UTS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

Good Intentions And White Middle-Class Femininities: Negotiating Privilege In The Social Enterprise

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Certificate Of Original Authorship

I, Helen Lind Taylor, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the UTS Business School at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise reference or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution. This research is supported by the Australian Government Research Training Program.

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Preface

My study of Warm Hearts as an organisation was shaped from the first coffee meeting I took with the CEO in the lead up to formalising our agreement for me to spend 12 months with them. A PhD candidate new to ethnography as a method, I was taking care to ensure it was clear what my study required in terms of access while also working to build a rapport from that first iced flat white. We spoke of the state of the social welfare sector and Warm Hearts' recipients, but we spent just as much time speaking openly about the challenges of running a social enterprise that was at that point just over two years old. After some time embedded in the organisation, I reflected on this first meeting and recognised that I had been casually interviewed, and evidently shown myself to be a good fit.

My ethnographic study of Warm Hearts called on me to bring much of myself to the work. It was important to my participants to understand me, and for me to 'make sense' to them as a researcher. Communicating that I was a good fit was partly simply showing up as a white, middle-class, tertiary-educated woman. I also drew on a set of skills I had developed by way of this positionality; I was equal parts encouraging, enthusiastic, empathetic. I was able to imply openness without sharing more personal information than seemed necessary to complement what my participants would later share with me between meetings, as asides, in those moments as we waited for everyone to log in to Zoom. Once fieldwork began, my participants quickly shifted from seeing me as a researcher to seeing me as one of them; they would share book and podcast recommendations they "knew I would love". When they shifted from speaking about their children and husbands to ask me about my family, my identity as a queer woman was framed in heteronormativity by a tendency to describe my dogs as my "fur babies". They made sense of me to themselves.

I had never seen or thought about my own whiteness, middle-class status, and femininity in terms of community building like this before. I recognised the spaces and disclosures this positionality opened up in new ways, where shorthand and assumed

consensus spoke more of our shared privileges than any careful articulation of capital P ‘Privilege’ ever could. This positionality is one that has historically made it hard for me to see my privilege. My background in gender studies gave me a firm stance as a feminist from my early 20s, and I consumed the work of white women advocating equal pay, bodily autonomy, safety in the streets and in our homes. I was passionate, my own writing calling for change and decrying the patriarchy. I drew from lived experiences to bolster my righteousness, and I was applauded for the words I had to share. Since this time, it is bell hooks’ (1984) *Feminist Theory: From Margin To Center* that first shook loose my insistent grip on my white middle-class womanhood-as-oppression. Learning how whiteness and middle-class status are seen and understood as privileges by those who do not hold them is one piece of the work. Learning to see myself as privileged and recognise my own whiteness, for example, is another altogether. Finally, learning how to bring my passion for challenging inequality into a new realm of possibility, the shared work of dismantling the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, is the world of a lifetime. Of *my* lifetime.

Encountering my own whiteness and middle-class privilege through this ethnography has been a determined practice of tarrying with discomfort (Yancy, 2015). My thesis presents my research as a linear story, but my starkly privileged experience of being somehow *surprised* by whiteness and all the ‘messiness’ that race encompasses (Yancy, 2012) is what I have endeavoured to be truthful to in my contributions. My initial intention was to study and subsequently celebrate Warm Hearts for the ways their work might inspire, but this gave way somewhat unexpectedly to a range of frustrations with the organisation. Exploring these frustrations has made clear to me the ways that I too have both perpetuated and been compliant with dominator culture (hooks, 2013). I believe my contributions are all the richer for these tensions. This work is personal; in various sections of this thesis, I implicate myself when I speak of white people. This is purposeful. I do not separate myself from the project as a dispassionate, objective researcher but instead involve myself and my own experiences in my work. I find that my queerness has been helpful in making clear to me the ways in which I do not ‘fit’, and how this can be constructive (Taylor, 2020), but this part of my identity

does not exist separately from other parts. Throughout my thesis, I find it more helpful to build my contributions from a place that holds privileges of whiteness and wealth to careful attention.

This thesis finds me concentrated on the work of dismantling the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. My wonderful supervisors Helena Liu and Kyoung-Hee Yu have helped me to stay clear on my intention to be hard on these systems of oppression and inequality, but soft on the people I have studied. I recognise that working under dominator culture often presents us with limited options. My participants have been generous with their experiences, and I am grateful to Warm Hearts for all I learned there.

Abbreviations

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACNC	Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission
AGM	Annual General Meeting
ATSI	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COO	Chief Operations Officer
DV	Domestic Violence
HR	Human Resources
IT	Information Technology
KPI	Key Performance Indicators
LGA	Local Geographic Area
MOS	Management And Organisation Studies
WIP	Work In Progress

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Abstract

Entrepreneurial pursuits appear to offer the promise of success to all. The possibilities inherent in building a business and working outside of hierarchical organisations and traditional roles are fascinating and compelling. A substantial body of scholarship on gender inequality in the critical entrepreneurship field explores entrepreneurship as socially constructed; a gendered practice. More recently, scholars in the field have reflected that research is largely focused on gender and the gendering of organisations, and call for a critical approach that looks beyond gender to consider race and class. Nkomo's (1992) call to re-write race into organisations implores critical scholars to incorporate race in their work as a central analytical category. My thesis answers this call by beginning from the assumption that race and class are central to critical contributions alongside gender.

For this project, I undertook a digital ethnography over 12 months, studying Warm Hearts, a social enterprise in its third year of operations. My thesis examines the reflection and reproduction of power structures in the social enterprise, defining these structures as white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. I address the complexity of race, class, and gender as social categories through a conceptual framework that incorporates postfeminism and critical whiteness studies. My project incorporates digital ethnography as a novel methodological approach to critical entrepreneurship studies. My contribution is drawn from studying online and digital spaces, reinterpreting the 'field' of social entrepreneurship.

My thesis examines the social enterprise as a site that reflects and reproduces systems of oppression, shaped by structures of power. Discourses of 'opportunity discovery' see the social enterprise capitalising on the needs of marginalised people, where the prioritisation of innovation contributes to their objectification. The negotiation of race, class, and gender for my participants makes social entrepreneurship a complex practice. Empowerment is pursued as a right, and privilege sits in tension with disadvantage. I challenge the ways women are reduced to one-dimensional traits of

‘sharing and caring’ in the social entrepreneurship scholarship (Lewis & Henry, 2019) by arguing my participants’ work is shaped by a complex relationship to power.

The inclusion of class and gender is key to re-writing race into organisations. This project lays bare structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. With more nuanced understanding of the complexities of power come new opportunities for co-conspiratorship and the dismantling of inequality.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introducing The Project

Entrepreneurship and the promise of implied freedom – of being one's own boss, making one's talent or passion one's livelihood, or delivering an answer to a problem in a unique and marketable way – has fascinated individuals, organisations, and society more broadly. As I note in the preface, my background as a critical scholar has given me an understanding of the ways traditional workplace structures exclude, limit, and discriminate against groups marginalised by structures of power that centre white, straight, wealthy, Western, able-bodied cisgender masculinities. There is much about entrepreneurship that appears to offer possibilities for success outside these organisational norms.

My curiosity about these possibilities was tempered by the understanding that the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy shapes what bell hooks names 'dominator culture' (2013); power structures made real through all the layers of our lives. I recognised that almost all entrepreneurs celebrated as successful were white, straight, wealthy, Western, able-bodied cisgender men. This curiosity was fed by my own experiences. Before I started this research, I was working with entrepreneurs in a start-up incubator, where I often observed white middle- and upper-class female entrepreneurs express fears about their new businesses being "taken seriously". Resources and events were devoted to female entrepreneurship, inviting a sense of possibility that their empowerment as business owners was close to hand. However, the persistent messaging that encouraged these white women to overcome the barrier of their genders in pursuit of entrepreneurial success left me uninspired. With this project I draw on my curiosity about the experiences of white middle-class women entrepreneurs. Only one in four start-up founders in Australia are not men (Startup Muster, 2018), so experiences of marginalisation in the industry are not surprising. However, the messaging from the start-up industry both reinforced and over-simplified the ways patriarchy as a power structure put white women entrepreneurs at a disadvantage. Between these female entrepreneurs, their champions and mentors, and the start-up sector, I saw a marked avoidance of discussions of race or

class as additional social categories that along with gender are shaped by structures of power.

Reviewing The Literature

Mainstream entrepreneurship scholarship prioritises progress and growth by building understanding of and ultimately replicating entrepreneurial success. The field of critical entrepreneurship considers the mechanisms that contribute to this success to be socially constructed; embedded within more complex structures that determine access to opportunity and resources (Martinez Dy et al., 2017). The field incorporates sociological approaches to more clearly explore the ways that structures of power have shaped entrepreneurship. My project makes a unique contribution to the field of critical entrepreneurship studies by extending this work; I consider the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy as dominator culture, with specific focus on social enterprise.

In Chapter 2, I examine the existing scholarship. Mainstream entrepreneurship studies look to understand how entrepreneurs have succeeded; fascinated with the discovery of entrepreneurial opportunity and potential avenues to replicate successes (Shane, 2000; Shane et al., 2003). I join critical entrepreneurship scholars by beginning my argument with an assumption that the mechanisms of entrepreneurship are socially constructed: identities, practices, and performances designed to convey legitimacy (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; de Bruin et al., 2007; Essers et al., 2017; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017; McAdam, 2013; Tedmanson et al., 2012; Yousafzai et al., 2019). I extend my argument, and therefore the field, by establishing a critical approach that includes race, class, and gender as social categories shaped by power structures (hooks, 1984; Nash, 2019; Nkomo, 1992). The start-up industry as well as scholarship in the critical entrepreneurship field have focused predominantly on gender as an identity shaped by patriarchy, but these experiences must be considered in the context of race and class as well as gender. Calls from the field concede that the focus on gender inequality alone limits the possibilities for critical entrepreneurship scholarship (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Tedmanson et al., 2012; Yousafzai et al., 2019). I set the complexity of white middle-class

femininities in my sights in this project. Theorising this complexity opens exciting possibilities for the future of the field. My contribution to critical entrepreneurship scholarship is one that insists on making multiple structures of power clear.

