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Gratia Sullivan April 14, 2020

Marketing the Pro-Choice Agenda: Planned Parenthood and the Nonprofitization of Reproductive Rights in the United States

by

Gratia Sullivan

Dr. Kim Loudermilk

Adviser

Institute for Liberal Arts

Dr. Kim Loudermilk

Adviser

Dr. Deric Shannon

Committee Member

Dr. Mary Frederickson

Committee Member

Dr. Robyn Fivush

Committee Member

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Dr. Kim Loudermilk

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Abstract

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As one of the most well-known nonprofit organizations in the United States, Planned Parenthood occupies a constitutive place in the American sociopolitical imaginary. This paper critically examines Planned Parenthood's history and current position within the reproductive rights world in order to understand why this organization, like all other nonprofits, is limited in its ability to catalyze significant social change. I illustrate this point by providing an overview of scholarship about nonprofits and charitable contributions, performing an analysis of Planned Parenthood's historical eras, and analyzing Planned Parenthood's virtual marketing materials. I argue that, despite Planned Parenthood's remarkable success, the organization's outsized social and political influence and dominant status as a nonprofit organization fundamentally limits the progress of reproductive rights in the twenty-first century. In order to conceptualize an equitable future, the relationship of nonprofit organizations to social change must be reconfigured in order to prioritize people over professionalization, problem-solving over bureaucracy, and creative thinking over profits.

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Introduction

In December 2019, Planned Parenthood ran a pop-up on its website with the following message: “Patients are counting on Planned Parenthood, so we're counting on you. Make your generous, tax-deductible gift today so we can keep up the fight. You know what's at stake: Affordable, high-quality reproductive health care. Safe, legal abortion. Comprehensive sex education” (2019). This donation appeal, which calls the security of the organization’s work into question, suggests that if donations are not secured, reproductive healthcare services such as abortion and sex education could become unavailable. Since 1912, Planned Parenthood has positioned itself as a key player in the reproductive rights movement, and the organization’s history illustrates how nonprofit organizations have grown to control social movements and service provision in the United States. Unfortunately, nonprofit organizations provide an inadequate platform through which to protect the reproductive rights of millions.

To say that Planned Parenthood is a well-known, influential nonprofit organization would be an understatement. With over 600 health centers nationwide, Planned Parenthood provides contraception, STI testing and treatment, cancer screenings, birth control, abortions, and other reproductive and sexual health services to millions of Americans annually. One in five American women has received care at a Planned Parenthood clinic, demonstrating the breadth and scope of the organization’s service delivery. In addition to its role as a health services provider, Planned Parenthood has 56 affiliate offices that work to protect American’s access to reproductive healthcare through political advocacy and educational programming (Planned Parenthood). With its combination of health centers and advocacy-focused offices located across the country, Planned Parenthood has grown into a powerful and well-known political brand. A 2018 poll

conducted by NBC News and the Wall Street Journal found that among adults in the United States, Planned Parenthood was the most popular political institution, beating out #MeToo and the FBI (Murray, 2018).

By the numbers, Planned Parenthood holds considerable financial power. In 2018, Forbes named the Planned Parenthood Federation of America the 27th largest nonprofit organization in the United States, surpassing organizations like UNICEF and Doctors Without Borders in private support and total revenue. In that year, Planned Parenthood solicited $533 million dollars in private support, contributing to a whopping $1.46 billion dollars in total revenue (Forbes, 2018). These numbers are impressive, given that 66 percent of nonprofit organizations have annual budgets of under $1 million (GuideStar, 2017). Beyond what can be demonstrated numerically, Planned Parenthood occupies a visible space in the American imaginary, moving beyond mere name recognition to represent the protection and growth of reproductive rights in the United States. This can be demonstrated through the support of big-name celebrities, including pop star Ariana Grande, who donated almost $250,000 in concert profits to the organization following a wave of restrictive abortion laws in 2019 (France, 2019). Additionally, conservative groups have long articulated their attacks on abortion access as attacks on Planned Parenthood, demanding that the government revoke federal funding from the organization.

From dining room tables to government meetings, many mainstream conversations about reproductive rights today seem to involve Planned Parenthood. Searching “Planned Parenthood” on the New York Times’s website yields a whopping 10,015 results, pointing to how the organization has positioned itself as a flagship in the reproductive rights world. The positive effects of this influence can be demonstrated tangibly through its long list of accomplishments: Planned Parenthood made birth control available to millions starting in 1920, made emergency

contraception widely available in the 1990s, and pressured the FDA to approve mifepristone in 2000 (Planned Parenthood). These successes should not be understated, as Planned Parenthood has organized, fundraised, and researched to improve American's access to reproductive health services for over 100 years. With Planned Parenthood's influence and power, however, comes limitations.

This thesis will critically examine Planned Parenthood's history and current position within the reproductive rights movement in order to understand why the organization, like all other nonprofits, is limited in its ability to catalyze significant social change. The United States is still far from achieving reproductive equality, and a careful examination of Planned Parenthood's contemporary role in 2020 will help make sense of the overlapping social currents that affect our capacity for progress. I argue here that despite its remarkable success, Planned Parenthood's outsized social and political influence and dominant status as a nonprofit organization fundamentally limits the ability of the reproductive rights movement to make progress in the twenty-first century. In this historical moment, the organization's enormous infrastructure and overwhelming dominance within the reproductive rights movement hinders further progress in gaining reproductive rights for the American people.

For one, Planned Parenthood's power and inability to operate under the radar make them vulnerable to outsized attacks from conservative groups. Republican politicians have introduced bills that would prohibit those on Medicaid from using their coverage at Planned Parenthood, and in February 2019, the Trump administration announced that Planned Parenthood would no longer receive Title X funding, previously used to help low-income Americans receive healthcare services (Belluck, 2019). The news coverage of these events centers Planned Parenthood as the target of these attacks on reproductive rights; however, this promotes the idea

that Planned Parenthood is the only provider of reproductive health services and emblematic of the entire pro-choice agenda. Planned Parenthood's influence allows them to be scapegoated, putting its patients in a vulnerable position.

In addition, Planned Parenthood's outsized influence takes attention away from other voices in the reproductive rights movement. When restrictive abortion bans emerged around the country in 2019, Planned Parenthood launched a successful campaign titled #BansOffMyBody that generated significant donations, including $1 million from Facebook Chief Operating Officer Sheryl Sandberg (Fang, 2019). At the same time that Planned Parenthood solicited these large donations, small abortion clinics without the same marketing power remained unable to raise staff wages or provide fences to protect those receiving abortion services from protestors (Lerer, 2019). Planned Parenthood's influence allows them to retain financial power and steer the conversation around reproductive rights. Even though Planned Parenthood offers valuable ideas and resources, its political agenda and conceptualization of reproductive rights is not the only one. Particularly as activists and organizations consider new frameworks such as reproductive justice, Planned Parenthood's influence must be questioned.

Lastly, Planned Parenthood's status as both an advocacy group and a health services provider complicates the organization's capacity for radical change. In order to protect its patients, Planned Parenthood must be careful not to push politicians or the public forward when they are not ready, as doing so would jeopardize the organizations ability to provide healthcare services to everyday Americans. Overstepping politically could result in Planned Parenthood's nonprofit status being challenged, threatening the tax benefits and federal funding Planned Parenthood relies on to keep clinic doors open. Looking to Planned Parenthood to tell us what is most needed means that the broader reproductive rights movement is hindered by Planned

Parenthood's status as a nonprofit organization. This is not the fault of Planned Parenthood, but begins to illustrate the shortcomings of the nonprofit model of social change.

Although this paper is focused on Planned Parenthood and reproductive rights, the larger underlying issue is the belief that labor performed in the nonprofit sector can solve deep-rooted social problems. The proliferation of 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) organizations in the United States since the 1970s reflected expanding neoliberal[1] ideologies, characterized by shifts away from government-provided services and belief in the free-market. When it comes to social change, neoliberal thought purports that it can and should be made through a market-based nonprofit sector. While nonprofits perform important activities that the government does not provide, they also manage the way that social antagonism is expressed. By sanctioning involvement with nonprofit organizations through tax breaks, grassroots activism is marginalized and radical ideas are ignored in favor of gradual, capitalist models of change. Scholars refer to this phenomenon as the nonprofit industrial complex, which will be explored more substantively in Chapter One.

Additionally, the increasing marketization, bureaucratization, and professionalization of the nonprofit sector has moved nonprofit organizations further away from its ability to engage in work that challenges the mainstream. As the number of nonprofits increases, more and more Americans are seeking employment in 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) nonprofits like Planned Parenthood, resulting in nonprofit employers seeking specific skill sets in areas such as fundraising and programming. As nonprofits continue to professionalize, the qualifications of grassroots activists and community organizers are devalued, further contributing to the neoliberal alignment of many nonprofit organizations. Although the vast majority of nonprofit

[1] I use the term "neoliberalism" in this context to refer to the ideology that change can be made through the free market.

organizations are small grassroots organizations, attention and resources are disproportionately distributed to powerhouse organizations like Planned Parenthood (GuideStar, 2017).

Planned Parenthood can be used as a rich example of how the nonprofit sector has come to dominate our understanding of social change in the United States, as well as an indicator of where the reproductive rights movement might be headed. I argue that, although the nonprofit sector fills an important role in American society by providing services and expressive value that the government does not, its ties to the state and private funders make it incapable of enacting the radical change that is necessary to address reproductive inequalities. The nonprofit sector is fundamentally unable to address racism, sexism, homophobia, and class elitism, all of which enable reproductive inequalities to persist. In fact, nonprofit organizations frequently reproduce these inequalities. Thus, although Planned Parenthood is a valuable tool in keeping health services accessible and affecting political shifts, focusing exclusively on its activities or the activities of other nonprofit organizations will not lead to lasting solutions.

In Chapter One, I explore the parameters of the nonprofit sector in the United States as well as their sociopolitical[2] role in the American imaginary. The nonprofit sector has grown dramatically since the 1970s, indicating a turn towards market-based attempts at social change. The United States's web of nonprofit organizations provide crucial social services, political interventions, as well as opportunities to engage with one's beliefs. Despite this, scholars exploring the nonprofit industrial complex have demonstrated how nonprofit organizations are fundamentally limited by their ties to the government and private funders. I end the chapter by considering theories about nonprofit donations, which can serve to fluff the ego of the donor,

[2] I use the term "sociopolitical" to describe something that is influenced by both social and political factors. The nonprofit sector in the United States, for example, influences and is influenced by both social factors (such as attitudes towards charity and volunteering) and political factors (such as policies that affect the nonprofit sector).

guide nonprofit organizations towards donor preferences, reduce innovative efforts, and maintain economic inequality writ large. Nonprofit organizations provide avenues for Americans to express their values, gain employment, and create community, but the conceptualization of their role as a primary method for social change is erroneous.

Situating Planned Parenthood within the nonprofit sector will allow for an in-depth exploration of its organizational history and ambitions in Chapter Two. This chapter delves into the history of Planned Parenthood in order to establish the organization in the present. I outline four epochs of Planned Parenthood's organizational focus, demonstrating how the group has realigned itself according to the social climate of the time. Though once focused exclusively on birth control, Planned Parenthood shifted to support abortion access and later a broader social justice agenda.[3] Despite adapting effectively to over a hundred years of challenges, the limits of the nonprofit form can be illustrated throughout Planned Parenthood's history, showing that it is necessary to engage critically with Planned Parenthood as the organization continues to occupy a large space in the American political realm.

In Chapter Three I perform a visual analysis of Planned Parenthood's recent social media activity in order to understand how the organization explains its priorities and role in the reproductive rights movement. Although the group performs admirable outreach online, the content that Planned Parenthood creates and promotes presents a commodified version of social change that appeals to liberal understandings of privilege and oppression. I argue that Planned Parenthood's marketing works to position the organization as the solution to reproductive inequality, creating a convincing argument for potential donors while glossing over the issues the organization cannot solve.

[3] In this paper I adopt Samimi's definition of social justice, which is defined as "a concept that is concerned with ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all people" (Samimi 2003 pg. 23)

Ultimately, this paper questions the capacity that nonprofit organizations have to reduce and/or eliminate reproductive inequality in the United States. By using Planned Parenthood as a vehicle for these conversations, it is possible to work toward answering questions that affect the trajectory of social movements in the twenty-first century. Given that all nonprofit organizations are implicated in webs of power, how might they operate while better acknowledging this reality? Is it possible, or desirable, to abolish the nonprofit sector in the United States, and what alternatives exist? How might we best organize to work towards increased reproductive freedoms, particularly for those who have been left behind by the mainstream pro-choice movement? These topics are important to consider as those interested in reproductive rights negotiate how our time, energy, and money is spent.

