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Los Angeles

Property Manager Discretion in Permanent Supportive Housing

Dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in Social Welfare

by

Carissa van den Berk-Clark

2012

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Property Manager Discretion in Permanent Supportive Housing

by

Carissa van den Berk-Clark

Doctor of Philosophy in Social Welfare

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Yeheskel Hasenfeld, Chair

This dissertation will examine how street level bureaucrats (in this case, property managers) use their discretion to provide access to housing for permanent supportive housing facilities.

Previous research has shown that there is a rate of 15-50% turnover in permanent supportive housing (PSH) facilities. What remains unknown is how decisions about client intake and eviction are made in such facilities. Case Study-qualitative methods such as field observations, unstructured interviews, and focus groups were utilized in order to understand the meaning of property manager discretion. Findings indicate that property managers' discretion is conditioned by policy context, task environment and organizational structure. Specifically, property managers evaluate whether or not to admit or evict residents based on agency expectations of them, which affect their working conditions. Agency expectations are constructed by organizational structures, which depend heavily on task environment and policy context. The social welfare implications to these findings are discussed.

The dissertation of Carissa van den Berk-Clark is approved.

Albert E. Benjamin

Stuart A. Kirk

Robert M. Emerson

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2012

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“Don't be deceived by life's outcomes. Life's outcomes, while not entirely random, have a huge amount of luck baked into them. Above all, recognize that if you have had success, you have also had luck — and with luck comes obligation. You owe a debt, and not just to your Gods. You owe a debt to the unlucky.”

Michael Lewis, Princeton University's 2012 Baccalaureate Remarks

I heard this quote recently and I've had been thinking about it a lot as I completed this dissertation. I really did work quite hard on this but many others, including myself (at other times in my life), worked hard on many other things, which did not get so much notoriety and which do not come with such rewards. Really, the completion of this dissertation, as well as its quality, is much more connected to the people I've had the privilege to work with, grow up with, befriend and fall in love with. This dissertation is dedicated to all of them.

I should start first by thanking my committee chair, Zeke Hasenfeld. I can't believe how lucky I was to have Zeke as chair and mentor. Zeke exposed me to new ways of thinking about science, research and social welfare policy. His work on human service organizations and how this has shaped the social work field inspired me. More than that, he took an interest in me and helped me gain experience and knowledge by giving me the opportunity to work on special projects, like this one, which led to this dissertation. He counseled me when I had a tough time in the program, challenged me when it was necessary and consistently motivated me to do better. He was a role model for me – not only in the way he served as my research mentor – but also for his integrity, loyalty and the way he treated students and colleagues.

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Soon, I hope to use these gifts I got from all these people, to help the students I mentor as well as those people that social workers always want to aid, *the unlucky*.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Overview

In the early 70s, two priests who ran a church soup kitchen in midtown Manhattan became moral entrepreneurs whose success established standard practices for human service organizations serving populations including the homeless and the mentally ill. In 1967, they noticed that more people were sleeping in front of their church than eating at their soup kitchen (Houghton, 2001). They also noticed that a large number of these individuals were mentally ill. They began using a local residential hotel, called the Aberdeen, to provide housing and mental health services to these homeless men (id). They recruited a state social service caseworker to work out of an office at the hotel, along with a visiting nurse service and a social worker. The State Office of Mental Health also provided some psychiatric time to the hotel. After showing surprising success with the homeless, the Aberdeen Hotel became a model for future developments in permanent supportive housing (PSH). The priests saw that providing everything on-site for residents encouraged participation in the hotel as well as its social service programs (Houghton, 2001).

The Housing and Community Development Act of 1992 disseminated these priests' intervention nationwide. It allowed HUD to supervise housing and social services to a variety of different populations with differing needs (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006). Three major permanent supportive housing programs were created by this act, including the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), the Shelter Plus Care (SPC) program and the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Program (See Appendix A: Definition of Terms, pp. 170-175). All three provide funding to states, local government and public housing agencies to serve homeless individuals with disabilities, AIDS and substance abuse problems. SPC attaches services to housing to ensure

increased stability, skills, income and self-sufficiency for homeless individuals (HUD, 2010a). SPC projects are generally implemented through partnerships with public housing authorities (PHAs), states, local governments, investors and non-profits (id). These programs led to high levels of permanent supportive housing (PSH) creation, especially after a series of studies showed their success with improving mental health and substance abuse outcomes and decreasing the cost of city services. Increased local money available for affordable housing also stimulated a boom period from 2002 - 2007. Approximately 65-72,000 units (nationally) were created in that five-year period alone (US Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2010).

The growth of permanent supportive housing (PSH) programs, as well as the positive attention they have received from academics, policy planners and mental health advocates, suggest that the program is the answer to co-occurring problems of mental illness, substance abuse and homelessness. However, in this paper I argue that the discretion of frontline workers at these facilities results in creaming. It is clear that residents of permanent supportive housing facilities (PSHs) have better outcomes and use fewer public services. It is unclear whether those residents would have made those strides anyway.

Problem Statement

Within permanent supportive housing (PSH) units, property managers (PMs) are responsible for maintaining order by using their discretion to admit, discipline or evict chronically homeless clients (See Abbott & Little, 2008). These property managers (PMs) are essentially responsible for the provision of housing that is laid out by objectives of housing and mental health policies created by those at higher levels of government, and, thus, the property managers (PMs) have a large amount of influence on policy outcomes (See Lipsky, 1980; Maynard-Moody, 2000; Scott, 1992). However, it is unclear how they exercise their

discretionary powers and why discretion over client access and retention is left to them. Discretion is a form of individual level decision-making where choice is not connected to satisfying other individuals. Discretion is common among street level workers, like property managers(PMs), in large bureaucracies where supervision is low, cases are sufficiently complex and individual rules give little guidance (Emerson & Paley, 1993). It has been criticized as being a form of ‘discrimination’ used to cream clients (that is, attempt to serve ‘more desirable’ clients), rubber stamp expert decisions, help workers to avoid conflict and better protect their position and to help workers better cope with goal conflicts and decreased resources (id p. 129; Sosin, 2009). More thorough analysis of worker discretion would help to clarify how mental health and housing policy is really being implemented at the ground level so that researchers and policy makers can understand whether property manager discretion reinforces policy or subverts it.

Background

Individuals with mental disorders and co-occurring substance abuse substantially over-represent the populations that are considered “chronically homeless” (O’Hara, 2007). They are considered “chronically homeless” because they face many barriers to accessing and retaining affordable housing (North, Eyrich-Garg, Pollio, Thirthalli, 2010), and they are often most resistant to traditional modes of services (O’Hara, 2007). Efforts to fight chronic homelessness increased in 2005, when the Interagency Council on the Homeless created a National Alliance to End Homelessness campaign, which promoted state-level coordination. This council favored the “housing first” approach to decreasing chronic homelessness over the traditional “continuum of care” approach (Davidson, 2006). The housing first approach offers an alternative to traditional continuum of care practices by providing permanent housing to homeless individuals directly

from the streets. In other words, the homeless are no longer required to go through a gradual process of independence which included shelter to substance abuse treatment to transitional housing to long term housing (O'Hara, 2007). Instead, they are automatically housed in permanent supportive housing units.

“Housing First” is a type of permanent supportive housing (PSH) focused on putting housing before substance abuse recovery. Supportive housing, whether it is permanent or temporary, is quasi-institutional housing in the community with flexible support services (Hogan & Carling, 1992; See also Averyt, 2003). These services exist to ensure retention and can include case management, group activities, property management, housekeeping services, medication management, medical services, psychiatric services, money management, and drug treatment services (id). Supportive housing is generally designed for one person using the design and sometimes the former buildings of Single Room Occupancy units common to Skid Rows throughout the United States in the earlier part of the century (Siegel, 1978). They can be scattered-site through the Section 8 program, but because of the difficulty many homeless people have in getting apartments through the rental market (HUD 2011; Oakley, 2006), they are increasingly being located in clustered apartments in the same building or complex. The Shelter Plus Care Program, SRO Program, Community Development Block Grants, Tax Credits and other local real estate incentives, which ensures affordability, have aided this.

Advocates for the homeless, as well as many researchers, praised permanent supportive housing (PSH) as a new way to house anyone with a disability, regardless of whether associated with HIV, substance abuse or severe schizophrenia (See Lipton, Nutt, & Sabitini, 1988; Brown, Ridgeway, Anthony, & Rogers, 1991; Conrad, Hultman, Pope, Lyons, Baxter, Daghestani, et. al., 1998). Permanent supportive housing (PSH) was also commended because attaching services to

housing to ensure increased stability, income and self-sufficiency significantly decreased costs of homelessness, such as emergency room visits (Pearson, Montgomery, & Locke, 2009; Kessell, Bhatia, Bamberger, & Kushel, 2006; Martinez & Burt, 2006; Nelson, Clarke, Febbraro, & Hatzipantelis, 2005; Tsemberis, Gulcur, & Nakae, 2004; Rosecheck, Kaspro, Frisman, & Lui-Mares, 2003; Culhane & Metraux, 2002; Drake, Yovetich, Bobout, Harris, & McHugo, 1997; Lipton et. al., 1988) and the utilization of shelter beds (Culhane & Metraux, 2002). Some studies even found that these permanent supportive housing programs could improve mental health outcomes (Greenwood, Schaefer-McDanile, Winkel & Tsemberis, 2005) and substance outcomes (Sosin, Bruni, & Reidy, 1995; Drake et. al., 1997; Conrad et. al., 1998). For example, Schinka, Francis, Hughes, Lalone, & Flynn (1998) found that supportive housing with a substance abuse component was no different than inpatient substance abuse treatment.

Many of these initial studies compared permanent supportive housing programs to control groups provided with services as usual (See Lipton et. al., 1988; Burnham, Morton, McGlynn, Petersen, Stecher, Hayes, & Vaccaro, 1995; Conrad et. al., 1998). These studies utilized experimental designs and generally exhibited high effect sizes, but the problem was that the standard treatment, i.e. a shelter bed, was much like comparing apples and oranges. Permanent supportive housing (PSH) offered much more substantial, long term programming. Other studies compared permanent supportive housing programs to other types of programs providing housing (Section 8 Housing Certificate Programs), which offered case management services to those who didn't (Hulbert, Wood, & Hough, 1996; Rosenheck, et. al., 2003; Clark & Rich, 2003).

However, only Clark & Rich (2003) found a difference, which might be a result of a case manager who arranges social services being placed "on-site," rather than simply offered with a Section 8 voucher or certificate. Clear & Rich (2003) found that case management intervention

was more helpful in increasing housing retention when clients had higher impairments. Mares et. al. (2004) found that intensive case management involvement led to better overall client retention over time. Kaspro et. al. (2000) found that part of this effect might have to do with increasing their income. When case managers were able to help residents get SSI income, they were more likely to remain stably housed after one year.

While reporting the positive effects of permanent supportive housing on the lives of the chronically homeless, these studies also pointed out low retention rates. Seven studies show that 22-56% of homeless people in supportive housing are not able to retain housing (Caton, Wyatt, Felix, Grunberg, & Dominguez, 1993 (56%); Murray, Baier, North, Lato, & Eschew, 1997 (22%); Shern, Felton, Hough, Lehman, Goldfinger, Valencia, Dennis, Straw & Wood, 1997 (24%); Hurlburt, Wood, & Hough, 1996 (43%); Goldfinger, Schutt, Tolomiczenko, Seidman, Penk, Turner & Kaplan, 1999(24%); Lipton, Siegel, Hannigan, Samuels, & Baker, 2000 (36%); Harkness, Newman, & Salkever, 2004 (45%), Mares, Kaspro, and Rosenheck, 2004 (50%)). Also, an Annual Progress Report on HUD's assisted permanent supportive housing (PSH) for homeless people showed that 5% of residents left within the first two months of living at these permanent supportive housing facilities (PSHs), another 7% left between 3-6 months and about 25% altogether left within the first year.

Several studies have attempted to explain this phenomenon. According to Culhane & Metraux, & Hadley (2002), permanent supportive housing (PSH) varies when it comes to house rules and tolerance of drugs and alcohol. Shorter housing tenure was generally the result of either severe psychiatric illness or substance abuse (Dickey et al., 1996; Goldfinger et al., 1999; Hurlburt et al., 1996; Tsemberis & Eisenberg, 2000; Lipton, et. al., 2000; Averyt, 2003; North, Eyrych, Garg, Pollio, & Thirthalli, 2009). The level of substance abuse or mental illness among

clients explains how some studies looking at “housing first” programs show higher retention rates (around 80%) (see Tsemberis & Eisenberg, 2000; Tsemberis, Gulcur, & Nakae, 2004; Pearson, Montgomery, & Locke, 2009; Robbins, Clark, Callahan, & Monahan, 2009). However, other studies point out other issues, which might affect resident retention rates. Availability of supportive services ranges, depending on the organization, its location and its goals and resources (See Wang, Poulin, Lee, Davis, & Hadley, 2008). These include age, which generally is associated with higher retention (Harkness et al., 2004; Tsemberis & Eisenberg, 2000), being female, which is also generally associated with higher retention (Hurlburt et al., 1996; Kaspro et al., 2000) and whether or not the resident had been incarcerated in the past (Casper & Clark, 2002). Also, many of the buildings offering permanent supportive housing (PSH) are located in areas with high levels of crime and social disorder, where housing turnover is generally high (Wong & Stanhope, 2009).

A 2008 HUD evaluation by Wong, Poulin, Lee, Davis, & Hadley looking specifically at leavers and circumstances of leaving found that two-fifths left involuntarily, either by being asked to leave or for violating program rules. They often used more services (psychiatric hospitalization, emergency services), had increased drug and alcohol use, had more behavior problems, were less able to live independently and required more case management services. The remaining three-fifths left for a mixture of reasons, including problems associated with living in permanent supportive housing. This study showed that the structure of permanent supportive housing and some of the ways that staff members attempted to bring about stabilization either worked or didn’t work. It showed that resident-staff relations might be an important predictor of client retention (Wong, Hadley, Culhane, Poulin, Cirksey, & Brown, 2006; See also Wong, Poulin, Lee, Davis, & Hadley, 2008).

No studies looking at permanent supportive housing (PSH) have considered whether or not this program success is due to the retention of better tenants. The only study to consider the use of discretion in the application process was Dickson-Gomez, Convey, Hilario, Cotbett & Weeks (2007). They point out that case managers and other street-level workers prioritized clients seeking permanent housing, in order to ensure what they view as the best use of limited resources. They also ensured that few drug-abusing clients applied for housing by increasing bureaucratic red tape and acting disrespectfully towards them (id). The tendency of case managers to determine whether to provide resources to homeless on the basis of what property managers at these sites would think about these applicants says a lot about how tenant screening affects outcomes. It is clear that further study of the use of discretion within permanent supportive housing (PSH) is necessary in order to better understand the effect of the true effects of these programs on the chronically homeless.

Purpose of Study

Housing first programs were designed with the assumption that stable housing could improve mental health and substance abuse outcomes while reducing stress on city services, the criminal justice system and on public and private hospitals. Cost-benefit studies on permanent supportive housing programs (PSHs) with a “housing first” philosophy have found that they usually were successful in reducing costs and improving outcomes (Culhane, Metraux, & Hadley, 2002). However, these programs had varying levels of eviction rates and never clarified mechanisms of applicant processing. The literature on program access and implementation had characterized discretionary behavior as an outcome, which was missed by studies of performance measures and formal requirements. These discretionary behavior outcomes could only be determined by examining the course of routine interactions between workers and clients

(Brodkin, 1997). Case studies provided a way of examining these routine interactions in typical welfare offices. These studies show a "bottom-up" approach to the study of policy implementation, by seeking to understand the relationship between client experience and frontline worker practices (Lindhorst & Padgett, 2005). The "bottom up" approach is a linchpin in policy analysis because it explains the effectiveness of policy reforms and the degree to which these reforms reflect those put forth by policy makers (O'Toole & Meier, 1999: See also Recucci, 2005). Within housing first programs which take the form of permanent supportive housing (PSH), property managers (PMs) are responsible for applicant screening, distribution of sanctions and initiating eviction procedures (Center of Supportive Housing, 2010b). Their discretionary behavior when it comes to these duties thus can illustrate how these programs are implemented, who is getting served and the extent to which these programs are truly successful.

Significance of the Study

Not much is known about how street level workers use their discretion to carry out mental health and housing policy in a non-profit organization specializing in housing and services that follows a housing first model. Currently, most supportive housing programs rely on property management companies and property managers to make final decisions about client housing (See Abbott & Little, 2008). There are few studies looking at property managers except a few ethnographies in the late seventies, which called them "supervisors of staffless institutions" (Siegelell, 1978, p. 22; Winberg & Wilson, 1981, p.64). However, their autonomy, vulnerability, lack of formal education, and discretionary authority are similar to that of welfare case workers, policemen, prison guards, SRO desk clerks and mental institution attendants. As permanent supportive housing and its use of property managers becomes a more prominent intervention for the chronically homeless, it is necessary to better understand how discretion carried out at the

ground level increases or decreases access and retention of housing for the chronically homeless.

This study is also significant because it seeks to develop theory on street-level discretion at PSHs. At this point, the literature on street level discretion using theory is limited to the study of welfare workers. Welfare workers, to some degree, deal with different role expectations and working conditions than property managers. They work for centralized public institutions and have limited contact with clients. This is not the case for property managers, who deal with decentralized institutions where client contact is high and often not safe. Property managers in this way might be more similar to SLBs at social control organizations like mental institutions, prisons or police departments. Most studies of worker discretion also tend towards a rational theory of street-level behavior with only a little mention of the policy context. For this reason, they fail to show the full picture of policy implementation in differing political, social and economic contexts. This study seeks to expand on current theory of discretion and to better understand the relationship between worker discretion and organizational structure.

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to describe the processes and patterns of PM discretion. This involves 3 primary questions. They are:

- 1) Do PM have discretion in PSHs?
- 2) Why do they have discretion?
- 3) What forces drive discretionary behavior in applicant screening, sanctions and eviction?

Design of the Study

The study of street level discretionary behavior generally involves a study of policy, political science, sociology, organizations and management. It is necessary that the method of

data collection and analysis illustrate decisions or sets of decisions that take place between these street-level bureaucrats (SLBs) and the organization in which they reside in order to understand policy implementation and organizational dynamics (Yin, 1989, p. 22-23). A case study is the best methodology for such a task because it can be used to explain causal links in real life interventions too complex for surveys or experiments (p.25). It can describe the real life context of the intervention or explore incidences when outcomes of interventions are unclear or ambiguous.

The study utilizes a descriptive-explanatory type of case study methodology but also uses organizational ethnographic methods. A case study allows me to find an explanation for discretionary behavior on the part of property managers (PMs) (See Yin, 1989, p. 16). Street level bureaucrat (SLB) research has posed competing organizational and individual level theories for street level discretionary behavior. By comparing each theory with the behavior of property managers (PMs) in the context of PSHs, I will be better able to expand on existing theory of street-level bureaucrat discretion and find the best explanation for property manager (PM) discretionary behavior in PSHs. I can also suggest that my explanation is applicable to other situations, and in so doing, I can broaden the significance of this study.

Summary

Permanent supportive housing is considered a successful way of improving outcomes and decreasing costs for the chronically homeless. However, it is unclear whether these outcomes are related to discretionary behavior on the PM or the effectiveness of the intervention itself.

The following chapter, Chapter II, will present the literature on street-level discretion over the years and the gaps that currently exist

Chapter II: Literature Review

Introduction

Street-Level Bureaucrats and Discretion

A property manager (PM) is an example of a street-level bureaucrat (SLB). Street-level bureaucrats (SLBs) are public service workers who work on the front lines and thus interact directly with citizens (Lipsky, 1980, pp 3-4). They have a significant amount of autonomy, which also means a large amount of discretion. By discretion, I'm referring to a certain level of autonomy among workers when it comes to their interaction with clients. These workers can deny benefits, take them away, give sanctions, inform about benefits or expand benefits (Sosin, 2009). Workers who have this level of autonomy create policy in practice. Discretion takes place between 3 classes of unequal's: clients, workers and organizations implementing policy (id). Discretion occurs when police decide to give someone a ticket; when teachers decide that a student should get a B instead of an A, when welfare workers decide to approve benefits or when prison guards give sanctions to inmates. According to Lipsky, all these types of workers are similar because they experience the same type of working conditions. Bureaucratic systems, whether they are run by the government or through the private sector, are fraught with street-level discretion (See Handler, 1992).

According to the traditional view of discretion, street level bureaucrats' (SLBs') use of discretion corresponds to their own judgments of conscience, without regard to the judgments of others (Hawkins, 1993). The use of street level bureaucrat (SLB) discretion allows rigid bureaucratic structures to consider individual situations and make exceptions where necessary. The use of discretion thus results in more flexible bureaucratic institutions (Hawkins, 1993). SLBs are mediators between citizens and the state (Lipsky, 1980). They are responsible for the

provision of public services laid out in policy objectives created by those at elevated levels of government, which means they can have a substantial amount of influence on policy outcomes (Lipsky, 1980; Maynard-Moody & Macheno, ; Scott, 1997). They have substantial impact on clients' lives and ensure that citizens are socialized and trained to be the clients that government policy makers expect (id). The use of street level bureaucrats (SLBs) to carry out policy outcomes, however, has met with a large amount of controversy because it is regarded as undemocratic and sometimes even discriminatory.

Discretion among Welfare Workers

One of the most controversial SLBs is the welfare worker, and much of the research on discretion concentrates on this kind of SLB because of their involvement with contentious subjects like poverty, single mothers and access to social services. The role of welfare workers and their level of discretion have changed dramatically over the years, from higher levels of discretion in the 1950s and 1960s as a result of a traditional perspective (where the structure of social services and their delivery were contingent on "experts," who were more likely to be aware of client need, rather than on rigid bureaucratic procedures) to lower discretion (where services and delivery are contingent on rules and regulations) (Sosin, 1986). During the 60s and 70s, social worker discretion was criticized both by conservatives and liberals. Liberals recognized that discretion could be abused and that "experts" don't always behave in a professional and disinterested manner (Sosin, 1986), while conservatives did not like the involvement of workers who could sympathize with and advocate for clients (Diller, 2000).

Handler & Hollinsworth (1971) completed one of the first studies to look at worker discretion in welfare bureaucracies. This very controversial study exposed the discretionary power of frontline workers in social welfare institutions. Handler & Hollinsworth concluded that

the AFDC program was essentially "lawless" and decentralized. Discretionary power of welfare workers essentially dictated welfare policy. Another study looking at welfare workers was Prottas (1979). Prottas acknowledged the discretionary power of frontline workers and highlighted workers' roles and working among public housing property managers, welfare workers and others. His findings show that workers favor clients who decrease their workload and improve their job performance. Welfare workers preferred citizens who knew less about the welfare system, were more compliant with the rules and were less likely to ask for more resources. For property managers (PMs), better tenants did not just make their job easier and more pleasant, freeing up more time and resources. They also led to better building conditions, which improved assessments of property manager (PM) performance (Prottas, 1979, pp. 52-54). Prottas' study emphasized the ways property manager (PM) and welfare workers used their discretion but also how worker burn-out changed discretionary behaviors over time.

In his 1980 book, *Street-Level Bureaucracy: Dilemmas of the Individual in Public Services*, Lipsky argued that discretionary behaviors – or favoritism toward one client over another – resulted from coping with certain working conditions relevant to street-level workers. Lipsky stressed human intentionality and thus attempted to acknowledge workers' perspectives, workers' coping mechanisms, and workers' needs and desires. He concentrated on strategic interactions between actors and institutional outcomes (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998). According to Lipsky, all street-level bureaucrats deal with the following working conditions:

- "1. Resources are chronically inadequate relative to the tasks workers are asked to perform.
2. The demand for services tends to increase to meet the supply.
3. Goal expectations for the agencies in which they work tend to be ambiguous, vague, or conflicting.
4. Performance oriented toward goal achievement tends to be difficult if not impossible to measure.
5. Clients are typically non-voluntary; partly as a result, clients for the most part do

not serve as primary bureaucratic reference groups." (pp. 27-28)

In order to cope with these conditions, workers develop "patterns of practice, routines and simplifications." (p.15). They also restructured their work and the role of client in order to make work and resources are more predictable. The role of social constructivism was emphasized in Lipsky's theory in what he called the agency's construction of the client. This term clarified how agencies and street-level workers structured the context and taught citizens how to become "good clients."

Since Lipsky (1980), most of the literature on street-level discretion has continued to concentrate on welfare workers who began to dominate the debate over SLB discretion when years later, growing discontent over the welfare system in the 1980s and 90s led to the enactment of the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act (PRWORA) of 1996 (Diller, 2000). PROWA and the Temporary Aid to Needy Family (TANF) Program led to a new era, which now aimed to transform welfare from a safety net to a temporary assistance and work program (Jewell & Glaser, 2006). Working conditions for welfare workers (i.e. goals, resources and performance measures) dramatically changed. Welfare also was devolved from the federal to state and county level, often with contracts going to for-profit and non-profit organizations (Soss, Fording & Schram, 2006). These very working conditions hinted at a multitude of institutional environments that simultaneously affected each other.

In this way, a historical institutionalist perspective, which saw polity as an overall system of interacting parts, became more useful than Lipsky's more rational institutionalism (See Hall & Taylor, 1996). Historical institutionalists see organizations as being defined by formal and informal procedures, routines, norms and conventions, which were entrenched in the political environment or economy. Unlike Lipsky and his use of rationalism, historical institutionalists

considered how power is related to the operation and development of organizations.

In 1997, Brodtkin looked at the effect of federal requirements and funding constraints on state welfare offices covering 4 regions of Illinois. She found that when there were federal cuts or when federal program requirements were changed, this was passed down to workers through performance measures. In the case of welfare, these measures included caseload quotas. Federal cuts led to "min-max" strategies where the state tried to decrease program costs while maximizing federal reimbursement. Agencies passed this onto workers through the use of "slot models" which determined the amount of education, training and day-care slots that were available. Workers then tried to push most clients toward more affordable activities to save their slots. All this took place through routines set up in orientation and assessment. These routines essentially were put in place to structure the context for clients and to teach them their role, which in turn increased predictability. However, according to Brodtkin (1997), this predictability was not just necessitated by workers but also by the agency, state and federal government as multiple institutions with differing levels of political and economic power.

Brodtkin (1997) inspired a series of studies, which looked at the relationship between TANF policy and performance measures, goals and sanctions distributed at the frontline level. These studies generally took a more political environment standpoint and concentrated on the TANF policy context. Several studies focused heavily on goals (Meyers, Glaser, & McDonald, 1998; Meyers, Riccuci, & Lurie, 2001; O'Toole & Meiere, 1999). Finding that TANF failed to decrease goal complexity, these studies essentially concluded that discretionary power was not necessarily dictated by policy context, especially when it is so decentralized and conflicted. Welfare policy, after all, had multiple goals of improving self-sufficiency, aiding families in need and decreasing rolls (id). This meant that discretion wasn't necessarily being taken away from

the welfare worker – rather, welfare workers would still be able to pick a goal, which would affect their discretionary decisions. What goal they chose, however, was highly connected to the organizational constraints and opportunities provided by policy context. These studies were able to study the relationship between goals and worker discretion by studying worker routines. Like Brodtkin (1997), they found that by studying face-to-face transactions of welfare workers during California's state level welfare reform in the early 1990s helped to clarify discretionary patterns and their relationship with policing implementation. These routines also emphasized the importance of dealing with limited resources in day-to-day routines of workers. Routines were important in these studies because they distinguished where discretion occurred.

Lurie (2006) looked at 4 states and determined how welfare agency routines and practices conformed to the goals of TANF. She spent a great deal of time at agencies and observed how multiple goals were pursued through certain routines. However, what is most interesting about Lurie's study is how she connected agency social construction of clients to worker discretion. She found that much of client worker interactions revolve around structuring the context for applicants and teaching client his or her role. Clients in Lurie's study were socially constructed as "workers." Banners in the waiting room of the welfare office proclaimed, "Welcome Job Seekers!" "Work first so that your child is not the next generation on welfare!" The client essentially got a sense that she was in an employment agency rather than a welfare agency (p.47). Lurie also mentioned the intake process and how work mandates were imposed from the beginning. This sets the stage for clients that there no longer is an entitlement to welfare and fulfilled the goals of self-sufficiency and independence from welfare.

Studies by Meyers, Glaser, & MacDonald (1998), Meyers & Dillon (1999), Meyers, Riccucci, & Lurie (2001) & Lurie (2006) were useful in providing more knowledge on how

TANF policy affected working conditions and highlighted how agency social constructions were used by workers to control clients. However, they were limited in terms of illustrating the political and economic pressures creating TANF and the constraints TANF put on welfare agencies at the organizational level. They were also unclear in presenting what discretionary decisions welfare workers actually made. Rather, the emphasis was on how working conditions changed.

Several studies used political economy theory to clarify how political and economic forces influenced the distribution of welfare resources and sanctions. These studies clarified how decisions actually changed and either favored or didn't favor certain clients. These included Barrilleaux & Miller (1988), Weissert (1994), and Schneider & Jacoby (1996) and Kaiser & Soss (1998). Most of them, however, compared states or counties by political factors such as whether they were liberal or conservative, the amount of interest group influence, local administration or demographic factors and economic factors including bureaucratic resources, federal matching rate and level of unemployment. These studies pointed out how political and economic factors influenced the task environment, which thereby determined whether the state or county would be generous or not. The mobilization of power, legitimization and economic resources by organizations is valuable in understanding how social welfare resources are distributed. However, it was unclear how individual workers at the frontline level dealt with this dilemma.

Three other studies, Hasenfeld & Cheung (1985), Schram, Fording & Soss (2007) & Watkins-Hayes (2009) attempted to consider how task environment was connected to the discretion of frontline workers. These studies were problematic, however, in that they did not provide a comprehensive theory of the effect of policy on the structures of organization and how these structures increased or decreased different workers' discretion.

A series of other studies on welfare sanctions also helped to clarify what discretionary decisions welfare workers were actually making, given the changes in welfare. Like the other studies mentioned previously, they tended to use a limited political environment view, where emphasis was put on the policy to set the context for frontline behavior. These studies focused on the distribution of sanctions and highlighted how sanctioning had been unevenly distributed to more at risk populations. Sanctioned recipients were more likely to be unmarried, younger and had more children (Fein & Lee, 1999; Edlhoch, et. al., 2000; Koralek, 2000; Westra & Routley, 2000; Muncuso & Lindler, 2001; Cherlin et. al., 2002; Kalil et. al., 2002; Hasenfeld, et al., 2004; Pavetti, et. al., 2004; See also Lens, 2008). They were also more likely to have health problems, which included issues with substance abuse and domestic violence (Muncuso & Lindler, 2001; Polit, et. al., 2001; Cherlin et. al., 2002; Kalil, et.al., 2002; Pavetti, et. al., 2004; See also Lens, 2008). They had less human capital, less education, less work experience and had spent more time on welfare (Born et al. 1999; Fein and Lee 1999; Edelhoch et al. 2000; Koralek 2000; Westra and Routley 2000; Mancuso and Lindler 2001; Cherlin et al. 2002; Kalil et al. 2002; Hasenfeld et al. 2004; Pavetti et al. 2004; Wu et al. 2006; See also Lens, 2008). Finally, sanctioned clients were more likely to have transportation and child care issues than non-sanctioned clients (Mancuso and Lindler 2001; Cherlin et al. 2002; Kalil et al. 2002; Hasenfeld et al. 2004; Pavetti et al. 2004).

To some extent, such clients may have affected workload and performance measures. However, a pattern of vulnerability and stigma among these types of clients hint that discretion is controlled by other forces. Lens (2009) observed workers, interviewed clients and used administrative hearing data to determine whether workers used their discretion in the application of sanctions to welfare clients. She found that workers equally applied sanctions narrowly,

meaning they interpreted explanations and proof offered by clients in an unfavorable light when considering sanctions. The reasons that workers see clients this way, unfortunately, are unclear. In 2009, Lens also looked at Texas using just hearings. She found that in 72% of cases, clients were looked at negatively. Personal and situational obstacles like transportation, childcare or housing difficulties were ignored or overlooked. In 17% of the cases, policy goals were subverted for program rules. Clients were sanctioned even when they had school or work responsibilities that caused them to miss an appointment. Lens blamed these inflexible and arbitrary SLB behaviors on the emphasis placed on the clerical responsibilities of the worker. However, these studies may have shown that workers tend to try to discipline those clients into becoming ideal clients, because these workers simply don't have the resources to deal with more vulnerable populations. These studies might also point out that workers have personal feelings about client behavior or characteristics, which affect their discretionary behavior.

Maynard-Moody & Mucheno (2003), in their well-known ethnography of SLBs called *Cops, Teachers, & Counselors: Stories from the front lines of public service*, argued that discretion is inevitable, even in the highly regulated version of today's welfare. Street level bureaucrats adhere to agency standards and follow a state-agent narrative only 75% of the time. The remaining time, they follow a citizen-agent narrative. According to Maynard-Moody & Mucheno, the citizen agent narrative is about following normative and cultural norms (p. 9-12). In doing so, workers identify those citizens they deem to be worthy and those they deem to be not worthy. State and citizen agent narratives often act in concert - that is, when SLB assessment of citizens matches that of laws, and public policy. However, this isn't always the case.

Dodson's (2009) book, *The Moral Underground: How Ordinary Americans Subvert an Unfair Economy*, showed how child welfare workers would subvert child welfare law by not

reporting cases of child neglect when it seemed to be more a case of social neglect (i.e. lack of childcare, etc) (Dodson, 2009, p.104), and medical professionals made "off the books" decisions when economic circumstances required them to provide substandard care (Dodson, 2009, p.136). In both cases, economic conditions which make what workers consider to be worthy applicants non-eligible for benefits or eligible for sanctions, may mean that workers reject the state-agent narrative in favor of the citizen-agent narrative. This also means that workers' decisions are not just meant to reduce workload or improve job performance. Maynard-Moody & Mucheno's theory of the citizen narrative helped Hagen & Owens-Manley (2002) and Lindhost & Padgett (2005) explain why welfare workers refused to utilize the family violence option when welfare applicants had a history of domestic violence. These workers often adopted the belief of self-sufficiency and responsibility among their clientèle, finding it unnecessary to help those whom they saw as not being responsible for their own behavior.

Watkins-Hayes (2009) did an organizational ethnography of a Massachusetts welfare agency and found that workers saw themselves as socially situated actors (p.25). They would ask themselves, "who am I as a professional?" and attempt to combine their social situation, which includes their life experience and training with their understanding of the organization's purpose and their role within it. Welfare workers thus executed policies and procedures of welfare based on their understanding of this role. Watkins-Hayes took citizen-agent narrative a step further, arguing that organizations have influence on how these roles are played out on the front line. The use of socially situated actors to create two types of roles chosen by welfare workers (efficiency worker or social worker) was similar to studies by Carstairs, et. al. (1957); Dunham & Weinberg (1960) and Stanton & Schwartz (1954), who compared custodial attendants to humanist attendants.

Roles are actually an important part of discretionary behavior ignored by much of the research on welfare workers. Only one other study by Jewell & Glaser (2006) looked at the effect of role on worker discretion. They did a cross-case analysis of 26 California welfare-to-work programs to see how worker authority, role expectations, workload, client contact, knowledge, expertise and incentives affected worker discretion, finding that role expectations did affect discretionary behavior. Workers saw their role as one of assessing eligibility and processing claims for benefits and thus saw anything outside of this as one that violated client privacy. This essentially made them an authority over giving and withholding funds, which translated into client-worker relations focused primarily around money. Client contact also affected discretionary behavior. For welfare workers, client contact was infrequent and rigidly structured, focusing basically on eligibility and documentation requirements.

Discretion among Agents of Social Control

Property managers are similar to welfare workers in that they have a role of processing clients and using their discretion to admit, give sanction or evict clients. Within these duties they essentially seek to protect resources. They are, however, not so similar when it comes to knowledge and expertise. Although many states require welfare workers to have at least some college education, PSHs generally only require property managers to have a high school degree. They also have other roles in addition to processing clients, including acting as social control agents and maintaining physical resources in the form of buildings. Property managers also have a lot more client contact than welfare workers. According to Jewell & Glaser (2006), welfare workers would often spend no more than 5 minutes with each client. This is much different than property managers, who often live on-site at the PSH and work in environments which have a high level of crime and disorder.

