss how a study of contemporary activism can highlight issues and concepts central to technical communication and rhetoric. Fourth, I discuss my research approach and design, and present my research assumptions. Then, I provide background about myself as a researcher. And, finally, I provide an overview for the structure of my dissertation.

Context and Background

Workplace organizations are dynamic, constantly shifting, complex systems. Each workplace environment incorporates concrete entities like individuals, edifices, and technologies, as well as more abstract components like experiences, goals and motivations, knowledge, and ideals. These contemporary dynamic workplaces have upset more traditional aspects of workplace standards and norms. As Daniels and Edwards (2010) assert, new innovations, as well as new problems tend to arise from this “changing world of work where complex problems call for multifaceted responses that can be in tension with long-established social practices of settled work settings” (p. 1). Further, Daniels and Edwards acknowledge that participants in contemporary workplaces may begin “creating new forms of work that call for the development of new tools or resources that in turn generate new understandings of practices and the sites of practice” (p.1). My dissertation develops an in-depth understanding of a specific type of contemporary workplace. The specific domain that my research considers is that of activism. My research investigates how an activist organization that is distributed and networked with other activist organizations completes its work within the organizational system. More specifically, my research considers the concept of networked activism: collaborative networks of individuals and organizations working toward an established and common goal.

Because activist groups are traditionally organized as networks, the metaphorical concept of a network is integral to my study of how activist organizations communicate to achieve localized goals, as well as larger organizational motives. Further, the network metaphor is useful and timely when considering how contemporary workplaces are increasingly structured. In this sense, understanding how activists reconcile their localized goals with the motives of the network has an impact on organizations outside of the domains of activism and social action because, like many activist organizations, networked organizations are becoming the commonplace structure of workplaces across disciplines and domains, including not-for-profit organizations, human services organization, disaster relief organizations, and even academic institutions.

Networks

My research explores how a networked organization communicates in order to reconcile SMGs at the individual and local levels and attempts to align goals with larger organizational motives. Recent scholarship has examined the concept of networks of various types, including social networks, economic networks, and communication networks. Further, networks have been discussed extensively by scholars in the field of communication, sociology, and economics among others. Scholars from various fields define networks in a number of different ways. Spinuzzi (2008) defines a network as “translations or transformations that tie together mediated activities” (p. 5). Similarly, Yochai Benkler’s description of a network considers the technological, social, institutional, and economic connections that tie together individuals in an environment. Benkler (2006) argues that the “emerging networked environment structures how we perceive and pursue core values” (p. 30). Furthermore, Benkler asserts that “the way life is

actually lived by people within a given set of *interlocking* technological, economic, institutional, and social practices is what makes a society attractive or unattractive, what renders its practices laudable or lamentable” (p. 3, emphasis added). Nardi & O’Day (1999) posit that, as scholars, we should expand “our perspectives to include the network of relationships, values, and motivations” and that technology (and I argue other mediating artifacts), are “part of an ecology, surrounded by a dense network of relationships in local environments” (p. 27-30). The use of network as a metaphor echoes through each of these definitions. Moreover, each definition and characterization of a network suggests that networks matter on many levels (social, cultural, economic, individual, and organizational) and have a great impact on social and cultural practices. My definition of a network is a synthesis of the definitions articulated by Nardi and O’Day, Benkler, and Spinuzzi. I define a network as individuals or organizations linked socially, culturally, and/or technologically by core values, goals, and motivations. Furthermore, like the scholars mentioned above, I posit that human activity is at the core of networks (or, net work, according to Spinuzzi) (Spinuzzi, 2008). Examination of human activity in networks encourages the consideration of a comprehensive activity network—all of the sociocultural factors that impact the activity and thus the network. Spinuzzi defines an activity network as “linked activity systems—human beings laboring cyclically to transform the object of their labor, drawing on tools and practices to do so” (p. 7). This definition necessarily takes into account the “interlocking” and interrelated practices that Benkler mentions (with a central focus on the social and cultural aspects of a network).

In addition to the social and cultural dimensions of networks, the structure of networks have implications for work and organizational activities, especially as the nature of organizations changes and become more distributed. According to scholars that have had an impact in the field

of technical communication (Hinds & Kiesler, 1995; Nardi & O'Day, 1999; and Spinuzzi, 2008) contemporary work organizations are increasingly distributed and networked. That is to say that, “many corporations operate in an increasingly distributed manner, with workers, contractors, consultants, and important contacts such as those in the press located in different parts of the country or across the globe” (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 31). In this sense, communication and collaboration become important factors in networks, so much so that communication within networks has been termed networked communication. Networked communication is defined as “collaborative distributed working and the sharing of information and expertise” (Dutton, 2008, p. 211) and studying networked communication takes into account the structure and the use of mediating artifacts (including genres). Thus scholars, like Spinuzzi, have turned their attention to how networked communication impacts work processes in contemporary organizations.

In general, the network metaphor has proven to be valuable for conceptualizing the interconnections of individuals, mediating artifacts, and objects within an activity system, as well as for examining the interdependent relationships of the constituent elements of an activity. On a broad level, my research explores how a networked organization can manage the aforementioned complexities and interdependencies and effectively communicate, collaborate, and coordinate to reach goals at the local level while aligning with larger organizational motives. As Engeström (2008) notes, there has been “fairly little critical and original theorizing on collaborative work and associated cognitive and communicative processes within and between teams in real organizational contexts” (p. 4). Engeström calls for studies that ask, “What is successful collaboration, and what are its obstacles inside work teams?” (p. 2). This call for further studies includes teams that are not co-located and organizations that are networked and distributed.

Thus, my research seeks to add to “discussions of socially distributed and artifact-mediated action” and communication in contemporary organizations (p. 4).

Rationale: Networks, Technical Communication, and Rhetoric

My research examines the work and communicative activities that take place in a network. In addition, my research aims to understand the manner in which socially-motivated goals (SMGs) of an instantiation of a larger organization are impacted by mediating artifacts by contextually investigating how a local node of a networked organization uses mediating artifacts to complete work and accomplish goals. I use an activist organization as a backdrop for my research study because activism, as a domain, provides an ideal research space for an examination of complex, networked, and distributed organizations. Because activism involves a number of individuals, constituencies, and stakeholders, each with disparate goals and motivations, incorporating, appropriating, and utilizing meditational means in order to encourage social action, a study of this domain highlights the complexity and interconnectedness of distributed work and networks. A study of a loosely networked, distributed activist organization brings to bear all of the concerns raised by Spinuzzi in the conclusion of his book *Network: Theorizing Knowledge Work in Telecommunication* where he states that taking a “strategic stance” will provide researchers with the ability to “identify objectives, set goals, take action, and retain the dynamism and flexibility necessary to cope with net work” (Spinuzzi. 2008, p. 207). When considering a successful example of an activist organization, one that has adeptly identified the goals and motivations of specific individuals, local divisions, and the larger organization and one that has been able to take action while still retaining flexibility the question then becomes, how has this organization been able to cope with net work? How has this

organization been successful in reaching established, but often disparate SMGs, while managing the complexities of networked work? The goal of my research is to take a “strategic stance” and discover how an activist organization that has become successful in coping with and managing net work.

In addition to examining how net work is successfully managed, my research also aims to investigate how mediating artifacts (including print, speech, and technological genres) can assist networked organizations in identifying, reconciling, and achieving established goals. The study of mediating artifacts, particularly technology, has been a primary focus of many scholars in the broadly defined field of technical communication (Kuuiti, 1996; Nardi, 1996; Spinuzzi, 2003; and Spilka, 2010). Scholars in technical communication have sought to understand how mediating artifacts impact work and affect communicative practices. Moreover, much is left to be understood about how work is completed and structured within contemporary networks in general (activist or otherwise), and one way of understanding how this work is completed is by studying tools used to complete the work—studying the mediating artifacts. As Kaptelinin & Nardi (2006) assert, based on the results of a case study by Engeström that examined “transformations of organizational work activities,” developments in technology and tools have a profound effect and new mediating artifacts [have] far-reaching consequences for coordination of work in general, the way different categories of workers defined and redefined their roles, and the way people . . . understood the object of their work . . . the whole structure of the activity system, including the nature of its individual components and their relationships, were transformed” (p. 109). In essence, with the implementation and use of meditational tools (specifically particular workplace genres, both oral and written, and ICTs) work activity develops into something new. There exists a dialectical nature between the use of the tools and

the nature of an activity. More specifically, mediating tools are “mediators of human experience” (p. 200) and “tools [are] an important part of the way we encounter the world to accomplish our goals” (Dourish, 2004, p. 108). My research aims to look beyond general conclusions that can be drawn about what we *think* we know about what technology and other mediating artifacts can afford activists (what Suchman (1987) may consider mere “assumptions about actions”), and provide detailed examination of how mediating artifacts support communicative practices and goal consensus in a contextualized environment. To this end, my study contributes to an understanding of how mediating artifacts affects communicative and work activities.

Finally, approaching a study of activism from a technical communication and rhetorical perspective provides a way to pull back the layers of a complex and dynamic domain by examining the work and communicative processes from the activity level, in other words, how the individual interacts with the environment through activity that is meaningful and “purposeful” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006, p. 31). As Kaptelinin & Nardi assert, “an active human subject engages in meaningful activity mediated by tools” (p. 200). Moreover, to echo Brown and Duguid’s (2000) call for analysis that moves past a mere examination of information and technology, my research study of the communicative practices of activism considers the “fuzzy stuff that lies around the edges—context, background, history, common knowledge, social resources,” all of the aspects that make up the work (and activities) of activists (p. 1). The holistic and comprehensive approach touted by Brown and Duguid and grounded in concepts from the rhetorical and technical communication disciplines (genre studies, attention to the social and technical, and contextualized observations) ideally provides insight into the work being done. In addition, a contextualized study of this nature allows me to peer inside the “black boxes” of a networked and distributed organization (in this case, a contemporary activist

organization)—fostering an understanding of a contemporary and complex field of study (Latour, 1987).

Significance for the Fields of Technical Communication, Rhetoric, and Activism

In addition to contributing to the fields of technical communication and rhetoric, my study is significant because it will also provide insight about the connections between activism and issues relevant to technical communication. What is understood about activism is rapidly changing and these changes have the potential to impact how information is communicated, how policy is created, how publics are influenced, and how SMGs are accomplished. Investigating these sites of transition in activism provides scholars the opportunity to study a dynamic communication phenomenon. Scholars in technical communication and rhetoric have found the study of activism and the changes occurring in activist organizations and activist contexts a particularly rich area of study, even in regard to how researcher themselves can function as activists. For example, Brenton D. Faber (2002) explores the connections between organizational change and community activism and J. Blake Scott (2003) calls for civic engagement and activism on the part of researchers, stating that “rhetorical studies of science, technology, and medicine have too often focused on colonizing new areas for rhetorical criticism and demonstrating the epistemological power of rhetoric in these areas, missing important opportunities to politically intervene in them” (Scott, 2003, p. 230). As the nature of activism changes (or develops), it is possible to explore what the field of technical communication can offer in order to foster a more full understanding of contemporary activism and activist organizations—whether scholars can contribute simply as communicators and researchers, or by becoming involved in activist causes.

Other tenets central to technical communication and rhetoric can also be explored and investigated when using activism as the field of study. Specifically, technical communicators and rhetoricians are well situated to examine how genres as mediating artifacts impact communication, persuasion, and work. One of the cornerstones of my research rests on understanding how activist work is transformed with the implementation of genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies functioning as mediating artifacts and how these genres are embedded in communicative activities. To this end, genre plays a major role in my study. Scholarship in genre studies spans the fields of both technical communication and rhetoric. Scholars in each disciplinary domain have explored what constitutes a genre, the methods and applications of genre theory, and the usefulness and effectiveness of genre in criticism. In addition, genre theory has evolved to include systems of genres, genre repertoires, internet genres, and new media genres. In this study, I examine genres (as mediating artifacts) in the highly contextualized work activities of activists. Dunmire (2000) asserts that one of the benefits of genre studies in rhetoric is that “rhetorical studies of genre provide a rich understanding of the dynamic relationship between genre activities and the social, historical, and institutional contexts in which those activities arise and are carried out” (p. 94). In other words, genre studies pay special attention to the social aspects of discourse and communication, including how discourse is socially recognized and accepted, and how genre helps to establish socio-discursive norms, provides structure to human interactions, and also provides an opportunity for agency. Further, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) assert that “genres . . . *should* be studied in their actual social contexts of use” (p. 2, emphasis added). Similarly, the field of technical communication also acknowledges the social nature of genre—for example, Carolyn Miller’s seminal work “Genre as a Social Action” (1984) asserts that “genre represents

action, it must involve situation and motive, because human action, whether symbolic or otherwise, is interpretable only against a context of situation and through the attributing of motives” (p. 152). These authors encourage the study of genres as they function in context. Ensuring that genres are studied within situated contexts is through ethnographic field studies, such as this, that consider genres as they are used to achieve localized and specific social action and communicative goals.

Finally, an auxiliary consideration for studying activism is that my research may provide a way for both scholars and activists to benefit from knowledge generated from this study. Stephen Valocchi (2010) asserts that “many times scholars and activists talk past one another. . . . For example, social movement scholars know a great deal about the costs and liabilities of certain organizational forms for longevity, democracy, creativity, and cooptation. Activists rarely have the luxury of learning from and then applying this scholarship” (p. 1-2). Valocchi further states that “we can be better students and scholars of social movements if we listen to activists; activists can be more effective agents of social change if they listen to scholars” (p. 2). One element of my research is geared toward cultivating this relationship.

Research Approach and Design

In order to address the research questions presented above, I conducted an ethnographic field study of a local activist organization, the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW). The IPNW is a local instantiation that is part of a larger networked organization of Innocence Projects distributed across the United States. The IPNW consists of a small core team of staff lawyers, one paralegal, two student assistants, and one director. Students enrolled in law classes in the

University of Washington's School of Law also complete casework as they earn credits in the law clinic. However, students were not included in this research as they were not members of the core administrative team.

My ethnographic study included participant observations, semi-structured interviews (oral and written), and artifact collection. The study took about seven months to conduct. Observations were recorded in a field notebook and then typed using word processing software. Interviews were recorded using a digital tape recorder and then transcribed using a transcription service. Written interviews were completed by team members and then emailed to me. Artifacts were collected during observations and interviews.

During data analysis, I considered the major components of my research questions (goals and genres as mediating tools) and examined my data based on these considerations. My examination of these key components was iterative. Activity Theory (AT) with a rhetorical focus and the Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM) framework were the key theories and analytical approaches that I used to analyze my data after collection.

Research Assumptions

The assumptions presented below served as my initial hypothesis about the answers to my aforementioned research questions. My assumptions were formulated before research began and were based on previous research and reviews of literature that discuss networked organizations and activism. To that end, I formulated three major assumptions or hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: I expected that the local instantiation of the larger networked organization communicates often with the larger organization in order to ensure alignment of goals

and motives. Due to the distributed nature of the network, I assumed that the mode and method of communication is often by email messages, or other information and communication technologies like teleconferences and via telephone.

Hypothesis 2: I hypothesized that, also due to the distributed nature of the network, the communicative practices of the local instance of the network are effective and aid in the accomplishment of established goals. This assumption was based largely on the success record of the local organization.

Hypothesis 3: I anticipated that the mediating tools that most affect local communicative practices would be those genres that are enacted in information and communication technologies (including social networking and digital media) because these systems often support distributed and collaborative work.

The Researcher

When this research was conducted, I was a doctoral student at the University of Washington, Seattle in the Human Centered Design & Engineering department. As a Master's student at Auburn University (Auburn, AL), I had the opportunity to enroll in a Biotechnology class in the Technical and Professional Communication program. The Biotechnology class explored the social and ethical implications in biotechnological advances like genetically-modified plants and animals, stem cell research, and DNA forensics. Through readings and class discussions, students were able to identify and discuss how these biotechnological advances impact the field of technical communication. As a course assignment, each student was required

to pick a topic in biotechnology and technical communication to explore more deeply. I selected DNA forensics. My study of the ethical and social implications of communicating about DNA advances led me to examine organizations that were involved in the use of and policy surrounding DNA forensics. The Innocence Project was one such organization and I quickly became fascinated with how the organization communicated about the advances in DNA testing and forensics. My research from the Biotechnology class became foundational in allowing me to publish a co-authored journal article about science, public policy, and technical communication with the professor of the course, based on a rhetorical analysis of the Innocence Project website (innocenceproject.org).

My interest in the Innocence Project, as a networked activist organization, continued as I pursued my Ph.D. The Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW), a local chapter of the larger networked organization, was fortuitously located on the University of Washington, Seattle campus and provided an ideal field of study for my dissertation research. I acknowledge that the convenience of the location of the IPNW played a role in my selection of the IPNW as my field of study. However, because of my dedication to rigorous academic scholarship, I was careful to design my research study in a way that would allow for a thorough and in-depth examination of the organization. I used a qualitative triangulation method (observations, semi-structured interviews, artifact collection) for data collection to ensure that I collected all necessary data and to strengthen the credibility of my research and findings.

Overview

My dissertation has six chapters and is organized as follows: First, I present an in-depth literature review that grounds my study in the field of technical communication and rhetoric

(broadly defined) and identifies the scholarly conversations to which this research contributes.

Next, I include a chapter that details my research methods, including a description of the research site, data collection methods, and data analysis methods. My fourth chapter presents an ethnographic narrative and presents findings. The fifth chapter of my dissertation provides analysis and discussion based on the ethnography and findings in Chapter 4. Finally, my sixth and final chapter presents my conclusions and points to implications for pedagogy and future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

My study examines the workplace activities of an activist organization in a contextualized setting through an ethnographic field study. The purpose of this study is to discover how a distributed, networked activist organization (the Innocence Project Northwest) communicates to accomplish goals. My research takes into account disparate individual goals, local activist-oriented organizational goals (which I term socially-motivated goals or SMGs and which can include awareness, education, litigation, and reform activities) and how these goals differ from or align with larger organizational (network) goals. In addition, I examine how mediating artifacts are used in communicative practices to support goals within the network. In order to fully understand the research space, I completed a critical literature review of relevant scholarly sources. My literature review was an iterative process that began before data collection and continued throughout the drafting and completion of my dissertation. Because my site of study is an activist organization, this literature review begins by providing background and a discussion of the current state of contemporary activism. In addition, this literature review examines the key concepts of the communication, collaboration, and coordination that are germane for identifying, reconciling, and meeting goals in a networked, distributed organization and the mediating artifacts that impact communicative and work practices in relation to the accomplishment of network goals. To that end, this literature review explores three major areas of literature: contemporary activism, goal theory, and mediating artifacts (and more specifically genres).

Contemporary Activism

When people think of activism, sounds and images of the Civil Rights Movement of the 1950s and 1960s might spring to mind. Or, people may envision the protests and pickets signs of the Occupy Wall Street movement taking place within the past year. Others may recall articles read from newspapers and video clips from mainstream media outlets, or even studies completed by academic and social movement scholars examined in college courses. However, understanding activism as it truly happens, from the perspective of those involved, is frequently neglected. Stephen Valocchi (2010) examines activism in Hartford, Connecticut. Valocchi's text presents a collection of stories about activism taking place in the city. To this end, Valocchi asserts that his book "privileges the 'voices' of activists, letting them express themselves in their own words" (p. 2). Further, Valocchi acknowledges that it is important to examine activism as it occurs in contextualized settings (what Valocchi calls "acting in the world") rather than attempting to understand activism from within academia (p. 2). Valocchi's text attempts to "illuminate and contextualize the 'what' of progressive activism [in Hartford]—what it is exactly they do, how they do it, and the challenges associated with it—but also the 'who' of the activists themselves—how they came to do this work, why they commit themselves to it, if they become frustrated and why, despite the frustration, they persist" (p. 3). As Valocchi clearly posits, more needs to be understood about what activism is and who activists are.

Activism, in a traditional sense, typically includes coordinating and organizing protest actions, distributing and disseminating information, and contacting lawmakers and influencing legislation. These activities and any other activities that center around "organizing groups of people with common interests or concerns to gain support for an issue, change policy around an issue, or undertake direct action to change a situation" (Hick and McNutt, 2002, p. 8) can be

considered activism. Broadly speaking, activism is synonymous with terms such as “community organizing/community practice, policy practice, and social action” (p.7). Though activism may include political issues and specifically political goals, this is not necessarily always a component. Similarly, protest activities may or may not stem from political issues and goals. However, activism can incorporate “protests and demonstrations to call attention to injustices and gain support for issues” (p. 8). Further, McCaughey and Ayers (2003) assert that “activism takes many forms—including direct action, protests, efforts to change laws, self-help groups, educational groups, cultural groups, activist newspapers, and political bookstores” (p. 14). Throughout my study, I call the desired outcomes of various forms of activism (whether direct protest, efforts to change and reform laws, and other types of social and political action) socially-motivated goals and examine the specific SMGs of the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW). The traditional forms of activism described by McCaughey and Ayers are often still used, but most activism today incorporates the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to accomplish goals that were once accomplished solely through the traditional means discussed above.

Contemporary activism, characterized by activism that makes use of ICTs, can be hard to define. Some scholars refer to contemporary activism as online activism, cyberactivism, or e-activism (Diani, 2000; McCaughey & Ayers, 2003; van de Donk et al., 2004; Carty & Onyett, 2006). Studying these contemporary forms of activism includes not only the use of internet and web-based tools, but also other new media technologies (like smartphones, social networking sites, blogs, and podcasts), which affect how activists achieve established goals and communicate. According to Garrett (2002), “new information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as cell phones, email and the World Wide Web, are changing the ways in which

activists communicate, collaborate, and demonstrate” (p. 202). Furthermore, the use of ICTs, such as the internet, not only change how activists communicate and collaborate within their own spheres of influence, but it has also had a great impact on the publics and groups that activists’ actions aim to impact. Van de Donk, et al. (2004) assert that, “not least, we see how the internet helps promote what are called alternative or counter public spheres that can offer a new, empowering sense of what it means to be a citizen” (p. xiii). ICTs have also afforded activist groups and social movement groups a great many organizational benefits. ICTs have allowed activists and social organizers the opportunity to make a greater impact by increasing the reach of activist organizations to larger populations, making the management and maintenance of resources more effective and efficient, and affecting policy in ways that have empowered traditionally disempowered groups and populations marginalized by the mainstream. For example, as explained by Carty and Onyett (2006):

Recent technological changes have facilitated the development of a number of independent, non-profit public interest media sites on the World Wide Web (WWW) that advocate social and economic justice. New outlets for the underrepresented in mainstream media allow for alternatives to corporate media controlled by profit, and give ordinary citizens access to information, resources, and opportunities for communication. (p. 230)

Further, McCaughey and Ayers (2003) explain exactly how contemporary activists are able to circumvent the traditional outlets available for activist and social movement organizers:

Small and larger networks of wired activists have been creating online petitions, developing public awareness Web sites connected to traditional political organizations

(e.g., Amnesty International online), building spoof sites that make political points (such as worldbunk.org), creating online sites that support or propel real-life (RL) protest (e.g., a16.org, which stands for April 16, the date of the World Trade Organization [WTO] protest in Washington, DC), designing Web sites that offer citizens information about toxic waste, and creating online organizations (e.g., Indymedia.org) that have expanded to do traditional RL activities. (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003, p. 1)

Because of ICTs like the internet and mobile phones, scholars' understanding of political and social activism has changed significantly. McCaughey and Ayers assert that contemporary activists have "changed substantially what counts as activism" (p. 1). Laura Illia (2003) traces the development of cyberactivism and the uses of ICT in activist movements in *Passage to Cyberactivism: How Dynamics of Activism Change*. According to Illia, "following the introduction of communication technologies (CT), information technology (IT), and the internet, the environment within which organizations and activists deal with each other changed" (p. 327). Essentially, activism has been completely transformed by ICTs. As asserted by Stengrim (2005), echoing Jean-Francois Lyotard, "technology transforms knowledge and the relationships among corporate, democratic, and civic entities" (p. 285). In other words, ICTs have not only changed activists themselves, but also changed the organizations and constituencies with which the activists interact *and* what they know and understand about one another.

Even as scholars recognize these transformations in activism, the nature of contemporary activism is still taking shape. Activism, even before the introduction of ICTs, is (and was) characterized differently for different groups of people, depending on the ends that the group desires to meet. McCaughey and Ayers acknowledge the difficulty in pinning down a definition of current forms of activism in their 2003 edited collection *Cyberactivism*. In the introduction,

the authors state that “*Cyberactivism* refuses to define the boundaries of online activism or to determine what counts and does not count as legitimate online activism” (p. 14). Hick and McNutt (2002) define cyberactivism as “a practice that (1) makes use of Internet-based technologies; (2) represents a move toward “new media” and away from traditional media approaches, including mass media (television and radio); and (3) complements more traditional approaches to advocacy” (p. 9). Moreover, even moving beyond simple definitions, scholars must also re-envision established categories and typologies of traditional activism to meet contemporary characterizations. In essence, the use of ICTs in activism has required that scholars rethink genres of activism and social movements. Sandor Vegh (2001), an activist scholar, categorizes online activism into two groups: internet-enhanced or internet-based. Both of these categories assume that “activists now take advantage of the technologies and techniques offered by the Internet to achieve their traditional goals” (p. 71). However, these categories differ in *how* the activist uses the internet. As described by Vegh, an internet-enhanced activist movement may use the internet to “enhance the traditional advocacy techniques, for example, as an additional communication channel, by raising awareness beyond the scope possible before the Internet, or by coordinating more efficiently” (p. 72). Vegh characterizes the internet-based movement as one that uses the internet “for activities that are only possible online, like a virtual sit-in or hacking into target websites” (p. 72). Further, Vegh divides the types of online activism into three subcategories: awareness/advocacy, organization/mobilization, and action/reaction (see Vegh 2001 for more on these subcategories). Other scholars have also attempted to categorize activism that implements the use of ICTs. For example, Illia (2003) divides cyberactivism into four categories: online traditional activists, rogue websites and discussion groups, hackers, and hybrid forms (Illia). The important point here is that because of the advancements in ICTs, the

manner in which scholars understand activism has changed just as much as activism itself has changed.

Activism centers on people and their accomplishment of goals. Though the mediating artifacts and technology provide a means to accomplishing established goals, the main interest lies in how people (the activists) are utilizing the artifacts and technology in ways that allows work to be completed. Van de Donk, Loader, Nixon, and Rucht (2004) assert that “. . . we should avoid becoming obsessed with just the communication technology itself. Instead we need to include in our analytical horizons the complex ways in which ICTs interplay with the dynamics of social movements, as well as mainstream political structures and contemporary cultural trends that frame these movements” (p. xv). Moreover, Van de Donk, et al. posits that it is important to consider *all* elements of social movements and activism. These elements include the individuals, organizational and communicative practices, and the tools used to complete activities in order to achieve localized and larger organizational goals. And, indeed scholars have realized the impact of the changing form of activism by turning attention to how ICTs have affected what scholars thought they clearly understood about concepts that impact activism—concepts like democracy, civic engagement, and public policy. In fact, during the past decade there has been much scholarship examining the impact of information and communication technologies (ICTs) on civic engagement, public policy, and activism (McCaughey & Ayers, 2003; van, de Donk, et al, 2004; Carty & Onyett, 2006; Gillan, K., Pickerill, J., & Webster, F., 2008). Some scholars agree that the internet and other ICTs have forever changed the manner in which the public communicates and engages in civic and social activity and that “a good deal of civic discussion takes place on the internet, not only in explicit public forums and within varieties of online journalism, but also within the vast networking of activist organizations and

social movements” (van de Donk et al., 2004, p. xiii). Carty (2010) asserts that “the tremendous impact that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have had on social movement organizing, contentious politics, and the electoral political process calls for the re-conceptualization of our definition and understanding of political struggle (p. 156).

Concepts like democracy and public policy have not been the only foci of contemporary activist studies. This transformation of activism has also impacted scholars’ understanding of identity, culture, and community (Ayers, 2003; Hands, 2011; Cooper and Dzara, 2010; and Hick and McNutt, 2002). The changes have been felt in social activist movements, as well as political activist movements. Further, scholars are also addressing concerns of how ICTs affect the networking and social aspects of activism. Juris (2005) examines this issue, asserting that:

By significantly enhancing the speed, flexibility, and global reach of information flows, allowing for communication at a distance in real time, digital networks provide the technological infrastructure for the emergence of contemporary network-based social movement forms . . . Barry Wellman (2001) has argued that ‘computer-supported social networks’ (CSSN) are profoundly transforming the nature of communities, sociality, and interpersonal relations. Although the proliferation of increasingly, individualized, loosely-bounded, and fragmentary community networks predates cyberspace, computer-mediated communications have reinforced such trends, allowing communities to sustain interactions across vast distances. (p. 191)

For these reasons, social media and social networking sites--like Facebook and Twitter--have been digital hotbeds for activist activities. Social media is defined as “forms of electronic communication (as Web sites for social networking and microblogging) through which users

create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (as videos)” (Merriam Webster Dictionary). In addition, social media can include the “various electronic tools available to help accelerate and improve our ability to connect, communicate, and collaborate” (Jue, Alcadlde Marr, & Kassotakis, 2010, p. 44). Social media can be found in any number of media formats. These formats may include “audio, video, text, images, and every other combination or permutation imaginable” (p. 44). Jue, et al, group social media into three main categories: blogs, wikis, and social networking sites. All of these media technologies have had a significant effect on activism and advocacy. Social networking sites may, however, be considered the most impactful due to their focus on relationships. Social networking sites are defined as “web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system” (Boyd & Ellison, 2007, p. 211). These new media formats have enabled activists to communicate in new and innovative ways. In addition, these formats have significantly altered how advocacy and activist-oriented work is completed. According to a recently published study of 169 representatives from 53 national advocacy groups, all groups surveyed were using some form of social media and social networking for civic engagement and collective action purposes (Obar, Zube, & Lampe, 2012). Further, the study’s results suggest that most advocacy and activist-orient groups “see social media as essential to contemporary advocacy work, and laud its democratizing function” (p. 2). In essence, the use of social media and social networking sites has greatly contributed to the development of contemporary activism.

Today, contemporary activism is synonymous with cyberactivism. More and more activist and social action groups are using ICTs to accomplish goals traditionally reached without

the assistance of communication technology systems. Activism and technology have merged in such a way that it has required that scholars reconsider formerly-held beliefs about activism and communication within activist organizations. However, while the nature of activism has changed, it appears that how activist organizations are fundamentally structured has not been significantly altered. According to Luther P. Gerlach and Virginia H. Hine (1970), scholars and prominent experts on activism and activist movements, activist organizations are not structured as traditional organizations are typically structured (hierarchically and centralized). On the contrary, Gerlach and Hine found that traditionally, in regard to activist organizations, the “most common type of organization was neither centralized and bureaucratic nor amorphous,” but networked in nature (p. 289) and contemporary activism has three structural characteristics.

Contemporary activism is:

- Segmentary
- Polycentric
- Integrated and Networked

Gerlach and Hine identifies these three characteristics as SPIN (segmentary, polycentric, integrated network). The section below discusses the three characteristics of the organizational structure of contemporary activist organizations (SPIN).

Segmentary

According to Gerlach and Hine, activist organizations are segmentary and “composed of many diverse groups, which grow and die, divide and fuse, proliferate and contract” (p. 289).

Activist organizations can be divided and create new groups with the same or differing views.

Some of the subgroups can merge with other subgroups, forming new groups with new leaders

and new ideas. As Gerlach and Hine note, there are no clear divisions between where a subgroup may begin or end. “New segments are created by splitting old ones, by appending new segments, or by splitting and adding new functions. Segments overlap and intertwine complexly, so that many people are members of several segments at the same time. A person may be a leader in one segment and a follower in another” (p. 290). Further, Gerlach and Hine acknowledge that segments can be created or diffused for a number of reasons. Gerlach and Hine note that the four main reasons that groups divide and create new subgroups are due to personal power, preexisting cleavages, competition, and ideological differences (p. 291-292). However, despite the reasons for activist organizations segmenting and forming new groups while dissolving other subgroups, “having a variety of groups permits a social movement to do different things and reach out to different populations” (p. 293). Therefore, the segmentary nature of contemporary activist groups can serve to greatly benefit the groups’ outreach efforts, spreading the cause further than a singular, cohesive group could.

Polycentric

Activist organizations are polycentric in that they are not centralized, but rather may have several points of concentrated power. Gerlach and Hine state that these organizations are considered polycentric, “having multiple, often temporary, and sometimes competing leaders or centers of influence” (p. 289). Gerlach and Hine note that polycentric means that “movements have many leaders or centers of leadership, and that these many leaders are not ultimately directed or commanded through a chain of command under a central leader. The leaders, like the segments, are not organized in a hierarchy” (p. 294). Gerlach and Hine use the term “heterarchic” to describe the nature of this multi-leader organizational structure. In addition,

Gerlach and Hine are careful not to characterize the organizational structure as “polycephalous.” According to Gerlach and Hine, the term polycephalous was “changed to polycentric because movement participants since the 1960s often claim to have no leaders and are dismayed when a situational leader appears to be translating inspiration and influence into command” (p. 294). In other words, similar to the segmentary nature of contemporary activist organizations, the heterarchic natures of activist organizations also serve as an advantage for activist groups because leaders are seen as one of the group and not as an individual that is in a more powerful or meaningful position than others. Further, leaders are usually not considered in ways that more traditional and hierarchical organizations view leaders. Traditional organizations choose and select leaders based on education, political views, and capability in completing a task. However, in activist organizations, leaders are typically situational and are more valued because of their motivational and inspirational qualities. Gerlach and Hines assert that “people become leaders chiefly by inspiring and influencing others rather than being chosen for their political or organizational skills. This leadership is usually situational, as leaders arise to cope with particular situations or episodic challenges in the life of a movement. Leaders must continue to prove their worth and are often challenged by rivals” (p. 294). While a number of leaders (or no acknowledged leader) can serve to benefit activist organizations, the challenges to leadership and the presence of differing perspectives of various subgroups and segments can also present a difficult obstacle for activist organizations. “There is no one person or group able to make decisions that are binding upon all or even most of the participants in a movement. This makes negotiation and settlement difficult, if not impossible. Temporary leaders of a specific protest action may be able to reach agreement on concessions that will end the action, but they have no power to prevent anyone from launching new protests” (p. 295).

Integrated and Networked

Gerlach and Hine define the networked aspect of activist organizations as an “integrated network” (p. 289). Gerlach and Hine state the network “forms a loose, reticulate, integrated network with multiple linkages through travelers, overlapping membership, joint activities, common reading matter, and shared ideals and opponents” (p. 289-290). Gerlach and Hine explain that choosing the network metaphor to describe the structure of activist organizations characterizes “an organization in which the cells, or nodes, are tied together, not through any central point, but rather through intersecting sets of personal relationships and other intergroup linkages” (p. 55). These networks are decentralized, but ideas and information are often shared among nodes of the network. Increasingly, ideals, information, and resources are shared throughout the network by means of ICTs.

Though, as asserted by Atkinson (2009), “contemporary research concerning new social movements have adopted the network concept (e.g., Arquilla & Ronfeldt, 2001; Eriksson, 2005; Huesca, 2001),” this networked structure of activism is not a new development (Atkinson, 2009, p. 49). Activist organizations and social movement organizations (SMOs) have long relied on the strength of the SPIN, networked structure. Gerlach and Hine posit that, despite an initial assumption that the decentralized and segmented nature of activist organizations is a disadvantage, the SPIN structure actually affords an activist group more flexibility and increases the organization’s ability to adapt to dynamic and changing situations. Gerlach and Hine maintain that:

When the success of movements is reported as having occurred “because of” rather than “in spite of” organizational fission and lack of cohesion, we will have come to understand

the nature of movement dynamics much more clearly. Organizational unity is functional in a steady-state social institution designed to maintain social stability and the status quo. Segmentation and “internecine dogfighting” are functional in a social institution designed for rapid growth and the implementation of social change. (Gerlach & Hine, 1970, p. 64)

In other words, the SPIN structure of activist organizations is ideal for encouraging social change. Or, as Gerlach and Hine more concisely assert, “these very characteristics are highly adaptive in that they promote the growth of the movement, prevent effective suppression of it, and facilitate the desired personal and social changes” (p. 65). Furthermore, Gerlach and Hine highlight the importance of the networked nature of activist organizations, particularly the links between nodes of the network and the underlying aspects that promote the links between nodes (like personal commitment, friendship, and group affiliation). Here, creating a common and shared sense of identity (inherent in the process of identification which is discussed at length later in this dissertation) is of great importance for the success of an activist organization or social movement.

Gerlach and Hine insist that,

in a decentralized, segmented organization, the importance of linkages which tie the whole into a network cannot be overemphasized. It is even more important to recognize the role of personal kinship, friendship, and other associational ties. In an organization where no single individual even begins to know of all the groups involved in the movement, and where there is no central headquarters through which information and authority can be channeled, an effective and very flexible unity can be maintained through personal ties between committed individuals. (p. 63)

In addition to characterizing the advantages of the organizational structure of activist organizations and describing the importance of the linkages between nodes in an activist network, Gerlach and Hine identify four specific ways that the SPIN structure allows an activist organization to successfully adapt to a dynamic social environment. According to Gerlach and Hine, there are “four functions of this decentralized, segmented, and reticulate form of organization which are adaptive in the growth of the movement and accomplishment of its purpose: maintenance of security, multipenetration, social innovation, and minimization of failures” (p. 65). Maintenance of security refers to the limits on the “ability of the establishment to penetrate, gather intelligence about, and counteract the movement” (p. 65). Multipenetration considers the organizations ability to impact the establishment from a number of different entry points. Due to the multiple points of entry and multiple leaders, security is increased in a networked organization. These aspects of a networked organization safeguard against the destruction of one node or one leader having devastating effects on the network as a whole. Further, these multiple entry points also create many and different areas of expertise within the network. Naturally, certain leaders will have experience, knowledge, and qualification in specific domains. Gerlach and Hine assert that the reticulate (or networked) “organization is especially adapted to the task of spreading the movement across class and cultural boundaries” (p. 69). Social innovation refers to the organizations repurposing of the traditional and the innovation of the new. These innovations can include the implementation of information and communication technologies or the repurposing of other tools and resources. Gerlach and Hine, in their study of the Pentacostal and Black Power Movements, describes each movement’s willingness to try new approaches. Gerlach and Hine observe that in each movement, “many groups in both movements are experimenting with different types of social organizations. They are also experimenting with

a variety of ways to achieve common goals” (p. 73). Furthermore, Gerlach and Hine state that “perhaps the most adaptive function of segmentation and decentralized control is the promotion of innovation in the design and implementation of social, political, economic, or religious change” (p. 73). Finally, Gerlach and Hine describe the adaptive function of the minimization of failures in networked activist groups. Gerlach and Hine insist that,

Innovation through trial and error results in a variety of adaptive and successful social “mutations” which can lead to constructive social change. It also results in a good many failures. In fact—and in this respect, social processes are analogous to natural processes—there are more failures than successes. Under the pressure of selective, adaptation the maladaptive variant simply passes out of existence. This can only occur on the social level, however, with a decentralized, segmented structure. If a movement has been centralized under the leadership and effective control of one man, and he errs in his judgment, the whole movement is in jeopardy. (p. 77).

In essence, the very nature of the organizational structure of activist organizations affords the organization a number of advantages and increases the potential for the organization to reach and accomplish set goals. The strength of a networked organization lies in its organization structure.

The next section of the chapter reviews relevant literature about goals and how goals are set and agreed upon within an organization. Because understanding how goals are accomplished within a networked activist organization is central to my study, this section will provide background on goal theory, more specifically goal setting and goal congruence.

Goal Theory

In the fields of administration and organization science and industrial and organizational (I/O) psychology, goals and how they are manifested and enacted in organizations have been studied extensively (Locke & Latham, 1990 and 2006; Ethiraj & Levinthal, 2009; Latham, Stajkovic, & Locke, 2010). These theories about goals include studies of goal-setting theory, goal congruence, and goal coherence, each concept helping to create a more comprehensive picture about how goals are enacted within an organization. For the purpose of my study, I use some key terms (including goal setting and goal congruence) from the fields of administration and organization science and I/O psychology to discuss my findings about how goals are coordinated and accomplished at my study site. In order to answer my research questions about goals in an activist organization, it is important to understand how goals affect organizations in general. This brief review of relevant literature provides the basis for understanding and discussing organizational goals.

Goal Setting

The concept of goal setting is relevant to my study because, in order to understand how goals are accomplished, one must first understand how goals are set. My study does not examine goal setting at length. However, I acknowledge that goal setting has an impact on goal accomplishment. This assertion is supported by lead scholars in goal-setting theory. According to Locke and Latham (2006), goal-setting theory “was developed inductively within industrial/organizational (I/O) psychology over a 25-year period, based on some 400 laboratory field studies” (p. 265). Furthermore, because of the findings in this field of study, scholars have been able to make generalizations about the types of goals and goal-setting activities that lead to

goal accomplishment. Locke and Latham assert that “these studies showed that specific, high (hard) goals lead to a higher level of task performance than do easy goals or vague, abstract goals” (p. 265). In other words, setting goals that require some exertion of effort garnered higher levels of goal accomplishment (or task performance).

In addition to examining goal setting and the effects of clear or vague goals and hard or easy goals, Locke and Latham have also studied the effects of the origin of goals on goal accomplishment. Goals can be set by any different number of sources: a supervisor, a peer, or a team leader. Locke and Latham have concluded that “goals are effective even when they come from different sources; they can be assigned by others, they can be set jointly through participation, and they can be self-set” (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 265). When specifically studying goals that are set through participation in groups, Locke and Latham discovered that “having high personal goals that were compatible with the group’s goals enhanced group performance” and that when setting goals in a group “task relevant information may be shared among group members” (p. 266). One of the benefits of participatory, group goal setting is that when groups share information they performed “better on complex management simulation... The sharing effect is enhanced if the people in the dyad have high goals” (p. 266). Simply put, group goal setting encouraged information sharing that in turn improved the entire group’s performance in accomplishing a goal.