Chapter One: The Repressive Functions of Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofits are seen as the embodiment of America's best values: generosity, compassion, and eternal optimism (Berry, 2003, p. I). From homeless shelters to hospitals, Americans see nonprofit organizations as sites of political and social change. Despite widespread belief in the inherent goodness and productivity of nonprofit organizations, there is considerable uncertainty among Americans about the parameters of nonprofit organizations and the nonprofit sector itself (Frumkin, 2002, p. 1). Thus, it is necessary to break down what we mean when we say "nonprofit organization." What are nonprofit organizations as they are functionally defined? What is the structure of the nonprofit sector in the United States? What are nonprofits capable of achieving, and in what ways are they limited? This chapter begins to answer these questions by exploring the sociopolitical role of nonprofit organizations in the United States. I join scholars like Andrea Smith and Myrl Beam in arguing that although nonprofit organizations perform important social functions and create opportunities for value expression, their capacity to catalyze substantial social change is fundamentally limited by their ties to the state and private funders. In addition to nonprofit organizations, this chapter will highlight the functions of charitable contributions, which promote a neoliberal perspective that social change can be purchased via financial support to nonprofits. While exploring these topics, I offer information about Planned Parenthood to begin situating the organization within the American nonprofit sector.

Scope, Regulations, and Funding of the Nonprofit Sector in the United States

As of 2015, there were approximately 1.56 million registered nonprofits in the United States, representing a total of $2.54 trillion in revenue and $5.79 trillion in assets (McKeever, 2018). These 1.56 million organizations, diverse in form and function, are primarily identified

according to their status with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). The IRS recognizes more than 30 types of nonprofit organizations, each of which receive degrees of exemption from federal and state taxes. There are 501(c)(5) labor and agricultural organizations, 501(c)(8) fraternal societies, 501(c)(19) veterans associations, 527 political organizations, and more. Of the many types of nonprofit organizations, 501(c)(3) nonprofits are the most prominent in both number and influence. 501(c)(3) nonprofits include religious, scientific, literary, and charitable organizations such as churches, universities and schools, hospitals, public charities, private foundations, etc. (IRS). Presently, 501(c)(3) nonprofits account for more than three-quarters of the revenue and expenses for the entire nonprofit sector (McKeever, 2018).

Donations to 501(c)(3) organizations are tax deductible, and the organizations themselves do not pay taxes to the federal government. The amount that an individual donates to 501(c)(3) organizations, for example, can be deducted from that person's taxable income. 501(c)(3) nonprofits are also exempt from federal taxes, sales taxes, and property taxes. These tax benefits are based on the idea that 501(c)(3) organizations exist exclusively for "charitable purposes." Based on the assumption that they are operating for a universal good, 501(c)(3) nonprofits are prohibited from performing partisan political activities and cannot engage in "substantial" political involvement. The IRS writes that 501(c)(3) organizations "may not attempt to influence legislation as a substantial part of its activities and... may not participate in any campaign activity for or against political candidates" (IRS). These regulations are imprecise, and as a result a fair amount of political activities can still be performed by 501(c)(3) organizations, so long as their activities are not considered "substantial" and do not "have the effect of favoring a candidate or group of candidates" (IRS). If audited by the IRS, violation of these parameters can result in the nonprofit status of that organization being revoked.

As a result of these restrictions, many 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations create affiliated 501(c)(4) and 527 organizations to broaden the scope of their political involvement. These hybrid organizations are allowed to share staff and resources, so long as their finances remain separate. 501(c)(4) organizations, broadly categorized as social welfare organizations, are permitted to lobby as well as participate in political activity that supports or opposes political candidates as long as their political involvement advances the organization's social welfare purposes and is not the organization's primary activity. They cannot, however, participate in political campaigns (Reilly, 2003, p. L-2). 527 organizations, defined by the IRS as "party, committee, association, fund, or other organization[s]" are often joined to 501(c)(3) organizations to address this restriction. Under a 527 organization, political contributions and endorsements are permissible. Due to their political inclinations, 501(c)(4) and 527 organizations do not receive the same tax benefits as 501(c)(3) organizations.

Although we think of Planned Parenthood as a singular entity, in reality Planned Parenthood is a web of nonprofit organizations that enable its divergent functions. Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA), Inc is a 501(c)(3) organization that carries out Planned Parenthood's direct service (i.e. abortion, STD testing, etc) and educational activities. There are 56 affiliate organizations of PPFA and over 600 health centers currently operating in the United States (Planned Parenthood Federation of America, 2019). In addition to PPFA, Planned Parenthood Action Fund (PPAF), a 501(c)(4) organization, engages in "grassroots organizing, legislative advocacy, and voter education, to promote and protect women's health and reproductive rights" (Planned Parenthood Action Fund, 2019). As determined by the IRS, these activities are not permissible under a 501(c)(3) framework, which creates the need for an affiliated 501(c)(4). Lastly, Planned Parenthood is affiliated with two 527 organizations, Planned

Parenthood Votes, a super Political Action Committee (PAC), and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund PAC. PAC's are limited in how much money they can spend in electoral politics and how much they can solicit in donations, while super PACs can spend and solicit unlimited amounts of money so long as they do not contribute directly to candidates (Ballotpedia). This organizational form extends to regionally based Planned Parenthood offices as well. In Massachusetts, for example, there is a 501(c)(3) Planned Parenthood League of Massachusetts and a 501(c)(4) Planned Parenthood Advocacy Fund of Massachusetts. Thus, although Planned Parenthood is conceptualized as one huge nonprofit organization, their legal structure is a network of independently registered 501(c)(3), 501(c)(3), and 527 nonprofits.

Exploring how nonprofit organizations are funded helps to contextualize the role of individual charitable contributions. Presently, nonprofit revenue comes from the following sources: fees for services and goods from private sources (50 percent), fees for services and goods from the government (23.1 percent), private contributions (12.9 percent), government grants (9.2 percent), investment income (3.6 percent), and other income including bequests and foundation grants (1.2 percent) (Candid, 2019). These revenue breakdowns are not representative of all nonprofit organizations, as each individual organization has their own revenue streams. Planned Parenthood Federation of America, including both the national office and geographic affiliates, receives 36 percent of their $1,638,000,000 dollar revenue from private contributions and bequests, 37 percent from government health services reimbursements and grants, 23 percent from non-government health services revenue, and 4 percent from other sources. Of this revenue, 60 percent is used to provide medical services, 18 percent is used for non-medical services, 14 percent is used for general support, 7 percent is used for fundraising, and 1 percent is used for other expenses (Planned Parenthood, 2019).

This brief overview of the nonprofit sector in the United States illustrates the depth of the sector as well as the financial and legal complexity that nonprofit organizations must contend with. This is particularly true for Planned Parenthood, which contains hundreds of separate nonprofit organizations all working towards Planned Parenthood's mission to provide sexual and reproductive health services alongside educational and advocacy work. This information is helpful in explaining the factual parameters of the nonprofit sector, and engaging with theory about nonprofit organizations will make it possible to understand what role nonprofit organizations play in American society.

The Socio-Political Role of Nonprofit Organizations

According to Virginia Commonwealth University professor Myrl Beam in his book *Gay, Inc*, "the nonprofit occupies a constitutive place in the American imaginary" (2018, p. 21). Often referred to as the "third sector," nonprofits are thought of as separate from the state and the market, despite their substantial ties to both. Reflective of this imaginative location, there is considerable scholarly conversation about the sociopolitical role of nonprofit organizations and the nonprofit sector writ large, particularly following the nonprofit sector's exponential growth in the late 20th century. Based on sociological, political, and economic theories, some scholars understand the nonprofit sector as a positive entity that allows citizens to express their values and improve their communities, while others argue that the nonprofit sector functions to remove responsibilities from the state and promote American neoliberalism. Many also point to the ways that the nonprofit sector is evolving, inching closer towards a marketized and bureaucratized approach to their activities. Understanding the social role of Planned Parenthood and their charitable contributions requires an exploration of these theories. Ultimately, the sociopolitical role of nonprofit organizations and the nonprofit sector remains a contested space.

First, why does the nonprofit sector exist? One attempt to answer this question comes from a market model of democracy. This model posits that in a democracy, when a majority of people think a good or service is necessary, they will pressure the government to provide that good or service. The goods and services that are not provided by the government then have to be provided by other sectors, including the nonprofit sector (Clemens, 2006, p. 207). In other words, the nonprofit sector offers what the government withholds but some members of the population still consider a necessity. These arguments, conceptualized by scholars such as Douglas, Weisbrod, and James, "use the traits and preferences of citizens to explain the development of nonprofit sectors and the distribution of activities across states, markets, households, and variously defined 'third sector'" (Clemens, 2006, p. 207). This theory positions both the citizens and government as beneficiaries of the nonprofit sector, as the emergence of nonprofits both relieves the government from providing additional goods and services and gives citizens what they wanted in the first place. Nonprofits emerge organically as the result of unmet desires, providing an alternative to the private sector and causing little harm to citizens and the state.

Other scholars base their ideas about why nonprofits exist on theories of political associations. This conceptualization is based on the work of political philosopher Alexis de Tocqueville, whose 1835 text *Democracy in America: Historical-Critical Edition* pointed to the "art of association" as key to explaining the ways that American society functions and addresses problems (Tocqueville, 1835). The role of associations in a democracy are numerous, as they function as a "capacity for collective or political action that may be exercised as an extension of elite power, as a vehicle for the mobilization of disadvantaged or disgruntled constituencies, or as an expression of the diversity of commitments in a pluralized society" (Clemens, 2006, p. 208). Almost 200 years later, Tocqueville's theory holds true as these numerous functions are

reflected in the actions of nonprofit organizations, which organize ideological groups through political education, provide spaces for marginalized groups to connect, and reflect the wishes and desires of those who become involved with the organization. Rather than simply meeting material needs, the nonprofit sector is a key provider of community in democracies.

Emerging scholarship draws attention to a darker side of the nonprofit sector. Straying from the idea that the sector merely responds to unmet needs and provides spaces for community, in *The Revolution Will Not Be Funded: Beyond the Nonprofit Industrial Complex,* Smith argues that nonprofits function as a tool of the state to limit social movements. Since the 1970s, social justice organizations have operated within a 501(c)(3) nonprofit model, primarily in order to access funding from private foundations (Smith, 2007). Rather than allowing citizens to express themselves and participate politically in a democratic society, nonprofit organizations perform a variety of functions that ultimately suppress social change while simultaneously appearing to promote it. The state monitors and controls social justice movements by encouraging activists to work within the nonprofit framework, where their dissent can be easily monitored by the IRS. Corporations improve their image through collaboration with nonprofit organizations, utilizing corporate social responsibility campaigns to present themselves as more ethical than they actually are. Through foundations, money remains untaxed under the assumption that it will be used for the public good, while groups seeking foundation grants are often forced to bend to the will of foundation executives in order to obtain any benefit from these untaxed funds. Additionally, as nonprofit organizations are publicly accepted while other actions such as protesting are frowned upon, individuals are encouraged to address their concerns through involvement with nonprofit organizations alone. As a result, the reach of social movements is limited (Smith, 2007). Dylan Rodriguez, a scholar from the University of

California, Riverside, terms these problems that the nonprofit sector causes the Nonprofit Industrial Complex, defined as "a set of symbiotic relationships that link political and financial technologies of state and owning class control with surveillance over public political ideology, including and especially emergent progressive and leftist social movements." Ultimately, our increasing reliance on nonprofit organizations limits the capacity of citizens to catalyze substantial social change.

In a manner similar to Smith and Rodriguez, Beam describes nonprofit organizations as vehicles for maintaining neoliberalism and capitalism in the United States. Beam explains the rise of nonprofit organizations in the 1960s as the result of two converging factors: political narratives that shrunk government-sponsored social safety nets, and a parallel social narrative emphasizing volunteerism and charity. As the social safety net shrunk, more and more nonprofit organizations emerged to address the gaps in service provision that were produced (Beam, 2018, p. 23). He cites Wolch's "shadow state" metaphor to describe these historical trends, which describes the nonprofit sector as "a para-state apparatus… administered outside of traditional democratic politics and charged with major collective responsibilities previously shouldered by the public sector" (Beam, 2018, p. 25). Nonprofit organizations exist in a "shadow state" because their support by the state and public image as positive social forces limits the amount of critical investigation they receive. Beam concludes that "all nonprofits, even small, politically radical grassroots organizations, are implicated in this web of state power, corporate wealth, and the disciplining function of charity" (2018, p. 34). Although many nonprofits offer valuable ideas about what societal changes might be made, it is impossible for a nonprofit to apply these ideas without supporting the state and market in the process, at the very least due to their financial reliance on these sectors. In Planned Parenthood's 2018 Annual Report, for example, the

organization boasts the support of more than 180 corporate executives, contributing to their $315 million dollars in private donations that year (Planned Parenthood, 2018). At the end of the day, nonprofits operate more similarly to businesses than social movements.