A Conceptual Framework

My project establishes a conceptual framework in the second half of Chapter 2 through which the complexities of white middle-class femininities in social entrepreneurship can be understood. Firstly, I define key concepts including capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy as power structures, as well as femininities in the context of this project. I incorporate postfeminist theory and critical whiteness studies to address the ways power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. I also explore the question of how white middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship. My examination centres whiteness and middle-class status for study alongside gender, interrogating them instead of further contributing to the universalising of these as social categories upheld by structures of power. Having identified the limits to the literature, my project extends these by considering a broader call made by Nkomo (1992, 2021) to Management and Organisation Studies scholars. Nkomo insisted in her 1992 paper *"The Emperor has no clothes: re-writing 'race in organisations'"* that as critical scholars we must re-write race into the field as a central analytical category. Nkomo (1992) argues that in Management and Organisation Studies (MOS), scholarship reflects structures of white supremacy and patriarchy through the continued construction of white, male superiority in organisations through the omission of race and ethnicity from their research. For Nkomo, this invokes a question of *other*ness, where it is most likely that non-white voices will aim to call attention to these omissions. She observes that these *other* voices (p. 488, her emphasis) remain unheard and ignored by the dominant group. The project of this paper, as she expresses it, is to firstly "analyse how race has been written into the study of organisations in incomplete and inadequate ways" (p. 489) before suggesting ways race can be used as a productive analytical category in MOS. Race has been silenced as an analytical category through domination of white supremacy as a power structure that shapes priorities, interests and interpretations. Nkomo's (1992) paper demonstrates the importance of taking race seriously as a critical approach to the study of organisations. Her

2021 paper returns to this declaration, reinvigorating her assertion. Her call is political, inviting scholars to theorise race with a "contextual, multi-level approach and attending to its historical, cultural, subjective, power, and structural manifestations" (2021, p. 215). Ultimately, my project is political; through the study of how power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise, I am challenging the societal assumptions and systems of oppression that uphold them.

Methodological Approach

My study looks to the social enterprise as a type of entrepreneurial organisation (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; Essers et al., 2017; Peredo & McLean, 2006). I define the social enterprise using Peredo and McLean's (2006) framework, as an organisation that creates social value, takes advantage of opportunities to create value, employs innovation, accepts a level of risk, and is resourceful with 'scarce assets'. Essers et al. (2017) argue that less 'traditional' entrepreneurial pursuits offer clear potential for extending critical understandings. Critical study of social entrepreneurship has limits pertinent for my project: a lack of examination of inequalities *within* organisations designed to address social inequality (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019), and a tendency to portray (white) women or practices of femininity as one-dimensional (Lewis & Henry, 2019). I examine these limits in the context of power structures as well as the rendering of white middle-class femininities. My project is informed by empirical data collected over the course of a 12-month digital ethnography. In Chapter 3, I establish the context of my study of Warm Hearts as a social enterprise in their third year of operations. I had access to data made possible through ethnographic methods of observation and semi-structured interviews (Bruni et al., 2004; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Gilmore & Kenny, 2015; Pierce, 2012; Van Maanen, 2011b). I explain how these were extended through a specifically digital ethnographic approach to include access to the organisation's digital and online spaces. Digital ethnography is a methodology often used in anthropology, sociology, media, communication, and cultural studies disciplines (Pink et al., 2016; Postill & Pink, 2012). Entrepreneurial pursuits are increasingly located in online and digital spaces, which has been the focus of recent studies (Martinez Dy et al., 2017, 2018), establishing a promising extension of the critical entrepreneurship field. This project examined a social enterprise that undertook the majority of their work in online and digital

spaces. By using more recently established data collection methods to meet the organisation at the various locations they did their work, I gained unique insights that were interpreted in the digital context. Online culture replicates social dynamics shaped by structures of power (Murthy, 2008; Postill & Pink, 2012). My work establishes digital ethnography as a meaningful methodological approach for the critical entrepreneurship field, but also offers exciting possibilities for the study of other types of digital organising and management practices. My use of this methodology is one of the unique contributions I make with this thesis.

Reflexivity

As a political project that challenges systems of oppression shaped by power structures, I incorporate reflexivity in my work. Having flagged this dynamic in my preface, I discuss it further in Chapter 3. Firstly, my role as a researcher embedded in the social enterprise situated me in a position of power (Gunaratnam & Hamilton, 2017; Madison, 2011; Pierce, 2012; Thomas, 1993). A critical approach to my digital ethnography included strategies to mitigate this dynamic (Alvesson, 2003; Denzin, 2001; Hjorth et al., 2017; Linabary & Hamel, 2017; Pessoa et al., 2019). To unravel the intriguing knot of the privilege and disadvantage experienced by the white middle- and upper-class women mentioned above, I must acknowledge my own positionality. As a white queer middle-class cisgender woman, I share many of the experiences of my participants. My positionality is significant in the design and delivery of this project because it informs my approach to and interpretation of existing scholarship and theory, my data collection and analysis strategies, and my theorising as a critical scholar (Behar, 1996; Madison, 2011; Pierce, 2012). Privilege can be understood as a word that threatens; a concept that somehow nullifies lived experiences of discrimination and disadvantage (Hamad, 2019; Sullivan, 2014; Yancy, 2012, 2018). In the pursuit of entrepreneurial success, I observe that acknowledging privilege sits uncomfortably alongside myths of meritocracy and neutral opportunity creation (Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017). This tension is rarely addressed in the critical entrepreneurship scholarship, most often centring the challenges of marginalised folks pursuing entrepreneurial success. My project extends the critical entrepreneurship scholarship

through recognition of my own privilege in reflections and reproductions of power structures in the social enterprise.

Research Questions And Findings

In this project, I took an exploratory approach in answering the following questions:

1. How are power structures reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise?
2. How are white middle-class femininities rendered through social entrepreneurship?

In Chapters 4, 5, and 6, I explore the findings I developed through an inductive approach to my empirical data. In Chapter 4, I delve into the recipients of Warm Hearts' material aid service. I show the ways the social welfare sector understood these folks as vulnerable people and consider the ways the sector shaped Warm Hearts' construction of their recipients as a 'vulnerable Other' (Daya, 2014). In Chapter 5, I look to the organisation itself. I describe Warm Hearts' place in the social welfare sector and explore how they operate as a social enterprise, considering entrepreneurial discourse of opportunity discovery. I explain the ways they were resourced as an organisation predominantly reliant on volunteer time and donations of goods and services. Chapters 4 and 5 describe a range of phenomena at Warm Hearts, purposefully drawing attention to what is considered typical of a social enterprise in rich ethnographic detail. This informs the contrasts and comparisons of the next chapter. In Chapter 6, I examine the reflexivity of the organisation, describing the range of ways their organisation discourse of 'doing things differently' shaped their pursuit of empowerment, negotiation of privilege, incorporation of good intentions, and finally, the ways my participants professed their vulnerability at Warm Hearts. These findings show the range of ways that structures of power are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

My Contribution To The Critical Entrepreneurship Field

My project offers a series of meaningful contributions to the critical entrepreneurship field. In Chapter 7, I discuss the implications of my findings. Firstly, I establish that the social enterprise is an organisation that reflects and reproduces power structures. In particular, my work shows that 'opportunity discovery' (Shane, 2000) is a dominant entrepreneurial

discourse that perpetuates capitalist priorities of exploiting resources for innovation, and ultimately for gain. Discovering opportunity in the lived vulnerability of people marginalised by dominator culture is a challenge for social enterprise that sits in tension with the motivation to do good. Dominator culture is further perpetuated as this 'opportunity' translates into the objectification of recipients as the vulnerable Other. Secondly, I show the ways that white middle-class femininities are rendered to argue that empowerment promised through postfeminist notions of perfection (McRobbie, 2015) reinforce systems of inequality and oppression. The focus on gender inequality in the pursuit of success for white middle-class female entrepreneurs masks the privileges that resource them. I extend this argument to state that even reflexive work to acknowledge privilege necessarily has a limit under white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy. Finally, through an examination of white middle-class femininities as both privileged and vulnerable, I challenge the notion of (white) women in social entrepreneurship as one-dimensional (Lewis & Henry, 2019). I name my participants' negotiation of their privilege and disadvantage as 'professions of vulnerability'; a specific performance that operates to soften responsibility while showing their reflexivity. In a social enterprise, the 'good white person' (Sullivan, 2014) engages in performances and practices that show a deep, emotional resistance to reconciling or 'tarrying with' (Yancy, 2015) race, class, and gender as social categories constituted by structures of power. The specific way these categories are interwoven is what produces these professions of vulnerability. In responding to Nkomo's (1992) call to re-write race into organisations, I examine my role in producing critical scholarship. My contribution insists that race does need to be re-written into organisation studies, but in order to attend to "its historical, cultural, subjective, power, and structural manifestations" (Nkomo, 2021, p. 215), it must be considered along with gender and class.

Conclusion

As an exploratory qualitative study, the discussion of my findings offer an exciting range of possibilities for further research. In my concluding chapter, I discuss the inevitable limitations of studying race, class, and gender in the critical entrepreneurship field. In drawing together the contributions of my project, I make some suggestions about avenues of enquiry that will further Nkomo's (1992) project of re-writing race into organisations and

extend critical entrepreneurship scholarship. In the political project of dismantling systems of oppression that maintain dominator culture, critical entrepreneurship studies make power structures tangible. Concluding my thesis with a sense of possibility insists on returning to liberation as a core value and driving force of scholar-activism.

Chapter 2: Literature Review And Conceptual Framework

Introduction

This project is the study of a social enterprise organisation in its third year of operation. My thesis is motivated by a broader political project of rewriting race into critical Management and Organisation Studies (MOS) (Nkomo, 1992, 2021). My project insists that re-writing race into critical entrepreneurship studies is a vital means of extending scholarship in this field that has tended to focus on gendered experiences and articulations of entrepreneurship. This chapter begins with a review of the literature, drawing together work across disciplines. I review entrepreneurship and critical entrepreneurship scholarship, considering how the field has taken focus on gender. I offer discussion of the limited examination of aspects of race and class, before situating social entrepreneurship in a broader context of critical entrepreneurship studies. Having established an understanding of the field, I then propose a conceptual framework for my project. I begin by defining how my project has used power structures as a key term more broadly, and capitalism, patriarchy and femininities more specifically. From here, I discuss my framework, which addresses the limits I have identified by incorporating interdisciplinary postfeminist approaches to themes of female empowerment and class to extend scholarship. Finding much of the scholarship quiet on race, I propose critical whiteness studies as a theoretical approach that also informs the conceptual framework. Central to the use of this scholarship is my political intention to challenge systems of oppression perpetuated by power structures. Throughout the discussion, I highlight and celebrate work that applies critical race theory and philosophy within organisations, looking to how this scholarship makes the interconnected nature of race, class, and gender explicit. Incorporating this approach means I will offer a contribution that extends understandings of power structures in the critical entrepreneurship field.