The effects of goal setting in organizations have been studied from a number of perspectives (as mentioned above, goal origin, goal difficulty, and goal specificity). However, the most relevant findings about goal setting in organizations relates to how the individuals within an organization perceive the goals and accept the goals that are set. These findings take into account not just the goals themselves, but the role of goals and self-efficacy, tenacity,

passion, and a communicated vision (Locke & Latham, 2006). As Locke and Latham assert, in one study they found that “a shared vision strengthened cooperative goal setting. . .thereby reducing the negative feelings that frequently occur in alliances due to perceptions of in- versus out-groups (p. 267). But, most importantly, Locke and Latham contend that “feelings of success in the workplace occur to the extent that people see that they are able to grow and meet job challenges by pursuing and attaining goals that are important and meaningful” (p. 265).

Goal Congruence

The manner in which goals are set affects the level of goal accomplishment in organizations. However, goal setting is only part of the picture. Goal-setting occurs early in the organizational goal process. And, as asserted by Locke and Latham, “goals refer to future valued outcomes, the setting of goals is first and foremost a discrepancy-creating process” (Locke & Latham, 2006, p. 265). In this sense, setting goals is just step one. After goals are set, goals must be agreed upon by individual members. The concept of goal congruence examines this agreement about goals among members of an organization.

Goal congruence is the degree to which goals within an organization align. Schaffer (2007) asserts that, within an organization, “managers and supervisors must address the degree to which all goals within the organization coincide with one another, recognizing the implications of congruence or incongruence” (p. 13). Vancouver, Millsap, and Peters (1994) define organizational goal congruence as “the agreement among organizational employees on the importance of the goals the organization could be pursuing” (Vancouver, Millsap, & Peters, 1994, p. 666). Goal congruence can also be defined as “the extent to which the organizations’

goals are similar” (Lundin, 2007, p. 654). The importance of goal congruence in relation to my study directly connects to the idea that “goal congruence may boost collaboration” (p. 654). Lundin points to a number of studies that support his claim that goal congruence increases collaboration and cooperation within and among individuals and organizations (p. 654). This alignment of goals creates an environment that supports collaboration among members. As asserted by O’Toole (2003), “a shared interest can be a powerful facilitator of cooperation, whereas diverging objectives may decrease cooperation” (p. 239). Considering this, my examination of the effects of the communication, collaboration, and coordination of members of an organization on the organization’s goals necessarily takes into account the impact of goal congruence on success or failure of goal accomplishment.

Other important considerations related to the concept of goal congruence are that of trust and organizational commitment and how trust impacts goal congruence. Schaffer (2007) categorizes four types of organizational goal consensus. The four types are: constructive goal congruence, destructive goal congruence, constructive goal incongruence, and destructive goal incongruence. Schaffer found that both constructive goal congruence and constructive goal incongruence both had a positive effect on the organizational environment. Schaffer asserts:

With both constructive goal congruence and destructive goal incongruence, congruence between the organization and its employees is ultimately achieved because of the inherent healthy relationship that exists throughout the different levels of the organization (from the board of directors down to the front line supervisors). These relationships involve a high level of organizational commitment and trust (Davis, Schoorman, & Donaldson, 1997; Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974) which ultimately provides a favorable environment for the organization. (Schaffer, 2007, p. 15)

Further, in his 2003 study of interorganizational cooperation and the Swedish Public Service, Lundin found that trust affects goal congruence within organizations. Lundin concludes that “congruent goals do not promote cooperation *if* authorities do not trust each other. Furthermore, mutual trust cannot enhance cooperation when authorities have very different priorities. That is mutual trust and goal congruence must exist simultaneously” (p. 669, emphasis added). Moreover, when goals are being communicated among organizations, Lundin suggests finding ways that “congruent objects can perhaps be communicated in a trustworthy way” (p. 669). Lundin’s research and findings are relevant to my study in that my research considers the impact of cooperation (broadly, communication, collaboration, and coordination) and goals on one another.

Though I have appropriated the scholarship of Lundin and other researchers mentioned here for my ethnographic study of a networked organization, it is important to note that much of the research referenced assumes a traditional, centralized and hierarchical organizational structure. However, these scholars’ research on goal theory (goal setting and goal congruence) can be extended to examine contemporary organizations that are networked and distributed in structure. In addition, the scholarship of the I/O psychology and administration and organization science scholars can also be used to examine organizations that are not for profit. Schaffer, in his call for future research, states that “future work can examine multiple variations of organizational structure and determine how principles related to goal setting and motivation can be tied to congruence/incongruence under such settings” (Schaffer, 2007, p. 17). Indeed, while scholars in administration and organization science and I/O psychology acknowledge that much of the research about goals in organizations consider more traditional types of hierarchical, centralized workplaces, these same scholars’ calls for future research have encouraged studies of

goals to be completed in organizations that may be structured differently (including networked organizations). In this way, my research regarding the goals of a networked and distributed organization (though not originating in the disciplines of I/O psychology or administration and organization science), adds to the body of knowledge about how goals are manifested and enacted in contemporary multi-dimensional, networked workplaces.

The next section of this chapter discusses mediating artifacts and how artifacts aid or hinder the accomplishment of local and organizational goals. The first part of the section discusses different scholars' perspectives regarding mediating artifacts, including Engeström's classification system for mediating artifacts. Finally, I discuss genre as a specific type of mediating artifact (providing a historical and contemporary explanation of genre).

Mediating Artifacts

Mediation can be a vague and complex term used to refer to a number of different concepts by various scholars in diverse fields. For the purpose of my study, I adapt Edwin Hutchins' (1997) definition of mediation. According Hutchins, mediation refers to "a particular mode of organizing behavior with respect to some task by achieving coordination with a mediating structure that is not itself inherent in the domain of the task" (p. 338). Further, Hutchins posits that "in a mediated performance, the actor does not simply coordinate with the task environment; instead the actor coordinates with something else as well, something that provides structure that can be used to shape the actor's behavior" (p. 338). In other words, the actor (or the individual) uses and interacts with a "tool" or "artifact" to affect the environment or their own actions. What Hutchins refers to as the "something" used to "structure," I consider mediating artifacts. Mediating artifacts are tools or signs used by individuals to carry out an

activity. “According to the model of ecological cognition, mediating artifacts can be found within the environment and their purpose is perceived by the user, who will use them to act out plans that have been conceived as a result of them experiencing a ‘desire’, which has to be made consistent with the goals they have developed” (Bishop, 2005, p. 55). As posited by Spinuzzi (2003), “activities are shaped in part through...instruments...tools, meditational means, or simply mediating artifacts” (p. 38). In simple terms, individuals use objects in their environment to help them to complete certain actions (for example using a hammer to drive a nail), act as cognitive cues (for instance using the color red to signal danger), or assist in other activities (like reminders, as demonstrated by classic Vygotskian example of tying a knot in a handkerchief as a reminder to complete a task). As Hutchins mentions, understanding what the artifacts are, how they are used, how they affect behavior and the environment are the key to understanding how humans perform and perceive activity. Hutchins states that “what this something else is [mediating artifacts], where I may be located, and how simultaneous coordination with it and some task relevant environment is achieved are central questions in understanding what sorts of creatures we humans are (Hutchins, 1997, p. 338). From an activity theory perspective, employing the use of mediating artifacts changes an individual (including how a person thinks or behaves). When individuals use mediating artifacts the individual is “psychologically transformed” (Spinuzzi, 2003, p. 38). Spinuzzi asserts that “artifacts help [the workers] meet goals by regulating or controlling their own actions...The artifacts thus transform the ways workers conceive of their activities, solve problems, set new goals, and so forth” (p. 38). Moreover, according to Spinuzzi¹, “in the Vygotskian account, mediation is what makes human consciousness possible” (p. 38).

¹ Note: Spinuzzi points to other resources for this perspective on mediating artifacts, listing Cole

The process of mediation is not only observed through the examination of material artifacts and tools, but can occur in other forms as well. Mediation is present in documents, language, culture, or other objects. Hutchins notes that

Many tasks in our culture are mediated by checklists or checklist-like artifacts, but even considering all of them would not scratch the surface of the full range of mediated performance. Language, cultural knowledge, mental models, arithmetic procedures, and rules of logic are all mediating structures too. So are traffic lights, supermarket layouts, and the context we arrange from each other's behavior. Mediating structures can be embodied in artifacts, in ideas, in systems of social interaction, or in all of these at once. (Hutchins, 1997, p. 339)

Hutchins examines how a simple checklist functions as a mediating artifact. As Hutchins points out in the study, a mediating artifact affects the person using it and the external environment. "In order to use a checklist as a guide to action, the task performer must coordinate with both the checklist and the environment in which the actions are to be taken" (p. 339). In essence, mediating artifacts transform the user and the environment. In this dialogic process, the mediating artifact is also transformed to fit the specific purpose of the user—embedding purpose and meaning in the artifact.

The vast array of what can be considered a mediating artifact can be daunting and overwhelming. However, one way of conceptualizing mediating artifacts is to understand how mediating artifacts can be classified. In addition to the infinite variety of ways in which mediating artifacts may manifest, different "classes" or types of mediating artifacts can be considered useful. Yrjö Engeström (2008) acknowledges that "mediating artifacts include both

1996 and Lee 1985 as sources.

tools and signs, both external implements and internal representations such as mental models” (p. 128). While Engeström notes that “it is not particularly useful to categorize mediating artifacts into external or practical ones, on the one hand, and internal or cognitive ones, on the other hand” because internal representation may become external manifestation and vice versa, there is a way to purposefully characterize mediating artifacts (p. 128). According to Engeström, there are “*what* artifacts,” “*how* artifacts,” “*why* artifacts,” and “*where to* artifacts” (p. 129). Table 1 below presents the types of artifact and how Engeström posits that each class (or category) of artifact functions.

Table 1. Engeström’s Mediating Artifacts Classification

Class of Artifact	Function of Artifact	Example
What	Identify and describe objects	An inventory list
How	Guide and direct process and procedures on, within, or between objects	A flow chart
Why	Diagnose and explain properties and behavior of objects	A conceptual model
Where to	Envision the future state and potential development of objects	A business plan

This classification makes conceptualizing how an artifact is used and why it is used in such a manner a bit easier to grasp. However, Engeström is careful to caution that artifacts do not neatly

fit into prefabricated boxes. Engeström states that “although certain artifacts are typically used in certain ways [like genres], there is nothing inherently fixed in an artifact that would determine that it can only, for instance, be a *why* artifact” (p. 129). Because artifacts can be appropriated by the subject for the particular activity in which they are engaged, artifacts can be fluid and dynamic entities. Sometimes, artifacts can be used in more than one way and fit into more than one category. “A conceptual model may typically function as a dynamic diagnostic tool, but it may also become a frozen definition used only as a *what* artifact to identify and classify phenomena” (p. 129, emphasis added). To further explain this occurrence, Engeström presents an example of a hammer as a mediating artifact that slips from one category to another. “A hammer may typically be used as a *what* artifact for identifying objects that may be hammered (such as nails). But it may also become a *where* artifact used as a symbol for workers’ power (p. 129, emphasis added). Further, as stated earlier, different artifacts may mean different things, present different opportunities for interaction with the environment, and may be used in different ways by different subjects. Engeström posits that the “artifact-mediated construction of objects does not happen in a solitary manner or in a harmonious unison. It is a collaborative and dialogical process in which different perspectives (Holland & Reeves, 1996) and voices (R. Engeström, 1995) meet, collide, and merge. The different perspectives are rooted in different communities and practices that continue to coexist...” (Engeström, 2008, p. 129). In essence, individuals’ use of mediating artifacts in the accomplishment of work is transformative for the environment, as well as for the individuals that use the artifacts. These transformations are fluid, yet persistent, embedding meaning in the artifact and allowing individuals to make meaning of their activities.

The following sections explore the relevance of genres as mediating artifacts. Genres are first explored from a historical perspective, tracing the different perspectives and approaches to

genre as a rhetorical concept and making the argument for genre as a useful and valuable rhetorical tool. An examination of contemporary genre studies is presented at the end of this chapter, including a discussion about situated genre theory and how it pertains to conceptualizing genres as mediating artifacts.

Genre

Genres, including traditional workplace genres and new media genres, can function as mediating artifacts. Spinuzzi notes that like the more general term, artifact, “genres are sometimes described as tools-in-use and are usually studied in a mediatory role” (Spinuzzi, 2003, p. 40). Russell defines tools-in-use as “material objects in use by some individual or group for some object/motive to accomplish some action with some outcome” (Russell 1997). Spinuzzi extends his discussion of genre and points to the complex and nuanced understanding of genre (Spinuzzi, 2003)². Indeed, at its nature, genre is a very complex concept with varying scholars defining genre in a number of different ways. Daniel Chandler (2000) traces the difficulties of defining genre. Chandler notes that though various forms of generic classifications have existed since Shakespearian times, actually defining a genre continues to be problematic. To add to this complexity, Chandler notes that “it is difficult to make clear-cut distinctions between one genre and another: genres overlap, and there are ‘mixed genres,’” (p. 2). In essence, “specific genres tend to be easy to recognize intuitively but difficult (if not impossible) to define” (p. 2). Genres of websites and genres of new media do not avoid these typical entanglements when it comes to identifying and defining genres, and perhaps these issues multiply when considering the generic

² Note: See Spinuzzi’s discussion of his understanding of the concept of genre in Chapter 2 of his book, *Tracing Genres Through Organizations: A Sociocultural Approach to Information Design* (2003).

distinctions of new media. However, value remains in recognizing, identifying, and understanding genres in more traditional forms of discourse and media as well as pinpointing the specific elements (in content, purpose, and form) of traditional genres, like genres enacted in print and speech, as well as genres enacted in ICTs.

Historically speaking, genre (as a concept) has been discussed and debated by scholars in rhetoric, communications, English, and other academic domains. Genre in rhetorical contexts has long been an esoteric and polysemic concept for scholars. Many scholars have debated about what constitutes a genre, the methods and applications of genre theory, and the usefulness and effectiveness of genre in criticism. In addition to these points of contention genre theory has evolved to include systems of genres, genre repertoires, and internet genres, and new media genres, and genre ecologies (to be discussed later in this chapter)—all adding to the genre debacle. Critics and scholars have varying perspectives about almost every element and aspect of genre studies, genre criticism, and genre theory. The following sections provide some historical background on genre studies in rhetoric by identifying three different perspectives. The first section examines genre as a classification system. Next, genre as a social action is discussed. Then, genre in relation to a sociocognitive approach is explored. Subsequently, contemporary genre studies and concepts are explored. This historical and contemporary discussion of genre concludes with an investigation of the various criticisms associated with rhetorical considerations of genre and finally, emphasizes the usefulness of genre as a theoretical concept.

Genre as a Classification System

Perhaps one of the earliest conceptualizations of genre was that of genre serving as a classification system for discourse (both written and verbal). Walter R. Fisher (1980), in *Genre:*

Concepts and Applications in Rhetorical Criticism, traces the development of the concept of genre and discusses how genre is used to categorize discourse. Fisher posits that one of the most important aspects of genre studies in rhetorical criticism is that discourse can be recognized as belonging to a specific category or class because a critic is inclined to judge the discourse according to the standards and norms that are ascribed to a particular category or class. Fisher states, “as a critic conceives an object of criticism, so will he or she assess it” (p. 290). In essence, discourse must be recognized as belonging to a specific genre. Fisher further explains, asserting that “if a speech is defined as a deliberative address composed of ethos, pathos, and pistis, the critic will see and appraise these modes of proof...An uncritical approach to genre, in other words, is tantamount to uncritical criticism” (p. 290). Moreover, Fisher also claims that genre criticism “specifies categories of discourse, places works within the categories, and the result is a more-or-less predetermined assessment” (p. 291). He makes an even more definitive statement when he simply defines genre as a category, asserting “my response to the first question, what is a genre, is simple and straightforward: a genre is a category” (p. 291). Fisher discusses genres as broad “generalizations,” created because of the “mind’s penchant for observing similarities and differences in things, to provide order and understanding” (p. 291). He asserts that this orderly categorizing of discourse serves a valuable function because it aids readers’ understanding of the discourse. “As genre and criticism are productive and useful understanding of things, they perform their highest function” (p. 291). To further categorize genres themselves, Fisher identifies four “levels of generality” to which genres can belong. For Fisher, genre studies exist purely for the purpose of categorization and identification in the service of judgment.

Fisher is not the only scholar that relegates genre to simply a classification system for discourse. According to Campbell and Jamieson (1978), earlier scholars sought to “trace traditions or recognize affinities and recurrent forms” (Campbell & Jamieson, 1978, p. 14). To this end, Black developed a framework for genre criticism that “located clusters of discourse based on recurrent strategies, situations, and effects” (p. 14). Black’s framework posited that a generic approach should consider the following:

- “a limited number of situations in which a rhetor can find himself”
- “a limited number of ways in which a rhetor can and will respond”
- “the recurrence of a given situational type through history will provide the critic with information on the rhetorical responses available in that situation”
- “congregations of rhetorical discourse [to] form at distinct points. . .the points will be more or less arbitrary” (Campbell & Jamieson, 1978, p. 14).

Black’s framework provided a model for genre scholars to follow in their criticism and categorization of various types of discourse. In turn, Campbell and Jamieson also define genre more along the lines of a categorization system. Though Campbell and Jamieson complicate the definition of genre, by comparing genres to star “constellations,” stating that genres are like constellations which are “perceived patterns with significance and usefulness,” the authors still ultimately define a genre as “a classification based on the fusion and interrelation of elements in such a way that a unique kind of rhetorical act is created” (p. 25). These scholars posit that the benefit of being able to identify and classify genres allows for rhetorical determinations about the practicality of employing the use of specific types of genres in certain situations. The next generation of genre scholars expands this concept and focus attention on the social implications of genres in typified, recurrent contexts.

Genre as Social Action Perspective

In 1984, Carolyn Miller's seminal essay, "Genre as Social Action," revisited the question of what constituted a genre in rhetorical criticism, highlighting the fact that the definitions and characterization of genre and what constituted a genre was still not a codified, well-defined concept in rhetorical criticism. In Miller's opening sentence, she asserts the lack of a solid definition of genre, stating that "although rhetorical criticism has recently provided a profusion of claims that certain discourses constitute a distinctive class, or genre, rhetorical theory has not provided firm guidance on what constitutes a genre" (p. 151). Moving away from the approach that characterized a genre simply as a discourse classification tool, Miller attempted to define genre based on the action that the discourse encouraged. She develops the idea of genre as a social action by incorporating the considerations of situation (introduced by Bitzer) and motive. Miller notes that this characterization is similar to Kenneth Burke's attention to motive and situation. As Miller asserts, "if genre represents action, it must involve situation and motive, because human action, whether symbolic or otherwise, is interpretable only against a context of situation and through the attributing of motives" (Miller, 1984, p. 152). Finally, another important aspect of Miller's characterization and definition of genre is that Miller expands on the linguist M. A. K. Halliday's concept of typification (1978). The concept considers that recurrent social situations are not material, physical situations, but "a semiotic structure" (Halliday, 1978, p. 29, as qtd. by Miller, 1984, p. 157). In this sense, recurrent social situations are only "socially constructed" because "the exact same situation never occurs twice, but the situation with the

same social goals and exigencies, requiring similar social actions can recur” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 5). As Miller progresses toward a solid definition of genre, Miller expands the conception of genre to consider culture and inclusion in discourse and virtual communities. In a later paper, Miller posits that “genres not only help real people in spatio-temporal communities do their work and carry out their purposes; they also help virtual communities, the relationships we carry around in our heads, to reproduce and reconstruct themselves to continue their stories” (Miller, 1994, p. 75). Accepting that genre not only provides for rhetors’ agency in communities and culture, but genres also “impose structure on a given action in space-time,” this conceptualization of genre necessarily takes into account not only social action, but also social order (p.75). For Miller and her counterparts, genres as classes of discourse only provide a partial picture regarding the rhetorical functions of genres. Miller and other scholars mentioned above assert that genres structure and define responses to specific social situations at particular points in space and time.

Patricia L. Dunmire (2000) builds from Miller’s conceptualization of a genre as a social action by examining the importance of kairos and temporal exigency in determining the most appropriate response to a recurrent situation, directly impacting how effective discourse can be. Dunmire defines particular rhetorical moves within a specific genre that may be appropriate or inappropriate depending on the end goal of the discourse. In this sense, genre is not simply a means (a classification) meant to guide our understanding of a type of discourse. Instead, genre can impact the ends that are sought—the objective of the action. Further, Dunmire describes the more general benefits of genre studies in rhetorical criticism, stating that “rhetorical studies of genre provide a rich understanding of the dynamic relationship between genre activities and the social, historical, and institutional contexts in which those activities arise and are carried out” (p.

94). In other words, genre studies pays special attention to the social aspect of discourse, how discourse is socially recognized and accepted, helps to establish socio-discursive norms, provides structure, but also an opportunity for agency. Miller's work acknowledges this social aspect of genre when she defines genre as a social action constructed in response to recurring social situations—a concept introduced by Bitzer. "From day to day, year to year, comparable situations occur, prompting comparable responses; hence rhetorical forms are born and a special vocabulary, grammar, and styles are established" (Bitzer, 1968, p. 13). Other authors also expound on and further develop Miller's theory of genre as a social action, namely, Bazerman (1994), similar to Miller, examines how social action is influenced and rearticulated through an individual's recognition, interpretation, and response to specific genres. Bazerman asserts that "genres allow us to create highly consequential meanings in highly articulated and developed systems" (Bazerman, 1994, p. 1). One of the most important assertions that Bazerman makes recognizes the importance of the social action aspect of genres and points to how genres can guide social actions that then become norms. Bazerman states that genres as "typified utterances, often developing standardized formal features appear as ready solutions to similar appearing problems. Eventually these genres sediment into forms so expected that readers are surprised or even uncooperative if a standard perception of the situation is not met by an utterance of the expected form" (p. 3). These perspectives acknowledge genres as tied to the social and contextual conditions of communication. The next section examines the social *and* cognitive implications of genre.

Genre as a Sociocognitive Approach

In 1995, Berkenkotter and Huckin attempted to further develop a more codified theory of genre (from a sociocognitive perspective) and approached the concept of genre epistemologically. Berkenkotter and Huckin delved deeper into the idea of genre having specific social functions, examining also the cognitive aspects of genre. In addition, they expanded on the generally accepted idea that genres are, in part, constituted by appropriate rhetorical responses in recurrent discursive situations, by exploring genre knowledge, defined as “an individual’s repertoire of situationally appropriate responses to recurrent situations—from immediate encounters to distanced communication” (p. ix). In other words, Berkenkotter and Huckin further developed the concept of genre to include how individuals understanding of genre impacts actions. Moreover, Berkenkotter and Huckin set out five principles that “constitute a theoretical framework” of genre (p. 3). Their five principles include:

- Dynamism
- Situatedness
- Form and Content
- Duality of Structure
- Community Ownership (p. 4).

Berkenkotter and Huckin state as their goal not fully and completely developing a “sociocognitive theory of genre” but “working toward one by integrating concepts from a number of fields” (p. 4). Berkenkotter and Huckin develop their five principles by aggregating and developing ideas from a variety of scholars in rhetorical studies, sociology, and technical communication, among others, promoting an interdisciplinary view of genre. Their principle of dynamism (“genres are dynamic rhetorical forms that are developed from actors’ responses to

recurrent situations that serve to stabilize experience and give it coherence and meaning”) is “derived from contemporary rhetorical examinations of genres (as reviewed by Campbell and Jamieson, 1978; Miller, 1984)” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 4). Berkenkotter and Huckin’s principle of situatedness (“genre is derived from and embedded in our participation in the communicative activities of daily and professional life”) stems from Brown, Collins, and Duguid’s (1989) concept of “situated cognition” and Bakhtin’s (1986) “speech genres” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 4). Form and content (“genre knowledge embraces both form and content, including a sense of what content is appropriate to a particular purpose in a particular situation at a particular point in time”) as a one of the five principles takes into consideration the work of Bazerman (1985), Miller (1984), and Giltrow (1992) (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 4). The principle of duality of structure (“we constitute social structures . . . and simultaneously reproduce these structures”) primarily finds its roots in Giddens’s structuration theory (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 4). Finally, the fifth principle, community ownership (“genre conventions signal a discourse community’s norms, epistemology, ideology, and social ontology”) takes into account the scholarly work of Swales (1990), Bazerman (1988), and Ackerman (1988, 1991) (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 4). Berkenkotter and Huckin support the study of genres in their disciplinary context—emphasizing that genres are what Bakhtin (1986) considers “typical forms of utterances” and as such, they should be studied in their actual social contexts of use (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 2). Further, Berkenkotter and Huckin state that “genre is the concept that enables us to envision the interpenetration of process and system in disciplinary communication” and that “genres are intimately linked to a discipline’s methodology, and they package information in ways that conform to discipline norms, values, and ideology Understanding the genres of written communication in one’s field is, therefore,

essential to professional success” (pp. x and 1). This interdisciplinary approach to defining a solid theory of genre adds to the academic scholarship regarding genre studies and genre theories.

Contemporary Approaches to Genre Studies

Since the aforementioned scholars’ considerations of genre were presented, other valuable approaches to genre studies have also developed as communication changes. In 2000, Spinuzzi and Zachry introduced the term “genre ecologies” (p. 172). A genre ecology is defined as “an interrelated group of genres (artifact types and the interpretive habits that have developed around them) used to jointly mediate the activities that allow people to accomplish objectives. In genre ecologies, multiple genres and constituent subtasks co-exist in a lively interplay as people grapple with technologies” (p. 172). In other words, as Spinuzzi (2003) sums, genre ecologies are “interconnected and dynamic sets of genres that jointly mediate activities” (p. 63). Here, genres are clearly defined as mediators and an important part of an activity system. Moreover, Spinuzzi acknowledges that just as activities are dynamic and constantly changing, genres are constantly shifting within the genre ecology. Further, just as genres change the nature of the activity, the activity also changes genre in a dialectical and dynamic relationship that must occur in order to sustain the activity undertaken. “An activity continually changes and thus the ecology of genres mediating activity must also change if the activity is to continue” (p. 65). Spinuzzi touts the benefit of understanding genres in the context of activity and ecologies stating that “this genre perspective allows us to examine in genre terms how local innovations can become centralized and officialized over time” (p. 66). In addition, understanding genre ecologies allows

us to acknowledge the traditional and historical aspect of the genre while also considering the “addressivity (that is, orientation to an activity), and distinctiveness, as well as their interrelations to other genres” (p. 66). Similar to, but preceding the concept of genre ecologies, Yates, Orlikowski, and Rennecker (1997) describe genre systems. The authors define genre systems as “an interrelated sequence of genres enacted by members of a particular community” (p. 51). Moreover, the authors’ characterization of genre systems harkens back to Miller’s concept of genre as a social action. The authors note that genre systems “are composed of a well-coordinated set of communicative moves that together accomplish an interaction (such as the job search process, ending in rejection or in a job offer). In these cases, the system as a whole, as well as the individual genres constituting the system, can be said to have a socially recognized purpose and common characteristics of form” (p. 51). Bazerman also discusses the concept of genre systems (Bazerman, 1994) and Swales examines genre repertoires (Swales, 2000).

In addition to genre ecologies, genre systems and genre repertoires, other scholars have examined genre blends, genre bends, and genre hybrids. Changes to existing genres can create new genres or amalgamations of genres. Orlikowski and Yates (1994) assert that “when changes to established genres are repeatedly enacted and become widely adopted within the community, genre variants or even new genres may emerge, either alongside existing genres or to replace those that have lost currency” (p. 545). These new genres may still hold some characteristics of the older genre. One example is that of the print-based memo and an email message. Though the email message still maintains some characteristics of a memo, some elements (and how those elements function) have changed over time. In essence, the email message is genre that has been “bent” to function in an electronic environment. My study takes special care to acknowledge the dynamic nature of genres, recognizing that genres can be enacted in any number of different

ways and through a variety of different mediums. Crowston and Williams (2000) discuss how genres can be enacted, reproduced, and adapted genres at length. Ken Hyland (2002), in his examination of how genre studies has developed and impacted linguistics and literacy, also mentions genre blends, including infotainment and docudrama. Hyland discusses the intertextual relationship of texts and mediation and asserts that “sometimes these relationships involve the mixing of genres in ways that blur clear distinctions, perhaps to the extent that new genres become recognized in a community’s nomenclature” (p. 122). Ultimately, Hyland posits that these new genres (whether genre bends, blends, or hybrids), call into question what scholars know about the identification of genres, as well as the social and cognitive functions of genres. Hyland states:

There is, then, clearly enormous potential for internal heterogeneity and feature-blending of genres which raises important issues of unity and identity. This obviously forces us to examine how we see and use genre and suggests that our understanding of discourse is itself socially constructed by the ways we see and act in the world. Genres help unite the social and the cognitive because they are central to how we understand, construct, and reproduce our social realities. But, while we need a shared sense of genre to accomplish understanding, genre research increasingly show that we do not need to assume that genres are fixed, monolithic, discrete, and unchanging. (p. 123)

Contemporary genre studies have acknowledged that genres are transformative and dynamic, not “fixed” or “monolithic.” Further, contemporary studies have sought to incorporate new and interesting approaches to genre. However, these new approaches still leave a number of questions and problems for scholars to address.

The Problems with Genre as a Rhetorical Criticism Concept

As is evident from the earlier discussion in this chapter, there is no singular approach to genre studies and genre as a concept in rhetorical criticism. This has been complicated by developments in communication that alters and changes more traditional types of genres. There are a number of authors and scholars supporting any number of approaches and perspectives. Not only are there a number of differing perspectives of genre as a concept, there are also different schools of thought concerned with exactly *how* (or the method by which) a genre should be identified and *if* genre criticism is appropriate or effective at all. One concern is that genre criticism “decontextualizes” as it classifies. Some scholars assert that “genre criticism...invites reductionism, rules, and formalism” (Miller, 1984, p. 151). Exploring these points of contention, Thomas Conley (1986) points to the tension between an “*a priori* approach” and an “empirical approach” to genre criticism. In other words, Conley discusses genre criticism that uses deductive reasoning and genre criticism that utilizes inductive reasoning. Conley concludes that an approach to genre criticism should neither be deductive (“the measurement of the text against a preexisting model,” as described by Campbell and Jamieson [Campbell and Jamieson, 1978, p. 16]) nor inductive, but should instead be dialectical, “playing off the general against the particular, the inexorably historical against the seemingly novel...In this way the critical process continues, feeding off itself and on new material, thus nourishing the appetites of scientific curiosity” (Conley, 1986, p. 65). While Conley touts a dialectical approach to genre studies, scholars continue to approach genre criticism in both deductive and inductive ways. Even scholars who seem to take a (very much criticized) reductionist approach to the concept of genre (defining genres as mere categories or classes of discourse) level criticism against methods for undertaking a generic analysis. For example, Fisher (1980), who defines genres as

“generalizations,” examines the pitfalls of genre criticism. He lists three pitfalls to avoid in genre criticism: “the tendency to impose genre on a work, missing its distinctive qualities (as in much “neo-Aristotelian criticism”); the tendency to describe or to classify rather than to explain or to evaluate a work (as in much that passes for neo-Aristotelian and Burkean rhetorical criticism); and the tendency to write theory rather than criticism (as in much of the writing about “apologia”) (Fisher, 1980, p. 294). In essence, there remains much disagreement about the epistemological advantages of undertaking studies of genre at all.

In addition to these criticism about the usefulness of genre (inviting reductionism and formalism) and the methods for undertaking genre criticism (deductively, inductively, or dialectically), other scholars are more concerned with whether or not genre criticism should be approached scientifically or humanistically. Herbert W. Simon (1978) proposes “a scientific approach to the study of rhetorical genres” with Simons offering a number of scientific suggestions for applying “scientific methods to ideas for theoretical development” in genre criticism (p. 44). Ernest G. Bormann (1978), in contrast, argues that “scientific studies and rhetorical criticism are different approaches to knowledge and that while they are not antagonistic and ought not be the basis for conflict and rancor they are incompatible in method and in explanation and understanding that they provide” (p. 51). The points of contention among scholars about genre include the definition of genre, the methods for undertaking a genre analysis, and the fields of study (science or humanities) that genre criticism methods should consider. Some scholars, however, posit that these concerns can be addressed through local, contextualized genre studies and an approach called situated genre theory.

Situated Genre Theory

The concerns and problems mentioned in the preceding section are indeed real problems and valid concerns leveled by authors and critics, but the problems can be mitigated. One of the best suggestions for attempting to resolve some of the concerns about genre thus far is a suggestion made by Berkenkotter and Huckin that genres should be studied in context.

Berkenkotter and Huckin, quoting Bakhtin assert that “genres are ‘typical forms of utterances’ and as such, they should be studied in their actual social contexts of use” (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995, p. 2). Decontextualizing genres relegates genres to a simple (and quite possibly faulty) categorization system. Swales highlights the benefits of examining genre in context asserting, “there is some interest in discovering in a community which communications are generically typed and what labels are used, as these reveal elements of verbal behavior which the community considers sociolinguistically salient” (Swales, 1990, p. 39). In other words, by understanding how a certain culture or community makes sense of the genres, we understand the social implications and meanings attached to the discourse. It becomes more about understanding communicative events. As Swales so eloquently states, “at the end of the day, genre analysis is valuable because it is clarifactory, not because it is classifactory” (p. 37). Perhaps if scholars and critics carefully consider context in genre analysis it will make for a better understanding of the rhetorical underpinnings and functions of a discourse. Indeed, many scholars are moving to a more contextualized analysis of rhetorical concepts. These types of genre studies can be largely defined as “situated genre” theory (Erickson, 1997, p. 2). According to Erickson, situated genre theory focuses on the recurring communicative event and the specific discourse community. Erickson asserts,

What distinguishes this flavor of genre theory from previous conceptions is its emphasis on the ways in which genres arise out of a recurring communicative situation. That is, the regularities of form and content which characterize a genre are not viewed as arbitrary conventions, but instead arise out of a confluence of technical, social, and institutional forces which comprise the communicative situation, and out of the attempts of the genre's 'users'—the discourse community—to achieve their communicative purpose in that situation. (p. 2)

One example of this move towards a focus on the specific communicative situation and the discourse community touts genre studies that include close readings paired with close analysis of the reception of certain discourse through careful examination of primary texts, secondary texts, and “intertextual material,” as defined by Ceccarelli as a “close textual-intertextual analysis.” (Ceccarelli, 2001, p. 8). Other examples include Spinuzzi's study of how genres are used and repurposed within a singular organization—a technique that Spinuzzi calls genre tracing (Spinuzzi, 2003). Still other contextualized genre studies and techniques include Erickson's examination of genres and the genre ecology in a computer-mediated communication system called Babble (Erickson, 2007) and Schryer, Lingard, and Spafford's study of genres used in a health care system at a teaching hospital (Schyer, Lingard, & Spafford, 2007).

Though genre, as a concept, can be hard to define, genre remains a useful and effective theoretical concept, especially if, as Frye describes, scholars carefully consider “a generic perspective toward criticism [and] not a crusading search to find genres” (Frye, 1957, p. 99). The generic perspective recognizes that while there may be few clearly distinguishable genres, all rhetoric is influenced by prior rhetoric and all rhetorical acts resemble other rhetorical acts. Such a critical perspective emphasizes the symbolic and rhetorical contexts in which rhetorical

acts are created” (Campbell & Jamieson, 1995, p. 26). This approach acknowledges the historical, social, situated and contextual aspects of genre and genre criticism. In addition, the tension between genre criticism and studies of genres in use must be acknowledged.

Contemporary approaches to genre that acknowledge genre as mediating artifacts and recognize the function of genre as depending on context and specific situations, help scholars to better understand the usefulness of genre by focusing on how genres are understood, used, repurposed, and transformed.

Summary

This literature review covers in detail scholarship that is relevant to my study of how a networked activist organization communicates, collaborates, and coordinates to reach local and larger organizational goals, as well as how the organization of study uses mediational artifacts to accomplish goals. To address my specific research questions, my literature review was interdisciplinary and included scholarship in the fields of technical communication, rhetoric, activism, administrative and organizational science, and industrial and organizational psychology. Though the literature included in this review draws from a number of disciplinary fields, each scholarly domain offers a valuable perspective for my study. In addition, because of the interdisciplinary nature of the scholarship that I used and reviewed, I am able to address gaps in literature and calls for future research in not only the field of technical communication, but also in the fields of administrative and organizational science, industrial and organizational psychology, activism, and rhetoric. More specifically, this literature review (as it relates to my study) examines the structure of contemporary activist organizations, investigates goal theory (including goal setting and goal congruence) in organizations, discusses perspectives on

mediating artifacts, and presents a historical discussion of genre and a brief examination of contemporary genre studies and situated genre theory. In essence, this study provides a genre-framework for understanding activist organizations specifically, and distributed networked organizations in a more general sense, affording a way for conceptualizing the completion of work and the accomplishment of goals across nodes in a networked, activist-oriented environment.

Chapter 3: Methods

This chapter provides a detailed discussion of my research methods, including data collection and data analysis. My study investigates how a loosely-networked activist organization works to reconcile disparate individual goals to accomplish local-level and larger organizational goals. In addition, my study examines the communicative practices of a local instantiation of a larger organization and explores how mediating artifacts are used to achieve established goals. More specifically, my research questions are:

- In a contemporary activist-oriented organization, where the organizational structure is loosely networked and distributed in nature, how do local instantiations of the larger network communicate, collaborate, and coordinate to reconcile disparate individual goals and meet local socially-motivated goals? In turn, how do local socially-motivated goals align with larger organizational motives?
- What are the communicative practices of a local instance of a networked organization and how do these localized practices aid or hinder the accomplishment of established socially-motivated goals?
- How are mediating artifacts (specifically, genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies) used in local communicative practices in ways that support the accomplishment of activist-related goals?
- How do the larger organization's motives manifest in genres used at the local level?

Each research question was carefully considered in the design and implementation of my research methods. My first question points to considerations of how a networked organization communicates, collaborates, and coordinates to mitigate differences in individual goals and achieve goals on the local and larger organization levels. To explore this question, I completed

an ethnographic field study, examining the communicative practices of members of the activist group. In addition, I completed semi-structured interviews with members of the group, specifically asking them about the goals of the local group and the larger organizational group. My second question asks about the communicative practices of the local group and how these practices affect the goals of the larger organizational group. To investigate this question, I completed ethnographic observations of the local group's primary communicative tool—weekly team meetings. Finally, my last main question considers how mediating artifacts (specifically genres) used by the local group affect local and larger organizational goals. To address this question, I observed the group's use of workplace genres, interviewed team members about their use of those genres and information and communication technologies, and I collected material artifacts (including documents used by team members and screen shots of computer programs used by the team members).

This chapter details the methods that I used to investigate each of my research questions. The first section of this chapter presents the theoretical underpinning and rationale for using the ethnographic research methods that I selected. Next, I present information about my research site and the research participants, my data collection methods, and my data analysis methods. Finally, I conclude with a summary of the information presented in this chapter.

Theoretical Underpinning: Sociotechnical Networks and Ethnography

My study explores the complex and dynamic nature of a networked organization. A network can be defined as “translations or transformations that tie together mediated activities” (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 5) or a network can be considered a “given set of interlocking technological, economic, institutional, and social practices [and] what makes a society attractive or unattractive,

what renders its practices laudable or lamentable” (Benkler, 2006, p. 31). Networks are also often called sociotechnical networks. For the purpose of my research, I use components of others’ definitions (Spinuzzi and Benkler) as a basis for my characterizations of what constitutes a network in my examination of a loosely networked activist organization. Throughout my study, a network refers to individuals or organizations linked socially, culturally, and/or technologically by core values, goals, and motivations. This definition assumes a multi-faceted perspective of the ontological nature of networks. Moreover, it considers the social and technical aspects of a network. Technological mediation can include computer-mediated systems (like information and communication technologies), but also more traditional print artifacts (like documents, books, and paper). How individuals use technology, their social motivations, and their understanding of the meaning of their communicative actions are concerns in sociotechnical networks, and in turn, primary concerns in my study. In order to attain a complete understanding of the social and technological functions within the network that I studied, I employed the use of ethnographic research methods.

Ethnographic research methods allowed me to closely observe actions and inquire about motivations driving those actions. Geertz asserts that “if you want to understand what a science is, you should look in the first instance not at its theories or its findings, and certainly not at what its apologists say about it; you should look at what the practitioners of it do” (Geertz, 1973, p. 5). Geertz’s idea about examining the actions of the practitioners of a science (or a work practice), refocuses the emphasis from experimentation to observation. Ethnographic research methods allowed me to focus my study on the “doing” and not a contrived laboratory situation. This focus on the social aspects underlying the “doing” provided me with insight into the meaning-making, the legitimizing of knowledge, the collaboration, the motivations and goal setting functions, and

the communication of my participants as they completed networked activist-orientated work activities.

In the following sections, I provide a rationale (beyond the brief discussion above) for using ethnographic methods in my study. Then, I describe my research site and participants and detail my data collection methods, followed by a discussion of my data analysis methods.

Rationale: Ethnographic Research Methods

In my study, I used ethnographic research methods to answer the research questions posed at the beginning of this investigation. Ethnographic methods, including observations and artifact collection, were particularly useful in my study because ethnographic research methods “have at their core a fundamental understanding of how people really work and live in groups, organizations, communities, and other forms of collective life” (Ackerman, 2000, p. 199). This focus on human activity supports moving past relying solely on examinations of technology to understand how work is completed provided me with a more holistic approach. Brown and Duguid assert that the focus on “technology design has not taken adequate account of work and its demand and instead has aimed at an idealized image of individuals and information” (Brown & Duguid, 2000). Using ethnographic research methods in my study pushed me to take into account what individuals were actually faced with as they completed work. This focus was not based on what I *thought* participants may do (an “idealized image”), but it was grounded in what I actually saw participants do—how they used technology, how they communicated, how they coordinated—and the outcomes of their communicative actions. Below, I describe my research site and participants.

Research Site and Participants

My research site, the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW), is located on the University of Washington (UW), Seattle campus at the School of Law in William H. Gates Hall. The IPNW is one of 11 law clinics based on the campus and is composed of one director, staff lawyers, two student assistants, one paralegal, and a number of students who participate in the IPNW in the clinic for academic credit. Most members of the IPNW team share an office space on the second floor of Gates Hall. The second floor office space consists of about 8 work desks that line the walls of the room. Each desk serves as the individual workspace for the IPNW core administrative team (the staff lawyers, the two student assistants, and the paralegal). The middle of the room is a large open space. Books and papers clutter the desks and large filing cabinets are also located in this room. Each desk also contains a desktop computer. The space is a bit small, but not too cramped. This is the primary shared office space for the team. The director has a separate office on the same floor of the building. Her office is packed with books and case file boxes.