In some ways, property manager discretion might also look a lot like the discretion of police officers, mental institution attendants and prison guards. All these workers are similar in that they act as social control agents in areas with high levels of crime and disorder. They have high levels of contact with clients or citizens; they are expected to use high levels of coercion, and they are charged with maintaining physical resources. Many of these studies, however, did not use “Lipsky's theory,” did not examine policy context or power and did not explicitly study discretionary behaviors. Rather, discretionary behavior simply came out as an important indicator of how these institutions were run. Much of workers’ behavior essentially came down to upholding their own role legitimacy, which inherently upheld the legitimacy of the institution. Scholars also pointed out community and situational factors which ensured that discretionary behavior did not just conform to rigid individual desires or beliefs or to organizational constraints, but to factors taking place in what was, essentially a very fluid environment.

Many studies of this type of frontline/SLB worker took place in the 1960s and 70s. These decades were characterized by dynamic social, political and economic changes which shaped social movements, political policy and social research (LaFond & Durham, 1992). This era emphasized individual freedom and fairness to the individual. It was also a time when sociologists began to question whether rules and procedures inherent to institutions were put in place for greater efficiency, or because they were culturally specific and created frames of meaning (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Immergut, 1998). Within these frames of meaning, organizations and organizational actors sought to establish and maintain legitimacy. As a result, symbol systems, cognitive scripts, moral templates and frames of meaning helped specify relationships between actors and institutions by creating roles and norms of behavior (id). In order to maintain legitimacy in their role, workers socially construct clients into specific categories.

Many of these studies used grounded theory and ethnographic methodologies to examine the roles of different SLBs, as well as how this structured their relationships with citizens, clients or patients. One of the first was Belknap's (1956) ethnography, which highlighted patient treatment by examining the discretionary patterns of attendants. Belknap found that psychiatric and mental institutional legitimacy created high demand for services, which in turn increased staff requirements but did not increase resources allocated toward mental institutions. As a result, low-level, low-skilled workers were assigned the role of social control agents in the institution. Psychiatrists attempted to maintain their legitimacy through the use of attendants, because they helped them retain staff control (Belknap, 1956, p.121). Like many of the welfare studies years later, it also showed how workers socially constructed clients in order to get them to do what they needed them to do. Attendants, in their role as social control agents, classified patients into 3 categories: (1) cooperative patients (favored patients, extra privileges), (2) neutral patients (limited privileges) and (3) uncooperative patients (no privileges). Cooperative patients helped attendants retain control and legitimacy while uncooperative patients served as examples of the patient's role. Their actions came with swift consequences, including taking away of privileges, less desirable ward jobs, ridicule, isolation, electrical shock therapy, even corporal punishment. So, basically, workers used categorization and distribution of benefits and sanctions to control patients, which essentially dictated their discretionary behaviors.

Goffman (1961) found that mental institution staff mutually created a "theory of human nature," which designated some patients as good and others as bad (Goffman, 1961, p.142). According to this theory, disciplinary action was regarded as "therapy," and punishments would grow more and more severe to ensure attendants ran efficient organizations. These methods improved staff legitimacy by discrediting patients when they became troublesome and avoiding

warm involvement with them, lest they put the staff person in the position of being "burnt" (Goffman, 1961, p.158).

Other scholars like Dunham & Weinberg (1960) and Watkins-Hayes (2009), noticed that attendants further interpreted their roles into two other categories: Custodial and humanist. These different categories correlated with attendant discretion (Dunham & Weinberg, 1960 p.57; See also Carstairs, et. al., 1957; Stanton & Schwartz, 1954). Custodial attendants focused on maintaining patient obedience, while humanist attendants focused on treating patients with kindness and patience. Like Stanton & Schwartz (1954), they found that custodial and humanist roles dominated in certain institutional settings. However, Dunham & Weinberg also found that custodial and humanist roles were also the result of attendant life experience and education.

Attendant behavior in Perucci (1974) was not just the result of attempts to maintain legitimacy. Like Dunham & Weinberg (1960), other factors were also important. Night attendants' discretionary behavior could also be explained by organizational constraints, like access to resources - that is, attendants were dealing with immense resources shortfalls which threatened their safety:

“Being on a mental hospital ward after dark is a very different experience from daytime duty for staff. Ward doors are locked, all patients are back on the ward, and the number of staff persons on the ward and in the hospital in general is sharply reduced. Doctors return to their homes, with one of them being 'on call' if needed. Nurses do not work nights, except for one who remains in the executive building and is 'on call' as the senior person in authority. The number of attendants who work the night shifts is also reduced so that open wards have only a single attendant on duty. Although patients' feelings about hospital life at night are hard to ascertain, there is evidence that ward staff tend to feel 'cut off' and somewhat vulnerable to unknown and poorly articulated fears at this time. The nurses' office, the place patients seek contact with staff during the day, becomes a refuge for the attendant at night. It is difficult for him or her to avoid the feeling of being a 'prisoner' surrounded by 50-odd patients whom he does not really know. The feeling of being isolated, without the social support of colleagues, and in an atmosphere of some anxiety, if not outright fear, is a reality that must be dealt with by the night-shift attendant.” (p. 60).

However, worker safety is not constant and varies depending on a number of community and situational factors, which are not completely controlled by resources. For these workers, much of their institutional legitimacy was related to ensuring safety and not necessarily based on their skills, but the work itself essentially meant keeping things under a continuous level of control, regardless of what type of patients were living on-site and whether day staff supported their decisions.

The same could be said about prison guards. In 2000, Conover posed as a guard in his well-known ethnography on prison life called *New Jack: Guarding Sing Sing*. When he arrived, he sympathized with the prisoners, but his growing fear of the bad guys (prisoners) and protection toward the good guys (officers), led him to gradually sympathize with the prison guard role. At one point in the ethnography, an inmate told him, “You think it’s a good idea to piss off this many people with just you here, CO?” (p. 84). He realized quickly that being a “hard-ass” and being overly rigid on rules would make his job more difficult. For one, increasing resentment from inmates brings him more harm, and it brings more harm to the prison guards generally, so that basically, other prison guards no longer can or will protect him. He learned that in order to survive in this atmosphere, where the only real power he had was his keys, was to mix toughness with an attitude of respect for the inmates and in turn he got respect back. He realized that, basically, the job of a prison guard was a relationship between guards and inmates, which the guard had the ability to control. Conover essentially clarifies the need to keep prisoners under control and that the prison guard’s ability to do that is linked to his legitimacy and ability to do his job.

Studies of police behavior also highlight the importance of worker and organizational legitimacy, but the nature of the work also highlights how community and situational factors

effect discretionary behavior. Bitner's (1967) studies on police discretionary behavior in Skid Row neighborhoods highlighted the challenges in performing a role as well as the effect of community and situational context on police discretionary behavior. Much of policeman's attention, according to Bitner, is spent ensuring that their role remains legitimate. This not only serves to help them do their job but also to protect them personally. To police officers, legitimacy can be a life or death matter. According to Bitner (1967), police officers roles of "law enforcement" and "keeping the peace" create a conception of social order and determine procedures for control. However, to fulfill these obligations, they must take on additional role obligations such as watchdog, mediator and social worker. This established a certain kind of relationship with community residents. Maintaining relationships with community residents was important because it helped them better do their job. For this reason, police officers did not seek to threaten these relationships by evoking the law across the board. Rather, they only used their arresting powers when the situation endangered the peace. Police officers essentially attempted to keep problems from snowballing out of control. Bitner (1967) also looked at emergency apprehensions of the mentally ill on Skid Row. This study brought up other issues besides role legitimacy, which controlled how police used discretion. Much of this had to do with context, resources and personal and professional capacity. When officers felt unsafe and that institutional, personal and professional resources were lacking, they attempted to create "operational control", where the police officer retained dominance over whomever he approached.

Discretion among Workers in Private Organizations

Most studies looking at SLBs have been in public institutions, because it is assumed that public workers can only work for public institutions and that public goods and services are only

distributed by public institutions. However, with the increasing devolution of public services to private organizations, private SLBs have become more common. Meanwhile, not much is known about them.

Property managers differ from many of the SLB in studies of discretionary behavior because they are not public workers. They are essentially working for a private agency, whether it is for-profit or non-profit. These private agencies are less likely to be considered focal organizations and thus have to deal with more institutional environments than public agencies do (See Pffeifer & Salincek, 1978). Francis' (2000) ethnographic study of a case management agency for the homeless showed how a non-profit agency can be caught between rules of conflicting bureaucracies, which sometimes have conflicting eligibility criteria and expectations. This requires workers to bend rules, find loopholes, and invest extra time and emotional labor in clients (id). PSHs must deal with public bureaucracies as well as non-profit and for-profit organizations, which not only require PSHs to deal with conflicting eligibility rules but also conflicting moral systems. This has resulted in PSHs decoupling service units dealing with social services from service units related specifically to housing and property management (See Hasenfeld, 2000). These types of organizations have been referred to as hybrid organizations, and they may require different discretionary responses on the part of frontline workers than state welfare agencies, especially if splitting also requires co-ordination between the sides.

Only a few studies look at discretionary behavior in private organizations, and most seem to highlight the importance of revenue and survival. Although this is an issue for all organizations, it seems to be more of a factor in discretion of workers in private organizations. A few studies on private mental institutions during the late 50s and early 60s highlight the differences in discretionary behavior - namely discretion really connects to organizational

survival. One study by Tobin (1958) showed how the gradual use of the day hospital to replace state mental institutions led to strict standards of admittance. These institutions, which scrambled to pull together different types of funding, along with client fees, did not have the resources to cope with more vulnerable and sicker mental patients. They also were no longer able to constrain patients, which originally made it easier for them to reduce staff members, get less skilled staff but still gain client compliance.

Another study by Stotland & Kobler (1965) showed the emergence of a non-profit mental hospital with a mission of providing milieu therapy as well as a less hierarchal, less coercive environment. What makes this study interesting is how one can see the effect of funding and crisis on staff behavior and discretion toward patients. In the beginning, workers were rewarded for having a strong engagement with patients. However, when this upset one main funder and psychiatrists who worked with the agency, a stronger superintendent was hired who forced agency personnel to follow a more rigid hierarchal structure. This same funder eventually pulled out and gave very little to the agency, which meant that the agency had to rely more heavily on patient fees - patient admittance and disposal were completely tied to fees. This led the hospital to have to gradually take on patients it didn't want and couldn't handle, like adolescents. This led to a series of crisis including a patient takeover and several suicides:

“Of course, the thing that bothered me also on suicidals - which I think in a way hinges on this problem - is what do you do with a guy once he tried to commit suicide and you keep him in a hospital? I'll speak staff-wise, for the personnel on the ward. Nobody wanted to work with him. They were afraid. And this had actually been said, 'What if something happens to him while I'm working with him? I don't want that responsibility.'

This is what it amounted to. So as a charge nurse making out assignment it was very difficult to get anybody to work with him, because they felt they had to watch him continuously after he had attempted and almost made it. So he couldn't move. Even if he was able to move, we wouldn't let him move. We wouldn't let the doctor let him move. The safest place for him was in bed with restraints on. And I went to the other extreme. If he went up to take a bath, I

insisted myself to go, because I didn't want anybody else to take the responsibility. I was a charge nurse; this was my responsibility; I had to take it.”
(p. 107)

The statement by a charge nurse showed the effects of the task environment on discretionary behavior on the part of staff. Here, a private non-profit hospital loses funding, takes on more different patients to maintain fees, while still trying to hold onto their previous institutional ideology. However, this institutional ideology requires more resources or easier patients. More difficult patients and decreased resources leads to a series of crises, which leads to staff having a certain level of trepidation. They end up using their discretion to be extremely rigid, in order to protect themselves in what had become a very chaotic environment.

Studies of SRO hotels also offered a way of seeing how SLBs in private organizations performed their duties and how they used discretion. SROs are low-income hotels, which have single units. A high level of individuals with mental illness and substance abuse problems generally occupied them. Such studies are a great way of understanding the pressures of SLBs who perform similar roles to PMs. In Siegel's (1978) study, tenants became “favored” by through standards, which designate them as “good tenants” but also by their ability to influence other tenants. It was common that these tenants went on to become property managers or desk clerks, because they would work for lower wages. Landlords' and property managers' discretion toward tenants was often connected to performance measures like maintaining steady income and preventing damage to the property.

PMs and landlords maintained performance measures by using informants to manipulate and control. When this failed, they engaged in cycles of throwing tenants out and taking tenants back again in order to better structure the context of the hotel environment but also to teach the tenants their role. At applicant screenings, they tend to look for docileness. While among

already existing tenants, they attempt to establish a bargaining relationship with dominant tenants in order to decrease property damage and resident turnover. Managers used the eviction process as a means of controlling emotionally erratic behavior, common among the mentally ill living in these buildings. This might be a means in which managers train their residents to become ideal, since they have less choice in selecting them. Siegel's study also showed the effect of long-term client contact. Tenant relations were vital to PMs ability to ensure peace in the building. PM fulfilled role obligations by creating a pattern of accommodating to ensure predictability of behavior (Siegel, 1978, p.121). PM's use of accommodation was really a means of using discretion to distribute resources and sanctions. By creating civil interactions, which developed into tenant favoritism or aid, the PM ensured he had a cadre of informants (id). Positive interactions with the PM ensured a resident's physical and social position in the SRO. It also meant that PM discretion typically favored them (Siegel, 1978, p.122).

Conclusion

The literature on discretion highlights a number of factors that could potentially effect how, why and what ways property managers use their discretion to admit, sanction or evict homeless people. These factors include policy context, working conditions, organizational constraints, social situation of workers, and political and economic forces. They also include role and role legitimacy, social and community context and agency survival.

The study of different types of SLBs brings certain strengths to a study of discretion of property managers (PMs) in PSHs. Studies of welfare workers helped bring a better understanding of the role of political and economic power or political environment and how different organizational environments interact. They can also help bring a better understanding of how property managers deal with different organizational constraints and opportunities which

are translated into goals and performance measures. The study of mental institution attendants, prison guards and police officers helped clarify worker role, social norms, situational and community factors and legitimacy. These studies explain how property managers gain legitimacy and leverage at the organizational level through their ability to consider situational and community factors in their own personal decision making processes. Studies of SLBs in private organizations help cast light on the effect of economic forces on discretionary behavior. In the following chapter, I will lay out how these different findings and theories can be integrated into a comprehensive model of property manager discretionary behavior, which informs my results.

Chapter III: Theoretical Considerations

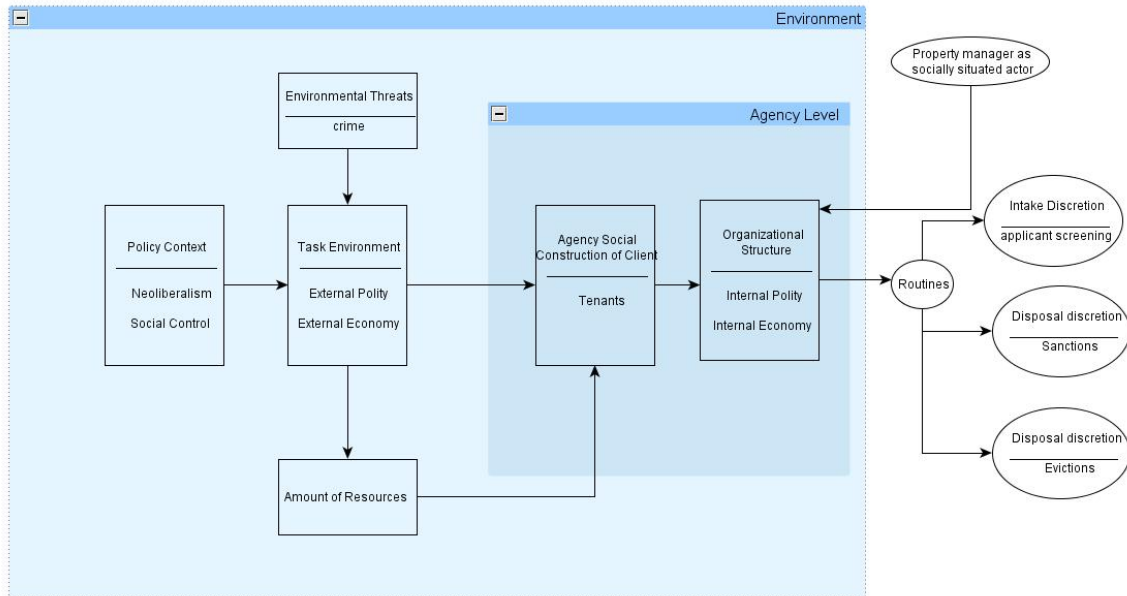


Figure 1. A model of property manager discretion in permanent supportive housing

Introduction

Within permanent supportive housing units, property managers are responsible for maintaining order by using their discretion to admit, discipline or evict chronically homeless clients (See Abbott & Little, 2008). These property managers (PMs) are essentially responsible for the provision of housing laid out by objectives of housing and mental health policies created by those at elevated levels of government, and, thus, they can have a great deal of influence on policy outcomes (See Lipsky, 1980; Maynard-Moody, 2000; Scott, 1992). However, it is unclear why discretion over client access and retention is left to them and how they exercise their discretionary powers. One way of understanding how and why they exercise their discretionary powers is through the model above (See figure 1). Below, I will discuss the elements of the model in greater detail.

Policy Context

Since the 1960s, policy dealing with poverty has shifted from a social rights/social

service approach to one that emphasizes neoliberalism and social control (Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2006). The result is a new type of poverty governance, which appears unique to the time period but is not much different than directive, supervisory and punitive tools of yesteryear. Policy focusing on entitlements and social rights has shifted to policies advocating increased social control. Welfare policy, which now emphasizes forced child support and work participation, is one good example, as is criminal justice policy.

Along with new levels of social control, there has been a reorganization of governance among neoliberal terms (Soss, Schram & Fording, 2006). Neoliberalism is a set of neoclassical economic policies, which have grown increasingly popular in the past 25 years (Lerner, Peck & Sheppard, 2007). These policies stress the efficiency of private enterprise and open markets, and they seek to enlarge the role of the private sector over state policy (id). States have contracted out core social welfare functions, like criminal justice, housing and social services, to private entities (Smith, 2002; Ogle, 1999; See also Soss, Fording, & Schram, 2006). Soss, Fording & Schram (2006) concluded that this has led to a poverty governance that, on one hand, is more directive and punitive in terms of enforcement while, on the other hand, is more hollow in terms of organizational structure (See also Mead, 1997; Milward & Provan, 2003). According to Feely & Simon (1992), the larger social category of the underclass has been deserted to the fate of poverty and despair. A new pathology has emerged replacing rehabilitation, market incentives, state supports and social group norms with control strategies for managing and sometimes confining the poor (See also Soss, Schram & Fording, 2006).

Social control and neoliberalism impact policy that deals with the homeless. To many policymakers, homelessness is tightly connected to criminal behavior and has to be controlled through the criminal justice system. The homeless engage in activity that often increases

individual and community instability and, thus, must be controlled. For this reason, local governments expended efforts to decrease the homeless populations through toughening local nuisance laws and increasing enforcement of drug policy (See Barak & Bohm, 1989). As a result, many homeless deal with bouts of incarceration, and jails and prisons offer mental health services on-site for these populations. These providers serve so many homeless and near-homeless that they have become the largest suppliers of mental health services in the US (James & Glaze, 2006).

Meanwhile, the provision of social services to the homeless outside of the criminal justice system has been organized around neoliberal policies. The policy response to homelessness began with the Stewart B. McKinney Assistance Act of 1987, which originally did not provide permanent housing until the homeless completed a supervision-heavy “continuum of care” (Avert, 2003). It was a neoliberal response, overwhelmingly using the private sector to build, finance and manage housing dominated by private interests (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006). This continuum included completion of adequate behavior, maintaining a drug-free lifestyle and maintaining medication through emergency shelter and transitional housing for 6 months to a year before having access to permanent housing (id). Housing was used as an incentive for behavior change. Mental health advocates and researchers began to argue that the use of housing as a behavior change mechanism proved disastrous – the instability of taking away housing, or constantly changing it, to bring homelessness along a “continuum,” exacerbated mental health problems (Ridgeway & Zippel, 1990). The emphasis on housing stability dominated the policy maker’s agenda, transforming homeless policy, at least in theory, to one that emphasized the neoliberal approach over that of the social control approach through the Housing & Community Development Act of 1992.

The 1992 act essentially transferred much of the responsibility for dealing with the homeless from a variety of government agencies including the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) and provided substantial funding to three major permanent supportive housing programs – Shelter Plus Care, the Supportive Housing Program (SHP) and the Single Room Occupancy (SRO), program. These two programs essentially dominated the funding streams allocated towards the homeless and became central to the social service delivery system aimed at the homeless. The act also would create specific types of task environments and organizational structures, simply by virtue of the agency funder (HUD) and the types of grants it allocated to human service organizations. These structures specifically attempt to provide clients with housing (through their property management side) and care (through their social services side). Services are provided through scattered-site permanent supportive housing facilities (PSHs), which operate like traditional single room occupancy (SRO) buildings with case management service added on, like the Aberdeen in New York City.

Policy for decreasing homelessness, thus, was implemented by a program that focuses specifically on decreasing the cost of rental housing in the private sector. Although affordable rental housing previously was run through the federal government by HUD, a series of scandals, most notably having to do with the mismanagement of public housing, led to the increasing use of for-profits to provide affordable housing. During the 1980s, affordable housing went from public ownership in the form of public housing with limited amounts of housing available to low income households to community development block grants, the Section 8 program (vouchers) and low-income housing tax credits (LIHTCs), all of which sought to maximize the role of the market and minimize the role of government (Schwartz, 2006). That is, these types of programs

maximized the role of for-profit (FP) real estate developers, banks and investors in the affordable housing market, while minimizing the role of government to regulating eligibility and maintenance. Further scandals having to do with money mis-managements shifted many grants towards non-profits (NPs), especially when it came to more vulnerable populations, like the elderly, the disabled and the homeless (Tilly, 2006).

In the early 1990s, the management of housing by for-profits and non-profits also was questioned. According to a Government Accountability Office (GAO) “high risk” report in 1994, HUD was criticized for widespread fraud and mismanagement (Government Accountability Office, 1994). HUD had significant problems ensuring that these contracted agencies only provided housing to eligible families and that these families paid the correct rents. There were also problems with guaranteeing that these properties were safe and sanitary. This increased monitoring and fraud protection processes at public housing authorities (PHAs), leading to increased documentation requirements. HUD also stepped up its inspections and increased maintenance requirements among its contractors (Schwartz, 2008).

HUD dealt with safety concerns through a “one strike” policy instituted during the Clinton Administration. This policy was created to decrease violence and drug trafficking in Section 8 and public housing. Certain offenses, like drug possession, can keep applicants out of HUD-sponsored housing. If residents of HUD housing engage in such offenses, they are also evicted and banned for a period of 5 years. The law gives public housing authorities (PHAs) discretion to deny applications from individuals who had any kind of crime in the past 5 years or were evicted from HUD-sponsored housing.

Current policy affecting the homeless is affected by the problems faced by HUD in the past, because it affects how HUD treats its contracting permanent supportive housing agencies.

To avoid allegations of fraud, HUD requires enormous amounts of documentation for its housing programs (Schwartz, 2008). To avoid allegations of property neglect, HUD requires its contracting agencies and businesses to undergo extensive inspections. At the same time, government support for affordable housing and HUD has been dwindling (Stone, 2006).

Task Environment & the Political Economy

In order for organizations to survive, they have to be effective, and effectiveness is determined by their ability to cope with demands (See Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 2). They also must be able to acquire and maintain resources (id). However, organizations are not self-contained; they must operate in an environment involving other organizations. This environment is often referred to as the task environment. This task environment presents certain pressures, which require organizations to accede to the demands of some coalitional interests and avoid the demands of others (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 3).

According to Benson (1975), a task environment includes all areas where organizations negotiate to exchange inputs for outputs. The task environment is made up of clients, workers, suppliers, competitors, formal and state organizations, politicians and collaborators. These very exchanges create interdependence and differing levels of power among participants. Power is a function of dependence. Organizations considered to be more focal are less dependent, meaning they are more likely to control contributions, activities and capabilities (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978, p. 29). These contributions, activities and capabilities must be critical to non-focal organizations' operations. Non-focal organizations must respond to demands of focal organizations, but they do not respond to every demand because these demands may conflict with other competing demands. Also, the stability of the resources provided by focal or other organizations, how critical it is to the operation of the organization and the relative

magnitude of the resource are also important factors (id).

One way of explaining how these organizations respond to demands is political economy theory. Consistent with such theory, organizations must develop two types of resources in order to adapt to their environment: (1) legitimacy and power (polity) and (2) production resources (economy). The more the organization depends on outside resources to gain political or economic resource, the more these external resource providers influence their internal processes. Wamsley & Zald (1976) identified four structures in the political economy: (1) the external polity where exchanges between an organization and external agents exist to increase the organization's "legitimization, resource base, goal definition and influence" (Wamsley & Zald, 1976, p. 21, Hasenfeld & Cheun, 1985); (2) the external economy which affects the organization's access to resources and whether there is demand for its services (id); (3) internal polity, or the internal structure of the agency – who has authority, who dictates, values and goals (id); and (4) internal economy, or the way in which the organization allocates resources and responsibilities.

PSHs task environments generally consist of HUD, local and state governments, state mental health departments, investors (banks, etc.) and the legal system. HUD would be considered a focal organization in its relationship with PSHs, because it "controls access to a large portion of PSH's operating funding and therefore is critical to their operation" (See Pfeffer & Salancik, p.29) which means it holds much of the economy and polity. Like many of HUD's other housing programs, the tenant is required to pay 30% of his or her income toward rent. HUD then pays the difference between that share and the fair market value (FMR) for the unit. For SRO units, the FMR is generally 75% of the cost of a studio apartment (Center for Supportive Housing, 2011). This means that HUD only pays around 30-50% of the costs of

running PSHs and pay nothing towards initial capital improvements (Id). To a small extent, they can make up for these funding shortfalls through another HUD program called the Supportive Housing Program (SHP), which works in conjunction with Shelter Plus Care (SPC). The Supportive Housing Program (SHP) pays for capital expenses and the costs of supportive services. However, the amounts are small. Capital expenses are limited to \$200-400,000 (depending on the cost of housing in a specific area) and 75% of operating expenses for supportive services (Corporation for Supportive Housing, 2011b).

This forces PSHs to partner with local and state governments, as well as for-profits, to increase the level of capital it has access to in order to build units for homeless residents. The continuing gap between cost to build and cost to maintain must be closed through other funding sources and client fees. HUD's Shelter Plus Care (SPC) program also requires that PSH's retain a "service-rich" atmosphere by forcing them to either provide their own social services or collaborate with those who do. HUD also requires resident participation in these programs as well as outside social services. This compels PSHs to monitor resident service use.

HUD also has many other requirements that constrain PSH behavior, many of which are the direct result of policy context. These include: (1) maintenance – HUD has strict maintenance requirements which are backed up by periodic inspection. Meanwhile, only 8% of HUD funding can be used by PSHs for maintenance, which affects how PSHs respond to maintenance issues. (2) Vacancies - HUD has vacancy requirements that limit the number of days a PSH unit can be empty. PSHs comply with this requirement by keeping a ready supply of applicants (through waiting lists) and swiftly evicting residents. (3) Abandonment - PSHs must abandon units when individuals are incarcerated, even if rent continues to be paid. This means that the tenant is not allowed to come back because his incarceration essentially meant he "abandoned" the unit. This

affects PSHs' ability to create a truly stable housing-first model. (4) Eligibility - HUD has specific eligibility criteria for housing it supports, including income, length of homelessness, previous arrests, drug use, sex offender status, previous HUD evictions and money owed to HUD, which also affect the eligibility criteria of PSHs and their ability to create true housing-first programs. For example, applicants need to have a clean arrest record for at least 5 years. For SPC housing, they can access housing, given they have completed a drug treatment program prior to moving in. Eligibility requirements necessitate high levels of paperwork completion and processing, increasing administrative costs of PSHs. HUD also requires that applicants verify their income with public housing authorities (PHAs). These PHAs then set the amount of rent they will pay once they begin residing at PSHs. In a way, this is not much different than the previous continuum of care model. Eligibility also must be recertified once a year, which require that staff compel residents to complete the necessary paperwork and provide proof of income, upon threat of eviction.

Local governments, which control the allocation and access to cheap real estate, as well as funding and services, help make up for funding shortfalls under HUD. They are also central to PSH's operation because they provide permission for them to build, modify, or occupy housing units within their jurisdiction. Furthermore, local governments provide city services, police and fire protection. Local governments are induced to work with PSHs, because they have dual interests in decreasing their homeless populations, increasing public safety as well as community and economic development (Vinderogel, 2005). PSHs not only decrease the amount of homelessness in the local community; they also develop real estate that often is abandoned by for-profit interests (Oakley, 2002). These expectations constrain PSH operations in the following ways: (1) PSHs have to be careful to ensure buildings are stable and do not increase crime levels

in a given neighborhood, (2) PSHs have to build where access to land is given, (3) PSHs have to conform to city regulations in regard to occupancy, number of units built and any changes made to housing units or buildings. PSHs also must conform to city requirements for fire and criminal safety by allowing periodic inspections both by fire and police officers.

Because HUD and local governments still do not provide enough funding to pay the cost of building housing units, PSHs must rely on investors (See Tilly, 2006). This is usually done by selling LIHTCs to buyers needing them, and by getting low interest loans from banks. In order to gain interest of LIHTC investors, PSHs need to maintain good relationships with state and local governments and continue to be a good investment of limited community and economic development dollars (See Tilly, 2006). They do this by maintaining a solid portfolio of properties. The more properties they have on these portfolios and the more money they make, the more likely they are to keep getting loans (See Bratt, 2006). The economy also must be good, as Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs) are not only less plentiful but also less valuable when economic conditions are more unstable. Meanwhile, PSHs also need to rely on banks for loans. Low interest loans come with large paperwork burdens, not to mention a track record of consistent payments, both in the past and into the future. This requires that PSHs have steady sources of revenue to consistently pay back banks.

State departments of mental health help make up for HUD funding shortfalls, particularly when it comes to providing social services. Their influence depends on the will of state governments to set aside funding for mental health (See Center for Supportive Housing, 2011). In turn, state departments of mental health seek to persuade PSHs to prioritize those with chronic mental illnesses. This means the departments attempt to get PSHs to admit more of the chronically mentally ill, while also trying to protect the chronically mentally ill from eviction by

helping to pay rent or increasing psychological services.

These state departments, along with HUD, also require PSHs to collaborate with mental health providers to make other services, like mental health services, more accessible to the mentally ill. In such a setting, homeless are not only housed but they can receive psychological, substance abuse, home healthcare and medical services. Collaboration between PSHs and mental health agencies helps PSHs meet the conditions required by state departments of mental health and HUD (Culhane & Byrne, 2010; SAMHSA, 2010). However, PSHs also must provide these agencies secured space and facilities as well as a pool of clients.

Finally, courts are central to PSH operation because they dictate how PSHs can dispose of clients. The legal structure of PSHs is built around landlord/tenant requirements, enforced through the courts (See SAMHSA, 2010). These organizations follow standard real estate technologies that protect them from legal liability, like separating different properties into different corporations (See Jennings, 2010), with each corporation run by its own property manager. Property managers can thus act as landlords and use eviction law for disposal procedures. However, because the completion of disposal procedures requires legal judgment, PSHs make sure to follow landlord/tenant laws closely when initiating eviction procedures. This requires that PSHs connect their disposal procedures as closely as possible to rent collection.

Environmental Threats

Lack of Resources

The level of funding for PSHs, whether it is from HUD or other sources, is inadequate to keep up with demand for housing (Rosenthal & Foscarinis, 2006). In an effort to make up for funding shortfalls, non-profit (NP) affordable housing agencies, like those providing PSH, have to put effort into building and maintaining partnerships, operating support and political support.

These partnerships all put constraints on PSHs, requiring a high level of resources. Local governments provide land and vacant buildings in scattered areas that are less desirable to favored housing developers, and that usually require increased security. HUD has plenty of regulations and paperwork requirements. Constraints posed by courts also can be costly. Meanwhile, HUD funding, as well as state, local and private funding are limited. This forces the agency to pass down these costs to workers and clients. Workers for the PSHs, in this case PSHs, get lower pay, have more role responsibilities and have higher workloads. PMs are also given a role of passing costs further down to clients. Clients are expected to pay fees and keep up with certain maintenance requirements. These are enforced by the PMs' ability to do evictions and inspect units.

Crime and disorder

PSHs, like many other organizations serving the homeless and/or mentally ill, operate in neighborhoods with significantly high levels of crime and disorder (Bratt, 2006; Oakley, 2002). PSHs, like other non-profit (NP) organizations, are often pressured to do something about deterioration in communities because they are community-based (id; See also Bratt, 2009). If they do not act, they lose legitimacy as effective community developers (id). These buildings in high-crime neighborhoods have to be stabilized, so that it is safe for residents to live there, and also so that they can maintain a professional social service staff. All this increases pressure on property managers to ensure units are rented, that turnover and vacancy rates are low, and that the building is safe (Bratt, 2009; Vinderogel, 2005).

Agency Social Construction of Residents

Social constructions of clients by agencies refers to attempts by agencies to fit citizens into a certain number of categories which can be used to treat them (Lipsky, 1980). For housing

agencies, these categories have shifted towards social constructions that are more business-oriented.

Neoliberal policies restricted money provided to human service organizations, which means they have to come up with different means of adaption, like creaming clients, hiring cheaper staff or charging fees. For organizations focusing on housing, it is necessary to partner with for-profits like banks, real estate developers and corporations in order to have the organizational capacity to buy land and build housing. It also becomes necessary to shift responsibility for costs back toward citizens. Thus, for PSHs which essentially focus on housing the homeless, above social services, fees in the form of rent are extremely important, because operation costs are extremely high, and there are no other funders but HUD which will help pay the cost of them. Clients, therefore, are constructed as “residents” or “tenants” and expected to form a tenant-landlord relationship with the agency.

PSH Agencies socially construct clients into specific categories of “good tenants” and “bad tenants.” They do this by, first of all, devolving responsibilities for distributing benefits and sanctions to the PM. The distribution of benefits and sanctions establishes to clients what the agency sees as “good tenants” and “bad tenants.” PSH agencies also socially construct clients through the ways they structure the context between citizens and frontline workers. PMs, for example, take on a mix of service and policing roles which structure the context for clients, in that clients feel uncomfortable making demands (Center of Supportive Housing, 2011b, 2010c). This helps the agency and PM deal with client demand and decreases client leverage.

Waiting lists are another way that organizations structure context. This method is used often when it comes to affordable housing (Lindsay & Feigenbaum, 1984). Waiting lists communicate to clients that resources are and must be rationed (Lipsky, 1980, pp. 93-99). They

help PSHs better measure demand and thus make arguments for increasing funding (id). They also help fulfill HUD's vacancy requirements. Waiting lists also help PSHs filter out the truly needy because additional time-consuming client requirements can further prove client need. Once a citizen's name is called from the waiting list, enormous amounts of paperwork is required by HUD, banks and other grantees, and several different screenings take place. All of these procedures are put in place to further structure context, guarantee reliability and accountability, as well as to protect workers from client demand (Lipsky, 1980, pp. 93-99).

At PSHs, client leverage is somewhere between that of a regular apartment building and total institution. Clients are voluntary but only in the sense that there is no physical force. Clients are involuntary when it comes to economic force. This is why PSHs do suffer some consequences when they try to structure client context, because they make clients feel their needs aren't truly being considered or that they are even being abused. According to Lipsky, when this happens, clients are more likely to use their leverage and attempt to impose costs on the agency. However, client leverage is considered differently in studies of mental institutions or prisons (See Belknap, 1956; Goffman, 1961; et. al). There, staff regard clients as not having the capacity to make rational or moral decisions. These clients, for example, might impose property damage, react violently to staff, create problems with other tenants or constantly complain. There, client leverage is dealt with using physical force. However, in PSHs no physical force is used, so PMs need to rely on economic force to maintain control. The main mechanism of doing this is through eviction. However, it is also possible that the client might sue and win an eviction suit. It is certainly possible that one way of maintaining control, in the face of these risks, is addressing this "leverage" problem by paying close attention to the legitimacy of the PM's role (See Belknap, 1956). Role legitimacy was also an important motivator of police discretion in

Bitner's 1967 study of police on Skid Row, and it helped police cope with the dangers of their environments. Police reacted to citizens who questioned their power to arrest or control the situation and made the decision to arrest them. It was also important in other environments where there is high risk, like for mental institution attendants or correctional officers, both of whom do not carry guns.