I offer a unique contribution that demonstrates the necessity of rewriting race into the critical entrepreneurship field as part of MOS more broadly. This review of the literature offers a sense of the political possibility of such a project. This scholarship is important and necessary because it articulates the ways power shapes entrepreneurship in social

enterprise. Making the privileges of white middle-class femininities clear in my work is a challenge to the power structures that perpetuate systems of oppression.

Literature Review

Entrepreneurship And Critical Entrepreneurship Studies

Entrepreneurship is a broad field of research. Its study has been applied in contexts ranging from individuals to start-up companies, as well as devoted innovation teams within organisations. It is a "very diverse, multifaceted, and contested phenomenon" (Essers et al., 2017, p. 1), yet the field has been primarily focused on 'opportunity discovery' as a driving force of entrepreneurial success (Shane, 2000); concerned with how individual entrepreneurs innovate and iterate in order to further this success (Hull et al., 2007; Ries, 2011; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; see also Ahl & Marlow, 2012; de Bruin et al., 2007). It has been discussed at length in terms of its promise as a field of research (Santos et al., 2018; Sarasvathy, 2001; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), but the field is primarily concerned with functionalist understandings of it as positive economic activity (Calás et al., 2009; Tedmanson et al., 2012). Many questions therefore remain unanswered by mainstream entrepreneurship research which perpetuates this understanding.

Contrarily, critical entrepreneurship studies question the neoliberal stylings of prioritising individual pursuit of profit above all else (Ahl & Marlow, 2021). Success has been positioned by mainstream research to function as a mark of respectability and entitlement (McRobbie, 2009; Rottenberg, 2017), whereas critical entrepreneurship scholars examine how entrepreneurship is represented as an accessible site of neutral socioeconomic opportunity creation (Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017) to question the privileged nature of entrepreneurial opportunities and how access to them is enjoyed by individual actors. Mainstream entrepreneurship studies understand entrepreneurship as a platform from which to realise individual potential and asserts that this platform remains inclusive as there are no formal entry barriers (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; McAdam, 2013). Much of this scholarship asserts that what determines success is simply a matter of recognising and taking advantage of an opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Critical scholars have countered this argument by observing the influence of neoliberalism in the mainstream's

focus upon individual over collective (Gill, 2008; Gill & Scharff, 2011; Marttila, 2013, 2018), specifically in the context of entrepreneurship (Ahl, 2006; Ahl & Marlow, 2012; de Bruin et al., 2007). It becomes clear with a critical approach that 'no formal entry barriers' can be more accurately described as 'invisible' barriers (McAdam, 2013). Despite neoliberal promises of opportunity and independence, entrepreneurship tends to reinforce limitations beneficial to upholding structures of power.

Critical scholars in the field examine a wide range of assumptions produced by dominant discourses of entrepreneurship: the idealisation of the entrepreneurial figure (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Tedmanson et al., 2012), lack of inclusivity in economic pursuits (Durbin et al., 2017; Walby, 2018), and the 'gender blind' premise of entrepreneurial success (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow & McAdam, 2015;). Entrepreneurship has been "intrinsically connected with masculinity" (Bruni et al., 2004, p. 407), where patriarchy is a structure of power that offers men a position of privilege with which to access all they need for success. Close examination of situated practices show the ways entrepreneurs perform gender. Feminist analyses observe 'entrepreneuring' as a gendered process (Ahl & Marlow, 2012), where the women's entrepreneurship landscape is understood as "gendered terrain" (Yousafzai et al., 2019, p. 167). My project builds from this invaluable work by starting with the assumption that entrepreneurship is shaped by power structures. I extend this understanding to argue that race and class must also be considered in the critical entrepreneurship field.

Despite understanding entrepreneurship as capitalist in nature and motivation, direct critical discussion of class in entrepreneurship as it relates to gender and race is significantly underrepresented in current scholarship. A few notable exceptions draw attention to class as a key social category, particularly in terms of poor and working-class folks and their relationship to entrepreneurship as a marginalised group (Martinez Dy, 2019; Martinez Dy et al., 2017, 2018). Most scholarship tends to speak *around* class and these different types of capital, identifying factors such as education, networks, financial support, and previous training or experience as key to entrepreneurial success (Byrne et al., 2019; Marlow & McAdam, 2015). This scholarship has addressed some connections between gender and class. For example, McAdam (2013) established that the privilege of *access* to capital is

gendered. Considering policies for inclusive economic growth, Walby (2018) has also discussed the ways in which *types* of capital are gendered. She observes that it is men who are most engaged in the production of fixed capital, or objects. Women are more likely to be associated with the production of human capital, such as care. In the critical entrepreneurship literature, the 'occupational segregation' of women into service-based industries has been discussed (McAdam, 2013; Rottenberg, 2017). McAdam (2013) argues that occupational segregation also limits the accrual of capital necessary to establish a business; another invisible barrier for women in entrepreneurship. Martinez Dy et al. (2017) make clear that "entrepreneurship is embedded within complex social hierarchies that influence the unequal accumulation of resources" (p. 290). These hierarchies include class as well as gender and race, and reflect and reproduce structures of power. While entrepreneurship research has focused on men's access to capital, the legitimisation of women engaged in entrepreneurship through access to capital is significant to critical scholarship. This project will hold the class and socio-economic status of white women up for critical assessment as privilege as the existing literature has done masculinity.

Informed by key discussions of power across disciplines, a significant amount of critical entrepreneurship research focuses on the ways patriarchy as a structure of power is reproduced in entrepreneurship. The field's focus on the gendering of entrepreneurship reiterates white, Western, patriarchal understandings of a masculine/feminine binary. Questioning the 'gender agenda' of entrepreneurship research, Marlow and Martinez Dy (2018) highlight that centring women and gender in critical entrepreneurship research puts the field "in danger of partiality in presenting gender as a one-dimensional property of women alone, rather than recognising it as a multiplicity enacted by all human subjects in a diverse range of contexts" (p. 4).

For my project, examining gender in terms of multiplicity establishes a more sophisticated understanding of how race and class are interwoven with identity in a way that reinterprets femininities as a more open question, instead of an "epistemological dead end" (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). Reifying gender as a binary through my research is antithetical to a project that seeks to challenge systems of oppression perpetuated by power structures. By considering white middle-class femininities in their multiplicity, I take up the

encouragement of my colleagues in the critical entrepreneurship field to appreciate the complexities of gender performances in entrepreneurship (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Yousafzai et al., 2019), and by doing so extend the scholarship in new directions.

Finally, and importantly for my project, I observe that race is largely unaddressed in the critical entrepreneurship field, following a pattern across much of MOS. I understand race as socially constructed, a categorisation that is a "profound determinant of one's political rights, one's location in the labour market, one's access to medical care, and even one's sense of identity" (Nkomo, 1992, p. 488). As a social construction, race is inextricably bound with and by power structures, as well as by organisations and organising practices that include management, leadership, and entrepreneurship beholden to these structures (Liu, 2020; Parker & Grimes, 2009; Pierce, 2012). Race has predominantly been examined in critical entrepreneurship scholarship as one aspect of identity in larger considerations of entrepreneurial activity. Work from Essers and Benschop (2007, 2009) draws ethnicity as well as religion into a larger analysis of minority women in the Netherlands, and their approach to entrepreneurial identities. In this approach to critical scholarship, 'ethnicity' is a term that surfaces often (McAdam, 2013; Verduijn & Essers, 2013). Nkomo (1992) offers an historical review of the 'ethnic-based paradigm' in terms of assimilation theory, where essentialist notions of racial and ethnic stratification hold focus on more individualist understandings of racism. Failure to assimilate into white America, in Nkomo's (1992) example, brought ethnicity into focus as an explanation that side-steps discussions of systems of power and collective experiences of discrimination and oppression. Ethnicity as a variable has been used comparatively by scholars to highlight discrepancies in experiences of entrepreneurship. Categorising difference in this way becomes a means by which to work around naming race, including acknowledging racism as a barrier to entry, longevity, or success in any type of entrepreneurial pursuit. There is notable lack of discussion of white supremacy as a structure of power that sets limits and barriers according to race, instead celebrating successful "ethnic entrepreneurs" in a way that foregrounds model minorities (Idriss, 2021; Idriss et al., 2021) and remains silent on whiteness. My project speaks into that silence, arguing that in the field of critical entrepreneurship, race must be considered *with* class and gender as social categories shaped by structures of power.

The critical entrepreneurship field has thus far been hesitant to consider the role of white supremacy as a power structure that shapes entrepreneurship. Whiteness is universalised as normative in organisations, largely unmentioned but unavoidably present in both organisations and the literature in which they are studied and discussed (Nkomo, 1992, 2021). Of the few studies that address whiteness, recent contributions from Martinez Dy et al. (2017, 2018) are exceptions that establish more complex understandings of positionality and their direct relationship to societal barriers to entrepreneurial success. Martinez Dy and colleagues argue that "specific differences of socio-economic class and race in particular, accompanied by corresponding resources access or lack thereof, precipitate the presence or absence of powers and mechanisms" (2018, p. 12–13) available to their participants. They state that for white participants, white privilege is a "vital entrepreneurial resource" (2018, p. 14) of credibility and familiarity, standing in for qualifications and facilitating opportunities through social networks. Martinez Dy et al.'s (2018) focus on digital entrepreneurship establishes promising possibilities for the future of critical entrepreneurship studies. My project extends these possibilities to the study of power structures in the social enterprise.

Calls from critical entrepreneurship scholars for research to reckon with race and class have been frequent in the past 10 years (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; McAdam, 2013; Tedmanson et al., 2012; Yousafzai et al., 2019). I have taken up this call with my work, making the privileges of white middle-class femininities evident and challenging the power structures that perpetuate systems of oppression. Entrepreneurship studies and critical MOS will benefit from a clearer understanding of the ways white middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship, as contributed through this research. In extending work in the field of critical entrepreneurship studies, I highlight the complexity of the ways in which structures of power shape access to opportunity and capital.