Much of my observations take place in the team meeting area, a small conference room located on the same floor as the law clinics. In order to access the law clinics (including the office space and conference room), a receptionist or another law clinic member must swipe an identification card to gain entry to the corridor that leads to the office and meeting spaces. The conference room in which the team meets is shared with other law clinics and faculty. However, the meeting room was reserved for the IPNW meeting times (most often on Thursdays at 1:30pm). The conference room consists of one long, rectangular table with approximately 12 office chairs crammed in around the table, leaving narrow walking spaces behind the chairs. The meeting room is equipped with a whiteboard that dominates the far wall. The room also has a

mounted TV/DVD combo and a small video camera mounted on the wall opposite the whiteboard. At the front of the room sits a small table with a telephone. Tall, long windows that look out across the law school law line one wall of the room.

My research participants are members of the core administrative team of the IPNW. There are three staff attorneys, two student assistants, one paralegal, and one director. During the course of my seven-month observation, two staff attorneys resigned from the IPNW, but were promptly replaced with two additional staff attorneys. Since the IPNW is a pro bono organization, it is not uncommon that staff attorneys' positions are funded through other legal and social justice organizations. Student assistants can be funded through work study programs, and the director and other lawyers serve as lecturers and faculty members for the law school. See the table below for the pseudonyms and roles of the members of the IPNW core administrative team.

Table 2. Participant Titles and Roles

Pseudonym	Title	Roles
Jill	IPNW Director	Directs and manages IPNW Clinic and administrative team
Kim	Staff Attorney	Case work and litigation, manage IPNW clinic students, assist with management of support staff
Jack	Associate Staff Attorney	Case work and litigation
Lacy	Policy Staff Attorney	Policy work and lecturer for law school
April	Supervising Attorney	Case work and litigation
Francine	Staff Attorney	Case work and litigation

Lisa	Paralegal	Assist attorneys and director, manages student assistants
Faith	Student Assistant	Clerical and administrative duties
Todd	Student Assistant	Clerical and administrative duties

Method (of Data Collection)

To collect data for my investigation I completed an ethnographic field study. My field study included participant observations, semi-structured interviews (both oral and written), and artifact collection. At the completion of the study, I spent about 30 hours of participant observations and completed 9 interviews that yielded about 150 pages of transcript. In addition, I amassed about 75 pages worth of field notes and memos. Finally, I collected over 20 material artifacts that included email messages, agendas, checklists, questionnaires, fact sheets, and a procedures manual. Below, I detail my data collection process for my observations, interviews, and artifact collection.

Participant Observation

During my field study, I spent 7 months observing the team meetings and work practices of the Innocence Project Northwest’s core administrative team. My study included approximately about 30 hours of participant observations. The majority of my observations occurred at the organization’s weekly team meetings that took place on the University of Washington, Seattle campus. Each team meeting lasted approximately one hour. A typical team meeting included the director, two staff lawyers, one policy lawyer, one paralegal, and one or two student assistants. During the team meetings, I recorded my observations using a pen and a

notebook. These observations were recorded as quick, cursory notes. Some ethnographers call this type of note-taking jotting (Emerson, 2001, p. 19). My jottings were primarily phrases that described my observations, the dialogue, the individuals, and the physical space. My jottings tended to be more detailed, which allowed me to better remember important observations during analysis. Emerson asserts that more extensive jottings may record an ongoing dialogue or a set of responses to questions” (p. 20). In my jottings, I recorded who attended team meetings, topics covered during team meetings, and quotes from participants that were relevant to my research. During most meetings, I recorded the beginning and end time.

After I jotted in my field notebook, I re-worked my jottings into field notes. Field notes are more detailed descriptions of observations of events and experiences. This careful recording of data during my observations was based heavily on Geertz’s conceptualization of “thick description” and the benefits of this type of data collection. Geertz defines thick description as not merely a report of what is observed in the field, but the researcher making sense of how participants are understanding the events that are taking place. Geertz asserts that “the ethnographer “inscribes” social discourse; *he writes it down*. In so doing, he turns it from a passing event, which exists only in its own moment of occurrence, into an account in its inscription and can be reconsulted” (Geertz, 1973). The fact that a social actions or events can be “reconsulted” was a great benefit to my attempts to understand the *how* aspect of work within a network. Rich, contextualized observations allowed me to be more attentive to participants’ social and technical concerns and needs. More generally, my field notes helped me to more fully understand observations. According to Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw (1995):

writing field notes heightens and focuses [these] interpretive and analytic processes;
writing up the day’s observations generates new appreciation and deeper understanding

of witnessed scenes and events. In writing, a field researcher assimilates and thereby starts to understand an experience. She makes sense of the moment by intuitively selecting, highlighting, and ordering details and by beginning to appreciate linkages with or contrasts to previously observed and written-about experiences. Furthermore, she may begin to reflect on how she has presented and ordered events and actions in her notes, rereading selected episodes and tales with an eye to their structuring effects. (p. 100)

My field notes served as a way to inscribe and provided a means of reconsulting my observations, allowing me to check for accuracy, attempt to understand meaning, and make decisions about the focus of subsequent observations. My field notes were typically typed into a Word document on a PC computer. I was careful to date each typed document according to the date that the observation took place.

At the end of each typed field note document, I included a memo to myself to record my understanding of the preceding field note. My memos were an “interpretive and analytic form of writing” that allowed me to take a more analytic stance regarding my data while still completing field observations (Emerson et al., p. 100). This process allowed me to begin refining my understanding, developing themes that would be used during my analysis, and re-examining what types of observations were most important and relevant. My memos included my thoughts about my observations, as well as notes about what to focus on in subsequent observations and questions that I may have had about my observations up until that point. Quotes and comments recorded from participant observations at team meetings are cited by date in the subsequent chapters of this dissertation (for example, Team Meeting 11/15/2011).

Semi-structured Interviews (Oral and Written)

The second form of data collection that I used during this study was semi-structured interviews. Though my field notes and memos from my participant observations were carefully detailed, I acknowledged that the observation and inscription aspects of the ethnographic field study cannot stand alone. Geertz suggests that, as ethnographers, researchers, even through observations, are privy to very little about the goals and motives between individuals' social actions, interactions, and cognitive processing. Geertz states that, "the situation is even more delicate, because . . . what we inscribe (or try to) is not raw social discourse. . . we are not actors, we do not have direct access, but only that small part of it which our information can lead us into understanding" (Geertz, 1973, p. 20). Further, Geertz asserts an ethnographer's goal is to attempt to "uncover the conceptual structures that inform our subjects' acts" (p. 27). This was an important goal during my study. In order to understand the social motivations and goals driving outward actions, one of the ethnographic research methods that I used was semi-structured interviews, which I coupled with my participant observations. In *Learning from Strangers* (1994), Robert S. Weiss, identifies seven reasons for integrating interviewing with other data collection methods. According to Weiss, these reasons include, developing detailed descriptions, developing holistic description, and learning how events are interpreted (pp. 9-10). Including semi-structured interviews in my data collection process allowed me to focus on those three concerns.

With those aims under consideration, I completed 9 oral interviews with members of the Innocence Project Northwest's core administrative team. My interview protocol consisted of "fixed-question-open-response" interview questions. However, I used a modified approach to the

fixed-question-open-response-process, primarily because “responses obtained by the qualitative study cannot be easily organized” (Weiss, 1994, p. 3). Weiss defines fixed-question-open-response questions as “carefully crafted questions” that allow respondents to be “free to answer them in their own words rather than required simply to choose one or another predetermined alternative” (p.12). This can also be considered a semi-structured interview (which is how I refer to my interviewing technique through this study). One of the benefits of fixed-question-open-response questions is that these types of questions proved to be useful when I began categorizing information into themes. In addition to this benefit, Weiss acknowledges the disadvantages to this method of interviewing, stating that “data collection turns out to sacrifice as much in quality of information as it gains in systematization. The interviewer is not actually free to encourage a respondent to develop any response at length” (p. 13). In order to mitigate this concern, I allowed respondents to answer their questions in any way that they saw fit. If the respondent chose to tell a story or give an example, I did not discourage this. I did, however, make a concerted effort to ask each interviewee each question listed on my protocol in the same sequential order. Pairing the fixed-question-open-response approach with the semi-structured interview approach allowed me to gather detailed information and easily group responses that I received. The interview protocol that I used during my oral, semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendix B.

Each oral interview included was a one-on-one interview with a member of the Innocence Project Northwest’s core administrative team. The time length of the interviews varied. Each interview was recorded using a digital tape recorder. During each interview, I also took notes using a pen and a notebook. The oral interviews are referenced by the interviewees name and “Interview 1” in subsequent chapters of this dissertation (for example, Faith Interview 1).

In addition to the oral interviews, I also completed two written interviews. These written interviews were needed due to time and scheduling constraints of the participants. Both of the written interviews followed the same fixed-question-open-response format, where respondents were asked the same questions, in the same order, but allowed to respond in any way that they saw fit. These two written interviews included between five to fifteen questions. The first written interview inquired about the participants' use of technology. This interview is referred to as Interview 2. Quotes used from this interview are cited by interviewee name (for example, Faith Interview 2). The second written interview inquired about the participants' conceptualization of success. This interview is referred to as Interview 3. Quotes used from this interview are cited by interviewee name (for example, Faith Interview 3).

The interview questions for both interviews were emailed to the members of the Innocence Project Northwest administrative team as a Word document attachment. The respondents typed their responses and returned them to me via email messages. In total, I amassed over 150 pages of transcribed interviews with a total of 9 oral interviews and 10 written interviews. The interview protocols that I used during my written, semi-structured interviews can be found in Appendices C and D, respectively.

Artifact collection

The final method of data collection that I used was artifact collection. I collected printed documents, email messages, screen shots of electronic work, news stories, and press releases related to the Innocence Project Northwest. Documents that the team members used to complete their work (for example, a task list, checklist, or questionnaires) were of the utmost importance and the most relevant to my study because these documents provided me with extra insight and

understanding about how the participants completed work and what mediational means the participants used for work activities. Other artifacts collected, such as news stories and press releases, were less important in answering my research questions, but provided me with a more thorough understanding of my research site as an organization. These documents helped me to understand how the organization was perceived publicly, as well as assisted me in understanding the type of information that the Innocence Project Northwest made available to the public. By the end of my study, I had collected nearly 20 different artifacts for analysis.

Data Analysis

During and after data collection, I iteratively analyzed my data. Using my jottings, field notes, and memos, I categorized my collected data into themes. Themes are patterns that allow the researcher to make meaningful connections across events and observations. These patterns or themes helped me to examine and link “a number of disparate incidents and events” (Emerson et al., p.156). “Core themes” developed naturally out of consideration and reexamination of initial themes developed from field notes and memos. As Emerson et al. assert:

Field researchers have different ways of selecting core themes. One consideration is to give priority to topics on which a substantial amount of data has been collected and which reflect recurrent or underlying patterns of activities in the setting under study. Fieldworkers may also give priority to what seems significant to members; whether it is what they think is key, what looks to be practically important, or what engages a lot of their time and energy. (p. 157)

I used the second method of developing core themes, focusing on what seemed significant to members and what engaged a great deal of the participants time. My initial themes were

identified (or coded) using Atlas Ti version 6.2, a computer software program specifically designed for qualitative research analysis. During this first close reading of my collected data, I looked for observations and notes that were recurrent and presented potential answers to my research questions. In subsequent analysis, my core themes were identified and coded manually, using highlighter and transcriptions of interviews and typed field notes and memos. The careful read through and manual coding of my initial themes slowed my progress, but allowed me to become even more familiar with my data and the themes that were developing. During the second pass of analysis, I sought to confirm or reject the initial themes that I identified. During this iteration, some themes were eliminated because they proved to be unique phenomena rather than recurring events or processes. Also, during this pass, I was careful to identify ideas that I needed to gather more information about. In this way, my analysis of my data and initial themes helped to guide subsequent observations and interviews. Ultimately, my core themes aligned well with key ideas in my research questions. Subthemes of the core themes emerged as I iteratively examined my data. The table below details core themes and subthemes:

Table 3. Themes, Subthemes, and Definitions

Theme or Subtheme	Definition	Example
Goals	Defined, identifiable priorities	
<i>Congruence</i>	Agreement on defined, identifiable priorities	Socially-motivated priorities of the IPNW team
<i>Incongruence</i>	Disagreement on defined, identifiable priorities	Differing individual priorities
Genres enacted in print	Printed documents used by staff members	
<i>Documents used by support staff</i>	Documents used and created primarily by	Tasks lists and checklists

	paralegal and student assistants (support staff)	
<i>Documents used by entire team</i>	Documents used by support staff, lawyers, and director. May or may not be created by support staff	Client paper files and client questionnaires
Genres enacted in speech	Verbal interactions	
<i>Conversational, intimate communication</i>	Marked by casual and friendly rapport—familiar and informal	Team meetings and office chat
<i>Success Stories</i>	Narratives that highlight accomplishments	Oral stories and newspaper clippings
Genres enacted in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)	Computer and web-based technologies used for communication, collaboration, and coordination purposes	
<i>Email Messages and Listserv Announcements</i>	Email messages—messages sent via web-based technologies Listserv announcements—information posted in forums to which users can subscribe to receive email messages about certain topics	Emailed team agenda notes, Network Board of Directors Listserv
<i>Websites</i>	Connected web pages used by the IPNW team for communication, collaboration, and coordination purposes	Innocenceproject.org

<i>Social Media</i>	Web-based technologies used for networking purpose, both formal and informal	Facebook, YouTube
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After my core themes and subthemes were identified, my next step was to write “integrative memos” that helped me to further analyze my data. Integrative memos “elaborate ideas and begin to link or tie codes and bits of data together” (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 162). Furthermore, integrative memos afforded me the opportunity to turn from writing to record and understand observations to writing for a more public audience. Emerson et al. describe the benefits of the turn to considering audience to be the “first occasion to begin to explicate contextual and background information that a reader unfamiliar with the setting would need to know in order to follow the key ideas and claims” (p. 162). In my integrative memos, I began to “write in a more public voice” and “to word ideas and concepts and language that approximate the analytic writing in a final text” (p. 162). To this end, these integrative memos became the building blocks of my ethnography and findings (see Chapter 4). Finally, after drafting my findings and reviewing my data and memos again, a thematic pattern emerged that lead me to develop an overarching theme that tied together my core themes and subthemes and helped to more comprehensively explain and theorize my observations. This overarching theme, which I will call a global theme, is **identification**. Identification, explained in detail later in this dissertation, refers to process of persuasion that promotes a shared sense of values, beliefs, and motivations among individuals, organizations, or entities. Through the identification process, consubstantiality (or the realization of a shared sense of values, beliefs, and motivations) can be achieved.

Finally, my integrative memos began to help me make meaning of the observations by allowing me to make definitive connections between data and theory. As an ethnographic researcher, I “proceed[ed] in a [more] open-ended way, seeking to identify issues and ideas by a careful sifting through and piecing together of field notes (Emerson et al., 1995, p. 167). However, I did not disregard my theoretical approach during this process. Emerson et al. further explain that,

for the ethnographer, theory does not simply await refinement as analysts test concepts one by one against events in the social world; nor do data stand apart as independent measures of theoretical adequacy. Rather, the ethnographer’s assumptions, interests, and theoretical commitments enter into every phase of writing ethnography and influence decision that range from selecting which events to write about to those that entail emphasizing one member’s perspective on an event over those of others. The process is thus one of reflexive or dialectical interplay between theory and data whereby theory enters in at every point, shaping not only analysis but how social events come to be perceived and written up as data in the first place. (p. 167)

For my study, as I considered my data and my theoretical interests and commitments, I used two complementary theoretical approaches—Activity Theory (AT) and Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM)—to explain and make meaning of my observations of work activities. I used both AT and GEM because each theoretical approaches afforded me a different perspective in regard to my data. AT allowed me to look specifically at how mediating artifacts are used to complete work. In addition, because AT looks at *how* work is accomplished, this theory provided me with a way to examine the everyday, mundane activities of the work of the organization. AT primarily helped me address my questions about goals and motivations (*i.e.*, how do local instantiations of

the larger network communicate, collaborate, and coordinate to meet local socially-motivated goals and align with larger organizational motives), my question about how communicative practices aid or hinder the accomplishment of goals, and my questions about mediating artifacts (*i.e.*, how do mediating artifacts affect local communicative practices). I used GEM, which is a theoretical perspective that is complementary to AT and can be used in conjunction with ethnographic data collection methods, primarily to examine how genres (as mediating artifacts) are specifically used within the contextualized environment of the IPNW. Whereas AT allowed me to look at how *the work* was completed and examine the genres broadly, GEM provided me with a way to narrow my focus to specifically study *which* genres were used to complete specific activities and how these genres interrelated and functioned in the local environment. GEM helped me to address my question about how genres affected communicative practices in more depth. In addition, GEM helped me to answer that question about how (and if) the larger organizations motives were manifested at the local level. The following section briefly describes each theoretical perspective and details how each approach aided the analysis of my data.

Activity Theory (AT)

Activity theory is an approach that fosters an understanding of the social and technical components in a sociotechnical network. As defined by Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006), “activity theory is an approach in psychology and other social sciences that aims to understand individual human beings, as well as the social entities they compose, in their natural everyday life circumstances, through an analysis of the genesis, structure, and processes of their activities” (Kaptelinin & Nardi). The value of an activity approach in my study is that this perspective taps into a user’s motivations and allowed me to examine how the participants interacted with

objects, subjects and the world around them. AT assumes and examines “purposeful activities,” like the activities of a user at work (collaborating, coordinating, and communicating) (p. 32). Further, AT considers the subject and object as inherently connected through activity. Kaptelinin and Nardi explain that “activity...as the basic unit of analysis [is]...a way to understand both subjects and objects, an understanding that cannot be achieved by focusing on the subject or the object separately” (p. 32). AT was an ideal analytical and theoretical perspective for my study because of activity theory’s attention to the subject and the object and its ability to consider the impact of mediating artifacts on activity. Further, an AT approach takes into account the social, technological, developmental, historical, and environmental considerations that impact how an individual accomplishes an object to achieve a specified outcome. In other words, AT provided me a comprehensive view of the communicative environment.

The primary focus of my study was to understand how work was being completed and why it was being completed in such a manner. This focus necessarily required that I was attentive to people, their motivations, and the tools that they were using to complete their work. AT provided a strong theoretical basis for considering those components. As Nardi (1995) asserts, the “main concerns of activity theory [are] consciousness, the asymmetrical relation between people and things, and the roles of artifacts in everyday life” (p. 10). AT’s strength is that this approach privileges contextual examinations of an activity system. In this way, an AT approach is paired well with ethnographic research methods. Employing the use of my ethnographic data collection methods (participant observations, interviews, and artifact collection) along with activity theory helped me to make sense of the relationships among the activities that I observed. When closely analyzing my memos and transcribed interviews from

an AT perspective, I was able to clearly identify mediating artifacts (tools), subjects, and the object(ive) and how each of these components interacted and were interrelated.

In addition to helping me to understanding and make meaning of the relationships between subject, object, and mediating artifacts, AT was also useful when analyzing my data due to the flexibility of the approach. AT has been successfully used as a research method and analytical tool in studies in Human-Computer Interaction (HCI), Computer-Supported Cooperative Work (CSCW), and Technical Communication (Kuutti, 1996; Nardi, 1996; Halverson, 2002; Spinuzzi, 2003; Engeström, 2005; Daniels et al., 2010). AT utilizes “a set of perspectives” and “a set of concepts” that allowed me more flexibility in analysis that led to a deeper and more comprehensive understanding of the activity being examined (Nardi, 1996, p. 8). According to Daniels and Edwards, who perceive “activity theory as a developing resource encompassing core principles,” an AT perspective encourages research that is “flexibly responsive to fields of study” (Daniels et al., 2010, pp. 1-2). Further, specifically in relation to studies of the workplace, scholars like Spinuzzi (2008) and Engeström have refined the perspectives and concepts of activity theory to examine how activity occurs in a network, examining for instance “the development of practices across organizational boundaries” or considering “human beings laboring cyclically to transform the object of their labor, drawing on tools, and practices to do so” (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 7).

Finally, I modified my use of AT with a rhetorical perspective. Other scholars have touted the benefits of employing the use of AT influenced by rhetorical considerations in the field of technical communication. For example, David Russell (1997) addresses the rhetorical concept of genre in his AT examination of classroom writing. In addition, Kain and Wardle, (2005) also examine the impact of genre and how AT can be used for instructional purposes in

the professional communication classroom. Combining AT as a theoretical approach with rhetorical considerations allowed me to focus on issues of genre, persuasion, and identification as these concepts relate to activist-related work in my study. For my study of how individuals in a unique networked, activist-oriented workplace communicate, collaborate, and coordinate to reach goals, AT infused with rhetorical theory provided an ideal analytical lens.

Genre Ecology Modeling

Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM) is the second theoretical data analysis method that I used to make sense of the data that I collected. The GEM approach provided me with a better understanding of how genres (mediating artifacts) were used to mediate and transform the participants' work. Spinuzzi, Hart-Davidson, Zachry (2010) define a genre ecology as a "dense set of genres [that] mediate work" (p. 45). A genre ecology perspective is especially attentive to the Vygotskian idea of the transformative nature of mediation and mediating artifacts in communication, an important consideration in my study. According to Spinuzzi et al., "in the dense information ecologies inhabited by knowledge workers . . . texts mediate work in combinations; the mediation is compound" (p. 45). In this sense, GEM moves past the simple sequentially and transactional understanding of how genres are used to complete work. The authors explain that "a chained transactional sequence is not adequate for examining how texts mediate activity, since text can be brought into play at any point and can intermediate in an assemblage" (p. 45). Furthermore, GEM takes into account the social, as well as mediational, nature of genres as communicative artifacts. Using GEM, I was able to identify how genres were

used to mediate an individual's work activity, how genres were used to mediate other genres, and how genres were used to mediate other forms of communication that were not necessarily printed documents. Being able to develop this comprehensive and holistic understanding of the interplay of communicative practices and the network of genres that enable the accomplishment of organizational goals was particularly interesting and revealing, not just in the light of my study, but it is relevant given recent conversation about the social and mediational nature of genre structures (structures like genre ecologies, genre frameworks, and genre assemblages).

Christensen, Cootey, and Moeller (2007) observe that the recent discussion about genre frameworks, or genre assemblages, acknowledge that genres are inherently connected to the social. The authors note that “much of this conversation about these varying definitions of genre assemblages—the term we employ here as general amalgamated term referring to genre frameworks—has centered on the reality that genres do not exist in a vacuum; they exist within complex social hierarchies and structures; they are a product and productive of those structures; and they demonstrate much the same mediating agency that a human agent might” (p. 1).

Understanding the mediational and social nature of genres in a localized and contextual setting was a cornerstone of study. Moreover, one of the primary strengths of a GEM approach in my study is that the GEM perspective can answer the question, “Given x conditions, what genres are people likely to use to perform y type of activity?” (Spinuzzi et al., 2010, p. 46). More specifically, in regard to my study: In a networked, activist organization, what genres are participants likely to use in order to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate in attempts to achieve socially-motivated goals and how do these genres affect local communicative practices?

Summary

In order to answer my research questions about communication, collaboration, and coordination in a loosely-distributed, networked activist organization, I relied on ethnographic research methods for data collection. My data collection methods consisted of participant observations of weekly team meetings, semi-structured interviews (both oral and written), and artifact collection. I used traditional ethnographic methods to record my observations in the form of jottings and then created field notes and memos from my jotted notes. Iteratively reviewing my notes and memos, I identified and categorized core themes from my collected data. After my field notes and memos were typed, I created integrative memos in order to begin transcribing my observation in a form that would be acceptable for public readers. My interviews were recorded digitally and then transcribed. After the transcription of my interviews, I used ethnographic methods to identify and categorize core themes that aligned with core themes and subthemes from my field notes and memos.

After data collection, I used two complementary theories to analyze and understand my data: Activity Theory (AT) and Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM). These two theories worked well with the ethnographic research methods that I used during data collection. Finally, by analyzing my data through the lens of AT and GEM, I used my integrative memos to begin to theorize my observations and report my findings.

Chapter 4: The Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) Clinic Ethnography

In this chapter, I describe my observations of the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) Clinic. The sections following provide a brief description of the IPNW and its mission and my involvement as a researcher. In addition, this chapter presents my observations of the IPNW in the form of brief ethnographic sketches and quotes from interviews. These sketches are organized by my research themes and subthemes:

- Goals
 - Goal Congruence
 - Goal Incongruence
- Genres Enacted in Print
 - Documents used primarily by support staff
 - Documents used by entire team
- Genres Enacted in Speech
 - Conversational, intimate communication
 - Success stories
- Genres enacted in ICTs
 - Email Messages and Listserv Announcements
 - Websites
 - Social Media

This chapter is primarily descriptive in nature, rather than analytic. At the end of this chapter, in addition to presenting my observation categorized by themes, I present my overall findings as they specifically answer and relate to my research questions. The findings for each question are presented individually and connect my research questions and themes to the ethnographic

sketches and interview quotes presented at the beginning of the chapter. Finally, I discuss the implications of my findings in regard to my global theme: **identification**. This chapter ends with a brief summary.

Description of the Innocence Network and the Innocence Project Northwest

The Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) is a law clinic based on the campus of the University of Washington (UW) in Seattle. The IPNW is composed of one director, staff lawyers, two student assistants, one paralegal, and a number of students who participate in the IPNW as a law clinic through the UW School of Law. The IPNW clinic is a part of a larger group of Innocence Project organizations that span the United States and operate in international locations including Australia, New Zealand, Ireland, Great Britain, and Canada. This larger network of Innocence Projects, called the Innocence Network, defines itself as “an affiliation of organizations dedicated to providing *pro bono* legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions” (innocencenetwork.org). The Innocence Network collects information, including amicus briefs³ and detailed information about exonerations from its

³Amicus briefs are written directly to the court and present a legal opinion regarding how a certain individual, organization, or group thinks that a court should rule. Amicus is literally translated “friend of the court.” According to the Public Health Law Center at William Mitchell College of law, “Amicus briefs are legal documents filed in appellate court cases by non-litigants with a strong interest in the subject matter. The briefs advise the court of relevant, additional information or arguments that the court might wish to consider. Briefs can also focus the court’s attention on the implications of a potential holding on an industry, group, or jurisdiction not represented by the parties. The court has discretion to grant or deny permission of parties to file briefs as amicus curiae. A well-written amicus brief can have a significant impact on judicial decision-making. Cases are occasionally decided on grounds suggested by an amicus, decisions may rely on information or factual analysis provided only by an amicus, and holdings may be

affiliated Innocence Projects. Affiliated organizations, or members of the Innocence Network, fall into two different categories: legal and investigative organizations or exoneree support organizations. The Innocence Network is governed by a board of directors which “consist[s] of at least three individuals from different organizations within the Innocence Network’s membership,” and help to define membership guidelines required for any organization wishing to use the “Innocence Project” in their name (innocencenetwork.org). These guidelines specify that affiliated organizations must be tax-exempt, must offer services on a *pro bono* basis, and can be located within a specific geographic area, among other stipulations. Further, the Innocence Network guidelines dictate that affiliated Innocence Projects may be “housed within, or sponsored by, other nonprofit organizations, including, but not limited to, programs based at educational institutions” and can be included in a “program in which volunteer private attorneys supervise law students on *pro bono* litigation, in exchange for academic credit from the students’ host university” (innocencenetwork.org). Such is the case for the IPNW, which is categorized as an investigative organization operating within a law clinic.

The IPNW is the only Innocence Project in the state of Washington. The IPNW team works *pro bono* for individuals who may have been wrongfully incarcerated in the Washington State prison system. The team is actively involved in the representation of “indigent people in Washington who are serving long prison terms, who claim their innocence, and who no longer have a right to court-appointed counsel” (<http://www.law.washington.edu/Clinics/IPNW/>).

Though the IPNW’s operation is based on the University of Washington campus, the IPNW

narrower or broader than parties have urged because of a persuasive amicus brief.” (<http://publichealthlawcenter.org/documents/resources/amicus-curiae-briefs>). The Innocence Network often writes briefs for innocence claims on behalf of affiliated members. In addition, the Innocence Network maintains an electronic bank of written briefs that affiliated members can use as a resource.

began as a grassroots movement by local volunteers. The UW Law Clinic website for the IPNW notes that “the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) Clinic grew out of a volunteer effort aimed at freeing inmates who have been wrongfully convicted of crimes” (<http://www.law.washington.edu/Clinics/IPNW/>). The IPNW was started in 1997 by Dr. Jillian Morgan (who prefers to be called Jill), a law professor at UW. Jill serves as the current director of the IPNW and spearheads the activist work that the organization undertakes. She is also on the Innocence Networks’ Board of Directors. Under Jill’s direction, the IPNW has overturned the convictions of 15 people in Washington State and garnered state-wide and national attention for justice system reform. This success and attention to exonerations as well as public policy reformation aligns well with the IPNW mission statement which is as follows:

The IPNW is dedicated to providing legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions in Washington State.

In addition, the IPNW’s mission as an affiliate of the Innocence Network also echoes the mission of the networked organization, meets the network’s eligibility criteria, and allows the IPNW to be considered one of the network’s legal and investigative organizations.

The Researcher’s Involvement

As I studied the IPNW, I observed team meetings and informal chats in the team’s group workspace (as described in Chapter 3: Methods). In addition, I completed semi-structured interviews and surveys. Most times, during team meetings and observations, I was silent and did not contribute to the team’s discussion. However, at times, I did ask questions or make suggestions. The team acknowledged my presence at team meeting and observations, sometimes

asking for my thoughts or ideas, or other times including me in jokes or stories, or even sharing lunches and snacks. Even more, the team was genuinely interested in how I perceived their communication styles and processes and even, at times, solicited my opinions about communication issues. Though I accept that my presence as a researcher affected some aspects of the team's work processes (for instance, the team had to be careful not to divulge client-sensitive information during team meetings and often used pseudonyms), I strove to significantly limit my influence and serve primarily as a researcher-observer and less as a participant.

The following sections present ethnographic sketches and quotes from participant interviews as they relate to my research themes and subthemes.

Goals

Examining how individual goals and local organizational goals are understood, accepted, and used in work is a foundational consideration of my study. Individual goals are defined as goals that are specific to individual team members. Local organizational goals are defined as social-motivated goals (or SMGs). These SMGs are goals that are shared by the entire IPNW and represent the primary goals that the team works to accomplish in order to exonerate the wrongfully convicted and reform the Washington State justice system. My focus on individual and local socially-motivated goals (SMGs) and how these goals aligned with the over-arching motive of the larger, networked organization addresses key points of my research questions: networked and distributed organizations, goal congruence and incongruence, and the communicative practices of the activist group. My observations of how individual and local SMGs are articulated, how individual and SMGs align with network-level organizational

motives, and how goals are operationalized (or manifest) in the work of the IPNW team are presented in the following sections.

Goal Congruence/Incongruence: Individual Goals

The IPNW team files into the room, noisily chatting and talking. There are jokes and laughter and everyone seems to be in a happy mood. It is a beautiful sunny day in Seattle on the UW campus. The tall windows in the meeting room filter the sunlight and casts long yellow stream of light across the meeting table. As members finds their seats, some arranging recently purchased lunches on the table, others chatting with a neighbor or finishing up a text on their smartphones, Jill sits quietly, a slight smile on her face. After a few moments, the weekly team meeting begins, as Jill asks, “Is there any big news to share?”

Though the team meeting may seem, at a glance, casual and unorganized, the IPNW’s mission is clear and concise—to provide legal and investigative services and work to redress causes of wrongful convictions in Washington State (IPNW Mission Statement). Individual and organization goals for the team members, however, may not be as explicitly articulated for team members, though most team members understand and agree on the socially-motivated goals (SMGs) of the IPNW. SMGs are the activist-oriented localized, conscious focus of the actions of the team. Lisa, the paralegal for the team, states that she was “pretty clear on that and their mission—to help people that are convicted and have their convictions overturned” (Lisa Interview 1). However, when asked about goals for her individual work at the IPNW, one litigation lawyer replied, “I don’t have any. I don’t” (Kim Interview 1). She explained further, “I think that’s terrible that I don’t have any. I think I just do the work that’s in front of me” (Kim Interview 1). However, despite her insistence on not having any individual goals, the lawyer

states, “I would say, of course, my goal is to get all my clients off, but that’s, you know, slightly...” She pauses to think as if searching for a word that eludes her. Her discomfort or uncertainty about articulating individual goals as related to work is shared by other team members. For instance, the difference between the individual goals of two litigation lawyers is evident in how they conceptualize and articulate their individual goals. Whereas the litigation lawyer quoted above points to achieving exonerations as her goal, another litigation lawyer identified gaining real-world experience as one of his individual goals. He states:

I mean, just coming out of law school, part of it is just learning how to actually practice law, and get an understanding of more than just the academic stuff, but the practical. I guess the actual practice of law, and what I need to do on a given case. And then the other part of it is for the clients that I take on. At this point, I’ve learned how long it takes to go through these cases, and so the odds of me getting an exoneration by the time I leave are slim at this point. But take on cases, create some record and a background, try to make some progress in their cases. (Jack Interview 1)

This contrast is also evident at team meetings. At a meeting in late April, Jill asks, “Is there any big case news?” Kim updates the IPNW team on a case that she has been working on for some time. Kim explains that she has just completed case interviews with a husband and wife that may potentially serve as witnesses for a crime that has occurred against their child. Kim tells the team that information that had not been previously mentioned before this most recent interview was discussed by the husband and wife, causing her to question the reliability of their stories. As Kim expresses her concern about the reliability of the interview, she notes that she is not sure “what we could actually use of the interviews” to help her client’s case. Kim directs her attention to Jill. “What are the next steps that we could take?” (Team Meeting 4/28/2011). Jill states that the

details of this case are “weird” and most team members nod in agreement. From this exchange, it becomes obvious that Kim’s primary focus is the how the interview affects her client’s case and how she should proceed on the case in order for her client to be exonerated. For Kim, exonerations are a primary individual goal. On the other hand, Lacy, the policy lawyer, is more concerned with policy and advocacy issues. This difference in focus at times causes the lawyers individual goals to be incongruent. In a meeting in early May, Lacy excitedly tells the team that she would like to “catch” them up on her latest discussions with legislators about a compensation bill that she is drafting. Lacy exudes confidence as she eagerly tells that team about the goals of her “big plan,” including taking students on a trip to the state capital in Olympia, Washington. Lisa says that she feels “well-positioned” about the legislators’ consideration of her compensation bill for next year. In contrast to Kim’s concerns at the team meeting (concerns that focus on a specific case and a specific client), Lacy’s mention no case or client. Instead, it is evident that Lacy’s primary individual goal is the policy changes that she hopes to encourage in the state legislature.

The lawyers are aware of the differences in their daily work and this contrast in how individual goals are understood is also apparent in *how* the policy lawyer describes the difference between her job and the job of the litigation lawyers. Though the policy lawyer has a clear idea of what her individual goals are, she sees her goals as vastly different from those of the litigation lawyers. In short, the policy lawyer states that her main objective is to “pave the way on many of these [innocence-related] reforms” (Lacy Interview 1), and the current focus of her reform efforts are on a compensation bill⁴ for exonerated individuals. She also states that providing “a little bit

⁴ At the time of my observations, the policy lawyer’s compensation bill focused on the state providing compensation for exonerated individuals. In early 2012, the compensation bill was being sponsored by democratic Washington State representative, Tina Orwall. According to the

of support in the case work” is one focus of her work. However, she makes certain to differentiate between her work as a policy lawyer and the work of the litigation lawyers. “It’s very different,” she states (Lacy Interview 1). She explains further,

And you need the litigation. You need an understanding of the litigation of the cases that come out of your jurisdiction and all of those things to do with policy . . . but they truly are separate. The work is so different. And, you can’t do one without doing the other. You can’t. I mean, it’s hard to do the policy without a lot of cases to work from. And, honestly, that’s why I think Jill hasn’t focused on developing a policy shop before me coming along. Well, I strong-armed her. I made her do it. . . I mean some policy work was done before we had exonerations. (Lacy Interview 1)

Kim also identified the differences between the goals of the litigators and the Lacy’s goals. Kim asserts that her primary goal is her clients. As quoted above, she states that she wants to make sure that all of her “clients get off” (Kim Interview 1). Further, she describes litigations as “more boots on the ground, less advocacy” (Kim Interview 1). When asked how she defined advocacy she replies, “I think there’s reforms. When I think of advocacy, more often I think of reforms” (Kim Interview 1). Moreover, Kim asserts that she has “an ethical obligation to be focused on [her] client,” rather than policy and reform goals (Kim Interview 1). She explains:

So I have to say I represent a client and not a cause. So if something my client wants to do is contrary to the policy that we’re trying to work on, I have to do what my client wants. I tend to be not as involved in advocacy and the system reforms because I represent a client. If our goals line up, great. But if they don’t, I go for what the client

proposed bill, the convicting county could be required to pay compensation in the amount of up to \$50,000 for each year that the individual spent in prison. In death penalty cases, the county would pay an additional \$50,000.

wants. An example of that just happened where we had to call the prosecuting attorney out and say, “We think you’re being really unethical,” knowing that in the long run it was going to hurt our reform goals because they were going to be mad at us. But I represented a client, and so it’s what I had to do because it was in the interest of my client. (Kim Interview 1)

Kim further explained that she knows that individual goals are different and that, moreover, she is not sure if she understands the goals of the Lacy, the policy lawyer. She was not sure how to characterize Lacy’s work. She says, “I think that we are all bound here as attorneys to advocate for the best interest of our clients. Lacy is a little bit out there for me because I don’t know what . . . Is her client the IPNW? I don’t know who her client is” (Kim Interview 1). She further explained how she conceptualized her individual goals and how her individual goals related to the goals of the Network, stating, “It has to be the client and then the clinic. And, then I would say we move towards outside the clinic to the network” (Kim Interview 1).

In essence, the way in which individual team members understand their goals as contributing to the organization and the level of understanding that they have regarding their individual goals and the goals of other members of the team vary greatly—from team members asserting that they don’t have goals to team members seeing distinct, but complementary differences between individual team members’ goals. During a team meeting in late November, Lacy notes that the team needs, “a way to know what is going on in cases” (Lacy Meeting 11/23/2011). She says that “coordination between policy and what is happening on cases affects policy” (Team Meeting 11/23/2011). She also notes that she “really need[s] to be in the loop” (Team Meeting 11/23/2011). In essence, the individual goals of the team members of the IPNW can often be considered incongruent and varied.

Goal Congruence/Incongruence: Local Socially-Motivated Goals (SMGs)

In addition to the disparity among how goals are viewed by individual team members, the director of the IPNW, Jill, also admits that she has some difficulty articulating goals for the IPNW. Jill says that she “doesn’t do strategic planning or goals and things” (Jill Interview 1). She also acknowledges that, at times, not planning ahead has been a disadvantage for her, stating that her lack of planning has been “a blessing and a curse” (Jill Interview 1). “I just plunged into this without any kind of idea of where we would go or big picture vision” (Jill Interview 1). Yet, despite her lack of pre-planning the IPNW has been successful and continues to gain momentum. With 7 exonerations and a compensation bill in the works in the Washington State legislature, the IPNW is on target to make a real difference in the Innocence Movement by taking on more cases in Washington State, expanding the types of cases that the project accepts to include non-DNA cases, and by garnering a positive response to reform and advocacy issues in state government. Despite the current success of the IPNW, Jill notes that not considering long-term goals for the IPNW team has caused her some anxiety. “I would lie in bed awake at night thinking, ‘What have I done? How am I going to keep up with this? How am I going to....These people are relying on us.’” (Jill Interview 1). These thoughts drove Jill to work harder and, as she puts it, “take advantage of these serendipitous opportunities that have allowed the project to grow” (Jill Interview 1). In fact, when pressed further about her goals for the IPNW team, Jill says that her “goal or vision would be to maintain the kind of support that we’ve got with the policy staff attorney, staff attorney, supervising attorney, the paralegal assistants, the resources to

do cases and hire experts. If we could maintain that for the next five years, it would be amazing” (Jill Interview 1). Even though Jill discusses only the SMGS of the IPNW when asked about her primary goals in an interview, at times in team meetings Jill shares with the other members of the team her individual goals and how they relate to the SMGs of the IPNW. Near the end of May, during a normal weekly team meeting, Jill announces that she needs to “explain to everyone what I’m doing outside of the IPNW” so that they can be aware. Jill lists about seven responsibilities and obligations that are currently filling her schedule, including chairing a committee for tenure for a faculty member and serving as vice chair on a Council on Public Defense. However, Jill is careful to mention that she is also co-chair of the Innocence Networks’ Amicus Committee. She mentions that she is doing “fascinating, important work” and also states that the Amicus Committee is discussing filing briefs in a local case from Bellevue, Washington. Considering Jill’s conceptualization of her individual goals and the goals for the IPNW, the SMGs of the team include exonerations, meaningful progress on active cases, and funding for their organization and their activist work on a local level.