Beyond theories about why the sector exists, many have worked to categorize the traits and roles of nonprofit organizations. Peter Frumkin's 2002 book *On Being Nonprofit* offers an explanation of the primary traits of nonprofit organizations as well as their political functions. Frumkin describes the nonprofit sector as "the contested arena between the state and market where public and private concerns meet and where individual and social efforts are united" (2002, p. 1). Nonprofits, to Frumkin, exist in a space that is independent from the government and the for-profit world. They do not coerce participation, do not distribute profits to stakeholders, and exist without clear lines of ownership and accountability (Frumkin, 2002, p. 3). To Frumkin, nonprofits perform four primary functions: promoting civic and political engagement, delivering critical services within communities, providing an institutional vehicle for social entrepreneurship, and allowing for the expression of values and faith (Frumkin, 2002, p. v). The nonprofit sector needs to succeed in each of these functions in order to sustain financial support and public acceptance (Frumkin, 2002, p. vi).

Frumkin also writes extensively about the political role of nonprofit organizations, pointing to the fact that nonprofit organizations are supported by both conservatives and liberals as evidence of the sector's "strength and enduring relevance" (Frumkin, 2002, p. 16). Nonprofits are linked to the political process in a myriad of ways by building cohesion and social capital in communities that can be translated into direct political action such as lobbying, grassroots work, advocacy, and electoral participation (Frumkin, 2002, p. 30). These functions fill important social needs, ultimately "affirm[ing] the value of diversity and pluralism" (Frumkin, 2002, p.

63). Frumkin's overwhelmingly positive notion that nonprofit organizations support a diverse state aligns his theory with Tocqueville.

Beyond the social functions and characteristics of nonprofit organizations, many agree that the sector is evolving in the twenty-first century. For one, states have laid the groundwork for more nonprofit regulations. In California, for example, the 2004 Nonprofit Integrity Act was passed in order to "improve the governance procedures and enhance the filing requirements for charities, other nonprofits that hold funds for charitable purposes, and commercial fundraisers" (Mayer, 2016). This and similar regulatory efforts help ensure that nonprofit funds are being used appropriately, but also force nonprofit employees to put more effort into monitoring oversight rather than addressing their mission. Additionally, philanthropy and nonprofit scholar Angela Eikenberry writes extensively about how the nonprofit sector is becoming increasingly marketized, professionalized, and bureaucratized. This is because nonprofit organizations are adopting the approaches and values of the private sector, as is expressed through four trends: commercial revenue generation, contract competition, the influence of new and emerging donors, and social entrepreneurship (Eikenberry, 2004, p. 132). Eikenberry cites resource dependency theory and institutional theory to explain these developments. Namely, changes in the relationships between nonprofit organizations and their funding sources have forced nonprofit organizations to adopt private sector approaches to maintain them (resource dependency theory), in part because nonprofit organizations' external environments suggest that these approaches are viable (institutional theory) (Eikenberry, 2004, p. 133). Eikenberry concludes that "marketization may harm democracy and citizenship because of its impact on non-profit organizations' ability to create and maintain a strong civil society" (Eikenberry, 2004, p. 132). Thus, Eikenberry agrees

with Frumkin and Tocqueville that the nonprofit sector is key to maintaining civil society, but aligns with Beam and Smith by identifying the sector's relationship to the market.

The evolution of the nonprofit sector towards increasing marketization, bureaucratization, and professionalization indicates how important it is to re-analyze our relationship to nonprofit organizations in the twenty-first century. It is clear that nonprofits provide opportunities for important political organization and social meaning-making. It seems impossible, however, that nonprofit organizations are the only way for citizens to associate and work towards these goals. Thus, it is important to consider *why* the government is willing to adopt such a wide legal definition of which organizations qualify as nonprofits, and why they provide these organizations with tax benefits. I join Beam and Smith in arguing that it is because the government gets something valuable out of it. By offering financial incentives to thousands of nonprofits that provide services as basic as food, water, and shelter, governments at both the federal and state level are relieved from social and financial pressures that might otherwise fall to them. By showing those interested in addressing social issues that they can have a fully funded career working on what is meaningful to them, the number of grassroots activists working without ties to wealthy donors is limited. The proliferation of nonprofit organizations in the United States is concerning because it marks a shift towards incrementalist neoliberal ideologies. Rather than glorifying social movements of the past or relying on a capitalist model to create change, we should look towards new opportunities for organization. These understandings of nonprofit organizations and the nonprofit sector today can help us contextualize the role of individual donations, both in terms of their material necessity as well as their implicit functions.

The Socio-Political Role of Charitable Contributions

American's affinity for nonprofit organizations often translates into donations. In 2017, private charitable donations totaled over $410 billion, an 11.5 percent increase since 2007 (McKeever, 2018). Of this $410 billion, 6.2 percent went to education, 5.1 percent to human services, 6 percent to foundations, 15.5 percent to health, 7.8 percent to public society benefit organizations, 4.4 percent to international nonprofits, 8.7 percent to arts and culture, 7.2 percent to animals and the environment, and 31 percent to religion. $286.65 billion of all donations came from individuals as opposed to foundations and corporations (Giving USA, 2018). Contrary to popular belief, the propensity to donate is not limited to the ultra-wealthy. In 2000, 90 percent of American households donated to nonprofit organizations, averaging $1,623 per household (Vesterlund, 2006, p. 568). As evidenced by nonprofit revenue sources explored earlier in this chapter, these donations from individuals are instrumental in maintaining the financial viability of nonprofit organizations. This, however, is not the only impact of individual charitable contributions. This section will consider the sociopolitical role of individual donations, both for nonprofit organizations themselves and society writ large, that extend beyond the need for financial stability.

First, why do individuals donate in the first place? From an economics perspective, individuals donate for both public and private reasons. Public reasons to donate are those that do not solely benefit the donor, such as the donor's desire to improve the service provision of whatever organization they are giving their money to. Public reasons to donate are seen as altruistic, whereas private reasons to donate that only benefit the donor are frowned upon. Donating can have private benefits because it may "make you feel better about yourself, it may make you feel like you have done your share and perhaps paid back to the community, or it may give you prestige or an acknowledgment that you would not otherwise get" (Vesterlund, 2006, p.

568). Additionally, charitable contributions can result in a tax break. Unsurprisingly, our propensity to donate is not fueled entirely by our desires to improve the livelihoods of those around us.

In addition to these reasons, one public-private hybrid factor that increases our willingness to donate is a desire to change political realities. In her book *Funding Feminism,* Johnson argues that the women's suffrage movement was catalyzed by substantial donations from wealthy women that were used to set up offices and scholarship funds for nonprofit organizations (2017). Today this can be illustrated by the 2016 "Trump Bump," wherein nonprofit organizations with ideologies counter to Trump's saw a dramatic surge in donations.[4] Planned Parenthood, for example, received over 200,000 donations in the week following the 2016 presidential election, roughly 40 times more than what they see in an average week (Chokshi, 2016). These politically motivated donations are particularly important when analyzing Planned Parenthood's marketing materials.

For the nonprofits themselves, donations provide both revenue and an opportunity for membership building. When someone donates, their personal information is typically added to the nonprofit organization's database. This enables a nonprofit to send emails and paper mail to alert the new donor about whatever the nonprofit may be advertising, whether it be volunteer opportunities, petitions to sign, or additional donation appeals. Although "member" implies an ongoing financial relationship between the organization and the individual, many nonprofits use "member" to signify anyone whose contact information is in their database. This contact information can be gathered at events, online, or when someone donates for the first time.

[4] It is important to note that the surge of activity after Trump's election had positive effects for social justice spaces other than nonprofit organizations, as leftist grassroots organizing also surged after November 2016.

Reporting an impressive number of members helps nonprofit organizations appear influential and engaged in their communities. Thus, although smaller donations may not be crucial in generating revenue, they help nonprofit organizations with advertising, event promotion, and educational outreach. While large donations are important for financial viability, small donations serve as opportunities for movement building and image management.

Donations, or more accurately the people behind the donations, the donors, have a profound impact on the activities of nonprofit organizations. This makes sense, as nonprofit organizations that rely heavily on private funders need to keep those individuals interested in the activities of the organization, which often entails catering to their interests and priorities. The cultivation of large donations, for example, typically requires longstanding relationships between the nonprofit organization and the donor. Additionally, major donors often overlap with board members, who act as the governing body of nonprofit organizations. Board members are selected because they have something to offer the organization, whether it be professional expertise, issue-based knowledge, a valuable network, and more often than not, financial resources. By giving those with the ability to donate large sums of money positions on the board, the organization disproportionately considers the input of wealthy Americans. A 2019 study by Ranucci and Lee found that the relationship between donors and nonprofit innovation is paradoxical. Reliance on donations decreases the likelihood that nonprofit organizations will engage in innovative practices, as they must expend significant amounts of their time and energy towards maintaining relationships with donors. At the same time, however, donations provide nonprofits with the social capital they need to innovate (Ranucci & Lee, 2019, p. 1046). This creates a no-win situation wherein donations are necessary to innovate, but simultaneously make it harder to find time to do so. Additionally, being forced to frame all activities as successes in

pursuit of private funders leads to repeating activities that got their attention in the first place, whether or not they were actually impactful (INCITE!, 2007). At the end of the day, nonprofits, understandably, do not want to bite the hand that feeds them.

Beyond affecting the activities of an individual organization, when nonprofits are involved in larger social movements, reliance on donors can affect the outcome of the movements themselves. When social change is located in a nonprofit organization, the donors that make it possible for the organization to stay up and running exert control over what changes are made. INCITE!, a United States-based national activist organization of radical feminists of color, points to one way this relationship is maintained: "to retain the support of benefactors, groups must compete with each other for funding by promoting only their own work, whether or not their organizing strategies are successful." This narrow focus does not promote broad-sweeping social justice movements, but rather organizational improvement and advertising. Reliance on major donors also privileges white-dominated organizations, as nonprofits led by people of color have less access to networks of ultra-wealthy potential donors (INCITE!, 2007). Beam points to how donor management impacts what kind of social change is privileged, noting that "the kind of infrastructure necessary to cultivate donors and raise funds --an infrastructure that involves careful fiscal tracking, bookkeeping and auditing practices, donor database tracking and management, savvy communications and marketing, and high value events-- tends to overvalue particular specialized skill sets and demobilize ordinary activists" (2008, p. 40). In other words, nonprofits are likely to hire those who are trained in maintaining a stream of steady funding rather than those well-versed in community organizing.

Other scholars have pointed to the role of charitable contributions in maintaining broader social structures. In his book *Just Giving,* Rob Reich of Stanford University explores how

donation tax laws perpetuate inequality. Philanthropy, Reich explains, is often seen as connected to liberty and equality because it is voluntary and is historically associated with helping the poor and disenfranchised. These narratives about charitable contributions, however, are a myth. In reality, public policies about donations disproportionately benefit the wealthy, and philanthropy does not primarily serve the disenfranchised (2018, pp. 68-69). One example Reich offers is private funding that goes towards public schools. Because organizations like Parent Teachers Associations (PTA's) are nonprofits, money can be raised to go directly towards individual public schools. Schools in wealthier districts have greater access to private funders, with an average $7,000 being raised per student, while PTA's in poorer school districts raise only $200 per student. Reich writes that "the institutional structure of philanthropy not only permits charitable giving to exacerbate the vastly different levels of public funding between schools but also subsidizes the charitable giving of those who… worsen the inequalities between schools" (2018, p. 101). Outside of public school funding, the structure of charitable giving reinforces inequality. Although everyone who donates to nonprofit organizations receives a tax subsidy, those in the highest tax bracket receive a larger deduction than those in the lowest (Beam, 2018, p. 79). Additionally, this subsidy is only available to those who itemize their deductions, penalizing the 70 percent of taxpayers who opt for the standard deduction on their income tax (Beam, 2018, p. 78).