Social Enterprise, Social Entrepreneurship

Recent work in the field of critical entrepreneurship studies has already considered social enterprise and social entrepreneurship as part of the larger entrepreneurial landscape. Essers et al. (2017) highlight the value of looking to less traditional forms of

entrepreneurship to extend critical understandings. They also argue for positioning entrepreneurship as an "activity, behaviour, or process which can be linked to new ethical and political possibilities" (p. 2). A critical review of social entrepreneurship literature from Peredo and McLean (2006) discusses some of the intricacies and debates in defining this type of entrepreneurship specifically. They question whether it is "just the application of sound business practices to the operation of non-profit organisations … or is it a more radically different approach to the business of doing good?" (p. 56). Their framework offers a useful understanding of social entrepreneurship, suggesting (p. 64):

> [S]ocial entrepreneurship is exercised where some person or group:
>
> (1) aim(s) at creating social value, either exclusively or at least in some prominent way;
> (2) show(s) a capacity to recognize and take advantage of opportunities to create that value (''envision'');
> (3) employ(s) innovation, ranging from outright invention to adapting someone else's novelty, in creating and/or distributing social value;
> (4) is/are willing to accept an above-average degree of risk in creating and disseminating social value; and
> (5) is/are unusually resourceful in being relatively undaunted by scarce assets in pursuing their social venture.

As with critical entrepreneurship literature, critical contributions to social entrepreneurship scholarship remain focused on gender but are also limited. In *A Research Agenda for Social Entrepreneurship* (2019), de Bruin and Teasdale observe that even though social enterprise work is often focused on addressing gender inequality, social enterprise is not often examined as a gendered practice. They claim what while women are over-represented in the sector generally, men remain over-represented at the higher decision-making levels. This argument is aligned with insights offered by Walby (2018), who suggests that gender inequalities in the workforce are reproduced through patriarchal leadership and management models, presenting a challenge to goals for inclusive economic growth. Again in *A Research Agenda for Social Entrepreneurship*, Lewis and Henry (2019) discuss the potential for inclusive economic progress in social enterprise, observing that women's

participation in the sector has been considered in terms of a "deliberate rejection of the hierarchical organisational structures of business … a means of rebelling against modern male-dominant conceptualisations of heroic capitalistic forms of entrepreneurship" (p. 122). Despite this hint of possibility, Lewis and Henry (2019) also note that gender has predominantly been incorporated one-dimensionally in research; as a relatively undeveloped field, discussions of women or practices of femininity as 'caring and sharing' within entrepreneurship literature are inherently reductive and play to more essentialising notions of trait-driven behaviour. The authors look to contributions to critical entrepreneurship from Calás et al. (2009) and Marlow (2014) to demonstrate the value of examining gender in social entrepreneurship. Still, there is lack of critical research addressing race or class in social entrepreneurship scholarship. My project takes focus on the social categories of gender, race, and class to establish a more complex understanding of the ways power structures shape social entrepreneurship.

This project looks to consider new political possibilities by extending critical entrepreneurship research to focus on a social enterprise company. The 'social' of social enterprise indicates a primary aim of "delivering social and/or environmental benefits" (Daya, 2014, p. 120). Considering the 'social' offers critical opportunity to examine the role 'doing good' plays in both discursive and operational ways in an organisation. 'Doing good' through the delivery of benefits has been consistently examined in research as a central aspect of social entrepreneurship. Considering social entrepreneurship as meaningful work, Dempsey and Sander (2010) argue that this kind of doing good is widely celebrated. Critical work examining the balance of doing good and being successful at doing good (Peredo & McLean, 2006) specific to social enterprise highlights a tendency of existing research to focus on empowerment as an outcome of doing good (Daya, 2014). Daya (2014) argues that this focus neglects more critical questions about power within the social enterprise sector, identifying the social issue of how power relationships shape discourse, representations, and practices of social enterprise. She highlights that the role of 'saving' implicit in social enterprise infers more complex power relationships, where the recipient of goodwill (or the good being done by the business) is necessarily objectified to varying degrees. Such ethical concerns encountered by social entrepreneurs are also examined by Zahra et al. (2009), who highlight that "balancing social wealth with the desire to make profits and maintain

economic efficiency is not a simple matter" (p. 520). Daya (2014) raises questions of power in terms of race, gender, and class of both the social entrepreneur and objectified recipient. Daya's (2014) participants raise this dynamic through the concept of 'white saviourism', and Cole's (2012) statement on the 'white-saviour industrial complex' is important to consider here. He argues that a white person seeking to do good by "making a difference" should be held accountable to a principle of 'first, do no harm' (para. 10). Harm is considered by Daya (2014) as objectification, where these discourses "entrench multiple differences" (p. 127). It is important to note that this project does not seek to criticise doing good as a pursuit for social enterprise companies. I look to examine what 'doing good' means for the social enterprise as a central motivator. Power structures can limit and shape the possibilities of doing good in social enterprise. The role of social enterprise in reflecting and reproducing power structures that marginalise and objectify recipients requires critical investigation.

Scholarship that critically examines power structures in the social enterprise sector is limited. My contribution to the critical entrepreneurship field extends an examination of the ways power shapes this work. I understand race, class, and gender as social categories that make clear the systems of oppression constructed through white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. To do so, I will incorporate critical concepts from across disciplines. I propose a conceptual framework from which to undertake my study, making clear the ways sociological understandings of race, class, and gender are key in answering the question of how power structures are reflected and reproduced in social enterprise.

Conceptual Framework

The critical work this project extends in the field of critical entrepreneurship studies is the incorporation of frameworks informed by feminist theory (Calás et al., 2006; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Tedmanson et al., 2012). To undertake this approach, I propose a conceptual framework that equips me with critical theory and which offers established understandings of power structures. This project defines power structures as socially constructed; they are constructed through human-made processes and practices in an ongoing state of production and reproduction (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Calás et al., 2009). In MOS, power structures are examined in terms of hegemony (Marlow &

Martinez Dy, 2018); they afford power to some, and withhold power from others. As discussed earlier in Chapter 2, processes and practices that reproduce structures of power are often embedded within entrepreneurial organisations (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019) and practices of entrepreneurship Tedmanson et al., 2012; Martinez Dy et al., 2017).

I identify power structures as white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. These structures shape a range of phenomena more broadly that stem from ways of knowing and ways of being in the world (Ahl, 2006; Tedmanson et al., 2012). These power structures are predominantly discussed in critical entrepreneurship research in terms of hegemony, where entrepreneurship is a mechanism through which political ideology can be constituted and reproduced (Tedmanson et al., 2012). It is important to understand each of these power structures. Specifically, critical entrepreneurship scholars have observed patriarchy as a power structure expressed as relations between genders; a "fundamental gendered socio-economic ordering" (Ahl & Marlow, 2012, p. 547). Patriarchy is a structure of power best observed through male dominance in entrepreneurship; it is a power relationship that can express itself in institutional ways (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018) as well as individual and personal ways (Marlow & McAdam, 2015). Capitalism in entrepreneurship has been defined by Verduijn et al. (2014) in terms of the economic context in which entrepreneurs work, describing a dystopian view of the ideology of a capitalist economy as "the single best way of producing wealth and value in society" (p.102). Critical entrepreneurship scholarship treats capitalism alongside patriarchy as structures of power identified during a focus on wealthy men (Lewis & Henry, 2019). Power structures are understood in the critical entrepreneurship literature to generate hierarchy, or binarized understandings of superiority; to facilitate entrepreneurial control through agency (Martinez Dy et al., 2017). Throughout the thesis, my study of power structures examines and defines white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism in the social enterprise context.

My approach in this project makes use of specific subjects of analysis. Firstly, I consider positionality as a means of situating my participants. Positionality is a framework established by Anthias (2001) that Martinez Dy et al. (2017) incorporate to focus their analysis of entrepreneurs 'othered' by race, class, and/or gender. In my work, positionality

informs my discussion of the complexity of my participants' access and proximity to advantages because of the privileges their race and class afford them without disregarding the disadvantages of their gender. Secondly, I understand race, class, and gender as social categories shaped by power. Belonging to or being assumed to belong to particular social categories is a socialised process that I consider critically in order to understand the ways power structures are being reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. Finally, I use systems of inequality or oppression to identify and analyse the specific ways that power structures maintain the social categories of race, class, and gender to perpetuate racism, classism, and sexism.

Power structures are constructed through relationships to positionality, social categories, and systems of inequality. My thesis observes the expression and construction of these structures through organisational discourse, in keeping with scholarship that shapes my conceptual framework (Applebaum, 2016; Grimes & Parker, 2009; Lewis et al., 2017;). The implications of the ways white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy shape discourse as structures of power are central to my contribution. Organisational discourse is discussed throughout the thesis as indicative of commonly held beliefs and assumptions (Grimes, 2001; Yancy, 2012), but also in terms of aspirations and strategy (Ahmed, 2004; Martinez Dy et al., 2017). Attention has been paid to who speaks, how they speak, and to whom. I identify the ways positionality and privilege inform discourse throughout the organisation, examining structures of power as they shape social entrepreneurship.

I understand my participants as both privileged and disadvantaged by their positionality as middle-class white women and social entrepreneurs. My conceptual framework incorporates theoretical understandings of postfeminism to offer insight into the complexities of empowerment. This includes a discussion of privilege as it relates to power, as well as a consideration of the role of capital in privilege. Then, to address how structures of power are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise, I use Critical Whiteness Studies; a reflexive critical approach to studying whiteness as race and white supremacy as a power structure. The great critical opportunity suggested to us by Nkomo's (1992) call to re-write race into organisations can be answered in part by the application of Critical Whiteness Studies.