Though Jill’s goals and the goals of the individual team members are different and vary (largely depending on job titles and job roles), team members agree on the basic mission of the IPNW as an Innocence Network affiliate. Jill’s description of the IPNW mission reiterates the explicit mission statement of the Innocence Network, right down to the characterization of legal and investigative functions of the organization. According to Jill there are “different components” of the IPNW mission, but it includes work to “help free innocent people in prison in Washington state, to enact policy reforms and decrease the number of wrongful convictions going forward” (Jill Interview 1). Each member, when asked about the goal of the IPNW, echoed this mission statement in some way. Comments ranged from “provide *pro bono* legal assistants

to clients who have claims of actual innocence. And to mend and help the miscarriages of justice and wrongful convictions” (Faith Interview 1) to “help people that are convicted and have their convictions overturned” (Lisa Interview 1). All responses mentioned successfully acquiring exonerations *and* affecting a change in the justice system. The ideals explicitly stated in the mission statement appear to be tacit knowledge among team members, not something that has been articulated and reviewed by the team. In fact, one team member noted that she learned of the mission of the IPNW from a book written about one of the exonerees (Faith Interview 1). Another member mentions attending a law class (Lisa Interview 1). However, team members note that the hands-on work that they began when they started working with the IPNW and general conversations with other team members helped them to develop a better understanding of the SMGs of the IPNW organization, though neither mentioned how this related to developing goals for themselves. Members repeatedly discussed how speaking with other team members assisted them in understanding how the IPNW functioned and the focus of the IPNW’s activist work. “Verbal conversations helped fill out my understanding, but I think I just had a good overall concept,” Lisa states (Lisa Interview 1). Faith, one of the student assistants for the team, had a similar experience when it came to learning more about the SMGs of the IPNW. When asked how she came to know and understand the SMGs, she states:

“It was more of conversation, I think. And being assigned different tasks, I became more aware of exactly what the Innocence Project does. It wasn’t like they sat me down and said, Faith, this is what we do. It was kind of like, here, I’ll assign this to you in hope of you understanding what we do. Like you’ll find meaning attached to what we assign you to do.” (Faith Interview 1).

Overall, most team members seem to feel similarly to Faith—team members learn through general conversation, team meetings, and contextualized, hands-on work about the SMGs of the IPNW. For example, during one team meeting, a team member mentions that the IPNW is “getting a lot of phone call from people who need some assistance” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). In general, the IPNW does not contact potential clients. Instead, potential clients or family and friends of the imprisoned individual reach out to the IPNW for help. These requests for assistance can come in the forms of phone calls or email messages and letters. Because of the increased number of phone calls for assistance that the IPNW was receiving, Kim suggests that it is a good time to discuss and agree on “what case we will accept and what we won’t accept” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). One specific case that Kim has received a phone call about would entail assisting an individual that has already served and completed a prison sentence for a crime that he claims he did not commit. Kim tells the team that the individual is already out of prison. The team seems intrigued, but express concern about the IPNW accepting such a case. Lacy wonders aloud about whether or not the potential client, who, since his release from prison, has been required to register as a sex offender and if his registration as a sex offender can be considered punitive and compensated by the state. The discussion pauses as team members seem to consider their option. Finally, Lacy announces that accepting this case would be “an entirely different project” if they were to “consider individuals who are already out of prison” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). Jill states that, on some level, deciding whether or not to accept or reject a case is a “resources issues” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). As the team members discuss the possibilities of the accepting the case (including that fact that the case would not be clear-cut DNA case and whether or not registering as a sex offender can be considered a punitive action⁵),

⁵ There is some disagreement about whether or not registering as a sex offender can be

Jill sits quietly. Finally, Jill announces that she thinks that the IPNW “cannot take cases of people out of custody other than post DNA cases” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). Ultimately, the team agrees with Jill’s assessment. In this instance, it is clear that understanding how the IPNW operates, including its criteria for the acceptance or rejection of cases, often develops in meetings and casual conversations rather than in a more formal setting. As, Lisa asserts, “there is not an official orientation here. Like many jobs, there is not an orientation” (Lisa Interview 1). Despite a lack of an “official orientation,” the understanding of the SMGs of the IPNW seems to be congruent, consistent, and agreed upon among team members.

Goal Congruence/Incongruence: Network Goals and Motives

As noted above, the SMGs of the IPNW are something on which team typically members agree and are predominately congruent among team members. This occurs despite how differently members define the goals of their individual work at the IPNW. However, another significant point of divergence among members is the goals or function of the Innocence Network. Jill is on the board of the Innocence Network, where she is also co-chair of a committee on amicus policies. As Jill explains, the Innocence Network screens groups that are and are not allowed to use the Innocence Project name. “The Innocence Project is copyrighted, so people can’t use Innocence Project without having the permission of the Innocence Network”

considered punitive in innocence-related cases (that is, cases where individuals have been convicted of sex crimes, but claim actual innocence). The issue has come to the attention of legislators and law-makers largely due to the efforts of Innocence Projects across the nation. In Washington State, a proposed compensation bill would require that, in cases where innocence is proven in regard to a sex crime, and the individual has been required to register as a sex offender, the convicting county would be required to pay the exonerated individual up to \$25,000 for each year that the individual was registered as a sex offender or required to be supervised by the county.

(Jill Interview 1). The goals of the Innocence Network and the affiliated Innocence Project members happen to be quite similar to the SMGs of the IPNW. In this sense, the larger, networked organization's goals ("providing pro bono legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions") align well with the IPNW goals (innocencenetwork.org). However, despite this alignment of SMGs on the local level with the IPNW, many of the IPNW team members are not aware of how the Innocence Network functions or how its motives impact the work of the IPNW. Faith says that she is not sure of purpose of the Innocence Network. She says, "I do feel that there's so much out there in terms of the Innocence Network that I don't know" (Faith Interview 1). However, when asked about the goals of the Innocence Network, Faith stated that she would think that "the main goal of the network is justice" (Faith Interview 1). She further explains:

And I know that the criminal justice system is--there are a lot of negatives to it. But their point [the Innocence Network] is the criminal justice system. And they stress the justice part. And they see criminal offenders as people and as individuals who deserve fair treatment and who deserve the legal assistance that they need. (Faith Interview 1).

Other team members respond similarly when asked about the Innocence Network. Lisa, when asked to describe the Innocence Network, replies, "Yeah. I don't even know what it is, but I think it is just a network of all the different Innocence Projects. I don't know that they're officially—they're not in and of themselves—I don't know" (Lisa Interview 1). However, despite being unsure about the function of the Innocence Network, when asked to describe what she thought could possibly be the goals of the Network, Lisa, like Faith, refers to a guiding ideal as the main goal of the Network.

Other than the larger goal of helping people get out of prison, overturned convictions—the only goal that they would have for existing together would be to make sure that they’re [Innocence Projects] learning from each other and staying connected on some of the issues that run through all these wrongful convictions. (Lisa Interview 1).

Jack echoes this understanding of the goal of the Network. He says, “But I think there’s—like the higher-level goal are—like I said, challenge the bad. Or, challenge the evidence and practices that lead to wrongful convictions” (Jack Interview 1).

Other members of the IPNW team have a better understanding of how the Network operates and point to the development of the Innocence Network as a regulatory body. Kim mentions that there are new ethical guidelines that the Innocence Network is attempting to implement. “Also this year, we actually just wrote—and when I say *we* I mean the Network—wrote a set of ethical rules for dealing with innocence cases that all the members are supposed to abide by. They’re up for review and they’re up for comment so everybody has a chance to look at them and comment on them” (Kim Interview 1). Lacy also describes her understanding of the Network and explains how the function of the Network is changing.

What they’re trying to decide at the Board of Directors is considering all these protocols to be put into place so that people understand that if you’re going to call yourself a member of this network, if you’re going to be a member of this network, an affiliate with our network, you have to have certain agreements in place in terms of confidentiality. You have to have certain practices in terms of maintaining records and you have to have clear criteria about what kind of cases you’re going to take. Like just setting standards about how basic operating procedures that have an impact on the image of the network as a whole. And they’re all things that are—a lot of it is ethical rules. If you’re going to be

part of this network you can't—I don't know if this is even explicit but I would imagine it would be a violation of ethical rules—you can't help your client get compensation and then take half of it as a fee or something like that. (Lacy Interview 1).

However, despite the attempts of the Innocence Network to codify ethical and procedural rules for Innocence Projects by creating an ethics guidelines document, there remain apparent disagreements in regard to local goals, agendas, and ethical standards among projects nationwide. Lisa describes one instance.

I don't know if you know about this. But, there is a case where an exoneree got compensation through the state and through the statute and it was about \$2 million lump sum. He was in [prison] for year and years, but the attorney that the Innocence Project referred him to, to do his compensation claim, was charging him for lobbying and all kinds of things. And, after he got his \$2 million lump sum, he [the attorney] gave him a bill for \$1.3 million. Of that \$400,000 was a referral fee to the Texas project--\$400,000 to the Texas Innocence Project! And the problem was that everybody defended it like it was okay. And, I'm thinking, "Is the Network going to do anything about that?" And Jill isn't sure—she doesn't know. My instinct is, as a member of the Network, that's exactly the kind of thing they should be. So, I think it's unclear because they're just at the point where they're starting to even lay standards about what I mean. . . It's new and yeah. I think that goals are developing. It's again, we're in a moment where it's big enough and there's enough people involved and there's enough sovereign groups making their own decisions that they have to say, "Ok, we have to reign this in a little bit." Because up until now, it's truly been information sharing. (Lacy Interview 1)

In addition to grappling with issues of ethical and procedural standards, the Network is dealing with different Innocence Projects having different points of focus. For example, as Lacy explains, “there are other projects that are around the U.S. that only do DNA. Generally, they are also complemented by a second project that will do non-DNA cases⁶” (Lacy Interview 1). Lacy describes that Network goals as being “in the midst of a little bit of an evolution” (Lacy Interview 1). She mentions, “we’ve got all these unique categories of cases⁷ that keep coming

⁶ The Innocence Project considers a DNA case to be a case where DNA evidence, either newly found or existing, can be testing in attempts to prove innocence. Non-DNA cases are cases that do not involve DNA evidence that can be tested, but can involve the investigation of other scientific or medical processes.

⁷ Due to scientific advances and developments, DNA cases are not the only cases that can prove innocence based on scientific evidence. The Innocence Project is now involved in other unique non-DNA cases that take into account advances in science and medicine. For example, during my observations, one of the litigators had begun work on a case involving the death of an infant. The caretakers of the infant were accused of shaking the infant, resulting in the death of the baby due to Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS). However, new science shows that infants can die of other causes that may mimic SBS. According to law professor, Deborah Tuerkheimer (2009), medical evidence that indicates SBS relies on the presence of three phenomena, “the classic triad: retinal hemorrhages (bleeding of the inside surface of the back of the eye); subdural hemorrhages (bleeding between the hard outer layer and the spongy membranes that surround the brain); and cerebral edema (brain swelling)” (p. 4). However, as Tuerkheimer explains, some courts convict with only two of the three phenomena present and recent medical developments indicate that diagnosis of SBS can, at times, be flawed.

In addition, to SBS cases that are now the focus of Innocence Project investigations and reformation, scientific advancements have also called into question arson convictions. In some cases, where individuals have been convicted of arson, it has been found that what was originally thought to be markers of the use of accelerates actually indicate the presence of a scientific phenomena call “flashover.” Flashover is “a transitional event that marks a change from a condition where the fire is dominated by the burning of the first item ignited to a condition where the fire is dominated by the burning of all combustible items in the compartment” (Innocence Project Arson Review Committee).

The Innocence Project, though its original focus was on cases that involved DNA evidence for exonerations, has began to examine, investigate, and seek reforms in cases in which

up, that don't fit into our criteria of what we've always done" (Lacy Interview 1). Even though, the Network goals may be transforming, Kim notes that her perception is that most affiliated projects still identify exonerations and reforms as their main objectives. Kim says, "You know, I think. . . I can almost guarantee that every one of the member organizations in the Network have the same two goals. Taking finance out of it. . . . I think everybody's number one goal is to free the wrongfully convicted. The second goal is to make sure that things that led to that wrongful conviction are eradicated. So we can say, in that sense, everybody's goals line up" (Kim Interview 1). In addition, despite the variance of network-level goals and a lack of a clear understanding of the function of the Innocence Network by the IPNW team, members mention that one of the greatest benefits of the network is the exchange of ideas, knowledge, and information that is supported by the Network. "The different Innocence Projects are able to use the Network to a look at what others are doing," Lacy explains (Lacy Interview 1). Kim also points to the exchanges of information and sharing of ideas on the Network listservs (to be discussed later in this chapter) and yearly Network conferences.

Most of what I discovered about what individual team members understood regarding the Network was ascertained during interviews. This was primarily due to the fact that the Network was rarely mentioned during team meetings and member interactions. On one rare occasion, Jill mentioned reaching out to the Network for information. This occurred during a weekly team meeting at which Jill discussed a brief that the Innocence Network filed on behalf of a local case. Jill, when updating the team about "big case news," mentions that, though the Innocence Network had a filed an Amicus brief for the case, the prosecutor rejected the filing largely

scientific and medical evidence can prove to be useful in acquiring exonerations and addressing flawed science used for convictions.

because the Network filed the brief on the last day of filing. One team member asks why it matters that the brief was filed on the last day to file if the deadline was met. Jill has no explanation (Team Meeting 6/23/2011). The discussion about the Network ends without any of the team members asking for more details about the Network or the specific filing by the Network. One other time that the Network is specifically discussed is during a meeting at which Jill mentions that the team should possibly hold an “ethics session” which would require everyone to review the Network’s code of ethics. She states that it would be beneficial for the team members to “have an idea” so that they could avoid “certain situations” (Team Meeting 5/12/2011). Jill does not specify the situations to which she is referring, and during the remainder of my observations the ethics session is not mentioned again. As noted in the preceding sections, team members learn much of what they know about individual goals and local SMGs through verbal exchanges and hands-on experience. If the Network is not often mentioned during verbal conversations, and the team members’ work tasks are not directly related to the work of the Network, this provides limited opportunities for the team members to learn and understand the functions and the goals and motives of the Network.

Overall, in regard to goal congruence and incongruence, individual goals are typically incongruent among team members, with each team member focusing on a different individual goal. Moreover, team members also note that they do not completely understand the goals of other team members. On the other hand, the SMGs of the IPNW are predominately congruent among team members. Team members agree on the focus that the IPNW should take and work to agree on the courses of action for the team. Finally, though the team does not frequently discuss the goals and motives of the Network, the SMGs of the IPNW appear to align well with the Network’s goals and over-arching motive of seeking justice for wrongfully convicted

individuals. Most team members point to this idea of a “higher-level” concept and guiding principle (that of seeking justice) which represents the Network’s motives that are addressed by explicitly articulated Network goals (as described on the Network’s website). Finally, the team members acknowledge that their understanding of the function of the Network is not clear and the function of the Network is in transition. In essence, the level of goal congruence and incongruence shifts depending on each stakeholder group (the individual, the local, and the network).

Genres Enacted in Print

Genres enacted in print (for instance, memos, letters, manuals, and checklists) are used by the IPNW team for internal, localized coordination and communication purposes, not by all members. This section describes the types of genres enacted in print and documents that the team uses on a regular basis. This section also discusses *who* uses the documents and *how* those print documents are used⁸. The documents that this section focuses on are those documents that are used in the daily operations by team members involved in core administrative tasks.

Like any other workplace, the IPNW uses printed documents to communicate and coordinate actions, as well as carry out the daily operations of the IPNW team. During my seven

⁸ These documents do not include the legal documents, such as legal briefs and filings, by the IPNW team. Because of the sensitive nature of many of the legal documents used by the IPNW team, I was not allowed to view the documents and thus did not include these documents in my study. Also, the legal documents were not necessary to review when examining communication, coordination, and collaboration amongst team members. However, it is important to note that these legal print documents play a vital role in the legal activities of the IPNW team. The lawyers use the documents as they develop cases for clients. In addition, students involved in the IPNW law clinic use these documents for investigative purposes as they research evidence and information available about each case.

months of observation, I noted that most of the genres enacted in print used were ones that were typical of many workplace environments (except for the sensitive legal information that was commonly used by the IPNW team members) and could be grouped according to the primary user of the documents: documents used primarily by support staff or documents used by the entire team. One type of print genre commonly used at the IPNW is the checklist. The checklists are used primarily by the paralegal of the IPNW team and the student assistants, the support staff. One of the checklists used by the paralegal (and at times by the student assistants at the IPNW) details the criteria for accepting or rejecting a case (see Figure 1). The IPNW has set criteria for the types of cases that can be accepted. This criterion is often discussed and agreed upon during team meetings, including reaching consensus about how clients should be contacted if their case is accepted or rejected. For example, during one meeting, Jill mentions that she and a few law students contacted two potential clients to inform them that they would not be able to accept their cases. This is not the typical manner in which clients are contacted. Usually, when cases are rejected, the IPNW contacts the individuals via mailed letters. Todd asks Jill why the clients were called instead of written. Jill explains that it is good form to contact clients via phone if you have investigated their cases for an extended period of time, stating that “it is more respectful when you’ve looked at the case for a while” (Team Meeting 4/28/2011). In order to help mitigate decisions regarding case acceptance or rejections, Lisa created the criteria checklist primarily to help coordinate the actions of the support staff. However, the checklist also helps to enforce established regulations, by requiring that the team member consider each of the IPNW case criterion individually. One of the most important criterion to which the IPNW must adhere requires that potential clients have an “actual claim of innocence” (Lisa Interview 1). An actual claim of innocence is defined as a claim in which the accused has no involvement with or

knowledge of the crime and thus has no liability for the crime committed. As Lisa explains having an actual claim of innocence in this way:

So, you can't say, the girl and I had sex, but it was consensual. Because if you're convicted of rape, you actually took part in the thing that you were convicted of, even if it's hard to tell whether it was consensual or not. We can't help with that. So, there's some definition to a claim of innocence. (Lisa Interview 1)

Another criterion for potential clients is that the client does not simply dispute the length of their prison sentence, claiming that the sentence is unfair. As Lisa explains, the IPNW cannot accept a case in which a potential client may say, "My sentence was out of line. They gave me too much" (Lisa Interview 1). Another important requirement is that potential clients must be from Washington State. However, with a large number of phone calls and letters from inmates arriving at the IPNW office (Lisa says that about 75 percent of correspondence is from inmates) and a varying number of volunteers, students, and a team of lawyers assisting with the IPNW operations, Lisa found it necessary to officially codify the case criteria—stipulate and establish specific rules and write them down so that they could be referenced. Lisa explains that addressing the correspondence can be overwhelming and complex.

The process is all the mail goes to Jill's mailbox. And she kind of looks briefly. I would guess that probably 75% of the correspondence we get is directly from inmates. So, if it's not...if she doesn't recognize the name of the inmate, or she doesn't know that it's something really hot, like it could be something from the court regarding someone we're working on right now, then she pulls it all down in the general IPNW box. And at various times in the organization's development, they've had people like me to help, and then there have been other times when they've had no one to help. So, I think that would have

then gone to Kim to kind of deal with, if there's no one else to help. Right now, we have a lot of volunteers. So, it supposed to...this is where it's a little interesting. Kim wants the mail to come to me and for me to look at it because there's different piles that it goes in, depending on what kind of correspondence it is. . . some things are kind of loopy-goosy, too. (Lisa Interview 1)

Because of the complexity and number of people that may be working or volunteering at the IPNW, Lisa saw the need to create the checklist to mitigate confusion among members, as well as help her organize her individual work. “A lot of them I’ve just made for myself based on what I’ve learned. I like to see things in writing, I like to have—Here’s the plan that we’re going to use” (Lisa Interview 1). In addition, Lisa has revised and updated a number of older checklists that were created before she began at the IPNW in order to help coordinate the processing of IPNW correspondence. “So there were some older checklists, and when I started to use them I realized that things had changed. So then I would start working on revising the checklists, and those aren’t official. It’s not something that Jill has said—we’re blessing this and we give this to everyone. This is what everyone uses” (Lisa Interview 1). Lisa explains that, even though the checklist is not official, it has helped to make preliminary determinations about the cases that the IPNW can and cannot accept—in essence, assisting with the IPNW’s ability to meet criteria and regulations set forth by the local organization as well as the Innocence Network. As Lisa asserts, when the IPNW receives a completed questionnaire⁹ from an inmate, she is able to use her

⁹ Questionnaires are sent to potential clients and then returned to the IPNW once completed. As explained by Lisa Wolfe, the IPNW paralegal, individuals usually initiate contact with the IPNW team by sending a letter. After receipt of this letter, the team sends an official questionnaire to the potential client in order to collect certain information about the client’s background and case. An example of an IPNW Questionnaire is included in Appendix E.

checklist, the Questionnaire Review Checklist, to make determinations regarding acceptance or rejection.

I go through briefly and scan the questionnaire and I say, yes, yes, yes, no, no—or whatever to some of these criteria. . . And then what I normally do is I say, “Based on what I see here, this is a rejection,” Or, “Based on what I see here this probably should go to the students for review.” And then, Kim checks those to say she agrees with me or no we’re going to do it differently. So, I made a little thing [checklist] to use and I attach it to the front of the questionnaire and I make my notes on it and then I have Kim review it.

(Lisa Interview 1)

A photocopy of the Questionnaire Review Checklist is presented below in Figure 1.

Questionnaire Review Checklist

Review Date: _____

Name: _____

DOC#: _____

Convicted in Washington State _____

Claim of innocence

Substantial remaining incarceration (>2 years)

On collateral attack

_____ Mandate

_____ PRV Decision

Indigence

Newly discovered evidence DNA

Notes:

Figure 1. Questionnaire Review Checklist created by Lisa

In addition to the mail sorting and questionnaire review checklists, Lisa has also created a checklist for processing out-of-state mail. This is important as one of the criterion for the IPNW because they organization only operates within Washington State. This form provides step-by-step instructions, detailing actions to be taken from the time the mail arrives at the IPNW to returning necessary correspondence to the inmate. In addition, the document explicitly instructs users as to how to create and process electronic and printed files and letters for the out-of-state mail received by the organization. An example of the Processing Out-of-State Inmate Mail checklist is presented below in Figure 2.

Processing Out-of-State Inmate Mail

Mail will be presorted into referrals and no resources. If not, use the table below as a guide to sorting mail. These piles may need to be arranged in date order. Oldest correspondence should be responded to first. The received date is stamped on the back of letters.

- Double check** to see that out-of-state correspondence is not an out-of-state relative writing on behalf of a WA inmate or a WA inmate housed in another state (e.g. Arizona) or at a federal facility.
- Check electronic 1.) "Clients" folder and 2.) Amicus** to see if we have previously corresponded with the inmate. Check with an attorney before processing mail for inmates with whom we have previously corresponded.

My Computer > Clinics on 'saturn.law.washington.edu/dept' (J:) > INPW > Clients

- If no folder exists, **create a new electronic folder** for the inmate. Use middle initial if available and put state in parentheses. Example: *Doe, John B. (NY)*
- Determine appropriate response letter.** Open letter and enter the date, inmate's name, corrections number and mailing address as they appear on the original correspondence.

Referral	No Resources
Claim of actual innocence	Self-defense Reduced sentence Clemency/Pardon Legal Advice Other

Referrals: *My Computer > Clinics on 'saturn.law.washington.edu/dept' (J:) > INPW > Forms > Referrals and Resources*

No Resources: *My Computer > Clinics on 'saturn.law.washington.edu/dept' (J:) > INPW > Forms > Rejections*

- Save the edited letter to the inmate's electronic folder** adding the date in front of the file name (e.g., 02-07-11NewYork_2009.doc).
- Add inmate information into Referral Tracking spreadsheet** to include name, state, received date, response date, and type of request and response type sent.
- Print letter and envelope** including inmate's original correspondence and seal for mailing. Recycle inmate's envelope (place envelope in printer first, face up and flap on left).
- Mail.** Attach clinic mail barcode sticker above return address and place in mail drop.

Figure 2. Processing Out-of-State Mail Checklist created by Lisa

The checklists are seldom used by the group of staff lawyers, and are predominately used only by Lisa and the student assistants who typically see the mail before anyone else and serve as the frontline for the screening of cases. In a meeting during the early fall, after I had been observing

for approximately 6 months, the lawyers seemed to notice Lisa's checklist for the first time, with one of the lawyers asking Lisa if she created the checklist and Lisa responding yes and explaining that one form explains the "criteria for accepting a case" (Team Meeting 11/15/2011). Because the checklist are predominately used for determining the acceptance or rejection of a case and processing mail—an activity that takes place during the early stages of the workflow process—it is understandable that Lisa's checklists are predominately used by the support staff at the IPNW (the volunteers and student assistants). These documents coordinate the actions of the support staff but also help to facilitate the work of the team by reinforcing criteria and regulations stipulated the IPNW and the Innocence Network. In this way, the checklists serve as a coordination function for the support staff and a regulatory function for the team.

Another type of printed document that plays an important role for the IPNW team is an informational sheet with facts about the IPNW. This information sheet helped to create consensus regarding the goals and objectives of the IPNW and the members' actions (see Figure 3 below).

SCHOOL OF LAW
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON



Innocence Project Northwest Clinic

Few injustices can compare with that of convicting an innocent person. Ted Bradford, Larry Davis, James Anderson and Larry Northrop (above with Prof. [REDACTED]) collectively served over 47 years in prison for crimes they did not commit. They were freed though the extraordinary efforts of Innocence Project Northwest Clinic (IPNW) faculty, students, staff and pro bono volunteers. The IPNW is dedicated to providing legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions.

OBJECTIVES

- Advocate for innocent prisoners
- Lead efforts to help the exonerated rebuild their lives
- Promote efforts to identify and redress the causes of wrongful conviction through interdisciplinary partnerships
- Develop thoughtful and reflective practitioners who are skilled in legal advocacy as well as multi-forum problem-solving

FREEDING THE INNOCENT

In 2008, James Anderson was freed on Christmas Eve, when law students uncovered evidence proving he was in California when the robbery for which he was convicted occurred in Washington. After serving 4 years of his 17 year sentence, Anderson returned to California. He celebrated the birth of his son James Jr. in 2010.

Post-conviction DNA testing led to the 2010 exonerations of Ted Bradford, Larry Davis and Alan Northrop. Each client's case was undertaken by the IPNW in 2002. Bradford was the first person in Washington State to win a new trial from the Court of Appeals based on DNA testing. After presenting the DNA evidence at a subsequent trial, Bradford was acquitted. He served his entire sentence – over 9 years – before being exonerated. He returned to Yakima to live with family.

Larry Davis and Alan Northrop were convicted in 1993, as co-defendants in a rape and burglary prosecution. They were exonerated, after being incarcerated for 17 years, when DNA testing proved the crimes were committed by 2 other men. Both have returned to the Vancouver, WA area.

Law students worked extensively with the above clients and on numerous other IPNW cases. Students get hands-on experience interviewing and counseling clients, developing facts, drafting motions and briefs, negotiating, and presenting appellate arguments. They develop skills in interviewing, negotiation, fact-investigation, trial preparation, collaboration and problem-solving.

Students work with experts in the disciplines of medicine, psychology, biology and ethics.

ADVOCATING FOR REFORM

Policy Staff Attorney [REDACTED] joined the IPNW in the fall of 2010. She drafted a bill that would establish a wrongful conviction compensation statute for Washington State. Larry Davis, Ted Bradford, and Alan Northrop were invited to testify in support of the bill. The bill passed easily out of the policy committee, but it was not voted out of the fiscal committee.

In the 2011-12 academic year, the IPNW will partner with the Legislative Advocacy Clinic to train students in legislative and public policy advocacy on innocence project issues. Students will learn about the legislative process and bill drafting. They will build a legislative agenda and work with coalitions. Students will advocate in the state legislature to develop and move legislation and respond to proposed legislation.

KEY FACULTY & STAFF

[REDACTED]: Director, Associate Professor of Law
 [REDACTED]: Staff Attorney
 [REDACTED]: Policy Staff Attorney
 [REDACTED]: Weil Deferred Associate Staff Attorney

SUPPORT & FUNDING PRIORITIES

- Stable funding for the Staff Attorney position to provide continuity of representation in cases which span over years and to oversee the 30-50 new monthly requests for assistance
- Stable funding for the Policy Staff Attorney position to continue the momentum for wrongful conviction compensation and to educate students to be leaders in the public policy arena
- Enhancement of funding for expert witness services, investigation and litigation support

Figure 3. IPNW Information Sheet

The information sheet was a project that the director of the IPNW began working on during the early weeks of my observation. During one meeting she mentions creating a “one-page document about the IPNW” (Team Meeting 4/14/2011). Jill seeks to include the team members on the

creation of the document and asks if there is any “great stuff” that the team would like to be included on the information sheet regarding individual work or information about the team as a whole. The first iteration of the document appears in Figure 3 above. She announces that she will circulate the revised document at a later team meeting. And, as promised, a few weeks later, Jill brings the completed, printed document to the team meeting. Jill seems proud of the document and even offers me one of the information sheets for my artifact collection. The information sheet is printed in color and includes the University of Washington logo and the header and address for the UW School of Law. The information page also includes the pictures of four IPNW exonerees, posing with Jill at that top of the page. Beneath the picture, in dark purple writing, appears a variation of the mission of the IPNW: “The IPNW is dedicated to providing legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions.” In addition, this document explicitly states, in a bulleted list, the objectives of the IPNW:

- Advocate for innocent prisoners
- Lead efforts to help the exonerated rebuild their lives
- Promote efforts to identify and redress the causes of wrongful conviction through interdisciplinary partnerships
- Develop thoughtful and reflective practitioners who are skilled in legal advocacy as well as multi-forum problem-solving (IPNW Information Sheet)

The purpose of this information sheet was originally to disseminate information about the IPNW clinic to students interested in participating in the law clinic, the general public, and potential clients. Though not initially created for coordination and consensus purposes among IPNW team member, interestingly, the first iteration of this information sheet provided an expanded

explanation of the mission and goals of the IPNW that were not previously articulated to or by team members. This sheet required that the team members collaborate and identify the specific goals of the IPNW. In addition, the information sheet detailed information about case work and policy work, making clear connections between very different individual goals (mentioned in the preceding section) and how those disparate individual goals aid in the accomplishment of local SMGs. The final iteration of the sheet streamlined the IPNW goals, reducing the original bulleted list of 4 items to only 3. In addition, the subsequent version of the sheet placed less emphasis on case work and policy work and instead presented more details about the IPNW's recent successes by providing the brief narratives of the IPNW exonerees. Further, this version, unlike the original version, includes Lisa (the paralegal) in key faculty and staff section. A link to a PDF of the final iteration of the IPNW fact sheet is provided on the IPNW's webpage through the University of Washington's School of Law (see Figure 4).

Innocence Project Northwest

Few injustices compare with that of convicting an innocent person. The Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW) is dedicated to providing legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove their innocence and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions.



Objectives

- Free the innocent through DNA testing and other means
- Advocate for reform to decrease errors in our system
- Train students to become thoughtful and reflective practitioners skilled in legal and policy advocacy

The Program

IPNW Clinic students gain hands-on experience litigating post-conviction claims of innocence for our clients. Students work with experts in medicine, psychology, biology and ethics in their efforts to free the wrongly convicted.

IPNW Legislative Advocacy Clinic students work for legislative and public policy reform on innocence issues through partnerships with forensic scientists, law enforcement, prosecutors, defense attorneys and judges. Students recently lobbied in support of a wrongful conviction compensation statute.

Funding Priorities

- Increase staffing to address the current backlog of 200 cases and ensure the ability to enact reforms to prevent wrongful convictions and compensate the innocent
- Meet law student demand for the IPNW and Legislative Advocacy Clinics

Recent Successes

Ted Bradford was the first person in Washington State to win a new trial from an appellate court based on DNA testing. He was deprived of the opportunity to raise his infant children during the 9 years he spent in prison for a rape he did not commit. Ted returned home to Yakima, but is struggling to find steady work.

James Anderson was freed on Christmas Eve 2008, when law students uncovered evidence proving he was in California when the robbery for which he was convicted occurred in Washington. After serving 4 years of a 17-year sentence, Anderson returned to California and celebrated the birth of his son in 2010.

Larry Davis and Alan Northrop were convicted in a rape and burglary prosecution in 1993. They spent 17 years in prison before DNA testing exonerated them, proving two other men committed the crimes. Alan missed raising his three young children, but received a six-figure child support bill for the time he was wrongly imprisoned. Larry, now middle-aged and unable to resume work as a logger, struggles to find a job with a living wage. Both have returned to the Vancouver, WA area.

Key Faculty & Staff

██████████ *Director, Associate Professor of Law*
 ██████████ *Supervising Attorney*
 ██████████ *Staff Attorney*
 ██████████ *Policy Staff Attorney*
 ██████████ *Paralegal*

Figure 4. PDF of IPNW Informational Sheet as it appears on the UW Law School website

Yet, another print genre used frequently by IPNW team members is the clients' paper files. Paper files, which are used by the entire IPNW team, are a compilation of a number of different genres, including correspondence sent to the IPNW team, police reports, appeal decisions, and any other supporting documents that are necessary to clients' cases. Paper files only include documents *not* generated by the IPNW. In other words, each genre included in the paper file for clients are created by an entity other than the team of activists (the clients, police, and other lawyers). I did not have access to view the information located in the paper files due to the sensitive nature of the material. However, I was able to ask about the contents of the paper files during my interview with Lisa, the team's paralegal. In addition, to explaining the contents and function of the clients' paper files, Lisa also mentions discrepancies about who handles documents that should be included in paper files, as well as how documents within paper files should be categorized. For example, during one team meeting, Jill mentions that case flow delegation and documents that should be included in clients files should all be directed through Lisa—in Jill's words, "all roads lead to Lisa Wolfe" (Team Meeting 11/15/2011). One team member asks if it makes sense to give all of the documents to Lisa to be included in the files. The team member suggests that Lisa could possibly first scan the documents and then provide the documents to students working with the law clinic. Lisa says that she would like to see all of the documents, stating that team members should give her "anything that comes in from now on" and she will take care of putting the files in the student mailboxes (Team Meeting 11/15/2011). At yet another meeting, Kim suggests that the client questionnaires that are received by the IPNW do not need to be kept in the client paper file after the document has been scanned electronically unless the IPNW decides to pursue the client's case further. Lisa mentions, however, that some clients contact the IPNW a second time and it would be helpful to have the

original questionnaire. Kim suggests that the electronic documents that are uploaded to an electronic database within the law clinic could serve as the “frontline” for case screening, with the paper documents serving only as a backup. The discussion ends without a clear resolution. Lisa notes that issues such as the ones describe above can be difficult and coordinating and organizing the paper files can be a complicated matter. Lisa explains, “you [also] got a paper file which can be a quarter inch thick until you decide to work on their [a client’s] case and then it can take up a whole shelf. We don’t have a coordinated way of managing that. We can’t always put our finger on someone’s file” (Lisa Interview 1). In addition, at times, Lisa also brings documents from the clients’ paper files to the team meetings and asks questions about specific courses of action regarding the paper files. During one team meeting, Lisa asks Kim if she has received files for a specific case so that the documents can be included in the client’s files. Kim tells Lisa that she can always go through her mailbox in the front office to check. This leads the team to discuss what actions should be taken to request and receive specific records for cases (what the team identifies as “will call” records). Lisa asks if, in order to have certain records mailed, should she use the forms from the agency from which she is requesting information or an official IPNW letter. She notes that each form is “a little different” and asks what she should do about the documents for the paper files of the specific case that she originally asked Kim about. Jill suggests that Lisa contact someone by phone for the records and the matter is settled.

As illustrated above, the paper files for the IPNW are a complex genre that includes a number of subgenres (police reports, appeals decisions, and client questionnaires to name a few). The paper files are used by the entire IPNW team, but serve different purposes for the support staff and the rest of the team (namely the lawyers). These paper files serve a coordinating function for the IPNW lawyers, in that the lawyers must coordinate their actions according to the

information provided in the paper files. However, what makes that paper files interesting is the collaboration that the compilation and organization of the paper files requires among team members. Team members must agree on what should and should not be included in the paper files, how paper files are distributed among lawyers and students, and how paper files should be organized. The next section describes a print genre that was specifically created to assist with the organization of the hardcopy paper files mentioned above and the electronic version of the paper files that are saved to a law clinic database called the J-Drive¹⁰.

Toward the end of my observations during the late fall of 2010, the IPNW created a document that dictated how client paper files (both hardcopy and electronic) should be arranged and organized. This text, the IPNW File Organization document (appearing in Appendix F), was also created by Lisa with the assistance of April, one of the newer staff lawyers that joined the IPNW team in late summer. The purpose of this document was to help facilitate management of the clients' paper files that were moved to an electronic format in the form of scanned images uploaded to the J-Drive. This document (the client paper files), originally enacted in a print form, becomes a new version of the original document and is now a genre enacted in an electronic form. Despite the change of medium, the print-based document and the electronic document both serve the same purpose. This initial draft of this document was presented at a team meeting and determined the "structure for documents stored in the client's electronic (J-Drive) file" (IPNW File Organization Document). At the meeting, Lisa and April note that the IPNW File

¹⁰ The J-Drive stores documents that are created by the IPNW. The J-Drive is shared by all law school clinics and, for security reasons, can only be accessed within the law school or with remote user name and password log-ins by law clinic personnel. The IPNW saves any documents that are created by the clinic to the J-Drive (in contrast to the paper files that saves only documents generated by outside entities) and other documents relevant to a client's case. Documents that are saved in a client's paper files are scanned and uploaded to the J-Drive as records. In this way, the files in the J-Drive should mirror a client's paper file documents.

Organization sheet should not only reflect the structure of the electronic documents, but “paper files should be kept in binders with tabs set up with a similar structure” (IPNW Organization Document). The IPNW File Organization sheet provides a template that could be copied and used as needed. April asserts that having students use this template will help to “retrain students to revamp their files and we can use this set-up and have students follow this protocol” (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). As the team members discuss the draft of the IPNW File Organization document, each member provides input regarding the best way to structure files. For example, April asks about everyone’s preference for chronological ordering of documents and correspondence—newest on top or bottom? Amidst jokes about toilet paper orientation (pulling from the top or bottom of the toilet paper roll), the team agrees on a chronological preference and handwritten notes are made on the draft document. In addition, the team discusses if folders are mutually exclusive, can be expanded, collapsed, or omitted altogether. The team members also attempt to agree on relevant categories and labels for folders that may not be mutually exclusive. For example, Lisa asks if the folder labeled Court Decisions could be changed to Court Decisions/Dockets. The team considers this change, but also points to other folders where the naming could be problematic. One team member asks if the folder labeled Witnesses refers to the IPNW witnesses or the witnesses at trial. Finally, Francine mentions that too many subfolders can make searching difficult. The team agrees and Lisa and April assure the team members that they will continue to work on the organization template (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). During the longer than usual team meeting, the team works on adjusting and revising the file organization structure, but does not finalize any changes. At the end of the meeting, it is noted the document will be revised and then redistributed. A copy of the IPNW File Organization document can be found in Appendix F.

A print document that is *not* used by the core administrative team (lawyers nor support staff), but seems to have relevance to how daily operations of the IPNW is the IPNW Procedures Manual. The printed manual is available for use by team members, students, and support staff and was provided to me by Jill during an individual interview. The manual, *Innocence Project Northwest Procedures Manual*, is a photocopied, black-and-white, 19-page document bound by one staple in the top, right-hand corner. The procedures manual assumes a primary audience of a student participating in the clinic not the core administrative team. The document's purpose is described in the overview section found on the second page. It states: "This manual is designed to provide you with a general overview of the goals and objectives of the IPNW and the procedures in place or implementing those goals" (p. 2). The manual covers: student responsibilities and office procedures (which includes how to leave a telephone message to how to take an incoming call and accepted computer use), case processing procedures (which details how the IPNW screens and assigns cases), communication (describing the proper ways to contact attorneys, write business letters, and conduct inmate interviews), case investigation (which defines the procedures for conducting an actual investigation to uncover evidence, locate witnesses, and take notes from interviews, as well as how to handle biological evidence), and the rejection process (which instructs students on writing a rejection letter and closing a case). Though the manual details much of what volunteers and support staff may also need to know about IPNW operations, for the most part, the team members did not seem aware of the manual. Lisa, who coordinates much of the communication between potential clients, team members and students, did not mention the manual when asked how she would describe the manner in which goals are communicated within the IPNW. Instead she notes that "verbal conversations helped to fill out my understanding" (Lisa Interview 1). Faith says she learned more from "being assigned

different tasks” (Faith Interview 1). She further explains, “It was kind of like, here, I’ll assign this to you in hope of you understanding what we do. Like, you’ll find meaning attached to what we assign you to do” (Faith Interview 1). In other interviews, with other team members, except for Jill’s interview, the manual was also not mentioned or referred to. Interestingly, in a meeting in late November, one of the new staff attorneys asked, “Can we update the manual? I don’t think any of them (students) read the manual” (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). In general, the manual does not seem to perform an important role to the core administrative team of the IPNW even though it has the potential to explicitly inform the core administrative team of the mission, goals, and procedures.

During my observations in the early months of 2012, an IPNW team agenda was introduced by Jill, the director of the team. These team agendas were usually emailed out in the body of an email message sent to the team and used by the team during the weekly meetings. In interviews, when asked about agendas and goal-setting for and during meetings, Jill noted that she did not typically have pre-planned agendas. “I usually—I don’t come in with an agenda. I should probably work on that more. I do come in—I have some things that I want to talk to people about most of the time. And, then, I also as we sit there, think, “I need to tell them this. I need to tell them...” I’ll jot down a few things on a piece of paper going in” (Jill Interview 1). When Jill began sending around agendas, the team meetings tended to stick fairly closely to the planned format. In fact, Jill began to use the white screen in the meeting room to display the emailed agenda to the team as the meeting progressed. She would note which item they were covering during the team meeting. For example, during one team meeting, Jill explicitly states, we can “cross one off the list on the agenda” and “now, on to number 3 on the list” (Team

Meeting 11/23/2011). These emailed agendas began to serve a coordinating purpose for the members of the IPNW team. See Figure 5 below for an example of one of the emailed agendas.