By positioning themselves as the gatekeepers of social progress, nonprofit organizations convince Americans that their money can be used to purchase social change on the issues that matter to them. This can be demonstrated by the language nonprofits use in their donation appeals, which often contains strong statements arguing that the fate of large-scale social issues are on the line. These statements, although not always inaccurate, make it challenging to think

outside of the nonprofit paradigm. Why organize a rally or march when you can give $20 to someone who will do it for you? How much money does it take to disrupt power structures? I argue that this can be likened to a process of commodification, wherein social change is marketed as something that can be bought via nonprofit donations, an idea which will be explored more substantively in Chapter Three. As Reich highlights, this model of social change reinforces social inequalities and disproportionately benefits the wealthy, allowing them greater control over what issues are and are not paid attention to. Additionally, the relationship of nonprofit organizations to donors limits organizational capacity for progress. By allocating significant time and energy towards maintaining relationships with donors and soliciting new ones, nonprofits operate more like fundraising organizations than anything else. The way that Planned Parenthood engages in these processes will be explored substantively in Chapter Three.

Although private charitable contributions play a significant role in funding nonprofit organizations that do important work in their communities, the role of private giving in the United States also has negative sociopolitical impacts. Donations can serve to fluff the ego of the donor, guide nonprofit organizations towards their own end, reduce the innovative efforts of nonprofits, and maintain economic inequality writ large. This is necessary to understand before diving into an analysis of Planned Parenthood's marketing appeals.

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Regulated by the IRS and restricted in their ability to organize politically, nonprofit organizations exist across the United States and are working to meet countless social needs. These nonprofit organizations give individuals an opportunity for self-expression and community building, but also function to monitor and control social progress in the United States. Individual private donations, crucial in funding most nonprofit organizations, favor the input of the wealthy

and make it seem possible for social change to be made through financial contributions. The scholarship explored in this chapter begins to illustrate why Planned Parenthood, despite providing critical services for those in the United States, is fundamentally limited in its ability to catalyze social change in the world of reproductive rights. The next chapter will connect these concepts to the reproductive rights movement by exploring the history of Planned Parenthood and then contextualizing the organization in the present historical moment.

Chapter Two: Planned Parenthood's Shifting Ideology

At Planned Parenthood's 2014 National Conference, President Barack Obama spoke to the organization's enduring legacy, stating at the end of his speech that "no matter how great the challenge, no matter how fierce the opposition, if there's one thing the past few years have shown, it's that Planned Parenthood is not going anywhere. It's not going anywhere today. It's not going anywhere tomorrow" (Planned Parenthood, 2014). Obama's remarks accurately reflect that Planned Parenthood has adapted to challenge after challenge during its 100-year history. But how did Planned Parenthood grow from a single birth control clinic to a dominant voice in the reproductive rights movement, rising to a level of influence that warrants a sitting president's presence at the group's annual conference? Perpetually controversial due to their associations with sex, contraception, and abortion, Planned Parenthood has been forced to constantly adapt to anti-choice opposition in order to maintain its financial security, political influence, public image, and the safety of the organizations patients. Along the way, Planned Parenthood has been led by influential women such as Margaret Sanger and Cecile Richards, who both helped the group navigate complicated political and legal terrain.

Although this evolution has facilitated the success of the organization and raised awareness of important issues throughout the United States, an outsized focus on Planned Parenthood detracts from alternative articulations of reproductive rights and diverse perspectives of social change. This chapter outlines the distinct periods of Planned Parenthood's history to demonstrate how different sociohistorical circumstances have affected the ideology and political positions of Planned Parenthood. I argue that despite adapting so effectively to over a century of challenges, the ideologies Planned Parenthood has adopted also illustrate how the organization has become fixed in a controlled organizational format as a nonprofit organization. In 2020,

Planned Parenthood's service provision and political power has increased to an all-time high, but ironically and counterintuitively the organization is more constricted than ever before due to an innervating reliance on government and private funding.

This chapter gives an overview of the ways that ideology and funding have come together to shape Planned Parenthood's history. The work of reproductive rights activists and organizations other than Planned Parenthood will not be detailed in this chapter; and not all areas of Planned Parenthood's history will be explored. For one, although this chapter examines Planned Parenthood's ties to racial and class eugenics, it will not fully explore the racial implications of Planned Parenthood's history. Planned Parenthood has a complicated history and there are certainly issues with which the organization has involved itself that need to be explored in further scholarship.

1910-1940: Birth Control

In October 1916, Margaret Sanger, Ethel Byrne, and Fania Mindell opened the first birth control clinic in the United States. This clinic, located in Brownsville, Brooklyn, marked Planned Parenthood's conception and the start of the modern birth control movement (Planned Parenthood). This section explores Planned Parenthood's first 30 years, detailing the people, ideologies, and legislation that shaped the organization's early work. During this period, Planned Parenthood sought to create public acceptance of birth control, which had long been associated with illicit sex and immorality (Anderson, 1998, p. 6). Although Planned Parenthood helped normalize birth control in the United States, the organization's early ties to the eugenics movement and corporations raised questions about the organization's ability to distance itself from racism and classism.

In the early 1910s, the larger movement to support birth control emerged thanks to feminist organizers such as Margaret Sanger and Emma Goldman, who were motivated by their belief that involuntary childbearing was a central cause of women's subjugation (Gordon, 1975, p. 254). At the time, birth control was largely taboo due to sexual moralities that made it challenging to discuss anything that gestured towards women's sexuality. Birth control was not commercially available, but a sizeable black market existed that enabled middle-class women to discreetly access birth control products such as vaginal suppositories or pessaries, syringes sold with acidic solutions for douching, and antiseptic spermicides (National Museum of Civil War Medicine, 2017).

It was in this environment that Margaret Sanger started what would later become the Planned Parenthood we are familiar with today. Sanger, born as Margaret Louisa Higgins, was born in 1879 to an 11-child family in Corning, New York (Franks, 2005, p. 22). The perspectives of her father and husband pushed Sanger towards the Socialist Party (although she later joined Industrial Workers of the World), which helped Sanger develop her belief that women's ability to have sex with men without risk of pregnancy was essential to the development of the socialist platform (Franks, 2005, p. 23). Sanger's campaign to educate women about sex began with her 1912 newspaper column "What Every Girl Should Know" and continued with the 1914 feminist publication *The Woman Rebel,* which advocated for the right of women to obtain birth control. Due to the Comstock Laws that banned "obscene" information from being circulated in the mail, which included information about birth control and abortion, Sanger fled to England to avoid a five-year jail sentence. (Biography, 2017). During her exile, Sanger studied the history and practice of contraception, population trends and eugenics, and what was called "sexology," the study of human sexuality. It was following her return, and her divorce from her husband, that

Sanger opened the Brownsville clinic, in 1916, to begin enacting her beliefs about women's liberation (Katz et. al, 2016, p. xxi). The Brownsville clinic's primary clientele was Jewish and Italian immigrant women, marking Planned Parenthood's early focus on underserved populations (Franks, 2005, p. 32).

Although Sanger's perspective on birth control first stemmed from her strong feminist convictions, in founding the American Birth Control League (ABCL) in 1922 Sanger had adopted an ideology of eugenic control. Rather than seeing birth control as essential to liberating women from the confines of childbearing, Sanger was influenced by prominent eugenicist Havelock Ellis and British Neo-Malthusians to see birth control as a means to control the reproduction of populations deemed undesirable. Scholar Angela Franks characterizes Sanger's ideology as the belief that "certain classes of people should not be parents, and if they would not embrace a childless state voluntarily, it should be forced upon them" (2005, p. 7). Eugenic historians such as Dorothy Roberts agree with Franks that Sanger was a eugenicist, although a number of scholars in the field of women's history have often argued the opposite. Ellen Chesler, author of *Women of Valor: Margaret Sanger*, contends that eugenicists did not join the birth control movement until the 1930s and thus could not impact the ABCL's early work. Other scholars such as James Reed, author of *The Birth Control Movement and American Society,* argue that Sanger only embraced eugenic ideologies because they were politically advantageous (Franks, 2005, p. 10). I join Franks in contending that Sanger herself was a eugenicist, though regardless of Sanger's personal beliefs, the financial support of wealthy eugenicists was essential to the growth of the American Birth Control League and a guiding force in their activities. The eugenic underpinnings of this choice are reflected in the organization's "Principles and Aims," which stated that "the complex problems now confronting America as the result of the practice

of reckless procreation are fast threatening to grow beyond human control… those least fit to carry on the race are increasing most rapidly" (Roberts, 1997, p. 75). This statement exhibits explicitly eugenic ideologies, promoting the idea that the reproduction of the socially unfit must be controlled. Rather than focusing on legislative lobbying, the ABCL focused on opening clinics, which by 1929 numbered an even dozen (Anderson, 1998, p. 18).

Support of popular eugenic ideologies, as well as Sanger's social network, helped secure the ABCL's early corporate support and donor base.[5] The Rockefellers, for example, donated $15,000 a year to Sanger in the 1920s in part because of Sanger's plan to distribute birth control to the "lower classes" (Franks, 2005, p. 37). Sanger also received financial assistance from J. Noah Slee, her second husband who led the Three-in-One Oil Company (Franks, 2005, p. 39). Lastly, Sanger secured funding from her personal network of monied women (Johnson, 2017, p. 172). The role these individuals played in supporting the ABCL and the early birth control movement illustrates two trends. First, the onboarding of monied professional men exemplifies how the birth control movement transformed from a radical feminist cause to a respect-seeking professional movement (Gordon, 1975, p. 253). In other words, accepting support from corporations and wealthy eugenicists facilitated the transformation of the birth control movement from one with staunchly feminist convictions to a more widely-supported social movement. Secondly, the financial allegiance Planned Parenthood received from wealthy white women in its early years influenced which interests the organization catered to moving forward.

By the 1930s, historical forces had begun to shift the public's perception of birth control. While Prohibition, a series of laws passed to stop alcohol consumption, encouraged Americans to break laws that went against mainstream attitudes, the ratification of the Nineteenth

[5] Though Sanger divorced from her first husband William Sanger in 1921, she decided to retain the last name Sanger.

Amendment, passed in 1920 to give women the right to vote, contributed to a sense of freedom and independence for middle-class women (Anderson, 1998, p. 60). As a result, by 1936 most Americans believed that birth control information and supplies should be available to married women (Anderson, 1998, p. 36). These shifting social attitudes, also aided by the decline in Comstock laws and an increase in social welfare programs following the Great Depression, contributed to the opening of over fifty affiliates of the American Birth Control League by 1939. This network of clinics laid the groundwork for Planned Parenthood's strong national presence in the 1940s and beyond (Anderson, 1998, p. 27). The organization's focus on birth control would soon shift, too, as the American Birth Control League rebranded to become Planned Parenthood, a move that demonstrated the organization's growing commitment to the concept of family planning.

1940-1970: Family Planning and Population Control

In response to the end of World War II and the beginning of the baby boom, the American Birth Control League shifted its focus from birth control to family planning, an ideological shift that will be explored towards the end of this section. Along with their new focus on family planning, in the 1940s the ABCL renamed itself "Planned Parenthood," as we are familiar with today. In addition to this substantial ideological shift from birth control to family planning, during the period of 1940-1970 Planned Parenthood sought increased social acceptance and solidified its basic organizational structure. Although social change was in the air in the 1960s, Planned Parenthood's focus on gaining the financial support of the business elite led to an organizational detachment from the more radical civil rights and anti-war movements. Ultimately, Planned Parenthood's shift to emphasizing family planning serves as an example of how nonprofit organizations are forced to adapt to retain their funding channels.

The end of World War II had a huge impact on the economic and cultural lives of Americans. Many women and men had deferred having families during wartime, resulting in a huge postwar baby boom in the mid-1940s (Anderson, 1998, p. 109). Alongside the baby boom, Victorian images of femininity made a resurgence, encouraging Americans to adopt cautious conservative attitudes (Anderson, 1998, p. 153). As part of a phenomenon later termed the "feminine mystique" by scholar Betty Friedan, women were encouraged to seek fulfillment through domesticity, maternal love, and sexual passivity (Meyerowitz, 1993, p. 1455). Alongside these trends, scholars expressed public concern about the dangers of widespread population growth, resulting in the public perception that rising birthrates would weaken the United States (Anderson, 1998, p. 109). These concerns also reflected a fear of the changing racial demographics in the United States, and as an antidote to increasing populations of people of color, married middle-class white women were encouraged to have as many children as possible (Bashford, 2014, p. 329). Family planning offered an appealing solution to concerns about population growth because of its focus on enabling heterosexual couples to make childbearing decisions in the context of the nuclear family, rather allowing women to make decisions independently. To match the attitudes of family planning experts, the American Birth Control League decided to emphasize family planning instead of birth control, hoping to strike a chord with those concerned about population growth.