Privilege, Postfeminism, And White Middle-Class Femininities

Studies of gender in entrepreneurship often centre the experiences of white women entrepreneurs under patriarchy as the prevailing structure of power. Through this focus on their challenges in a male-dominated sector, they often fail to observe the ways that race and class offer advantages for these white women entrepreneurs. Critical consideration of privilege requires a strong grounding in larger understandings of structures of power. These structures of power permit access to privilege for some and deny access to others. Privilege is an advantage or benefit, in contrast to a disadvantage or restriction. As a power structure, white supremacy privileges whiteness; capitalism, the bourgeoisie; patriarchy masculinity (Collins, 2002; Davis, 1981; hooks, 1984, 2000, 2013). These structures of power are seductive (Liu, 2018a), and embedded into everyday practices as ongoing domination, what bell hooks (2013) describes as dominator culture. hooks' (2013) work draws together power structures, making an important argument that shapes my approach to analysis of white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism; all are interconnected and shape a culture of hierarchised power relations. The privilege these power structures offer is an incentive for those who hold it to ensure continuing dominance through oppression and inequality (Liu & Baker, 2016; Nkomo & Al Ariss, 2014; Sullivan, 2019; Yancy, 2018). Such encouragement and seduction obscures the fact that under dominator culture claiming power cannot lead to equality. It is not the master's tools that will dismantle the master's house (Lorde, 1984); acts of resistance and protest are re-purposed by dominator culture to continue perpetuating oppression in forms that often appear empowering until examined in closer detail.

Postfeminism has been taken up as a "critical concept for exploring women's contemporary organisational experience" (Lewis, 2014, p. 1845) in the past 15 years across a range of organisation studies scholarship (Lewis et al., 2017; Liu, 2018), including entrepreneurship specifically (Ahl & Marlow, 2021; Idriss, 2021; Jones & Clifton, 2018; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). Posited as an alternate route to success beyond the patriarchal structures of workplaces and organisations (Ahl, 2006; McRobbie, 2009), entrepreneurship seemingly offers (white) women possibilities of self-determination, a freedom from 'glass ceilings'. As an entrepreneur, a woman is able to pursue what McRobbie (2015) identifies as the

'Perfect': the individualistic striving to 'have it all', meaning a career and achievement of the feminine ideal. Defining femininity as a socially constructed expression and performance of gender (Butler, 1990) in context of a social enterprise allows me to contribute to feminist and social constructionist approaches established in the critical entrepreneurship field (see Lewis & Henry, 2019; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Tedmanson et al., 2012). Expressions and performances of gender are necessarily rendered through historical, cultural and social contexts; McRobbie's (2015) notion of the Perfect has analytical use for understanding particular and specific aspects of lived experiences of women in contemporary contexts, including in workplaces and organisations. In critical entrepreneurship studies, femininity is most commonly discussed in relation to women entrepreneurs (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Martinez Dy et al., 2017), and often established in an assumed binary in opposition to masculinity; the domain of men entrepreneurs (Ahl, 2006; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). This thesis examines the rendering of white middle-class femininities in an entrepreneurial context to purposefully emphasise the plurality of gender expression and identities. In resisting a singular application of gender, this research offers a meaningful analytical approach that can encompass race and class.

Critical reflections on postfeminism highlight the ways that the collective struggles of feminist political projects have been abandoned for this individualistic striving (Gill, 2008; McRobbie, 2009; Rottenberg, 2017). Previously radical political language of white feminist movements has been co-opted, where choice now rests with individual women, empowerment claimed through pursuits of success that scholars argue has played right back into standards and expectations of femininity driven by white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy (Kanai, 2020; McRobbie, 2015). The work of striving and the relationship to perfection held by women caught in postfeminist narratives ultimately serves to distract, promising empowerment while at the same time "refusing them, or else introducing even more exacting terms and conditions" (McRobbie, 2015, p. 8). While these aspects of postfeminism have been examined in organisations, social entrepreneurship and the idea of the Perfect have not been as closely examined in research. Moreover, the Perfect and how white middle-class women strive for it has not been addressed in critical entrepreneurship studies in relation to its proximity to power structures. I examine how race and class as well as gender inform this proximity in the social enterprise.

The literature considering postfeminism in organisations and entrepreneurial pursuits provides an important starting point from which to examine the reflection and reproduction of power structures in the social enterprise. These structures of power are also clear within the scholarship and tend to universalise whiteness by leaving it unmentioned. I echo Butler (2013), Ferber (2012), Liu (2018), and Idriss' (2021) respective commentaries on the role of race in general and whiteness in particular in critical discussions of postfeminism. Butler (2013) rightly argues that this body of scholarship "privileges a white middle-class heterosexual subject" (2013, p. 36), particularly given it is a white feminist politics that is co-opted by the postfeminist agenda of individualisation. Liu's (2018a) autoethnographic examination of postfeminism in the academy incorporates aspects of race and gender to build meaningful testimony to an experience of institutional harm couched in individual rewards. Her framing of harm is important because it makes clear how structures of oppression are still shaping the empowerment promised by postfeminism. Harm in an organisational setting is often minimised in the pursuit of success, made to seem insignificant in balance with progress. Postfeminist discourses seduce us into a forgetting of collective understandings of power (Liu, 2018a), yet critical scholarship identifying such postfeminist discourses continues to centre whiteness and middle-class status while failing to mention the privilege implicit in such positionalities. The continued centring of white middle-class women in organisation studies as representative of a marginalised group calls for further critical attention. The issue of how empowerment for some comes at the expense of others has not been widely addressed in social entrepreneurship.

The role of capital in facilitating entrepreneurial success is minimised in the literature in a way that perpetuates whiteness and middle-class status as universal. Existing critical research on women's experiences of entrepreneurship has disproven myths of neutrality and meritocracy in the discourse. Martinez Dy et al. (2017) challenge the myth of neutrality as an assumption of digital entrepreneurship, and ultimately extend this critique to argue against the larger myth of meritocracy in entrepreneurship. Marlow and McAdam (2015) effectively show that 'neutrality' only serves to centre and universalise gendered assumptions that privilege (white) masculinity in entrepreneurship. Such arguments have not been made of social enterprise in critical entrepreneurship research. My project challenges myths of neutrality and meritocracy by examining how my participants' white

middle-class status determines success. It is Skeggs' (1997) project of reinstating class into feminist and social theory that offers my project means to consider types of capital in context of the work of women pursing entrepreneurship. Skeggs (1997) draws from Bourdieu (1986) in her discussion of economic capital, cultural capital, social capital, and symbolic capital specifically in terms of working-class and middle-class white women. She examines how different types of capital are recognised as legitimate, recognising in clear terms that "legitimisation is the key mechanism in the conversion to power" (Skeggs, 1997, p. 7). I foreground this insight from Skeggs (1997) in my critical approach with particular note of her discussion on white women and respectability as class matters. I also take care to note important arguments from Connell (2002) and more recently Bennett et al. (2021) that class categories have specificities across different countries. I offer insights into class as they pertain to the Australian social enterprise I have studied in this project. I pay particular attention to understandings of class division in Australia established around cultural differentiation (Bennett et al., 2021), also considering how historical economic decision-making has shaped a 'somewhat more diverse' middle class (Connell, 2002). In entrepreneurial terms, white middle-class women access a range of types of capital to undertake entrepreneurial projects (McAdam, 2013). Examining the ways race, class, and gender shape access to and application of capital in all its forms is a new way to address how structures of power are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

Critical Whiteness Studies

The understanding of race, class, and gender as socially and historically constituted informs my thesis. These are categories shaped by power structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. Looking to deeper analyses of whiteness and privilege in anti-racist, Indigenous, and Black feminist scholarship, critical whiteness studies enables an examination of these structures as they are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. Organisations and organising practices are part of our lived experiences of power, as part of the everyday context in which race, class, and gender position us within and beyond our workplaces. Race continues to be under-addressed in the MOS literature. Nkomo's invaluable (1992) paper highlights the limited scope of race in organisations and, in so doing, proposes alternative frameworks for the field. She suggests that MOS scholars

must look to other theoretical approaches that centre race as an analytical category, enabling us to ask questions that will inform a 're-writing of race' (Nkomo, 1992, p. 505). Returning to this agenda to consider how scholarship has progressed nearly three decades later, she concedes re-writing race in MOS remains an unfinished project. Nkomo (2021) writes, "theorizing race in organizations requires a contextual, multi-level approach and attending to its historical, cultural, subjective, power, and structural manifestations. Realizing this approach implores us to draw from multiple theoretical perspectives" (p. 215).

A number of scholars have taken up this challenge by theorising and re-writing race in MOS (Al Ariss et al., 2014; Dar et al., 2020; Grimes, 2001; Heckler, 2019; Liu, 2017, 2018b, 2020; Nkomo & Al Ariss, 2014; Parker & Grimes, 2009; Pierce, 2012; Swan, 2017). Their research has brought race into MOS through dialogue with a range of theoretical perspectives, including postcolonial and decolonising approaches, as well as critical whiteness studies. The call for more work in the academy on race persists throughout this scholarship, and my project responds to this call.

Critical whiteness studies exists within a broader project of critical race theory and critical race philosophy. Examining critical whiteness studies must begin from a critical understanding of race more broadly. There is a rich tradition of Black feminist, anti-racist, and Indigenous work and scholarship that is significant to the larger critical project of knowing, naming, assessing, and dismantling structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. Jennifer Nash (2019) recently unpacked the historical and political aspects of Black feminist scholarship. She cautions against simplifying Black feminism to a singular project, observing that limiting this work reduces complexity, and ignores or subdues the internal debates and "rich and varied approaches" (p. 5) of a body of scholarship that continues to inform vital political projects challenging inequality and oppression. It is important to note that Nash (2019) highlights the ways that women's studies has often sat in tension with Black feminist thinking. Women's studies reinforces an assumption of the neutrality of their political work, implying a universal experience of gender that remains quiet on race and class. Nash (2019) argues that this also means Black feminist thinking has been appropriated by (white) women's studies, and non-white knowledges and bodies marginalised on the page, in the academy, and in the streets. Black feminist scholarship and

critical race theory elaborate on power structures in a way that embraces the complexities of holding both privilege and disadvantage. These insights offer a new way of re-writing race into organisations.