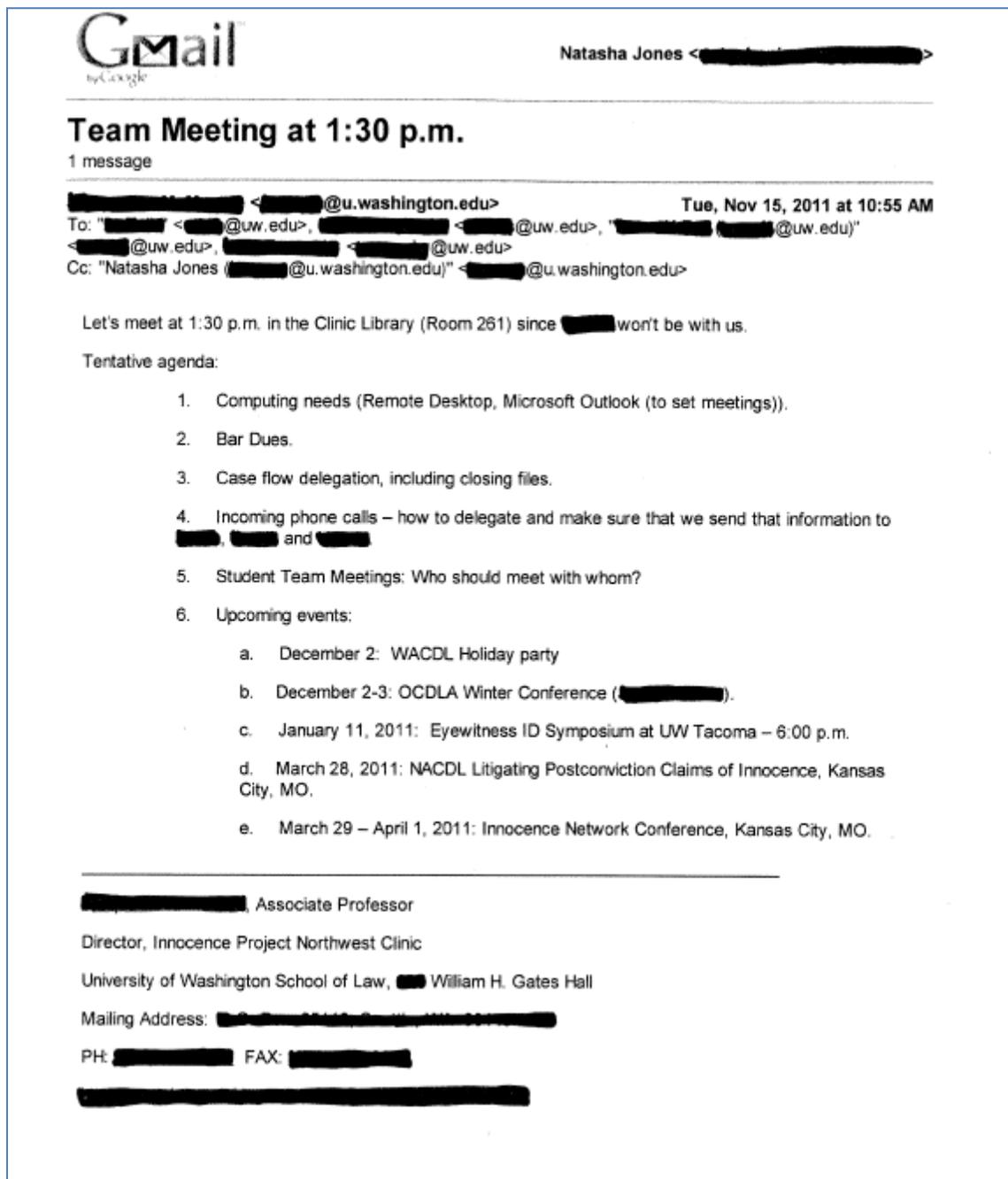


Figure 5. Email Message of the Team Meeting Agenda from Jill

In summation, print documents can generally be characterized as used primarily by support staff or used by the entire IPNW team. The documents used by the support staff tend to

have a coordinating and regulatory function (for example, the checklists for IPNW case acceptance or rejection criteria and task list for processing mail). While the documents used by the entire team also have a coordinating function (like the team agendas), these documents also encourage collaboration among team members (for example the IPNW Information Sheet, the client paper files, and the File Organization document). The IPNW Procedures Manual was the one document that I observed was created specifically for coordinating purposes, but was not used by the IPNW core administrative team.

Genres Enacted in Speech

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, much of the communication between team members is verbal. One staff lawyer on the team said that about 65% of the communication between team members is carried out verbally. The paralegal on the team puts the number even higher. She states, “Most of it’s face-to-face. Probably 80 percent is face-to-face” (Lisa Interview 1). Other team members agree, with one member asserting, “We definitely talk a lot,” (Lacy Interview 1). In this way, genres enacted in speech served an important function for the daily operations and goals of the IPNW. The weekly team meetings proved to be the most practical forum for observing the team’s communicative practices and I focused a large amount of attention on these meetings. The two subthemes that developed from my study of the genres enacted in speech at the IPNW were conversational, intimate communication and the use of narratives (specifically, success stories) during those team meetings and other member interactions. The next section describes my observations of the conversational, intimate communication as I primarily observed it at weekly team meetings. Next, I present my observations of the team members sharing success stories at weekly meetings. These observations include details about how the individual

members of the IPNW team define success, and other ways and mediums in which the team's success stories are shared outside of the weekly meetings.

Conversational, Intimate Communication

At the time that I started my observations, the team was abuzz with discussion about progress that had been made in cases that team members were working on and they were excited about a grant that the IPNW had just received. The first team meeting that I attend begins in the afternoon, around 1:30 p.m. Team members walk in, casually discussing the happenings of their days. At a little after 1:35 p.m. Jill begins the meeting. She introduces me to everyone at the table. There are five members in attendance (including Jill). The team meeting is lively and at times team members talk at once. It is hard for me to keep up with the flow of the conversation. The discussions about work are intertwined with team members' talk of moving, kids and family, and recent trips taken. One team member asks about the team's decisions about creating a rule that dictates which cases should be accepted or rejected. Jill mentions contacting other clinics to find out how they are setting these rules and guidelines. Another team member discusses recent motions that he has filed for a case that he is working on. Yet another team member talks about working with law enforcement agencies to provide interrogative training for police officers and detectives. There is so much going on and so much information being passed back and forth between members. All of the discussion is conversational and friendly. The team members' discussion jumps around from topic to topic, from personal to the work related. As an observer, I am overwhelmed, trying to parse through the details of the discussion. The IPNW team members, on the other hand, seem to keep up just fine.

The tone of the first meeting and of each subsequent meeting that I attend is always chatty and conversational. I am struck by the relaxed atmosphere. During the course of my seven-month study of the IPNW team meetings, this conversational communication at the team meetings becomes an important consideration as I begin to understand that these unassuming oral interactions are a central component to how work is being completed and goals are being accomplished at the IPNW. I characterize the specific manner of the communication that I observed as conversational and intimate communication. My definition of conversational refers to speech that is characterized by an exchange of sentiments, opinions, or ideas, and can be contrasted with the definition of a discussion, which is more formal in nature. Further, intimate is defined as marked by close association and familiarity, or informal warmth. The conversational and intimate nature of the communication by the IPNW team members:

- Is viewed as **customary and accepted** by team members and is not discouraged during team meetings and when work activities are being carried out
- Is **familiar and intimate** and encourages as friendly, non-competitive, non-confrontational rapport among team members
- Occurs alongside **goal-setting** and implicitly aligns individual goals with the goals of the team (**goal congruence**), and
- Fosters an environment conducive for **learning and knowledge-sharing**.

The following sections describe how the conversational, intimate communication functions in the ways noted above and provide details from my observed meetings and responses from participant interviews.

Customary and Accepted

As I continue to observe team meetings, I learn that the conversational and informal format of team meetings is customary and accepted by team members. Customary denotes that a practice is commonly practiced or observed. Conversation is varied and lively during weekly team meetings. Team members often joke and share personal stories during the team meetings. Team members also go off on tangents, chatting about events and occurrences that have little to do with their activist work. For example, during a team meeting in early fall, the team members spend time discussing crock pots and coffee pots. The conversation begins as one team member suggests that “if you are ever hungry, you should stop by the law review room.” The team member describes the array of crock pots of food and goodies that are available in the law review room. The conversation meanders for a while and team members eventually end up discussing that coffee pots are not allowed in a certain area of the office because there had been issues with power surges. The team laughs and jokes in good spirits. The coffee pot and crock pot conversation continues for about 4 minutes before the director asks the team if there is “anything *else* that anyone needs.” In another meeting, as the team discusses visiting a client that is currently imprisoned. The team briefly chats about how “pretty” one of the student assistants is. One of the lawyers suggests taking the student assistant along with her on a scheduled client visit, stating that because she is “young and pretty” this could encourage the client to share more information. Discussions like this are not unusual. They are not discouraged and appear to even be expected and welcomed by the team members. Chats about personal events, funny stories, or lunch plans—things many would consider office chit-chat—are customary at meetings. After an anecdote is shared, the team resumes work as normal, often times with Jill asking if there is any other “good news” to share.

Familiar and Intimate

During one of my interviews with a staff lawyer, she said of the communication among team members, “It’s all casual” (Kim Interview 1). For example, a team member mentions that “there is very little professionalism, but I don’t mean that in a bad way. I mean that in a good way, in that... We can be professionals when we need to be, but I feel like when we’re back there, we leave our professionalism...” (Kim Interview 1). I came to understand that this casual communication reflected a deep sense of genuine friendship, familiarity, and openness shared among team members. During my observations, most team members conducted themselves as if there were in the company of friends, rather than attending a weekly meeting in a conference room at work. At a meeting in April, Jill leads off the meeting, focusing on upcoming business. She reminds that team that she and Kim are attending a conference near the mountains in northeast Washington. Instead of focusing on information regarding the conference, Kim asks Jill if she is “totally prepared?” But, Kim is not referring to the conference; instead she begins discussing the possible driving conditions to the conference. Kim tells Jill that she should make sure that she has chains on her car because it recently snowed 6 inches. The two chat briefly about preparing for the drive up—warm clothes and car maintenance. The discussion never returns to the specifics of the conference. The team meeting has provided an opportunity for social interaction that does not focus on work-related activities. At other team meetings, team members bring food and snacks to share with the team. In late November, Jill even bakes a batch of meringues for the weekly team meeting. At these weekly team meetings, the team members are comfortable and familiar with and friendly toward one another. They view each other as friends, not just work colleagues. The familiarity and openness at the meetings also affords team

members the opportunities to pitch ideas, suggest courses of action, critique one another, and ask questions without feeling guarded or being apprehensive about how they will be received. Team members can say what think and ask for clarification on what they do not understand without fear of being judged. Kim mentions that she feels that the way that the team communicates even helps with the casework and being able to ask informal questions seems to support the team in their activist work. At one particular meeting, Kim tells Jill that she is not sure how to proceed in a particular case where she has interviewed two witnesses that she believes are unreliable. Kim specifically asks Jill what her next steps should be (Team Meeting 4/28/2011). Kim states that this collaboration is “how I learn. I think that’s how I understand.” In addition to the familiarity and friendly rapport, the atmosphere seems completely devoid of disrespect or competition.

During an interview, Kim, described the team’s familiar rapport like this:

I feel like one of the things that lawyers do generally is if you say black they say white. So no matter what you say, they say something else. I know I do it, and I know people hate dating lawyers. But it’s true. I feel like if we’re [the IPNW team] back there, we’re being ourselves. I can say, “Jack, shut the fuck up.” It’s like funny and everybody’s fine. Or they can say to me, “You’re talking out of your ass” or something like that. There’s no, “I need to pull you aside. I need to talk to you. (Kim Interview 1)

Most team members agree with Kim and acknowledge that the familiar tone of conversations in the IPNW offices and at team meetings is an accurate and typical representation of the team’s workplace discourse. Faith notes, “I really enjoy going to them [team meetings] because again, it makes me feel a part of the team. But more and more I realize how well the staff members communicate with each other and how close knit they are to each other” (Faith Interview 1).

Goal-Setting and Goal Congruence

Team meetings serve an important function for the IPNW and its members because the meetings provide the team members with a chance to hear what each individual team member has accomplished during the week and get an update on other team members' future tasks and goals. In this way, team meetings serve provide the team with the opportunity to collaborate on goals and implicitly understand how team member's goals are congruent. During my observations, I noted that goal-setting and goal congruence does not occur *in spite of* the conversational, intimate nature of the communication; it occurs *alongside* the conversational communication. Moreover, the goal-setting and goal congruence may be fostered by the informal nature of the IPNW's communication styles. During one meeting, for instance, Kim informally suggests some ways to divide the workload on a specific case. After her suggestions, she asks Jill if she and the rest of the team are "okay" with her suggestions. The team agrees, sets a goal to proceed in the manner suggested, and moves on to another topic. There is no discussion of chain of command, divisions of labor, job titles and roles, or organizational hierarchy. When asked about team meetings and goals during an interview, Faith asserts that the team definitely does set goals during weekly team meetings. She notes states:

I think we all realize that there is a lot of work to do, but it's also really important to set little goals to achieve that big goal. And, for example, at the meeting last week, Jill talked about how we need to not take any more cases and how we should be taking our time off in the summer to patch things up and get organized for the fall and for the incoming students. (Faith Interview 1)

During the meeting to which Faith refers, Jill asked that the team to "think about the workload during the summer." She stated that one of her individual goals and her goals for the team was to

plan to get organized for next year and that she felt the entire team was “doing too much” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). In this way, Jill informally shared her individual goals and began to set goals for the entire team. At the same meeting, Jill also told the team that she would like to possibly hold a retreat for the team members as a way of encouraging “strategic planning” by the team, allowing the team to collaborate on and set goals. Jill states, that at a retreat the team could also “catch everyone up more than we can in an hour meeting” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). Other goals that were set and agreed upon during the course of my observations included how to handle phone call for the clinic, types of cases that should be accepted or rejected, and plans for funding and fundraising—all important considerations for the team’s activist activities.

Learning and Knowledge-Sharing

During my observations, I found that the conversational and comfortable nature of the communication during the team weekly meetings fosters an environment in which team members can learn and develop their understanding of the IPNW and its criteria and procedures. Undoubtedly, other team members agree that the team meetings are valuable. Moreover, one team member mentioned that the team meetings were the most beneficial at times when she had to adjust to the “learning curve,” when she was just beginning as a volunteer. This concept of team meetings aiding in the learning process is best highlighted when, in early fall 2011, two new staff attorneys joined the IPNW team. During one of the first meeting that included the new attorneys, Jill asks the team if they would like to continue having weekly meetings as they had done in the past. Both of the new attorneys mentioned that they think that weekly team meetings are important. With one team member stating that she “liked” the weekly team meetings, while another team member mentioned the meetings were a time for the team to “connect” and “see

how things are going.” However, the learning and development aspect of a number of meetings proves to be one of the greatest benefits of the weekly meetings. This is demonstrated at other team meetings that I observe. For example, during one meeting, April asks Jill about the specific criteria for accepting and rejecting cases. Jill tells April that she is “always welcomed” to bring in actual cases that she has questions and the cases can be discussed during team meetings (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). At another team meeting, Lisa poses a question to the team, asking “What is the Innocence Project’s position on if a family member [of an inmate] writes us and then we write the inmate?” (Team Meeting 6/2/2011). This is important, because due to the sensitive nature of clients’ cases, information about cases can only be divulged to individuals at the inmates’ consent. Lisa wants to know how to handle a situation in which the family has contacted the team and is requesting information about specific documents. Jill advises Lisa that the best way to approach the situation is to tell the family member that the team has contacted the inmate. However, Jill also instructs Lisa that, though it is okay to tell the family member that the inmate has been contacted, a Release of Information document would be needed to be signed and received from the inmate before the team would be allowed to discuss and share specific documents with the inmate’s family members. Team members also learn about scientific concerns related to their activist work. For example during, one meeting, Jill announces to the team that she has great news to share about a DNA case that the team has been working on. She states that great progress has been made and was found in the case evidence (specifically, in a rape kit). The team is encouraging, with Lacy exclaiming, “Wow! That’s huge!” The IPNW team specializes in DNA cases. The scientific nature of the evidence that the IPNW is concerned about often requires research by team members. A few of the team members have questions about how DNA testing will impact the trajectory of this case. Jill explains that DNA tests can identify if

there is male or female DNA present. She shares that one of her concerns about this particular case is that there is a mixture of male and female DNA present. In cases such as this, when male and female DNA is present, Jill tells that team that a YSTR DNA¹¹ test can be completed. Jill believes this specialized test may make a big impact on the case. Team members acknowledge that they understand the implications of being able to have a YSTR DNA test conducted and begin to discuss DNA transfer—when DNA material from one person is picked up on another individual—another type of scientific process that could possibly affect the case (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). Examples like the ones above show that team weekly meetings are valuable and beneficial to team members, largely in part, because the meetings provide a forum for the team members to learn how the IPNW operates (including proper protocol and procedures), in addition to providing a conducive environment where questions (about the IPNW or about scientific processes) are encouraged and welcomed by the director.

Finally, in addition to team meetings, members cite the casual nature of the communication in the office workspace as contributing the teams' success in coordination and collaboration. Though my participant observations did not yield much evidence of this, when asked in interviews, team members note that the conversational and intimate nature of the communication in the shared workspace supports some of the discussions that take place during the team meetings.

11 A DNA YSTR can differentiate between male and female DNA by identifying short tandem repeats (STR) on the male chromosome (Y). The DNA Diagnostics Center notes that the STR are “the coding genes, mostly found on the short arm of the Y Chromosome, [and] are vital to male sex determination, spermatogenesis and other male related functions” (<http://www.forensicdnacenter.com/dna-ystr.html>). The Center asserts that “Y-STRs have been used by forensic laboratories to examine sexual assault evidence. In a sexual assault case, evidence such as vaginal swabs will contain both female and male DNA” (<http://www.forensicdnacenter.com/dna-ystr.html>).

Faith explains,

I mean, during the meetings, sometimes they'll be talking about things I have no idea what they're talking about . . . Because there's so much going on and they know so many people and I've only been working here for four or five months. But, whenever they do mention stuff like in the office that we work at, I always listen. I'm being updated whether they direct the conversation to me or not. (Faith Interview 1).

Lacy states that chat in the office often functions as support among individual team members.

I do, in a way, provide a little bit of support in the case work, just in the sense that we casually discuss things in the office, because our desks are right there. So, when we're talking about. . . Kim will have an issue, or be trying to understand something, or trying to figure out a good argument for something in a brief, and then the three of us will talk and throw things around. (Lacy Interview 1).

Other members agree that collaboration and coordination often occurs through casual chat in the office workspace. Further, casual conversation does not necessarily have to be directed at specific individuals for team members to benefit from the issues being discussed.

The close proximity of the team members also seems to aid casual chat in the office space. Kim explains, “. . . we share an office. We definitely talk a lot . . .we can talk about cases and legal stuff. . .it's all casual” (Kim Interview 1).

In summation, the conversational and intimate nature of communication by the IPNW core administrative team serves benefits that team in their accomplishment of goals and completion of work activities. The informal communication is customary and accepted and characterized by familiar and intimate interactions. Further, the oral communication aids in goal-

setting and goal congruence among team members and also affords the team with an environment that is conducive to learning and development.

Success Stories

As highlighted in the preceding section, the team members at the IPNW embrace team meetings and other opportunities to communicate informally with one another. During my observations of team meetings, I noticed that the IPNW team often shares stories of success with one another. These stories of success may be personal (for instance, a successful move to a new home) or may be directly related to the work being completed at the IPNW. The following section first highlights *how* the team defines success and presents examples of the types of success stories that team members share as it relates to work at the IPNW. In addition, I explore how team members share these success stories—often during team meetings, but not limited to that medium.

As mentioned earlier in this chapter team members' definition of individual goals differ from person to person. However, team members seem to agree on one thing—how success is defined. Most team members define success broadly. In general, the team members look beyond the scope of success being calculated by quantifiable means (that is, in terms of the number of exonerations) and view success as related to the overarching motives of the Innocence Movement. Lacy, the IPNW policy lawyer defines success this way:

The IPNW team is successful if we are able to work effectively to investigate claims of actual innocence, resolve wrongful convictions, and propose/support policy changes to prevent wrongful convictions from occurring in the first place. Because the cases and

causes of wrongful convictions are dynamic, success in this kind of work cannot be measured only in terms of numbers. (Lacy Interview 3)

Lacy also points to fostering a “community and/or institutional understanding of the fact of wrongful convictions” as a way a defining success. Other team members agree with Lacy’s characterization of what success means for the IPNW team. Jack, one of the team’s staff attorneys also points to the difficulty in measuring success solely by the number of exonerations.

Jack states:

On one level, we obviously want to work towards exonerations. But that doesn’t always happen, often for reasons outside of our control, and sometimes because of errors we might make. Evidence may be destroyed, judges and juries may make decisions we disagree with. So, it’s probably not fair to base success solely on exonerations. And in other cases, we may believe our clients but the evidence might show the client’s DNA and confirm his/her guilt. So, I think success needs to be measured somewhat more subjectively a lot of time, in terms of choosing cases that look promising and use our resources well, and in terms of the quality of our representation of the client. I’m not sure that this is a very good answer in terms of concrete measures of success or failure, but given the uphill challenges we face in a lot of cases, it’s unfair to judge success solely based on wins and losses. (Jack Interview 3)

When asked about success, most other team members echoed Lacy and Jack’s definition of success, pointing to issues greater than actual exonerations.

Another way that team members characterize success is highlighted in how the team communicates among themselves and with their constituencies. Effective communication is viewed by most team members as an indicator of the success of the team. One of the student

assistants that work closely with the team mentioned communication as being one of the important aspects that defines the success of the IPNW team. She states that success does not relate directly to “how many cases we take on or solve as much as it is how well we communicate as a team and communicate with our clients” (Faith Interview 3). Further, Faith mentions that “communication and organization and advocacy is how I evaluate success for our team. As long as we stay true to our cause, reach out to our clients and the prison population and advocate our project to the community, while clearly communicating with one another—we’re golden!” (Faith Interview 3). Faith’s characterization of success is complimentary to the other definitions of success noted by other members of the IPNW team. Faith’s definition is similar to Jack and Lisa’s definitions of success that insist that success is not determined solely by quantifiable means. In addition, Faith mentions that encouraging and supporting advocacy and fostering an understanding of concepts involving issues relevant to innocence (what Lacy calls the “facts of wrongful convictions”) through effective communication within and outside of the IPNW group are important factors for success. Faith’s idea of success highlights and sums up two important components of how success is defined by the team: success is defined in subjective terms and by effective communication.

Faith’s consideration of what accounts for success in regard to the IPNW team points to another important aspect of measures of success for the team. Faith mentioned that effective communication within and outside of the IPNW team was important, stating that “clearly communicating [with] one another” is one way that she evaluates success. As communication within the IPNW team is a focal point of my research, this is a point of interest during my observations and data analysis. In addition, Faith’s acknowledgement that effective internal communication impacts the team’s success is also echoed by other team members. Specifically,

Jill, the IPNW director, cites “productive team meetings” and “effective communication about problems or issues” as ways that she measures success (Jill Interview 3). Even more telling, Jill states that as a director, she is successful in her work if she can, among a long list of other things, help “people feel valued as a member of a team” and encourage a “feeling of community” within the IPNW.

Clearly, team members of the IPNW have similar definitions of what success means for the team. Team members also agree on the types of success stories and how those success stories are shared with the team. Though team members often share personal success stories (not related to the work being completed at the IPNW), team members are more than willing to share their success as these accomplishments relate to their work at the IPNW. Team members often start these stories with phrases like, “Do you remember that case where . . .” or even “Have you heard . . .” (Team Meeting 4/14/2011). Team members often provide the background stories or history of cases and then bring the team up to date on the latest events that lead to success or an accomplishment. Moreover, these stories often include members relaying information about the emotional impact of an event. For example, during one of my early observations, Jill shared stories about her experience at the Innocence Network Conference which she had attended during the previous week. Jill detailed information about the theme and focus of the conference and the board of directors’ meeting, including a conference session on storytelling and how to relay the narratives of exonerees and those affected by innocence issues to stakeholders and constituents. Moreover, Jill also shared information about a concert, entitled *Let Freedom Sing*, given by the exonerees at the conference. She notes that the concert was “emotional” and “amazing.” Jill tells the team that when the exonerees all began singing and holding hands many of the attendees were obviously emotional and even crying (Team Meeting 4/14/2011). Jill

explains, “The song that I remember best at the concert was the last song—a spontaneous rendition of *Jailhouse Rock*.” Jill says that the group of exonerees were originally supposed to sing *Amazing Grace*, but “switched at the last minute.” She reminisces, “It was wonderful to see James, Alan, and Ted up on stage rocking out with the other exonerees. I laughed and probably cried” (Team Meeting 4/14/2011). One team member asks if the exonerees from the IPNW were in attendance at the conference. Jill tells the team that they were and says that she is “impressed” that all of the IPNW exonerees were able to attend the conference. Kim, who also attended the conference, agrees with Jill’s sentiments about the emotional aspect of seeing and meeting all of the exonerees that have been helped by Innocence Project organizations across the nation. With over 500 attendees and 100 exonerees from across the nation and several international countries, the conference was an undeniable success. Both Jill and Kim speak enthusiastically about the conference and the team members listen intently with proud looks on their faces.

Describing the emotion of events and cases is a reoccurring feature of how the team tells stories. The team does not rely only on data and documentation to report information relevant to cases in the narratives shared during meetings, but the details of the emotional impact are often woven throughout the stories, providing members with both a factual and subjective account of an event. Further, at times, emotions and feelings are highlighted in the stories shared. In some cases, the actual events that have taken place during the course of a hearing or trial may not seem positive or encouraging, but, despite an apparent setback, the team will deem the event a success. For example, Kim discusses a ruling that was not made in favor of the IPNW team. Kim tells the team that they were “ruled against and some information in the record was never argued against” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). As the team discusses the court experience, some members probe Kim for more details, with one team member asking why the information in the record was not

refuted. Kim states that it is her opinion that the opposing side could not find an expert to refute certain evidence. Kim mentions that even though they lost the motion, she is not upset primarily because of her determination and efforts in the case. In addition, she states that she had the opportunity to argue with a litigator that she respects. Ultimately, Kim tells the team that she feels “good about the outcome, even though we lost” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). Many members of the team nod in support. This sketch points to the team’s characterization of success as not simply quantifiable or solely based on exonerations or wins, underscored in Jack’s assertion that sometimes success can be “subjective” (Jack Interview 1).

In addition to talking about feelings and emotions of cases and events, members use slang and colloquial language to tell their stories. During one spring meeting, Kim shares an “update” on a case she has been working. An unfavorable parole decision has been reached. Kim tells the story of how a parole decision was reached using colloquial language when discussing the cases. She explains that her client was denied parole. She mentions that this setback on the case is “frustrating” and that the parole board’s decision to deny parole was a “bummer” (Team Meeting 4/14/2011). At other times, team members use words like “juicy,” “interesting,” “weird,” and “perfect” to describe their cases to one another. For example, at a meeting in late April, Jill and the team discuss an exciting opportunity—a nationally recognized investigative news program has contacted the IPNW about highlighting the work of the organization. The team excitedly discusses possible case that can be featured on the show. Kim suggests that a specific post-DNA case would make for a good show. Kim says that the “juicy” case would be a great representation of the work of the team. However, Faith notes that the DNA test results have not come back yet for that particular case. Jill suggests that another case that the team has been working would be “perfect.” She suggests that she can pitch this case to the show because she thinks he may find

the case “interesting” (Team Meeting 4/21/2011). The team seems to acknowledge and embrace this casual exchange of stories about cases. During one meeting, the team even laughs about the casual nature of their meetings, with one member joking that in their meetings “talking shit is a legal term” (Team Meeting 5/12/2011).

Overall, the success stories shared by members of the IPNW team are usually interwoven with work-related activities, use casual and colloquial language, and exchanged verbally during the weekly team meetings, though at times, members will also provide material artifacts that point to successes and accomplishments. For example, at one meeting, Jill shares a card that she received from one of the clients. She brings the card to the conference room and reads the handwritten message that praises the IPNW team’s work and support. The card is shared as evidence of success. As Jill notes, success in regard to clients is realized when the clients feel that “he or she has an advocate” (Jill Interview 3). It is clear from the message in the card that the client indeed views the IPNW as an advocate working on their behalf. At another meeting, one of the team members offers to bring in a newspaper clipping that highlights the story of one of the IPNW’s first exonerees. Jill notes that she has only seen the story online and would like to see the actual clipping from the newspaper (Team Meeting 4/14/2011)—a success story in the print media. In addition, success stories also appear in the final version of the IPNW Information sheet that was published on the UW School of Law website (mentioned earlier in this chapter and appearing in Figure 5). These printed and publicized success stories highlighted the 4 IPNW exonerees and helped to project an image of success to external stakeholders as well as reinforcing stories of success within the group. However, sharing stories of success by highlighting material artifacts like cards and newspaper clippings is not done often at the IPNW.

The primary mode of sharing success stories are through verbal interactions at the team weekly meetings.

In general, the IPNW team members define success in complementary ways and both subjectively and objectively. Success stories are often shared among team members during weekly meetings, and less frequently, shared via email messages or listserv announcements. In essence, the success stories of the IPNW team take on the same familiar and intimate tone of other oral interactions, with team members expressing emotions in an open manner. The success stories of individual members help to highlight how the work of the individual supports the locals SMGs of the team.

Genres Enacted in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

During my observations, the team did not rely heavily on information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs and other computer technology were rarely used during team meetings that I observed. However, because scholars of contemporary activism point to the use of ICTs as changing and transforming the nature of activism (as noted in my literature review in Chapter 2), I interviewed the IPNW team about their use of ICTs. Based on my interviews, I found that the team primarily relies on email messages and listserv announcements for communication, coordination, and collaboration. However, team members also read and post to listservs, access specific websites, and participate in social media to complete their work. The following section details my findings (largely based on my interviews with the team) in regard to how and when they use ICTs.

Email Messages and Listserv Announcements

Even though the IPNW team members agree that the informal and casual nature of their working relationship encourages face-to-face communication more than other types of communication, members of the team do use email messages to communicate with one another.

Lisa explains:

Well, my instinct when the person is right there, is just to go directly to them. And especially since it is a very informal environment, it makes you feel even more comfortable doing that. And then, sometimes, I have to stop and say, “Ok, do I really need to walk over to Jill’s office and ask this question right now?” . . . So, sometimes, I step back and say, “Oh, you know, I will send an email. . .” (Lisa Interview 1)

Other team members seem to agree with Lisa’s characterization of the informal nature of the team’s communication and how email messages function as a supplement, rather than a primary mode of communication. Lisa even notes that she feels that the verbal communication proves to be a more successful way of communicating with team members. She compares the manner in which the IPNW team communicates with the way that she communicated at her previous workplace:

In my former work situation, a lot more communication was via email. So, in this sense, the informality probably leads to greater collaboration and getting more input from people with different perspectives and having somebody be able to say, “Oh, yeah. Have you thought about this? Or what about that?” (Lisa Interview 1)

Even though not greatly acknowledged by the team members, email messages do appear to serve an important role in coordinating work activities, for examples scheduling meeting times and

locations. Jill notes that she often uses email messages for the purpose of “setting up or rearranging meetings...coordination purposes and sometimes to provide information about what they’re doing with their cases” (Jill Interview 1). Email messages are also used as a way to remind team members of specific activities or events. Kim mentions using email messages when she doesn’t “want to print stuff up” (Kim Interview 1). When asked how often she uses email messages to coordinate or communicate, she explains:

I rarely...What I will do...I mostly do it verbally. I send emails when it’s things that I don’t want to forget or if I’ve checked a student’s document, I’ll send it back via email. I try not to print stuff up. I send emails when I don’t want to print up documents. But mostly, because Lisa comes in once a week, normally, I’ll send her stuff during the week and I’ll say, “This is for Thursday,” because I’ll forget. (Kim Interview 1)

Though email messages are used for communication, collaboration, and coordination purposes by the IPNW team, due to the casual nature of the communication that is prevalent in the culture of the organization, email messages becomes a secondary mode of communication that supports or coordinates face-to-face communication. As one team members concludes: “It’s easier to just speak up than to send an email or something else” (Jack Interview 1).

Listsers announcements tend to function quite differently from email messages in that the listserv announcements primarily allows team members to coordinate and communicate with entities outside of the local IPNW. The IPNW members subscribe to a number of different listsers. Jill identifies at least 6 unique listsers to which various members are subscribed, including the Directors of Innocence Projects listserv, the Innocence Network Board of Directors listserv, the Committee on Amicus and Policies listserv, and the Staff of the Innocence Network listserv. Jill notes that she has also created two listsers specific to the IPNW, the Alumni

listserv, which Jill states that she created to “communicate IPNW news with [my] former students, and the IPNW Friends listservs, which includes “lawyers and students who worked with the IPNW when it was a volunteer organization, as well as recent supporters” (Jill Interview 2). The listservs are primarily used by team members to reach out to individuals at other Innocence Projects and function as a resource for all subscribed individuals. Though there are a number of different listservs with a variety of members, Jack notes that “they all serve the same purpose. Just ask for advice, sometimes more urgent than others. . . references, sharing sample briefs and motions for certain areas of the law that other lawyers have done in the past, and the person asking it isn’t familiar with” (Jack Interview 1). The Innocence Network is connected by these listservs and information regarding nationwide cases is discussed in these forums. Jack asserts that “a lot of times it’s just easier to just go through the listserv and get quick responses that way,” rather than doing legal or investigative work in-house (Jack Interview 1). In this way, listserv announcements are even privileged over email messages when reaching out to other members of the Innocence Network. Jack gives an example describing why the listserv announcements are an important mode of communication in the Network:

Just hypothetically, if we’re working on a case and a motion for post-conviction testing, and say your client confessed or made incriminating statements, but you’re trying to get post-conviction DNA testing, one of the things you might have to respond to in the motion is the fact that they made those incriminating statements. And so then you might send something out to the listserv that says, “Do you know how many cases, or can you send me a list of cases of instances where people are exonerated by DNA, but they confessed, or made incriminating statements?” (Jack Interview 1).

In general, listservs are used for the purpose of information sharing. Jack describes the listserv announcements as “ad hoc” (Jack Interview 1). He explains, “you put out a specific request, and you get answers to that. It’s less like a database of information than ad hoc... You make a request on specific areas, and you’ll get answers based on that” (Jack Interview 1). This type of exchange of information also helps the team members to share and develop ideas. Lacy says she uses the listservs of which she is a part for “brainstorming” (Lacy Interview 1). She notes:

“So, when someone says, I’ve got a toolmark case, meaning that at some point somebody testified that this bullet absolutely came from this gun. I’ve got a toolmark case and this is the facts [sic] and these are the issues, has anybody ever dealt with anything like this? Do you know how would we do it? It’s just brainstorming. (Lacy Interview 1).

Lacy also states that communicating via the listservs helps local projects stay informed about what is happening in other states, which in turn, helps to guide local projects goals and agendas. She says, “Knowing what happened in other states and what states have a culture similar to yours is very helpful in trying to define your agenda and how you’re going to approach things” (Lacy Interview 1). Lacy asserts that the listservs are the primary way that Innocence Projects stay in touch with other projects in the Innocence Network.

Yeah, and that’s how people keep in touch on a regular basis. There’s also one of the people at the New York project, from the policy listserv, she compiles all the media from every state on Innocence issues. And she sends it out in a digest email every week... So, you can see, just from a glance, what issues are being considered across the country, what issues are coming up. And, it gives you a better sense of, it’s a good way of keeping tabs on what’s happening across the country. (Lacy Interview 1)

This information sharing function of the listserv announcements reflects that most members characterize the advantage of the Innocence Network is the communication (sharing of ideas, information, and knowledge) among Innocence Projects that are distributed geographically. Jill notes that legal documents are also shared on the listservs, noting that at times participants may ask for help “reviewing briefs” (Jill Interview 1). She also comments that communicating via the listservs has been her preference when communicating outside of the local organization. When asked if she ever called via phone to speak with other projects, Jill responds, “Talk to somebody? That might be a good idea, but I don’t do it very much” (Jill Interview 1).

Not only do IPNW team members use listserv announcements as a resource for information. Some members also actively contribute to the discussion. Though I was not allowed to view the listserv conversations due to confidentiality issues, Kim shared with me one way that she contributed to the listserv by answering a question posed in the forum. She explains:

The question was: how many exonerations have occurred in the following situation. It says—“On initial inspection of the victim of a sexual assault/murder, the determination was made that there was no semen present either in or on the victim or the clothing. Later, the inspection by a modern, professional laboratory, determination was made that the first inspection was incorrect and there was actually semen present in or on the victim or clothes that could be tested. Does this make sense? Has anybody had this situation?” So that was the inquiry. I think what her concern was that the prosecutors will say they already searched it. They didn’t find anything. . . So, I wrote back, “We had an exoneration where they had initially done DNA testing in 1993 and only the boyfriend’s DNA was found. Later in 2009, we did a second round of DNA testing and found

matching redundant profiles under the victim's fingernail and pubic comb that belonged to the perpetrator that was not her boyfriend." We always do that. (Kim Interview 1).

In this way, the listservs become an active channel of communication between the IPNW and other projects in the Innocence Network, but does not seem to significantly impact communication within the local organization.

Websites

The IPNW rarely uses websites and blogs for communication, coordination, or collaboration purposes among local team members. However, the team members do occasionally use websites and blogs for informational purposes regarding other innocence-related issues and affiliated projects to help support local work-related projects and cases. Websites and blogs use was not prevalent during my observations and was not address often during my interviews with team members. However, I describe my observations here because they are relevant to the types of genres that are used to aid or hinder accomplishments of SMGs and they are germane to the description of the communicative practices of the team.

My first experience with an Innocence Project occurred when I came across a website, innocenceproject.org. I became fascinated with the website—the sleek design, the stories of the exonerees, the abundance of Web 2.0 features. Before I began my observation at the IPNW, I hypothesized that the IPNW would have a website dedicated specifically to the activist work in Washington State. I was disappointed to find out that the IPNW did not have a dedicated website. Instead, they were allowed web space through the University of Washington's Law Clinics servers. However, I was later informed that, due to University regulations, because the IPNW is affiliated with the law school, they are relegated to having their webpage linked to the

law school's website. In this way, the IPNW does not have a fully dedicated and developed website.

Despite not having a dedicated webpage, at a meeting in late November of 2011, Jill and the team focus on updating team members' profiles on the School of Law website. Jill mentions that she wants to "update blurbs and add phone numbers" for the team members. Using the projector and the white screen in the meeting room, Jill displays the current webpage. In keeping with the usual casual and chatty tone of team meetings, this initiates a discussion among team members about whether or not they like their profile pictures. One lawyer notes, "My eyes are squinty," while another team member asks if her picture can be "photoshopped" (Team Meeting 11/29/2011). As the discussion turns to considerations of interesting information that could potentially be included on the website, Jill suggests linking to an article about eyewitness identification and also having the students write a "blurb" about what they are doing this week so that she can include the updated information on the webpage. Other than the above discussion about the IPNW's webpage, I did locate information about the IPNW on the School of Law's website (<http://www.law.washington.edu/Clinics/IPNW/>). This site provided detailed information about the IPNW, including links to information about awards won by the team and links news stories about the IPNW in the media—a section entitled "IPNW Clinic in the News" (<http://www.law.washington.edu/Clinics/IPNW/>). This site also includes a video, "In Their Own Words," featuring Jill as she discusses the function of the IPNW as a law clinic within the School of Law. In general, the IPNW webpage was not an area of focus for team members during the majority of my time observing the IPNW until this meeting. However, the team members did mention using the innocenceproject.org website at times for informational purposes and a link to the innocenceproject.org site is provided on the IPNW webpage through the School of Law.

The website, innocenceproject.org, is a prominent website developed and published the Innocence Project located in New York State. The New York State Project was the first established Innocence Project and is affiliated with the Benjamin N. Cardozo School of Law at Yeshiva University. Though the New York Innocence Project is arguably the most conspicuous of the projects and the project with the most financial resources, the project is not considered as a headquarters or regulatory body. The New York projects' website, however, has become a resource for information for other affiliated projects and innocence-related organizations. Jill notes that she uses the innocenceproject.org site about once a week to “update my presentations to include the most recent number of DNA exonerations and as a resource on topics, such as cause of wrongful convictions or policy remedies” (Jill Interview 2). Jack, also states that he uses the innocenceproject.org site to “see what is happening in other Innocence Projects around the country and to look up data on Innocence Project exonerations” (Jack Interview 2). Kim cites using the site for “statistics and stories” (Kim Interview 2). Lacy, states that she “always begins at the innocenceproject.org website” when she is “researching a new issue area or looking for details of a specific DNA exoneration case” (Lacy Interview 2). In general, the website provides the team members with needed background, updated statistics, and relevant innocence-related issues as they apply to Network progress and the team repurposes the information from the website to use in local contexts.

Social Media

During my seven-month observation of the IPNW team, I was surprised at how little the team used social media. Much of my research and reading of current scholarship about activism and social media, touted the benefits of social media in activism and provided example after

example about how activist groups were harnessing the power of social media to support goals (see Chapter 2 of this dissertation for review of relevant literature). This did not, however, seem to be a point of focus for the IPNW team. This section describes my observations of how the IPNW used social media sites, including Facebook and YouTube.

When I began my observations of the IPNW, one of the first tasks I performed was to access the team's Facebook page. When I first became a "fan" of the IPNW's Facebook page, the page only had approximately 5 "likes." There had been no recent postings to the Facebook page, and except for the profile picture, there were few photographs present on the page. Finally, during a meeting in November, Jill and the team turned their attention to the IPNW Facebook page and began discussing ways to update the information on the page. Not long after the meeting, the IPNW's Facebook was updated and postings became more consistent. The updated Facebook page includes the IPNW mission statement, as well as a detailed description of the organization and information about how students are involved in the clinic. New pictures were uploaded to the page, including pictures of exonerees, team members, and, senate hearings, awards ceremonies, and the Innocence Network conference. In addition, the IPNW began sharing links to news stories and other media outlets about the progress being made in Washington State and across the country. These links included videos and podcasts. In addition to linking to information about new stories, invitations to talks by exonerees and team members were posted. The Facebook page highlighted the success of the IPNW as a cohesive organization. The Facebook page also includes links to news stories about the IPNW exonerees. When asked specifically about her use of social media, Jill mentions using Facebook to "promote the IPNW" and another team member notes that she uses, "Facebook to post articles about clients and cases, an about issues surrounding the innocence movement in general" (Lacy

Interview 2). Lacy also mentions the networking aspect of Facebook. “I have legislators, lawmakers, and advocates as “friends” on Facebook, so to the extent they see my posts, IPNW purposes are furthered” (Lacy Interview 2). She also mentions that information sharing “on the level of the Innocence Network” is accomplished through the use of Facebook. To date, the IPNW Facebook page has 85 “likes” and recently moved to the Facebook Timeline¹² profile format.