While the American Birth Control League's argument for the importance of birth control was radical in the 1920s and 1930s, their shift to the field of family planning was rooted in the desire to gain mainstream acceptance for their growing network of clinics. In 1942, when the American Birth Control League changed their name to Planned Parenthood and re-defined their mission as to "provide leadership for the universal acceptance of family planning as an essential

element of responsible parenthood, stable family life and social harmony through education for family planning, the provision of necessary services, and the promotion of research in the field of human reproduction" (Bashford, 2014, p. 162). This mission painted Planned Parenthood as universally appealing, matching the cautious social attitudes of the time, as well as social aspirations of a return to a stable, heterosexual middle class life after the war. While birth control was understood as something only women would be involved with, family planning appealed to men by encouraging them to get involved in responsible reproduction within their families. Albert Lasker, the husband of one of Planned Parenthood Federation Action's executive committee members, came up with the name because "the words 'Planned Parenthood' were more acceptable… to men than birth control, which he felt advocated continence" (Franks, 2005, p. 36). Accordingly, Planned Parenthood's name change represented an attempt to encourage wealthy men to accept and promote contraception and population control, as the organization's ties to wealthy businessmen had become important in the preceding years. Removing "birth control" from the organizational name ensured that Planned Parenthood's name did not explicitly refer to American women controlling births, further demonstrating how the name change marked a more conservative turn. Roberts summarizes the shift from birth control to family planning, noting that "what began at the turn of the century as a crusade to free women from the burdens of compulsory and endless childbearing became by World War II as a method of sound social policy" (Franks, 2005, p. 58). By the end of the 1950s, Planned Parenthood's basic organizational structure had been set. These changes also foreshadowed the extensive bureaucratization of Planned Parenthood in the 1970s, undertaken in order to generate an argument for legalized abortion that had mass appeal.

Although Planned Parenthood's role was minimal, another important development in the reproductive rights movement in the 1950s was the birth control pill. Research for the development of the pill was almost single-handedly funded by Katherine McCormick, heir to a substantial family fortune. McCormick had been a loyal supporter of Planned Parenthood and wanted to work with them to develop the pill, however, Margaret Sanger was reluctant to get involved in the then-controversial research due to concerns about the safety of abortion procedures. As a result, McCormick provided over a million dollars in funding without funneling it through Planned Parenthood first (Johnson, 2017, p. 199). Although McCormick was interested in population control, her primary desire to fund birth control came from her belief that women should not have to rely on men to prevent pregnancy (Johnson, 2017, p. 211). In 1960, after being tested on Puerto Rican women, the first FDA approved oral contraceptive became available in the United States.[6]

Although the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War protests paralleled Planned Parenthood's activities in the 1960s, the organization did not involve themselves with either movement, rather remaining focused on family planning, particularly as a newly energized eugenics movement offered their support (Anderson, 1998, p. 206). The Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, supporters of Planned Parenthood's early work and interested in eugenics, established population councils to research the effects of the baby boom and make policy recommendations (Anderson, 1998, p. 209). Simultaneously, Planned Parenthood established its first office in Washington, D.C. staffed with lobbyists, representing their increased focus on

[6] Clinical trials of the birth control pill occured in 1955 in Puerto Rico, which due to its status as an overpopulated United States territory without Comstock laws, provided a desirable location for testing. The over 200 Puerto Rican women who participated in the trial were given little information about potential side effects, and were dismissed when they reported nausea, dizziness, headaches, and blood clots (Liao 2012).

legislative activities, in addition to providing clinical services (Anderson, 1998, p. 212). Additionally, in the 1960s Planned Parenthood began targeting businessmen in its promotional materials in order to convince that constituency that family planning was necessary for the growth of the economy in the United States as well as abroad (Franks, 2005, p. 203). Franks explains that the incorporation of male business executive agendas into Planned Parenthood's priorities promoted supporting "demographic reduction above all else and thereby puts women's health and dignity in a clearly subordinate position" (Franks, 2005, p. 208). In other words, the focus of businessmen in limiting women's reproduction to ensure they have enough money for discretionary spending indicates Planned Parenthood prioritized the interests of the corporate elite over women's needs and opinions. Additionally, Planned Parenthood's lack of involvement in the Civil Rights Movement and Vietnam War protests exemplified the organization's focus on their own activities and priorities, above all else.

Another significant historical development during this era was the 1965 Supreme Court Case *Griswold v. Connecticut,* which laid the groundwork for Planned Parenthood's focus on abortion in the 1970s. In the case, Yale University gynecologist C. Lee Buxton and Planned Parenthood Connecticut president Estelle Griswold were sued for opening a birth control clinic in New Haven, Connecticut. The Supreme Court affirmed the right of marital privacy against state restrictions on a couple's ability to receive information about contraceptive methods, ruling in favor of Griswold and Buxton (Oyez). The right to privacy argument made by the seven justices proved important to the evolution of the reproductive rights movement, as would be invoked in the *Roe v. Wade* case eight years later.

Ultimately, in the years between 1940 and 1970 Planned Parenthood engaged in a significant rebranding mission, emphasizing family planning instead of birth control in order to

make its platform more appealing to men and the business elite. The public support the organization garnered during these years would be critical to their efforts to legalize abortion in the decades that followed. At the same time, these concessions to corporate America compromised Planned Parenthood's original goal of promoting radical social change.

1970-2000: Abortion and Bureaucratization

In the period of 1970-2000, the fight for legal and safe abortion rose to the forefront of the reproductive rights movement. In response to these changes, pro-life groups mobilized and the New Right developed. These changes saw Planned Parenthood adjusting its approach to reproductive rights three times: in the 1970s to protect themselves from the New Right, in the 1980s to emphasize women's choice, and again in the 1990s to become increasingly professionalized. The institutional pivots in this period, occurring in fast succession, illustrate how the organization has adapted alongside shifting social perceptions of reproductive rights.

While Planned Parenthood had previously focused on birth control and population control, as founder Margaret Sanger was wary about the safety of abortion due to how common infections were before the advent of antibiotics, *Roe v. Wade* and Title X of the Public Service Health Act shifted the national conversation about abortion rights, helping to normalize the procedure (Anderson, 1998, p. 267). Shifting social perceptions were also aided by social protests emerging from the Watergate scandal and the American military's withdrawal from Vietnam, encouraging Americans to adopt critical perspectives on the government. Once abortion was legalized in 1973, Planned Parenthood began offering the service at its clinics.

By the mid-1970s the legalization of abortion led to the mobilization of pro-life political platforms, putting Planned Parenthood in the most challenging defensive position in the organization's 60-year history (Anderson, 1998, p. 272). In 1976 the Hyde Amendment passed,

making it illegal for federal funds to be used to fund abortion procedures. This forced Planned Parenthood to make fundraising a top priority, hosting staggering numbers of dinners, book sales, and even fashion shows to keep their business model viable (Anderson, 1998, p. 282). The consecutive presidencies of Reagan and Bush fostered the growth of the New Right in the United States, making pro-life political platforms increasingly common (Anderson, 1998, p. 392). As the pro-life movement grew and tensions rose, two Planned Parenthood clinics were bombed in 1984 (Anderon, 1998, p. 394). In response to these acts of violence, Planned Parenthood adjusted its mission to emphasize education and women's right to privacy in hopes of deemphasizing their abortion provision and shrinking the target on its back (Anderson, 1998, p. 337).

With the help of a significant media campaign to improve the organization's public image in the late 1980s, Planned Parenthood once again redefined their approach to reproductive rights by emphasizing "women's right to choose" instead of women's right to privacy (Anderson, 1998, p. 423). Planned Parenthood was not alone in this ideological approach, as other abortions rights advocates, such as NARAL Pro-Choice America, adopted similar articulations of reproductive rights. Although the "choice" ideology remains popular in the twenty-first century, it also exemplifies Planned Parenthood and the larger movement's increasing ties to neoliberalism by painting abortion as a choice consumers could make. Rickie Solinger, who explores the shortcomings of the choice ideology in her books, summarizes the problems with the trend as "abortion became just another service that a consumer could or could not purchase, depending on how much money she had" (Solinger, 2001, p. 17). Rather than presenting abortion as a right all persons with reproductive capacity should have access to, the choice model indicates that some are able to make a choice while others are not (Solinger, 2001, p. 7).

Shortly following the growth of the choice model, however, came the formal development of the reproductive justice framework in 1994. This model, coined by scholars and activists of color, combines social justice with reproductive rights and emphasizes three primary principals: the right to not have a child, the right to have a child, and the right to parent in a safe and healthy environment (Ross & Solinger, 2017, p. 9). Reproductive justice brought increased awareness to the racism associated with the reproductive rights movement, which catered primarily to the interests of middle-class white women.

The late 80s and early 90s saw even more pro-life victories. Between 1989 and 1992 alone came the landmark pro-life victory *Webster v Reproductive Health Services,* a gag rule that barred Title-X funded clinics from giving women information about abortion, and *Planned Parenthood v Casey* which established the "undue burden" clause in abortion access.[7] Additionally, abortion rates were in decline for the first time since *Roe* (Anderson, 1998, p. 436). These developments once again inspired Planned Parenthood to reevaluate its mission during a 2-day retreat in Atlanta, wherein executives decided to create more opportunities for volunteers rather than paid staff, establish a management service organization to assist affiliates with finances and purchasing, and establish a for-profit arm to oversee licensing. These changes further professionalized Planned Parenthood, improving both its business and fundraising apparatuses (Anderson, 1998, p. 512). These changes, enacted to ensure the security and financial security of the organization, set the stage for Planned Parenthood's rise to a mainstream American political brand in the twenty-first century.

2000-2020: Increasing Politicization

[7] The Supreme Court defined undue burden as a "substantial obstacle in the path of a woman seeking an abortion before the fetus attains viability" (Oyez). *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* established that restrictions on abortion could be passed, so long as they did not constitute an undue burden.

Beginning the twenty-first century on the offensive, the early years of the 2000s saw Planned Parenthood gain increased public recognition and political power. Under PPFA President Cecile Richards, who filled the role from 2006 to 2018, Planned Parenthood utilized coalition building to move away from a focus on traditional women's issues and rebrand as a pillar of American politics. Shadowing Planned Parenthood's growth, however, was a wave of constant attacks that sharply increased after the election of Donald Trump in 2016. As will be shown in this section, Planned Parenthood's political influence in 2020 highlights the increasing politicization of reproductive healthcare as well as an increased understanding of reproductive rights as an intersectional issue.

The twenty-first century began with a challenge to the reproductive rights movement, as anti-choice George W. Bush took office in 2001. In one of his first acts as president, Bush instituted the Mexico City policy, colloquially referred to as the global gag rule. This rule made it impossible for Planned Parenthood to fund their family planning clinics that provided abortion counseling abroad, although the trend was reversed by Obama in 2008. As a result, the International Planned Parenthood Federation lost over $100 million in federal funding (McFarlane 2006). Additionally, Bush urged the Supreme Court to overturn *Roe v. Wade,* adding fuel to the fire for the increasingly mobilized pro-life contingencies. This period, however, was not without victories. In September of 2000, the FDA approved mifepristone (RU-486), marking a major victory for Planned Parenthood (Larson, 2017). As abortion became an increasingly partisan issue, Planned Parenthood became an increasingly partisan organization. As a result of these trends, Planned Parenthood hired politically-savvy Cecile Richards as their next president.

Like Sanger, Planned Parenthood President 2006-2018 Cecile Richards left a huge mark on Planned Parenthood and served as a highly visible president. Born to campaign-manager and

civil rights attorney parents, Richards had an extensive career before joining Planned Parenthood, having worked as a union organizer, deputy chief of staff for Nancy Pelosi, and founder of America Votes (Gurtler, 2016, p. 182). Richards successfully brought Planned Parenthood into the digital age and attracted young supporters, but her biggest impact was turning Planned Parenthood into a unified political organization with widespread influence. During Richards' time as president, Planned Parenthood's membership increased from 3 million supporters to over 11 million, reflecting both Richard's focus on coalition building and the constant attacks that pushed Planned Parenthood into the media spotlight. While before Richards's presidency the service provision and advocacy elements of Planned Parenthood's mission remained separate, Richards merged the two and made bold statements about Planned Parenthood's abortion provision, which were previously de-emphasized in order to remain palatable (Cottle, 2018). As Planned Parenthood gained traction politically, the organization began making statements on issues outside of their traditional wheelhouse, most notably about immigration.