Black feminist and critical race theorists have long argued that power structures such as patriarchy and capitalism must be considered together with white supremacy. Considering this wealth of insight, this study examines the intertwining of race, class, and gender within the social enterprise. bell hooks (1984) and Audre Lorde (1984), among many others (Andrews, 2016; Davis, 1981; Hall, 2019; Nash, 2019; Yancy, 2012), offer key insights into race, class, and gender across a range of socio-political contexts. This work has established understandings of structures of power and of systems of inequality and oppression that have not been widely adopted by critical entrepreneurship studies. hooks' (1984) work makes clear the ways that systems of oppression shape intimate and everyday experiences from workplaces to the home. Her (1984) work *Feminist Theory: From Margin To Centre* works as a critique of feminism and the whiteness of the feminist movement, deconstructing racist and classist structures upon which the movement has grown and developed. hooks (1984) critically examines how white women have historically dominated feminist discourse, to illustrate the ways white supremacy and capitalism are perpetually shaping the feminist movement. The collapsing of differences of race and class by white feminism reproduces and perpetuates systems of oppression. The same tendency to emphasise some social categories over others echoes in the critical entrepreneurship scholarship, where race and class remain unaddressed in favour of a focus on gender. hooks (1984) argues that ending the oppression of women implicitly requires us to address classism and racism as feminist issues and therefore as interrelated systems of domination. My project holds a political motivation to challenge systems of oppression. I do so by making clear how white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy have constructed a culture of domination, and I contribute to dismantling these structures by critically examining how they operate.

My contribution challenges white feminist scholarship as a theoretical framework that prioritises gender-based oppressions to the frequent exclusion of race and class concerns (hooks, 1984; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Nash, 2019). I do this by incorporating Critical

Whiteness Studies, approaching whiteness as a race and therefore social category. My critical examination of whiteness incorporates Black and Indigenous scholarship which has made the privileges of this racial identity clear from marginalised standpoints. Here in so-called Australia, Moreton-Robinson (2000) importantly offers an Indigenous standpoint to interrogate white women and white feminism specifically, by considering the dominant subject position held by white middle-class women. She observes that this white subject is familiar to Indigenous women as a daily presence in their lives; a 'universal woman' around whom feminist work is historically built (p. xviii). Moreton-Robinson's (2000) insights are directly relevant for the conceptual framework in this study. She highlights ways whiteness should be seen in order for it to be critically examined. Her work offers insight into the ways the privilege of my participants might inform their work as social entrepreneurs and highlights the ways other factors protect or distract from the implications of their privilege. Importantly, Moreton-Robinson's (2000) work supports the consideration of multiple subject positions while highlighting disparities in privilege. Examining how this multiplicity is negotiated by my participants is key for a larger consideration of white middle-class femininities and how these are rendered through social entrepreneurship. I will therefore contribute a nuanced understanding of how structures of power are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

This project is specifically concerned with the development of a more critical and reflexive understanding of race, class, and gender as social categories that shape social entrepreneurship. As the race that is overwhelmingly universalised in critical entrepreneurship studies and MOS more broadly, whiteness is correspondingly under-examined in the literature. To undertake this work, I extend established understandings of white reflexivity (Ahmed, 2004; Slater, 2019; Sullivan, 2006) and the 'good white person' (Applebaum, 2010; Cole, 2012; Sullivan, 2014). I lean on the work of critical whiteness scholars who challenge white people to see the "invisible" privileges of whiteness that have always been visible for people of colour (Ahmed, 2004). With this critical approach, I make the argument that whiteness perpetuates specific femininities, and that those white femininities are rendered in particular ways in social entrepreneurship through access to capital and socio-economic privilege. Ahmed (2004) has considered the role of class in white reflexivity, arguing it is classically bourgeois. She observes that claims to this self-

consciousness allow for the educated middle- and upper-classes to distance themselves from 'real' racism. Sullivan's (2014) *Good White People: The Problem With Middle-Class White Anti-Racism* extends this concept, arguing that class is one of the most central ways middle-class white people avoid taking responsibility for and fighting against white privilege. These strategies of distancing and avoidance hold further complexity when considering gender. The critical entrepreneurship literature has thoroughly established entrepreneurship as a gendered pursuit (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; McAdam, 2013; Tedmanson et al., 2012; Yousafzai et al., 2019) as well as a practice that often perpetuates the systematic oppression of women (Martinez Dy et al., 2018; Verduijn et al., 2014). My project will articulate how the universalisation of this gender-based struggle has enabled the distance and avoidance of addressing race and class. Connections between race, class, and gender are central to my thesis.

Negotiating reflexivity around privileges afforded by race, class, and gender is confronting and inevitably calls for emotional engagement. Understanding the privilege of whiteness, for example, requires acknowledgement that it is directly related to the suffering of people of colour (Yancy, 2018). Through this project I consider the role of emotions in the construction of white middle-class femininities as they are rendered through social entrepreneurship. I am led by critical scholarship that focuses on emotions connected to whiteness including anxiety (Slater, 2019), discomfort (Yancy, 2018), guilt (Sullivan, 2014), fragility (DiAngelo, 2018), and defensiveness (Hamad, 2019; Swan, 2017). This work has shown emotions to be significant to the ways race and racism are socially constructed specific to whiteness as a privilege, but has not been addressed in the context of social enterprise. Scholarship examining white emotions is incisive, articulating how white people resist addressing the ways power has shaped their everyday worlds. I extend key insights to consider how such dynamics are at play in the social enterprise. A key aspect of Ahmed's (2004) examination of declarations of whiteness is her argument that white people incorporate emotion into such declarations as anxiety, shame, or even pride. Yancy's (2018; originally published in the New York Times in 2015) work on the philosophy of race is an ongoing conversation about privilege and power with white America and a call for white people to 'tarry' with, or sit with their whiteness and the emotional discomfort of white racism (2012, 2015). DiAngelo (2018) examines white fragility from an education context, as

does Applebaum (2017) in her work on encounters with white fragility in her classrooms. She further articulates the very discomfort Yancy (2012) entreats us to tarry with, articulating how the impulse to 'comfort' uncomfortable emotions brings forth white complicity. Hamad (2019) works from a journalism context to discuss how white tears are employed as a means of defence against criticisms of racist behaviour, arguing this is an expression of white entitlement to emotion, a claim to white innocence. From the cultural studies field, Slater (2019) asserts that even when impassioned by ongoing inequality, good white people's emotions are political; they can contribute to a reiteration of structures of power by evading political responsibility (see also Pierce, 2012) as they look to be validated as 'good people'. Navigation of emotion is political and incorporating gender and class into my analysis of this phenomenon makes this clear. The expression of such emotions from white middle-class women founding a social enterprise offers compelling critical possibilities.

To address the silences on race and class in critical entrepreneurship studies, my thesis examines power structures that can be seen in positionalities, social categories, and systems of inequality and oppression. By bringing postfeminism and critical whiteness studies to an analysis of the social enterprise, this work extends understandings of power for critical entrepreneurship studies. The rich complexity of my study is exciting for the future of the field.

Research Questions

Having established my thesis as a contribution to the critical entrepreneurship field, my discussion of the literature makes clear there is an opportunity to extend invaluable work that examines the mechanisms of entrepreneurship as socially constructed (Ahl & Marlow, 2021; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Tedmanson et al., 2012). In agreement with Nkomo's (1992) argument that race should be re-written into organisation studies as a central analytical category, I draw from hooks' (2013) work on dominator culture to consider the white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy as structures of power. These structures shape race and class as meaningful social categories that should be discussed alongside gender when studying the social enterprise as an organisation. A study of the complexities inherent

in positionalities that hold both privilege and disadvantage offer a unique contribution to the field through a more nuanced understanding of how power shapes social entrepreneurship. My thesis poses the following questions:

1. How are structures of power reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise?
2. How are white middle-class femininities rendered through social entrepreneurship?

In the specific context of power structures, I understand reflection to mean an indication of that which already exists and can be seen and subsequently discussed through a critical analysis (Gunaratnam & Hamilton, 2017; Madison, 2011). The reproduction of structures of power supposes that the social enterprise as an organisation also contributes to maintaining these structures (Lewis & Henry, 2019; Henry et al., 2016). Considering the rendering of white middle-class femininities, this project seeks to understand the ways gender, race, and class are expressed and shaped through social entrepreneurship. The study of white middle-class femininities in particular informs a critical understanding of social entrepreneurship that discusses how power structures shape tensions in organisations. These questions are posed to establish an exploratory study. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 examine the everyday phenomena of running a social enterprise. Chapter 4 looks at how Warm Hearts understands its role in the social welfare sector. Chapter 5 then focuses on how the organisation operates. In Chapter 6, I add the layer the reflexivity and self-awareness of my participants to these practices and processes to show the tensions and silences at play in the work of social entrepreneurship. I establish a sense of the movement, challenges and achievements of Warm Hearts' everyday operations as a social enterprise to make clear that structures of power are reflected and reproduced at every level of the organisation. Chapter 7 offers theoretical contributions through a weaving together of sector, organisation, and the reflexivity of my participants. With these research questions, I extend critical entrepreneurship scholarship to further the political project of re-writing race into organisations.

Conclusion

This project is a response to Nkomo's (1992) continued call to re-write race into organisations that meaningfully extends the critical entrepreneurship field. The key to

offering novel research will be “a more reflexive, theoretically informed, and holistic understanding of the embedded context” (Yousafzai et al., 2019, p. 167). I propose a conceptual framework that incorporates postfeminist theory and critical whiteness studies to address my research questions. With this approach, I consider how structures of power are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise, and I examine how white middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship.

In the next chapter, I discuss the research design and methodology of my project. I begin by describing key details of the research context, then moving to explain digital ethnography as my methodological approach that has enabled the collection of the depth and breadth of data required of an exploratory study. Finally, I detail my data analysis as a strategy that makes best use of my empirical data, building to findings that answer the questions posed.

Chapter 3: Research Design And Methods

Introduction

This project is a critical examination of power structures and how they are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. My project examines Warm Hearts, a social enterprise delivering a material aid service to support caseworkers managing caseloads of recipients at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness in an Australian capital city. Two white middle-class women founded the organisation, so in establishing the mechanisms of reflection and reproduction of power structures, I include specific focus on white middle-class femininities in social entrepreneurship. In this chapter, I discuss my methodological approach to make clear that the use of digital ethnography for the study of the social enterprise is a significant contribution of my thesis. Firstly, I provide the context of my research, describing Warm Hearts as a social enterprise in terms of organisational structure and operations, as well as the social welfare sector in which they operate. Secondly, I detail my methodology. The depth and detail required of this research led me to undertake an ethnography over the course of 12 months, and Warm Hearts' use of digital tools and spaces to do their work lent itself specifically to a digital ethnographic approach. I explain the ways my approach was informed by digital methodologies established in disciplines including anthropology, sociology, media, communication, and cultural studies. As a novel approach to critical entrepreneurship studies, I discuss how digital ethnography unlocks possibilities for new data types and shows how this approach uniquely offers additional contributions to the field. In this section, I also include a positionality statement to contextualise my role as researcher in terms of the power structures I was studying. Finally, I explain my exploratory approach to data analysis which, enabled by ethnography, informed my coding strategy and subsequent findings that emerged from the data.