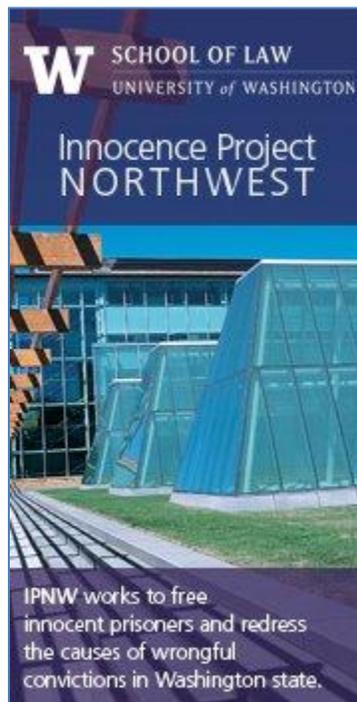


Figure 6. Profile Image from Facebook Page

In addition to beginning to use Facebook, the IPNW is just beginning to have a presence in other social media formats. For instance, there are a handful of YouTube videos related to the IPNW. However, most of the videos available about the IPNW are not posted by members of the

¹² The Facebook Timeline Format allows users to construct their individual pages to in the form of a chronological timeline. This format is in contrast to the original Facebook Wall Format the simply provided a listing of posts and activities from individual users and their “friends.” The timeline format provides a summary of an individual’s life events by integrating posts, pictures, and video.

IPNW. In addition, when asked about the types of social networking sites used in relation to work, no team member mentioned YouTube, even though team members did mention using Facebook. The videos that are posted on YouTube include videos from innocence forums, lectures, and media clips of exonerees. Finally, the IPNW does not have a Twitter account, though Jill mentioned at the last meeting that I observed that she is “looking into” acquiring one. Currently, however, tweets about the IPNW are sometimes included on the UW’s School of Law’s twitter account. For example, on October 31, 2011, the UW School of Law tweeted, ““UW Law's Innocence Project Northwest has its own Facebook page now. Be sure to check it out! <http://fb.me/1pFQrJFsQ>” (<http://twitter.com/#!/UWSchoolofLaw>). In general, however, the social media outlet in which the IPNW is most active is Facebook, though the use of social media by the IPNW team as it related to local or Network activities was extremely limited.

The preceding section provided ethnographic sketches and participant interview quotes that highlighted the core themes and subthemes of my research. The next section presents my findings organized by research question.

Connections to my Research Questions

The following section details my findings for each of my research questions, explaining how my themes and the ethnographic sketches and interview quotes above connect to my questions. The findings for each question are presented and discussed individually.

Research Question 1

Research question 1 asks: In a contemporary activist-oriented organization, where the organizational structure is loosely networked and distributed in nature, how do local

instantiations of the larger network communicate to reconcile disparate individual goals and meet local socially-motivated goals? In turn, how do local socially-motivated goals align with larger organizational motives? Based on my observations of the IPNW, I found that communication is predominately directed toward facilitating collaboration (interactions that purposively seek to establish consensus and agreement among individuals—a “meeting of the minds”) and coordination (interactions that seek to create cooperation and develop unified actions among individuals—actions that are in concert with one another). In general, the findings from my study suggest that the local instantiation (the IPNW) communicates primarily through conversational, intimate communication that was specifically observed in weekly team meetings and casual office chat. To a lesser degree, the team also communicates via email messages. Communication with affiliated Innocence Projects and the larger Innocence Network is predominately is accomplished through listserv announcements. Communication is supported by print documents that may also serve coordination and regulatory functions.

The most prominent mode of communication is verbal. Most of the verbal communication was observed in weekly team meetings. These team meetings typically included all members of the IPNW’s core administrative team and are characterized by conversational, intimate communication. During these team meetings, team members discuss upcoming events, set priorities and goals, discuss work in progress, and plan for subsequent meetings and activities. Though team members understanding of their individual goals and the individual goals of other team members vary, these team meetings provide team members with time to share stories of success, build a sense of camaraderie, familiarity, and openness, and provides an opportunity for goal-setting and consensus, as well as learning and development.. The explicitly articulated purpose of the team meetings primarily focuses on the local organization’s goals

(goal setting and goal consensus) and supports the activist work of the team. The team also exchanges information through casual office chat (conversations) that occurs within the shared workspace. These verbal interactions supported both collaboration and coordination of team members.

The IPNW team also communicates via email messages. Email messages are used a secondary mode of communication, as team members find that face-to-face communication is most effective. Tasks and team meeting agendas are examples of the types of email messages that are usually distributed to team members. Email messages sent by team members often help to coordinate and schedule face-to-face meetings for the team.

The team also uses print documents for coordination purposes. Print documents can be created and used collaboratively. The print documents were often used and created by support staff (the paralegal) to help coordinate the work of the support staff (the paralegal, the student assistants, and the volunteers). Some print documents also form regulatory functions at the local level (for example, the checklists, task lists, and the questionnaires). Other documents are form informational purposes only (IPNW Information Sheet). Finally, some documents have the potential to be used for regulatory purposes (the IPNW Procedures Manual), but are largely neglected by the core IPNW administrative team.

The aforementioned modes of communication appear to have a great impact on setting goals and creating a sense of goal consensus among individual members of the IPNW team. However, there is rarely reference to the larger organization's motives or how the motives may or may not align with local goals. If the larger organization, the Innocence Network, is mentioned, it is typically a reference to information found on the organization's website

(innocenceproject.org) or information on one of the listservs (each listserv focusing on a specific community of practice within the organization). In addition, most of the team members do not claim to have a complete understanding of the Innocence Network or how it operates or its purpose. The team members' understanding of the Innocence Network is further complicated by the Networks changing function—moving from a repository of information to a having a more regulatory focus.

Finally, the vast differences in how team members understand and conceptualize disparate individual goals do not seem to have an impact on the team's agreement about the IPNW's socially-motivated goals. As an organization, the IPNW has a clear understanding of its SMGs. However, the IPNW's understanding of the goals and motives of the Innocence Network is lacking and inconsistent among team members. This may be due to the limited consideration of the Network during team interactions. Interestingly, however, though the goal consensus among IPNW and the Innocence Network does not seem to be recognized, the SMGs of the IPNW and the goals and motives of the Innocence Network align well.

Research Question 2

Research question 2 asks: What are the communicative practices of a local instance of a networked organization and how do these localized practices aid or hinder the accomplishment of established socially-motivated goals? To answer this question, I observed the IPNW's core administrative team as they worked and communicated during weekly team meetings. I also collected artifacts from team meetings and individual team members and interviewed each team member. I found that the primary way that the team communicates in order to complete their work and accomplish established goals is through genres enacted in speech and manifests in the

form of conversational, intimate communication, usually occurring in the form of team meetings and office chat. Team meetings afford each the team the opportunity to meet as a group and complete work-related activities. Team members do not usually meet as a group outside of these team meetings. However, team members that share an office sometimes do chat about work-related issues, ask for advice and opinions, and make decisions in their workspace. Still, most issues that need be considered by the director or the group as a whole are presented during team meetings. In each of these settings, the weekly team meetings and in the shared office space, conversational, intimate communication supports establishment of and consensus about local SMGs. In fact, team members agree that team meetings and office chat aided understanding of the IPNW's SMGs and supported knowledge sharing and learning among team members.

Research Question 3

Research question 3 asks: How are mediating artifacts (specifically, genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies) used in local communicative practices in ways that support accomplishment of activist-related goals? This question considers three categories of genres as mediating artifacts (genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies). The following sections will address each category and comment on how the genre affected local communicative practices individually.

Genres Enacted in Print

The genres enacted in print that were used by the IPNW include checklists and task lists, informational fact sheets, questionnaires, paper client files, the IPNW Procedure Manual, and

meeting agendas. Print documents seemed to fall into one of two categories: print documents used primarily by support staff and print documents used by the entire team.

Many of the most prevalently used genres enacted in print were predominately used by support staff (the IPNW paralegal, student assistants, volunteers, and students in the law clinic). These documents were the checklists and task lists. The director and lawyers of the IPNW did not often refer to, and at times were not aware of, checklists and task lists created by Lisa, the IPNW paralegal. Despite this, the genres enacted in print served important coordination and communication purposes, and, at times, a regulatory function. These documents helped to direct the staff's actions and ensured that the staff followed locally established criteria for the acceptance or denial of potential clients.

In addition to the checklists and task lists, the paper files of the clients were organized by the support staff as well. Interestingly, the paper files organization was dictated by yet another print genre, the IPNW File Organization document, created by one of the lawyers and the paralegal. The client paper files and the IPNW File Organization document were used by all members of the IPNW team. These two documents were, at times, the subject of discussion at the weekly team meetings, encouraging collaboration among team members. Portions of the client's paper files were discussed by team members (lawyers and support staff). Discussions about the client paper files occurred when a decision had to be made about certain documents or courses of action in a client's case. Discussions about the IPNW File Organization and the client paper files documents were collaborative in nature and centered on setting goals for the team in regard to how files should be organized in the future. In this way, the IPNW File Organization document helped to coordinate the actions of all team members. In addition, the IPNW File Organization document was to also be used to help organization electronically scanned paper

files. Both of these files were important because they helped to encourage collaboration, as well as coordinated future actions.

Other documents used by the entire team served informational purposes—for example, the IPNW Information sheet. This document affected communicative practices because it was created in collaboration and required an explicit articulation of the IPNW goals, objectives, and successes. In this way, the final document helped to articulate and better define the goals and objectives of the IPNW team, in addition to making the team members aware of how individual goals related to local SMGs and advanced successful realizations of the local SMGs. Finally, the entire IPNW used the IPNW questionnaires. The questionnaires were first used by Lisa to gather information and aid in the client screening process (assuring that potential clients met the locally established criteria) and then used by the lawyers to gather information in order to prepare cases for potential clients. This document affected communicative practices by helping to further articulate and define local goals (and established criteria).

In general, local communicative practices were affected by print documents in that these genres helped to coordinate team member actions, aided in fostering collaboration among team members, and assisted in explicitly articulating local goals while reinforcing locally established regulations and criteria.

Genres Enacted in Speech

Local communicative practices were most affected by genres enacted in speech. The IPNW team used genres enacted in speech in order to communicate (collaborate and coordinate) significantly more than they used any other mode of communication. The nature of the speech

genres was overwhelmingly casual and informal in nature. Genres enacted in speech were important to goal-setting, as well as goal consensus on the local level. Moreover, the intimate and casual nature of the speech genres that I observed supported workplace activities and encouraged collaboration and coordination among team members, as well as learning and development. In addition, the genres enacted in speech also fostered an environment conducive to learning and sharing ideas and knowledge among team members. The open, conversational style of the genres enacted in speech helped team members understand the SMGs of the IPNW, and implicitly appreciate the individual goals of other members. When goals of the IPNW were not clear, team meetings served a goal-setting and goal consensus function. In addition, the inclusion of success stories and anecdotes helped to keep the team focused on SMGs by underscoring how individual achievements supported local goals.

Genres Enacted in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Genres enacted in information and communication technologies (ICTs) seemed to have the least amount of impact on local communicative practices. Team members did not often use ICTs when communicating, collaborating, or coordinating on the local level. At the times when team members did use technology to support local communicative practices, email messages seemed to be the preferred mode of communication. Moreover, email messages were predominately used to communicate information to the entire team or to coordinate face-to-face communication (the weekly team meetings). In the late stages of my observations, weekly meeting agendas were emailed to the team by the director. In addition to email messages, listserv announcements were used to help direct local actions and aid team members in gathering

information about cases or the activities of affiliated projects to assist with local cases. However, listserv announcements were not used a communication tool among local team members.

Websites and social media were used to a lesser degree. The innocenceproject.org website was typically accessed by team members only for informational purposes. The social networking sites Facebook began to be used by team members during the later stages of my observations. However, Facebook was predominately used to communicate to other stakeholders and outside constituents about the activities of the IPNW, and not used to coordinate communication among IPNW team members. Other social networking sites like YouTube and Twitter did not have an impact on the local communicative practices of the IPNW. The IPNW team did not appear to have any involvement in the posting of YouTube videos and did not have a dedicated Twitter account.

Research Question 4

Research question 4 asks: How do the larger organization's motives manifest in genres used at the local level? Because of the lack of discussion about and references to the larger organization, this question was the most difficult to address. However, the larger organization's (the Innocence Network) motives of seeking justice for the wrongfully convicted were indeed apparent at the local level. Listserv announcements were the primary manner in which the Innocence Networks motives were apparent at the local level. The listservs, as a mode of communication for genres enacted in ICTs, are used by affiliated projects across the network and provide information about the goals and activities of the networked projects. These listservs, predominately used by the staff lawyers and the director serve as informational resources for the IPNW. The listserv announcements keep individual team members aware of how their individual

tasks and work at the local level connects to the Innocence Network's organizational tasks and goals.

Though the Innocence Networks motives were not explicitly communicated to local team members, the local goals aligned well with the Network motives. The local SMGs, listed on local print documents, mirrored the Networks goals. In this way, the Network goals were inherent in the print documents, though no local print documents specifically referenced the Network. In addition to no print documents that specifically reference the Network, there was an absence of significant discussion about the Network during team meetings and verbal interactions, with many team members asserting that they were unsure of the purpose and function of the Network.

Implications of my Findings for my Global Theme: Identification

My findings suggest that the genres used by the IPNW all aid the process of identification among members of the team. Identification refers to process of persuasion that promotes a shared sense of values, beliefs, and motivations among individuals, organizations, or entities. Through the identification process, consubstantiality (or the realization of a shared sense of values, beliefs, and motivations) can be achieved.

Each generic category, in its own way, increased coordination and collaboration of team members. Through the use of the genres, as mediating artifacts, team members were able to set and agree upon goals and future actions for the local organization. In this way, team members were able to identify with one another on a level that allowed each individual to work together to accomplish agreed upon local SMGs, despite significant differences in individual goals. Genres enacted in print were used primarily by the support staff created coordination and regulation of actions among team members, encouraging a standardize way to complete work and requiring

team members to be on one accord. Genres enacted in print used by the entire team were characterized by extensive collaboration among team members. These genres often required discussions among team members that helped to direct future actions and aided in developing the team's understanding of the identity of the local organization and local goals. Genres enacted in speech, constituted of primarily conversational, intimate speech encouraged identification among team members by becoming a customary and accepted manner of communication marked by a sense of familiarity and intimacy facilitated discussion about and agreement upon goals, and provided an environment conducive to learning and knowledge-sharing. In addition, team members sharing of success stories afforded team members an opportunity to hear and appreciate the individual work of others and better understand how that work supported local SMGs. The genres enacted in ICTs primarily help to establish a not always acknowledged connection to the Network and implicitly fostered an acceptance of the Network motives by team members at the local level. Through contribution to and participation in the listserv groups, team members were able to support local-level actions with information and knowledge acquired from other Network affiliates. Similarly, by access the innocenceproject.org website, local team members were able to use information provided at the network-level to support localized work activities. The use of email messages helped to coordinate face-to-face interactions among team members and allowed members to focus on shared objects and goals during team weekly meetings. Finally, social networking sites, like Facebook, though it did not seem to coordinate team member actions or goals within the group, created a forum for the IPNW organization to present a unified and cohesive organizational identity to outside stakeholders and constituents. Facebook also brought together success stories of the IPNW organization as a whole and highlighted the narratives of the wrongfully imprisoned individuals that the team helped to exonerate. Each genre was used in

such a way that process of identification and the achievement of organizational cohesion were promoted in spite of individual differences.

Summary

In summary, in this chapter, I described my observations of the IPNW. I included information collected through interviews and artifact analysis and presented details related to my themes of goals and mediating artifacts (genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies). My ethnographic sketches, along with quotes from participant interviews, provide a detailed representation of how team members' perceptions and understanding of goals on the individual, local, and network level, as well as how genres impact IPNW work and communicative practices.

In regard to my research questions, I found that, in general, the IPNW relies on genres enacted in speech (in the form of casual and informal exchanges during team meetings and office chat and the sharing of success stories) to accomplish and align goals and complete work. This form of communication aids in the establishment and accomplishment of local socially-motivated goals (SMGs), by encouraging collaboration, helping to serve goal-setting and goal consensus functions, and providing a conducive environment for learning and the exchange of knowledge and ideas.

Genres enacted in print are used to a lesser degree. However, print documents are important to the IPNW's communicative practice in that they help to coordinate team member actions (including the scheduling and planning of face-to-face meetings), aid in fostering collaboration among team members, and assist in explicitly articulating local goals while reinforcing locally established regulations and criteria

Finally, genres enacted in ICTs are used the least and appear to only have a small impact on local communicative practices. However, genres enacted in ICTs, specifically listserv announcements, are pivotal in the Innocence Network's goals and motives manifesting in genres used on the local level.

In summation, all genres increased and supported identification and organizational cohesion among team members. Each genre mediated communication in a unique way; however, the common theme that connects the three very different categories of genres is that of identification.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

In the previous chapter, I presented my findings based on my ethnographic observations, organized by theme and by research question and concluded by addressing the implications of my observations in relation to my global theme of identification. In this chapter, I analyze my findings using Activity Theory (AT) and Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM) frameworks making connections to the broadly defined fields of technical communication and rhetoric. This chapter is to show that the IPNW, as a complex, networked organization, constitutive of differing goals, motivations, contradictions and tensions, through mediating artifacts and communicative practices, is nevertheless able to establish a common identity that enables the organization's advancement of the accomplishment of local, shared SMGs. These divisive tensions manifest in how goals are articulated and understood, are embedded in print documents, and are discussed at team meetings and in shared workspaces (as described in Chapter 4). Consubstantiality—the realization of shared ideals, beliefs, and goals—is accomplished alongside the organizational divisions and the organization is transformed through the process of identification. Oneness and commonality, discussed under the overarching rhetorical concept of identification, are often highlighted and emphasized by scholars examining activism and social action. In fact, studies of activism and social action often note that activist organizations and social movements, which are traditionally structured as networked and dynamic organizations, employ a variety of rhetorical and persuasive means to increase identification and a sense of community among members. In the following sections, through an examination of my core themes and subthemes, I reveal the contradictions and related tensions of the core administrative team at the IPNW. Moreover, I present the rhetorical means through which these tensions and contradictions are reconciled in a manner that allows members of the activist organization to communicate to meet local SMGs

and align with larger organization motives. In addition, I reveal how these tensions are mitigated through rhetorical moves embedded in three categories of genres, focusing on how each type of genre promotes the process of identification among team members and within the Innocence Network, thereby aiding in the accomplishment of local SMGs. Finally, I show how the motives of the larger organization (the Innocence Network) manifest in local genres. To that end, the first part of this chapter presents my analysis and discussion organized by themes and subthemes:

- Goals
 - Goal Congruence
 - Goal Incongruence
- Genres Enacted in Print
 - Documents used by support staff
 - Documents used by entire team
- Genres Enacted in Speech
 - Conversational, intimate communication
 - Success stories
- Genres Enacted in Information and Communication Technologies
 - Email Messages and Listserv Announcements
 - Websites
 - Social Media

Using Activity Theory, I present an analysis and discussion of each theme. This analysis is followed by a section dedicated to a Genre Ecology Modeling analysis of the genres of the IPNW. Next, I present my concluding analysis of my findings, which directly answers the research questions addressed in my study.

Goals

My study considers how goals are accomplished and how they relate to and align with motives. Because goals and motives have distinct meanings in Activity Theory, I have included

background on the differences between objects, goals, and motives to ground my analytical discussion that follows.

Objects, Motives, and Goals

In Activity Theory, motives, objects, and goals can be complicated and the line between these concepts can be blurry. Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006) state that “objects of activities are prospective outcomes that motivate and direct activities, around which activities are coordinated, and in which activities are crystallized in a final form when the activities are complete. Objects separate one activity from another” (p. 66). An object is defined as “the raw material or problem space at which the activity is directed and which is molded and transformed into outcomes. . . . The concept of object is primarily related to production through its relation to human needs” (p. 143). For Engeström, the object, introduced through the “subject-object” distinction—that is, as *objekt*—is the focus of collective activities. Kaptelinin and Nardi assert that

when a need becomes coupled with an object, an activity emerges. From that moment on, the object becomes a motive and the need not only stimulates but also directs the subject. An unobjectified need is a raw state of a need searching for an object, while an objectified need is a need with a defined object, where the subject knows what it is looking for. (p. 61)

In other words, the activity has purpose now. In this sense, I use the term object to mean purpose, or the premeditated reasoning for undertaking an activity—the objective. My analysis addresses objectives in relation to individual object(ives) of the IPNW team members—their individual goals to which they direct their specific activities. As noted in the previous chapter, these individual objectives are disparate and differ greatly among individual team members, largely

based on job roles. Such individual objectives are categorized as subordinate to the local SMGs in this study. The concept of object(ives) also provides a foundation for understanding how motives and goals are defined.

As stated above, a motive is a special type of object: “A motive is an object that meets a certain need of the subject” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 1996, p. 59). Kaptelinin and Nardi posit that “we may not be immediately aware of our motives” (p. 62). Further, according to Kaptelinin and Nardi, “Leontiev observed that making motives conscious requires a special effort for making sense of ‘indirect evidence,’ that is motives are revealed to consciousness only objectively by means of analysis of activity and its dynamics. Subjectively, they appear only in their oblique expression, in the form of experiencing wishes, desires, or striving toward a goal” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 2006, p. 62). Motives are aligned with the activity as a whole. In earlier chapters, I mention my examination of how the local SMGs align with the motives of the Innocence Network. The motives of the Network are inherent in and revealed through their stated socially-motivated goals—described on their website as “providing pro bono legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions” (innocencenetwork.org). The primary motive of the Innocence Network is seeking justice for a disenfranchised population. Many of the IPNW team members reference to developing their individual understanding that the Innocence Network has a higher and overarching motive of the Innocence Network. One team member even specifically identifies that overarching motive as seeking justice (Faith Interview 1). Later in this chapter, I discuss how local socially-motivated goals (SMGs) align with the overarching, network-level motives of the Innocence Network.

Finally, goals differ from motives and objects in that goals, Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006) assert, are overtly targeted toward accomplishing something, while motives may not be explicit or readily apparent: “goals are conscious; we are typically aware of the goals we want to attain” (p. 62). Goals are the outcome that is sought to be achieved through activity (as in, “working toward a goal”). In this way, an activity is founded upon a motive (an object driven by need) and the actions that constitute the corresponding activity work toward achieving specific goals. These goals, in turn, address the need inherent in the motive. Kaptelinin (1996) summarized the relationship between objects, motives, and goals this way:

Activities are oriented to motives, that is, the objects that are impelling by themselves. Each motive is an object, material or *ideal*, that satisfies a need. Actions are the processes functionally subordinated to activities; they are directed at specific conscious goals . . . Actions are realised through operations that are determined by the actual conditions of activity. (p. 108)

I refer to local-level goals as SMGs throughout this study. SMGs of the local organization, the Innocence Project Northwest (IPNW), are clearly delineated in their mission statement: “providing legal and investigative services to individuals seeking to prove innocence of crimes for which they have been convicted and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions in Washington State” (IPNW). Providing legal and investigative services and working to correct the causes of wrongful convictions are the goals at which the IPNW’s actions are directed. As presented in the ethnographic narrative in Chapter 4, the team members of the IPNW agree on and actively work toward the goals of the IPNW. When asked, each team member was able to articulate these goals, even though the goals had not been explicitly discussed. In contrast, IPNW team members were not asked about motives on the local level. This distinction between goals

and motives is germane to my study in that my research questions ask about alignment between goals on the local level and motives on the network level.

My initial examination of goals considers how the IPNW communicates, collaborates and coordinates to meet local, shared SMGs—in other words, how the organization attempts to achieve goal congruence at the local level. I then consider how the local SMGs align with network-level motives. I begin with an analytical discussion of two subthemes: goal congruence and goal incongruence.

Goal Congruence and Incongruence

Goal congruence is agreement about or alignment of goals among individuals in an organization. The team members of the IPNW experienced varying degrees of goal congruence and incongruence regarding their individual goals and local SMGs. In general, as illustrated through the ethnographic sketches in the previous chapter, IPNW team members did not fully understand each others' individual work-related goals. Team members often saw individual goals as potentially competing—thus incongruent. One explanation for the incongruence of individual goals is the division of labor between team members. Each team member saw his or herself as fulfilling a certain organizational role that was distinct and unique. For example, Kim asserts that her individual goal as a litigator is to make sure her “clients get off” (Kim Interview 1), whereas Lacy, as a policy lawyer, views her individual goal to be paving the way for innocence-related reforms in the Washington State legislature (Lacy Interview 1). In addition, individual motivations, higher-level, need-based objects, had an impact on how team members perceived individual goals. Recall that Jack, a staff lawyer, first identified gaining real-world experience, “not just the academic stuff,” as a motivating factor, but also asserted that his individual goal was

to “create some record and a background, try to make some progress in their [client’s] cases” (Jack Interview 1). These different ways of conceptualizing individual goals highlight how each team member, in some way, defines themselves in terms of how they perceive *other* team members’ goals. In other words, they define their goals *based* on the differences that they see. For example, Kim mentions that she does not quite understand Lacy’s goals at the IPNW. She states, “Lacy is a little bit out there for me because I don’t know what . . . Is her client the IPNW? I don’t know who her client is” (Kim Interview 1). For Kim, her clients are very real and identifiable, so much so that she notes that her first concern is her clients, and *then* the IPNW (Kim Interview 1). Similarly, Lacy also identifies her individual goals in contrast to the goals of other team members. She notes, “It’s all very different” (Lacy Interview 1). In this sense, Kim identifies her individual goals at the IPNW as a defender of clients, while Lacy identifies as a defender of the cause—a stark contrast between the two foci of the team members.

Such identification by comparison is not unique. It is an inherent premise in Burke’s theory of identification (discussed in detail later in this chapter). Further, from an activity theoretical perspective, identification via comparison of differences connects directly to the divisions of labor present in any social activity. The division of labor plays a significant role in how goals are perceived as congruent or incongruent. Russell notes that “the use of tools (including vocalizing and marking) and—most important[ly]—the division of labor [are] enabled by tools mediate humans’ interactions” (Russell, 1997, p. 511). Russell further posits that divisions of labor give rise to new activities and the appropriation of mediating artifacts to support a new activity system (p. 511). Moreover, division of labor helps account for individual roles and “how tasks are divided horizontally between community members as well as referring

to any vertical divisions of power and status” (Montgomerie, Geelan, & Peacock, n.d.)—see Figure 7 below.

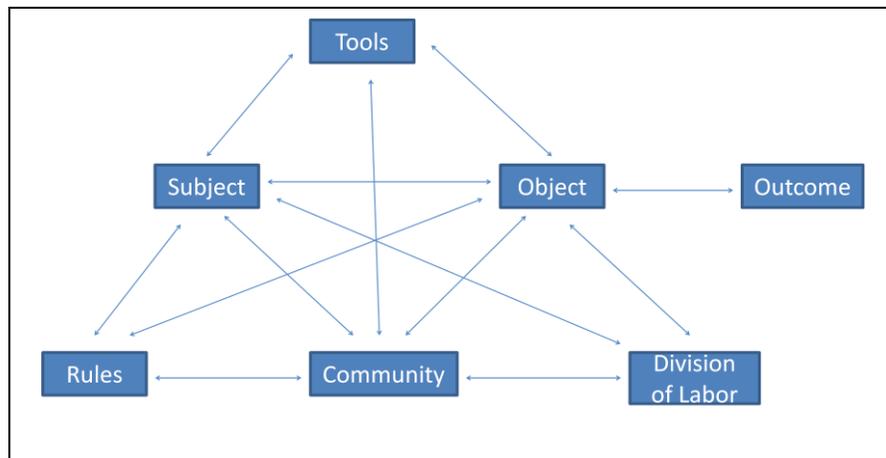


Figure 7. Adaptation of Engeström’s Representation of an Activity System (Engeström 1987)

As shown in Figure 7 above, an activity system entails direct connections (represented by the two-way arrows) between the community, the subject, and the object. These linkages among the subject, division of labor, the community, and the object, highlight the complex relationships—including the tensions, disruptions, or disturbances—between an individual’s (or a subject’s individual goals) goals and the goal—or outcome of an activity system. Further, division of labor directly impacts not only individuals’ goals and the community, but the object of the activity itself. However, despite the fact that the division of labor highlights the disparity of individual goals and that, in relation to the IPNW, most team members’ individual goals can be characterized as incongruent in the context of the IPNW work activities, this appears to be of little consequence in regard to the ability of the IPNW to accomplish established shared goals. Here is why: Following Engeström’s perspective, the collective takes precedent over the individual. The individual (referred to as the subject in Engeström’s activity system model) is

affected (or mediated) by rule, community, and divisions of labor—the social forces of the collective or group. The collective, mediated activity becomes most important as the subject is acted on by the factors identified at the base of the activity system pyramid. Collective activity, as described by Frezzo, Behrens, and Mislavy (2009), accounts for both individuals and social interaction: “individual action is situated in the community”—within the collective—and is “mediated through tools” (p. 4). It is constrained by collective rules and norms; subjects are constrained by the divisions of labor that they accept by choosing to engage in collective activity. Leontiev’s (1981) development of the idea of the collective accounts for individual actions and goals that work to support a common and shared goal.¹³ Further, as Kaptelinin and Nardi (1996) note, “even though the outcome of each individual activity contributes to the outcome of a collective activity as a whole, these contributions are coordinated in a way external to activities of other individual participants” (p. 221). In other words, these individual goals can be overshadowed and subordinated as the team is working toward a “common goal”—or as I identify in the IPNW—the local SMGs. Russell (1997) notes, it is not uncommon for individual members of groups to have differing goals and perspectives as they work toward a shared or common goal. He explains that “collectives pursuing different objects and motives interact with one another in a host of ways over time” and “these interactions and differing goals within the activity system can produce micro-level and macro-level conflicts (p. 508). These micro-level

13 Leontiev explains the concepts of individual and collective goals by telling a tale of a tribal hunt in which the members are divided into two groups: the beaters and the hunters. The beaters are responsible for “beating the bushes” and scaring game out of hiding places. The hunters then target the game that attempts to flee. Leontiev’s example illustrates how two groups, with differing individual goals, can work to accomplish a goal shared by the collective. See Leontiev’s 1981 work *The Problem of Activity in Psychology*. In J. Wertsch (Ed.). *The Concept of Activity in Soviet Psychology*. Armonk, NY: Sharpe.

conflicts are highlighted in my interviews with individual IPNW team members where team members recognize that their goals are vastly different from the goals of their fellow team members. These goals range from exonerations for a client, gaining real-world experience, to effecting policy on the state level, or securing funding for the local organization. In spite of the variety of individual goals at the IPNW, the unique actions or activities of individual members, however incongruent, are coordinated to meet the established, local, shared goals—the SMGs of the IPNW and the object(ive) of the activity system—through what Engeström calls “reflective communication” (p. 51). Reflective communication, according to Engeström, is “the interactions in which the actors focus on reconceptualizing their *own* organization and interaction in relation to their shared objects” (p. 51, emphasis added). For the team members of the IPNW, there are true and real differences in roles, responsibilities, goals, and conceptualized work. However, each member has demonstrated adeptness at reconceptualizing their own work to support the shared SMGs of the IPNW. This reflective communication is accomplished primarily through genres enacted in speech marked by an intimate familiarity that encourages commonality and openness. The genres enacted in speech at the IPNW are discussed at length later in this chapter.

Mediation of Incongruent Goals

In addition to overcoming disparity among individual goals through reflective communication, the SMGs of the IPNW—goals at the local level—are mediated by objects of individual team members. According to Vygotsky (1981):

Psychological tools are artificial formations. By their nature they are social, not organic or individual. They are directed toward the mastery or control of behavioral processes . . . just as technical means are directed toward the control of processes of nature. (p. 137)

These psychological tools can include objects (or individual object(ives)). Developing Vygotsky's understanding of mediating artifacts, Engeström's conceptualization of activity theory emphasizes mediation of all kinds and posits that "the core of activity theory is its focus on mediation, namely mediation of subject-object relations by resources (tools), rules, and communities and divisions of labor" (Frezzo et al., 2009, p. 5). In this regard, mediating artifacts (tools) take a place of primacy in activity theory studies. Engeström defines mediating artifacts as "instruments, including symbols and representations of various kinds" (Engeström, 2008, p. 26). For Engeström, mediating artifacts can be conceptual as well as material, internal as well as external. "The mediating artifacts include both tools and signs, both external implements and internal representations such as mental models" (p. 128). The SMGs of the IPNW present themselves as both internal and external mediating artifacts as the team members carry out their work. The disparate objects of individuals of the IPNW help to mediate the collective, local SMGs of the organization by directing behavior and work activities. Objects mediating the goals of an activity network are not a novel concept in activity theory-based examinations of organizations. However, what is most notable in regard to the IPNW is *how* the shared SMGs are mediated by disparate objects. Specifically, one of my research questions asks how the local organization communicates to reconcile disparate individual goals to meet local SMGs and align with larger organizational motives. Understanding how disparate objects (as mediators) develop into common SMGs reveals details about the manner in which communication, collaboration, and coordination take place.

My observations of weekly team meetings at the IPNW provided a number of examples of interactions that foregrounded objects functioning as mediating artifacts. Two participants, Kim and Lacy, serve as exemplary representations of how disparate individual goals were

reconciled and how objects served as mediating artifacts. As described in an ethnographic sketch in Chapter 4 and discussed earlier in this chapter, objects functioned as mediating artifacts during a team meeting when Kim mentions taking on a case for a potential client who has already completed serving a sentence. Recall that Kim closely identifies with working to defend and exonerate clients. During that meeting, Jill mentions that taking on such a case is a resources issue, underscoring her object of securing funds for the organization and ensuring the financial and resource stability of the IPNW. In contrast to Kim and Jill, Lacy's focus during this exchange is on whether existing laws can be considered punitive in the potential case. All three members have three very different individual object(ives). However, during the discussion, Lacy notes that taking on such a case would be outside of the IPNW criteria and an "entirely different project" altogether (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). In other words, taking on such a case contradicts how the team has characterized their objectives and what the team has understood about them (or their shared, common goals). After some time, Jill and the team agree that the IPNW should not take the case. It is outside of the scope of the organization's goals for exoneration and reform. In this instance, through collaboration, the team was able to use reflective communication (careful consideration of the individual actions as they interrelate with the collective goals of the organization) to reconceptualize differing objects, transforming the objects in a way that supports forming an organizational identity, thereby progressing the team toward a unified outcome—the common and shared SMGs of the IPNW. Figure 8 below illustrates this phenomenon. In addition, the figure demonstrates how both Kim and Lacy not only begin with differing objects, but also use different mediating artifacts (e.g.: genres, like witness reports and resolutions) to accomplish their individual objects. Kim and Lacy's experience of attempting to reconcile disparate individual goals to create a shared, goal is emblematic of similar transactions that

occurred with other members of the group. This process of reconciling disparate individual goals was replicated in other member activities, and, though my focus in this instance highlights Kim and Lacy, the lighter colored triangles in the figure below acknowledge the existence of other individuals within the organization who also contribute to the transformation of a variety of differing objects into shared and common goals. Through reflective communication many disparate objects are reconceived. The IPNW in turn shares common tools and a common object as it works to realize local-level SMGs.

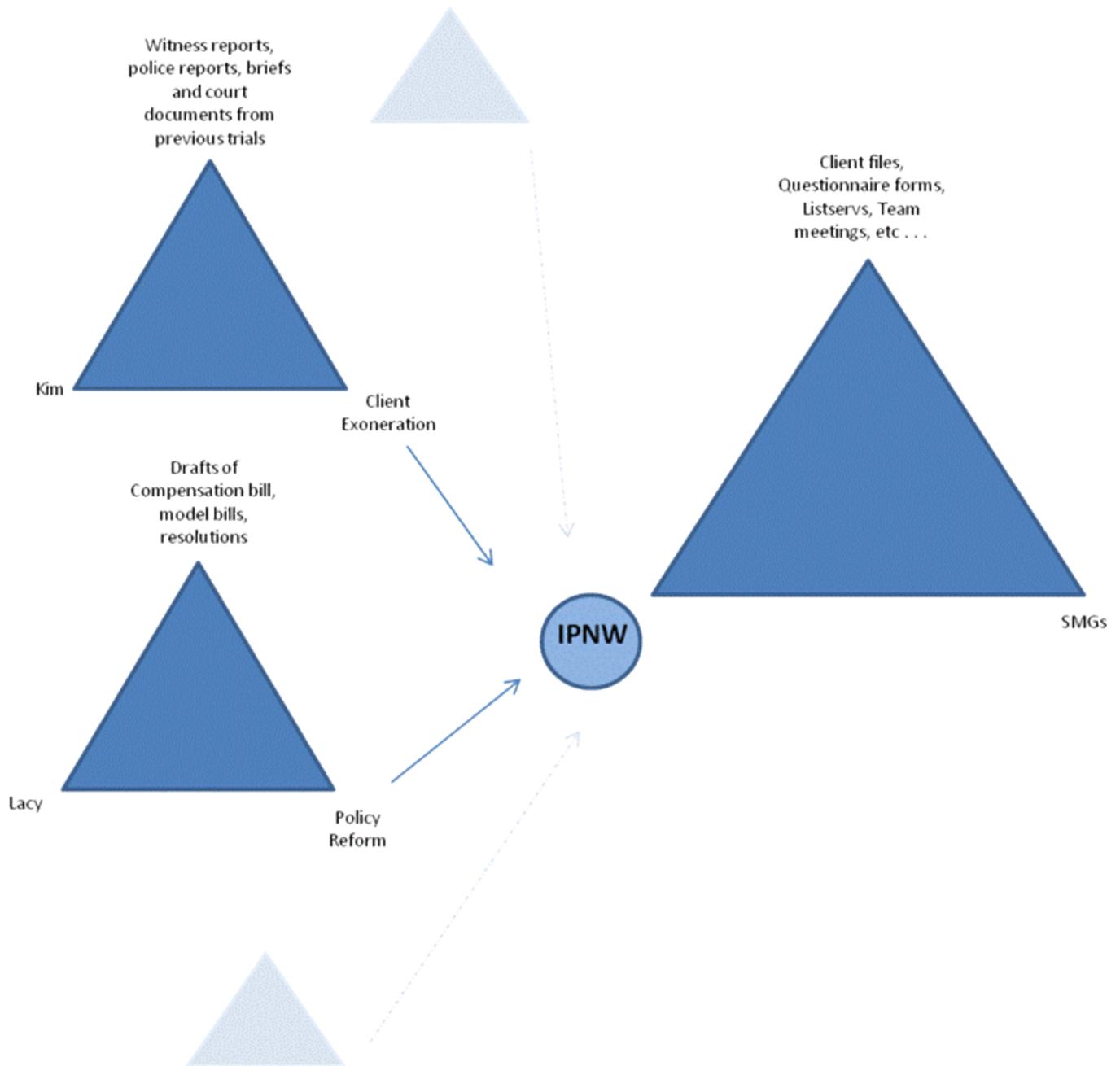


Figure 8. Disparate Individual Objects Transformed

In essence, the IPNW team approached a problem from differing individual perspectives, using different tools (genres) and collaborating to construct a new, shared object that supports the accomplishment of shared, local SMGs. In the case illustrated above, the team needed to work

through understanding who they were as individuals and who they were as an organization in order to decide if the case under scrutiny could be accepted as a means of accomplishing established goals. The team had to form a shared objective in order to complete work. As Engeström (2008) notes, “formation of a shared object is a major collaborative achievement” (p. 163). In his examination of knowledge creation in teams, Engeström notes that objects can indeed be “renegotiated and revised” (p. 141). Objects can mediate and direct actions. Further, Engeström notes that this reconceptualization of objects usually “takes the form of problem finding and problem definition” and is a “collaborative and dialogical process in which different perspectives (Holland & Reeves, 1996) and voices (R. Engeström, 1995) meet, collide, and merge” (Engeström, 2008, pp.128-129). The IPNW team demonstrated this in the sketch described above. And, in this way, goal congruence regarding the local SMGs of the organization is achieved. The individual goals in essence become embedded in the collective’s sense of the common identity of the IPNW.

Clearly, the process of reaching goal congruence in a team is a complex, dynamic, and negotiated process into which the examples above can provide only a brief glimpse. Individual IPNW team members have very different individual goals corresponding to social divisions of labor. However, these disparate individual goals do not negatively impact the IPNW team’s ability to meet and achieve the shared goals of the collective, the local SMGs. The team employs the use of reflective communication and negotiates and reconceptualizes individual goals to create shared objects that support the accomplishment of local SMGs. This creation of shared objects acknowledges diversity and divisions of labor while promoting common goals.

Genres Enacted in Print

Genres enacted in print perform a number of different communicative functions at the IPNW where team members use checklists, task lists, client questionnaires and informational sheets (among other documents). These genres enacted in print at the IPNW typically belong to one of two categories: documents used by the support staff and documents used by the entire team. In the previous chapter, I noted that genres enacted in print help to coordinate member actions, foster collaboration, and explicitly articulate goals. The following section analyzes my findings in regard to how these functions of printed texts impact the communicative practices of the organization and aid the accomplishment of SMGs by facilitating a sense of common identity among team members.

Documents used by Support Staff: Embedded Expectations, Created Cohesion

Russell asserts that “genres are not merely texts that share some formal features; they share expectations among some group(s) of people” (Russell, 1997, p. 513). During my observations at the IPNW the printed texts inscribed and embedded job-task related expectations, rules, and norms, and encouraged and created a sense of cohesion among team members. This is, of course, typical of many workplace documents, especially documents like checklists and task lists.

The checklists at the IPNW were created by the IPNW paralegal and used predominately by the support staff. The checklists helped to regulate and coordinate the work of the support staff as team members would refer to the checklists to ensure that they were processing clients’ questionnaires according to established organizational criteria. For example, the IPNW Questionnaire Checklist requires the user to consider if the potential client’s case is viable for the

IPNW based on whether or not the client is a resident of Washington State, whether or not the client has an actual claim of innocence, and whether or not the client is still incarcerated (among other criteria established by the IPNW). The team members use the checklists and task lists in attempts to ensure that team members are in one accord in regard to explicit work activities and criteria. This coordination of actions and activities implicitly acknowledges the heterogeneity of individuals using the documents (different tasks, backgrounds, and roles), but also allows each individual to work toward a common object. As Winsor (2007) notes, common objects [are] achievements, not naturally occurring situations” (p. 4). Further, as Winsor asserts, generic texts are particularly useful for creating common objects because they not only use a “typified form but also invoke a typified reaction” (p. 4). In this way the checklists and task lists work toward this accomplishment. In addition to coordinating functions, the checklists and task lists also served to regulate activities of individuals while promoting and standardizing expectations that help to create a cohesive organizational identity by “stabiliz[ing] a particular reality”—an ideal image of the identity of an organization—what an organization can and cannot do and how these processes should be carried out (McCarthy, 1991, p. 359).