When this doesn't work, agencies use pressure specialists to resolve issues with staff (Lipsky, 1980, pp. 133-135). Frontline workers, like PMs and case managers (CMs) in PSHs, can reach upward toward another layer of bureaucrats to manage non-compliance. These bureaucrats are referred to as pressure specialists, and they can be more aggressive to clients without having to worry about having to survive daily in that environment. PSH social service staff often use PMs as pressure specialists to improve client compliance and outcomes. Through the use of PMs, social service and mental health service staff also do not have to work as hard at engaging clients. They can also intervene more easily during client crisis.

Client leverage is also controlled through tracking the client's role (Lipsky, 1980). Goffman mentioned a similar mechanism in mental institutions called "theory of human nature" (1961). Client role is taught at PSHs from the beginning of the application process, on through intake, sanctioning and eviction. The initial waiting list communicates to clients that housing is scarce and that there are a lot of people waiting. The longer the waiting list and the more time required by the clients to check in, the more effective these cues. This is followed by additional screenings, paperwork and background checks. A final screening with the PM and CM also adds to the cue, as well as the exchange of information taking place during screening about client expectations, because it clarifies to the client the PM's role to serve as police and landlord, the CM's role as social worker, as well as the client's role as tenant (See Lipsky, 1980). Once the

tenant has been accepted, they are subject to more and more severe punishments whenever they showed non-compliance. Like attendants in Goffman's (1961) *Asylums*, PMs and PSHs see this as "therapy." Finally, other tenants who all live in the same building teach client role. Residents are aware of how other residents get sanctions, work the system or get evicted. They also see how punishments evolve into eviction. Client worker intake and disposal processes can easily become very public events which further clarify resident role. All these processes improve the PM's legitimacy by discrediting the clients when they became troublesome.

Organizational Structure

Organizational structure, which is composed of activities such as task allocation, coordination and supervision directed at specific organizational goals expectations and performance measures, is characterized by internal polity and economy (See Pugh, 1981). Those who gain internal polity and economy within an organization do so because they increase the external polity and economy (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Within PSHs, this person is the PM. Much of the goal expectations (expected outputs), such as keeping resident "stably housed" or maintaining buildings is done by PMs who are allocated these roles. PM role expectations also include meeting other output expectations (i.e. performance measures), which, for PSHs, would include the number of vacancies, rent accruals, number of social services utilized by clients, etc.

Within permanent supportive housing units, property managers are responsible for maintaining order by using their discretion to admit, discipline or evict chronically homeless clients (See Abbott & Little, 2008). Many of these tasks are utilized for the same reason a forest ranger would use his discretion – to prevent or put out fires. Prevention of fires, which to a property manager could be any kind of crisis involving a client or maintenance of the facility, is one of the most important functions of the property manager, because nothing can go so out of

hand than a client who cannot be controlled. Like a fire, which can wipe out 100s of square miles of land, wildlife and human occupants with one single, catastrophic blow,, residents can present problems which could easily interrupt the functioning of the facilities, or could cause significant physical damage to the building and the residents under the PMs' care. Thus, much of what PMs do is involved in prevention of “fires” (through screening clients who are more likely to follow facility policy and are less likely to be troublemakers; through enforcing rules through sanctions), pre-suppression (arrangements made with other staff members to deal with a client who has gotten out of control) and finally, suppression (eliminating the out-of-control client or behavior in the building and getting things back to normal). Thus, the property manager, like a fire ranger, prepares the organization to deal with these “fires” at all stages (See Kaufman, 1960, p. 51).

Property managers' ability to manage this task environment is related to the level of discretion they gain in an organization. PMs gain this ability by being a “favored tenant,” much like those tenants written about in Siegel’s (1978) study of SROs. They understand the organization’s relationship with its task environment, and they are situated in a place of authority among other tenants. PSHs hiring these workers, who are sometimes former clients, communicate to the task environment that they believe in the abilities of their clients, and that they seek to promote democratic participation, local accountability and neighborhood control (Bratt, et. al., 1994). This also saves PSHs money, as the agencies get workers who are more willing to be on-site, thereby providing 24-7 staff coverage. This means PSHs don't actually have to hire night staff. The willingness to take on this role in the organization is very important, because through it, the PMs take on most of the hazards existing in this kind of working environment. The willingness to deal with these hazards and protect other staff from them gives

PMs internal polity and economy, as does the PMs' increased access to clients. On top of protecting themselves, residents and staff from hazards, PMs also have to make certain performance measures for themselves, as well as for other staff, through client coercion. Their ability to do this further increases their internal polity and economy. This internal polity leads to PMs' increased level of discretion.

PM's have increased internal polity because of their ability to “put out fires” and manage the task environment. In order to accomplish these agency expectations, PMs take on 4 different roles: landlord, policeman, social worker and neighbor. The landlord role involves collecting fees, supervising maintenance of the property and dealing with paperwork connected to operating expenses. The policeman role is connected to enforcing the rules, guarding the premises and monitoring client activities. The social worker role is connected to acting as a crisis mediator and as peer support. The neighbor role is connected to living on-site. These roles often overlap. For example, in order to meet performance measures for maintenance, PM must use the policing role to reinforce the landlord role through room inspections and the use of sanctions.

PM as Socially Situated Actors

PMs' multiple roles all connect heavily to human dimensions of PSH operation (See Lipsky, 1980). They are also vital to achieving the agency's multiple bottom lines (See Anheier, 2005). PSHs have a business side, which connects to their sustainability, as well as a social service side, which connects to their actual mission (id). Multiple roles facilitate these multiple bottom lines.

According to Watkins-Hayes (2009), SLBs, like PMs, take different professional roles according to organizational structures, social identity and professional identity. In her study of

welfare offices, she found that in a welfare organization with a more client-centered structures, workers chose between two different professional roles based on their social and professional identities: a social worker professional role and an efficiency engineer professional role (pp. 70-95). Workers who saw themselves as social workers thought that being compassionate and having a heart was critical to their work. They had relationships with clients that were based on trust and were less likely to use extensive measures of surveillance against them (p. 70). Workers who saw themselves as efficiency engineers were more protective of the hierarchy between clients and workers and viewed their role as one of maintaining order (p. 72). This same phenomena was found in studies of mental institutions where more generous attendants were considered “humanists” and less generous, more rigid attendants were considered “custodians” (See Stanton & Schwartz, 1954).

At PSHs, like welfare bureaucracies and mental institutions, there is a need for workers who can deal with large degrees of conflict. One way of dealing with this conflict is to emphasize opposing roles – one based on rule compliance, the other on compassion. For PMs, these roles are policeman and social worker. For PMs, maintaining the peace in the community is not just accomplished through enforcing rules, it is also accomplished through building trust, which inherently requires mutual respect. The worker must build rapport, bond with the client, listen to his problems, be open and non-judgmental (See Hasenfeld, 2009, pp. 405-426; See also Bitner, 1967). PMs gain much of their rapport with clients through their role as neighbor and social worker. They have credibility within these roles because they were former clients. However, the likelihood that they embrace the role of social worker or policeman vary depending on their identities and how they perceive survival for this population. These role identifications affect their internal polity in the organization as well as their use of discretion.

Working Conditions of PMs

For much of the literature on discretion, working conditions have been a crucial factor in explaining worker behavior. Originally conceived of by Lipsky (1980), there are 5 main working conditions that play out in all types of street level bureaucracies. These include:

1. Chronically inadequate resources
2. Supply of services increase demand.
3. Goal expectations are generally unclear and confusing.
4. Performance measures are impossible to measure.
5. Clients have much less leverage than the agency.

These “working conditions,” however, do not exactly fit those of PMs because unlike many of the SLBs that Lipsky considered, PMs work in decentralized organizations with a business side. They also engage in client encounters that are long term. Thus, the 6 main working conditions for PM would be:

1. Excessive workload
2. Contradictory goals
3. Performance measures which require multiple roles, some of which are contradictory
4. Client leverage
5. Decentralization
6. Lack of safety

Excessive Workload

PSHs, like other SLBs, deal with a problem of resources, and they pass these resource constraints onto their workers and clients. PMs help PSHs to use their resources more efficiently because they take on multiple roles, although multiple roles mean that PMs have an increased workload and less time.

PM deal with the increased workload and number of roles through routines. Routines narrow tasks into manipulable units of information, so that property managers can develop appropriate and uniform responses to differing situations (Lipsky, 1980, p. 83). Routines make property managers’ work more manageable by reducing complexity. These routines become

implemented policy deliverables (p. 85) and shape what citizens should expect from organizations. Routines are directed toward four purposes: (1) rationing services, (2) controlling clients and reducing uncertainty, (3) protecting worker resources, and (4) managing the consequences of routines. It is through routines that discretion becomes apparent in the 3 core discretionary processes: applicant screening, sanctioning or eviction. Applicant screening reflect “intake” decisions by property managers, and sanctioning and eviction reflect “disposition” decisions by property managers.

PMs also cope with increased workload by using the agency's social construction of residents. In other words, they utilize the structural conditions that teach client role, in this case, the waiting list, the paperwork requirements and the screenings, to not only filter out what they would consider to be "bad tenants," but to also teach the client role. Teaching the client role is very important in this setting, because it helps with control issues inherent to the PMs' job which makes their workload decrease. If PM staff make the wrong decision about which clients to give agency resources, and these clients increase their workload, they are by no means stuck with them. Once a client proves to be unsatisfactory, formal systems (or “routines”) of disposal take place. The role of PM thus shifts promptly to that of policeman and landlord; sanctions are imposed, and eviction eventually take place. Thus, there is a reinforcing system of creaming and disposal which help PMs deal with their workload.

Contradictory Goals

Property managers are responsible for more than just the business side of the organization. They also work for a social service organizations with a “housing-first” policy, meaning they work alongside CMs. One of the CMs’ roles is to ensure housing retention in order to follow goals of reinforcing the “housing-first” policy. Meanwhile, PMs have a role of

landlord and police. So, if tenants do things, which are against the rules, or they do not pay their rent, PMs threaten the clients' housing, because these actions threaten the task environment. This causes conflict with the social service/CM side of the organization. In order to cope with both of these conditions, PM create emergency categories and put clients into such categories, when dealing with the clients touches on these differing goal expectations (Lipsky, 1980, pp 136-139). These categories allow PMs to keep a "hands-off" attitude with clients, while still attending to community and task environment needs.

Performance Measures

Lipsky also mentioned performance measures as another type of working condition that SLBs must contend with. Due to the differing organizational structure of PSHs, it would seem that PMs don't necessarily experience this working condition in exactly the same way. Measures of job performance at PSHs should be easier to measure than at public organizations or traditional social service NPs. PSHs, as hybrid organizations, are part business, part social service agency, which makes many indicators of performance (i.e. market transactions) as easy to measure as those in for-profit businesses. These performance measures relate specifically to the PMs' role. The problem is that properly making these performance measures often means controlling and coercing clients. PMs deal with this by finding ways to decrease client leverage.

Client Leverage

PMs deal with issues of client control, which Lipsky thought of as leverage. As I mentioned previously in this chapter, clients at PSHs have some leverage, or at least some capacity to make the PMs' job harder or cause destruction in the environment. PMs can't use physical force against clients, so they deal with client leverage through agency social constrictions. They distribute benefits and sanctions, structure the context of client interactions

and teach client roles in their role as PM. These constructions are translated into PM routines. When these strategies don't work, PMs have other methods, such as increased monitoring of clients. PMs can start monitoring clients they see as potential troublemakers, from applicant screening onward (See Lipskey, 1980). PMs would more likely call monitored clients out for misbehavior, giving the clients write-ups, than PMs would unmonitored clients. This decreases client leverage, because other clients directly observe these interactions. According to Lipsky (1980), this behavior is like that of a police officer who clarifies to a perpetrator or suspect that he is ready for action.

PM also rely on "pressure specialists" and "emergency categories." PMs have supervisors that they can bring in to deal with situations that are too difficult or too dangerous to handle alone. When confronted on the use of discretion, a PM can say he makes no decision on the manner and is required to kick it upstairs, thereby relieving himself of responsibility. The threats of the pressure specialist are backed up by organizational procedure, which generally means eviction procedures reinforced by the court system.

Fragmentation

Property managers, unlike other types of street-level bureaucrats (SLBs), conduct resource management and manage its physical performance. Property managers work in environments where there is a substantial amount of local control, but their ability to have that control is not unconditional. Like fire rangers, property managers have extensive reporting requirements which include written reports, accounts of rent received, as well as surveillance and hourly logs of whatever is happening in the facility. For fire rangers, supervisors used this information to understand what is going at the local level. The logbooks were hard to falsify (See Kaufman, 1960, p. 132), and falsifications were quite easy to see, because there would be inconsistencies

that would be easy to bring to light. In this way, PMs' discretionary behavior, to some extent, is monitored. Therefore, routines build in these levels of supervision. PMs must be able to log the actions that they do, and they must be in agreement with write-ups or eviction notices.

Unsafe Conditions

According to Lipsky, the threat of physical harm is one of the most dramatic types of threats to SLBs, and it has a significant effect on their working conditions and how they react to client behavior (1980, p. 29). Property managers have to act as unarmed guards over buildings, which can have as many as 150 occupants and erratic police protection, on top of other duties. Their work improves the external polity for PSH agencies, because they can guarantee to the developer that the PSH cannot only complete renovation or construction efficiently, but also can ensure the building is stable.

According to Lipsky, as well as other scholars who focused on street-level discretionary behavior in social control organizations (See Lipsky, 1980, pp. 66-67), worker-client interactions in social control organizations focus in some way on the SLBs' need to assert authority and gain client obedience. This is obvious among attendants, police officers and prison guards, but it can also be seen among teachers, where establishing discipline is the first benchmark in successfully teaching a class (See Belknap, 1956; Bitner, 1967; Conover, 2000; Goffman, 1961; Lipsky, 1980). Thus, for PMs, preserving role legitimacy is extremely important. Much of their discretionary decision making considers their own role legitimacy and future ability to control and discredit clients.

Summary

PM working conditions include high workload, contradictory goals, client leverage issues, fragmentation and lack of safety. PMs play multiple roles, not only to ensure their safety

but to improve task performance and protect resources. In order to deal with these and other working conditions, PMs, like other SLBs, create routines and simplifications. These routines and simplifications are also influenced by the social situation of the PMs and the roles PMs emphasize. From these routines and simplifications, discretionary decisions are apparent. The work environment, however, is the direct result of the organizational structure, which is also influenced by the agency's social construction of clients and the organization's task environment. Policy contexts set the stage for all this, because it establishes the polity and economy of different organizations within a task environment. For PSHs, it is clear how neoliberal policies designed to deal with the problem of homelessness have influenced organizational legitimacy and economic resources, which affected frontline worker behavior.

Chapter IV: Methodology

Introduction

In this chapter, I will lay out the purpose of this study, its research questions and methodologies. In the first part of this chapter, I will restate the purpose and research questions. Then, I will present the methodology I used to answer the research questions. This includes the steps I used to collect data, what kind of data I collected and how I analyzed the data. Finally, I will explain the steps I took and will take to ensure reliability and validity.

Restatement of Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine discretionary processes and patterns among property managers, to identify processes in the implementation of PSH programs. Studying worker discretion is a "bottom up" approach to the study of policy implementation, which interprets outcomes through looking at the interactions between frontline staff and clients of social service programs (Brodkin, 1997). Unlike task-oriented implementation studies, which only show whether or not agencies fulfill policy requirements, discretionary studies help to clarify the effects of institutional forces, which influence property managers' (PMs') discretionary activities (id; See also Lindhost & Padgett, 2005). These activities, in turn, can have a significant effect on homeless citizens (Lipsky, 1980). These studies have been used to study implementation, because they clarify the degree to which service delivery matches with the stated goals of policy makers (Meier, 1999).

Restatement of the Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to explain property manager discretionary behavior . The three primary questions that were used in this research are:

- 1) Do PM have discretion in PSHs?

- 2) Why do they have discretion?
- 3) What forces drive discretionary behavior in applicant screening, sanctions and eviction?

Questions and the Course of Action

I will begin my analysis by examining the agency's history and organizational changes to get a better understanding of the PM's role in the organization, and how this was connected to internal polity and economy (question 2). I will then examine PM routines during organizational processes involving distribution of resources. These include applicant screening, sanction and eviction. Through these routines, I will determine whether PMs have discretion (question 1). I will determine why they have discretion (question 2), and what forces drive their discretion (question 3).

The Case Study and Discretion in the Literature

The majority of current literature on discretion has used the case-study approach, enabling researchers to study complex organizations and bureaucracies. They could also examine process-based interventions such as permanent supportive housing (PSH) (See Fisher & Ziviana, 2001). Traditional experimental and quasi-experimental research fails to truly capture these processes, especially those occurring at the organizational level (Yin, 1994). A qualitative case study is essential for enhancing evidence-based practice on PSHs. Originally developed by Yin (1984), this method has been shown to be a valid and rigorous research methodology (Fisher & Ziviana, 2001). It is useful when the number of variables is higher than observations, when methodology must answer "how" and "why" questions, and when events occurring in the research setting simply cannot be controlled (Yin, 1999). These types of questions are evident when considering discretion in PSHs (Center of Supportive Housing, 2010a). These PSHs

provide an excellent opportunity to compare multiple cases because of their scattered-site organizational structure. They also provide an excellent opportunity to examine how new institutional theories of discretion tested only on public welfare bureaucracies can be applied to organizations like PSHs, which, unlike state and county welfare bureaucracies, are private, have a decentralized organizational structure, have much higher client contact, and often deal with significant safety issues.

As stated in the literature review, most implementation studies measuring discretionary behavior looked at welfare bureaucracies. Case studies of welfare offices accounted for vast regions of the US, including cities like Chicago (Brodkin, 1997; Cherlin, et.al., 2002; Sosin & Yamaguchi, 1995), Boston (Cherlin et. al., 2002) and San Antonio (Cherlin et. al., 2002). They also included states like California (Meyer, Glaser, & MacDonald, 1998; Meyer & Dillon, 1999; Jewell & Glaser, 2006), Texas (Meyer, Riccuci, & Lurie, 2001; Lurie, 2006; Riccucci, 2005; Weissert, 1994), Georgia (Meyers, Riccucci, & Lurie, 2001; Lurie, 2006), Louisiana (Lindhost & Padgett, 2005), Massachusetts (Watkins-Hayes, 2009), Florida (Schram & Soss, 2006; Fording, 2007), Oregon (Morgen, 2001), Missouri (Keiser, Mueser, & Chois, 2004) and New York (Lens, 2008; Lurie, 2006). Of these, only three studies did any type of case comparisons. Meyers et. al. (2001) and Lurie (2006) compared Georgia, Michigan, New York and Texas, while Jewell & Glaser (2006) compared cases of welfare offices at the California state level. These studies generally uncovered the same phenomena as single-case designs. However, multiple cases had improved external validity of findings, because they applied to different states where different demographic, economic and policy contexts existed. The use of case study for welfare studies helped to clarify the relationship between agency, environment, policy and worker. The use of different types of data, like systematic reviews of case records and administrative data (Brodkin,

1997; Lens, 2008; Schram & Soss, 2006) and face-to-face observation of frontline interactions with clients (Lurie, 2006), helped to connect policy to environment to organization to worker.

Case studies also helped to connect discretionary behavior to more personal feelings of the worker. Lindhost & Padgett (2005), Watkins-Hayes (2009), Sowa & Selden (2003), Kaiser, et al.(2004) and Riccucci (2005) are some studies which considered these factors . Watkins-Hayes (2009) answered question 4 through her case study of Massachusetts’s welfare offices. She referred to her case study as an organizational ethnography, and she saw this as the ideal way to see how professional capacity (work experience, education) related to social identities (racial, gender, class) (pp. 34-39). She then looked at how these individual level variables interacted with organizational level variables (organizational constraints, resources & incentives). Her methods were not that different from those of many of the other descriptive case studies of welfare offices that included observation, interviews and content analysis.

Workers' desire to preserve role legitimacy was studied in sociological studies of mental institutions, police officers, SROs and prison guards, and these also used case-study methods. Their emphasis on grounded methods of ethnography helped establish why roles came into existence and how role expectations and role legitimacy affected how staff socially constructed clients and used discretion with them. These studies emphasized staff categorization and “emergency” type routines to deal with role expectations (See Belknap, 1956; Bitner, 1967; Bitner, 1967b; Conover, 2000; Dunham & Weinberg, 1960; Goffman, 1961; Kupers, 1999; Perucci, 1974; Strauton & Schwarz, 1954; Siegel, 1978). These studies also considered issues unique to PSHs, such as worker safety and long-term client contact, which studies of welfare workers did not.

Thus, the 3 questions would be best answered by a case study – organizational

ethnography design. The sociological studies on mental institutions, police officers and prison guards show that inductive methods help researchers uncover relationships that are not explicitly laid out in theory. However, theoretical insights help inform the interpretation of data uncovered in ethonographic case study research (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, pp. 134-135).

The Site

The “agency” referred later as the “Cochran Housing Corporation” was a permanent supportive housing organization located in a Skid Row Neighborhood in the United States. The study examined 14 out of 20 of agency’s permanent supportive facilities (or sites), which contained shelter plus care (SPC) units. These facilities had between 40-150 units. Three of the facilities also had on-site supportive services, which included medical, psychological, psychiatric, legal, substance abuse and/or nursing services. Each facility had one property manager and 2-3 desk clerks. Case managers sometimes worked onsite, sometimes not. They had caseloads of about 20-40 clients. Residents (or clients) were homeless individuals living in the local area, some of whom were “chronically homeless” others were not.

Data Collection

Data were collected from January 2009 through June 2011, including observation, individual and group interviews, survey data and archival data. From January 2009 to June 2010, I spent an average of 15 hours a week on-site at the agency. Data were collected in four phases: (1) observation and open-ended interviews of facility workers and clients (January 2009-November 2009); (2) structured interviews, more observation and open-ended interviews (November 2009-January 2010); (3) surveys (January 2010-June 2010); and finally (4) focus groups (June 2010-June 2011). I also collected observation and open-ended interviews of intake workers (March 2011-June 2011). Table 1 shows how the different data collection and analysis

methods answered research questions posed previously:

Question	Source	Method	Analysis
1. Do PM have discretion?	Property Managers, Case Managers, other staff, clients, agency, members of task environment	Observation, Interviews, Documents	Content Analysis
2. Why do PM have discretion?	Property Managers, Case Managers, other staff, clients, agency, members of task environment	Observation, Interviews, Documents	Content Analysis
3. What motivates discretionary behavior in applicant screenings, sanctions and evictions?	Property Managers, Case Managers, other staff, clients, agency, members of task environment	Observation, Interviews, Documents	Content Analysis

Table 1. Research Design Plan

Observation

I engaged in complete observation, meaning I did not act as a member of the organization I was observing. Respondents were informed of my role as a researcher, as well as the objective of the research. At the time, that objective was to provide the agency with an evaluation of its program, as well as to look into organizational boundaries existing between property management and case management. This served several goals. One, it more easily satisfied internal review board (IRB) requirements of informed consent. Second, in my role as agency evaluator, I acted as an agent of a university. Participation in program activities, especially at the staff level, could lead to unintended consequences on clients, staff and the university I represented. Third, clarifying my role as a researcher, and ensuring respondent confidentiality, led to increased comfort and forthrightness on the part of respondents. The organizational environment was very contentious, and so having a label of objective observer helped to avoid receiving one-sided answers. In other words, as a participant observer I would either need to pose as a client, a property manager or a case manager in a very hierarchal, contentious

organization.

My observation of respondents took place in a variety of venues, including **day-to-day operations**, where I could track interactions between clients and frontline staff (SLB) and among frontline staff themselves; **meetings**, where I could track case manager (CM), property manager (PM), supervisor and management interactions; **groups**, where I could track CM interactions with clients in the absence of PMs; **events and community meetings**, where I could track interaction of both PMs and CMs with clients; and finally **communal areas occupied by clients**, to look at client interaction in the absence of both case and property managers.

The observations all took place in PSHs in a “skid row” area, which in the city where the study took place, had become a virtual “containment area” for crime. It was identified by its numerous SRO hotels, missions, shelters and industrial facilities (Rhmer, 2001). Fourteen percent of the city's homeless call Skid Row their home, 85% of whom are Black and Male, and 63% reside in the SROs and PSHs (Rymer, 2001).

Interviews

A mixture of formal, informal, structured and unstructured interviews were conducted to make sense of observations, and to account for those things that were not observable (see limitations).

Individual Interviews

Staff Interviews

I interviewed a variety of staff members, including case managers (CMs), property managers (PMs), supervisors, intake workers, desk clerks and other staff that routinely worked with clients. Interviews generally started off informally, as I observed day-to-day interactions with clients, or staff assessment of problem clients through staff meetings. Questions served

both as a means of providing a better understanding of these observations, and also as a way for me to see how organizational and cultural factors played out in day-to-day operations. Analysis of these informal interviews by multiple data analysts led to debriefing sessions, where semi-structured questions were constructed. These questions involved assessment of working conditions, feelings about clients and assessments of other staff members. Semi-structured interviews were then conducted with property managers and case managers representing all 14 SPC PSH facilities. Each interview, lasting approximately 2 hours, was recorded on tape and 20 pages of transcripts each.

Client Interviews

Like staff interviews, client interviews started informally by spending time in communal settings frequented by clients, or by going to groups. Such venues allowed me the opportunity to engage informally with clients, to get a sense of their life experiences, expectations of the agency, as well as their troubles with it. This progressed to more formal, open-ended interviews, which generally provided life histories of homelessness, how they came into contact with the agency and how their day-to-day life progressed within the agency.

Surveys

Client Surveys

Multiple analysts reviewed client interviews and, through debriefing meetings, constructed a list of structured survey questions. This survey was conducted with 100 clients representing all 14 SPC facilities. Respondents were recruited using convenience-sampling methods. The survey was conducted with 4 other staff members, all social work professionals or students. Two staff members were male, and 2 female. Two of the staff were of Asian descent, and two of Caucasian descent. Interviews lasted 30 minutes to 1 hour, and they examined client

demographic backgrounds, time in the agency, satisfaction with the agency, relationships with staff members and experience with agency sanctions and disposal procedures.

Group Interviews

Preliminary results of survey questions presented new questions for research staff, necessitating a series of focus groups. These survey results informed the construction of focus group questions.

Group Interviews with Clients

Through debriefing meetings attempting to interpret survey results, multiple analysts constructed a list of focus group questions meant for groups of hotel residents. Focus groups were conducted in two of the largest PSH facilities operated by the agency. Both groups consisted of 15-20 participants representing race, gender and age demographics of the buildings, as well as service requirements (mental health, substance abuse, HIV). Focus groups further assessed client satisfaction with PM and CM staff, as well as their reaction to organizational rules, methods of distribution of sanctions and rewards, etc.

Group Interviews with Staff

Focus groups utilizing staff members helped to clarify the effect of working conditions, individual ideologies and professional backgrounds on discretionary power and behavior, and these groups involved the majority of SPC property managers and case managers. Questions were constructed through debriefing meetings involving multiple analysts and catered to role expectations of either case managers or property managers. Property managers made up the first group, answering questions about their feelings about their role, agency expectations, how they categorized clients, their day-to-day routines, feelings about case managers and discretionary behavior. Case managers were assessed on how they engaged clients, when they agreed with

property management and when not, as well as what they thought of property management discretionary power and outcomes.

Archival Data

A diverse collection of archival data was also used to better understand the agency. These documents provided ample information on agency task environment, expectations of the staff, and how agency and frontline workers socially constructed clients. Job advertisements, CM/PM/intake worker client files, advertisements for units, application documents, leases, other agency documents, reports prepared by staff assessing clients for staff meetings and logbooks all helped to provide a better understanding of PM, CM and intake worker roles, routines, as well as how they socially constructed clients. In addition, these files helped show agency expectations and paperwork requirements. The agency task environment was assessed by looking at a combination of evaluations, grant applications or reward announcements, memos, newspapers and magazine articles on the agency as well as on other neighborhood PSHs, literature produced for fundraising or for public relations purposes, and finally local, state and government documents and regulations.

Additional background information for the study also was derived through client files and connected to survey respondents' answers. Client information such as disability status, income and program compliance were gathered from clients and matched with survey responses. Evaluation reports provided additional information on organizational efficiency and history.

Methods of Analysis

Organization of the Data

The research project originated as a research study and evaluation of organizational boundaries of a hybrid organization, which informed the original organization of the data. The

agency had 14 SPC hotels, each with dedicated PM and CM staff members. Thus, data were organized by hotel, then by CM, PM or clients, according to their boundaries. They were further organized into data type, including observation, individual interview, group interview and archival data. Observations and informed interviews showed up in field notes, while semi-structured interviews were generally taped when consent was provided and transcribed immediately. For the majority of this documentation, brief reflection memos served to provide initial thoughts, ideas, perceived connections and emerging patterns. These files were further organized by the types of routines staff engaged in three areas: applicant screening, sanctions and eviction. To confirm PM discretion in these routines, files were also organized by points where PM could use discretion. Finally, organizational history and points of transition as well as organizational structure were studied to provide a setting for these routines.

Content Analysis

I coded all field notes, interview transcripts and archival data using the Atlas.ti software, and these items were initially coded according to the needs of the boundary study and evaluation project. I also did a fair amount of open coding to identify and formulate ideas and themes surrounding the boundary study and evaluation project (See Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 143). After a series of debriefing meetings discussing codes, a pattern of discretionary behavior among property managers became clear. More focused coding continued to reveal these discretionary patterns. Some initial memos have been written, noting perceived connections. These initial findings showed similarities to previous findings and theory on SLBs (See Fries, 2012), which led to re-reading data and refining existing coding schemes, as well as determining organizational and individual-level variables that affect discretion in admission, sanctions and eviction. In re-reading data, I determined whether PMs actually had discretion and where their

discretion existed, by examining PM routines during intake and disposal processes (including admission screening, sanctions and evictions). Routines, as well as organizational history and organizational structure (PM role, CM role, CM relationship with PM, PM relationship with Management) will also help me to explain why PMs have so much discretionary power and what motivates their discretion. Much of the analysis then involved finding a final set of historical events and routines and putting these into chronological order. Specific cases were drawn from the data to better illustrate how events took place in the organization and how routines would vary. Richer detail was assigned to these cases to clarify client, PM and hotel variations. I will then write memos confirming these findings. As I continue to memo, my findings will become more elaborate and focused, which will help me build my narrative of PM discretion. I will then confirm these findings through statistical analysis (See Fries, 2012).

Content analysis practices draw heavily from grounded theory. I came to the research site simply as an evaluator, and I knew nothing about studies on and theory of discretion. The existence of discretion was discovered through the course of the evaluation and through examining organizational boundaries. In writing results, I did not rely on theory or findings but on establishing chronology and understanding patterns. It is only in the final chapter (the conclusion) that I allow theories to inform my interpretation of the results. This helped me get past a constricted view of specific events and write about more generalizable social and organizational forces (See Emerson, et. al., 1995, pp. 134-135).

Tests of Reliability and Validity

Construct Validity

Because this is a case study, I paid special attention to construct validity to avoid becoming too “subjective” (See Yin, 1984). Tests of construct validity apply to measures and

are, thus, connected to the data collection phase (Rubin, 2008). Much of this is accomplished through the use of triangulation techniques. Triangulation procedures include comparing different types and sources of data (id), which became necessary, because this study used several types of data to answer research questions, including observations, interviews, surveys and archival data. Interviews and observations involved different participants, including supervisors, administrators, case managers, property managers, intake workers, other staff and clients. These data were initially reviewed by multiple analysts who investigated data collections independently, and who then discussed their initial thoughts during debriefing sessions

Internal Validity

Internal validity is also very important, especially because I am trying to establish how and why discretion among certain workers exist. These insights lead to a model which implies causation. To increase internal validity, I used case analysis and prolonged engagement. The use of case analysis is accomplished by comparing cases, in this instance interactions between PMs and clients, looking for those that deviate from the norm and seeing why they deviate. I did this by first establishing the general routines of PMs, then picked out specific clients mentioned in the dataset and saw how those routines connected to the clients' unique situation.

This study also used prolonged engagement. I spent almost 3 years on-site at PSHs in Skid Row, spending a great deal of time with participants building trust and establishing rapport. Not only did this ensure that my data were more accurate, it also considered changes in institutional context over time. The passage of time, including the length of the recent economic downturn, was definitely affected by the political and economic resources available. Meanwhile, I wrote field notes immediately at the close of every day on-site, in order to properly recall and write coherently about who did and said what, and in what order (Emerson, et. al., 1995, p. 39).

These notes were written to document all the different details of events from beginning to end.

Case studies have been criticized as having weak, external validity, because single cases cannot necessarily be generalized. Thus, it was important to design my study in such a way as to make comparisons. The agency under study provided such an opportunity through its large stock of scattered-site properties. Each PSH facility could be considered a single case which deals with the same institutional forces as other cases, but having different PMs and other staff. This sets up an opportunity for me to compare different cases. I also looked at how clients were dealt with through staff meetings and through follow-up interviews. Each client represented a separate case I could compare.

Reliability

Next, it was necessary that the research be reliable, meaning it could be repeated with the same results found. This required that I documented all areas of the research process, so that other researchers could look at my data and find the same results. All of the processes that took place during content analysis were documented in Atlas.ti memo files (See Fries, 2012), with specific memos laying out analytic procedures and notes for the setting of the study, as well as each research question. These memos would help future researchers follow my steps to find the same or similar results.

Finally, it was important to maintain a certain level of objectivity. In writing down field notes, it was necessary for me to consider how I communicated my observations (See Emerson, et. al., 1995, p. 43). After all, it was easy for me to take a stance in much of my writing which ties to my orientation, knowledge of theory or attitude about the people I'm studying. In order to deal with this, I self-consciously recognized my fundamental orientation (id), and I clarified this orientation through debriefing sessions and sought to understand different perspectives on the

data collection. The combination of acknowledging and relating points of view helped me clarify my stance and try to pay closer attention to different local meanings. These local meanings would become very clear during discretionary interactions, especially when I paid close attention to the words, phrases and categories that participants used during these interactions (See Emerson, et. al., 1995, p. 112). Due to participants of the study having contentious relationships with each other based on boundaries within the organization, it was also important that I interview the different sides. This is because, according to Emerson et. al. (1995), each person's story will reveal only a partial reality, one that highlights their own concerns and circumstances (p. 116-117).

Summary

A case study methodology using organizational ethnographic methods will be employed to determine how discretionary outcomes are related to organizational mechanisms and individual worker motivations. This was done by developing an understanding of the PM's role in the organizational structure. Then, it was necessary for me to look at intake (applicant screening) and disposal (sanctions and eviction) routines to answer research questions on whether PM discretion exists, where it exists, why it exists and what forces motivate it. These areas of discretion will reveal organizational, political, personal and economic forces which effect these discretionary decisions.

The following chapters will show the results of content analysis. Chapter 5 will illustrate the organizational setting and clarify the PM's role in the organizational structure. Chapter 6 will focus on routines taking place during applicant screening. Chapter 7 will focus on routines taking place during sanctions, and Chapter 8 will focus on routines taking place during eviction. Finally, Chapter 9 will will discuss the results in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 and connect them to the

literature and theory on discretion. Chapter 9 will also lay out policy implications and recommendations.

Chapter V: The Setting

In this chapter, I will lay out the history of the agency called Cochran, its task environment and its organizational structure. The chapter reveals how the agency changed over time, according to constraints posed by the task environment. Cochran's task environment had been influenced by the policy context, and, in turn, the task environment influenced Cochran's organizational structure. This chapter will also introduce the major players in the organizational structure, including property managers (PMs), case managers (CMs) and managers.

It was opening day at the new Pruitt Hotel. The hotel was designed by Premier Architects to stay around for a while. It was not just a "bunch of rooms and beds," but, rather, an attempt to forge a community within the buildings that would be there to stay. Future tenants entered the building with a somewhat stunned expression. They looked tired and worn from being out on the street, or from staying at different houses as hangers-on. Here they were in this shiny new building, looking not all that different from the new lofts going up just across Main Street. They sat waiting uncomfortably – in the lobby where they could see the open-air staircase that led into the central courtyard, waiting and hoping about their future.