Research Context

After meeting with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and securing an agreement from her on behalf of the organisation, I began fieldwork with Warm Hearts in January 2020. Warm Hearts were founded in 2018 by a white middle-class woman I refer to as the CEO

throughout my thesis. Less than six months later, the CEO was joined by her co-founder, a white middle-class woman who I refer to as the Chief Operations Officer (COO) throughout the thesis. The organisation was founded to provide a material aid service to those experiencing or at risk of homelessness in an Australian capital city. In establishing the organisation type, I noted that Warm Hearts defined itself in a range of ways that included a charity, not-for-profit, start-up, and social enterprise. This was dependent on context and was often strategic, however for the purpose of clarity for my project I have classified Warm Hearts as a social enterprise, as indicated by the definition set out by Peredo and McLean (2006) as an organisation that creates social value, takes advantage of opportunities to create value, employs innovation, accepts a level of risk, and is resourceful with 'scarce assets'. It was registered as a charitable organisation with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC), the national regulator of charities, as well as categorised by the Australian Tax Office (ATO) as a Public Benevolent Institution.

During my study of them in their third year of operations, Warm Hearts reported an annual revenue of $271,200 AUD. As a registered charity with ACNC, Warm Hearts were beholden to the regulator's requirements which meant when they confirmed their revenue exceeded $250,000 AUD, they were considered a medium-sized charity and required to undertake annual audits. The organisation completed their first audit by December 2020 during my fieldwork.

Warm Hearts was structured to operate under leadership from the founders, who held the titles of CEO and COO. Figure 3.1 indicates the basic structure of the organisation.

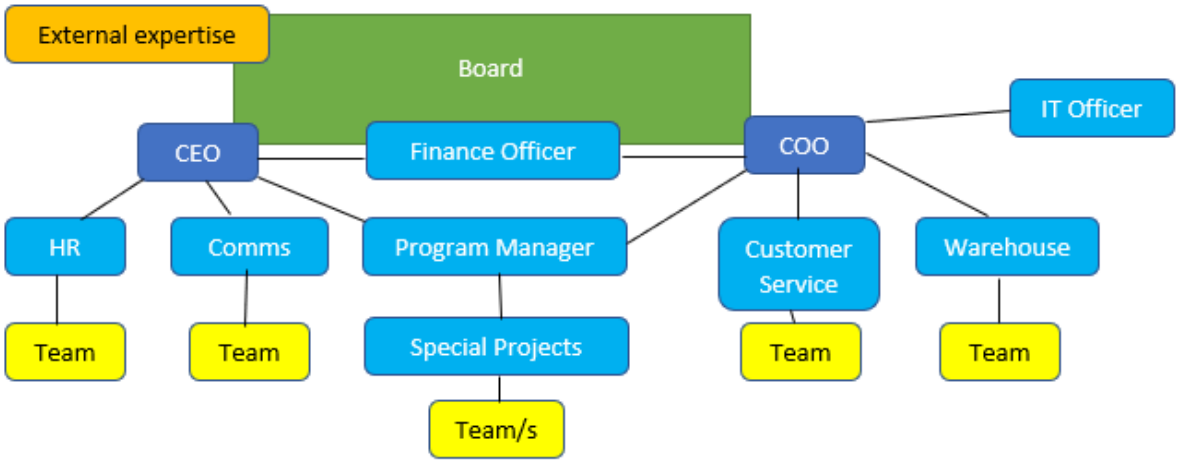

Figure 3.1: Organisation Chart

The workforce at Warm Hearts were spread across teams that included warehouse work, customer service, human resources (HR), and communications. There were also ongoing projects with a strategic focus, including the development of grant applications and strategic planning work. In some cases, where the chart indicates a 'team', this represents one person undertaking a key role. This was the case for the Information Technology (IT) Officer and Finance Officer. All team leaders were white women, with the exception of the warehouse supervisor who was a Māori man. The HR, Communications, and Special Projects teams were all white women, and the customer service volunteers were almost all female, and those I met were white. The warehouse volunteers were the most racially diverse, with roughly two-thirds of the volunteers I met being white. Men were more evenly represented in the warehouse team, making up approximately half the 50-strong volunteer list. There were no volunteers working at Warm Hearts that disclosed to me they were trans or non-binary. As the workforce were predominantly unpaid and working in a volunteer capacity, I refer to them throughout my thesis as 'volunteers' or 'volunteer employees'. Where relevant, I discuss individuals in key roles by referring to them by their title or an approximation of their title.

Over the course of my fieldwork, Warm Hearts established four roles in the organisation as paid positions. Firstly, the CEO and COO transitioned into part-time paid roles on 1 January

2020 with approval from the Warm Hearts Board. The Board then agreed that the Warehouse Supervisor role should be established as a part-time paid position. Finally, in late 2020 the Project Coordinator role was established as a part-time paid position. In our second interview, the Finance Officer disclosed that Warm Hearts paid the CEO and COO annual salaries of $35,000 and $30,000 respectively. While I could not confirm salaries for the other two roles in exact figures, an estimation based on Warm Hearts' cashflow would suggest these both sat between $26,000 and $29,000 per annum.

As a registered charity with ACNC, Warm Hearts had established a suitable governance structure to meet governance standards (ACNC, 2021). The Warm Hearts Board comprised of five members as I started fieldwork, growing to six in December 2020. The roles established were President, who chaired monthly meetings, and referred to in my thesis as the Chair; the Treasurer, filled by the Finance Officer; and members of the Board, which included the CEO, COO, and two additional members to replace the one outgoing member. The two new members were nominated and seconded at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) in December 2020. In the updated structure, five of the six Board members were white women, and one Board member was a white man. Board members who were not working with Warm Hearts brought expertise and experience with which to guide and advise the organisation. The Board met monthly, and the agenda was typically a review of past minutes, presentation of monthly reports from the CEO, COO, and Finance Officer, and any other business. All meetings were minuted as due diligence by the Secretary, a Board role that was the official responsibility of the CEO in an interim capacity while recruited for.

Warm Hearts operated as part of the social welfare sector. The organisation referred to the work undertaken by the City Futures Research Centre at University of New South Wales to develop the Australian Homelessness Monitor (2018, 2020) whenever the question of demographics and specific statistics arose. These reports took focus on government in terms of homelessness policy and practice, comparing Australian states and territories with different approaches to measure their effects and efficacy. There was an emphasis on those experiencing homelessness as rough sleeping. These reports, in keeping with definitions used by the (2016) Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) Census, agree that 'homelessness' applies to anyone who:

- is entirely roofless, or
- occupies a dwelling that:
    - is physically inadequate
    - provides no tenure, or only a short and non-extendable tenure
    - enables the resident no control of, and access to, space for social relations

This definition establishes understandings of the range of experiences of homelessness. Pawson et al.'s (2020) report notes that "in the four-year period up 2018–19, the number of people seeking help from specialist homelessness services (SHS) increased by 14% to some 290,000" (p. 10). The detail shared with me by caseworkers, including the complexity of lived experiences associated with homelessness that included mental ill-health, family and domestic violence, and the growing representation of people over 65, was aligned with the findings of this report.

The organisation were focused on a specific 'catchment', or cluster of Local Government Areas (LGAs) in this city and worked with partner agencies in the social welfare sector to support caseworkers responsible for sourcing home essentials for their clients to establish themselves in housing. Warm Hearts' focus on this catchment complemented their partner agencies, where an historic allocation of LGAs informed how agencies were assigned their caseloads. These partner agencies provided a range of support for their clients, including community housing, drug and alcohol rehabilitation, mental health support, and community development amongst a range of services. Broadly speaking, work in this sector falls into the remit of a range of government bodies that include the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) and Family and Community Services (FACS), which has incorporated the Social Housing Management Transfer (SHMT) as a review of services. Warm Hearts is not a qualified agency and does not work directly with clients, but their proximity to these systems means the impacts of requirements from these government departments on caseworkers in partner agencies shape how Warm Hearts provides their material aid service. As the people receiving material aid from Warm Hearts are not their clients, I refer to this group as recipients throughout my thesis, with some specific discussion about this terminology in Chapter 4.

Warm Hearts provide what the organisation terms ‘housing essentials’ with their material aid service. This includes beds, couches, tables, chairs, and wardrobes as well as fridges, washing machines, and often televisions. These items are second-hand, donated by individual members of the public and corporate donors. During my fieldwork, corporate donors included but were not limited to large hotel chains, property management companies, and furniture companies. Warm Hearts stored these goods in two warehouses central to the catchment they serviced. The warehouses were space donated by contracting companies on a medium-term basis prior to being scheduled for re-development. The process for providing the material aid service was as follows: the caseworker placed a request through the organisation’s online form, processed by the customer service team, picked by the warehouse team, and delivered to the recipient’s house by a transport contractor. Warm Hearts owned the truck used for deliveries, which the contractor effectively leased as part of his payment for services rendered. Transport was the highest outgoing cost besides salaries and wages.

Warm Hearts’ daily operations included a range of teams and locations. The organisation managed two warehouses located in adjacent suburbs and used these to store donated goods. Most of the work was done by the warehouse volunteer team at their more established location, which had been in use by Warm Hearts as donated space for two years. The other location was a larger space, also donated, that the organisation had taken up at the start of 2020 and used for storage. The established warehouse was the location where volunteers picked and loaded requests into the delivery truck. The only other physical location used was the incubator space, where the CEO had a desk and worked 1–2 days of her week. Volunteers performed all other work at their homes. The Warm Hearts team leads met once a week for ‘Work in Progress’ (WIP) meetings, and in the second half of my fieldwork, the organisation also included a strategy planning meeting for team leads, to separate operations from strategy in terms of meeting agendas.