In addition to checklists and task lists, other genres enacted in print that are used primarily by the support staff highlight divisions of labor at the IPNW because of who uses them and how those individuals use the documents. Russell (1997) notes that

Many activity systems use complex systems of written genres to (re-)create and stabilize-for-now their object/motive and collective identity. Because of the division of labor within an activity system, not all of the participants must appropriate (learn to read/write) all of the genres. Participants at certain more or less (but never entirely) stable positions

within the systems interact in ways that make it more likely that they will use certain genres and not others at certain times and not others. (p. 520)

The checklists and task lists are not used by all members of the IPNW because not all members, based on job roles, identify with the tasks being completed. The litigation lawyer identifies her role as one that supports clients through the judicial system. The staff lawyer champions the innocence cause by affecting changes in legislation. Only the support staff needs to screen incoming mail and documents. This division of labor and emphasis on expected roles occurs due to the “microstructural circulation of texts and other tools in genres, these regularized shared expectations for tool use within and among systems of purposeful interaction, that macrosocial structure is (re-)created” (p. 521). Further, Russell notes that “at the same time in the same fundamental way, the identities of individuals and groups and subgroups are (re-)created” (p. 521). In essence, the print documents, while highlighting social roles within the IPNW, reinforce individual and organizational identity. These identities, as accepted and conformed to by team members, play a central role in agreement upon goals, criteria, and behaviors, and create a sense of cohesion for the local organization. Everyone is working in distinct roles toward a common goal.

Documents used by Entire Team: Acknowledged Divisions, Emphasized Collaboration

The genres enacted in print used by the entire IPNW team, like printed documents used primarily by support staff, acknowledge divisions of labor, but also emphasize and encourage collaboration. The documents used by the entire team include the client paper files and the IPNW File Organization document, as well as the IPNW Information Sheet. The creation and maintenance of these documents, specifically the client paper files and the intertextually-related

IPNW File Organization document, required extensive collaboration among team members. Further, these documents were interrelated with the genres enacted in speech that I observed at the IPNW in that these texts were often brought to team meetings and provided a basis for some discussion in that forum. As Russell observes, “written genres very often are powerfully linked to genres in other media as well, either directly or indirectly” (Russell, 1997, p. 514). At team meetings, these files were discussed in a conversational and intimate manner, with members encouraged to contribute, ask questions, and raise concerns. The collaboration about these files also contributed to the learning and knowledge-sharing function of the meeting as members, at times, grappled with attempting to understand the relevance and organization of certain documents within clients’ paper files.

The client paper files and the IPNW File Organization document served as an index of what the team focused on during collaboration at team meetings. The client paper files include police documents, appeals records, parole decisions, and previous court rulings related to a client’s case. In essence, the client paper files are the client’s story. These paper files are representations of the individuals—their successes, their failures, and their biological evidence (in the form of results from DNA tests). The clients are, in a sense, embodied in these paper files. The IPNW team collaborates about these files and creates other documents to manage them—organizing the narratives of individuals and deciding which parts of the individuals’ stories are important and which parts of the stories should be consulted or omitted based on the identity and goals of the organization enacted through established criteria. Both the client paper files and the IPNW File Organization document that was created to help manage the client paper files are the two texts over which the team collaborates the most in team meetings. In this sense, the team was required to negotiate, collaborate, and reach consensus in order to decide which cases

advanced their understood image of the IPNW goals, values, and criteria. An example of this identification process is revealed in the episode described earlier in which team members had to decide about accepting or rejecting a case of a client who has already been released from prison. As the earlier sketch illustrates, one team member notes that accepting the case would push them into the realm of an “entirely different project” (Team Meeting 5/26/2011). In other words, accepting this client case diverges from the image that the team members have of what the IPNW does. Team members resisted this action largely because it ran contrary to their understanding of the commonly shared identity of the local organization.

In addition, the genres enacted in print used by the entire team also implicitly conjure the idea of a unified “we” in support of the stories of the disenfranchised, helping to create a unified front for the advancement of a common cause against a flawed justice system. The clients are embodied in the files that the IPNW manages. The client paper files and especially the client questionnaires map the stories of the convicted. The questionnaire template is created by the IPNW team, but completed by potential clients who must present their individual stories in their own words. The questionnaires ask the clients to describe the prosecution’s and defense’s “theory” of their individual case and explain why the client feels that their case should be accepted by the IPNW. In addition, the questionnaire asks about DNA material, dates of arrests, and descriptions of the alleged crimes. After the questionnaires are completed by clients and then returned to the IPNW, the support staff must make initial decisions about case acceptance or rejection. In essence, the IPNW must decide which narratives are acceptable and germane to the local SMGs. Moreover, these genres enacted in print (the client paper files, the IPNW File Organization document, and the client questionnaires) are essentially stand-ins for the individuals that the IPNW represents. The ability to compile, organize, and manage these files

directly affect the ability of the IPNW to successfully assist their clients and accomplish the established, local SMGs of exonerating the wrongfully imprisoned and working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions within the justice system. These documents, though not always explicitly acknowledged during team meeting and collaborations, have serious implications beyond the scope of the core administrative team. The narratives of the documents implicitly help to make real the implications of their work. In addition, the narratives promote an “us versus them” imagery. Stewart, Smith, and Denton (2007) assert that narratives encourage identification in a social movement because they establish connections between the reader and the narrator. The authors posit that “the reader-narrator identification is central. Readers who identify with the narrator step into the story, enact it, and retain the experience. Stories that facilitate these processes, in turn, foster identification” (p. 204). This sense of identification through narrative constructs a unified “we” primarily because narratives help to “organize social relationships” and the “narrator and listener create a ‘we’ through their identification; ‘my story’ becomes ‘our story’ through cocreation” (p. 204). In essence, though the IPNW questionnaires and client paper files are gathered for informational purposes, the documents help to create narratives of individuals that the IPNW seeks to help. These narratives, in an auxiliary effect, increase cohesion around the values, goals, and identity of the organization and, more broadly, the innocence movement.

Finally, the information sheet for the IPNW was created collaboratively by team members for an outside audience. The document helps to create cohesion and congruence regarding the local SMGs of the organization primarily by explicitly stating and outlining the goals of the team. The published version of this document also specifically notes both the advocacy/policy work and the work of litigators (exonerations). Further, the document also

presents stories of the team's success by highlighting the narratives of the exonerees. Though most members noted that they were not made aware of the goals of the organization beforehand or through formal training activities, the information sheets provided members with a common and shared point of reference that articulated the goals of the IPNW as well as presented an image of the collective successes of the team.

In general, the genres enacted in print used by the IPNW team members help create a sense of cohesion and foster identification among team members, despite divisions of labor and differing goals, by encouraging collaboration and coordinating the work activities of the collective. Finally, these communicative practices aid the IPNW team in setting and accomplishing local SMGs.

Genres Enacted in Speech

Genres enacted in speech encompass a prevalent means of communication at the IPNW. The IPNW speech genres help to serve goal-setting and goal consensus functions and aid in providing an environment conducive for learning and the exchange of knowledge and ideas through the use of customary and familiar communication styles. Two speech genres include (1) conversational, intimate communication and (2) success stories. The next section presents a discussion and analysis of these, focusing on how the nature of these speech genres affect the communicative practices of the IPNW team and aid the team's ability to accomplish local, shared SMGs by establishing a sense of cohesion and promoting identification among team members and within the organization.

Conversational, Intimate Communication: Cohesion Created through Conversation

Verbal communication was a central component to how IPNW team members completed work and accomplished goals. Team members asserted that verbal communication was most effective and most prevalent among the team—noting that as much as 80% of communication takes place verbally (Lisa Interview 1). Moreover, this verbal communication was characterized by conversational, intimate communication. My definition of conversational indicates the oral exchange of ideas, observations and opinions, or ideas and my definition of intimate points to interactions that are marked by close association and familiarity and informal warmth, friendship, and camaraderie. The conversational and intimate style of communication was most readily observed during weekly team meetings; however, this casualness was reflected in the tone of the conversation at the meetings, as well as office chats among team members in shared workspaces. In this sense, the nature and tone of genres enacted in speech as a type of mediating artifact greatly impacted the communicative practices of the IPNW team in the following ways:

- The style of communication was **customary and accepted**.
- The communication was **familiar and intimate**.
- The conversational and intimate communication occurred along with goal-setting, supporting **goal congruence** among team members.
- Conversational, intimate communication created an environment conducive to **learning and knowledge-sharing**.

In essence, team members were comfortable with the casual and conversational manner of communication. Team meetings were always marked by an informal tone and I observed that the conversational and intimate communication dominated the verbal interactions of team members. How language mediated the activities of the IPNW seemed to significantly affect the

team's ability to complete work, agree on goals, and mediate activity so that they realized goals in an efficient and effective manner. Bakhtin (1986) asserts that "all the diverse areas of human activity involve the use of language" (p. 82). Bakhtin discusses the importance of understanding language in the context of human activity, stating that

"language is realized in the form of individual concrete utterances (oral and written) by participants in the various areas of human activity. These utterances reflect the specific conditions and goals of each such area not only through their content (thematic) and linguistic style, that is the selection of lexical, phraseological, and grammatical resources of the language, but above all in their compositional structure" (p. 82).

The linguistic style of the IPNW team—conversational and intimate—indicated a sense of familiarity and openness among team members. In essence, team members seem to view each other as partners and friends. This familiar and intimate communication fostered an environment conducive to the exchanging of ideas and learning—even when important and complex knowledge was being exchanged, like the details of complicated DNA testing procedures. The friendly rapport of the IPNW team members transcended concerns about hierarchy and divisions of labor. Despite not fully understanding each others' individual goals, team members seemed to understand that their collective success depends on the success of the individual team members.

Bakhtin characterizes this type of speech as an intimate genre:

"Intimate genres and styles are based on a maximum internal proximity of the speaker and addressee (in extreme instances, as if they had merged). Intimate speech is imbued with a deep confidence in the addressee, in his sympathy, in the sensitivity and goodwill of his responsive nature. In this atmosphere of profound trust, the speaker reveals his internal depths. This determines the special expressiveness and internal candor of these styles (as

distinct from the loud street-language candor of familiar speech). Familiar and intimate genres and styles (as yet very little studied) reveal extremely clear the dependence of style on a certain sense and understanding of the addressee (the addressee of the utterance) on the part of the speaker, and on the addressee's actively responsive understanding that is anticipated by the speaker" (p. 93).

Bakhtin's description of intimate speech genres accurately describes the type of verbal interactions that I observed during my time at the IPNW. Team members often displayed confidence and trust in the other members of the team, noting that team members felt they could be themselves (Kim Interview 1) and consider the team to be "close-knit" (Faith Interview 1).

This conversational, intimate speech communication often helped the IPNW team set and agree upon goals and contributed to goal congruence among team members. Team members noted that goals were often set and agreed upon at team meetings where intimate speech genres dominated (I share examples of goal setting and goal congruence in the previous chapter). For instance, as one of my observations detailed, Kim decided how a case should be divided among team members and was able to easily convince the team members (including the director) to agree without paying much attention to chain of command or organizational hierarchy. Again, Bakhtin notes that intimate speech often flattens social and organizational hierarchy.

With all the immense differences among familiar and intimate genres (and, consequently, styles), they perceive their addressees in exactly the same way: more or less outside the framework of the social hierarchy and social conventions, 'without rank,' as it were. This gives rise to a certain candor of speech (which in familiar styles sometimes approaches cynicism). In intimate styles this is expressed in an apparent desire for the speaker and the addressee to merge completely." (p. 93)

For members of the IPNW team, there is an evident desire to be in one accord, even as individual goals differed. The team members acknowledge and understand that they are all working toward and for one ultimate cause. In this way, the familiar and intimate speech of the team members aids in the accomplishment of local SMGs by merging the individual interests in order to support goals and encouraging communication that is marked by confidence in one another, openness, and trust which fosters a sense of cohesion and common identification.

In addition to supporting goal consensus among members, the familiar and intimate communicative practices of the IPNW also promote learning and knowledge sharing among team members. Team members explain that they learn due to the verbal interaction of the team. One team member mentions that the familiar and intimate nature of the team weekly meetings helped with her “learning curve.” Further, the director of the IPNW encourages team members to bring questions about cases to the weekly meetings (Jill Team Meeting 11/29/2011). In this way, learning helps to reconcile disparate perspectives. Moreover, in activity theory, the processes of learning and development support collective activities and account for overlapping, individual expertise: “Significant learning processes are achieved by collective activities” (Tuomi-Grohn 200). The intimate speech genre that supports learning and knowledge-sharing, in turn, helps to establish a cohesive collective identity.

Success Stories: Context Cultivated through Central Narratives

The IPNW team shares success stories primarily at their team weekly meetings. These success stories include updates from exonerees in the form of a greeting card, in-roads made within the Washington State legislature, or progress made in court. The success stories help to develop a central narrative that promotes common organizational identification among team

members and help the team members to contextualize successes and failures of the individuals as they impact the collective. Success stories shared at team meetings also create a sense of cohesion within the team because they allow the team members to hear about the work of their peers and better understand how individual work contributes to the accomplishment of local SMGs.

Faber (2002) asserts that “stories provide a cultural record of who we are, where we have been and what we hope to achieve. Stories document our habits, successes, failures, and lessons learned” (p. 21). Further, Faber acknowledges that stories of success or failure can direct decisions and future actions (p. 21). Success stories function in these ways at the IPNW. When the IPNW team shares success stories, these stories often point to achievements of the local organization—SMGs that have been met and accomplished. For instance, when Jill shares the story of the *Let Freedom Ring* concert performed by the exonerees at the yearly Innocence Network conference, she specifically mentions how amazing it was for her to see the exonerees from Washington State on stage with the exonerees from across the nation. She specifically acknowledges the success of the local team. In addition, when sharing a greeting card from a client in a team meeting, again the success of the local organization is brought to the fore. Faber posits that narratives “highlight the actions of specific individuals and charismatic leaders and refer to important organizational events and occasions” (p. 33). Sharing the success stories in team meetings highlight the hard work that the team has accomplished. Further, these stories help to develop what Faber calls a “central narrative” (p. 31). Faber asserts that central narratives are important for an organization because narratives help to create an organizational identity and image, which in turn, impacts how members of that organization perceive themselves, as well as the organization. These narratives are shared among team members in a manner that helps to

focus members on individual goals and local SMGs. They emphasize the accomplishment of the explicitly defined SMGs, helping to remind team members what they are working toward—what is important for the team. Faber states that narratives can “distinguish and politicize what members of an organization value” (p. 33). In this sense, the values and SMGs of the organization are underscored via the sharing of success stories.

In addition to calling attention to and reminding team members of the SMGs of the IPNW, the team shares success stories to help contextualize their successes (and failures). Exonerations take time (Joe Interview 1). Over the course of nearly 15 year, the IPNW has been successful in that they have won 4 exonerations. On average, this rate represents less than 1 exoneration every 5 years. For the IPNW team members, success is not just a numbers game; it is judged more subjectively. Faber notes that understanding “broader and more meaningful context,” or the back story of the organization, is often more productive and encouraging. For the IPNW, these success stories motivate the team members adding meaning and broadening the context—something that relying solely on numbers cannot do. Even when a situation appears to be a failure (for example when Kim lost a motion in court), the more meaningful and broader context is highlighted in stories that represent success. In Kim’s instance, she notes that she felt “good” about the outcome because she worked hard, she made some progress, and she had the opportunity to argue with a litigator that she respected. Moreover, the litigator that Kim argued with was later hired on at the IPNW due to a grant that the organization received. In these ways, the broader context highlighted by the shared stories of success create meaning out of experiences (Faber, 2002, p. 21).

Finally, sharing stories of success at the IPNW helps to showcase individual accomplishments and how those accomplishments aid in the realization of local SMGs. Team

members of the IPNW acknowledge that their individual goals and work were very different. As discussed previously, one team member very candidly shared that she was not even sure what another team members' goals entailed (Kim Interview 1). As individual team members share success stories at the team meetings, these divisions of labor are highlighted. For example, in the earlier sketch where I described the policy lawyer sharing a story about success regarding a proposed bill while another lawyer shares stories about a success at trial underscores how narratives can create cohesion where division exists. The team was supportive and encouraging for both situations. Even though the differences are evident, the success stories pull together individual accomplishments and demonstrate how these individual achievements are successes for the entire team. As many members notes, the team is successful if they are able to communicate despite difference and they are able to "feel valued as a member of a team" (Jill Interview 1). Rouse (1990) notes that "sharing a situation as a narrative field thus makes possible meaningful differences along with convergence. The need to make differences intelligible and [make] a common project possible compels an ongoing struggle to keep in check the divergence of versions of the community's story... This struggle takes the form of a shared concern to construct, enforce, and conform to a common narrative which gives common sense to everyone's endeavor" (p. 185). In essence, the success stories create a shared story (or central narrative) and minimize divisions of labor and tensions between individual goals. The speech genres of the IPNW (conversational, intimate communication during time meetings and office interactions and the shared success stories) play a central role in the communicative practices of the team and effectively aid the team in the accomplishment of local SMGs.

In essence, genres enacted in speech have a significant impact on how the IPNW team communicates to meet local SMGs. The intimate speech of the IPNW is a communicative

practice that has contributed to the team's success in their activist work by allowing the team to set and agree on goals, learn, and share knowledge in a familiar and intimate manner that supports progress toward a common goal over social hierarchy and divisions of labor. Sharing stories of success is another communicative practice that has aided the IPNW in the accomplishment of SMGS by creating cohesion through encouraging member motivations, contextualizing success, reminding members of team goals, and establishing a central narrative. The nature and function of the speech genres of the IPNW greatly affect the local communicative practices of the organization by advancing a sense of consubstantiality, common goals, and shared ideas. These speech genres allow the IPNW team to communicate, collaborate, and coordinate to meet local SMGS and aid in the accomplishment of those goals.

Genres Enacted in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)

Genres enacted in information and communication technologies were the least frequently used by IPNW team members. However, these genres still played an important role in creating a sense of cohesion among team members. These genres were also the primary way in which larger organizational goals manifested in local genres and communicative practices.

Email Messages & Listserv Announcements: Local Coordination & Connections to the Network

Email messages were primarily used for coordination purposes at the IPNW. The paralegal mentions receiving email messages that serve the function of a task list from one of the lawyers. The staff lawyer, Kim, noted that when she did not want to print documents, she would, at times, send the tasks via email messages the paralegal the tasks instead. This helped to

coordinate the actions of the paralegal in much the same way as the paralegals own checklists and task lists. Later during my observations, the director of the IPNW, Jill, began using email messages to distribute the agenda for the team weekly meetings to team members. These agendas also served a coordinating function in that they helped to direct and organize future actions (carried out during weekly meetings). The coordinating function of texts distributed via email messages functioned similarly to the print documents discussed in earlier sections of this chapter. The emailed texts inscribed and embedded task-related expectations—ensuring that team members were in one accord and creating a sense of cohesion through the collective.

Listserv announcements function in a very different way than the email messages. Listserv announcements were the dominant way that the motives of the larger network manifested at a local level as they enabled team members to communicate with other affiliated network organizations. The lawyers describe using the listserv announcements for two main reasons: to gather information about activities at the network-level that supported local actions and to share local ideas and activities with other affiliates within the network. Listserv announcements were used predominately by the staff lawyers and the director of the IPNW, but the information gathered from the listserv announcements supported the collective actions of the local organization. As mentioned in Chapter 4, Lacy noted that “knowing what happened in other states and what states have a culture similar to yours is very helpful in trying to define your agenda and how you’re going to approach things” (Lacy Interview 1). The listserv announcements act to support this knowledge-sharing and information-sharing role for all members of the larger organization—the Innocence Network. In this way, identification on the network-level is promoted and encouraged through participation in these forums. Members are aware of activities and progress made outside of their localized environment. Members learn

from the activities and advancements made by other affiliates and are then able to appropriate that knowledge and information from affiliated network members to use in their local spheres of influence.

Websites: Localizing Network Information

The use of the innocenceproject.org website presents another example of how the larger, network-level motives are addressed on a local level. The innocenceproject.org incorporates the use of Web 2.0 functionality with persuasive multimedia design elements. Jill, the director, mentions that she uses this website for information-gathering purposes. She notes that she often uses the website to “update my presentations to include the most recent number of DNA exonerations and as a resource on topics, such as cause of wrongful convictions or policy remedies” (Jill Interview 2). The website presents the most comprehensive resource that catalogues and exhibits network-level social action. The public image of the Network is represented through this website. The website lists and provides detailed accounts of all exonerees’ stories across the network, in addition to introducing the public constituents to the scientific, legal, and cultural causes of wrongful convictions. This public identity of the networked organization emphasizes the cohesion and consubstantiality of the Network and its affiliates. It presents affiliated members with knowledge that can be used in local contexts and it provides the local organizations with a touchstone for an established cohesive network identity.

Social Media: Publicizing the IPNW

Social media was by far the least frequently used of all forms of communication at the IPNW. Toward the end of my observations, the team began to use Facebook to communicate

success stories, upcoming activities, and highlight the narratives of the exonerated to outside stakeholders. Social media, particularly the social networking site Facebook, in small ways, did affect the sense of identification and cohesion among team members. However, this function of the social networking site served as more of a support to other genres that did the same thing. For example, some stories of Facebook featured the narratives of the exonerated individuals that the IPNW sought to help—further developing a shared narrative among team members. As mentioned earlier, the client paper files accomplished similar basic functions. One of the advantages of the use of Facebook for the team was, however, that Facebook allowed the team to create a more public image that mirrored the cohesive, private image developed with the organization. In other words, the organizational identity of the IPNW was made public through the use of Facebook.

Finally, another advantage to using social media like Facebook is that the IPNW was able to share information with the networked affiliates through the Facebook forum. Facebook allows organizations to “friend” one another. Friending removes privacy blocks and allows organizations (or individuals) to read and interact with the posts of its friends. In this way, Facebook served a similar function as the listserv announcements—providing the local organization a forum for connecting with and communicating others within and outside of the network.

GEM of the IPNW Genres

The preceding sections explained how the specific types of genres used by the IPNW team individually encouraged the process of identification and promoted consubstantiality among team members. The following section examines how these genres interrelate through a

Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM) approach. This section specifically answers the question: *How* do mediating artifacts (specifically, genres enacted in print, speech, and information and communication technologies) used in local communicative practices support the accomplishment of SMGs by mapping how genres interact in a contextualized environment. A Genre Ecology (GE) illustrates how genres work in concert in a specific context. Further, GEs present a way of “visualizing the mediational relationships among genres” (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 157). Taking this situated genre studies approach helps to develop a close and detailed study of the three categories of genres that I observed during my study. My comprehensive study of interrelated genres revealed the manner in which genres mediated the work-related activities of the core administrative team and helped to create a cohesive identity within the organization. As Spinuzzi notes, genres can “weave” together individuals and groups that have different objectives, goals, and ideals (Spinuzzi, 2008). In addition, sharing of genres and knowledge embedded within those genres can encourage collaboration that results in cohesion among heterogeneous group members. This next section, acknowledging the findings listed above, turns attention from how individual genres are used to accomplish work to examine how aggregates of genres aid in the achievement of goals.

According to Spinuzzi, Zachry, and Hart-Davidson (2009), a GEM approach suggests that researchers identify the genre that is most used and most prevalent in an environment. In regard to the IPNW, I identify the team weekly meetings as the most prominent. At the team weekly meetings, use of nearly every other genre studied at the IPNW became evident. In fact, team meetings represented an opportunity for IPNW team members to discuss how other genres could be used, altered, or even ignored (like the IPNW Procedures Manual). At the team meetings, team members discussed and collaborated about client paper files, the IPNW File

Organization document, criteria and checklists, the IPNW manual, and the IPNW Information sheet. The team meetings were the primary and essential genre that helped to coordinate and mediate other genres that were important for the work of the team. In addition to identifying the most observed genres, GEMs also encourage observations that note how “texts interact” (Spinuzzi, et al., 2009, p. 17).

Visualizing the GEM of the IPNW

In the preceding sections, I highlighted how a number of genres within the IPNW mediated one another as well as mediating the work of the IPNW team. Below, I present a visual that depicts this GEM. The team weekly meeting, as the most prevalent and readily observed genre, is located at the center of the figure. Other genres, genres that are collaborated about and often brought to bear at the team weekly meetings, are connected by directional arrows. Heavier lines represent genres that are more “interconnected” or are observed functioning together often. Lighter lines represent genres observed functioning together less often. Dashed lines represent genres that may not have been explicitly discussed at team weekly meetings, but conversations at team weekly meetings may have impacted how team members interact with the genres outside of the meeting forum. Finally, the length of the line (distance from the center of the representation), depicts genres that were infrequently discussed (for example, if a genre is not often discussed at team weekly meetings by individuals, that genre is placed further away from the center).

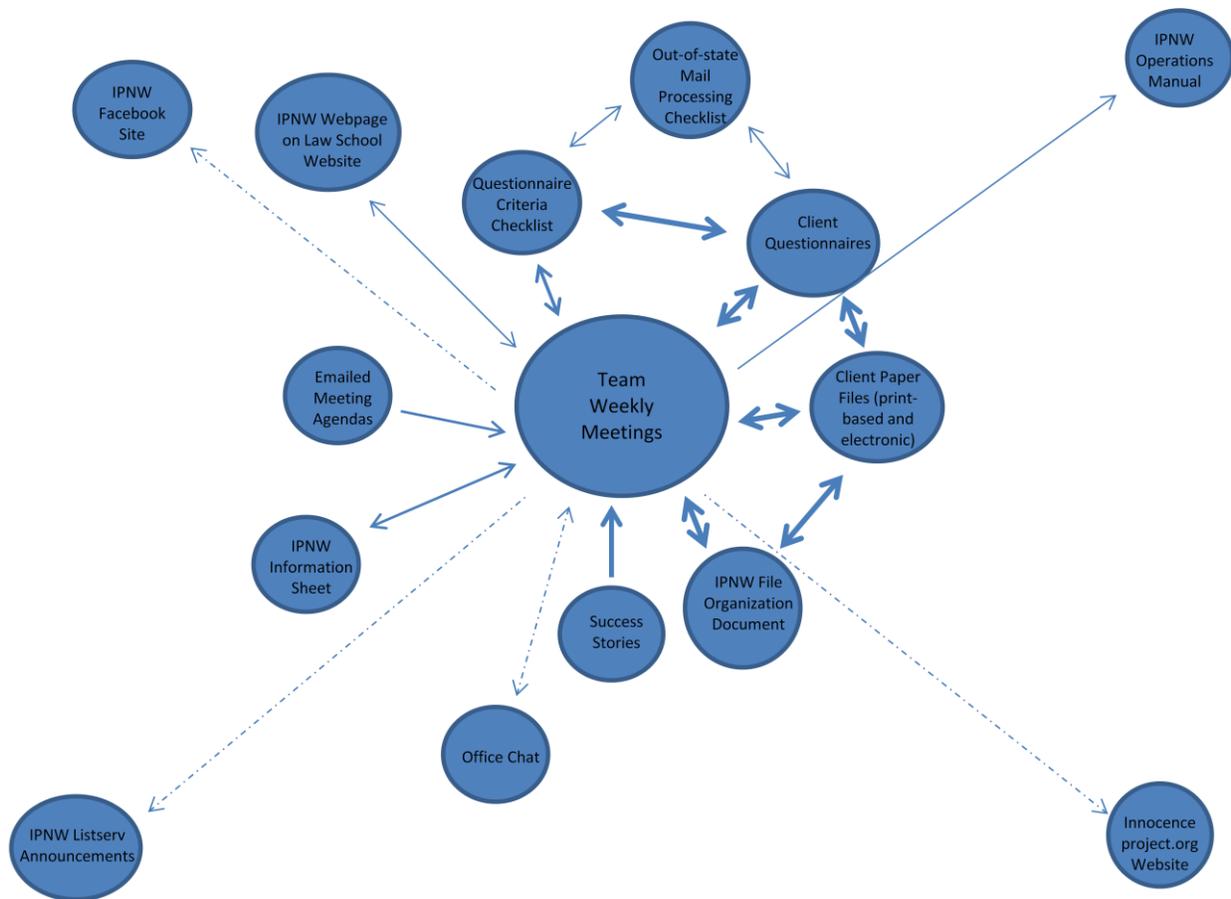


Figure 9. Genre Ecology Model of the IPNW

As we can see from the figure, the team weekly meetings bring together most of the genres that are used at the IPNW. Each genre, in one way or another, makes an appearance at the team weekly meetings. In this way, the team weekly meetings encompass the other genres and underscore the interconnectedness of the genres used by the team. The GEM of the IPNW highlights how the genres mediate one another and support the work of the organization.

Identification and the Organization

The genres used by the IPNW team, through the use of Bakhtinian intimate speech, through reflective communication, through narratives and collaboration, all create a sense of

cohesiveness, as well as minimize the effects of divisions of labor and flatten social hierarchy. In choosing to use mediating artifacts (genres) in the way that they do, the communicative practices of the IPNW team mobilize the team to agree on goals (goal congruence) and accomplish the locally established SMGs while aligning with larger organizational motives. As Russell asserts, “when an individual, dyadic, or collective subject takes some goal-directed action . . . the subject might choose from a range of tools (e.g., lexical and syntactic items. . . That is, there are variable mediational means of accomplishing a goal” (Russell, 1997, p. 515). Though a number of choices could have been made regarding the tone and tenor of speech genres, regarding the content of printed texts that contributed to collaboration and coordination, and regarding the use and implementation of ICTs, the IPNW team chooses (whether strategically or unintentionally) to utilize genres in ways that encourage the process of identification and congruence within the group. In this way, the genres used by the IPNW team help to reinforce a shared, common goal and establish a common and cohesive identity and direction for the organization. Burke (1969) calls this realization of shared goals and common substance, “consubstantiality” (p. 21). Consubstantiality is not automatically realized in the process of identification. Instead, identification is developed in degrees. Consubstantiality represents the recognition of commonality in communion with diversity. Despite differences, the IPNW team acts in unison towards common, local SMGs. As Burke asserts, “in acting together, we have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes: these make us consubstantial” (p. 21). Miller asserts that these commonly shared goals and ideals “give us a common substance, which, reciprocally, enables and enhances our common actions” (Miller, 1984, p. 72). This concept of consubstantiality is grounded in Burke’s positioning of the theme of identification as a cornerstone of rhetoric and persuasion. For Burke, identification is inherent in persuasion. The

process of identification (with a cause, with a person, or an organization) promotes and progresses toward consubstantiality, without denying uniqueness or division. Burke explains:

Here are ambiguities of substance. In being identified with B, A is “substantially one” with a person other than himself. Yet at the same time he remains unique, an individual locus of motives. Thus he is both joined and separate, at once distinct substance and consubstantial with another. (p. 21)

The IPNW team members see themselves as working toward a common goal, but functioning within individual practices and spheres of influence. The team members are separate, yet the same. The team members identify with one another regarding a common cause, common beliefs, and ideals. However, division and diversity is not ignored, largely because of the specific foci of team members’ individual work (for example, a litigator whose first priority is a client and who works within the criminal justice system, contrasting with a policy lawyer who works to affect changes in legislation within the state legislative system) and division of labor. In fact, according to Burke, division is a constituting element of identification and consubstantiality. Burke notes that “identification implies division” because in order to identify with an entity or thing, one has to acknowledge that other entities or things are different and separate (p. 45). Further, according to Burke, division can “sharpen our understanding of identification” (p. 150) and that the “very argument for dissociation is association” (p. 153). Burke posits that, in engaging in social human activity and working together—what Burke calls “acting together”—cohesion and consubstantiality develops. In this sense, as team members of the IPNW work toward the established SMGs of the local organization, they “act together,” and as Burke asserts, acting-together is an unavoidable way of life; “in acting-together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes that make them consubstantial” (p. 21). The IPNW team,

though divided by job roles, job titles, and communities of practice, is able to communicate in such a way that the individual tensions and contradictions coexist with cohesion.

This consubstantiality through the use of mediating tools (genres) is not a simple or uncomplicated feat. However, the process of identification and the achievement of consubstantiality is a necessary accomplishment in any organization, but possibly even more necessary in activist organizations and social action organizing. Cheney (1983), a scholar in organizational communication, asserts that “persuasion is inherent in the process of organizing” (p. 144). Further, persuasion (identification and consubstantiality) provides the foundation for organizing and this rhetorical process can occur in a number of ways, both implicitly and explicitly, and through any number of generic forms. Cheney notes that “organizations . . . attempt to influence members through oral messages from management; with bulletins, handbooks and house organs; in labor negotiations; by offering an array of benefits and services; and through personnel selection, socialization, training and promotion” (p. 144). The IPNW encourages the process of identification and the achievement of consubstantiality through its use of genres (though much of this is done implicitly and possibly, unknowingly). However, this implicit process of identification enacted in the activities of the IPNW is not unusual. In fact, Cheney asserts that “organizations frequently do ‘help’ . . . facilitate[e] identification through their myriad means of communication. Thus, while an individual has the ability to identify spontaneously with an organizational target, the ‘move’ is often encouraged by the organization in its dealing with the member” (p. 146). In fact, the organizational member is often not aware of the persuasive pull of identification and consubstantiality. Cheney posits that “an individual who is inclined to identify with an organization (or an organizational subunit) will be open to persuasive efforts from various sources” (p. 146). These efforts are often written into genres that

help to establish or explain organizational values and goals. In regard to the IPNW, these genres include the team meetings where goals and criteria are discussed, printed documents that include goals that are explicitly listed, and in genres enacted in ICTs that point to values and goals of the Network. As Cheney notes, “the organization ‘initiates’ this inducement process [the process of persuasive identification] by communicating its values, goals, and information in the form of guidelines for individual and collective action; the member may then ‘complete’ the process by adopting or adapting the organization’s interests, doing ‘what’s best’ for the organization, and perhaps even developing a salient identification with the organization as a target” (pp. 146-147). We see an example of this in the IPNW team meetings where criteria and goals are discussed. Further, we see that team members do indeed “complete the process” of identification with the IPNW organization—at times, putting their personal work-related goals aside to do what is best for the organization and its cause. Further, Cheney posits that in accepting the goals and values of an organization and becoming “socialized” within that organization, the “outer-voice” (what Cheney terms the “values and goals of the organization—and in terms of the IPNW, what would be considered the SMGs), the “socialization is termed ‘successful’ from the organization’s standpoint” and, in turn, “the member will ‘see’ his or her ‘reflection’ in the social mirror of the collective, the interests of the individual and the organization will overlap or coincide” (p. 147). In essence, the member identifies with the organization and consubstantiality is achieved. For the IPNW as a node in a networked organization, we see that the local members are not only socialized and identify with the local organization, but they also identify with the larger networked organization (the Innocence Network) and are consubstantial with the Network. The director, Jill, plays a large role in this socialization and identification process. Jill, as a board member of the Innocence Network and director of the IPNW, identifies and is consubstantial

with the Network. She has identified with and accepted its values and goals. In turn, those larger Network motives and values manifest at the local level (because Jill already subscribes to the motives, values, and goals of the network—she is successfully socialized to them). Even though the Network is not often discussed and the motives and values of the Network are not clear and explicit to team members, they are apparent at the local level. In this way, the “outer-voice,” as defined by Cheney, “can be traced to a particular social unit”—the Network (p. 147). And, as follows, identification and consubstantiality is apparent at the individual, local, and network level of the organization.

Identification, to the degree of consubstantiality, as it is encoded in the genres of the IPNW (that is, identification strategies¹⁴ that are apparent within genres) and enacted in the communicative practices of the organization is not explicit and the process of identification may not be apparent or obvious. Burke (1974) notes that the “major power of identification derives from situation in which it goes unnoticed” (p. 28). In regard to the IPNW, the process of identification goes unnoticed. That issue is still not clear and my data does not reveal much about the intentionality of identifying with and encouraging consubstantiality in the IPNW. However, through my observations of behaviors and collection and analysis of artifacts, it is apparent that the process of identification, whether intentional or not, does occur at the IPNW. In fact, one of Jill’s primary goals as the director is to create a sense of community among her team members (Jill Interview 3). Though Jill is the only member that specifically mentioned a sense of community and cohesion as a goal, all members of the IPNW team have a stake in creating a sense of identity with the organization. Like many organizations, for the IPNW, identification is

¹⁴ Identification strategies are different from the process of identification. Identification strategies are rhetorical moves that can be recognized in a genre. The identification strategies, in other words, are the persuasive mechanisms by which the process is carried out.

essential in advancing the accomplishments of their SMGs. Cheney (1983) points to some strategies by which the process of identification and consubstantiality occurs within organizations. A number of these strategies (intentional or otherwise) are apparent in the communicative practices of the IPNW. One strategy that Cheney describes, and is ascertainable in the IPNW communicative practices is the “common ground technique” (p. 147). The common ground technique, an identification strategy, assumes a common value system and common beliefs and draws on the perceived agreement to encourage consubstantiality. Cheney describes the common ground technique as a strategy where “the rhetor equates or links himself or herself with others in an overt manner” (p. 148) —for example, when team members ask what are the next steps that *we* can take or what cases will *we* accept. Using the pronoun *we* explicitly connects the individual to the team. Cheney notes that the using the pronoun *we* as a common ground strategy is “both a subtle and powerful identification strategy because it often goes unnoticed” and “uses of this strategy . . . present similarity or commonality among organizational members as a taken-for-granted assumption” (p. 154). Another strategy of identification employed by the IPNW is the “identification through antitheses” technique (p. 148). Identifying through antitheses encourages the imagery of “us versus them.” As Cheney states, it is “the act of uniting against a common enemy” and organizations can “implicitly stress identification with ‘insiders’ (i.e., members of the organization) as an effort toward achieving unity and collective acceptance of organizational values” (p. 148). This identification strategy manifests in the IPNW’s adoption of the Innocence Project name, whose mission seeks to reform the criminal justice system by, as asserted by the IPNW, “working to redress the causes of wrongful convictions” (IPNW). Yet another way that identification is developed is in the way that the IPNW seeks to find common ground by presenting “praise by outsiders” to encourage

consubstantiality (p. 152). Praise by outsiders “encourage[s] the employee to identify with the organization by representing the views of others. Implicit in the statement is the idea that employees should hold the same positive view of their employer that actors in the environment do” (p. 152). This is observed in the sharing of a greeting card by a client as a success story and also can be examined through the links to YouTube videos and news stories on the IPNW Facebook page. Finally, the Innocence Network encourages the identification process and achievement of consubstantiality through the use of a “unifying symbol”—the Innocence Project name. Cheney notes that identifying symbols (which are also identification strategies) stress the significance of a “name, logo, and [or] trademark” (p. 155). Further, Cheney notes that “guidelines that instruct the employee how to use the trademark cause it to take on tremendous significance; it is portrayed as a revered symbol not unlike a nation’s flag” (p. 155). The Innocence Network’s criteria and guidelines for organizations to use the Innocence Project in its title in this way implicitly encourages the process of identification and achievement of consubstantiality, at a network level, for its individuals and its separate local affiliates.

Mediation and Identification in the Activity Network

Considering the completion of work and accomplishment of goals through the use of tools (genres) and the embedding of rhetorical identification strategies within those genres provides a more comprehensive view of the IPNW activity network. Mediation is important because it reveals the means through which work is completed and carried out and how subjects interact with the environment and transform objects. Activity theory places an emphasis on “the interaction between people and their environment” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 1996, p. 70). Further, the use of tools is sociocultural in that “tools are created and transformed during the development

of the activity itself and carry with them a particular culture—the historical evidence of their development. So the use of tools is an accumulation and transmission of social knowledge” (p. 70). Rhetorical identification strategies embedded in these genres as mediating tools is then filtered through the historical, sociocultural perspective of the artifact. Through identification strategies embedded in mediational tools—the genres—present in the IPNW ecology, individual activities aggregate into the local organizations activities creating an multidimensional activity network. On a macro-level, several of the affiliated Innocence Project organizations aggregate to establish the Innocence Network (though this line of study was outside of the scope of my research). On the micro-level, local organization’s SMGs are aided and supported by identification strategies embedded in the genres in use at the IPNW. Further, the identification process is integrated and infused in the communicative and work activities of the organization. In this way, the process of identification represents a need for the IPNW, an object that must be transformed to reach an established outcome. In order for the local group to organize around local SMGs, and in order for the net work (the “coordinative work that weaves and splices divergent activities and that enables the standing sets of transformations that characterize work”) of the organization to be completed, the individuals must work through the process of identification (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 135). The figure below (Figure 10) illustrates the manner in which this activity network is structured.