The Pruitt hotel overlooks one of the roughest parts of the infamous downtown Skid Row. Behind the Pruitt was Kenmore Street, a street that really seems more like an alleyway. *Places for People* is on that block, and the homeless are waiting in line outside of it. It is early morning, and they are waiting to take a shower. This is probably the filthier part of the neighborhood, where the concrete has turned black from filth and debris. The whole area still smells of human waste, and people just stand there for hours, some with overloaded shopping carts full of blankets and jackets, some with just a sleeping bag or a backpack. A quicker line is around the

corner at the 6th Street mission, where people wait for breakfast in the morning or lunch in the afternoon. At 6 PM, they line up for a chance to sleep on 1 of 400 cots.

The Beginnings of Cochran Housing Corporation

Skid Row is known for these missions and drop-in centers, also for its state-of-the-art SRO redevelopment. In the late 70s, the City adopted a redevelopment plan that sought to contain the problem of homelessness. It was hailed as enlightened at the time, because it contrasted with most redevelopment at the time, which typically included razing rundown buildings and “class cleansing.” The plan concentrated services for the homeless and the preservation of housing, and by housing, they meant SRO Housing. SROs were used historically for the transient workforce, but, later, they became a vital source of housing for the mentally ill, just as state mental institutions began to shut down (Bahr, 1973; Seigel, 1978; Shapiro, 1969). Their standard layout – a small room with a bed and communal bathrooms down the hall – assured privacy but also affordability. SROs also tended to have a certain level of stability, despite their tenants, because of their use of on-site property managers (id). Unlike other low-income housing organizations, all management activities like collecting rent, fielding tenant complaints and maintaining the building was done by on-site management recruited from a pool of responsible tenants. The mayor at the time encouraged the sustainability of this housing through tax increment financing (TIF), which was issued through the community redevelopment agency. This allowed for the dumping of “the destitute, disturbed and disturbing” on Skid Row whenever they appeared in other parts of the City or County.

The Cochran Housing Corporation, started by community activists and business leaders in 1989 to save downtown SROs from destruction, was one of the first to utilize this new type of funding. Cochran benefited from a climate where the city demanded that funding for Skid Row

match that of more prosperous skyscraper development in the west side of Downtown. The agency mobilized this type of private equity, along with public financing, some Section 8 subsidies and conventional debt to transform dilapidated hotels into safe, attractive permanent housing. Housing the homeless was relatively simple at this time, because the problem of homelessness was, to activists, a problem of affordable housing. The homeless just came to the hotels and filled out an application. It wasn't like other permanent supportive housing providers in the area, which required layers upon layers of referral and reform. One of the other larger providers of permanent supportive housing in the area, Taylor Housing Services, required the typical "continuum of care" rout: emergency shelter to transitional housing, with intensive counseling for substance abuse and mental health, and then finally permanent housing.

"They operate a program," according to Jane, one of the founders of Cochran. "We operate housing."

Thus, the only on-site staff during this time were property managers (PMs). Property managers were the frontline workers and facilitated all communications between tenants and management. Private equity only paid for capital improvements, so operating expenses, such as loan payments, building maintenance and administrative costs, still needed to be covered by rents. Rents were usually paid through General Relief (GR), which was pretty generous in this state. Homeless individuals received \$356 a month, and they paid rent for one of Cochran's SROs from that amount. During this time, the organizational structure centered around PM.

In the beginning, PMs would recruit and interview tenants, field complaints, follow up on maintenance issues and collect rent. Only, the PMs were a little stricter then, because they feared the hotels could become too unstable, and so they had to also police buildings and enforce a guest policy. This was when Leroy came to work as a desk clerk. At the time, Leroy had just

lost his business, selling cleaning supplies. He also ran a Skid Row congregation and had some business manager experience, so he applied for a PM job. He was given the desk clerk job and told that he had to start from the bottom.

Many formerly homeless and people down on their luck applied to the desk clerk position at Cochran, and many of them didn't last long. They are either fired, or just stopped showing up to work. The desk clerk position offers a very low wage and very unsafe working conditions. However, for many people with just a high school diploma, very little job experience, prior substance abuse and a criminal history, a desk clerk job at a Skid Row hotel was the only job they could get.

Leroy was probably overqualified to be a desk clerk, but he couldn't find a job otherwise, and he enjoyed doing volunteer work in the community with his local church. He also didn't stay in that position long. As a desk clerk, Leroy essentially focused on just being a watchman for the regular PM. He was to watch the surveillance camera and write about day-to-day events in the logbook. He essentially was a reporting arm of the PM, so that PM could go back to his unit and have some leisure time. Leroy worked hard, showed up at the hotel on time and did what his supervising PM told him to do, and so he was soon promoted to assistant PM and then a full PM. The agency essentially trained its PMs this way. Experience within the agency was of the utmost importance, and no matter what one's previous experience happened to be, he usually had to start as a desk clerk and work his way up.

As a PM, Leroy would make about \$2/hour over the minimum wage and be provided an apartment at one of the hotels. For many PMs, this is a very lucky break, because it isn't particularly easy to find a "management" job with their typical employment and criminal records. Leroy figured the salary was small by the standard of living in the city, but he figured

he would spend less on housing, and he liked feeling as if he was running a business again. As a PM, Leroy was at the frontline of the organization. He had very little supervision, because the hotels were separated from the main facility, and he enjoyed enormous discretion over how he ran the hotel. Leroy essentially had a role of a landlord. On a basic level, he also had five other major roles, including the role of a neighbor, a maintenance supervisor, a policeman, a doorman and a social worker. These roles overlapped in numerous ways.

Leroy was a heavy-set man and was quite intimidating. The management liked him, because the neighborhood was very rough, and they could trust Leroy to police the building, despite the lack of police protection outside. Leroy did this partly through his presence in the hotel, but also by getting tenants to stick to the rules, to pay their rent and to let him know if other tenants were doing something wrong through the distribution of resources. Being a good policeman was an important part of Leroy's job. Leroy was hired for the same reason as many other PMs were hired: he could cope well with the conditions of the neighborhood and could stabilize buildings. Several other PMs stayed at Cochran for quite a while because of their ability to stabilize buildings. These PMs included Matt from the Cabrini Hotel, Brian from the McCandless, and Andy from the Phillips. Brian from the McCandless said this about expectations of PM when he was hired on:

“I [moved onto the Thompson] as an assistant manager. We were having a lot of problems with the building. That was when 5th Street was known as the Nickel. There was 24-7 activity; you know all the drugs and stuff, which is also when all the non-profits and police started coming in and cleaning up the area. A lot of people were sleeping on the streets and they had, you know, all the tents and the boxes all down the street. That was before they came in and cleaned it up.”

Brian, just like Andy and all the others, were brought into Cochran and kept on, because they were able to settle hotels down in a very difficult climate. Brian and Andy could seem

tough as well. Brian was a former gang member, and Andy used to work at a board-and-care. Without these PMs, hotels had a higher level of instability, making them more likely to attract criminal activity in the neighborhood and the police, causing conflict with local officials. The agency would also face significant admonishment from HUD and DMH when clients turn up dead in the buildings, and it would have a hard time attracting staff if it became too dangerous to work there. However, it was tough to stabilize buildings through just the policing role, which is where other roles came in, like the role of neighbor, social worker and landlord. Latisha said this of her experience as a PM at the Silveria Hotel:

“I mean let's face it, nobody wakes up and decides, I'm going to go live on Skid Row. That's the place I want to be. Issues usually bring people down here, so a large portion of our clients have some sort of substance abuse issue or some sort of mental illness.

“For me, by keeping them engaged doing things they want to do, even if it's just an hour or two, that person is not up in their room smoking crack, because once they start getting high, that's where the sneaking people up in their room came in at. They are going to find somebody who has money and try to bring them in so they can keep getting high. That's where all the deals start taking place – ‘well if you buy it, then next month I'll buy it.’ Now, I got an argument with two people because they didn't keep their word about buying the drugs this month. So if I keep them engaged, their mind off of what they are doing, it was easier for me because I had less infractions, crisis, all of that. And then people started really realizing that – ‘hey, I used to have fun. There were things that I used to like to do and now that Miss Latisha had started to do things in the buildings.’ Like every year, they would have a Xmas tree and I would have a tree trimming party. I would buy some little cookies and eggnog and we would have it in the evening, because we had some people who went to school so that everybody could be part of that activity. That way, you get to know your neighbors. The fact that a lot of people had done nothing but get high for years - they forgot about the good stuff in life. They forgot about having fun. It allowed them to be more positive people and all that negative stuff was thrown out the window, at least temporarily. And then with time, they get used to doing things that are positive.

“Before I knew it, I had people saying they were going back to school, or getting a job. I encouraged all of that. And then, they became really territorial about their building because they were having fun and they didn't want anything to disrupt that, so they became - they started policing other residents - they would say, you can't have this person over here, because if Latisha find out that this is going on

then we might not have game night anymore. I had a person on every floor that when I came in, they would tell me what went on. They get to be healthy again.”

Latisha, who later went on to become a PM supervisor, pointed out how PMs combined social worker and neighbor roles with their need to police. In a way, this served as a mechanism to get the tenants in the building to help with policing duties. PM have a large amount of power in the hotel, almost as if were the landlords, and they used this power to police tenants. They not only could control who could get a housing unit there, but they also could sanction tenants and evict them. PM also had power over other resources, like the provision of maintenance, access to mail, guest privileges and other building services like replacing a lost key. This power was used to intervene when events threatened the safety of the hotels, or when other types of crises occurred. Andy, while talking about a crisis that he had to deal with by taking overlapping roles of policeman and social worker, said:

“I had [] situation where one of my tenants relapsed, and she was going through a mental breakdown. She didn’t know who she was. As a matter of fact, she thought she was the owner of the building. She tried protecting the building from outsiders and I had a new tenant that had moved in here, and she saw the new tenant and walked over to the door and pulled it shut to prevent them from coming into the building, and the person didn’t notice she was coming, and they had their hand in the door, and she smashed that person’s finger in the door. The finger started bleeding all over the place. I had to call the paramedics.”

The passage expresses how PMs dealt with clients’ complex issues with substance abuse, mental illness, poverty, etc. This was at a time when the problem of homelessness was expected to be resolved by increased affordable housing. Homelessness was defined as a housing problem, and it could be cured by the provision of more affordable housing. However, the political tide was set to soon change.

The Introduction of Case Managers

By 1993, a state budget crisis led to steep cuts in social services. GR now only paid \$212

a month, and Cochran had to come up with a way to make up for the difference. This is when SRHT turned to HUD. According to Jane:

"When I came down here in the '70s, the missions were these hole-in-the-wall places. Now some of them are big corporations with headquarters off by the beach and movie stars on their boards, and they're invested in institutional survival."

Jane and Cochran Housing ran into a big problem. Getting money just for housing to aid homeless clientèle meant admitting who the homeless were, and what their conditions actually were. According to Jane:

"[Pursuing funding meant] talking 'the lingo of rehab.' [This] stigmatized the poor, especially poor, drunk, deranged, dirty men, and when the organizations were eventually called upon to explain why there were still so many such men on the Row evidently un-rehabilitated, they came up with the portrait of the 'service resistant' individual, who couldn't bear the rules and restrictions of shelters and programs".

HUD had several programs, which provided operating subsidies responding to these political trends toward rehabilitation. These were expanded by Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, and an emphasis was put onto service rich permanent housing. The largest share of funding went into the Shelter Plus Care (SPC) program, which required housing providers to hire case managers (CMs) to coordinate services for the homeless. Cochran did this, and also used the CMs to help clients receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI), thereby increasing the clients' monthly payments to Cochran. CMs were often para-professionals or former property managers, and they played a diminished role until Cochran added a supportive housing supervisor, Saul, to the management level of their organization.

"He came on board and cleaned house," said Saul's co-manager, Frances. "He fired almost everyone."

"Why?" asked the researcher.

"People were criminals," France responded. "They were stealing from the agency,

sleeping with the residents. “

Frances' statement clarifies how Saul was hired on to fix a housing agency that simply wasn't working anymore. Saul hired new CMs and encouraged PMs to work with them. These CMs were different than the CMs the agency used before. Rather, these CMs were more educated, often had some experience with human services and had idealist notions of “helping people.” Some CMs even had master’s degrees. These CMs were supposed to add legitimacy to the agency, which its corrupt staff had all but taken that away. These CMs were significantly younger, mostly White, and they came from middle class backgrounds with little opportunity to learn “street” knowledge. This was one of the reasons there was tension between CMs and PMs. CMs also did not come from the 12-Step community, like PMs. Rather, they were hired because they had a more open mind about drug use among clients, so as to follow philosophies that the agency was just starting to embrace, like housing-first and harm-reduction. Few clinicians, especially those specializing in substance abuse, were familiar with practices related to harm-reduction, and they typically relied on 12-Step and zero-tolerance methods, which essentially forced sobriety onto clients. Saul would designate these CMs as having the role of “social worker,” and had PMs refer all social work activities to the CMs. This meant that CMs would run the groups, counsel clients, refer clients to services and intervene during a crisis. There now would be boundaries, and PMs would no longer take on these roles.

This amounted to a slap in the face for many PMs, who often thought of themselves as better “social workers.” Their interactions with clients, in their opinions, were more comfortable, and engaging clients was easy for them. They noticed this wasn't the case with the new CMs. PMs' large number of roles put them in much more frequent contact with clients. PM lived on-site with clients, gave them their mail, checked in their guests, and recharged their

keycards when they were locked out on Saturday. New requirements by HUD required room inspections, so they even went into clients' rooms. They were around during a crisis, whether it was at 3 in the afternoon or 3 in the morning. They were often former homeless themselves, and even if they weren't, they were generally from the same socio-economic background and usually the same gender. In a way, the CMs' leverage over this role was an insult to PMs. It made their job less safe, because they could no longer use the social work role to soften their role as police. It was also irritating that CMs could earn a middle-class salary performing the social work role, when PMs made poverty wages. PMs got their revenge, however. There were ways to discredit CMs, and one of the main ways was through their increased access to client information. PM also continued to perform their social work roles, because they had little supervision.

As if taking over PMs' jobs and getting paid three times as much wasn't enough, CMs were also expected to advocate for clients. HUD and other funders pushed for the use of CMs in PSHs, because they increased housing retention. This is because CMs advocated for homeless clients against PMs, who held onto discretionary power over organizational resources. The CMs' role – in theory – was to buffer these discretionary powers. The introduction of CMs was supposed to make PSHs like Cochran a little less like plain old Section 8 apartment buildings, by encouraging PMs to give their clients chances. The CMs would then have the responsibility to engage the clients in behavior change. However, in reality, the CMs' ability to engage and advocate were severely hampered.

PM essentially saw CMs' advocating activity as enabling negative tenant behavior. To PMs, the goals of advocating essentially got in the way of their job and required that they made exceptions for certain clients. This meant it was harder for them to preserve order in the hotels. Brian from the McCandless Hotel said this about CMs and how they advocate for clients:

“We want this tenant to be housed, we want this tenant to be comfortable, but at the same time we cannot give this tenant favors when it comes to the house rules. You can’t come to me and ask me not to enforce any rules on this tenant because there are 45 units in this building . If I allow this tenant to do something, I have to let everyone in here do it. As an advocate, the best thing for you to do is, when we communicate, we communicate as a team, and this is what you are doing, and this is where the rules say you can’t. As a CM, you have to ask tenant, how can we help you not do this, but some CM take their side and say they should not have to follow the rules. A CM said to a tenant, ‘I’m on your side’ to the tenant and that ‘he [the PM] is not.’”

As a result, attempts to “advocate” fell flat. CMs were not taken seriously anyway, and their attempts to advocate were considered “soft” by PMs; evidence that clients were manipulating them. Lynn, a CM over at the Cabrini hotel, said this about PM Supervisor Leroy:

“Leroy is really abrasive and I think a lot of the case managers feel that way. It always gets put off as this is just how he is. Sometimes the way he talks to us sometimes is just really degrading. I can’t really pinpoint ... I think he is threatened by the fact that we are just more intelligent than him. Sometimes he thinks we are just too sensitive and naive. He’s actually said this in a meeting - you guys are too sensitive. And it’s like, that’s what we’re hired to do - we know other people’s pain and suffering so we can actually... try to help them. Everyone was pissed about that, even Cindy. Cindy was a bit ignorant at first, and she would try to explain to us ‘you have to say it this way or that way.’ She has kind of laid off and realized we are doing the best we can.”

In order to properly advocate, CMs needed to have more power. CMs thus rarely advocated, as they were not truly advocates. Advocates stake out a position and stick to it. Rather, CMs worked on being heard by PMs, because PMs had leverage over what their clients needed. Being able to advocate implies that there is enough power and leverage on your side, and that you have something upon which to negotiate. It also means that the role of advocate is valued by the organization. This simply wasn't the case with CMs.

The Beginning of Comprehensive Services

Saul also tried to build the social services department. One of the things he did was build

collaborations in the area to create a *Chronic Homeless Initiative* demonstration project in 2003. Saul convinced Cochran that their model of low-income housing did not work for all homeless people and that better access to services could improve this. This initiative organized a mix of 12 prominent Skid Row institutions into a collaboration to create service-rich housing. The emphasis on services was the result of the two federal departments spearheading the program: the Department of Veterans Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services, which partnered with HUD. Thus, services for the homeless, including mental health programming, health services and substance abuse treatment, became part and parcel of housing the homeless.

Out of 12 public and private institutions, however, only a handful would get money for services. These included a health service provider, a mental health service provider and a community outreach provider. The program would take place at St. James, one of the newly renovated hotels, which provided a small amount of service space for the provider. This was one of the first buildings on which Cochran would do a complete gut-rehab. It was designed so there would be as much service space as possible. The front lobby had the original building facade, including wrought-iron columns and glazed bricks. The original Frank Lloyd Wright windows were painstakingly preserved. A new community kitchen with stainless steel appliances was constructed, in addition to a large lobby with couches and immaculate bookshelves. All of this seemed very expensive. The building bordered on Main Street, almost as if to buttress the more prosperous side of downtown as possible, while still preserving the Skid Row neighborhood for the homeless against competing interests like downtown improvement districts.

According to Frances, the collaboration was difficult and expensive for Cochran to preserve, but the scale of renovation and redevelopment wasn't. Once demonstration funds ran

out, Cochran would have to go after funding focused specifically on chronically homeless offered by the local government, foundations and the State, which had focused on fixing the “problem” of chronic homelessness because of the pressure it put on government resources. Jane wasn't thrilled about shifting attitudes towards the homeless that concentrated so much attention on making change. According to her, the compassion people felt towards the homeless during the 1980s had been exhausted. Now, the mandate was to reform the homeless, constructing them as problems, rather than people with problems. Skid Row institutions had switched course to follow these changed expectations, concentrating on being change-making organizations rather than charity organizations. PMs' roles changed as well, acquiring much higher paperwork and maintenance responsibilities. Saul said this about PMs' role at Cochran at this point:

“Property management role is what property management role is; it is focused on the buildings as Oliver just explained to you. Buildings have multiple levels of funding. Almost all of those layers of funding have got strings attached to it. They come with regulatory covenants that we agreed to file for 55 long, bitter years. Property management is charged with documenting, recording, getting all that information and filing it in a nice, articulate fashion, so that when we are audited, which we are, they can just lay it out and say, this is what we are doing. Our buildings on the property management side have a heavy reporting burden connected to them. So there's that, then there's the curb appeal of the building. Building has to look good, operate well, has to be clean. Has to be a place someone wants to be in, and there is a tendency on Skid Row not to maintain buildings.”

By 2006, the housing authority came under fire for mismanagement of funding, and under pressure from HUD, it decided to monitor those agencies it sponsored. According to Frances:

“A few years ago, HUD monitored the housing authority, who was doing poorly. Under pressure from HUD, the housing authority decided to monitor its sponsors. They wanted to avoid trouble with HUD. We were the largest contractor and came under scrutiny. We had never had a site visit from the housing authority; never met our goals, never met our matching funds requirement; our paperwork was shoddy; but we had never had an audit. We needed to start thinking about ourselves as a service provider rather than a housing provider. But we hadn't made that transition

in our thinking. We turned our paperwork in every year in good faith and never received feedback that we were doing things wrong.

“About 2 years ago, we had our first audit and site visit. The hammer came down on us like you wouldn’t believe, and rightfully so. Harry told me he hired me right before this happened; he didn’t know it was coming when he hired me, and told me he understood if I didn’t want to take it on. We spent weeks trying to get the case managers to start document everything correctly. 'Socialization' and 'going to church' were not valid activities for matching funds, and they needed to understand that. We had to hire a forensic accountant (someone who is usually hired to find evidence of embezzlement) to show that our lapses were not intentional. We had to pay back money to the feds when we didn’t make our match. [] The issue came under a federal statute. It was a lot of money we had to pay back.

“Now, 'the match' consumes us. My job is primarily around making the match. HUD and the housing authority will come back and our house needs to be in order. Other agencies were considered to be 'golden children,' while we were the focus. Now, even they are getting pressure.”

When Frances refers to “the match”, she is actually referring to what HUD calls a “record of service” and staff members and clients called “tracking sheets.” It is a piece of paper that shows the date of service, the service provider and the time spent for service, and it must signed by the service provider and stamped. CMs keep a copy for their records and enter the information into a spreadsheet. HUD determines the charges for each service. For example, 1 hour of medical services is \$306. The housing authority will then take this information and see if Cochran receives this much in matching dollars. The audit became a very important part of Cochran's evolution. The role of CMs became clarified as a role the agency just couldn't ignore. The agency also had to get its act together and focus its energies on professionalism. The role of PMs, however, that dominated the agency was never really what one would call “professional.” PMs, rather, represented the very people that the agency sought to help, and they were, nevertheless, very successful in keeping their buildings under control and could do a multitude of differing roles which ensured the agency's success.

CMs, meanwhile, were often over their heads. They had significant problems dealing

with the safety issues the hotels presented, and this led to a high level of distrust between them and clients. One example was Kara, a CM for a number of the older hotels, who worked in an office with three other CMs around the corner from the hotels they serviced. She had a client named Carlos who began to obsess over her and kept telling her he loved her. She essentially blew it off, but his behavior escalated. He began calling her multiple times during the day and sometimes flew into jealous rages about her relationships with other clients. Kara's office was in a storefront with glass windows, right next to the tenant service office, on a main drag of Skid Row. The other CMs had left for the day by the time Carlos came to see her. It was 5 PM, and she didn't rise to open the door to see him. Rather, she called out from her desk, which was some distance from the storefront window, "The office is closed."

This resulted in pure rage on the part Carlos. He began hitting the windows and wouldn't stop. Kara tried to call some of the PMs she worked with from the hotels but couldn't get hold of anybody. She finally had to call the police. This created a full-on intervention on the part of staff. Saul got involved and soon after, Kara was moved to one of the other hotels. Bridgett, an African American woman who worked with Saul at another non-profit, replaced her. Saul essentially hired Bridgett to keep an eye on the women and to avoid situations like the one between Kara and Carlos. Bridgett said this about the CM she worked with:

"I just think that they don't truly stand up to [PMs]. At meetings, Kara doesn't even look PMs in the eye. They will come back to the office and complain about how stupid the PMs are. I don't really think the PMs are stupid. They do this, but they don't actually address with the PM what they are specifically doing wrong.

"There was this one time that Kara and me were sitting in the office and this *The 50 Most* client wanted to get into *The 50 Most* office. [*The 50 Most* is a program specifically for chronically homeless and is in an entirely different storefront - there is no way to access it through the Hill office.] He was pissed, because it wasn't open and started to cuss us out. I just told him to leave and Krista was so surprised. She asked, 'Were you scared?' I told her no - I grew up in South Central."

The incident between Kara, Bridgett and the PMs show the troubles that Cochran faced with hiring. Staff at the agency either had no education and lots of experience, or lots of education and no experience. Saul essentially had to find case managers who not only had more education but also had more experience working with the population. This was challenging, because it also meant spending more money on the CM department, which the agency did not want to do unless there was funding for it. He resolved this by hiring a few CM supervisors who were older and who had more experience in the field. PM supervisors, however, were still their bosses.

Saul also began holding supportive housing meetings once a week. Supportive housing meetings had been instituted at Cochran in 2009 as an attempt to improve the relationship between PMs and CMs, and to improve the flow of information. Essentially, the meetings were intended to improve CMs' leverage at processing points by nudging PMs to supply more information to CMs. CMs can also try to advocate for clients during these meetings and possibly slow down the eviction process when it occurs. Meanwhile, PMs can sometimes use CMs as an additional rule enforcer who constructs tenant problems into therapeutic encounters.

The meetings had just been instituted at the same time several different initiatives were put in place to change what many real estate developers and business people saw as a significant problem downtown. They joined forces with homeless advocates to improve services to the chronically homeless downtown. Initiatives like *The 50 Most* and others focused on funding for “service-resistant” homeless individuals. They began to push local PSHs, like Cochran, to set up their hotels like St. James. There was suddenly a lot more money available for housing these populations, which led to a boom in building for Cochran. At this point, several new buildings had been built, including ones that soon became legendary across the country, like The Pruitt and the Cabrini.

The main reason for this was to clear the streets of the homeless, who had been setting up what had essentially been a tent city since the 1970s. Containment would no longer work. Downtown real estate was too valuable to the local government, and the area had to become more neutral, meaning that it had to be used for more than just containing the poor and mentally ill. This is why these initiatives to increase PSH also came at the same time as efforts to increase policing of the area. Meanwhile, the city also got a new police chief, who was the former police chief of New York City under Mayor Giuliani, and who was a pioneer in using the Broken-Windows theory as a tool of neighborhood control and stabilization. His philosophy of prosecuting smaller crimes heavily to prevent bigger ones from happening would be the law of the land, especially on Skid Row, where the central police station sat. A *Safety City* initiative had also passed by the city council, which focused on Skid Row. It led to more money for PSHs in the area, but also for hiring 50 new police officers. The result of these two events was an increase of enforcement of nuisance offenses, but also fewer homeless sleeping on the streets. The expectations of homeless persons' behavior were now different. Homeless were increasingly getting ticketed for petty offenses like jaywalking or using a shopping cart to carry their belongings. Meanwhile, more were also housed and made the responsibility of PSHs, rather than the local government. Increased funding came with tougher and tougher requirements to take on more chronic homeless who often had more problems with health, mental health and substance abuse.

Comprehensive services would fix all this. At least, that is what “experts” were saying. However, Cochran knew its services and collaboration could only do so much. The rest was done through the agency's social construction of the client, and discretion of PMs over applicant screenings, sanctions and eviction.

Summary

This chapter illustrated the political and economic context, in which Cochran Housing Corporation subsisted. Political and economic actors known as the task environment had influenced Cochran's evolution from an activist organization focused on saving area S.R.O.s, to an affordable housing developer and later into a hybrid social service provider-affordable housing developer. This changed the organizational structure by changing frontline staff from activists, to property managers and finally to property manager and case manager. The use of case managers were meant to comply with requirements of HUD, local funders and advocates which sought to increase the amount of services being distributed to the chronically homeless. They were also supposed to help with housing retention by being involved in the screening and eviction process. However, they were essentially introduced to the agency to comply with funders and did not add to institutional survival outside of fulfilling this requirement. If anything, they made affordable housing development more difficult. As a result, frontline leverage and discretion was in the hands of property managers who used discretion to fulfill performance measures and cope with neighborhood demands.

Chapter VI: “Getting in” and Learning How to be a Good Tenant: The Applicant

Screening

This chapter focuses on the routine of intake or applicant screening. It begins by illustrating a client's reactions to gaining housing in one of Cochran's newer hotels. This is meant to show a simplified and often stereotyped version of how applicants gain housing. I then contrast this with the actual routines the agency and PMs utilize for intake. This chapter shows how intake really is more of a process of structuring the context for the client, and teaching them how to become “tenants.” There are two layers of this type of routine. There are routines that are structured by the agency (referral, intake, waiting list, documentation); and routines that are structured by the PM (documentation, interview, covenants).

“I then came to downtown []. So naturally - I was very frightened - for good reason - I must admit. You walk the streets, and you have to be very careful. Fortunately, someone on the street told me about the Pruitt apartments. So, I ran to the Pruitt office and filled out an application, and they told me to come back next week. She just asked me a couple questions, and then she closed my file. I saw on the cover of my file, and it said - ok - approved - apartment 412. And I looked at that and I said, well I couldn't say a word, and she said I could move in today if I wanted. I could move in today. I couldn't believe it. Well trust me - all my belongings were at the 3rd Street Mission in storage - I didn't even go back. I slept here that night. First night I could close both eyes and have a good night sleep.”

This passage shows Ann's experience “getting in” at Cochran Housing. When Cochran first started, much of “getting in” had to do with getting past the PM:

“I was living in an apartment with a woman who was 15 years older than me. She didn't care who you were from a hole in the wall - she would just bring you in and charge you \$200 to stay here. Before we knew it, we have 6 people living in a 1-bedroom apartment. In November, I turned to my ex-husband, Berry, you know - I'm tired.

He said you are my ex-wife, the mother of my children. You not gonna have to live that way anymore - you just reached a point. I said - what do I do? He said - go into Cochran.

“I walked in there and said, ‘I’m homeless. This is Cochran, right?’ They looked up they put up a sign that said mental illness. I said, ‘I don’t know - I’m bi-polar.’ They said, ‘You’re mentally ill if you have bi-polar.’ I said, ‘OK.’ They said, ‘Do you have documentation of that?’ - I said, ‘yeah.’

“I came to the door and she says - do you take medication? I said – ‘yeah’ - and the other woman says – ‘no’. ‘You’re out’ to Carla right. When Carla walked away with a frown on her face - or whatever. She says - you’re in. I said, what do you mean I’m in. She said, ‘Didn’t you just tell me you’re on medication for bi-polar.’ I said, ‘yes.’ She said – ‘Welp - ok if you can bring in all these documentations.’

“I said, ‘Are you trying to tell me that by December 1st I’m going to have my own place.’ She said, ‘yeah because I have 6 availabilities.’ I came to find out I was the 6th person.”

To Molly, a client at the St. James, the process of getting past the PM felt more like an interview. She essentially answered the questions perfectly and proved how she could be a “good tenant” according the requirements of the PM. However, the use of the PM as the sole representative of the agency during the application process soon caused problems with the agency’s task environment. PMs essentially could create their own pools of potential “tenants,” because they knew who would fit the eligibility criteria. Longer-term clients were often old friends of PMs. Now, however, the agency’s task environment required increasing levels of funding and accountability, which put pressure on Cochran to accept a wider pool of applicants to resolve the Nations and the City’s problems with homelessness. The combination of federal funding requirements through HUD’s SPC program, and local initiatives to increasing housing for chronically “service-resistant” homeless, had left PMs with a much more vulnerable and difficult to serve population to chose from. Screening, for the most part, moved to the tenants’ service (TS) office, relieving PMs of having to deal with applicant demand. Meanwhile, PMs still held on to the ability to reject applicants they did not like. When the agency made these

changes, the nature of PMs' discretion also changed. Instead of using discretion, per se, PMs fell back on the agency's social construction of clients to teach clients the value of their housing, and why it is necessary to do what it takes to keep it. Tenants accepted to Cochran after tenant services started taking over the applicant screening process spoke about a much more complicated processes of "getting in:"

“ With me, I went to the building on 5th street, and I signed in every week for a whole year. Every week for a whole year. I did not miss one week, and it took me a whole year. If I missed a week, I didn't get it.”

“ I did all that, I signed in every week and then that week, when they are just about to place you, they are like, 'oh, this is missing out of your file,' 'oh, you have to do this again.' So, then they have you run around like you are a chicken with your head cut off. Then they see you don't have something else, and start the process all over again. I mean, come on! Oh you brung that, now go get this.”

These tenants spoke of the way that the agency set up hurdles for applicants to pass through, which has been referred to as the “agency's construction of the client” by the literature on discretion. In this way, Cochran created a type of meritocracy, where more resilient, more mentally sane and more intelligent applicants jumped through the challenging hurdles, while the rest just struggled with homelessness. These clients were able to learn how to be a “good tenant.” PMs, in this way, took over how the tenant services offices dealt with client demand, and they used it to create the pool of tenants they needed to get their job done and to avoid trouble in the building.

According to Saul, the typical routine for applicant screening includes the following: (1) referral, (2) client brings in tuberculosis (TB) test results and two forms of ID, (3) TS office follows up with the tenant and informs them of their housing options (SPC, Section 8 or market rate), (4) tenant fills out HUD paperwork, (5) SRHT verifies income and (6) the tenant is sent for interview at the hotel. However, as can be expected, there are lots of twists and turns along the

way. Much of the routine around applicant screening concentrates on getting the applicants used to the quirks of the agency and making them show they deserve housing. PMs get involved midway through this process, but use the lessons learned from the moment tenants reach the agency as a way to make their jobs easier and to improve compliance during sanctions and evictions processes.

(1) Referral and Waiting in Line

Clients like Ann, who got to stay at one of the newer hotels like Pruitt and Cabrini, had “gotten in” through referral. Referrals generally pertain to recommendations by a number of agencies that have a close relationship with Cochran, the local government or the State Department of Mental Health (DMH). A certain number of units are set aside for the chronically homeless in these buildings, and these homeless have to be referred. These units are not just SPC units, but rather SPC combined with a variety of other funding incentives by state and local governments, and more of these units exist in the newer buildings than the older ones. The set-asides are part of a series of local initiatives which sought to provide funding for PSHs for the chronically homeless and severely mentally ill.

At the tenant services office, job responsibilities were sectioned off depending on whether a tenant had received a referral or not. Roberto, who had the highest status in the tenant services office, dealt with referrals. In the applicant's eye, his office was the goal, because applicants who worked with him were able to go to one of the seven newer buildings, which often had less burdensome paperwork requirements and sometimes shorter waiting times. The other intake worker, Trina, handled all of the agency's remaining 16 buildings. There was also a receptionist, Nina, who mostly managed the waiting list as well as all those other duties that the intake

workers did not want to do.

Non-referred units were filled by agency outreach efforts, which generally included putting up flyers once or twice a year announcing that Cochran is opening up its waiting list. Applicants also heard about the waiting list openings through word-of-mouth and other agencies. When the waiting list was opened up, which usually was for about a week to two weeks, there was a line around the block of people wanting to apply for units. The last line count was about 400-500 people.

The days that Cochran opened up their waiting lists were usually pretty chaotic. The tenant services office takes in ten people at a time from the line and put them through an orientation. The orientation, essentially, seeks to clarify to applicants what supportive housing and SROs actually are. According to intake workers at the agency, applicants are pretty ignorant about this type of housing and about expectations that are connected to it. They think it is regular Section 8, and that they'll get a voucher and an apartment and they can go and live anywhere. They think of it as a housing program. Trina and Roberto would have to make it clear before they got started with the application process – that the applicants just get a room with a communal bathroom at the end of the hall and kitchen downstairs. They will be expected to follow house rules – including guest rules, which means they just can't have people over whenever they please. They also may have to have a case manager, depending on what is available, who will check on whether or not they are fulfilling contractual obligations with the agency, like tracking sheets. The orientation takes place in a tiny storefront just off of Main Street, underneath one of the hotels. It is in a dingy, cramped, uncomfortable room where tenants crowd in for about a half hour, then crowd out.

According to Trina, it is at this point that clients are to schedule a follow-up appointment, but many don't because they are not interested in living in an SRO or Skid Row.

On the other hand, many do, and their follow-up appointments are scheduled starting 10 days later. There are about 3-5 intake interviews scheduled per day on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, so someone can wait a long time for the intake interview, the point at which they actually get put on the waiting list. They are asked to bring their ID, social security card and TB test results to the appointment, but for those scheduled earlier, it isn't really expected that they actually show up with these things, just that they turn them over by the time their name comes up on the waiting list.

The intake interview is really the applicant's only chance to try to connect with intake workers. Some try to make the best of it by telling as much about themselves as possible, trying to arouse sympathy.

"When did you get out?" Trina asked.

"In 2003," the applicant replied. He had started his sentence in 1996.

Trina didn't ask what the conviction was for. She then explained what an SRO was and clarified there would be no personal kitchen or bath.