Although Bush did not support defunding Planned Parenthood entirely, attempts to revoke all federal funding from the organization began with Mitt Romney in 2011 and have continued into the present (McFarlane, 2006). In 2015, an anti-abortion organization released a video of Planned Parenthood employees discussing the purchase of fetal tissue which led to widespread controversy. The anti-abortion activists, who posed as a fake company called Biomax Procurement Services in ordert to speak with Planned Parenthood representatives, edited the footage to accuse Planned Parenthood of donating fetal tissue for profit. Although the claims of illegal profit were debunked, the video led to the Defund Planned Parenthood Act of 2015. The act did not pass, but the controversy over the video created a significant PR hurdle for

Planned Parenthood. Additionally, as of 2016, states had enacted 1,074 abortion restrictions since *Roe v. Wade*, more than a quarter of them occurring after 2010 (Larson, 2017). These anti-abortion sentiments continued to grow with the election of Donald Trump in 2016, who expanded the global gag rule, called for a nationwide ban on abortion, singled out Planned Parenthood for defunding, and nominated pro-life justices to the Supreme Court (Planned Parenthood Action Fund). In 2019, six states introduced bills to ban abortion after a heartbeat is detected, posing a serious threat to abortion access in the United States (Lai, 2019).

Amidst these conservative attacks came more highly publicized events in Planned Parenthood's recent history. In January 2018, Cecile Richards announced she would be stepping down from her role as President of Planned Parenthood after deciding voluntarily that it was a sensible time for her to depart. In her statement, Richards wrote that "Leading Planned Parenthood over the last 12 years has been the honor of my lifetime… I will be leaving the organization well-positioned to serve and fight for our patients for a century more" (Planned Parenthood, 2018). The Board of Directors later selected Dr. Leana Wen to serve as the new President, but only 8 months in, Dr. Wen was asked to leave by the Board of Directors. Unlike Richards, who came to the organization as an activist, Wen joined Planned Parenthood following a career as a physician, having most recently served as the Health Commissioner for the City of Baltimore. In her farewell message, Wen cites "philosophical differences" as the reason for her departure, later expanding in a New York Times article that she has "long believed that the most effective way to advance reproductive health is to be clear that it is not a political issue but a health care one" (Wen, 2019). Wen's poorly received attempts to depoliticize the organization illustrates the continued focus of Planned Parenthood on political advocacy, blurring the lines between service provider and lobbying group (Kliff & Goldmacher, 2019). As of March 2020,

long-term board member Alexis McGill Johnson is serving as the acting president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America (Planned Parenthood). Wen's departure illustrates the tension that exists between Planned Parenthood's mission as both a healthcare provider and a political advocate, as well as the bureaucratic challenges that nonprofit organizations can face when board members disagree with staff leadership.

As of early 2020, Planned Parenthood has 49 affiliate offices and over 600 healthcare centers located across the country, as well as a network of over 12 million activists, supporters, and donors. Their mission statement states that Planned Parenthood aims to provide reproductive and healthcare services, to advocate for public policies that guarantee such policies, to provide educational programs, and to promote technological advancement in the field of reproductive technology (Planned Parenthood). The organization has continued to diversify its advocacy efforts, drawing attention to health care equity, voting rights, and sexual assault on their website. Planned Parenthood has also increased its involvement in electoral politics, announcing in October 2019 that they planned to give $45 million to pro-choice candidates in the 2020 elections, their largest contribution to electoral politics yet (McCammon, 2019). Their website today emphasizes this campaign, titled "We Decide 2020," highlighting issues to watch, voter registration information, endorsements, and more. Ultimately, the twenty-first century has shown Planned Parenthood becoming increasingly politicized and partisan, distancing themselves from the organization's earlier attempts to appear as palatable as possible to those on both ends of the political spectrum.

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This brief look at Planned Parenthood's hundred-year history reveals that, despite their work to meet the needs of millions of people in need of reproductive health services, the

organization has been forced to adjust its mission and activities in order to maintain financial security as well as its public acceptance as a nonprofit organization. Additionally, Planned Parenthood's history is clouded by its relationship with the eugenics movement and corporations. As Planned Parenthood's involvement in the political sphere continues to increase in the twenty-first century, evaluating the organization's publically available educational and promotional materials will make it possible to more thoroughly understand the organization's capacity for social and political change, as well as the group's limitations as a catalyst for transforming reproductive rights in the United States.

Chapter Three: Virtual Content as a Branding Tool

Although Planned Parenthood's history and current work shed light on their present-day role in the reproductive rights world, looking closely at Planned Parenthood's internally produced and widely circulated materials allow us to evaluate the role the organization currently plays, and hopes to carve out, in American society and politics. Utilizing thematic content analysis with a media studies lens, this chapter considers selected materials from Planned Parenthood's websites and social media accounts in order to provide concrete examples of how nonprofit organizations leverage virtual platforms to curate advantageous public images.

I argue here that Planned Parenthood utilizes social media channels to support a brand that relies on the misleading notion that the organization is the vanguard of the reproductive rights movement. Additionally, although the group performs admirable outreach online, the content that Planned Parenthood creates and promotes presents a commodified version of social change that appeals to liberal understandings of privilege and oppression. There is a difference between a business and a social movement, and due to their status as a nonprofit organization, Planned Parenthood is forced to act as the former. Before diving into this analysis, it is important to note that this critique is intended to help develop an understanding of how nonprofit organizations are fundamentally incapable of disrupting the social systems of which they are part, not to paint a negative picture of Planned Parenthood itself. The analysis in this chapter turns on the structural problems that stem from capitalist models of social change, not the shortcomings or negative intentions of individual organizations or employees.

Methodology and Background Information

The materials explored in this chapter are drawn from the social media accounts and websites managed by Planned Parenthood and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund national

offices. More specifically, I evaluate materials from Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, and the organization's respective websites. Planned Parenthood's social media channels are popular, boasting 652,000 followers on their primary Instagram profile; 318,000 followers on their advocacy fund Instagram profile; 300,000 followers on their primary Twitter account; and 498,000 followers on their advocacy fund Twitter account as of February 2020. As of 2012, these accounts are run by 18 full-time employees who focus on social media and other digital projects (Perry, 2012). Although many affiliate offices of Planned Parenthood have independent social media accounts and websites, I am focusing on the work of the national offices in order to best identify how the organization strives to be perceived as a whole. Because the staff and board members in national offices hold the most influence over Planned Parenthood's institutional identity and direction, their materials more closely reflect the organization's priorities.

The sections in this chapter explore different goals of Planned Parenthood's promotional materials, perform a visual and textual analysis of the materials themselves, and then consider the impact of these materials on the public writ-large. To determine the focus of each section, I reviewed Planned Parenthood and Planned Parenthood Action Fund social media and websites in order to identify recurring themes. Based on this research I identified two primary focus areas of Planned Parenthood's media activity: educational outreach and organization-specific image management and fundraising. Both of these facets uphold Planned Parenthood's mission as a healthcare provider and lobbying force, as well as perform essential branding work.

Educational Outreach

Perhaps the clearest goal of Planned Parenthood's virtual content is education. Planned Parenthood and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund utilize social media accounts to educate their followers about a diverse range of topics, including sexual and reproductive health, voting

rights, immigration, LGBTQ+ issues, interpersonal violence, relevant legislation, and even self-care. These posts, frequently characterized by colorful infographics and to-the-point descriptions, exemplify the organization's goal to inform and educate communities with "honest, factual health and relationship information" (Planned Parenthood). While some of these topics might seem outside of Planned Parenthood's purview, I will discuss why they are a central component of the organization's branding work. Planned Parenthood's social media accounts perform an important public service by circulating low-barrier and easily comprehensible information, helping those who are inadequately educated about sexual and reproductive health. At the same time, however, Planned Parenthood's educational content relies on liberal notions of power and oppression, as well as identity-based solidarity. Because of the ideological framework that shapes the organization, Planned Parenthood has a limited capacity for social change. Most importantly, the activities they promote as vehicles for social transformation do not address the root causes of reproductive oppression in the US.

Emphasizing the importance of membership in a racial, gender, or other identity-based group, Planned Parenthood advocates for understanding reproductive oppression through a simplified lens. In her book *Feminism After Identity Politics,* Jodi Dean writes that "at the level of the group, the assumption that a particular identity dictates a particular politics over-looks internal differences, stifling diversity and dissent" (1996, p. 5). Planned Parenthood engages in the practices that Dean identifies, calling in their posts for specific actions, as well as solidarity, to be developed on the basis of one's identity. These facets put Planned Parenthood in a position with limited capacity for social change, as the activities they promote as a vehicle for social transformation do not address the root causes of reproductive oppression in the United States. Thus, Planned Parenthood's depictions of social change as well as their depiction of themselves

as a universal good makes it challenging to engage in conversations about the complicated social role of nonprofit organizations.

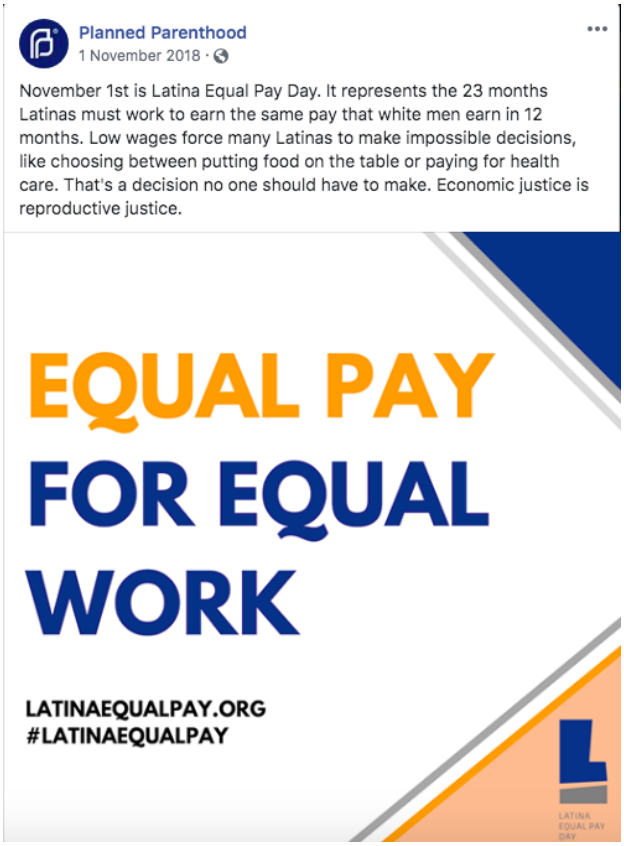
One example of this trend is an Instagram post made by Planned Parenthood in August 2019. The image, which solicited over 24,000 "likes," states that "men of quality do not fear equality" and is captioned "high five to the men who know when to stand up, step back, and listen" (Planned Parenthood, 2019a). Although this post does not reference a specific social issue, it appeals to digitally-driven fourth wave feminists by drawing on the notion that, when dealing with social issues like reproductive rights, identity-based action and solidarity are adequate tools. The implication that men should know when to step back promotes the idea that men (or other individuals with privileged identities) being cognizant of the space they occupy in conversations about reproductive rights can change the systems that continue to drive reproductive oppression. In the piece *Who is Oakland,* community organizers describe the shortcomings of prioritizing individual change in antiracist movements as "[recentering] antiracist practice on whites and white behavior, and assumes that racism (and often by implicit or explicit association, sexism, homophobia, and transphobia) manifest

primarily as individual privileges which can be ‘checked,’ given up, or absolved through individual resolutions" (2012). Similarly, in the reproductive rights world, individual men foregoing an outspoken opinion about women’s choices do not constitute a restructuring of the sexism and racism that continue to perpetuate inequity. In the same vein, an Instagram post from March 2019 titled “The Ally’s Toolkit” suggests nine ways that allies to the LGBTQ+ community can change their individual behavior to support the LGBTQ+ community (Planned Parenthood, 2019b). Allyship is important and particularly useful in making sure the voices of LGBTQ+ people are heard, however, this post provides another example of Planned Parenthood using their virtual content to promote the idea that person-to-person attitude adjustments as a solution to social forces like sexism and homophobia.