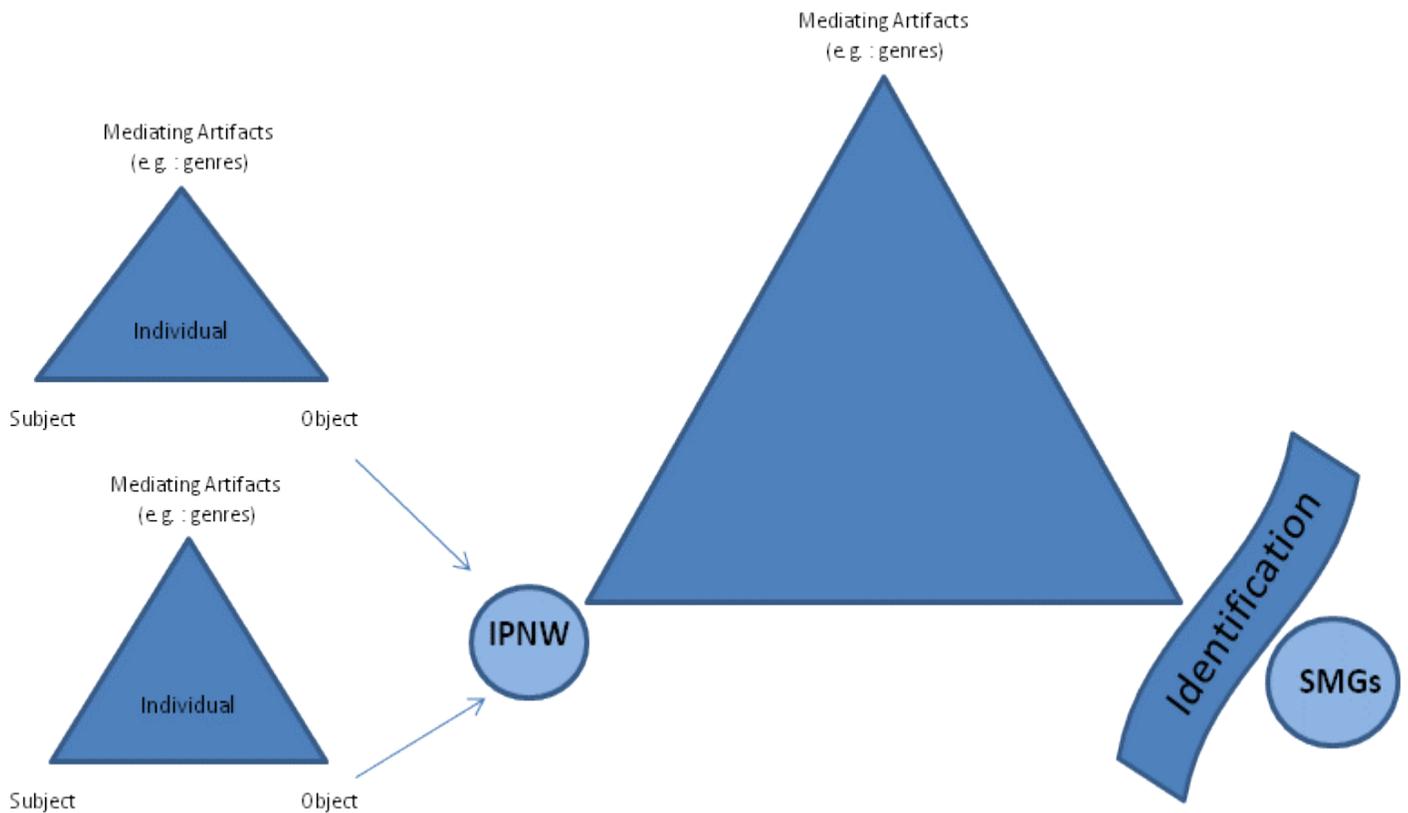


Figure 10. SMGs Realized through Identification in the Activity Network

As illustrated above, the process of identification must be accomplished en route to recognizing and realizing the shared, local SMGs of the IPNW. More broadly, however, identification, when applied to the study of activity networks, demonstrates one theoretical perspective as to how networks are enacted and attempts to address Spinuzzi's questions: "How is network done? That is, how are networks constructed and repaired, how are new nodes added, and how do workers collaborate? How are collaborators recruited and persuaded to help" (Spinuzzi, 2008, p. 135) and

acknowledges the need to answer questions like “How and why do people get together for collective activity? How do people find and communicate with one another for purposes of joint work?” (Kaptelinin & Nardi, 1996, p. 27). My answer to these questions is through rhetorical identification strategies that are strategically or unintentionally embedded in and enacted through mediating artifacts like genres. Moreover, including the rhetorical concept of Burkean identification in studies of activity networks also helps to bring rhetorical and associational to the framework.

Communicative practices of the IPNW as realized through the creation and use of genres encourage the process of identification and achievement of consubstantiality at the network, local and individual levels. Examining the rhetorical process of identification and achievement of consubstantiality within a networked activist organization allows us to “logically extend our conceptions of the rhetoric of identification and. . . broaden the application of identification in rhetorical criticism to include other domains of discourse” (Cheney, 1983, p. 144). Specifically in relation to my study, investigating how the IPNW communicates to reconcile disparate individual goals and to meet local SMGs that align with larger organizational motives, in addition to how the communicative practices of the organization aid or hinder goals, revealed that identification and consubstantiality are at the core of successfully accomplishing goals within a network—accomplishing net work. My study acknowledges and highlights that divisions of labor and competing individual goals do exist within networked organizations. It reaffirms that fact that “any organization must, at least part of the time, subordinate individual [and local] needs to those of the collectivity if it is to “act” as an organization” (p. 156). However, the implications of my study suggest that identification, or “intentional and unintentional attempts by the organization to induce identification on the part of the employee,”

as it is encoded and embedded in an organization's mediating tools (genres) is central to an organization's success (p. 156). The process of identification is transformational. Through this process heterogeneous and seemingly inconsonant goals become unified, advancing the accomplishment of meaningful social action and activist work by the organization.

Summary

The IPNW communicates to reconcile disparate individual goals to meet SMGs that align with larger organizational motives through the process of identification and promoting consubstantiality among a diverse group of individuals. This cohesion is reinforced by the team acting-together in attempts to seek justice for a specific, disenfranchised population. The communicative practices of the IPNW team members emphasize commonality over diversity (in print and speech genres, as well as genres enacted in ICTs). The organization's communicative practices contribute to and aid in the IPNW's ability to accomplish local SMGs and align with larger network motives. Ultimately, like many other activist organizations, the success of the IPNW hinges greatly upon the ability of members to relate to a cause or ideal and establish and maintain a sense of community and a cohesive identity. Consubstantiality transcends divisions of labor and individual motivations and goals. This is evidenced in my observations of the IPNW team. My analysis also reveals that while the tensions, contradictions, and differing perspectives at the IPNW are very real, these issues have the potential to be mitigated and overcome (though, I acknowledge that tensions and contradictions in a network can also be productive and useful). Diversity and division can be acknowledged or embraced. Moreover, commonalities and creating a sense of cohesion is paramount in order to successfully achieve activist-related goals. Consubstantiality—realization of a shared sense of purpose, common ideals and beliefs, and

shared experiences—attained through identification strategies mediated through organizational genres provides a foundation for networked, activist-oriented work of the IPNW. Further, the rhetorical concept of identification, along with careful attention to the implications of mediation in communicative practices provides another perspective to help scholars more comprehensively understanding communication in networks.

Chapter 6: Conclusions

Contemporary activism presents a complex and dynamic field of study for scholars in technical communication and rhetoric. Because of the heterogeneous and networked nature of activist organizations and social movements, this domain offers rich opportunities for cultivating deeper understandings of how networked organizations communicate and realize goals. My study examined a contemporary activist organization as a distributed, networked organization constituted of individuals with disparate goals who were dedicated to working toward a commonly shared socially-motivated goal (SMG). In addition to focusing on how the organization sought to achieve local SMGs my study also examined how the local activist organization reconciled their disparate individual goals and local shared SMGs in order to align with network-level motives. Ethnographic research methods were employed to provide a close, contextual examination of the local group. In addition, through interviews and artifact collection, I investigated how mediation (in the form of three specific categories of genres) was used in the communicative practices of the local organization and how these communicative practices supported the work oriented toward the accomplishment of established SMGs. In this final chapter, I first revisit my research assumptions and hypotheses presented in Chapter 1. Then, this chapter emphasizes my contributions to the fields of rhetoric and technical communications (broadly defined). In addition, I address some of the challenges and limitations of my study. I then highlight implications for pedagogy. And, finally, I point to possibilities for future research. This chapter ends with some concluding thoughts commenting on my research and my experience (rather than developing any analytical or theoretical concepts).

Research Assumptions and Hypotheses

In Chapter 1 of my dissertation, I detailed my assumptions as a researcher in the form of three hypotheses. Below, I restate the hypothesis and point to areas of divergence based on my findings and analysis.

Hypothesis 1: I expected that the local instantiation of the larger networked organization communicates often with the larger organization in order to ensure alignment of goals and motives. Due to the distributed nature of the network, I assumed that the mode and method of communication is often by email messages, other information and communication technologies (ICTs) like teleconferences or via phone.

Based on my findings and analysis, hypothesis 1 proved to be incorrect. Despite the networked nature of the IPNW and the Innocence Network, the local organization is not in close contact with the Network on a regular basis. In addition, the IPNW rarely used phone or teleconferences to reach out to other affiliated projects or the Network. Instead, the IPNW relied on specialized listservs to communicate with other affiliated projects. In addition, the IPNW collected information from the innocenceproject.org website and repurposed the information gathered for localized contexts. I was surprised to find that in an organization that is networked and distributed, such as the Innocence Projects, local affiliates were not reliant on structured and regular communication with the Network. However, my findings show that the local organization can be oriented toward and open to ascribing to the network-level motives and local-level goals through identification strategies embedded in the documents that are used by individual members. My findings also prove that it is likely that, through carefully presented

rhetorical identification strategies, the motives and goals will align, even if they are not explicitly disseminated or discussed.

Hypothesis 2: I hypothesized that, also due to the distributed nature of the network, the communicative practices of the local instance of the network are effective and aid in the accomplishment of established goals. This assumption was based largely on the success record of the local organization.

Hypothesis 2 assumed that the communicative practices of the IPNW supported the accomplishment of SMGs. Based on my findings and analysis, this hypothesis was proven to be true. More tellingly, however, was the way in which the communicative practices of the IPNW supported the realization of SMGs—the *how*, rather than the *if*. The IPNW team employed genres that encouraged identification and promoted consubstantiality among team members. These genres, embedded with rhetorical identification strategies, allowed team members to develop a sense of collective cohesion through reflective communication, shared narratives, and intimate speech. Team members identify with a shared and common goal. Genres encouraged identification helped to account for team members' actions.

Hypothesis 3: I anticipated that the mediating tools that most affect local communicative practices would be those genres that are enacted in information communication technologies (including social networking and digital media) because these systems often support distributed and collaborative work.

Hypothesis 3 was not proven to be true. In fact, despite literature that points to the reliance of distributed, networked organizations, like activist organizations, on the use of ICTs (see Chapter

2 of this dissertation), my findings suggest that, for local instantiations of a networked organization, more traditional genres (like genres enacted in print and speech) may have more of an impact on the communicative practices that support collaborative work and encourage coordination at the local level. Based on the findings supported by my genre ecology model of the IPNW, the genres enacted within ICTs (websites, social media, and listserv announcements) were the least evident and least collaborated about within the organization. In fact, genres enacted in speech (as observed through weekly team meetings) were central to the communication (coordination and collaboration) of the IPNW team. Genres enacted in speech, particularly by Bakhtinian intimate speech acts, were used overwhelmingly by team members. Genres enacted in print were also used frequently and often facilitated collaboration at team weekly meetings.

In summation, my initial hypotheses may reveal some gaps in our understanding of communication in a dynamic, networked organization. My findings underscore the following conclusions: (1) the rhetorical concept of Burkean identification is an important consideration for understanding how networked, heterogeneous organizations communicate and work to achieve common goals, (2) genres, as mediating artifacts, are embedded with identification strategies that can implicitly and explicitly promote consubstantiality within an organization, and (3) identification on the local-level of a networked organization is not always most readily achieved through the use of genres enacted in ICTs—more traditional types of genres, like genres enacted in print and speech, play a vital role in contributing to the development of a cohesive collective.

Contributions

My research presents a number of contributions to the fields of technical communication and rhetoric, as well as to scholars in the fields of activism and social action. These contributions include: (1) demonstrating how Activity Theory (AT) and Genre Ecology Modeling (GEM) theoretical frameworks can be used in conjunction to highlight how genres work together, both rhetorically and mediational, to facilitate identification in a network, (2) encouraging the consideration of the rhetorical concept of identification when applying AT to an examination of networks or other dynamic and complex organizations in order to provide another perspective on how knowledge work is mediated, and (3) examining how all three major categories of genres (print, speech, and genres enacted in ICTs) interrelate in a networked organization.

AT and GEM Theoretical Framework

Activity theory provides a very adept framework for understanding the mediational functions of genres as artifacts. In addition, AT acknowledges human ingenuity in the use of the mediational artifacts and the transformative nature of artifacts on subjects and the environment. On the other hand, a GEM framework approach focuses attention on genres as mediational artifacts specifically. In essence, a GEM framework scrutinizes how certain genres allow individuals to accomplish specific activities and how genres mediate one another. These two theoretical perspectives, used in conjunction, provide a more comprehensive view of the mediational and rhetorical functions of genres. Using these two approaches in conjunction is not a novel approach; however, a specific contribution of my study in regard to these two complementary theoretical perspectives is that I demonstrated the impact that a rhetorical

concept, such as identification, has on the process of mediation. Moreover, my study illustrated how genres, working together, achieve identification.

Identification in AT Networks

One of my primary contributions to the fields of technical communication and rhetoric is encouraging the consideration of identification in the study of activity networks. My study showed that identification is a process that can be facilitated through communicative practices and the use of shared genres. More specifically rhetorical identification strategies can be embedded in genres as mediating artifacts. In order for local groups to organize around a commonly shared goal, the group must work through the identification and mediation processes. Identification and mediation are, in this sense, important co-components to consider in an activity system. As a network attempts to coordinate actions and goals, the rhetorical nature of identification must be examined as it exists as a means through which the network attains desired outcomes.

Comprehensive, Situated Genre Studies

As noted in the literature review of this dissertation (Chapter 2), situated genre studies examine genres as they are used in local, contextualized environments. The benefits of a situated genre study are many, including a better understanding of contextualized use, the sociocultural impact of genres, and attention to sociotechnical concerns of genre use. Situated genre studies that are all-encompassing, meaning studies that consider all types of genres and the various ways that genres are enacted, provide an even more comprehensive understanding of how individuals are using genres to complete activities. Furthermore, by studying genres in context through an

ethnographic field study, my findings provided me with detailed data that would not have been as rich or complete if I had relied on artifact analysis alone. Being able to investigate genres in use allowed me to produce a GEM that was reflective of my ethnographic method. This comprehensive understanding will necessarily take into account, not only the genres themselves, but cultural concerns (like expectations historically-embedded assumptions), technical concerns (like the effects of technological mediation and nuanced human behavior that appropriates texts to be used with or without technology), social concerns (like how the genres reflect and mediate relationships among individuals), and rhetorical concerns about genres in use.

Challenges and Limitations

My study, like any research study of this magnitude, has limitations that should be acknowledged. The first limitation concerns data and artifact collection decisions that I made during the design and development of my study. The second limitation of my study relates to the development of my global theme of identification.

Traditionally, scholars tend to focus on one major genre category in their research (genres enacted in print, speech, or in ICTs). While including special attention to all three interrelated categories of genres during my study provided me with a comprehensive view of the communicative practices of an organization, there was simply no way of successfully collecting, recording, and analyzing the plethora of data and artifacts in each generic category. In addition, some data was not made available to me due to IPNW client privacy concerns. This posed a limitation for my study in that, as a researcher, I was required to make hard decisions about which texts in each generic category played a central role in the communicative practices and work-related activities of the organization. To that end, some artifacts were not collected and

some data was not included in my study. I realize that all texts used by individuals or team members of an organization serve some purpose in the completion of the work activities (even if this purpose is not obviously evident to a researcher). Further, each text, even those not used frequently or deemed as inconsequential, in some way mediates other activities and/or other texts that may have a significant impact on the manner in which communication occurs. Quite simply, when undertaking a study that includes an examination of all genres used by a complex, networked organization, the vast amount of information available about the genres can be overwhelming.

Another limitation of my study is that the scope of my study did not afford me the opportunity to consider the specific *types* of rhetorical identification that are facilitated in each genre, and how, depending on identification type and genre type pairings, the realization of goals may have been enhanced or hampered. Identification is a broad topic that has been extensively examined by scholars from a number of fields. Identification occurs in degrees and the overarching theme of the process of identification is constitutive of at least three major types of identification (material identification, idealistic identification, and formal identification). An examination of each type of identification as it manifests in the genres that I studied would have provided an even more rich investigation of the function of identification in a complex, networked organization. Though this level of detail was beyond the scope of this study, a research project that includes a consideration of identification types would be valuable. Overall, despite the aforementioned limitations, my study thoughtfully and carefully considered issues relevant to technical communication, rhetoric, and activism and revealed novel conclusions that point to new avenues to be explored in pedagogy and scholarship.

Implications for Pedagogy

As an instructor, I wanted to ensure that my study contributed to scholarly research in technical communication and rhetoric. To this end, my research points to implications for technical communication pedagogy. First, based on my findings and analysis, my study suggests that it is important to consider all categories of genres in technical communication courses. The GEM analysis provided some insight on the importance for understanding how genres interact and mediate workplace activities. Facilitating students' understanding of how genres interrelate will provide students with a more comprehensive view of how genres are used in context by illuminating which genres are best used to accomplish specific activities and support individual and collective actions. Further, as students better understand how genres are interconnected, they develop skills for conceptualizing genres, not as formulaic text types, but as socially and rhetorically constructed tools that can be used to advance and support work-related goals. Courses that are designed so that they include a focus on genres enacted in print, speech, and ICTs provides a more realistic representation of what students should be prepared for when entering the workplace. Introduction and advanced level technical communication courses in the Human Centered Design and Engineering (HCDE) department at the University of Washington, Seattle (where I currently serve as an instructor of record for the aforementioned courses), include course assignments that take into account print, speech, and technologically mediated genres. Students enrolled in these courses must meet course objectives that require students to acknowledge the commonalities, nuances, and interconnectedness of each generic category.

In addition to understanding the interrelation of print, speech, and technologically-mediated genres, my findings also support discouraging an overreliance on the affordances of

ICTs in an organization. Our students are often inundated with messages filtered through technology. While an understanding of how technology supports communicative practices in workplaces is important, instructors must be careful to also explain the limitations of technology in the workplace. My study showed that genres enacted in speech and print still take a central role in the workplace. It is necessary for students to be aware of the capabilities and limitations of employing the use of genres that are technologically mediated (ICTs) in order to promote a solid foundational understanding of the rhetorical function of all genres.

Finally, my study calls for instructors to seek an interdisciplinary perspective for helping our students understand workplace communication. Often times, the university system relegates genres enacted in speech to Communication departments, writing genres to English departments, and genres enacted in ICTs to Information Schools. As instructors, it is important to encourage an approach that seeks to reveal how all forms and genres of communication function across curricular boundaries.

Future Research

My study has the potential to encourage future research in the field of technical communication in a number of ways. First, one of the central findings of my study was that identification is key to understanding how heterogeneous, networked organizations achieve a commonly shared goal. More studies of the impact of identification in activity networks would help to provide foundational knowledge as to how identification affects the capacity of a network to achieve established outcomes. In addition, studies such as the one suggested can help to answer questions like: Since identification is a process that is achieved by degrees, what happens when identification is low in an AT network? What happens when identification is high in an AT

network? And, through what mediational processes is the process of identification integrated within an AT network?

Another future study that would provide a more complete conceptualization of the impact of identification in activity networks may address the different types of identification realized through the shared use of genres in a network. As mentioned earlier, there are three different types of identification that have been identified. A study that considers the type of genre, in addition to the type of identification strategies present, and examines how the pairings function as a mediational artifact may address the question: How do different types of identification manifest in genres as mediational artifacts in activity networks?

Finally, studies that are dedicated to a closer examination of the mediation process and the role that identification plays in that process can encourage a dialogue between AT and Actor-Network Theory (ANT), in addition to promoting a developing conceptualization of AT as more rhetorical and relational.

Concluding Thoughts

My dissertation provided me the opportunity to reflect on the amazing story of the IPNW and also envision how I see myself contributing to the fields of rhetoric, technical communication, and activism in the future. The small group of lawyers, students, and volunteers at the IPNW are an impressive group of people. They are truly activists who tenaciously seek to affect the justice system in Washington State in lasting and meaningful ways. This team epitomizes the substantive connections between academia and communities that many from within the university system seek. It is my hope that, as a researcher, I can likewise contribute to communities in need through my academic scholarship and community activities.

As I continue my academic career, I aim to find ways to merge my interests in technical communication, rhetoric, and activism. I desire to complete a cross-site analysis of other Innocence Project affiliates in the future. My personal goal is to be able to contribute to the Innocence Movement through my research, but also become more directly involved in the activist-oriented work in a manner that will enhance both theory and practice in all three fields of study.

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Appendix A: Consent Form and Information Statement

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON INFORMATION STATEMENT

Networks, Activity, and ICTs: The Sociotechnical Nature of Contemporary Activism

Department of Human Centered Design & Engineering

Investigators: Natasha Jones Doctoral Candidate jonesnn@u.washington.edu

RESEARCHER'S STATEMENT

I am asking you to be in a research study in which I will observe you, ask questions about your actions, and interview you (formally and informally). The purpose of this statement is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether to be in this study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I will ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When I have answered all your questions, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "informed consent." I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

PURPOSE

This study involves research and seeks to provide a qualitative analysis of how activist-oriented organizations communicate, collaborate, and coordinate within a larger network of organizations with socially-motivated goals. The conclusions reached aims to provide insight as to how similar organizations can accomplish large-scale established social goals while simultaneously meeting smaller-scaled organizational goals.

THE EXPECTED DURATION OF THE SUBJECT'S PARTICIPATION

The expected duration of the subject's participation is approximately 6 months.

PROCEDURES

As a participant in this study, I will observe your typical work and communication activities. Observations will be approximately up to 3 hours each time and may be scheduled periodically for up to six months. I may ask questions or request further explanations about your work or communication activities. In addition, I will interview you (both formally and informally). You may refuse to answer any interview questions at any time. The most sensitive question that you may be asked to answer is for you to explain why you made a decision to complete a work or communication activity in the way that you did or to explain your goals or personal motivation behind completing a work or communication activity. The interviews may be voice-recorded and transcribed. This ensures accuracy of the information collected. In addition, in order to gain a better understanding of the communication and collaboration practices of the organizations and the individuals involved with the organization, I will also attend organization conferences and meetings. These meetings and conference proceedings may be voice-recorded and transcribed. I will also take handwritten or typed notes at these events in order to gain a better understanding of

how the organization communicates. I will also, **with your permission**, collect documents that include, but are not limited to, interoffice correspondence, intraoffice correspondence, emails, memos, legal brief, letters, handwritten notes, flowcharts, and other workplace genres, and make voice recordings. For documents that do not lend themselves to collection, I will take photographs. No photographs of any subject's likeness will be taken or used in my research.

To protect the subject's rights and interests, I will take precautions to ensure subject confidentiality and make photographs anonymous. The following precautions will be taken:

- The names of affiliates, members, and volunteers will be replaced with pseudonyms.
- Photographs will only be taken with permission of the IPNW director.
- Photographs will be destroyed upon completion of my degree program and publication of research.

To protect the subject's rights and interests, I will take precautions when keeping written transcripts and voice recordings:

- Written transcripts will be kept in a locked cabinet in my on-campus office.
- Voice recordings will be destroyed after transcripts have been made. Written transcripts will be destroyed after completion of my degree program and publication of my research.
- The written transcripts will be shredded and no digital copies will be made after that time.

In addition, any photos of documents that may be taken or copies of digital correspondence that may be collected will be password protected and destroyed after the completion of my degree program and publication of my research.

No video recordings will be made of subjects, affiliates, or any part of the IPNW organization (meetings, conferences, or daily operations). Subjects' identities will be protected with pseudonyms. In the case where pseudonyms are not enough to protect subject identification, other information, such as job title or function, will be withheld (unless otherwise agreed upon by and with written permission of the subject). Finally, names of subjects will be withheld in any public presentations or publications of my research. Pseudonyms will **always** be used in making reference to the subjects in public presentations or publications of my research. To further safeguard subject's confidentiality, the names of the subjects will not be attached to the interview tapes. Each tape will be given a code number or name that correlates with the subjects. The list of code number or names and the subjects' names will be kept in a locked file apart from the interview tapes.

You have the right to refuse to share a documents or any information with me at any time. Further, you have the right to redact permission at any time. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits.

RISK, STRESS, OR DISCOMFORT

Risk, stress, or discomfort will not exceed risk, stress, or discomfort beyond that which is normally associated with their typical work environment. Subjects will be given an opportunity to review the recordings and delete any portions.

ALTERNATIVES TO TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY

Subjects may choose not to take part in this study. If a subject chooses not to take part in this study, subjects may choose to continue their normal daily work activities without my observations or interruptions.

BENEFITS

Your input to the study will help provide insight about the nature of communication in activist-oriented organizations. You may gain insight into how effective your communication and work practices may be, though this is not guaranteed. There are no financial benefits related to this study.

OTHER INFORMATION

You are free to refuse to participate in the study and may withdraw at any time without penalty. Your name will not be used in the tabulation of the results, final data, or written reports in order to ensure confidentiality. A coding system will be used to link subjects to interviews and audio-recordings. These links to identifiers will be broken by January 1, 2013. No researcher (other than the primary investigator—Natasha N. Jones) or agency will have access to your information. All of the information you provide will be confidential. However, if we learn that you intend to harm yourself or others, we must report that to the authorities. In addition, government or university staff sometimes reviews studies such as this one to make sure they are being done safely and legally. If a review of this study takes place, your records may be examined. The reviewers will protect your privacy. The study records will not be used to put you at legal risk of harm. Finally, you have the right to redact permission at any time, to refuse to answer any question, and to refuse to participate in any observations or study activities. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of any benefits.

SUBJECT'S STATEMENT

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later about the research, I can ask the researchers listed above. If I have questions about my rights as a research subject, I can call the Human Subjects Division at (206) 543-0098. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

Printed name of study participant

Signature

Date

Printed name of study staff obtaining consent

Signature

Date

Appendix B: Interview 1 Protocol

IPNW Interview Protocol Interview 1

1. How long have you been working with the IPNW?
2. What is your title?
3. Describe your primary job at the IPNW.
4. What are your primary communication roles at IPNW?
5. How do you communicate primarily with at IPNW? What are your primary modes of communication (email, meetings, etc)?
6. What do you usually communicate about and to whom?
7. Describe your individual goals/objectives for being involved with IPNW?
8. How do you decide or establish those goals?
9. Describe what you understand about the goals/objectives of the IPNW organization.
10. Describe what you understand about the goals/objectives of the IPNW and the Innocence Member Network.
11. Describe what you understand about the goals/objectives of other IP organizations in other states.
12. Explain if you think the goals align and how.
13. From your experience, how does the IPNW set organizational goals and what communication techniques or documents or systems (genres) does the IPNW use to set the goals?
14. From your experience, how does the IPNW set organizational goals and what communication techniques or documents or systems (genres) does the IPNW use to communicate the goals to all involved?
15. Describe the purpose of the IPNW weekly meeting (as you understand it).
16. What agenda/purpose do you bring to the weekly meetings?
17. Is there anything you would like to share (about communication/goals)?

- When do you use Amicus? ([REDACTED])
- Idea behind using students on clinic/ clinic work?

Appendix C: Interview 2 Protocol

1. How often do you use Amicus?
2. For what reasons (purposes) do you use Amicus?
3. How often do you use J-Drive?
4. For what reasons (purposes) do you use J-Drive?
5. What listservs (if any) do you use?
6. For what reasons (purposes) do you use the listserv(s)?
7. How often do you contribute to discussions on the listserv(s)?
8. Do you use the Innocenceproject.org website? If so, how often do you access the site?
9. For what reasons (purposes) do you use the innocenceproject.org website?
10. Do you use any other technologies for your work at IPNW (websites, blogs, podcasts, discussion boards, etc)? If yes, please list the technologies that you use?
11. For what reasons (purposes) do you use other types of technologies?
12. Does using the technologies you listed above help you to reach your specific *work-related* goals at IPNW? How?

13. Does using the technologies you listed above help you reach *individual* goals that you have set for yourself in regard to your career or work at IPNW? How?

14. Do you use any social networking sites (like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) for your work or work-related activities at IPNW? If so, how?

15. Is there anything that you would like to share about your use of technology to accomplish individual or work-related goals?

Appendix D: Interview 3 Protocol

- 1) How do you evaluate success for the IPNW team?
- 2) How do you evaluate success for your individual work at the IPNW?
- 3) How do you evaluate success for the Innocence Movement (other Innocence Projects, etc)?
- 4) How do you share your success with the IPNW team? (That is, through stories? via email? sharing cards/notes received from those impacted by your work?)
- 5) How do you share your success with others in the Innocence Movement?

Appendix E: IPNW Questionnaire Form

Innocence Project Northwest Screening Questionnaire

Please return to: IPNW at University of Washington School of Law
William H. Gates Hall, [REDACTED] • [REDACTED] • Seattle, Washington [REDACTED]

NAME _____ TODAY'S DATE _____

PRISON INMATE (DOC) #: _____ DATE OF BIRTH _____

ADDRESS: _____

SUPERIOR COURT CASE # _____ APPELLATE CASE # _____

PRISON COUNSELOR, NAME AND NUMBER _____

DATE OF OFFENSE: _____ CONVICTION DATE: _____

EXPECTED RELEASE DATE: _____

INSTRUCTIONS: Please answer, as fully as you can, all of the questions that apply to your case. The more information we have, the better we can assess your case.

I. Briefly Describe the Prosecution's Theory of Your Case at Trial (what the prosecutor said happened):

Briefly Describe the Defense's Theory of Your Case at Trial (what your defense attorney said happened and why you are innocent of the crime):

II. Briefly Describe Why Your Case Should Be Taken By Innocence Project Northwest. Explain Why You Are Innocent. And Why You Believe You Were Wrongly Convicted.

Would You Be Willing To Submit To A DNA Test Knowing That The Test Could Prove Your Guilt OR Innocence? Yes _____ No _____

Is There Any Physical Evidence Still Available? Yes _____ No _____

**If Yes,
What is It?**

Where Is It?

Who Has It?

Was It Used At Trial? Yes _____ No _____ If No, Why Not?

III. Attorney and Court Information

1. Date Of Incident:
2. Date Of Arrest:
3. Investigating Detective (*Name, Address*):

4. Charges:

5. Name(s) Of Alleged Victim(s):

6. Date and Place Of Conviction (*Town, County, State*):

7. What Were You Convicted Of?

8. What is Your Sentence?
9. Pre-Trial Attorney (*Name, Address, Telephone*):

10. Pre-Trial Prosecuting Attorney (*Name, Address, Telephone*):

11. Trial Attorney (*Name, Address, Telephone*):

12. Trial Prosecuting Attorney (*Name, Address, Telephone*):

13. Judge (*Name*):

APPEAL (if you did NOT appeal, please go to Section IV, CASE MATERIALS)

14. What Court Heard Your First Appeal? _____

15. On Appeal Was Conviction:

Affirmed _____ Reversed _____

Date Decided: _____

Date of Mandate: _____

Cite to Published Opinion _____

16. Was a Petition for Review with Washington Supreme Court Filed?

Yes ___ No ___

Granted? Yes ___ No ___

Date Granted or Denied _____

17. Did the Washington Supreme Court Hear Your Case? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, was conviction Affirmed _____ Reversed _____

Date Decided: _____

Cite to Published Opinion _____

18. Was a Personal Restraint Petition (PRP), Habeas Corpus Petition, or other collateral attack filed? Yes _____ No _____

Date Filed:

Who Filed the Petition? You _____ An Attorney _____ Other _____

If an attorney filed your petition, please provide us the *attorney's name, address, and telephone number*:

What issues were raised in your PRP or Habeas Corpus Petition?

Has the Court Responded to your PRP or Habeas Corpus Petition?

Yes ___ No ___

If Yes, Date Decided: _____

If Yes, What was the Court's Response? _____

IV. Case Materials

(Check those documents you can make available to us. Please do not send anything until we specifically request it)

22. Hearing Transcript(s) _____

23. Trial Transcript(s) _____

24. Police Report(s) _____
(Please describe):

25. Laboratory Report(s) _____
(Please describe):

26. Appellate Briefs:
Appellant's Opening Brief (defense) _____
Respondent's Brief (prosecution) _____
Appellant's Reply Brief _____
Court of Appeal Opinion _____
Petition for Review _____

27. Other Post-Conviction Documents: _____
(Please describe):

V. About You and Your Case

28. What Is Your First Language?

I would be better able to answer this question if it were in the _____ language and I ask that you send me a questionnaire in that language.

29. What Is The Highest Grade Level You Completed In School? _____

30. Please Give A Brief Description Of Your Work History.

31. Does New Evidence Exist In Your Case That Would Lead To Proving Your Innocence? Describe. (Note: evidence introduced at trial is **not** new evidence).

32. Why Do You Think The Victim(s), If Any, Made Complaints Against You?

33. Can You Prove You Were NOT At The Scene Of The Crime When The Crime Was Committed? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, how?

Can Anyone Else Verify This?

Do you have some OTHER way to prove this alibi? No _____ Yes _____
If yes, how?

34. Did The Police Or Investigating Detective Ever Interview You?
 Yes _____ No _____
 A. How long were you interviewed? _____
 B. Did you ask to speak with a lawyer during the interview? _____
35. When Was The First Time You Spoke With Your Lawyer After You Were Arrested?
36. Did You Give A Statement/Confession? Yes _____ No _____
 If Yes, To Whom Did You Give The Statement?
- A. Was your lawyer with you when you signed the statement? Yes _____ No _____
- B. Was it a written statement? Yes _____ No _____
 If yes, did you sign it? Yes _____ No _____
- C. Why did you give a statement?
37. Did You Plead Guilty? Yes _____ No _____

IF YOU WENT TO TRIAL, please answer the following questions: (if you did NOT go to trial please go to question #45)

38. Did You Testify? Yes _____ No _____
 If no, why didn't you testify?
39. Did Any Alleged Victim(s) Testify? Yes _____ No _____

40. Did An Expert(s) Testify For The Defense Or
the Prosecution? (Doctors, Scientists...) Yes _____ No _____

A. What Kind Of Expert(s) Testified For The Defense? *(Include Names,
Addresses, & Telephone Numbers)*

B. What Kind Of Expert(s) Testified For The Prosecution? *(Include
Names, Addresses, Telephone Numbers)*

41. Who Else Testified At Your Trial?
Defense *(Name(s), Address, Telephone):*

Prosecution *(Name(s), Address, Telephone):*

42. Did Any Alleged Victim(s) Identify You? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, when and where? *(Example: At the scene of the crime, line up, in
court, other)*

43. Did Anyone Else Identify You? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, who, when and where?

44. If Someone Other Than The Alleged Victim
Identified You, Did That Person Testify? Yes _____ No _____
(Name, Address, Telephone):

45. What is the Race of the Victim(s) _____
Initial Description of the Perpetrator _____
You _____

IF YOU PLED GUILTY, please answer the following questions: (If you did not plead guilty, go to question #57)

46. Did Your Attorney Talk To You About The Plea Agreement?
If yes, what did your attorney say to you? Yes _____ No _____
47. If English is Not Your First Language, Did An Interpreter Explain The Plea Agreement To You? Yes _____ No _____
48. Did You Understand The Plea Agreement Yes _____ No _____
A. Did you understand the charges? Yes _____ No _____
B. What did the plea mean to you?
49. Was The Plea In Writing? Yes _____ No _____
50. If The Plea Was In Writing, Did You Sign It? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, was your attorney present? Yes _____ No _____
51. Did You Understand What You Were Signing? Yes _____ No _____
If not, what did you think you signed?
52. When Did You Go To Court And Plead Guilty?
53. Did The Judge Ask You If You Understood The Plea Agreement? Yes _____ No _____
54. Was Your Attorney With You In Court When You Pled Guilty? Yes _____ No _____
If not, did you ask for your attorney? Yes _____ No _____
55. Did You Want To Plead Guilty Or Did You Want To Go To Trial?

56. Why Did You Plead Guilty?

57. Did You Know That You Could Attempt to
Withdraw Your Plea? Yes _____ No _____

If yes, did you try to withdraw your plea? Yes _____ No _____

**IF PHYSICAL AND/OR BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE WAS RECOVERED, please
answer questions 58-76 as completely as you can: (If physical and/or biological
evidence was NOT found, go to question 77)**

58. Was Any Physical And/Or Biological Evidence
Recovered During The Investigation Of Your Case? Yes _____ No _____

59. Were Any Bodily Fluids, Hair Samples or Fibers Obtained From the Victim?
(For example: vaginal or anal swabs, blood, or saliva) Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what samples were obtained?

60. Were Any Bodily Fluids, Hair Samples or Fibers Obtained
From You? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what samples were obtained?

61. Were Bodily Fluids, Hair or Fibers Found At The
Crime Scene? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what was found?

62. Were Bodily Fluids or Hair Found On Your Clothing? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what was found?

63. Were Any Bodily Fluids Found On The Victim's Clothing?
(For example: blood or semen stains) Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what was found?

73. Were The Results Of The Tests Used At Trial? Yes _____ No _____
If not, why not?

74. Were The Results Of The Tests Used After Trial? Yes _____ No _____
If not, why not?

75. List ANY Item(s) Of Evidence That you Think Can Be Subjected To A DNA Test (And how that test will show that you are innocent):

76. Would You Be Willing To Submit To A DNA Test Knowing That The Test Could Confirm Your Guilt Or Innocence? Yes _____ No _____

77. Would You Be Willing To Submit To A Lie Detector Test To Assist In Proving Your Innocence? Yes _____ No _____

78. Please Give Names, Addresses And Phone Numbers Of Family And Friends Who Have Information Regarding Your Case:

79. Is There ANY Other Information You Think Would Be Helpful For Us To Know About your Case?

64. Was Any Testing Done On The Bodily Fluids,
Hair or Fiber Samples? Yes _____ No _____

65. What Kind Of Testing Was Done?

66. Who Had The Testing Done? Prosecution _____ Defense _____

67. Who Actually Did The Test? (*Name, Address, Phone Number*)

What Were The Results Of The Test?

68. Was A Second Test Done? Yes _____ No _____

69. What Type Of Testing Was Done?

70. Who Arranged The Second Test? Prosecution _____ Defense _____

71. Who Actually Did The Test? (*Name, Address, Phone Number*)

What Were The Results Of The Test?

72. Was Testing Done On All Of The Physical/Biological Evidence
Recovered During Your Case's Investigation? Yes _____ No _____

Was Anything NOT Tested?

UW School of Law

INNOCENCE PROJECT NORTHWEST CLINIC
University of Washington School of Law
William H. Gates Hall • [REDACTED] • Seattle, Washington [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

CONSENT FOR RELEASE OF INFORMATION

I, _____, hereby authorize any and all entities and persons, including my former attorney(s) _____

to release to The Innocence Project Northwest, or to its staff or student representatives, any and all records, files, reports, and information of any kind related to me or to any criminal case involving me.

I fully understand that there may be statutes, rules, and regulations that protect the confidentiality of some of the records, files, reports, and information covered by this release; it is my specific intent to waive the protection of all such statutes, rules, and regulations. By my signature below, I represent that this waiver is voluntary and given without any reservation.

Signed this ___ day of _____, 20__.

Signature

This is the end of the Innocence Project Northwest Screening Questionnaire.

- *Please check to make sure you have fully answered all questions that apply to your case.*
- *Attached is a **Consent for a Release of Information form**. Please **sign** the form and **fill in** the relevant blanks. This form will allow Innocence Project Northwest to contact your former attorneys, the police, witnesses, and other individuals who may assist us in proving your innocence.*
- *Please return your completed questionnaire and consent form by mail to:*

**Innocence Project Northwest Clinic
University of Washington School of Law
William H. Gates Hall, Suite [REDACTED]
P.O. Box [REDACTED]
Seattle, WA [REDACTED]**

- *Please **do NOT** send IPNW any documents, other than the completed questionnaire and consent form at this time. We will ask you for further documentation when we deem it necessary.*
- *Thank you for your time and effort completing this questionnaire.*

We will contact you as soon as possible.

Appendix F: IPNW File Organization Document

IPNW File Organization

DRAFT 11/29/11

The IPNW Clinic uses the following structure for documents stored in the client's electronic (J: drive) file. The empty file structure can be copied from the "Joe Template" client file folder at the outset of the case. Paper files should be kept in binders with tabs set up with a similar structure.

- ☞ Case Information
 - Questionnaire
 - Legal Services Agreement
 - Investigation Plan
 - Document Index
 - Transcript Summary
 - Witness Charts
 - Evidence Log
 - Timelines/Chronology
 - Transfer Memos
- ☞ Correspondence (should include letters & saved emails)
 - ☞ Client Correspondence
 - ☞ Document Requests
 - Police reports
 - Crime lab reports
 - Court documents
 - ☞ General Correspondence (rename as appropriate – some cases may need a folder for specific people with whom there is a lot of back and forth but in general would be best to avoid a bunch of extra sub-folders if we can)
- ☞ Court Decisions
- ☞ Experts
 - ☞ John Doe
 - Resume/CV
 - Retainer Agreement
 - Chart of Materials Provided
 - Articles
 - Interview Memos
 - Reports
 - Declarations
 - Court Orders
 - ☞ Jane Doe
- ☞ Notes
- ☞ Pleadings
 - Trial Court Pleadings

- COA Pleadings
- Supreme Court Pleadings
- Post-Conviction Pleadings
- 📁 Press
- 📁 Reports & Evidence
 - Police Reports (Identify Agency)
 - Photographs (Identify Source)
 - Crime Lab Reports
 - DSHS Reports
 - Others
- 📁 Research
 - Related Cases (may want sub-folder for specific issues)
 - Articles
- 📁 Transcripts
 - Volume/Date
- 📁 Witnesses
 - 📁 John Smith
 - Interview Memos (Identify interviewer source & date)
 - Criminal History/Background Info
 - Excerpts from other documents (police reports, transcripts)
 - 📁 Jane Smith

VITA

Natasha is originally from Augusta, GA and possesses a Bachelor's degree in Print Journalism from Georgia State University and a Master's Degree in Technical and Professional Communication from Auburn University. She began her doctoral degree at the University of Washington in 2007 after discovering her passion for teaching at the university level, receiving her Doctor of Philosophy in Technical Communication from the Human Centered Design & Engineering (HCDE) department in 2012. As a PhD student, Natasha has taught a number of courses for the HCDE department, served as an instructor for the Professional and Organizational Development program, and managed the Engineering Writing Center. In 2011, Natasha received the University of Washington Excellence in Teaching award, a university-wide award presented to only two graduate students each year. Natasha has accepted an assistant professor position at a research university and will continue her career in teaching and research in the fall as she continues to work to expand her interests in activism and communication. As a single mother of a young daughter, Natasha hopes that her work and scholarship will inspire and empower young women to seek education as a pathway for creating positive personal, professional, and public change.