"I can live with that," the application said. "Now I'm in transitional - at the Dempsey, and I can't wait to get out of there. Will I be in an older or a newer building?"

"Older - they're all older buildings," Trina lied, and then asked him the agency's software program's canned questions, then asked for ID, and finally asked for proof of income. When she told him he would have to wait 8-12 months, maybe more, maybe less - he was frustrated.

"But I want to get out of the Dempsey," the applicant pleaded. He cracked some jokes and asked a bunch more questions. He tried to position himself by saying he was in the CDC program.

"I was in the CDC program. Who cares?" Trina replied. "There is no way to go up and down the waiting list."

This passage shows a common interaction between an applicant and tenant service staff.

Applicants expect discretion on the part of tenant service staff, and they try to get an understanding about how power over resources work in the office. They come to realize that their interaction with Trina is extremely short, about 1-2 minutes, and there is not much they can communicate in that short amount of time. When the applicant left, Trina said that this is constant - applicants are always looking for an angle, something that will give them priority. "I don't blame them really." Applicants essentially searched for something to try to get the intake worker to remember them. However, the screening program software Trina used, called ROMAS, made this difficult. The ROMAS screener gives question prompts that must be answered and essentially guides the interview process, while still providing for the ability to stop and focus. Trina used this opportunity to hone in on issues like certifiable homelessness or incarceration. It didn't really matter though, what their answers were, she only seemed to care if they showed up. If she had concerns, she simply put them in the client's file, which was started that day.

Even though HUD had a five-year ban for evictions or incarceration, Trina would put the applicants on the waiting list anyway even if their answers raised some red flags. Sometimes, she would also give referrals if it appeared likely they wouldn't get through the housing authority application process. When and if someone had been incarcerated, or was really homeless, or was income-eligible, could be quite complicated. This can be seen by the following conversation between Trina and an applicant who had checked the "been incarcerated" box of the self-screening form.

"I was convicted in 1972," the applicant said. "I don't know what you are talking about."

"You didn't get picked up or arrested for anything, since then?" Trina asked.

"Yeah, two weeks ago, for public intoxication."

“That’s a conviction,” Trina explained.

In the previous exchange, Trina didn’t really explain to the applicant he would need a certificate to prove he’s completed treatment. Trina didn’t really feel this is her place, since the arrest could or could not be a conviction. She did not do criminal checks, so she had no way of knowing. Instead, she explained what an SRO unit was (no kitchen/no bath). The applicant complained a little about having no bathroom. She then explained the sign-in process. Cochran was careful when it came to Fair Housing laws and appearing to not discriminate, even though this care often caused major inconveniences to homeless applicants. Meanwhile, there were few limits to how large the waiting list can be, and no punishment if the agency ignored them. This has backfired on a number of occasions for clients once the paperwork has reached the local housing authority. Trina remembers well an elderly married homeless man who had been on the waiting list almost a year. The housing authority found that he had sex offender status, even though he got the status for dating his 16-year-old future wife, at age 18. Meanwhile, other sex offenders had sometimes gotten through HUD and into SPC housing at Cochran.

Trina also left people on the waiting list because it served the agency. Brian, a PM at one of the second-generation buildings, explained why this is the case:

“People are holding onto their housing now. The only thing is, is it’s easier for them to come in. When they are living here, they know they are safe. It used to be that some of these buildings were just as bad as living outside. But with the quality of staff they are hiring now, who are keeping the buildings safe, ensuring tenants have a sense of safety, because a lot of tenants used to be off the chain. A lot of them are here, go buck wild, and then realize they don’t want to be out there, having no place to go, so they comply. But you have got to bring it to them in an honest, understanding way, 'What do you want? Do you want to be out there ? Or do you want to have a place to come in from out there?' And they accept that they have a place to go, 'I have a key; I can come in and out when I want to, and I can come in, and I can lay down in the privacy of my own room, and no one will bother me.’”

Brian essentially is explaining how clients are less likely to cause trouble in the hotels because it

is harder to get in, even if some clients who would otherwise not get accepted are now getting accepted. He saw this client burden as part of the reason that clients were more careful when it came to holding onto their housing. PMs and the agency benefit from the length of the waiting list. Applicants invest their time and energy in the application process, and once they gain housing, they will start having to invest time and energy towards retaining housing. Both forms of investment can be used to clients' advantage and disadvantage. The problem with investing large amounts of time and energy into something one doesn't own is that it is possible to lose it, which puts more power into the hands of those who could take it away. For this reason, once clients get to the point where they meet with PMs and begin their working relationship, PMs have incredible amounts of power. If they fail to go along with what PMs want from them, at any point, they lose all the investment they had built up over time.

This use of agency constructions over PM discretion for applicant admittance began in 2006. Tenant services was put into place to deal with client demand, and to please actors in the task environment. The HUD audit reinforced Fair Housing requirements, and a paper trail was necessary. The agency could comply with these requirements by creating a work-around. By having a waiting list and some type of system that applied equally to all applicants, the agency was able to more effectively construct a social context and train applicants to become "good tenants." Management put Leroy in charge of a tenant services department that would do just this. He had intake workers engage in an informal way of assessing housing need. Instead of ROMAS, they used a simple spreadsheet, which just had the applicant's name and the date they applied on it. At the time, applicants had to sign in three times a week, and intake workers chose applicants not by time on the waiting list, but by how familiar their faces became. They also were more willing to give housing to those who signed in the most. However, the same problem

remained. Tenant services staff could still provide housing to people they favored in one way or another, which could cause problems later on with HUD and the courts.

Finally, in 2009, Kempter, a large funder of health services in the area, required that the agency start using ROMAS, a computer system that could more effectively track the effects of housing and social services on client outcomes. Supervision over tenant services was switched over to Doug and a management-level department called “compliance.” ROMAS would be used to screen clients but also to collect information about them. Around this same time, the tenant service office organizational structure was reorganized and made more legally compliant. ROMAS would create transparency when it came to the application process, which gave the agency an additional push to focus on how to better organize their tenant services department. They decided Leroy would be out and Doug the accountant would be in.

Roberto thought the new system was “fairer” in a legal sense, but that it did not necessarily assess severity of need properly. This is what bothered him about it. The old system had provided housing faster to those that staff members saw as more desperate and thereby reduced tension in the office. So, clients who were most needy and likely to get upset were less likely to get too frustrated. Also, it could be argued that staff members could feel as if they were making a difference, and they could ease their consciences in other regards. In other words, the tenant services office was given a large amount of discretion to control resources, which made their work environment more bearable. Much of the psychological burden of the waiting list fell on Nina the receptionist. Before the introduction of ROMAS, Nina had quite a lot of discretionary power, since she sat at the front desk and controlled the waiting list. She saw who came in and out every day and reported to Trina and Roberto inside. Now, she had much less control over these matters but could still manage to shift a few applicants she really considered

more “needy” towards Roberto's office. Nina's job was very difficult. The waiting room was hard to watch; people were just so desperate.

“Only three months more, right?” one man asked. He was smiling when he asked the question, his face filled with expectation.

“No, it’s six months, maybe even eight,” Nina replied.

His expression saddened at that moment, and it almost seemed as if a weight fell onto his shoulders as he walked out.

There was one man who Monika (PM-Levingston) recognized when she was at tenant services two years ago. He kept on getting dropped off the list, because he couldn’t always consistently come. He had been on the list for three years.

When control over tenant services was transferred to Doug and the compliance office, the recording of the process became more transparent. Applications were entered into ROMAS, and applicants had to wait until their name came up on the list. Nonetheless, maintaining a relationship with the receptionist did still help applicants even after ROMAS was put in place. It was important that the receptionist and other staff members knew who you were, and that they felt a certain amount of compassion for you. As a client, this would be hard to maintain, especially since the application process is almost a year long. However, a welcoming receptionist that let you hang around and chat for a while, helped.

Outside the tenant services office, about 12 men are waiting for the staff to get back from lunch. Community advocates for the homeless came by to distribute flyers for a protest on the Mayor’s city budget - money for housing – and people in line took them, frustrated with standing there waiting. A man with a shopping cart full of recyclables passed by.

“I would never let anyone in my family become homeless,” one of the men said, and

about half of the men in the group agreed.

Ricardo was one of the men, and he had been waiting size months for his housing. He said that Nina thought he was a good guy, so she was going to try to get him housing at – he pointed toward Cabrini and Pruitt – “one of the newer hotels.” He also mentioned the Taylor, which will not be completed for another year. Ricardo had an SSI verification to give to Trina, and he was staying at his family’s house in the meantime. He knew a couple of others waiting in line, and no one seemed to react to what he said. One man came specifically for unsubsidized housing, who had been waiting a month. He sat next to a man with long dreads, who said he had been waiting three months. He commented on the process of “getting in” and why it took some people longer than others:

“I don’t know how they do it - racial profiling, mental illness, if you got a drug problem or not - but something is going on - maybe you have to look pitiful enough, you need a story which moves them.”

Currently, there are around 190 applicants on the agency waiting list. To get a Section 8 unit, the wait now was typically 9 months; for SPC it is 8 months, and for market about 2 months. The size of the waiting list has varied over the years, and the tenant services office has adjusted accordingly. Applicants came in once per week to check in with the receptionist Nina. She greeted each applicant who came through the door, asking them to sign in by their last name. She knew all of them. Many of the applicants greeted her back, though, and not in a surprised way, but with a mutual warmth and recognition. She knew little bits and pieces about their lives. She said she loved her job; she loved helping people.

“Oh boy, here comes Mr. Black,” she said as one applicant came in. “His mother died this Friday. Mr. Black, you didn’t have to come here, for Christ’s sake!”

Mr. Black is sullen and searches for a pen to sign in. Nina tries to comfort him, and he

bursts into tears. She hugs him until he calms down. He finishes while a few more applicants spill through the door, one of whom got his housing today. She lets that applicant out the front door, saying, “aren’t you excited about your new home?”

(2) Paperwork and Dealing with the Housing Authority

When a vacancy opens up in the building, PMs call the tenant services office and request two or more applicants. PMs have an incentive to fill these units quickly because of HUD vacancy requirements, even though fewer tenants would technically mean less work. One of Roberto's job duties is going to these “vacancy meetings,” where PMs, property administration and compliance all meet and ensure that Cochran is complying with HUD’s 85% occupancy rule. Part of the intake worker's role is to work with PMs to fill the units up quickly.

The PM will then get the room ready for the next tenant. For SPC units, this means an inspection by HUD, while for Section 8, it just means a 4-6 week wait. Matt from Cabrini talked about his usual routine for applicant screenings:

“From tenant services, Raymond will call me. I’ll get hold of CM to make a date. Once we get a date, they bring their folder of information; we go through it to make sure everything’s right. If it isn’t, we get it corrected/take a note. Once we go through paperwork, we do a pretty relaxed interview, 20 minutes with the prospective tenant.

We approve almost everybody. The requirement to get into here is jacked up anyway. You’ve got to have a mental illness. You have to be homeless for a year anyway. So that’s way it’s hard for me to turn somebody down. Once we do the interview and they’re approved, I give them a call and send them to the housing authority, then get the room inspected. Once it has been inspected by the housing authority, then they have to go and be interviewed by the housing authority. Once they are approved, I get their name and how much rent they should pay.”

Matt speaks to how most PMs regard applicant screenings. They essentially don't like their choices, so they use the screenings as a means of clearing their paperwork burden and beginning to structure the context. PMs assume that many of these applicants will be “bad tenants” in that they will be hard to control, will increase their workload and make it harder to

fulfill agency expectations. Essentially, PMs judge by standards of a regular landlord. “Good tenants” and “bad tenants” mean much the same things at Cochran as they mean at any other apartment building. These are people who will provide the PMs with reliable income and essentially not increase their workload. In the meantime, tenant services begins the paperwork for the housing authority. HUD requires an enormous amount of paperwork from tenants, including many official documents. Tenants often saw the documentation process as another level of weeding:

“What does it take to get in?” asked Eve.

“A lot of hard work,” replied Yvonne, which is met with laughter and agreement.

“One of these and one of these,” Laura added, pointing to an arm and a leg. “Lots of going back and forth. Going to the same place. Did you go to GR? Then you have to go back to GR. Then I have to go back the next month.”

“So, it’s a lot of legwork?” Eve continued.

“A lot of legwork, but they never want the same thing,” Laura responded.

By the time the applicant is dealing with paperwork, he has already taken on quite a lot of burden. He had already waited in line for up to a week, waited for an intake interview and remembered an appointment that could be months away, went through the intake screening process, then signed in once a week for an average of 8 months. Besides the 50 pages of forms that essentially ask the same questions in 20 different ways, tenants also needed to bring in verification of income, disability and homelessness. Intake workers take this opportunity to teach the client his role as tenant by imposing rigorous standards for documentation.

Documentation requirements are so rigid that even though documents are signed and come on official letterhead, they are not accepted unless worded just the right way. Clients are not taught these specific requirements. Rather, they are often sent back to the homeless shelter or doctor or GR office to make changes on the same piece of paperwork two or three times in one day. The

applicant soon gets the message – getting documentation right is important to Cochran, and part of the burden of proper documentation is on the client. According to Trina, this was because HUD was very particular, and some of the workers were on a power trip. Small issues with paperwork turned into big ones, and there's quite a lot of paperwork, making it typical for the applicants to go back and forth several times. This “going back and forth” essentially gets them used to the idea of taking on some burdens to receive housing. This is part of independent living, where self-sufficiency is a main goal and being able to keep up with paperwork demands is vital.

However, for many referred tenants moving into the new hotels, some of this is handled by the referring agency, although the amount of paperwork completed by the referring agencies varies from applicant to applicant. This ensures that some people, like those with more severe mental illnesses who would otherwise get weeded out through this process, have a way in.

“There were two forms and when I filled them out and brought them back that was all I needed,” Lila said. “Only two forms.”

Lila would avoid some of these pitfalls, but she would move into a building filled up with others who would swap stories over the hurdles they went through to get housing. This is because other agencies have all sorts of reasons for giving referrals. She will likely see that she was one of the lucky ones, and she may also realize that she might not be so lucky, the second time around.

(3) The Big Interview

By the time the applicant goes to the PM to hand over the paperwork, they are used to being shuffled around, and they are used to waiting. The context, for the most part, had already been structured. These applicants were aware that they were applying for highly rationed housing, and that there was a chance they would not get it.

By the time the applicant gets to this stage, he has to bring over all the housing authority paperwork he worked on with Trina or Roberto in tenant services to a PM at a hotel with a vacant unit. To complete the paperwork, the PM asks applicants to get the last piece of documentation, a document from the GR or SSI office verifying income. PMs are required to do this and not tenant services, because it further clarifies to the applicant how the hurdles don't end once the applicant has left tenant services. PM also can make the applicant apply for GR if they have not already done so, so that they have a documented income. If the applicant comes in at zero income, they pay no rent and thus become a problem for the PM who cannot use rent as a method of control. These constant client burdens – exchanges occurring between agency, PM and client for services, became what many clients saw as their “job,” meaning they needed to go through these hoops with patience and consistency for an unspecified amount of time to eventually get housed. The agency essentially demanded a lot of trust from applicants, that eventually all this trouble would pay off. Adrienne from Cabrini, described her experience:

“Depends if you want place to stay, that’s really what you got to focus on. Because Matt sent me to the GR building to get a printout. You go there and its half a day anyway and I counted and it got wet. I was so mad. He made me go all the way back, and the next day. [*He couldn’t accept it because it was wet?*] Eve asked.] It was wet, the signature had faded off, but I did what I had to do because I wanted my own place.”

The process introduces the tenant to the PM, because he will be the main person who enforces applicant contracts. The PM then starts to structure the context further by creating his own hurdles. PM doesn't have to do this; he can make the process easier. He can tell applicants exactly how to fill out forms, what to watch out for and what HUD is looking for. However, it is within his discretion to do this. The PM then does background checks, which means he checks the applicant's eviction record. PMs also, legally, have the ability to look at much more, like credit history, whether the tenant is an addict, and any criminal background. They can chose

what to highlight and what not, because the housing authority is a large bureaucracy that misses a lot of information. However, if they do it at all, they generally just do a past landlord check and see if there had been any evictions. More often, they verify the housing history during the intake interview, to see how the tenant dealt with housing in the past, and whether they got along with other people in their housing situations. Matt explained the basis for his rejections during this interview:

“If you show real, real serious emotions, get angry, are super, super arrogant, we know you are going to be a problem. You are the type of person, you know. Then we look at the record at how many times you had been kicked out. How many times we had some issues. The application shows past three places they stayed, and we ask you what happened here, here, here. If they say, I had a problem with this person, this person, this person, it shows you have a problem with people, with staff and when you know you are having problems and you don’t admit it. When we see that, we’re like ‘no.’ These people are just not ready. If you say, when I was going through it I was on drugs, medication, than that’s fine.”

If the tenant is turned down by a PM, they are sent to other hotels if there are vacancies. The person isn't completely rejected until they receive a written copy of the approved *Grievance & Appeal Procedure*, along with information about why they were rejected, like eviction or credit background. However, because documentation is given to applicants which even tells them where to go for legal aid, tenant services and PMs have to have a legally justifiable reason for rejection that complies with, at least to some extent, Fair Housing standards. This is why they handle this by continuing to refer them to other hotels, because some hope remains that the person may at some point be housed. It also gives PMs an excuse to reject if the applicant fails to show up to subsequent interviews. If worse comes to worse, and they do get sued, their penalties are minimized, because they can essentially claim that hotels are separate entities, since they are all incorporated separately with their own PM.

Legal and funding considerations strongly affect PMs' decision-making and take away

much of their discretion in the applicant screening processing point. Legal requirements, as stated in the previous paragraph, include Fair Housing requirements against discrimination, especially discrimination based on race, gender and disability. HUD implements Fair Housing laws through their housing programs and penalizes contractors who do not comply with them. The HUD audit in 2006 led to the use of tenant services and PMs' new focus on rejection. When they reject, however, they had to have documentation. Along with legal requirements came funding requirements by SPC and local initiatives like *The 50 Most* and others, which used funding mechanisms to push Cochran to take more chronically homeless into their hotels.

So, as PMs lost discretion over choosing their pool of applicants, they gained new powers of coercion over the new pool. In all, PMs had a fair amount of discretion during the applicant-screening phase. This discretion can be enumerated in 4 layers: (1) PMs could slow down the process of intake, and (2) they had final say so over who comes in and who doesn't; (3) they could highlight issues with eligibility in the paperwork that is sent to the housing authority, and (4) they could lay the framework for staff encounters in the future.

The tenant Alfonso made his way up the waiting list, cleared tenant services and was ready to be interviewed by a PM at the Phillips, one of the older hotels. His interaction with staff shows a typical screening routine.

When Alfonso arrived at The Phillips hotel with his file, he had to wait for an hour and a half. Latisha, the PM Supervisor, insisted on sitting in on a applicant interview but was late. When Latisha and Andy, the PM from Phillips, finally arrived, it was decided that everyone should sit in the PM office, which was very small (compared to those of St. James and Cabrini), and consisted of little more than a desk and a little space around it for filing cabinets. At this

point, the applicant hadn't yet seen the room, or the communal kitchen or bathroom. It didn't seem important whether the applicant liked the unit or not. Rather, it was more important that the PM liked the client. This sets the stage for applicants' understanding that they don't have the luxury of choice, and that they are being provided a rationed resource. The Alfonso sat on the outside of the office looking in.

The CM, Heather, started the interview by informing Alfonso about her role. She took a tracking sheet with her and showed it to him. She explained a little bit about “tracking sheets” and the applicant nodded as if he already knew. She then explained that he would have to meet with her once a week. What she said was short and very concrete, and she did not enter an actual conversation with him.

“Do you have any questions?” Heather asked in conclusion. Alfonso just nodded, unsure of what to say. Heather then promptly got up and made her way back to the CM office.

The full interview was done by the PM, and when there was trouble, Latisha would sit in. This time Latisha was sitting in to ensure that the PM continued to lead the meetings and that CM and PM followed their appropriate roles. PM-led applicant screenings were the norm at Cochran, and they also made final decisions on applicants. Latisha explained why this was the case:

“PM [lead the interview and make the final decisions], because at the end of the day CMs go home after 5 PM or whatever time they get off. PM has to deal with this person 24 hours a day. So, if let's say PM has some concerns about this person and the CM feels like they could work with them – based on who is making that statement will sometimes determine whether that person will be allowed in the hotel, because let's face it, some CM are better at what they do than others – so if I have a CM who I don't think is really equipped to work with that person, then I may go with PM on that.”

Latisha, like other PM supervisors and PMs, foresee a large percentage of their interaction with

clients to be about control and coercion. According to her perspective, whether CMs could work with clients was often connected to PMs' ability to control them. PMs' concern then is client control, and it is only when CMs can prove effectiveness in doing this, that she gives their opinions leverage.

Once Heather had left, the real interview began. Latisha started by asking Alfonso, where he slept last night.

“The Dahlberg House.”

“Don’t you pay to stay there?” Latisha asked.

Yes, Alfonso replied, and Latisha and Andy then began discussing whether Alfonso could be considered homeless if he was paying rent somewhere, even if it were transitional housing. Alfonso tried to defend his admission by talking about the requirements at the Dahlberg House. He said there were all sorts of rules in the matrix program,

“I have to give part of my paycheck,” Alfonso said, “can’t even keep my medication in my room. I am required to have a sponsor.”

Latisha didn’t seem impressed. She was trying to get a better understanding of the applicant's housing background, and she was unsure whether or not he is even eligible anymore for an SPC unit. She considered whether she would highlight this or not in the paperwork she sends back to the housing authority. Alfonso was also being somewhat vague, and this bothered her because it means she had little to work with. Latisha then asked a few questions about substance abuse, including a past arrest, whether Alfonso was actually dealing, if he ever got high on Skid Row, what he did to maintain sobriety, anything that would cause him to relapse, how many times he relapsed (how many drug treatment programs), and his take on people who are still active. They spent quite a while talking about this. Latisha concluded that he will share

everything except his room, so he may be impacted by someone else's drug use.

“How do you think that you will deal with your neighbors' drug use?” she asked. “It will affect you just in your general quality of life – like your neighbors going in and out all night because of drug use?”

“I am already experiencing this at the Dahlberg,” Alfonso said, “and it wouldn't be a problem for me.”

Substance abuse is an important issue to PMs. The agency considered itself a “housing-first” agency which uses “harm-reduction” to deal with substance abuse. Managers for the social services side insist that a zero-tolerance policy makes little difference when it comes to client retention, but PMs still see substance use as an important indicator of future tenancy. PMs believe that they cannot control someone who is active in their addiction. To PMs, clients in relapse are the most difficult to control, and these clients are much more difficult to deal with than the severely mentally ill. In fact, PMs see their ability to catch substance abuse as an asset to the agency. This ability reinforces two of PMs' toughest roles, that of policeman and social worker, as PMs ultimately are expected to control clients. One of the ways this is done is through their ability to distribute housing resources, because PMs don't need to accept applicants they don't feel they can control.

Many managers are former addicts themselves, and they see themselves as recovering addicts who follow 12-Step principles of recruitment. These PMs do not want to create trouble for themselves as recovering addicts, and for others in recovery in the building, by introducing new clients who have substantial substance abuse problems. They see addiction as an infection that can spread quickly throughout the building. This conflicts with the underlying philosophy of the agency, and with that of some of the actors who may be responsible for funding, like the

DMH and The National Coalition for the Homeless (who puts pressure on HUD). However, more powerful players back the PMs' position, such as HUD with its “One Strike” policy, the courts and local governments. The discussion about housing and substance abuse are all parts of the process of teaching the applicant how to be a tenant. The PM essentially frames what is important to the agency, to the applicant, even if the agency has a completely different philosophy.

Interviews with PMs are very personal. PMs look closely to see how applicants react to other people, and they have different ways of figuring this out. Some, like Matt and Brian, will seek answers to this question by going through applicants' previous housing situations and asking questions about them during the interview. Since Alfonso was being somewhat vague about his stay at the Dahlberg House, Latisha tried to find another way to get the information she needed. Latisha began asking Alfonso all these personal questions like what were his “best relationships,” when really her purpose was to observe and instruct the applicant. The question she was really asking was, “How do you deal with aggressive people?” and “Are you aggressive?” Since the answers to these questions would either be superficial or dishonest, she didn't ask them. Instead, she gave a scenario. Latisha started by explaining that Cochran is a community environment:

“You might want to cook a meal but others are there ... Let's say you made a nice meal and forgot something so you went up the elevator and came back to find that someone was eating your meal.”

“I would offer him some,” Alfonso said and gave Latisha a big smile.

Latisha became annoyed with this response and replied, “What if he says ‘I'll take it anyway?’”

This exchange went on for a while, almost like a battle of wills. Alfonso wanted to prove he would be a “good tenant,” even if he wasn't sure he knew what that meant to Latisha, while Latisha was trying to get a point across to Alfonso, which was: “These are issues you'll have to deal with.”

Latisha gave another scenario, “Say you have an interview for a job. You take a shower, get to sleep at 9PM, and a neighbor knocks on the door at 11PM to ask you if you want to buy a pair of jeans.”

“I won't answer the door,” Alfonso replied.

“He's persistent!” Latisha insisted. They argued back and forth. Latisha used hyperbole to get her point across, saying “Lets say it's 1:30 AM, now he wants to sell a bag of bus tokens.”

“Isn't that against the rules?” Alfonso asked.

“There is no rule about someone knocking on a person's door,” Latisha answered. “I was just wondering at what point you would come down and talk to staff. They are there to intervene.”

“Stealing food from someone jeopardizes your housing,” Andy finally said. “We will evict people for stealing other people's food. I will call the police on you for stealing food, theft, whatever.” At this moment it should be clear to the applicant that the PM is essentially like a police officer and as a tenant, he will be expected to cooperate with him. The applicant gets the message that the PM will not accept certain behavior and that he shouldn't either. The message is clear about how to become a “good tenant.” The building is secured by tenants bringing issues to the PM so that the PM can resolve them with their policing tool belt. The secret to being a “good tenant” is helping PM to be a “good PM.”

The conversation switched again – this time focusing on the expectations of living in

independent housing. Latisha asked again where Alfonso stayed.

“I've been at the Dempsey House for 30 days,” he answered, “and I have to hand over \$101 per month of my GR over for rent. If I'm there a full year, the rent will go up and I'm not sure how I'll afford that.”

“Are you ready for independent living?” Latisha asked. Alfonso nodded. “Can you handle the decreased level of structure?” she continued. “There's no one taking money from your check here.”

“I already know I don't want to do drugs,” Alfonso replied. “I want to go forwards, not backwards. I don't think I need that much structure anymore.” Andy then reiterated what Latisha said about dealing with other tenants.

“What I heard from you is that you think you will be able to handle other tenants on your own,” Andy said, “but you can't handle these things at Cochran - this isn't possible at Cochran - because it's too easy to get yourself in trouble.”

Latisha had concerns, and concerns make the interview last longer. Andy later said this about having concerns about an applicant:

“Sometimes my interviews will last 45 to an hour because I have some concerns of what I'm hearing from you but I want to hear something that will say it's okay, they'll be alright. I'm not looking to say no. So, I try my best to find something positive in front of somebody. I try to tell them about what we want from them, what we expect from them by going through the house rules. I tell them that in some of the old buildings you need to share the restrooms, you need to share the kitchens, so you need to be open to that. I'm basically looking to be convinced. The only people I'm concerned about are people who are so mentally ill that we're just not equipped to handle that person, or if a person who appears to me to have an anger problem, not just the fact that there's an anger problem but they would take that anger and play it out. Because you have some people who would just openly say, “I'm a dangerous person and if A, B and C happened, I'm going to do D, E and F.”

Extended interviews were quite common at Cochran. Plenty of PMs had done them with

clients that would worry them in one way or another. Latisha continues to clarify in the interview – that independent living did not mean “no rules.” It was important for her to be sure that the tenant understood that less structure did not mean no structure, and that someone was watching. Her questions then connected to some of the rules that are more important to PMs.

“Do you have quite a few things?” Latisha asked, “because the room isn’t that big.”

“Just the regular stuff”

“You can’t have too much stuff,” Latisha said, “because every month the room gets sprayed and the Pugs Bugs guy also critiques the units – over-crowdedness is one of his pet peeves. If he’s not able to open a door, he declares it a fire hazard. How does Dahlberg House deal with guests?”

“We can only have guests after 28 days of living there and then only 3 overnights per week,” Alfonso explained. “Guests also are not allowed to take showers.”

Latisha realized she didn’t have to talk much about the guest policy, since the applicant already had dealt with one and knew how to conform to it. She still knew the rule is controversial, so she attempted to justify it with the applicant.

“This is pretty much the same,” she said, “but Cochran wants to give a little leeway. Cochran has these rules to keep a handle on things. Otherwise, everybody and their momma will be running in and out of these hotels. Being able to have guests is a privilege and depends on your good standing.”

“Tenants also have the opportunity,” Andy added, “to call ahead of time (before 5 PM) to set up overnight guests.”

Andy further clarified the policy. He wasn’t trying to make the applicant feel better by saying he can have some leeway. Rather, he pointed out another rule he’ll be expected to follow.

He then tried to further justify the guest policy by asking, “Where are you from?”

“Idaho.”

“Did you ever see a neighborhood like Skid Row?” Andy continued.

“No.”

“The rules exist at Cochran because Skid Row is a unique neighborhood,” Andy explained. “Other neighborhoods don't have what we have. Do you have any other questions?”

“Yes, what is the rent again?” Alfonso asked.

“The rent is assigned by the housing authority,” Andy clarified. “For tenants with GR, it usually ran around \$53/mo with a \$40 deposit. But this is just a preliminary interview. Latisha and I are still in the process of interviewing others. I will contact you in 48 hours.”

Latisha was vague about whether she was going to take Alfonso. She didn't think he was very honest, and he hadn't been clean that long. It seemed pretty obvious she didn't like him. She could easily reject him through HUD by pointing out his type of housing. PMs have a large variety of things they look for – some are highly connected to recovery and the individual client, others have to do with helping them cope with agency role expectations and workload. However, the ability to adapt to agency social constructions were really the most important, because they predicted whether the PM would be able to control that client in the future. Tenant control led to increased performance measures.

PMs' discretion during applicant screening was highly constrained by agency expectations, like filling vacancies quickly, and picking clients who will make it easiest for them to make their performance measures. They fulfill them because they want to keep their job. They are a good policeman, a good social worker, a good landlord, and this means they are more likely to hold onto their job. At the same time, the agency can be very hard on PMs. They deal with multiple

roles which often need to be combined, like policeman, maintenance supervisor, landlord and social worker, but they are given little formal training about how to balance these roles. These high expectations come with a combination of low pay, low quality of living, high workload, multiple contradictory roles, no physical security and resentment from other frontline staff and clients. In other words, PMs' working conditions offered a large amount of stress, and so did their living conditions. Matt from Cabrini said this about working at Cochran:

“I could bring up some stuff, but I don’t want to get anybody mad. One thing is I think PM should make \$20 an hour. We deal with serious hazards. I think that PM should have the most comfortable plush units that are possible - sound proof. We hear nothing! If anyone needs to contact me, we have cellphone. It’s crucial that we have our space where we can’t be disturbed. You deal with all this. I really do feel this is serious, serious work, dealing with this. You’ve got to have your peace. I’m surprised I lasted this long. In a sense I think PM is taken for granted, PM is really taken for granted.”

Thus, PMs just try to ensure that their work and their life, which all take place at Cochran, is bearable, and that future clients don't cause them too much trouble. Performance was often connected to the quality of tenants. PM were in an precarious economic situation. They earned poverty wages and their housing was directly connected to their job. It was hard to save a substantial amount of money, their credentials were meager so it was hard to find a job and getting fired also meant they were homeless.

Workload, performance and lowering the potential of workplace “hazards” may explain quite a few of PMs' discretionary decisions, but not all of them. PMs were also choosing neighbors and potential allies in the building. To some extent, this was connected to their social work role, but on a another level, PMs got quite a lot of gratification when they felt they could relate to or mentor clients. PMs, after all, saw themselves as survivors. There was something that helped them to survive and keeps helping them to survive, despite their difficult

surroundings. They looked for others who had similar struggles or whom they could impart their survival story onto. PMs looked for someone they could talk to, mentor and who would be a good neighbor. However, as PMs admit – the pool of potential clients is already limited – they only try to get a “sense.” The real point of the interview is to clarify the client's role, to structure the context and to get them ready for a future relationship.

(4) Verifying They are Who They Say They Are and Getting Ready to Move in

Once the tenant has been interviewed and was cleared by the PM, he would do a second interview at the housing authority. The housing authority was much less concerned with the applicant as a potential tenant, than about actual legal eligibility. This is the point where all those screening questions get a second, “official” investigation. The client then comes back with documentation from the housing authority proving eligibility. At this point, the PM will sit down and go over the lease and house rules with the tenant, until they are sure they understand them, and then they both will sign the documents. The client will also visit with the CM to set up their weekly appointments, complete intake forms detailing past history of health, mental health and substance abuse and to sign the service agreement. These contracts set the stage for living at the agency. “Getting in” is only part of securing housing. The client's ability to abide by the contracts helps ensure his future housing retention.

Ann learned this quickly, because as she moved in her boxes from the 3rd Street Mission, Leroy was already on her case. He told her she had too much stuff, she couldn't bring all that stuff into “his” hotel. As she pretended to ignore him and proceeded to shuffle her boxes towards the elevator, Leroy turned to Jones, Pruitt's PM.

“Keep an eye on her,” Leroy said.

Summary

This chapter showed how property manager discretion presented itself in intake processes. Property managers use discretion to filter out and to structure the context for future encounters with residents. The agency's construction of the client and its use of waitlists and paperwork requirements aids this process. Property managers essentially start the process of teaching the client the role of "good tenant" through application procedures.

Chapter VII: A Problem in the Hotel: Sanctions and the Use of the Mini-Crisis

In this chapter, I will talk about how sanctions are used at Cochran to resolve problems that come up in the hotels. I will then discuss six different ways that PMs resolve problems and how sanctions are connected to their resolution. For each of the different ways, I give an explanation of why the strategy was used and the routine that often comes with the strategy. I use specific tenants to show how routines and discretion varied, according to client problems.

The Pruitt seems almost serene compared to the rest of Skid Row. The fresh and clean building appears like it belongs somewhere else, that the sidewalks around it should not look so dingy. However, the building exists in an oasis. If you stand outside it, you see how it differs from the other buildings in the area. There is no one hanging around outside, and, except for an errant empty soda bottle or empty bag of chips, there is usually no trash outside the building. Inside, the lobby is refashioned to look like the lobby of an upscale hospital in the newer hotels, or like a middle class residential hotel of the previous era. Everything is glossy and waxed and cleaned daily. Everything just looks so perfect.

The Cochran hotels were designed to up the ante, to push homeless to do better by showing that they could achieve better housing. However, it is not very easy to keep this perfection. Problems happen in the hotel.

Sanctions are one of the ways that PMs deal with problems. The microwave oven breaks and so does the garbage disposal. Tenants bikes are being stolen, and someone just left a bike in the lobby unattended. Someone in the building plays their stereo loud in the middle of the night, then gets in fights with people in the building about it. There is a terrible odor coming from the

3rd floor. A tenant has blood streaming from his forehead, but he insists on joining the cooking club. These are examples of some of the problems a PM may notice in the building. It is then under his discretion whether he should take additional steps.

The reason for PMs' hyper-vigilance is a combination of fear and lessons learned. Problems can spread like wildfire, and PMs are in a way like fire rangers. Small fires happen all the time, and if left to fester, become big fires. The Broken Windows Theory is an important part of the culture of Cochran. It resonates so powerfully, because of the agency's focus on real estate development and its fiscal and regulatory relationship with local government. However, small problems aren't always dealt with and sometimes big problems are even ignored. The reason for this variation is PM discretion. Problems must be confronted by PMs, who have several options, all of them bringing different consequences to the client and PMs:

1. The PM can ignore the problem.
2. The PM can just write about the problem in the logbook.
3. The PM can talk to the client's CM about the problem and recommend that she engage the client.
4. The PM can give the client a verbal warning.
5. The PM can give the client a written warning.
6. The PM can move for eviction.