In the case of both Instagram posts, individual change does have important outcomes because it can lead to shifts in actions and ideologies that result in systemic solutions. Normalizing conversations about male privilege, for example, can lead to increased collective acknowledgment of how sexism manifests in the twenty-first century as well as add energy to social movements such as #MeToo. Individual efforts, however, must evolve into activities that substantially disrupt the status quo. Planned Parenthood encouraging its followers to be better allies to marginalized groups is certainly helpful, but if the organization’s ultimate goal is to maintain the security of Planned Parenthood itself and promote an organizational brand, these online efforts are unlikely to lead to the collective organizing and power redistribution that can change the state of sexism, racism, and other social forces that ensure sexual and reproductive oppression persist in the United States. In his 2001 piece, Maniates points to additional problems that arise from advocating for individual responses to deep-rooted social issues. Namely, prioritizing individual responses results in “little room to ponder institutions, the nature and

exercise of political power, or ways of collectively changing the distribution of power and influence in society" (2001). In Planned Parenthood's case, promoting an outsized focus on individual actions detracts their followers energy and attention from other activities.

In addition to focusing on individual identity-based actions, Planned Parenthood's social media accounts often highlight events and issues that the organization does not directly address in its work, presenting Planned Parenthood's activities as more diverse than they actually are in order to produce an inclusive, intersectional brand. In March 2018, for example, Planned Parenthood posted a photo on their Instagram account for Muslim Women's Day, encouraging their followers to share Muslim women's stories on social media (Planned Parenthood, 2018a). Similarly, on their Facebook page, Planned Parenthood posted for Latina Equal Pay Day, and on their Instagram for Transgender Day of Remembrance (Planned Parenthood, 2018b, 2019c). These posts have many positive outcomes, particularly as they advertise important events to their hundreds of thousands of followers and provide an opportunity for education. At the same time, utilizing language like "we celebrate" and "we support" when posting about events like Muslim Women's Day, Latina Equal Pay Day, and Transgender Day of Awareness does little to support these causes materially. Rather, these posts mark an effort to construct an appealing political brand for Planned Parenthood. In her exploration of French digital feminist



activism, Jouet explains that promoting content online indicates "loose engagement and distant support," pacifying feminist communities with appealing digital content while simultaneously curating sentiments of belonging (Jouet, 2018, p. 139). In Planned Parenthood's case, individuals who care about the events they promote are drawn closer to the organizational brand and are less likely to critique Planned Parenthood for failing to invest in matters outside of their primary work. Thus, these promotional posts are self-serving, benefiting Planned Parenthood more than the social issues they highlight.

Another example of Planned Parenthood utilizing their branding to align themselves with causes outside of their primary work is their virtual content about reproductive justice. In conjunction with Black History Month, in February 2020 Planned Parenthood posted about the reproductive justice movement to their Tumblr and Facebook, writing in a Tumblr post that "Planned Parenthood is committed to our work with reproductive justice partners who have taught us that reproductive freedom is not only about the ability to decide when and whether to have a child, but also the ability to raise that child in a safe and healthy environment" (Planned Parenthood, 2020a). Planned Parenthood, despite working with reproductive justice partners, is itself a pro-choice organization. As discussed in Chapter Two, reproductive justice and pro-choice frameworks have substantially different focuses. Pro-choice frameworks tend to focus on providing abortion services and birth control to those who need it, while reproductive justice frameworks have a wider focus, emphasizing the right to parent children in a safe and healthy environment along with access to birth control and abortion. Planned Parenthood aligning itself publicly with the organization's reproductive justice partners capitalizes on the growing strength of the reproductive justice movement, creating the illusion that Planned Parenthood operates similarly to reproductive justice organizations. Again, though there is value in raising awareness

for issues that Planned Parenthood does not directly address, the posts about reproductive justice appeal to those who are aware of the growing reproductive justice movement and will feel positively about Planned Parenthood's collaboration with reproductive justice groups.

Additionally, Planned Parenthood's 501(c)(4) arm, Planned Parenthood Action Fund, posts frequently about legislative issues and electoral politics, which promotes the idea that working with the government is an adequate tool to achieve reproductive equality. One example of this is their depiction of voting as a tool capable of transformative social change. One Instagram post, featured on the left, states that "young people are the future, so vote because the future is ours" (Planned Parenthood Action Fund, 2018c). This message implies that the voting habits of young Americans are enough to ensure that their best interests are secured, an idea that is quickly contradicted by the widespread voter suppression during the 2016 election cycle as well as the shortcomings of the electoral college. Although the deterioration of reproductive rights protections and increased attacks on Planned Parenthood since the election of Donald Trump in 2016 highlights the tangible impact that politics can have, voting is not enough to guarantee progress on social issues such as reproductive rights.

Planned Parenthood's reliance on government funding as well as their relationships with pro-choice politicians, however, make it important for the organization to continue to advocate for voter turnout. As was true for Planned Parenthood's promotion of events outside of the organization's traditional wheelhouse, Planned Parenthood's promotion of political activities is not a bad thing, as advocating for change in the political realm can lead to positive changes in the

world of reproductive rights and other social causes. The issue, however, comes when hundreds of thousands of Americans look to Planned Parenthood to guide their decision-making processes and shape their perceptions of how social change can be made in the United States. If individuals look to Planned Parenthood as their sole informant for information pertaining to reproductive rights, they might be unable to identify the limits of the American political sector in resolving the barriers to reproductive rights for all Americans.

In addition to voting, Planned Parenthood Action Fund's social media content promotes the idea that increased racial and gender representation in the government is an indicator of social progress. This idea can be emphasized by one Instagram post titled "They Made History" accompanied by the pictures of new members of congress who are pro-choice, primarily highlighting women and people of color (Planned Parenthood, 2018d). Although it is important to diversify Congress, this post illustrates a desire to form relationships with ideologically similar

government figures more than it does the erasure of the racism, sexism, and institutional barriers that keep women and people of color from winning elected positions. How many women and people of color in elected positions does it take to change institutionalized racism and sexism? Ultimately, it is not advantageous for Planned Parenthood to point out the limits of the American political system because Planned Parenthood relies on this system for both financial support and publicity. As a result, their

virtual content makes it seem possible for social progress to be achieved through voting, lobbying, and other individual political activities.

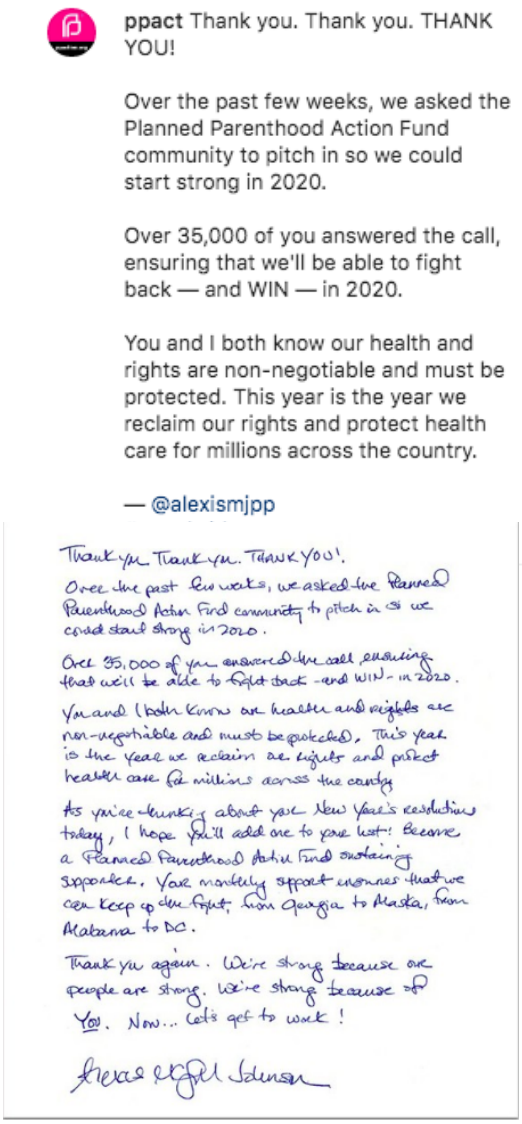
Image Management and Fundraising

In addition to showcasing educational content, a major function of Planned Parenthood's virtual content is to prove to their followers that the organization is an indispensable tool in the fight for reproductive freedom in the United States. This idea is particularly important to the organization's fundraising messaging, which relies on the notion that Planned Parenthood is a gatekeeper of social progress and capable of addressing political concerns outside of their control. In order to promote this sentiment and ensure that donations are solicited, Planned Parenthood overlooks the historical injustices they have contributed to such as the eugenics movement, as well as limits how frequently they promote the work of other individuals and organizations. As is common for nonprofit organizations, Planned Parenthood's social media capitalizes on public anger and a desire for social transformation in order to solidify their own funding channels, sending the message that social change can be bought and sold via relationships with nonprofit organizations.

One way that Planned Parenthood utilizes its virtual content to solicit donations is by overemphasizing the reach of the organization's work, conflating the work of Planned Parenthood as synonymous with the values their supporters frequently hold. This tactic, although certainly not unique to Planned Parenthood, gives supporters an exaggerated idea of the organization's role in the reproductive rights world and its capacity to catalyze social change.

One example of this strategy is an Instagram post that states "Stand with equal rights. Stand with freedom. Stand with truth. Stand with Planned Parenthood" (Planned Parenthood 2019d). The repetitive phrasing in this post implies that if one stands for equal rights and truth, one must also stand for Planned Parenthood, and conversely that Planned Parenthood stands uncategorically for those values, as well. Although equal rights, truth, and freedom are certainly some of Planned Parenthood's organizational values, these black-and-white depictions of Planned Parenthood as an indisputable good limits our capacity for a nuanced conversation about the role of nonprofit organizations in upholding existing power structures, as well as the limits of the nonprofit sector in prompting societal change.

An explicit example of Planned Parenthood presenting itself as holding the key to reproductive equality is this Instagram post from January 2020, which features a handwritten letter from acting Planned Parenthood President & CEO, Alexis McGill Johnson (Planned Parenthood Action Fund, 2020d). The caption, which repeats the content from the letter, thanks supporters for their donations to the Planned Parenthood Action Fund and notes that "over 35,000 of you answered the call, ensuring that we'll be able to fight back -- and WIN -- in 2020." Unfortunately this is outside of the control of Planned Parenthood alone; let alone the organization's donors. Similarly, a pop-up donation appeal run on Planned Parenthood's website in December 2019 wrote that "Patients are counting on Planned Parenthood, so we're counting on you. Make your generous, tax-deductible gift today so we can keep up the fight. You know



what's at stake: Affordable, high-quality reproductive health care. Safe, legal abortion. Comprehensive sex education." These posts imply that Planned Parenthood is the sole provider of these services, and that failure to donate to Planned Parenthood will result in these services becoming unavailable. Though Planned Parenthood does help make reproductive healthcare services available to millions of Americans and provides a voice to other healthcare providers, Planned Parenthood is not the sole provider of reproductive healthcare services in the United States. Today, in fact, independent clinics perform 60 percent of abortion procedures in the United States (Dias, 2019). Thus, writing that safe, legal abortion is in jeopardy unless individual donations to Planned Parenthood are secured is misleading. The same can be said for comprehensive sex education, which is promoted and facilitated by countless individuals and organizations other than Planned Parenthood.

In addition to presenting themselves as single-handedly responsible for securing reproductive healthcare in the United States, Planned Parenthood's fundraising messaging utilizes the energy generated from current events in order to solicit donations. This tactic, common for politically active nonprofit organizations, often implies that the organization is capable of resolving concerns generated by the current event in question. One example of this is

a Facebook post by the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, which writes “let’s make tonight the last Trump State of the Union” and then makes an appeal for donations (Planned Parenthood Action Fund, 2020c). Particularly during the Trump presidency, Planned Parenthood has successfully utilized political activities as opportunities for fundraising. The money solicited from this post, which would go towards their 501(c)(4) arm, works to ensure pro-choice politicians are elected in 2020. Although mobilizing pro-choice voters against Trump can be helpful in preventing his reelection, a donation to Planned Parenthood, or any nonprofit organization, will not guarantee any political shifts. Framing donations in this light, however, can mobilize donors into turning their desire to remove Trump from office into a financial contribution to Planned Parenthood.