1) The PM Ignores the Problem

Darla, a client at the St. James, said this about living there:

“It all starts at 7 PM. The PM and CM leave and the building comes to life, just as the streets of Skid Row. The dealers and the prostitutes are in full force. The dealers come from the building and out in the alley, right next to St. James, or they solicit door to door. Prostitutes bring different men in at all hours of the night. People don’t even bother to close their doors, and you smell the crack and marijuana everywhere. And with the drug use, comes other bothersome things, like people playing their stereos loud and running up and down the halls, having tons of their over-to-use friends. People are all agitated and at 4 in the morning, decide to move all around their furniture and you just want to sleep, you know. People are constantly having their rooms broken into and will constantly instigate fights. So there are constantly fights breaking out. The people who are going through withdrawal are the worst - being at a stage where they’ve conned too many people and no one believes their stories. They just result to violence to get what they need.”

The St. James was given special recognition because its PM staff worked so well with its CM staff. Jackson, the PM, had a very nurturing side and really tried to work with CM on client problems:

“When I first started here, a person called me from her room and said the Virgin Mary was in her room. She said, ‘The Virgin Mary is here in my room, and she came in without a guest pass.’ I had to do something outside the rules. I checked her room, and didn’t find anything. She said the Virgin had gone to the bathroom. I had her come downstairs and watch TV down there. Then she calmed down and was fine. But the lobby was closed at 11:00, and I let her in after 11:00. So I had to improvise.”

As both passages illustrated, Jackson rarely gave out written or verbal warnings and did not go to the CM. One of the reasons for this was he didn’t identify with the policing role. He saw himself as more of a social worker and neighbor who was there to help clients. Jackson prided himself on his patience and ability to listen, and he also was young, wanting to be liked. He didn’t like the conflict, especially since St. James could be a pretty dangerous place. But Darla (above) was not pleased by the increased chaos at the hotel and she blamed this on Jackson.

Another PM, Terry, over at the Graham, one of the first generation hotels, did the same:

“About the rules. I try to stick to the rules. We want to follow the rules. But in terms of picking out every little thing that’s going on, no. The small things don’t tend to lead to bigger things, so I just let them go.”

PM have a number of considerations when deciding how to react to problems. The most important of which is, “How will this affect me?” Reacting to problems causes confrontation with clients and sometimes other staff: write-ups, verbal warnings, involving the CM, even writing observations into the log are more than just witnessing behavior and giving a sanction. They provoke confrontation and require that the PM have some sort of back up. The legitimacy of their role is put on the line.

At Cochran, PMs live on-site. This means that they need to get along with tenants and control them at the same time. This involves a number of different roles along with the role of neighbor, such as social worker, policeman, informant and doorman. It takes many PMs some time to figure out how to balance these roles. Matt said that when he started at Cochran, he wanted to be everyone's friend, “but this quickly devolved into chaos.”

Matt was often frustrated by his position and alternates between ignoring violations, giving verbal notices and giving written notices. He concentrates more on the role of landlord and spends much of his time trying to keep tenants from, “tearing their places up.” Others, like Andy, identified more with the policing role and took the opposite route. This identification aligned with a desire to keep one's legitimacy in tact. Andy reacted to every issue with a write-up, thinking it's easier this way – that if the client knew Andy would consistently react to defiance with a consequence, there would be no defiance. PMs, after all, have the discretion to chose when to enforce the rules but also the discretion to create new rules, even if they are not listed in the original house rules that the client signed upon moving into the hotel. Andy took advantage of this. Being this rigid, however, came with consequences. Latisha, a PM supervisor, had this to say about one of the PMs she supervised:

“ I had a manager at one of my hotels who on Tuesday or Wednesday had to clean the kitchen (because no desk clerks on Tue/Wed and they usually clean kitchens), and he was complaining about the nights he had to go back and clean the kitchen, that the kitchen would be a mess. There would be grease everywhere and he would have to work so hard to clean the kitchen, but it was only on Tuesdays and Wednesdays that the kitchen is like that. And I was like, ‘you haven’t figured that out yet’ and he was like, ‘no, no.’ I said, ‘because that’s the day you go and clean the kitchen.’ It’s the rapport that you have with your residents. They are going to get back at you somehow. They’d go in there and they’d spread grease over the counters cause they knew he had to clean the kitchen. One other tenant was defecating in the trashcan. And I asked him, ‘you don’t have any idea who may be doing this? Cause believe me, residents know who is doing what. There’s no one you could talk to or you could ask who would have some idea who would be doing this because this is really - you know - nasty. He said, ‘no.’ I said, ‘that’s pitiful that you do not have no rapport with no one in your building.’ Your residents can make or break you - that’s why they do what they do in the kitchen on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, because of the way that you treat them. I was in the building for maybe 15 minutes. I was asking questions. In 20 minutes, I found out who was defecating in the bathroom trashcan.”

Latisha’s comment above on the policing role speaks to the importance of the social work role to PMs. This role can add legitimacy to the policing role because it lets a PM step back and save face. Latisha was not crazy about this PM, nor did she always appreciate Andy and Brian, whom she supervised. Her irritation with them may have come from the fact that they made PMs look stupid. In a meeting involving Andy, staff increasingly began to take him less seriously.

“There is little I can do with Arthur because he had relapse problems but is at zero rent,” Andy (PM) said.

There was then a discussion about whose client Arthur was, and the CM seemed annoyed with Andy (PM) for not knowing. Andy (PM) finally admitted he didn’t have an updated list, and Heather (CM) said that she would make one for him. She said this with a little bit of irritation.

“What kind of things are you experiencing with Arthur, which concerned you?” Latisha (PM Supervisor) asked Andy (PM).

“He is making strange noises,” Andy (PM) responded, “draping windows with tiles, newspaper, and board because he is paranoid. I tried to confront him over safety issues (visual, also appearance of building) and code violations but Arthur implied I was abusive.”

Saul (Supportive Housing Supervisor) asked for more detail.

“I hear a lot of sound from his apartment,” Andy (PM) said, “because I live directly below him. It sounds like dropping weights or moving a bed. I asked neighbors and night desk clerk and was told he was moving furniture. The noise will not stop. I think Arthur should be in a program – that he had a drug problem.”

“How do you know he should be in a program?” Saul asked.

“This behavior is a symptom of drug use,” Andy (PM) responded. “I also heard about an exchange of money for drugs involving Albert from someone in the building.”

“Do you know the difference,” Debra (CM) asked, “between mental illness symptoms and drug-use symptoms?”

Andy (PM) didn’t answer.

Saul kept asking Andy (PM) tenant-related questions, “Is Arthur up to date with rent? How is his grooming, relationship with other tenants?”

“He is running in and out all day,” Andy (PM) said.

Jerome (PM Supervisor) asked Andy (PM), “How did you know about money exchange between Arthur and others?”

“People in the building tell me things all the time,” Andy (PM) responded, “but they’ll turn around and deny it.”

Saul said to Andy (PM), “You should be writing this stuff down in the logbook because there needs to be a record.”

Kara (CM) looks over at Andy’s (PM) list of “problem” tenants and asks, “Is there a way to shorten it?”

Saul congratulated her initiative and said, “It may be better to focus on those tenants who have CMs in the room.”

Andy gets conditioned from going to these meetings that an overemphasis on policing means he gets taken less seriously. CMs begin to regard him as brutal and too concrete a thinker. Saul begins to back them up, and even Latisha and Jerome begin to hesitate defending him. Andy is being hasty and selfish in the way he is handling Arthur, which upsets everyone. They

clarify to Andy that there has to be a reason for eviction, one that is viable. There is a process that needs to be followed. Andy has trouble with the multitude of roles this presents – that policing isn't the end of it and that disposing of clients took so long.

More important than this, Arthur and other tenants can break Andy. They have leverage in that Andy cannot physically force them to do anything. They can make his job harder if they want to. One thing they can certainly do is decrease the PM's quality of life. Arthur kept Andy up at night, and one of the reasons he isn't being considerate may be that he just doesn't like Andy. Safety is another quality of life issue, which concerns PMs, as clients have quite a bit of "leverage" when it comes to ensuring staff safety. A desk clerk on the night shift related the fear he had that resentful clients might attack him on his walk to and from work:

"When I first got here it was crazy, but at some point it just calmed down. I even got a ... Michael Rocket one day was drunk, not crazy drunk but he was just talking a lot and he told me that people are talking about you. They don't like you because you're always looking at the camera. You're always sitting by the camera. They're talking when you go home - they are going to do something to do you. And I said 'oh yeah, I wasn't worried about it. I walk all the time...' But in a way, I can't lie I did get a little worried. So I would – say -instead of going the same way I always go home, I'll go down this street today and maybe for a week I'll just go down this street. I guess it did worry me a little bit."

The fear seems easy to understand. PMs are offered no security, nor do they carry guns, and the building is in Skid Row. CMs would make sure to leave no later than 5 PM, out of fear of what could happen to them if it gets dark and fewer police are around. Skid Row is a place where heroine overdoses and prostitution take place out in the open, and inside the buildings, client issues can be magnified. Clients often swapped stories of some of the horrible or crazy things that happened in the hotels, from the man who held the whole floor hostage after his girlfriend stole his SSI check, to the client who believed Latisha pumped poisonous gas into her bedroom and would run naked in the street. These stories and sometimes the experiences that went with them meant that PMs either saw clients as "damaged" and uncontrollable or trying to manipulate

the situation. Overall, PMs did not truly understand the nature of mental illness, so they often misunderstood client behavior and used mechanisms to decrease client leverage.

Meanwhile, a PM and possibly a desk clerk are alone in a big building with 50-100 clients, and yet they somehow have to get them to follow the rules without physical force. Matt related the unpredictability of clients living in Cochran housing, when a co-worker told him about a tenant over at the McCandless hotel who threatened to shoot everybody. Matt was well aware of clients who could turn suddenly, without warning. In response, Matt just shook his head and said:

“One thing I learned from being here is that the bad ones, they don't say nothing, they just do it.”

Clients also noticed that the PM could be afraid, and this is why they chose their battles in regards to write-ups, sometimes even focusing on more vulnerable clients to prove they were following up on building problems. PMs saw some clients as more damaged than others, and some also had more ability to damage. In other words, more dangerous clients can have a larger degree of leverage than more harmless clients because the PM is afraid of them. PMs can sometimes even get caught up with the more harmful clients, when they are in a clique, either as a means of self-preservation or to improve their economic situation. This was the case with Jackson. When Jackson got finally got fired 2 years after he started working at Cochran, the building was really out of control, and Management replaced him with a White PM. This is actually unusual because most PMs were Black. The new PM, Ben, however, was afraid of many of the Black tenants and often did not enforce the rules on them. However, he did enforce the rules on less threatening clients, like Darla, a Latino woman who was physically handicapped. Darla complained when she was unfairly used as an example:

“I believe if they are going to enforce rules with me, they have to enforce rules

with everybody because they don't. I had my nephew over. They had my nephew leave. Not even a week later this guy came in with his 3 children and when I went and confronted Ben he said 'we are in the middle of changing the rules for the moment now; we can have kids up.' That's ridiculous. There are people who bring in kids all the time and never get in any trouble. And I thought he was really nice. But when I confronted him about him throwing my nephew out but letting someone's three kids in, he said, 'you must have mistaken me for someone else.' And I said, 'You're the only White man that works here. Everyone is either Black or female or Mexican.' (How can I mistake him for anyone else? How? That was so silly.) When Ben told me I had to kick my mom out, and I did, he still wrote me up, and they both wrote me up, gave me 3 write-ups, and Ben told me that maybe you should look for another place. He said, that we should get together with you and Chiffonte [the CM Supervisor]. I said don't, next thing 8 o'clock in the morning Ben is talking about me to all these people."

Darla also points out how clients deal with a constant turnover of PMs. Jackson, the previous PM, had been caught stealing SSI checks from client mailboxes. In doing this, Jackson had to be careful not to get caught, meaning he had to create alliances with certain clients. These clients had increased leverage, allowing them more leeway when it came to rules, and these clients remained after Jackson left St. James. This increased chaos in the building occurred because enforcement of rules was clearly inconsistent, and there was furthermore no paper trail on these clients. The propensity to engage in inappropriate behavior on the part of PMs was common, and there were plenty of incentives to do this – low pay, or a way of dealing with safety hazards. PMs had in the past skimmed rents, sexually harassed female clients and took bribes to give outsiders entrance to get in the hotel, among other things. When this behavior was discovered the agency investigated all of the PMs and increased scrutiny of their behavior. Jackson was fired shortly after his PM supervisor, Florence, was fired for skimming rents. Brian from the McCandless was fired about a month after Jackson.

2) The PM tells the CM about the problem

One of the additional steps that PMs could take, is involving the other frontline workers at the hotel, namely case managers. One of the CMs' role is to deal with crisis. Crisis here is a relative term, and it essentially covers any type of conflict or problem in the building with a tenant. Clients in this context are constructed as “tenants,” and problems in the building become tenant problems. This way, burdens put on staff by the agency get shifted onto clients. These problems are given emergency categories, which gradually become more intense. For every level, CMs intervene. CMs help clients deal with the consequences of not living up to the responsibilities of being a tenant and attempt to help them make better choices.

PMs don't often like to involve CMs because of the tension between the sides caused by CMs' background and education, as well as their role as client advocate. Despite this, CMs could sometimes make things easier on PMs. Both Matt and Jackson would talk to CMs when there were problems with clients, which could not be easily resolved through a write-up, such as prostitution inside the hotel between the clients and drug trafficking. One example was the time that Jackson involved CMs when one of the female clients was knocking on doors wearing a see-through shirt, and another example was when Brian involved CMs when one of his female tenants had been raped. Some of these problems require some kind of write-up, but some, like the rape, don't. For the write-up offenses, PMs need an actual house rule violation or proof. Proof often means getting other tenants to “rat” on their neighbors. To avoid all this, the PM would talk about it with CMs, who would then bring up the issue with the client in a way that seemed less confrontational and more therapeutic. CMs could also engage clients using harm-reduction practices. They could confront behavior, provide condoms, ask about relationships, etc., which hint to the client that staff were monitoring his or her activities. Saul, the director of supportive services, also put forth quite a bit of energy trying to get PMs to refer social work

related issues over to CMs. Even though Saul did not directly supervise PMs, most had a certain amount of respect for Saul because of his history with Cochran and experience working with the homeless. Andy, Leroy, Matt and Latisha really liked Saul, and they would often follow his advice, even though he represented CMs. For this reason, Andy began involving CMs more often with problem clients, finding that it eased his relations with CMs, Saul, his PM supervisor and clients.

Andy had a tenant named Arial, who had a skin disorder that caused a strong odor. The entire 3rd floor of the building smelled terrible, and tenants were complaining, but there was nothing Andy could do about it. Arial's room was spotless, almost as if nobody lived there, so he couldn't write her up. He brought this up at a Supportive Housing Meeting, and Saul instructed Arial's CM, Kara, to have Arial assigned an HHS worker (who will clean the rooms of disabled people). Saul also instructed Kara to take Arial to the doctor, to get her skin examined. Kara would then follow up with Arial, to make sure she took medication after that for her skin. Jackson's, Brian's and Andy's experiences showed how the use of CMs could sometimes resolve issues in a way that was less confrontational. The use of CMs was more common, when pushed by Saul who had some organizational leverage over PMs.

3) PM Writes about the Problem in the Logbook

PM staff were required to log events occurring during their shift into a logbook, and these notes were to be done once per hour. Logbooks provide a paper trail between staff members, without necessarily addressing the issue with the client, but the use of the logbook has its own issues. First, it can expose PMs' inability to enforce the rules. PMs could not write about an

incident in the logbook, which would require taking additional actions, without those actions actually taking place. Second, all actions they to take would have to agree with the logbook.

Logbooks are usually closely monitored by PM supervisors. The nature of their job, which is essentially as a roving hotel manager attached to a number of scattered sites, makes supervision of frontline staff difficult, especially PM staff. The use of logbooks and surveillance aid in this. PMs realize this and use logbooks when they begin having issues with a client, and they want to do something about it but are not sure what to do. One client gave Jackson and his desk clerk a very difficult time, so Jackson and his clerks began logging down their interactions with this client, named Jacob B and referred to by his room # 215.

“1AM Rounds. #215 came n sat n lobby
2 AM #215 came 2 desk & asked if he could have ONG [over night guest] w/
boyfriend Jerry. I said no, and he hurried back outside
6 AM #215 returned to the desk and asked me if it was a child in the cold would I
let a rule keep it out? He harassed me about not allowing his boyfriend to stay. He
said that's why he took the overdose because he's tired people's bullshit!
2-10-09 7:17 PM #215 came in the hotel I was on my lunch, and he came at me
very loud and say bad things regarding the hotel and about his guest being 86 from
the building. He told me to fuck myself and that he did not care about me being on
lunch and that I better open his door for him. I told him that he would half to wait
until I was off of my lunch, and he told me that he could not wait until he move that
he would catch me outside and fuck me up.
2-11-09 12 PM. Some left the oven on in the kitchen #215 is hanging around
w/Jerry C. They are on the side of the building
2 PM. #215 came into the building with a pile of clothes and went upstairs. A man
left the building dressed in the lay coat that #215 was carrying #215 walked out
shortly afterwards. They were in the alley looking through the window.
2:35 PM #215 came inside the building & his boyfriend crawled inside on his
knees and hid in the front by 2nd door. #215 came to the window to distract me and
pushed the elevator button. I could see that he was trying to devise a plan to get
him in. I escorted him back outside. #215 said he knows he's losing his housing,
so he doesn't care anymore about getting written up.
3 PM #215 back outside. #215 entered building, and his guest hid behind him w/a
blanket over his head. #215 proceeded to get on the elevator, his friend went
upstairs and tried to hurry up the st airway. I stopped him and made him leave.
2-17-09 11 PM #215 & Jerry C. moved chairs into the foyer area of the front
doorway and made out in front of the building.

2-18-09 5:30 PM #215 came in with hair all wild. He & Jerry C. had just finished fighting.

7 PM Rounds. #215 is walking around carrying a knife. Says he will kill somebody.

8 PM #215 stood at window & called the desk clerk Chiffonte an 'arrogant bitch.' He says that he hopes Chiffonte gets hers and Jackson (PM) gets busted. I asked him to please remove himself from the window. He went and stood in front of the elevator and continued to talk crazy. Alice, a CM, got him to go upstairs.”

The logbook notes show the level of attention PM can give to specific tenants and how their day-to-day interactions become the building blocks of evidence. Along with logbooks, PMs also consider and utilize surveillance cameras, which can help PMs detect violations of house rules like the guest rules. Cameras allow them to leave their desk and take a break, go take a nap in their rooms or do “rounds,” which means walking through the building, making sure everything is running smoothly. PMs just check the surveillance tapes when they get back, making sure no one has snuck in. However, surveillance tapes can also record when the PMs are not enforcing the rules, like those concerning overnight guests. However, this depends on the quality and location of cameras and whether outside staff are aware of who guests are and what they look like. Thus, logbooks and surveillance are tools, but they can also limit discretion because they also serve as evidence. These units of evidence have to match up, so that the PM’s role remains legitimate to hierarchy above. This legitimacy essentially ensures that PMs retain internal polity, and that their discretionary decisions are backed up by PM supervisors and by the head of PMs.

4) Warnings

PMs have a variety of different ways of alerting the client when they think he is responsible for a problem in the hotel. PMs may give a verbal warning when the client is new to the hotel and may not be familiar with or remember all the rules. This will serve as a way to

further teach the client how to be a “good tenant,” by showing the client that some rules matter more than others. It also does not create a “mini-crisis” situation for staff members, meaning the violation exists merely between client and PMs. These warnings serve as a buffer – to get the client used to the PMs' way of setting the rules, a way to teach the client his “tenant” role.

PM write clients up if they fail to learn this role. Especially if their rule violation connects to the task environment. Some rules matter more than others, and PMs will feel more constrained in terms of following up on them. Rules connected to the task environment come with more constraints and fewer discretionary choices, meaning PMs will have less flexibility in ignoring violations of such rules, and fewer choices about what to do in response. Economic forces emphasize room condition, while political forces emphasize guest policy over other types of rule breaking, like noise or meeting with one's case manager.

a) Room Condition

One of the most important jobs of the PM is ensuring proper maintenance of the building. Maintenance is important to HUD and the local government, leading to the PMs' duty of regularly inspecting tenants' units. The maintenance standards are high, requiring that PMs shift some of the burden back onto tenants, which PMs do through their policing role. PMs at different hotels talk about how they deal with agency expectations when it comes to maintenance and how policing clients is a big part of this:

Matt (PM-Cabrini Hotel): “... These are studio apartments, and you have furniture in there, and you can't really put any extra furniture in there because it is really small. We had a resident who had so much stuff in his room - when I get in there - I get claustrophobic. I can't move and then something falls on me - there is stuff all over the place, then he wants to bring something else in. I say you can't bring anything in here you need permission of the supervisor. This CM - she advocated for him - she went above and beyond - to get this big-ole long dresser drawer. His bathroom is like - man - you have to go sideways just to get onto his toilet.”

Tom (PM-McCandless): “I have a tenant who goes into the streets, and she gets new stuff to put in. I have to literally stop her. Because I went to her room and ... yeah. I say, ‘no you can't bring that in there.’ I try to talk to her, but it's like (bangs on the table) talking to the table.”

Melissa (PM-Hill): “I have a client like that. I get ready to go do my thing - pugs bugs, I began taking pictures, sending them an email, then I copy this to my supervisor, & the CM, to try to get the CM to try to intervene on it. So when something come up, I not only talked to them, I involved the manager and the CM. So my only ... is letting my supervisor know, and my supervisor knows I did what I was supposed to do.”

Clemont (PM-Phillips Hotel): “This morning, it was brought to my attention that a resident was recycling - when I say recycling, I mean, recycling. I saw him coming from the main office last week. He brought in a shopping cart with stuff that tall sitting at the top of the cart. He had long bags sitting on side of the basket and I was like I know he didn't pick up all that today. This morning it was brought to my attention that this guy has been recycling. So I had to go up and talk to him and say, ‘Check this, you can't be going and be recycling in the room, because of the rodents and the roaches and you get the whole place infested.’ I said, ‘listen, we don't care about your recycling, you just have to find some place else to put it.’ And so uh, he wanted to know who gave him up and I said, ‘you know what brought it to my attention, I saw you with your choo-choo train the other day.’ I don't even know how he was pushing it down the street because he couldn't even see over it. He had more stuff than a recycling yard in his basket.”

Matt, one of the PMs mentioned above, is successful at Cochran because he puts a lot of emphasis on maintaining the buildings, for the sole purpose of pleasing local government inspectors and HUD. His relationship with the HUD official were cordial, but the inspections felt like tests. Still, he spends a lot of time trying to meet the requirements of the inspectors, and he usually has a few units that fail, even though Cabrini is a new building.

In order to reach these standards, Cochran structures the context to shift these requirements onto PMs and clients, and one of the ways it does this is by spraying the units for bugs on a monthly basis. This adds an additional layer of protection by allowing PMs to investigate rooms and look for any looming maintenance problems. The agency uses the monthly spraying as an opportunity to allow PMs to inspect units, requiring clients to prepare

their rooms for spraying beforehand. Through inspections, PMs can do preventative maintenance but also catch tenant behavior, which might cause other problems in the hotel. PM can issue verbal or written warning about what they see. At Cochran, bug spraying/inspections are called “Pugs Bugs,” for which the PM puts up notices both on client doors and in common areas. Matt, over at the Cabrini puts together a really friendly and casual flyer that seems to try to make Pugs Bugs seem like a fun event. It starts off saying, “Hey, Hey, Hey - Pugs Bugs is Coming!” Although it seemed more casual, it was a pretty big deal. Adriane, a tenant at Cabrini, said this about Pugs Bugs:

“Sometimes you have a verbal confrontation. I do sometimes, with Matt. Just yesterday, I was taking my GED classes and taking the four-hour tests and I really didn’t feel like it. I was doing dishes and pugs bugs, it pulls out my back and then you go to the doctor and they don’t want to give it to you. I told them I wasn’t going to be ready. My thing is, I like my privacy. I don’t like people going in my room when I’m not there and if I tell you I’m not ready - because you got a Skeleton key it doesn’t give you the right to go in my room and I told you two minutes before because I’m not ready yet. No reason to come in there, come back later. Something should be done about your privacy because they come in your room when you’re not there and they don’t have the right to do that. Maybe they do, I have nothing to hide, but you can tell when somebody been in your room. It’s an uncomfortable feeling. And I think that we should be respected a little bit more and not ‘well, you get free housing.’ That’s not right.”

Pugs Bugs causes all sorts of consternation among clients because, as Adriane said, it invades one’s privacy. For Pugs Bugs, clients were expected to empty out all their cabinets and put their belongings into buckets, so that John, the Pugs Bugs man, could spray. If they didn’t do this, they were written up. The reason for this is that the hotels were known for having bug infestations, which were often exacerbated by their downtown locale. The spraying and inspection also were irritating because expectations of HUD were somehow put onto clients. Clients were told that submitting to room inspections was just part of the reason that their rent was so low. They were, in a way, working off the subsidies by complying with these rules.

These inspections also clarified to clients that their privacy was not valued by the agency. When clients struggled with these requirements, write-ups functioned as a way of teaching them their role as tenants.

b) Guest Policy

Property managers also are more likely to enforce guest policy because it helps them better police buildings. Andy, over at the Phillips, talks about his experience dealing with the pressures of working in a rough neighborhood and why guest policy is vital to his ability to police the building:

“There’s a lot of trouble in this community. We wouldn’t have sign-in sheets - like this - in Beverly Hills. You might register, but you don’t need to show your ID and all that. If there was no policy for IDs this hotel would be running off the hook. There are dealers out there. I’ve got people that sell drugs all the way around the corner. It took me almost two months to make these people aware that they are not going to be allowed to sell drugs or hang out outside this building.

“When I first got here, I had to call the police so often that the police got tired of coming up over here. But they also got tired of getting harassed by the police for coming up here. So, now they don’t. So, when they hung out in front of the hotel, whenever that door would open, they would try to sneak inside, because we have common bathrooms here. They can seek refuge in the bathrooms. When I first got here I had to ask people - bathroom door is locked (knock knock). I want to hear your voice and know who you are because we had people turning tricks in the bathrooms and I eliminated that.

“That’s one reason why we have daily inspection. That’s one reason I do rounds, frequently. Because if I’m going to lunch and I review the camera and I see someone come in and they come in when someone is exiting, I have to find out who that person is. It’s a high crime rate here. Who you bring in because of your addiction could be someone you don’t even know. It could be a murderer, a jacker, a robber, anybody but because of your addiction, you’re bringing them into satisfy your addiction. You don’t care who the heck they are - you don’t care what they do, once you get your addiction satisfied, you’re out to do it again.

“That’s the nature of the drugs. I once checked my camera to see this guy come in with another guy and I went up to his room and neither one of them was in the room the tenant lived in. So I started walking around the hotel and I found the guy he had bring in here checking the doorknobs on all the units until he could find a room that was open. That’s these people that live in this area.”

Andy is talking about the significance of Cochran's guest policy to PMs' ability to control criminal activity in and around the building. Overnight guest rules are one of the more difficult rules to enforce, but Cochran insists on keeping them because they believe they help to stabilize buildings. The house rules, which tenants receive and sign upon moving into the building, have an elaborate guest policy. There are very specific protocols that clients need to pay attention to, like the time the guest can arrive, if a fee needs to be paid, when the guest is supposed to leave and whether he can be left unattended. If the tenant violates these policies his guest "privileges" are revoked for 30, 60 and sometimes 90 days, depending on the discretion of the manager. Guest policy is important to PMs, because it helps them better control the people in the hotel. It also is supposed to reduce crime, prostitution and drug trafficking in the hotels, thereby improving Cochran's relationship with HUD, DMH and the local government. According to Brian, the PM at the McCandless:

"I found out that and I'm sure they knew it before, the people who cause the most problems in the building are the people who don't live here and these people are unauthorized guests. Unauthorized guests, are people who don't live here, don't give a darn who lives here, about the building, the guests and those are the people most likely to destroy the building."

Guest policy is enforced through guest rosters, surveillance and the PMs' own discretion over who gets in the building and who doesn't. Jackson explained the following routine he uses:

"Sometimes I can get a bad feel for someone they are bringing in, and say, 'You know what, I can't let this person in.' Or, they are trying to bring in the neighborhood drunk. Then I say, 'I have no problem against you, but not here.' I use my judgment. How do I know someone is violating guest privileges? We have a roster with a list of who has a guest. If I see someone leave who isn't on the list, I write it up. Our tenants are very crafty! One might call downstairs and say, 'I'm locked out.' So as the desk clerk goes up, another tenant opens the door to let someone in. Also, the desk clerk has to do a walk through of the building once an hour. Sometimes people come in then. We find out by checking the surveillance tapes. If you leave to do a walk through or take care of something, you can do a play back [of the tape] on the front door. Or, if you hear an alarm, you might play

back the tape for that door.”

The process of having to sign guests in and inspect rooms allows PMs to get into clients' personal business and have inside knowledge of their day-to-day affairs. PMs can get in the middle of relationships and see what clients are doing through their relationships with people. Like evaluating room condition, PMs have access to clients' private lives and gain leverage because they know important information about them. According to Jackson:

“Violation of guest privileges can usually tell you about other issues. They might have relapsed into substance abuse; maybe they shut themselves off from us, but keep sneaking in their significant other, which is a totally co-dependent. It usually is leading up to something or is because of something.”

The PMs' access to client information is very important, because it gives them internal polity, and because the information is helpful in improving the agency's external economy and polity. PMs and other staff can get a handle on individuals who may stop paying rent more quickly. Clients also, to some degree, have a certain degree of leverage in that they can make formal complaints to the police, DMH and HUD about crime. Written warnings provide some detail about the incident, including witnesses, suspects, victims and sometimes even police reports. They are sent to the PM supervisor, the CM and the client. The PM will also put the infraction on the next supportive housing meeting agenda.

CMs generally receive a copy of the written warning about a day after it is written. This gives them until the next scheduled meeting to engage the client. It is not uncommon for PM to 'forget' to send these notices, which means that CM will suddenly be surprised if they show up on the agenda at the next meeting or later on down the road, when the client is suddenly threatened with eviction. Both occasions essentially strip the CM of her ability to advocate and slow down the process of eviction. PMs usually do this when they are looking to speed up the process, to increase their control over the situation, or when they just don't want to be bothered.

However, they don't do this all the time because the reason write-ups have any kind of influence is the belief that after a certain number of them, the agency will move for eviction. It's not always good to systematically show that CMs were excluded from advocating for their clients when they are supposed to, because it doesn't prove that the agency did all it could to do to work with the client. This can also backfire if the judge does not actually grant an eviction because there is not enough evidence. Furthermore, if the tenant cannot be evicted, the secret is out. Client leverage increases if they catch on that there are ways around PM power and that they do have rights. PMs, thus, are best served by discrediting CMs, which is sometimes very easy.

The PMs' likelihood to write-up clients is also connected to client leverage. Clients with higher leverage are those who are more connected to neighborhood crime hazards and are less likely to respond to the agency's social constructions of them. Clients with lower leverage are generally socially isolated and accept the context and role that PM designate for them. Dealing with client leverage, however, is a very dangerous game for PMs. Clients can frighten a PM, and they can also threaten his role legitimacy. One example is Jacob, the tenant who was being written about in the logbook above, and who had initially received a write up for sneaking in his boyfriend after hours. This resulted in a 30-day penalty, which Jacob could not stick to.

Jacob had, what some would consider, a co-dependent relationship with his boyfriend Jerry. This relationship was staff's business because the way the context was set, Jacob didn't feel he had the right to privacy at the St. James. CMs and PMs believed his relationship with Jerry was abusive. Jerry beat Jacob, and they disturbed neighbors with their fighting, which led to Jackson paying closer attention to Jerry. A guest write-up for sneaking in Jerry after hours caused a mini-crisis which Jacob's CM, Javier, had to attend to. Javier tried to use the write-up to get Jacob to think about his relationship with Jerry, but he approached the whole situation in

somewhat of a naïve way. He thought that housing alone could be enough to get Jacob to end one of his only relationships. He also assumed that as a CM, he had the right to make these requests. He kept providing Jacob with referrals to domestic violence therapy, and Jacob would go back and forth about whether to stay with Jerry. Saul would tell Javier that Jacob was “in contemplation” and that he just needed that additional push; he just needed one more reason not to stay with Jerry. When the situation started snowballing, mini-crisis turned into a full-blown crisis and Jerry kidnapped Jacob, then Jacob escaped, and Jerry went after him in the building. The most that got damaged was a window, but that was enough for the PM to call the police and have Jerry removed.

Jacob got write-ups from PM for several reasons. One, he annoyed Jackson and his staff. Two, he challenged Jackson’s legitimacy as a rule enforcer. Jacob violated guest rules, and his boyfriend had caused physical damage to the building that all the other clients could see. It was necessary thus for the PM to make an example out of him, to clarify to other tenants that damage to the building would not be tolerated. Three, Jacob didn’t have much leverage. He was a skinny transgender man who was socially isolated, and he was not connected to some of the cliques in the building who could physically harm PMs or other tenants. Jacob comprehended and complied with agency social constructions of him. Jacob didn’t have much legal leverage either, because the damage his boyfriend inflicted on the building was physical evidence that the PM could use in court.

Similar reasons also applied to Mira, a woman who had been homeless for 10 years prior to moving into the St. James. Mira got a write-up because her room had too much stuff, and the staff referred to her as a “hoarder.” This label can sometimes be inappropriately applied, because clients sometimes wanted to make a home out of their tiny units and they built up some things

they kept in storage while they were homeless. But for Mira, it really wasn't, as she was bringing items retrieved from dumpsters into the building on a daily basis. Her CM, Alice, got a write-up from Jackson about Mira's behavior. Alice knew that Mira had severe depression and thus had no incentive to clean, so she tried to convince Mira to get an HHS worker, who would come into the disabled client's apartment to clean. A worker cannot just be sent to the room because of landlord/tenant laws, but, rather, a staff member had to convince the client to get one. Mira agreed to work with the HHS worker, which satisfied both the CM and PM.

Mira posed serious problems to the agency's task environment through her hoarding behavior. Local government was particularly aggressive when it came to putting pressure on landlords to stop hoarding behavior on the part of tenants. PMs usually deal with hoarders by starting the paper documentation earlier, because they can take pictures of the room during designated room inspections. Hoarders have less client leverage because they are often socially isolated and because their hoarding behavior conflicts with requirements of the task environment, and PSHs can legally evict clients for hoarding. The state also provides HHS workers to help PSHs and landlords deal better with hoarding behavior. This decreases some of PMs' maintenance responsibilities.

Shaltreece had a little more client leverage and it took a while for the PM to finally start to issue actual write ups to her. Her behavior became flagrant, and she was just vulnerable enough to target. She also posed a threat to the PM because she would complain a lot. The complaints not only threatened the PM's ability to satisfy performance measures by decreasing his legitimacy with management and resulting internal polity, they also increased his workload and added to his level of frustration.

Shaltreece had been connected to drug traffickers in the building, and she paid less

attention to agency social constructions. She got a write-up for violation of the guest policy, although Jackson was careful to give it to her. She had gotten quite a few verbal warnings in the past. He may have let it go, except she kept complaining to him about her unit and other tenants, increasing his workload. After finally issuing Shaltreece a written violation, Jackson sent a copy to Shaltreece's CM, Candace. He also put the violation on the agenda at the next supportive housing meeting. Before the meeting, Candace tried to talk to Shaltreece about the write-up and explained that she would be losing privileges for 30 days. She got a note in return that said that Candace was a "half-assed case manager." It was clear to Candace that Shaltreece didn't really "get it" and needed more lessons in the tenant role. One of those lessons is to not make any demands on staff.

"When she first started using in the building," Candace explained, "I went to her room and there were wet floors. I suspect that she somehow got the floor all wet when she was doing heroine. Yesterday she brought in some sheets, they looked forged. You know, same pen, same ink."

"She's showing signs of using," Jackson, the PM, agreed. "She was spoken to several times by me and my staff about guests. She received an infraction. She was put under a two-week suspension on guests. After all this, comes the complaint about the leaky sink and floor. When she reported it, I checked it out. It was minor, but the sink was leaking. We fixed it. After that, she showed her displeasure for the staff. She says it's 'unfair'. She says, 'I feel like I am in prison.'"

"Her neighbor says she hears banging at two in morning," Candace continued. "Shaltreece has been here since November. She was compliant at first, but certain guests started coming (implies that Shaltreece started using drugs with 'friends'). She recently got off parole,

so we don't have that anymore as a lever. We need to tell her that her behavior leads us to believe that she is using. She had only been clean for 9 months when she came to us."

Saul and Latisha weighed in. Latisha thought Shaltreece needed more structure.

"She thinks her case manager is the worst in world," Saul said. "What does she want you to do?" "Protect her from getting infractions maybe?" Candace replied.

"There are red flags all over the place," Saul said. "She has twenty year drug history; she just got off parole."

"She has never had her own apartment," Candace added.

"Ask her what she needs," Saul instructed, "reflect with her how she has gone downhill since she moved in. Help her see it. She's a tough client. We need to work with her for however long we have until she sabotages herself again and ends up in prison or whatever."

"By the way," Saul then told Candace, "you are not the worst case manager in the world."

Write-ups can sometimes end just when they are made. The tenant cleans up his room, is ready to see the Pugs Bugs man, or responds to the revocation of his guest privileges by not having any guests until its okay for him to do so. In these cases, the write-up only stays on record, waiting for the tenant to run into another mini "crisis" with staff. Many clients stop at this stage. Their write-up provides PMs better control over the building and CMs the opportunity to intervene in their lives.

However, if the tenant does not comply with the advice of PMs or CMs, they may end up on what is called a "hotlist." This is the agency's version of an "emergency category." Being on the hotlist means that the client is regularly discussed at supportive housing meetings, whose agendas are usually written up by PMs, but not always. PMs also decide who gets on the hotlist, which consists of, what one CM called, clients who have "burned their bridges." Staff pay extra

special attention to tenants on the hotlist, waiting for an opportunity to intervene. Jacob, at some point, wound up on the hotlist, and the logbook entries quoted above show the increased attention he received from PMs. This is because his guest policy violations began to escalate; there was damage done to the hotel, and the PMs had to show that they were keeping an eye on him, so as to ensure that this little fire would not become a big one. Supportive housing meetings became an opportunity for the PM to present all the information he gathered as he began to pay close attention to the tenant. Mira, the hoarder, also continued to get Pugs Bugs write-ups, requiring the CM to intervene more often. CMs here try to prove they are “working with” clients to resolve the problem. At one meeting, Mira's CM, Alice, told the PM:

“I believe she is doing better. It is one of her main concerns, because her housing is important to her. Now it has gotten better, I can open the door. I went in her unit yesterday, and there was a remarkable improvement. We can open up the door. There was room to maneuver in her unit. In the past, it was nowhere near that. She's doing better with her recyclables. I'll be more hands-on but it's getting better.”

However, the PM still didn't take Mira from the hotlist. The PM and CM still kept an eye on her, because with Mira's condition and with their possible need for a legal remedy, they needed to have written documentation of their attempts to remedy the behavior. Shaltreece showed up on the hotlist as well, and the CM and PM wanted to watch how her “heroine relapse” evolved. Frequent guest rule violations kept her on that list. Many of the clients, like Jacob, Mira and Shaltreece eventually get evicted. They are featured in the hotlists, because they have serious problems with mental illness, relationships, substance abuse and physical health. However, problems are generally constructed into tenant problems, and resolution is often focused only on keeping PMs happy, rather than resolving some of the client's major issues. It is through these hotlists that PM essentially builds a case.

Summary

This chapter introduces the use of the sanction. Property managers have enormous discretion when it comes to the use of sanctioning. The ability to distribute sanctions helps property managers make the following goals: staying safe in their job, concentrating on roles where that they feel more comfortable, controlling their workload, making performance standards and attending to personal, economic and philosophical agendas. Client control is a very important factor when it comes to PM discretion and attending to these goals. Client control also requires PMs to balance multiple roles. Their discretion over resources, information and context help make this easier for PMs, and this discretion gives them enormous power in the agency and helps them deal with the serious hazards in their environment. The use of sanctions and discretion related to sanctions is connected to other agency constructions, such as emergency categories, the use of monitoring and case building.

Chapter VIII: The Ultimatum: Property Managers' use of Eviction

In this chapter, I will explain the function of eviction for PSHs and PMs. I will also discuss some of the reasons that PM start the eviction process and what they hope to achieve through it. Next, I will discuss the typical routine of a full-fledged eviction. However, because PMs often threaten eviction but do not follow through on those threats, I will distinguish the forces that lead PMs to threaten and actually carry out eviction.

Eviction is a big deal at the agency, judging from the number of times it comes up, and PSHs in general focus quite a bit on it. The Center for Supportive Housing (CSH), which prepares tool kits for PSHs across the country, including Cochran (which uses several for its programming), have prepared quite a few manuals on eviction, all listing different types of routines to get there. The routines have three things in common: (1) there are many steps along the way that make it very difficult to do a quick and hasty eviction, and (2) more stops are created when lawyers aren't involved. Finally, (2) the routines highlight power distributions, which most commonly are concentrated among property managers.

At Cochran, the power was definitely distributed to PMs. This means PMs could sometimes skip stops and speed up the process, and CMs would actually be used to reinforce and legitimize the use of PMs for evictions. The use of CMs also constructs evictions not so much as devices to stabilize and control the buildings, both socially and economically, but to make the threat of evictions into “interventions,” like those used among drug-abuse counselors. At the agency, Saul further legitimized the use of eviction for therapeutic purposes by attaching the Stages of Change Theory to the use of eviction – clients needed that additional push to get out of the “pre-contemplation” stage and into “contemplation.” PMs give them that push while CMs

hold their hand.

PMs hold the power, but there are plenty of constraints on their discretion. PMs are central to the provision of housing resources at Cochran. They decide who gets into the buildings, and once clients are admitted, PMs have the option to use agency constructions to decrease clients' leverage and increase the PMs' legitimacy. Client leverage is decreased through the ability of PMs to distribute resources, as well as through their ability to transform the client's investment in their housing into agency and PM leverage. PMs use clients' propensity to "value their housing" to decrease client leverage and propose ultimatums. A PM then deals with problems in the hotel using emergency categories, which look like mini-crises, and which require the intervention of a CM or a follow up with the PM. These mini-crises compound, until there is need for a large "intervention" and ultimatum, which may require serious change on the part of the client in a short amount of time.

However, there are reasons PMs do this to some clients and not others. PMs do not act in a vacuum, consumed only with personal desires for an easier workday. Rather, they have the luxury of choice but have to take consequences for those choices; PMs can be fired or demoted if a mini-crisis snowballs and becomes a major crisis. PMs can have their decisions questioned and more carefully scrutinized if they seem to take their discretion for granted. If they make the wrong choices with the wrong clients, PMs can make it harder for themselves to make performance measures. PMs can also feel that they are actually hurting the people they are supposed to be helping. These decision-making processes take place in the applicant-screening stage, the sanctions stage and the evictions stage, and they all involve the PMs' desire to hold onto control and legitimacy.

Evictions, however, distinguish themselves from applicant screening and sanctions for one

reason, pace. Pace is related to pleasing the courts, who are another important member of Cochran's task environment. Evictions are a legal mechanism, and the way courts decide on them heavily influences how the agency allocates discretion. PMs can't just change the locks on the client's apartment or deactivate their keycard. Rather, there is a fixed routine that points final eviction decisions upward in the organization. Nevertheless, PMs are the most powerful people at the agency (when it comes to the clients) – they control information that arrives at the final eviction decision points. They filter information about tenants to all other staff members, including CMs. These staff members only have so much time to interpret the information PMs give them and decide what they are going to do about it. Complete evictions are usually composed of the following steps.

1. A PM notices one of the following: (a) Pile up of write-ups that are properly documented, (b) no rent payment, or (c) a larger crisis, like an altercation between tenants or between a tenant and staff.
2. The PM will issue a 3-day notice. A copy of it will be posted on the tenant's door and will be delivered to the CM (if the tenant has one) and the PM's supervisor.
3. The PM will also list the 3-day notice on the weekly supportive housing agenda.
4. The CM will try to engage the client during this time.
5. At the supportive housing meeting, the CM and PM will talk about the client. The CM will "advocate" and or help the PM decide if the hotseat is necessary.
6. The tenant either goes to the hotseat or works with staff member on a contract.
7. The tenant either signs a 30-day notice, is evicted legally, is evicted through some other method or ends up perpetually on the hotlist.

However, PMs often do not complete all these steps when initiating evictions, as they

have discretion over when to speed things along or slow things down. Thus, there are actually two categories of routines: (1) threatening eviction and (2) actually evicting.

1) Threatening Clients with Eviction

To PMs and other staff members, evictions occur as an action of last resort. It is the culminating crisis engineered when all preceding mini-crises don't work on the client. According to Saul:

“I’m not embarrassed to blackmail people when behavior and health are so obviously deteriorating, and their housing is important to them. I’m not afraid of saying, you’re going to get evicted, unless. They have all the choices in the world, and they decide what choices get illuminated. Sometimes it's eviction.”

Saul essentially clarifies how evictions get constructed into a major intervention or ultimatum, and this is how CMs like to think of it. However, for many staff members, especially PMs, eviction is more a mechanism of control. Cochran puts little energy into eliminating some of the common factors for making it occur, like their rent and guest policy. Rather, they keep it around because it is easier to maintain stability when “bad apples” can be categorized, monitored and eliminated. Control gets at the heart of decreasing client leverage and protecting PMs' role legitimacy, which is a serious problem at Cochran. Andy talks about how control of the building is highly connected to eliminating “bad apples:”

“I can take you through the process [of eviction], but I’m going instead to take you through 'the situation.' Now the situation is this person is in addiction, which means he’s running wild through the hotel. I’m pleading with him; I’m begging him - you can’t continue to violate these rules and regulations - he’s not listening. And then one day you catch him on camera, breaking into a car that belongs to another tenant, and you also catch him on camera. Well, we didn’t exactly catch him on camera, but his girlfriend is on camera, and it looks like he was involved also in a drug transaction that took place in front of the building. We wanted to put him out because of that, the breaking and entering of this tenants car and the drug transaction. They said, 'don’t accept his rent until we get this resolved.' By the time they got it resolved, they said, 'go ahead and take his rent.'

‘They’ is the field supervisor and the director. They had to decide legally if they

could evict him for what he did, because they don't want to have anybody in this building who is breaking into the other tenant's cars, doing drug transactions in and out, and he's bringing in illegal, unauthorized people. He's breaking the rules. He's just a problem because his unauthorized guests are running down these emergency exits - every time you go out an emergency door the alarm goes off (happened three times). Two times his unauthorized guest pulled the fire alarm, had the fire department coming out it. It was just a mess.

So, they decided because he stopped for 30 days - they asked me what he was doing. I said, I hadn't seen him bring in any unauthorized guests in the past few days. They said, 'Okay, ask him if he still has his rent and if so, take it.' I asked him and I said turn it in - we'll accept your rent. He said okay. Next day, he hadn't turned in his rent. Next day, I asked him to turn in his rent. He said he would, still had it. They asked if I had taken it, I told them no, because he hadn't brought it to me. They said, 'Well, bring him a three-day notice.' I gave him a three-day notice for nonpayment, which showed if you're not going to pay, we'll evict you. He didn't pay in three days."

Andy's description of eviction shows that PMs also use eviction to manage clients' substance abuse problems. Cochran may have a policy and philosophy of "harm-reduction" when it comes to substance abuse and medication. However, there is a strict distinction made between behavior that affects individual and behavior that affects communal structures. The agency actually works hard on creating a strong communal infrastructure, and the building is structured to increase the size of communal space. Although this is said to be therapeutic, in that it is meant to decrease isolation among its inhabitants, another use for such a strong communal infrastructure is increased control. More community means more opportunities to intervene in clients' lives. Even community meetings focus on CM groups and activities, instead of meetings focused on the true needs and desires of the tenants. Harm-reduction means that behavior crossing into the communal means intervention and communal starts as soon as the client opens their front door. In a way, it goes past that door since inspection requirements challenge this notion of private space. "Communal" thus becomes quite flexible, just like the interpretation of "relapse."

“Do you think it’s very possible actually for people to be using and really be able to stay?” asked Eve.

“Sooner or later the situation gets worse and worse,” replied Lila, “and you end up going out anyway. Some people are faster than others, some people just slow. It is always the same. Some take three years, some take two months”

“Every nut cracks,” added Arial.

“Mostly because of breaking the rules or not paying rent or whatever,” said Eve.

“Mostly because of not paying rent because they don’t got no money,” said Arial.

“But you got to realize,” explained Adriane, “you can be in your room and you can only stay in your room so long. You have to come out and deal with reality, and the reality is that you live down here on Skid Row, drugs are plentiful, 24-7, alcohol, anything you want, you can step out of your residence, and you can get it and come right back in your house and sit back in your room for another three weeks. But, eventually, you are going to start networking with the wrong people. You might have a bad incident one day, but that one day may turn into 30 days, because as soon as you start talking and the people are doing the same things you’re doing, they’re like, ‘Why don’t you come over here?’ and you might not really want to go, but it’s the addiction that is forcing you to be in places you don’t want to be in.”

Thus, hotels being called “harm-reduction” and “housing-first” isn’t always very meaningful.

The only difference between these types of hotels and zero-tolerance hotels is that there is no testing. Cochran still regulated substance use – it just did so through its house rules and rental policy. PMs pay more attention to tenants who have relapsed. Cochran staff have argued that relapse has more of a communal effect in that out-of-control substance abuse can spread, while this isn’t exactly the case with mental illness. Substance abuse is also more connected to the legal system and often isn’t considered a “disability,” especially by courts. However, this is less of a reason PMs pay so much attention to substance abuse. Rather, they are much more concerned with “relapsing” clients, because they more closely identify with addiction than mental illness. PMs’ identification as survivors is connected to their own personal theories of survival over adversity, and for many, this is 12-Step recovery. These PMs see their ability to pass these recovery lessons on as a way of helping clients. As a result, many of the supportive housing meetings were focused on tenant addictions, shifting attention away from the expertise of CMs, who know more about mental and physical health, to PMs’ expertise. Bridget, a CM for

some of the older hotels reacted to this constant reframing occurring in meetings and in other interactions with PM:

“It makes me feel like – why did I bother going to school – why did I spend all this time and money – I might as well have just been a crack addict.”

On-site, the deep-seated, competing ideologies – harm reduction versus 12-Step become very clear. Many PMs consider themselves “recovering addicts” in the 12-Step philosophy; they believe they have a special understanding that can only be understood by other recovering addicts. Matt said this about the relationship he had with clients and why PMs were sometimes better at the “social work” role than CMs:

“How could you understand what I’m going through? How can you help me? That’s a good thing about the AA book. One alcoholic talks to another. I come to you. I’m talking about your condition, I’ll tell you what happened to me. They say in a matter of hours we’re able to break through, what nobody could get through.”

PMs interpret client behaviors through the lens of black and white dualisms of recovery or relapsing. This heavily influences their discretion over eviction and what tenants they will concentrate attention on. Throughout the ranks of the organization, however, PMs’ fixation with substance abuse and use of discretion to follow their ideologies is reinforced. This exists for a number of reasons. One reason for this is that evictions are much easier, legally, when the client is an addict, than if they are de-compensating due to mental illness. Furthermore, HUD’s “One-Strike” policies actually facilitate eviction in circumstances related to drug and alcohol activity. The agency also does not want to encourage some things that come with “relapse,” like drug trafficking and prostitution, which may further destabilize the area and encourage problems with the local government. After all, despite their policy and philosophy, they are still in the US. where drug policy is still focused towards criminalization.

The process of eviction starts with a three-day notice. The notice essentially creates a

communal intervention, as other tenants may see that this tenant is misbehaving; they may know he is late on rent. The three-day notice on their door serves as a visual reminder that these behaviors will not be tolerated in the hotel. It serves to clarify the limits of client leverage. It is also the start of what is considered a full-blown crisis. According to Jackson at the St. James:

“We create the crisis. We try to keep it - if it’s just nonpayment of rent we try to keep it to property management, but if we have some insight that maybe there is substance abuse, then we try to create a contract.”

The notice is sent to the PM supervisor and the CM. It is also posted on the agenda of the next supportive housing meeting. Meanwhile, CMs have a limited amount of time to pull together a plan for their clients. Frances, the manager of social services, put it this way:

“Mostly, people in our buildings get evicted because their drug use is out of control. They have no money, so they get evicted because they don’t pay their rent or their behavior is so disruptive to the community that they are breaking the rules all over the place, and we have to evict them, and they can’t change their behavior.

“So, one of the challenges, and Debra and the rest of the case managers have an incredible challenge, because in the world of treatment in regular social service organizations, people who have behavioral problems but come to an office, you have all the time in the world to deal with them. In this situation, if you can’t help them move along quickly enough, they are going to get evicted, and that’s just the way it is.’

“Now for some people, that serves as their wake up call. But the thing that the case managers are often confronted with - it’s clear that someone has an out-of-control substance abuse problem and you present it to them, and the person will say, ‘there’s nothing wrong with me, so I smoke a little crack once in a while in my room.’

“‘Well, for whatever reason you don’t seem to have any money; you haven’t paid your rent, and the loan shark keeps coming around, threatening to hurt you, and you are screaming in the middle of the night at someone who doesn’t appear to be there that no one else can see, so you’re getting written up for those things. Is there something wrong with ... ?’

“‘There’s nothing wrong with me. The property managers are ... I’m always quiet. I paid my rent. The property manager stole it.’

“‘Well, okay, we need to see your rent receipts to rectify this situation...’ of course

they can't ... So, this the thing. Now, if they were just going to a mental health clinic, you could have years to deal with this.”

There are two problems here. CMs are faced with clients' insurmountable personal problems that cannot possibly be solved by anyone in such a short period of time. On top of it, CMs usually have rather weak relationships with clients. Communication between PMs and CMs, despite agency efforts, is also weak. PMs could chose what they want to communicate about the client to CMs, and their knowledge of the client was much richer because they lived in the building, and they were more tightly intertwined in building politics. PMs could chose to move forward with the eviction and not even tell CMs about it. Sometimes they let clients “spiral,” as CMs put it. They didn't even bother giving write-ups until something really bad happened, resulting in the client having to be evicted.

Upon getting the three-day notice, the client's CM considers how she will engage the client. Usually, she comes to the same conclusion – that the client will work with her if he or she fears losing their housing. CMs uses this leverage to get a better understanding of how these problems with PMs translate into clinical problems. The leverage is important here because it is essentially a leverage that is constructed by the agency and HUD through the difficult application process. The CM works together with the client on what they think should be done to please PMs, which could mean just figuring out how to get up to date with rent. However, if rent is part of other ongoing problems, especially clinical problems, the CM will also urge the client to do something concrete about changing these problems to lower the risk of the money not being paid up.

At this point, PMs can move forward with what the agency calls a “hotseat,” which is a meeting where the PM Supervisor has to talk with the client about his problems in the hotel and issues some type of ultimatum or penalty. PMs deal with out-of-control behavior, including

behavior caused by addiction, by proposing such ultimatums. Sometimes, they hold hotseats after the supportive housing meeting, but sometimes not. The hotseat meeting is meant to intimidate clients, as the penalty is either losing one's housing or entering into a contract. The contract is essentially a covenant between a staff member and a client that certain actions will occur – rent will be paid, guest rules will be followed, drug treatment will be pursued, etc. The mystery of the “hotseat,” and the use of discretion by the PM supervisor, a “pressure specialist” whom clients generally don’t see all that often, adds to the clients' fear factor. Clients really don’t know what will happen in these meetings and, thus, do not know what to say to staff members to resolve the situation.

Valerie and Gloria, two women living at the Phillips, one of the older, first-generation hotels, were required to be in a “hotseat” with Latisha, the PM Supervisor. The two were always seen around each other, and Latisha felt they were co-dependent and needed to be broken up. Both women had differing levels of client leverage. Valerie had much lower leverage. An alcoholic in her mid-50s, she didn’t come from the neighborhood and took a market-rate unit only three months ago after being homeless for a long time. She was also a timid woman who tended to do what she was told. Gloria had been at the hotel longer, and so she had a higher amount of leverage. She was the younger of the two, and she was more confident and connected to the neighborhood. She also had a cocaine addiction and was more indifferent about the agency's social constructions. Gloria had her guest privilege revoked for sneaking in her boyfriend too many times. So, she would have Valerie sneak in her boyfriend, and they would all get drunk together. One day, Gloria and her boyfriend stole \$400 from Valerie.

The building PM, in this case Andy, scheduled the “hotseat” for a specific time, to structure the context. Not showing up for this hotseat means automatic eviction, or at least that

is the threat. However, there really is no law that requires tenants to meet with their landlord and really, it wasn't Andy's business whether Gloria took advantage of Valerie, or if their relationships was "co-dependent." The tenants were just trained to expect a lack of privacy and interference in their personal life. Valerie and Gloria took the hotseat very seriously; they showed up on time and waited on separate sides of the lobby for an hour and half for Latisha to show up. Valerie became increasingly nervous as she waited. She was frantically pacing back and forth and said she couldn't sleep the night before because of the anxiety. Her facial expression was filled with sadness. Before they could come in, Andy explained to Latisha that Gloria and/or her boyfriend stole Valerie's money. The two women were friends, but because Gloria kept stealing from Valerie, Andy insisted that Valerie stay away from Gloria. It had reached the point that criminal activity was happening in his hotel, and he wouldn't put up with it. However, after he told Valerie this, Andy had a surveillance camera shot of Valerie walking in that day with Gloria. He then recorded size times where the two (or three) walked in and out of the building with each other, and he showed Latisha the list of times.

Latisha called Gloria first. She does not apologize for making her wait, structuring the context further, as she was a higher level "pressure specialist" who did not have much time and had to make quick decisions. Gloria would need to convince her to let her stay. Latisha let Gloria tell her side of the story first, but it almost seemed like a way for Latisha to catch her in her lies. She then showed the surveillance pictures and explained what she thought of her manipulative behavior. Gloria seemed indifferent for the most part. Latisha told Gloria her boyfriend is "86ed" from the building, and that if she ever hangs out with Valerie, she will be too.

"Ok, can I go now?" Gloria asked simply, in response.

Valerie came in next, and Latisha doesn't apologize to her either, seeming even more pissed with her than with Gloria. Latisha excoriated Valerie for her drinking problem, and for lying about continuing to hang out with Gloria. One would think that Latisha and Valerie were related, as the attack seemed so personal. Latisha then told her that she must see one of the case managers, so they can find another place for her to live, which Valerie was not expecting. She also didn't think she had any way out, and appeared frightened by the whole affair. Valerie brought into the structural context and her tenant "role." She talked with Latisha for a little longer about her drinking problem, that she was clean for a long time, but fell off the wagon in 2003 when she ran into trouble with her partner and kids. The hotseat was meant to frighten Valerie back into sobriety. Latisha would be that forceful voice of reason that would straighten her out.

"Well, we can't have this in the hotel," Latisha finally said, and told her she would need to sign a 30-day notice. She could stop by the off-site CM office for some housing referrals. Valerie was given a choice: she could let the agency go ahead and evict her, or she could sign a 30-day notice. If she went ahead with the eviction, she could spend the next five years unable to get any type of subsidized housing. HUD created an effective tool for subsidized housing providers it funded by requiring "abandonment" after 30 days or incarceration, and punishing abandonment with five years' ineligibility for their programs. The same applied for evictions. However, clients could avoid all this by signing a 30-day notice, pledging to leave voluntarily within 30 days. This helped the agency reduce a number of costs, including around \$750 in legal costs, plus additional costs related to vacancy requirements and lost rents and rent subsidies. HUD recommended using these forms, all the while enforcing Fair Housing rules.

Valerie had heard about the 30-day notice but, ironically, Latisha did not present it to her

at the hotseat meeting. Latisha really just wanted to scare Valerie straight. She was further teaching Valerie the tenant role, which was to do what the PM told her, no matter what she thought of it. In the beginning, it didn't seem to work. Valerie continued to be seen with Gloria around the building until they had a falling-out, afterwards keeping mainly to herself. However, through this, Valeria also kept largely out of the the PM's hair and continued to follow rules of the building.

PMs thus can use the hotseat ultimatum as mechanism to resolve clients' substance abuse problems and tenant altercations. However, PMs control whether issues get pushed to the hotseat, meaning they can handle situations themselves. Sometimes, this is used to increase their leverage with clients and to align themselves with clients who had become allies in the building. PMs often connect themselves to individual tenants with substance abuse problems through their mutual interest in recovery, and it is not uncommon for PMs to also protect those they see as being on course with their ideology. PMs do not just take roles of police but also neighbors and sometimes social workers. They create alliances with tenants around mutual interests in the building, mutual survival struggles and mutual coping mechanisms. For example, Brian from McCandless became quite close to a tenant named Felicia. Brian identified as a recovering addict and believed that the 12-Step program had saved him. Felicia was a recovering addict too, who had gotten in trouble in the building for fighting with another client over her husband. The situation had been resolved when Brian acted as a mediator between the two women, and he became quite close to Felicia through this encounter, because the two would often talk about 12 steps and the struggles they had with recovery. She would come by his desk, which faced the door of the building, almost daily.

Felicia kept secrets for Brian too. Brian, sometimes, would let guests in for an extra fee

and Felicia kept quiet about this. One day, Brian noticed that Felicia got a big check for being in a research study. He asked her if he should hold onto it so that she wouldn't be tempted to spend it on drugs. She told him she would buy a car and that she could handle it. A week later, she spent about half of it on drugs. Felicia came to Brian very disappointed with herself and he counseled her about her addiction. The relationship went on this way, and Felicia still continued to be "relapsing," and the PM did not make a fuss about it, even when she really paid no attention to the guest policy.

That is, until Felicia made a copy of her key to the McCandless and gave it to a friend of hers who came in the hotel and beat another tenant up. Then then secret was out. The other tenant could report this action to his CM, and it could come out in a supportive housing meeting where Saul and Latisha would hear about it. Felicia, however, upon being threatened with eviction and subsequently thrown out, could also tell management about Brian taking bribes. Felicia, in other words, had leverage. She also was a friend whom Brian could identify with and mentor.

Brian did issue a three-day notice to Felicia, handing it to her directly, and the two discussed what Felicia should do. They agreed that Felicia would go to treatment. Brian was happy because he felt he helped his mentee by imparting his life lessons onto her. Saul and Felicia's CM, Heather, were not so happy that they were not involved, but they couldn't really complain since Brian was not kicking out her client. Felicia did not complete her treatment, but Brian let her stay anyway, which upset Heather. Heather brought it up at the next supportive housing meeting, and Saul asked Brian what was going on. Brian told Saul that he and Felicia had a long discussion after she left treatment early.

"She is done with drugs," Brian stated.

“How do you know?”

“She was crying and she told me she was just so sick and tired,” Brian answered.

Saul let it go. He wasn't in the business of eviction. His side, the CM's side, argued in favor of housing retention, so what was there to say?

Sometimes, clients became late on rent or had received too many write-ups, while not posing too big of a problem for the PMs, making PMs not very interested in evicting them. This is because PMs had spent quite a bit of time using agency social constructions to get these clients to be “good tenants,” and it would increase their workload to have to replace a tenant with someone they would have to retrain, someone who might not be all that trainable. Thus, sometimes, if clients are late on rent or have too many violations, they can contact PMs and get a payment plan or make a PM-related contract. PMs have discretion over whether or not they will give payment plans or contracts, but they do need approval from the PM supervisor. For these plans, much of the discretion is connected to future risk of not paying or not changing behavior, along with the client's current behavior in the building.

Client leverage is less of an issue here, although PMs' institutional legitimacy is. PMs need to show that payment plans actually result in payment to please members of the task environment, especially those related to private equity and financing. They need clients to stop disobeying certain rules, and they also need to ensure this is clarified to the rest of the clients in the building. PMs also use eviction as a tool to get rid of clients that cause them difficulty. Not paying rent, because it is connected to the task environment, is a certain way for clients to be evicted. Thus, if PMs want to keep clients, they will create a payment plan for clients who are anywhere from one month late to, in a few cases, six months late. Payment plans save clients from actually being evicted.

Actually Evicting Clients

PMs' likelihood to go through with an eviction is highly connected to improving their job performance, which is connected to satisfying actors in the task environment. PMs' job performance is easily measurable, like how their buildings look, the number of vacancies, the total rent income per month, the number of units that fail inspection, or the number of official complaints by HUD or local government. The rules around rent, room condition and guest policy respond very closely to these measures and are thus most likely to lead to eviction.

Ashley, a CM at Graham explained one such instance:

“There was one older man who, cause they have to keep their room clean for pugs bugs and roaches, and this is a gross one - his room was so disgusting, and he would never clean it, and he kept failing his inspections, and they said they would get him a HHS worker. He just wouldn't let anyone in his room. And when they would come in for inspections, they were finding that he was pooping and peeing in bottles all around his room. They let it go on for a month and a half after knowing about that. Meanwhile, roaches were coming from it and going into everybody else's rooms. They told him, 'no, really, you're going to lose your housing if you don't clean this up or let someone clean it up.' And in the end, they kicked him out. He kept trying to come back in so they changed the lock on his door. It was sad - he was just so stubborn. He stayed and lived on the side of the building for like, weeks. It was depressing to see him out there. He would try to come in. It was terrible but they were like - 'we can't allow this. We're housing, and we'll get in trouble with housing authority if we look like we just let roaches and things fester in here.’”

The PM at Graham, Terry, was interim and, to ensure that she could be full-time, she had to have fewer HUD write-ups and fewer days' vacancies. The client that Ashley mentioned had to be dealt with quickly, so that roaches didn't infest the building or the smell of human waste did not overwhelm communal areas, causing more HUD write-ups or even full-scale complaints. These tenants also needed to be expelled from the premises as soon as possible so that the number of days vacant would not lead to reduced funding for Cochran. This conflict with the tenant from Graham clarifies how HUD and local government dominates the way that staff deal with clients.

Even though treatment can be tough, it is fine with the agency because it comes as a result of adjustment to tough requirements.

Another actor in the task environment are the courts. Evictions are more likely to happen when it is legally viable to do so, as Alice, a CM at St. James, clarified:

“We don’t try [to let write ups pile up] - we have to - because we have to build a strong enough case. If you got to court, they don’t recognize it as much. Because when we go to court we go to court, landlord v. tenant, not housing authority v. resident. If you have the fact that they hadn’t paid their rent, you’re good, if not, you’re not. Also, we have one hoarder on my caseload. She constantly get stinged by pugs bugs. If your room becomes a fire hazard you can get kicked out.”

Alice's statement clarifies just how important legal precedence factors into decisions made by PMs. One indicator of the strength of legal precedence is the reasons clients get evicted. The largest number of evictions occurs because of non-payment of rent (60-65%), whereas violent behavior only leads to 5-10% of evictions. The rest are highly connected to non-violent “health and safety,” which requires a large amount of evidence. The reason why rent is so commonly the cause of evictions is because it is easy to prove, and judges will give judgments in favor of Cochran. Other rules, like refusal to comply with Pugs Bugs inspections or frequent violations of the guest policy, noncompliance with tracking requirements, or even arguing with a staff member, do not hold up in courts because they do not follow landlord/tenant housing regulations on eviction. The agency reacts to this by enforcing high levels of documentation for tenant misdeeds onto PMs. The following minutes from a Cabrini supportive housing meeting show how PMs are pressured by legal evidence when it comes to eviction. Matt essentially had to accept this client, whether he liked it or not, so he tried to find a way to think of the client as a “good tenant” and keep up appearances around staff and clients:

“He has a girl problem – women,” said Monica (Desk Clerk).

“He is addicted to sex because he can’t get anything else,” said Cindy (CM Supervisor). “He needs to be on psychotropics.”

“There were a bunch of technical billing problems with getting him to see a doctor,” said Heather (CM).

“Can’t he get evicted after having four different warnings?” asked Lynn (CM). She mentioned another tenant who had been evicted after two warnings. “He has AIDS and is having unprotected sex with a partner: He’s a predator and he is dealing as well.”

“He’s bartering,” interjected Matt (PM), “sex for drugs.”

“Isn’t that soliciting?” asked Catherine (CM). “Can’t he get evicted for that?”

“The only way to evict over solicitation,” explained Matt (PM), “is if a tenant says he is approached but even then - this is hearsay, basically only when staff were directly propositioned. If a tenant has an unauthorized guest violation Leroy will kick him out, but a judge won’t. When you get to the judge, and he sees you’re coming with the same offense, well, he’ll really throw the book at you. ... There are some good things about him ... at every tenant meeting, he tells tenants that they need to talk to us, if you don’t want to talk to me, then talk to your case manager, talk to Cindy but talk to one of us.”

It was not uncommon for PMs to address eviction rather emotionally – like for example, in the case of tenant relapse. Eviction causes significant distress among clients and increasing tension between them and staff. However, and more importantly, if the judge rules in the favor of the client, the judgment de-legitimizes the agency's and PMs' control mechanisms. Client leverage is heightened, and PMs are left with non-legal methods, which put them in further danger.

In addition, evictions may be more likely to happen to tenants who increase PM workload or put their role legitimacy into question. These tenants, who often have significant mental illness or some other type of “weakness” like health problems, or old age, can put strains on PMs' time and energy in the midst of already stressful working conditions. Unfortunately, many of these tenants are quite vulnerable, taking up additional PM resources to protect them in what often is a very hostile environment. Nancy, an elderly woman living at the Holm Hotel, got a

member of the local police department to come and check on her, because she kept witnessing enormous amounts of violence at her hotel and getting beat up, and she was labeled a “snitch” for doing so. She said this about how she was targeted by staff at Cochran:

“There are people with 30-some infractions, while I’ve been here for 10 years with nothing, and they want me out. Latisha and Saul both think I am too weak to live at Cochran. This weakness is a hassle for them, and they didn’t want to deal with it. They had political influence on Charlotte, the PM of my building and the case managers – Ashley and James, who are only in it for the paycheck. James is holding onto the job until he could go back to school, and Ashley – I don’t know, but there was an incident that soured her on the whole Cochran experience. I feel uncomfortable talking to either of them, and Ashley feels no real empathy for me. Charlotte was a former addict, just like Latisha, and they stuck around because they couldn’t get a job anywhere else.”

Nancy increased her PM's workload in several ways. One, she required that PMs get mixed up in tenant relationships and mediate them. Two, she required PMs confront violent tenants who could potentially seek revenge. Three, she could complain to the police, local politicians, the media, HUD, DMH, and their job performance would be questioned. Nancy put into question the PM's ability to control the building. However, Nancy was also very vulnerable to the agency's social constructions. Having been a victim her whole life, she already didn't think she had any rights so she believed what she was told. Her PM constantly tried to find ways to frighten her, coming into Nancy's room and looking for things to write her up for: her clothes were hung on her dresser, she had soda cans in her refrigerator, her door was left open when she was talking to someone. Such constant harassment silenced Nancy and communicated to her that she was not in a position to make demands.

Finally, eviction is more likely to actually happen if the tenants poses a significant safety problem for PMs, staff and other clients. These usually involve violence or threats of violence on the part of clients. However, in order for PMs to be able to get these clients evicted, there must be proof. So, a violent incident must have already occurred where there were witnesses

willing to testify in court or sign affidavits. This explains why, sometimes, violent clients stay. Other clients are only protected when they are in the building. They cannot be assured protection on the streets. So, when PMs are given an opportunity, like the client does not pay rent, for example, they quickly instigate legal proceedings. They also, sometimes, engage in semi-legal practices to get these clients out.

Matt at the Cabrini dealt with one such situation when he found a cat in John's unit. John had always been difficult to work with and Matt often got into arguments with him when he entered his unit for pugs bugs. It was not uncommon that John would threaten Matt, and Matt heard rumors about him threatening other clients. It had gotten to the point that Matt would take Leroy, the PM supervisor and Lynn, John's CM, with him every time he had to inspect the John's unit. When he found the cat, Matt had Mary, a CM from the Pruitt, take it to the Humane Society while Lynn investigated ways that John could keep the cat and still stay at the Cabrini. She didn't really want to do all this because to her, he was a difficult client. He rarely handed in tracking sheets or met with her. Keeping the cat meant lots of paperwork and forms from doctors, and Lauren wasn't sure if he would really follow up. He also scoffed at the idea.