Posts that align Planned Parenthood with positive values and position the organization as capable of providing the solution to political concerns exemplify Planned Parenthood’s branding work. Branding “serves as a linking device between an alienated product and the realization of social aspirations such that brands become an extension of the self that enable consumers to convey ideas about the kind of person they are and the sort of person they would like to be seen as” (Warrier, 2011, p. 38). By engaging with Planned Parenthood’s brand on social media, and particularly by donating, supporters are encouraged to feel like they have taken steps towards substantially addressing issues that matter to them. In order to uphold the idea that brands can bridge citizenship and consumption, Planned Parenthood is forced to paint itself in an

overwhelmingly positive light, making it challenging to recognize where the organization might fall short. This is particularly apparent in posts and website pages referencing Planned Parenthood's organizational history, which shy away from addressing the organization's evolution across time.

One example of this is a Tumblr post that draws attention to the United States' history of forced sterilizations. In one post, created to acknowledge Native American History Month, Planned Parenthood details sterilization abuses committed against Native American women and concludes that "acknowledging the historical and systematic racism within the medical community has enabled us to look at the ways we can be better providers and advocates of sexual and reproductive health care." As discussed in the education section, drawing attention to historical injustices is an important action to take, particularly because Planned Parenthood has such a large number of followers who view the content regularly. But rather than acknowledge points in the past where Planned Parenthood itself promoted dubious policies, the post simply states that the organization has acknowledged systemic racism within the "medical community," a phrase that distances both Planned Parenthood and the reproductive rights movement from participation in historical injustice against women of color. In the 1970s, for example, when the Committee to End Sterilization Abuse proposed new national guidelines to prevent the forced sterilizations of women of color, Planned Parenthood testified against the new guidelines. This was done because of fear that additional regulations about sterilizations would make the procedure less accessible for people who sought it, namely, white women (Roberts, 1997, p. 96). Planned Parenthood's timeline of its organizational history does not address in any way the organization's position regarding forced sterilizations, nor their ties to the eugenics movement.

Although this is not surprising, these historical omissions and ongoing attempts to frame the organization's history in a completely positive light make it challenging to facilitate nuanced conversations about Planned Parenthood's social and political role. These conversations would make it possible to develop realistic perceptions of nonprofit capacity, thus encouraging the energy of those interested in substantial social change to be directed towards both nonprofit organizations and other movement leaders. Because it is forced to protect its public image and financial future, Planned Parenthood is unable to publicly, or seemingly even privately, address the contemporary limitations of the organization, as well as where they have fallen short in the past.

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Planned Parenthood's social media presence provides important social goods by offering opportunities for public education. Educating thosuands about safer sex and birth control methods, providing Americans with information on how to vote, drawing attention to equal pay initiatives and other social justice causes, and keeping their followers up-to-date on abortion restrictions are valuable activities. It is not my intention to diminish this work. However, as was illustrated in Chapter Two, by Planned Parenthood's regular rebranding and shifting organizational focus, Planned Parenthood's status as a nonprofit organization means it is forced to adapt to perspectives that will encourage the public to provide Planned Parenthood with financial support and social acceptance. As a result, Planned Parenthood is obliged to use its social media accounts to build the membership and donor base, both to support its mission and to ensure financial stability and social power. I argue that this self-serving utilization of virtual content is not the same as movement building. Planned Parenthood ultimately operates as a

service provider, a business, and a brand, not as a social movement or as the group that holds the key to progress in the world of reproductive rights.

Ultimately, Planned Parenthood's online presence contributes to the continued rise of mega-nonprofit organizations that demand outsized focus on its organizational activities. Because of the organization's reach, people look to Planned Parenthood for answers instead of to activists, community organizers, or to smaller nonprofit organizations with a different perspective on current events. It is the organization's increased professionalism and bureaucratization that allows it to carefully curate multiple social media channels and to deepen its reliance on private funding. Just like the organization as a whole, Planned Parenthood's social media popularity relies on maintaining mainstream acceptance from the politicians and celebrities that support their work, from their donors, and from individuals that are invested in their content and mission. The relationship between virtual media and branding, or image management, makes it challenging for Planned Parenthood to drive the social change necessary to radically alter reproductive rights in the United States.

Conclusion

Two years before starting this paper, I worked as a development intern at a 501(c)(3) 501(c)(4) hybrid pro-choice advocacy group.[8] While I was there, the group was working hard to develop a guide to obtaining abortion services in the geographic area they served, and sought the input of interns on whether to use gendered or gender-neutral language in the guide. Although almost everyone at the organization agreed that gender-neutral language was the best option, some staff members were concerned that their donors and board members would prefer the guide to use gendered language, referring to people in need of abortion services as women throughout. In the end, everyone agreed to use gendered language in the guide, but to add a caveat at the beginning to acknowledge that women are not the only people who need access to abortion. This decision, made to avoid ruffling the feathers of those who provide the organization financial security, illustrates some of the problems with nonprofit organizations.

In this example, the work of the nonprofit organization was constrained by the opinions of monied individuals who were able to exert control over the organization's work. Regardless of whether or not the organization would have experienced backlash to gender-neutral language, their response demonstrates the primary focus of nonprofit organizations on maintaining their financial security and public acceptance. The staff members at the organization where I worked played an invaluable role in forming my perspective on reproductive rights, and I remain inspired by their dedication to ensuring that every person they serve has the ability to exercise autonomy over their sexual and reproductive lives. The limits of the nonprofit sector have little to do with the intentions of nonprofit employees or organizations. Rather, they reflect the

[8] The organization was not Planned Parenthood.

ongoing reliance of the nonprofit sector on the state and private funders, limiting the amount of social change that nonprofit organizations are capable of catalyzing.

This paper works to demonstrate how Planned Parenthood, an organization that has moved reproductive rights forward in the United States for over 100 years, is bound by the nonprofit industrial complex in the same way that all nonprofit organizations are. Chapter One explores the makeup of the nonprofit sector in the United States as well as theories about nonprofits and charitable donations in order to establish how nonprofit organizations provide critical services. Simultaneously, nonprofit organizations act as a tool to monitor and control social movements, which fundamentally limits their capacity to create social change. Chapter Two uses Planned Parenthood as an example of these relationships, demonstrating how, due to their status as a nonprofit organization, Planned Parenthood has been forced to adapt its organizational priorities to secure public support as well as financial security. Planned Parenthood's switch from focusing on birth control to focusing on family planning, for example, was motivated by a desire to better reflect the ideas and beliefs of a cautious American public, as well as to better appeal to men. Lastly, Chapter Three takes a deep dive into Planned Parenthood's current promotional materials in order to highlight how the ideologies the organization promotes today, although not without positive benefits, work to cultivate a marketable political brand that maintains Planned Parenthood's position as a leader of the feminist establishment in the United States. Planned Parenthood works hard to uphold its mission, but is also, by necessity, fighting to uphold the power structures that allow the organization to exist in the first place. Maintaining these structures and leading a movement for reproductive freedom simultaneously, I argue, is impossible.

This argument asks us to consider what should be done about the problematic relationship between nonprofit organizations and the goal of social justice. I join Paula Rojas and Eric Tang in arguing that, although the nonprofit sector does not need to be abolished, there must be a significant restructuring of the relationship between nonprofit organizations and social movements. While in the United States the nonprofit sector currently overshadows organizing happening outside of the nonprofit model, Rojas and Tang outline how nonprofit organizations could be used to support independent social movements without co-opting those movements. Rojas asserts that, if organizing work is done outside of the nonprofit sector, activists could still opt to create nonprofit organizations to address the specific needs of social movements such as technical assistance or education. In this instance, nonprofit organizations and employees would see themselves as allies to movements rather than the leaders (Rojas, 2007, p. 207). Tang points to another potential function of nonprofit organizations, writing that "the NP can clear a path for revolutionary change by dismantling the policies and practices that prevent autonomous movements from taking hold in the US-- from the electoral college, to the denial of proportional representation, to the collapse of the social welfare state, to the rollback on civil rights" (2007, p. 225). Shifting the focus of nonprofit organizations from establishing themselves as movement leaders to becoming support apparatuses would allow some benefits of the nonprofit model, such as tax exemptions, to be maintained while still avoiding the current overshadowing of independent movements.

These goals are aspirational, and the rapid growth of the nonprofit sector in the United States seems to indicate that a large shift in the relationship of nonprofit organizations to social movements will not happen anytime soon. In the meantime, there are steps that can be taken to mitigate the effects of the nonprofit industrial complex. For one, it is important for those

interested in donating time and money to nonprofit organizations to understand that nonprofit organizations are not a monolith. Some rely heavily on corporate funding while others refuse to accept it, some offer support to activists while others work to position themselves in the spotlight, some utilize grassroots models while others operate almost identically to corporations. These differences make it possible for some existing nonprofit organizations to engage with and support broader social movements, while others remain trapped in the bureaucratized, neoliberal form that is more likely to delay social change than to prompt it. When it comes to reproductive rights, for example, SisterSong works to provide funding, housing, and childcare to those seeking abortion services and leverages the talents of staff members from diverse backgrounds, including doulas and community organizers (SisterSong). Then there are organizations like Access Reproductive Care Southeast, which focus almost exclusively on service provision, making sure that Southerners have the transportation, lodging, and funds necessary to receive reproductive care (Access Reproductive Care Southeast). Consciously supporting organizations that minimize their contribution to the nonprofit industrial complex by focusing on providing services and integrating staff members of different professional backgrounds is one way to ensure that nonprofit organizations do not overshadow alternative methods of seeking social change.

Additionally, existing nonprofit organizations can take steps to minimize their relationship to the nonprofit industrial complex. Diversifying funding channels to avoid reliance on money from the government and philanthropic organizations can mitigate the need for approval from these groups, as well as allow for greater flexibility in nonprofit activities. When hiring new employees, nonprofits can avoid prioritizing candidates "professional" qualifications specific to the nonprofit sector. Fundraising and communications skills can be learned on the job,

and hiring those without extensive experience in the nonprofit world can boost innovation within the organization. Lastly, nonprofits can commit to speaking openly about places their organization might fall short, as well as their capacity to address the issues their organization focuses on. Avoiding painting nonprofit organizations as the only solution to social problems in the United States will allow those interested in social change to choose where to use their time and resources knowingly.

As for the reproductive rights movement, I hope that the amount of attention directed towards Planned Parenthood can begin to be redirected to the work of other activists and the leadership of alternative organizations. I contend that an outsized focus on Planned Parenthood, although important in securing the safety of the organization's patients and continued pro-choice influence within the political sphere, comes at the detriment of the twenty-first century reproductive rights movement. Planned Parenthood's status as a target of conservative groups, its ability to shape the way millions of Americans conceptualize reproductive rights, and the organization's contradictory stance as both a lobbying group and healthcare provider all compromise the ability of the organization to offer the kind of cutting-edge transformative leadership that the reproductive rights movement needs.

Although I hope that Planned Parenthood can keep their clinics open nationwide, it is necessary to stop treating the organization as the most important voice in the reproductive rights sphere. I have trouble imagining how this might be reflected in the organization's online content, as branding is by necessity self-serving, but I believe that some improvements could be made. For one, Planned Parenthood could avoid boasting about the organization's own achievements within their educational content. When writing about reproductive justice, for example, the organization points out that they worked with reproductive justice organizations. Letting

educational material exist without using it as an explicit promotional tool could help foster engagement with other ideologies and groups. Additionally, Planned Parenthood could step away from heavily curated visual content. A less unified online appearance will deter automatic associations between the content the organization shares and the Planned Parenthood brand. These adjustments might make it possible for Planned Parenthood's massive following to be leveraged in support of a broader reproductive rights agenda, rather than simply serving Planned Parenthood itself. I recognize that it can be challenging to imagine how Planned Parenthood might maintain their clinic structure without positioning themselves at the front of the reproductive rights scene. I do not have all of the answers, and before closing, I would like to reiterate that this paper works to use Planned Parenthood as a case study to illustrate the shortcomings of the nonprofit structure and to show that even nationally beloved nonprofit organizations uphold structures that perpetuate the very issues they are trying to work against.

In his exploration of the bureaucratization of LGBTQ+ serving nonprofit organizations, Beam writes that "despite the best intentions of many liberation-oriented activists… the nonprofit structure wields its own power, and it arcs towards the maintenance of existing systems of inequality" (Beam, 2016). Moving forward, I hope that conversations about the problems with the nonprofit sector continue to grow both inside and outside of academic spaces, and that Americans become more comfortable in challenging the nonprofit organizations that shape our day-to-day lives. Our ability to imagine an ethical future might just depend on it.

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