Staff met to talk about John at the supportive housing meeting. Lynn used the opportunity to complain but it didn't really matter what she said. It was too late for her client. The PM had a loophole. The client had a court order to go to drug treatment, and Matt would just follow up on that. This would mean that he had a legal option to "abandon" the property and could evict according to HUD's one-strike policy. The client snuck the cat in, and there had to be a repercussion. Clients having pets would drain building resources and cause more work for PMs. Besides, he was a "bad tenant:" he constantly snuck guests in, he was late on rent, and he often screamed at Matt. Leroy did a "hotseat" with John, which ended in fighting.

John “chose” to be evicted, and his difficult behavior turned sociopathic shortly afterwards. He tracked down the human society where the cat was dropped off and got hold of Mary's cell phone and home address somehow. He began leaving threatening messages on her cell phone shortly thereafter. The blame came back to CMs – they had to be better with boundaries, and all the while John’s behavior continued to escalate. He did this all while still at the Cabrini. Mary had to eventually get a restraining order against him, and he soon moved onto Lynn, his actual CM. John told Lynn he would pay someone \$20 on the street to kill a staff member or screw up staff cars. This was particularly frightening to Lynn and other staff because the agency didn't use security guards, and the PM office was often empty. Lynn recalled:

“I was scared of him. I’ve never been scared like that in my life. And then his step dad came out from New York, and he was totally manipulated (and that was another issue with [this client] he was always trying to manipulate). So, he was calling me, leaving me nasty messages, and it wouldn’t stop. I would think to myself, I’m not going to return this call, first of all this is not my client ...”

The PM finally just changed the front door keycard for the whole building and called the police when John showed up. The legal eviction proceeded in the meantime.

Summary

The past few chapters (5, 6 and 7) culminate into this chapter, chapter 8, the evictions chapter. PMs socially construct clients according to the needs of the agency and its task environment in Chapter 6. PMs’ ability to structure client’s context and teach the client the tenant role proves to be the PMs' most important discretionary power in applicant screenings because it serves to decrease client leverage. In chapter 7, PM begin to further teach the client the role of the “good tenant” by using verbal, then written sanctions. As written sanctions continue to be written, PM start to build a case. They continue to monitor through the use of

emergency categories called “hotlists.” In chapter 8, they are faced with mounting evidence, late rent or a serious emergency, which prompts PM to consider eviction. Eviction is PM’s most powerful means of controlling tenants. It is through eviction, where PM turns the investment the client put into the agency, against them. Client burden essentially becomes leverage on the part of PM to make behavior changes. PM then essentially consider the risk of allowing the client to retain housing v. evicting them. If it is less risky to actually evict the tenant, PM will follow up on their threat and actually evict the client.

Chapter VIIV: Conclusion And Implications

At the beginning of this study, I asked three interconnected questions. First, do PMs have discretion over access to and retention of permanent supportive housing? Second, why do PMs have so much discretion? Third, what forces influence their discretion in applicant screenings, sanctions and eviction? Answers to these questions reflect the political context surrounding homelessness, namely the interacting connection between neoliberalism and social control within human service organizations. To better explain my findings, I considered theoretical concepts surrounding the use of discretion among SLBs. In this concluding chapter, I will discuss how discretion takes place at PSHs and the theoretical contribution of this study. I will also suggest policy implications, consider limitations of the study and talk about future research.

Lipsky proposed that all SLBs respond to the same working conditions, and these working conditions apply to all large bureaucracies centered around human services. However, he over-generalized about the type of conditions SLBs typically dealt with and did not clarify how these working conditions were connected to the task environment. He also regarded SLBs as individuals who just did their jobs and did not come to agencies or organizations with any type of identity or agenda, besides getting paid.

PMs at the agency I studied, had a large degree of discretion over applicant screening, sanctions and eviction. For all these events, they had three types of discretion: (1) discretion over resources, (2) discretion over information and (3) discretion over frame. Clients of the agency were socially constructed as tenants, which meant that their behavior as tenants, i.e. “good” or “bad” tenants, came under judgment of PMs. It was the CM’s job to help them learn to be a good tenant under standards set by PMs. This meant that PMs could award good tenants and punish bad tenants through their control over resources, and resources were allocated

through applicant screening, sanction and eviction. PMs were largely unsupervised through these decisions, and they only needed final approval of a PM supervisor (a former PM who raised to a higher level of the bureaucracy) for evictions.

The construction of clients as “tenants” is important here because it allowed PMs to frame all client encounters with the agency. PMs could use the agency social constructions of tenants, which included setting the context, as leverage against clients they saw as behaving like “bad” tenants. In other words, contexts that significantly increase the client’s burden, like waiting lists with built-in check-in requirements, not to mention large amounts of paperwork and documentation, clarified to the client that his/her housing was highly rationed and valuable. In a way, client investment of time and energy into the applicant screening process was constructed as equity with the agency, which could be lost if clients did not comply. PMs’s used this context as a means of control, and they also used their discretion to teach the client how to be a “good tenant”. They framed what a “good tenant” meant, and the discretionary frame extended past the client into negotiations with other staff members. In facilitated interactions between PMs and social service staff, the staff usually tried to get something from PMs, whether it was information on the client or special treatment when it came to decisions about screenings, sanctions or eviction.

It is also important to note that PMs are situated in a role which exposes them to more information about clients than any other role in the agency. In other words, PMs have access to the inner life of clients, and they can see past what impressions clients try to give other staff members. Their belongings, the state of their room, the people they associate with, are all part of the clients' inner life, which becomes part of the PMs' knowledge base. A PM also gains information through informants, who come to him or her with information in order to fulfill

some kind of agenda. A PM can chose to do what they want with this information, given him or her substantial leverage within the agency.

In addition, applicant screening, sanction and eviction routines clarified the importance of the task environment in increasing PM leverage and discretion. PMs take on a number of roles, including the role of landlord, neighbor, police and social worker, to satisfy agency expectations and performance measures. These expectations and measures are connected specifically to preserving exchanges with members in the task environment. HUD, local government and local business provide inputs in the form of funding and land, while the agency provides an output of housed homeless, decreased city service costs and improved local economies. These outputs are quantified through PM performance measures, which focus specifically on rent accruals, vacancies, safety and the maintenance of the building.

Along with outputs, the task environment also establishes requirements that the agency needs to follow, especially when it comes to maintenance, income and safety. Without PMs, coping with task environment regulations, like maintenance, gaining income and safety would be very expensive. Paying these costs while still generating the expected outputs would be very challenging. To deal with these cost-demand constraints, the agency passed down constraints to PMs in the form of increased role responsibilities and workload. PMs then passed these expectations down to clients by monitoring and enforcing client rents, room condition requirements and guest policy. PMs' ability to get clients to follow these expectations saved the agency money, and it helped the agency meet requirements of HUD and other of actors in the task environment. For the most part, the clients' ability to meet these expectations meant they were "good" tenants in the eyes of PMs.

To deal with "bad tenants," PMs used many of the tools that Lipsky mentioned, like using

their ability to distribute resources, structuring the context, teaching a client how to be a client, emergency categories and pressure specialists. These constructions all moved towards gaining highly rationed housing, or possibly losing it. Taking away resources through eviction, however, involved the court system, which slowed PMs down and required they build a case. The paper *Last Resorts* by Emerson (1981) provides a clearer understanding of how PM discretion was connected to the use of these different tools, given legal constraints and client leverage, to following through on eviction threats. PMs essentially evict in two different circumstances: “emergency” circumstances, where normal “routines” are not worthy responses to the event. In the other circumstance, all normal remedies have already been attempted and have failed, making the “last resort” the only remaining (and necessary) option. Moving too quickly for every eviction would call the agency into question and result in judgments in favor of “bad tenants”, de-legitimizing PMs’s mechanisms of control. In comparison, slowly and deliberately building a case shows that the agency did what it could, and that all the normal remedies it attempted failed.

PMs, as members of the community, also gained leverage because they knew how to deal with the challenges posed by their location. The agency sits in Skid Row, an area with a high level of mental illness, drug abuse and violence. When the agency first opened its doors, tents covered the streets of the neighborhood and policing was sparse. The agency gained much of its legitimacy through working in this area and maintaining properties that did not aggravate existing problems. PMs had a vital role in helping make this happen, providing 24-hour oversight because they lived in the buildings - this means that no matter what, somebody was there, watching building operations. PMs’ residency also gave them a vital stake in these operations and the hazards of the building and its surrounding neighborhood, motivated PMs to

ensure their own safety. PMs were essentially unarmed guards over buildings, which could have as many as 150 occupants and erratic police protection. PMs thus dealt with serious workplace hazards.

Although other SLBs like police have relied heavily on being able to exert authority and demand respect, many PMs did not have the same tools. It is important to note that PM could not use physical force. This was a very important constraint on their behavior, so they had to rely on agency social constructions of tenant role, their own role legitimacy and their ability to distribute resources. Some PMs combined their discretion with the lessons they learned on the streets as former gang members or inmates. They presented themselves as tough and intimidating, which helped them better apply the rules across the board and demand respect. These PMs usually identified with more of a policing role and were more rigid about rule enforcement. Their discretion essentially leaned towards increased levels of sanctions and evictions.

Other PMs would steer clear of very threatening clients or used their discretionary powers to make deals with them, whether this affected their “job performance” or not. This is most likely because their job was not just a job, but where they lived. Sometimes these dealings could also provide additional income. Meanwhile, PMs still had to ensure that agency social constructions and their ability to distribute resources held some legitimacy in the building, so they found clients they could use as “examples.” They made sure that their dealings with these clients were very public. This communicated to upper management that they were doing something about the problem. Doing this preserved their institutional legitimacy or internal polity. However, these clients were always safe examples for them, which meant that the client was guilty of much less severe violations to house rules, were less violent and often more

vulnerable. Such clients were safe examples because the amount of leverage they had was decreased. They reduced PM risk because they were often not violent people, not highly connected to the neighborhood and were just more docile. More important, they bought into agency social constructions of themselves. They actually cared about them and understood what they could mean. PMs could manipulate, control and frighten them with these constructions. Many times, PMs' ability to structure the context and teach client role were so successful, that the client did not even realize they could exert some leverage. PMs could present a 30-day notice to these clients and just see how they reacted. They didn't need to worry about them starting a battle of wills or trying to get revenge.

Finally, PMs essentially gained legitimacy in their role because of their background as the formerly homeless. This personal narrative allowed PMs to gain power and leverage within the agency, which served to motivate clients and teach CMs about the population. PMs shared the same race (African American), often the same gender (male) and the same economic background (below poverty level) as tenants. On the other hand, social service staff were often upper class and White. Although social service staff had higher levels of education, this doesn't seem to count for much in the agency because these staff were so young and inexperienced, that there was no way for them to connect their book knowledge to the lives of clients.

The PMs' story had the capacity to inspire clients, and they served as examples to clients of what was possible. They also used their “story” to push an agenda onto clients, as PMs saw themselves as survivors. Their personal narrative and their sentiments towards those things that helped get them through their challenges, like religion, caring mentors, a 12-Step program, toughness, discipline or hard work influenced whom they saw as “good tenants” or “bad tenants,” despite the tenants' behavior. This was especially true when it came to PMs' regard

toward client substance abuse. Since many PMs either had been former addicts, or had someone close to them with an addiction, they often identified with 12-Step ideologies. These 12-Step ideologies often conflicted with housing-first and harm-reduction ideologies, causing conflict between PMs and other staff. Nevertheless, PMs would often entertain their 12-Step fellowship with other clients, when given the chance. Clients who conversed with PMs on these subjects were on the same wavelength, and PMs often believed they could “save” these clients. As a result, PMs were often much more lenient with them and tried hard to ensure their success. The relationships between PMs and these clients were clear to other clients, who would see how these favored clients received more leeway or special favors. PMs thus backed up these clients with their enormous institutional powers and used them to teach other clients the role of the “good tenant.”

These mentorship relationships (between client and PM) occurred more often when a PM took on a social work role. It is important to note that PM did not always take on either social work or policeman role exclusively. Rather, PM would more commonly lean towards a social work or policeman, or sometimes landlord role. When a PM acted in a manner, which was too connected to, one role (social worker or police or landlord), clients and fellow staff members generally reacted negatively. PM role leanings tended to come with different discretionary actions (more lenient when it came to the rules and to rent for social workers and more strict for policeman). PM’s survivor narrative connects to the tendency towards these roles. PM who saw their life history as one where they achieved some sense of stability through compliance often focused more heavily on the rules. PM who experienced the capacity of helping relationships (like those between friends, family and social service providers) and nurturance to heal and provide greater stability, were more likely to take on a more social work role. These PM “social

workers” were more likely to use mediation when client disputes occurred, responded in therapeutic way to building crisis’, use counseling as a means of keeping tabs on clients, put more time into creating community events (like seasonal get-togethers or weekly groups) and used their relationships with clients as a means of enforcing rules, not their discretionary power.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several theoretical contributions. For one, it shows why discretionary power is given to certain actors within an organization and why certain actors are excluded. In other words, it clarifies why PMs as frontline workers were provided higher discretion than other frontline workers, and even some managers. Second, it shows what factors influence SLB discretion. It contrasts previous research, in that it concentrates on human service workers who have long-term relationships with clients and who work for non-profit organizations. Results indicate that discretionary power is connected to being able to help the agency deal with constraints posed by the task environment. The task environment is then connected to the resources the agency has access to, even the location where its facilities sit. These resource constraints get passed onto frontline workers, and they are translated into workload, agency expectations and hazards and dictate a large percentage of PMs’ discretionary decisions. The rest of their decisions are connected to PMs’ identity, client leverage and personal narrative.

As expected, HUD dominated the agency and put many restraints and requirements on its behavior. HUD’s focus on housing also accounted for the construction of clients as “tenants.” HUD's multitude of scandals surrounding maintenance, safety and fraud meant that HUD had to work harder to provide evidence of due diligence. At the same time, HUD dealt with a decreasing flow of resources (Schwartz, 2008), which it accomplished by increasing requirements on the contracted agencies, applicants and residence of the housing it sponsored.

HUD's overwhelming requirements and decreased resources constructed the housing environment that tenants could expect.

The demands of task environment actors, like HUD, influenced the organization's structure. This study took place in an agency, which had a hybrid structure. Frontline worker roles were split between CM and PM. Although CMs were often more educated, they had less discretion and leverage in the agency. This was due to the connection of PMs to agency goals and performance measures, which were more concrete. PMs, after all, attended to the business side of the agency, which had relatively clear measures, like rent accruals, days units are vacant, etc. PMs' ability to clearly reach these measures proved their usefulness to the agency (See Lipsky, 1980). CMs' role as advocate, even though it was connected to one of the agency's goals of housing retention, often got in the way of PMs' ability to reach performance measures and lead to tension between the two sides. Although it can be argued that CMs were also service coordinators, they really just monitored whether or not clients completed "tracking sheets." When clients weren't completing their tracking sheets, CMs relied on PMs to enforce the service contracts with clients, which required that clients complete the tracking sheets or face eviction.

The agency's social construction of clients was a powerful tool for PMs and started the moment the client requested housing. Applicants didn't just call up a phone number and request to be put on a list. Rather, they had to wait for specific dates when the waiting list would be opened, then wait in a long line of around 400-500 people spanning around the block for as long as a week. They then were put through an orientation, which educated them on what they could expect from being a client. Tenants from the long line were shuffled into a small room, ten at a time, just to get an appointment to be screened and have their names added to the waiting list. These were just two of the ways that the agency increased the burden of application on clients.

However, this was just the beginning of the ways that the agency structured the context. Tenants than had an average of one year more of checking into the agency and waiting, until they were given intense paperwork requirements and sent to the PM for a formal interview over a hotel unit.

This long process surely cools down undesirable clients. It also requires applicants invest a large amount of time and energy, without any type of guarantee of a return on that investment. If anything, the increased amount of investment improves the agency's social constructions. The housing the client eventually earns with all this invested time and energy becomes so much more valuable, and those with the potential of taking that housing away thus become so much more powerful. Clients are “good tenants,” when they understand the value of their housing and give staff leverage over them.

The agency's construction is connected to organizational structure. PMs have more power here because an agency's social construction of clients as “tenants” means that their role as tenants is more important to organizational structure. PMs have much more to do with the tenant role than other staff members, so they gain internal polity in the organization. The PMs' chief role is to manage tenants, which means that much of their performance measures are achieved through their management of tenants. This job requires an extensive ability to control and coerce, and multiple roles need to be balanced in order to accomplish this, like policeman, landlord, social worker and neighbor. This is accomplished through an organizational structure which gives broad discretion to PMs.

This study also considers long-term interactions with clients. PMs knew they could spend quite a bit of time with clients, even years. However, unlike much of the literature on long-term clients, PSHs are not in total institutions, but rather quasi-voluntary institutions.

Voluntariness can in some ways be connected to client leverage (See Siegel, 1978). However, so can commitment. Client leverage could to a large extent be understood through Rusbult's 1980 Investment Model. Rusbult believed 4 variables predicted commitment: rewards, costs, investment size and alternative value. Many clients who "got in" at Cochran, saw their housing (and the stability it provided) as a substantial reward which was much more important than "costs" like less freedom than a conventional apartment building and less privacy. More than that, their investment size was enormous: Many spent almost a year of their life trying to get housing with Cochran. Their alternative value (the attractiveness of the client's alternatives) were extremely low. Most lived in Cochran facilities because they couldn't afford to live anywhere else. They also had serious mental health, physical health and substance abuse issues which often gave them a stigma of being "undeserving." Meanwhile, PM's alternative value was high. They had plenty of applicants to chose from who would be happy to take the client's unit. Agency-level social constructions were very powerful in reinforcing these commitments to what were sometimes over-inflated notions of the "value of housing" to clients. Thus, agency social constructions such as "teaching the client role" and "structuring the context," as proposed by Lipsky, were common within the agency.

"Teaching the client role" essentially started during PMs' first interview with clients during applicant screening and proceeded through sanctioning and eviction routines. From sending the client back to GR two times to get the paperwork right, to nit-picking about the level of cleanliness in his room, to blowing off what the PMs felt were petty maintenance requests, PM/client interactions were events which PMs had many opportunities to further help clients understand how to be a "good tenant." Mini-crises and interventions further instructed the client on their roles in the agency, and what was expected of them.

Finally, PM discretion is highly connected to PM identity. As I discussed earlier, PMs have to play multiple roles to accomplish tasks related to performance measures and the task environment, and these roles must be balanced against each other. However, PMs usually focus on some roles over others, because those roles simply make them feel more comfortable and conform more closely to their identity and past life experience. Similar to the findings of Watkins-Hayes, some PMs felt uncomfortable with the policeman role and more comfortable with the social worker role. These PMs tended to hand out fewer sanctions and thus had fewer evictions. Some PMs felt more comfortable with the landlord role, which meant they focused heavily on the maintenance of the building and whether or not clients did their part to ensure the building was maintained by following the rules. These PMs tended to give more write-ups and push for more evictions on clients who had violated rules about room condition. They were also stricter when it came to room condition and pugs bugs inspections. In addition to their designated roles, PMs identified as “survivors” and focused much of their discretion on the lessons they learned through their personal survival experiences. They created alliances with clients based on these experiences, as well as on the coping mechanisms involved, such as religion or 12-Step. Alliances with clients based on these ideologies influenced their discretionary decisions.

Policy Implications

Housing-first policy emphasizes the construction of clients as tenants out of an assumption that housing and independent living in apartments in the community will provide these clients the stability they need to change destructive behaviors, be they substance abuse or untreated mental illness. Being a “tenant” essentially means living a normal life. At the agency level, these policies are implemented through “bundling,” meaning that clients are expected to

adhere to treatment in exchange for holding onto housing (See Allen, 2003).

This study has shown that the success of housing-first policies may not necessarily be connected to client improvements. Rather, housing-first policies are so successful because they are attracting better clients and training them to stay that way. If clients are not able to stay “good tenants,” they are evicted, and PMs are instrumental in accomplishing these prerogatives. Clients already have to be clean when applying to the agency, as HUD requires that if clients have an arrest within the past 5 years for illegal substances, they must go to treatment. Besides that, there are significant hurdles, such as yearlong waiting lists, weekly check-ins and extensive paperwork requirements. It is unclear how homeless individuals with significant problems involving mental health, drug abuse, and general health would be able to get through these hurdles.

For this reason, it is very difficult to resolve problems with creaming and coercion simply by attempting to create more appropriate forms of discretion. As was mentioned previously, discretion is inevitable, especially when it comes to bureaucracies dealing with human matters, because these bureaucracies have to be flexible to properly adjust to human complexity. PMs learned how to use their discretion to get the highest returns through their mentorships relations with their supervising staff. This is not much different than the way police officers learn to use discretion (i.e. through their partner or supervisor and not through the police academy) (See Bitner, 1967). Training therefore does not resolve these issues. The issue only are resolved by changes in the policy context and task environment.

In addition, the agency used as its main “intervention,” a version of motivational interviewing which tries to nudge homeless clients who are in the “pre-contemplation” stage to “contemplate” treatment, in order to retain their housing. This has been referred to as “bundling”

by homeless advocates, in that housing and treatment are made dependent on one another (See Allen, 2003; Tsembaris & Eisenberg, 2000). The way the agency structured the context and taught the client to be a client were connected to bundling, particularly in the ways they attempted to establish the value of housing and how it was a tightly-rationed commodity. This housing became leverage staff could use against clients. Staff members said this was successful, whether or not clients could actually make substantial changes in a matter of days, because the client's eviction was another "lesson" in his or her personal journey. However, it is troublesome that this intervention served as the cornerstone of the agency, especially since staff really didn't know if it made clients' live better or worse.

What is interesting is that the literature doesn't actually verify the effectiveness of the use of staff leverage to improve client outcomes. Instead, it brings up concerns about legality, coercion and the potential to upset the therapeutic relationship (Van Dorn, Swartz, & Swanson, 2012). Research in the 1980s suggested that coercion pushes individuals with mentally illness further away from the mental health system, leading to adverse, long-term consequences (Blanch & Parrish, 1993; Rachlin, 1989; See also Allen, 2003). According to Monahan, Redlich, Swanson, et. al. (2005), leverage and "bundling" was more often used among younger patients who had more severe, disabling and longer-lasting mental health problems. This is not surprising. Clients who experience the use of housing as leverage also perceive it as coercion, not as a contract (Robbins, Petrila, LeMelle, & Monahan, 2006). According to Tsemberis, the use of bundling in PSHs increases behaviors such as hoarding, withdrawal and drug abuse, which typically leads to eviction (Tsemberis & Eisenberg, 2000). These are the same findings, which essentially led policymakers to move from the "Continuum of Care" to "Housing-First."

Allen (2003) wrote an interesting paper critiquing the use of "bundling," which mentions

that mental health advocates' desire for community-based mental health services and housing never became a reality. Rather, disabled people are still segregated into separate communities and still subject to coercion, rather than treatment. Allen mentioned four reasons why leverage to compel treatment should not be used: (1) It weakens the therapeutic alliance, (2) It violates ethical principles of mental health professionals, (3) It is not a “housing-first” approach, and (4) It violates federal law.

The problem with the isolation and coercion is that it creates collateral damage, which is difficult to document (Allen, 2003). The isolation of PSH in cities and its use of coercion through its PMs is connected to a task environment, which is fixated about outcomes on the one hand and motivated by economics on the other. The task environment encourages coercion, but it also does not facilitate client choice, concerns or demand. At the agency, “community” was encouraged, but only a certain type of community, one that followed the goals of the agency. There was no such thing as a true tenant meeting. There were “community meetings” which were run by frontline staff and focused on indoctrination, groups or events that CM were organizing. A way to facilitate demands simply did not exist. Clients were expected to complain to their PM, who had discretion over whether or not to ignore them or punish them for lodging complaints.

A large part of this problem is the dilemma on housing the homeless, mentally ill or substance abusers, and, as a result, many of the responsibilities over implementing housing for the homeless fell onto the HUD agency. The problem with housing and social control was resolved by making HUD the main federal program to implement supportive housing, because HUD operates independent, community-level housing which has a fair number of rules attached. HUD is the only federal program to focus on housing, and although it has faced its fair share of

controversy, it adapts to current social and political trends, including an emphasis on neoliberalism. Nevertheless, HUD is not well versed on mental illness, and some of HUD's policies and requirements attached to rent and eviction may not work well with the mentally ill, or with those with serious substance-abuse issues. Although HUD does receive pressure from groups like the National Alliance to End Homelessness, they are still given too much control over a program which also attends to other problems besides housing, and which require substantial amounts of social services for mental illness, physical health problems and substance abuse.

Many PSHs remain in isolated areas where there are higher levels of poverty, crime and disorder (Oakely, 2006). This is the case because, above all, there are still large areas of concentrated poverty in the United States, and most affordable housing, especially affordable housing offered through HUD, reside in those very neighborhoods (Bratt, 2008). HUD faces incredible demands for affordable housing, especially in certain locations where housing affordability is worse. Local governments also are more willing to give land parcels or vacant buildings from less-desirable areas to affordable housing developers (Tilly, 2006). These neighborhood constraints then pose problems when it comes to staffing, and the segregation leads to further degradation on the part of clients' lives. They are truly seen as a separate, undeserving and highly stigmatized population. The heartless use of year-long waiting lists on these clients by PSHs backs up the agency's and society's reaction to the deservedness of these clients.

It also should be mentioned that a true transition from the Continuum of Care approach to Housing-First has not been made. HUD policies like the "One-Strike" policy still apply to applicants of PSHs, many of whom are disabled precisely because of substance abuse disorders

which caused them to have a conviction in the past 5 years. Housing authorities have discretion to apply this policy however they want, and most require those with a criminal record to attain treatment prior to receiving housing. Such policies are inappropriate for permanent supportive housing meant for the chronically homeless. It just doesn't make any sense that applicants are being turned away because of drug possession charges when the whole point of Housing-First is to provide housing prior to treatment.

Furthermore, the “big-box” approach to PSH used by the agency I studied has been criticized by housing advocates. According to a report by the Technical Assistance Collaborative (2001), these type of PSHs neglect the more seriously mentally ill. They also engage in a high degree of creaming and segregation by disability. PMs often fill the buildings with individuals with similar disabilities and assume they all have the same needs. PSHs use the service component as window-dressing and essentially neglect individual needs. Instead, there is more of a focus on whether or not the client belongs in the environment, rather than whether the environment can respond to their needs.

According to an issue report by the National Housing Institute, called “When Supportive Housing Isn't,” property managers at big box PSH providers don't have the resources to serve the severely disabled, so they simply evict them (Bridgam, 2007). The report equated this to “a system where the nurse goes out to the emergency room and sees who have the fewest injuries and brings them in because there's no doctors (id).” One cannot really criticize the nurses (and in this case the property managers). Rather, it is really the fault of the organization that put nurses into this environment, the task environment that shapes the organization and the policy context which provides power to some actors in the task environment, and not others. This big-box approach, thus, is very effective for those who basically don't have a mental illness or a

substance abuse problem (Bridegam, 2007). In order to improve services and housing to the homeless, it is necessary that SPC programs have better oversight from federal departments like The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration and the Department of Health and Human Services. According to Tas, LaBrecque, & Clayton (1996), the most important property manager skill is that of working with people. For housing, which is populated by people with serious and chronic mental health, physical health and substance abuse problems, these people should have a clinical background along with skills in property management. There should also be higher levels of supervision, and staff members should not live on-site with clients. This means that administrative subsidies for PSH providers should be higher, so they don't need to rely on this kind of worker. There could also be less emphasis put on certain performance measures which create incentives for PSHs to avoid or kick out more challenging clients, like "tracking sheets" and "goal fulfillment."

Another approach is to put less faith in the big-box approach and more onto a scattered-sites approach. Several programs, like JOIN in Portland, Oregon and New York City's Pathways have taken this approach (Bridegam, 2007). These programs focus much more on services than housing. They work with private landlords and each client is assigned a treatment team made up of medical, psychiatric and social work professionals. Clients also have peer counselors whom they can relate to on challenges and problems. Counselors work with teams to anticipate problems with landlords, and do something about them before the landlord becomes involved. If the client becomes a problem in the eyes of the landlord, he is moved on to another site, rather than evicted. The team is essentially dedicated to the social service component and do not work for the landlord, so there are fewer problems with the use of "advocating." The treatment team also aims to focus on individual needs of the client and do not have a one-size-fits-all approach.

Furthermore, clients aren't segregated into stigmatized areas where there are extreme levels of crime and disorder. Rather, they have the use of a voucher to pick and chose where he would like to live.

Limitations and Future Research

Throughout the course of this research, several limitations became clear. One of the first and definitely most important is that some interactions were not possible to witness systematically. Two major areas where this occurred were the observation of property managers at night and consistent observation of interactions during eviction. Night observations in Skid Row hotels were not permitted by staff, because of the danger posed to a female researcher. It was also difficult to consistently watch evictions play out because it took a long time to build enough rapport, so that I could be invited to such events. Also, I could only be invited to such an event if I happened to be on-site, and this happened to be an eviction interaction that the property manager didn't mind me seeing. Instead, I was exposed to bits and pieces of eviction proceedings that I pulled together using the Atlas.ti software and Excel spreadsheets. There were also difficulties learning the true percentages of evictions from the PSH, because such information does not need to be reported to the housing authority due to the agency's non-profit status. There is also a reliance on using 30-day notices, which likewise don't need to be reported

Also, because this project originally sought to collect data for an evaluation and a study of case manager and property manager boundaries, much of the data that was collected throughout the study focused on those issues. Thus, there were things missed about discretion, since my original focus was on the evaluation and boundary issues taking place in the agency. As time went on and I spent more and more time at the agency, I developed relationships with people where certain information was exchanged which I wasn't sure was permitted to be in

research notes. It seems that sometimes participants forgot about my role as researcher, and that my purpose for being at the agency was to do research. These encounters and realizations, although not included in many of the notes, except as a brief sentence here and there to keep me on track, often informed the way I wrote notes, coded notes and conducted my analysis. According to Meyerson (1991), these insights cannot realistically be omitted from one's understanding of a social situation even if they are excluded from one's written reports.

Future research could quantitatively test many of the findings of this study. A survey of a random sample of clients is necessary to determine which kinds of tenants are more likely to be threatened with eviction and eventually evicted. More systematic reviews of CM and PM notes, as well as more systematic observations of intake interviews, applicant screenings and meetings with agency “pressure specialists” would improve the reliability of these findings. Studies of discretion in other organizations that provide housing with social services, like those who operate as scattered sites would also help increase the knowledge of implementation of these programs.

Appendix A: Definition of Terms

Applicant Screenings The series of screenings taking place at PSHs. These include the initial intake phase where eligibility is determined, a determination by housing authorities (HUD), and a final screening with case managers and property managers.

Case Managers Case managers at permanent supportive housing programs coordinate social services, conduct groups and work with property managers to conduct tenant selection, screening, move-in orientation and crisis management (Averyt, 2003).

Chronically Homeless An adult with a disabling condition (physical or mental illness or substance abuse) who has been homeless 1 or more years or four times in the past 3 years (HUD, 2010b).

Client Contact refers to the frequency, amount of time and quality of interaction with clients (Jewell & Glaser, 2006).

Discretion Autonomy toward clients – the ability of organizational members to act independently from demands of authorities (Sosin, 2009). Discretion is generally connected to the following street level behaviors: distribution of resources, structuring the context and teaching a client how to be a client (Lipsky, 1980)

Exchange Relations Organizations as members of coalitions must engage in a process of exchanges. Out of these exchanges, there is interdependence and different levels of power among participants. Power is a function of dependence on contribution, activities and capabilities. Individuals and organizations gain influence through contribution and the inducements they demand (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978)

Eviction The legal process of filing eviction papers with the court, serving a tenant and having a hearing before a judge. This also can include forcing residents to sign a 30-day notice to leave without a contract for change of behavior.

Frontline Workers See Street-Level Bureaucrat

Harm Reduction A program that tries to decrease the harmful consequences of addictive behavior to both addicts and community members. It acts as a public health alternative to criminal justice and disease models of addiction. It sees abstinence as the best outcome but accepts alternatives to reduce harm, and it focuses on addict advocacy rather than addict professionals (Marlatt, 1996).

Housing First An approach based on the belief that the primary need of the homeless is stable housing and that once that is addressed, the homeless person can work on issues that originally led them into homelessness.

Hybrid Organizations that carry on in multiple function domains. They merge features from divergent organizational forms. PSHs are an example of a hybrid organization because they also contain two different organizational forms: a property management company with a social service provider (Minkhoff, 2009).

Incentives Formal and informal rewards and sanctions which affect action at the worker and agency level (Jewell & Glaser, 2006). They are connected to the organizational level, because the success of these rewards and sanctions effect what the organization is able to accomplish (Pfeffer & Salincik, 1978).

Organizational Constraint Organizational response to scenarios and events are contingent on these, regardless of which actor is responding (Pfeffer & Salincik, 1978).

Performance Measures are measures, which are guided by bureaucratic goals. They offer feedback to adjust a system. Clearer goals ensure better performance measures (Lipsky, 1980).

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) are social programs that combine affordable housing with social services. They have a mission of providing stability to people who face complex challenges in a cost-effective way. These complex challenges include homelessness, economic problems, mental illness, HIV/AIDS and substance abuse. Services include case management, housekeeping services, money management, etc. Housing is built to house single persons, and it can be located at scattered sites (voucher) or within one apartment complex (building subsidy) (Avert, 2003).

Political Economy Model A theory that states that organizational survival is based on the ability to retain (1) legitimacy and power (polity) and (2) economic resources (economy). The more the organization depends on other elements in its environment for polity and/or economy, the more they are controlled by that element (Garrow, 2009).

Political Environment All laws, government agencies and groups that constrain or induce organizations and organizational actors (Pandey & Wright, 2006).

Processing Functions include classifying, conferring public status and disposing of clients. These actions are central parts of people processing and people changing organizations (Hasenfeld, 1972).

Organizational structure activities such as task allocation, coordination and supervision directed at specific organizational goals, expectations and performance measures (Pugh, 1981).

Property Managers (PMs) Workers at PSHs who are responsible for maintenance, rent collection and financial management. They work in conjunction with supportive service staff on tenant selection, screening, move-in, orientation and crisis management (Abbott, 2000).

Roles Normative mechanisms that involve shared expectations between group members (Hollander, 1958)

Role Expectations Expectations embodied by the mission and goals of the agency as understood by staff. These expectations affect how workers perceive their role and clients (Jewell & Glaser, 2006).

Routines The act of simplifying tasks and narrowing one's range of perception to more efficiently process information and respond. Routines make tasks more manageable. It is through routines that worker discretion is evident (Hollander, 1958, p. 83).

Sanctions Any type of write-up or infraction, which either takes away tenant privileges or puts their housing in jeopardy. This can also include a 30-day notice with a contract requiring change of behavior.

Shelter Plus Care Program (SPC) A federal program designed to serve the most vulnerable and difficult-to-serve homeless populations. These include those who are disabled, have severe mental illness, AIDS or chronic substance abuse problems. The program does this by offering these individuals permanent supportive housing. The SPC program distributes grants to public agencies that offer supportive housing. For those homeless with less severe issues, an alternative program called the SRO program provides affordable permanent housing without supports (Fosberg, 1996).

Single Room Occupancy (SRO) are multiple tenant buildings, which contain one-room units meant for only one person. They often have communal bathrooms and kitchens. They have often been a means of acquiring housing for very low-income vulnerable populations because of their low cost.

Social Construction of Client The categorization and labeling of clients. This can be done at the agency or worker level.

Socially Situated Actors The ability of the individual to articulate an understanding of the organization's purpose and her role within it, to execute policy and procedures on the basis of that understanding, and to withstand internal and external critiques of her approach (Watkins-Hayes, 2009, p.25).

Street-Level Bureaucrats (SLBs) Public service workers who work face-to-face with the public and have substantial discretion with interactions with the public. Public service agencies that employ a significant number of SLBs are called street-level bureaucracies. Examples of SLBs include teachers, police officers, welfare workers, criminal justice workers, mental institution attendants, healthcare workers and other public employees responsible for providing access to public goods and services. Those who hold such jobs are similar because they experience similar working conditions (Lipsky, 1980, p. 3-4).

Supportive Housing Meetings

Task Environment areas of the organization where exchange of inputs for outputs are negotiated. For PSHs, task environments can include clients, granting agencies, federal, state and local governments, advocacy groups, other social service agencies, etc.

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