The above detail contextualises Warm Hearts in terms of operations, people, and finances. I have provided organisation type, as well as brief but key detail about the sector within which Warm Hearts operates. Finally, I include an acknowledgement of the context of this research in terms of time. My 12-month study of the organisation ran from late January

2020 to late February 2021, incorporating a 4-week break. During this time, the world was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. There were inevitable impacts for Warm Hearts, and therefore for my study. While effects specific to COVID-19 are not the focus of this project, I acknowledge that my participants and the organisation were managing these impacts during the time of my study. The state government considered the work of Warm Hearts to be essential so this continued during state-mandated lockdown periods. Where relevant, my thesis will make brief note of the COVID-19 context as a means of framing information.

Ethics Approval

Approval from the UTS Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for project UTS HREC ETH19-4041 was granted on 21 November 2019, with a modification to the project made and approved on 7 April 2020 advising of the shift to digital ethnography and data collection methods that reduced risk in alignment with social distancing restrictions required by the state government in response to COVID-19.

In accordance with ethical considerations stated by UTS, the project adhered to strict ethical research practices. I undertook arms-length recruitment in order to minimise perceived coercion, using an email template approved by the UTS HREC. Additional documents approved in my ethics application included the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) and the consent form to confirm informed consent in writing. Each aspect of both the PIS and consent form were also discussed with the organisation prior to signing. I reiterated the organisation had freedom to withdraw from the study at any time and explained that my primary source of data collection for observation would be fieldnotes but could also include recording as well as photography or screen captures that would not be reproduced but used as complementary to my notes. The participants understood that all data would be de-identified, including renaming the organisation with a pseudonym. I explained how and where this data would be stored and confirmed that data collection and storage was being managed in line with UTS requirements. The PIS is included in Appendix B.

I note that all identifying information has been carefully checked and removed from this thesis. In accordance with the UTS HREC, protocols were also developed for managing disclosure of information where mandatory reporting is required. It was confirmed that my

project did not include any covert observation or active concealment, and as a digital ethnography I had to receive digital invitation to attend meetings and access the team messaging platform, which provided my participants with opportunities for confidentiality in situations where it was not appropriate for me to attend. During semi-structured interviews, I reminded interviewees they were being recorded, and that this was for my own records. I also reminded them they were to be de-identified in my data. In some instances, the participant expressed an opinion or reflection to me that they requested not be included in my research outputs. These requests were noted accordingly in my fieldnotes and are excluded from my data.

Additional discussion of the broader ethical considerations of my methodology is included in the next section, specifically in the sub-section on positionality and considerations of researcher reflexivity.

Methodology

This project begins with the understanding that power structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy shape systems of oppression such as racism, classism, and sexism through social categories of race, class, and gender. To critically examine the *how* of these structures of power, my project required both depth and breadth of data, from everyday exchanges to the documented reporting of an AGM. Digital ethnography was the most effective approach for my exploratory project, where access to the organisation over 12 months of fieldwork yielded a substantial data set. Through thematic analysis, I established significant findings that speak to my question of how power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

In the next section, I discuss ethnography as my methodological approach, specifically digital ethnography. I explain the organisational context that informed my decision to undertake data collection in predominantly digital spaces and argue for the value of this approach as a contribution to critical entrepreneurship studies. Digital ethnography has been well established in various disciplines and presents an approach in keeping with my intention to extend the critical entrepreneurship field. Next, I make clear how I have treated my own place as a researcher as part of, rather than separate to, my research questions. My

positionality as a white, queer, middle-class woman is important to consider in a project that deals with questions of power structures as well as white middle-class femininities. From here, I detail my fieldwork, discussing data collection and the process of preliminary thematic data analysis. Finally, I offer insights into the refinement of my analysis, explaining the methods by which I arrived at my findings.

Traditional Ethnography

Traditional ethnography is an ideal means of contributing to the critical entrepreneurship field by showing how power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. It is a methodology developed from anthropological studies, where researchers studied a culture not their own in order to produce a written representation of that culture or cultural experience (Van Maanen, 2011b). It has since been taken up across a range of disciplines including MOS (Gilmore & Kenny, 2015; Mazzetti, 2016; Pierce, 2012; Smith, 2007; Vincett, 2018; Watson, 2011; Weatherall, 2020) as well as the critical entrepreneurship field (Bruni et al., 2004; Essers & Benschop, 2007; Ozkazanc-Pan, 2014). A traditional ethnographic study requires an extended period of time in the field, relying on the collection of empirical data through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and additional avenues including archival data and media (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Thomas, 1993). The approach enables the collection and triangulation of this range of data (Clifford, 1986; Jonsen & Jehn, 2009), where implications of subsequent findings are considered in context of the field of study. The depth and breadth of empirical data offered by ethnography informs my complex examination of structures of power. More recent use of ethnography in online and digital spaces have extended this methodology to incorporate new types of data and understandings of culture. For my project, this extension promised by digital ethnography also offers new understandings of work, and the social enterprise as an organisation.

Digital Ethnography

I undertook digital ethnography as a methodology for my project to best align with the ways Warm Hearts worked as a social enterprise. Above, I briefly noted the range of locations of their operations, making clear that almost all meetings, presentations, and strategic

discussions took place online. In this section, I show that digital ethnography was an effective approach for my project and the study of Warm Hearts. The use of this methodology presents exciting possibilities for the extension of MOS research, and the critical entrepreneurship field in particular. I also consider some limitations of this methodology as a qualitative approach to researching the organisation.

Digital ethnography has been taken up in disciplines including anthropology, sociology, media, communication, and cultural studies for the last two decades. The exponential growth of online technologies has been researched because of the ways they play a significant role in connecting people, revealing ways in which relationships are established and negotiated in formats that replicate face to face interactions as well as enabling new means of connection (Lincoln & Robards, 2017; Robards & Bennett, 2011). As technologies shift, grow, and change, so too do the ways they are studied. Pink et al. (2016) observe in the instructive *Digital Ethnography: Principles And Practice* , "doing research with, through, and in an environment partially constituted by digital media has led to the development of new and innovative methods and challenged existing conceptual and analytical categories" (p. 2).

By nature of the range of uses of online technologies, digital ethnography has been put to work as a method of understanding communications, community-building, relationships, place, and infrastructure (Hjorth et al., 2017). Extension of this approach and the variety of data collection methods undertaken has also found critical contributions considering politics, social activism, and representation (Gerbaudo & Treré, 2015; Gray, 2016; Postill, 2017; Postill & Pink, 2012; Zhang & Kramarae, 2014). Online culture replicates social dynamics shaped by structures of power (Murthy, 2008; Postill & Pink, 2012). As a means of building complex understanding of people and relationships, the increasing use of online technologies as a means of connection bears the close and considered observation that ethnography offers. Keeping in mind that working in digital and online spaces is understood in recent scholarship as a working from home option with gendered implications, (Arntz et al., 2020; Daraba et al., 2021; Feng & Savani, 2020), studying my participants as women in parenting and caring roles in their preferred work environment also informed my consideration of this aspect of gender in organisations. In considering how power structures

are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise, digital ethnography is a methodology that best suits my project as the study of an organisation increasingly operating in online and digital spaces.

Digital ethnography is a recently established approach that continues to develop. I recognise that ethnographies of digital and online spaces reach beyond digital ethnography alone and acknowledge that the range of approaches includes virtual ethnography (Hine, 2000), netnography (Kozinets, 2010), internet ethnography (Hine, 2015), and ethnography of virtual worlds (Boellstorff et al., 2012). I define my methodological approach as digital ethnography because I am incorporating the approaches and tools described by Murthy (2008), Pink et al. (2016), and Hjorth et al. (2017) for my project. As experts in this methodology, the definitions offered by these scholars are not overly prescriptive, rather they acknowledge that the nature of working in the digital space requires flexibility (Pink et al., 2016; Postill & Pink, 2012). For my project, the capacity to consider data collected with digital tools informs a contribution that incorporates empirical data about the online context in which these meetings, workshops, and conversations occurred. Establishing understandings of the nuances of power through expressions of race, class, and gender in online spaces is a meaningful contribution of my project.

Examining the growing body of research in digital ethnography, it is clear firstly that understandings of the methodology include both an ethnography of the digital world and the use of digital tools to undertake ethnographical research. Hjorth et al. (2017) observe that these two pieces are complementary, and enable scholars to continue to extend novel contributions. Those looking to digital media technologies are arguably not so much rupturing traditional ethnographical work as continuing with established practice into new spaces (Burrell, 2017; Postill, 2017). Murthy (2008) champions digital ethnography as an underutilised but increasingly important methodological approach that can and should be used in combination with traditional ethnographical methods. Murthy (2008) argues that such a combination offers researchers a larger array of methods, but also suggests that such an approach can be used to demarginalise the voices of participants. He observes that it is the researcher's responsibility to resist a sense that the internet is neutral in any way; as a social setting it is also shaped by structures of power like other ethnographical field sites. I

incorporate this understanding that power structures inevitably shape my methodological approach as they do the social enterprise I have studied.

Digital ethnography, being at epistemological odds with traditional ethnography as an embedded and embodied approach to research, is an important concern to address. Postill's (2017) examination of remote ethnography considers the value to be found in the long-distance study of events, groups, and communities. He observes that the key concern with which researchers must grapple is the notion of 'being there' versus 'being *then*' (p. 66, my emphasis); that the possibilities inherent in studying happenings and actions in real time online enable a replication of the immediacy traditionally relegated to a physical field site. Postill (2017) extends from the work of Gray (2016), observing that "… ethnographers experience and remember online social media encounters just as they do offline encounters, that is, in the body" (p. 63). In considering the question of 'there', my understanding of the field site in its multiple iterations has enabled the project to open up. Burrell's (2017) paper considers how we might re-conceptualise a physical field site as a network, taking time to argue that despite traditional conceptualisations of field site as bounded space, this has not been true for some time in ethnographical work. Important work from Marcus (1995) discusses multi-sited ethnography, where methodological approaches were not spatially fixed, instead opting to 'follow the person', 'follow the conflict', or 'follow the metaphor' amongst many other approaches. In my study of Warm Hearts, I observed that interactions including decision-making, negotiation, and team motivation were possible across several sites and even great distances. Burrell (2017) suggests that in fact the understanding of the field site as a network enables the study and consideration of not only many sites, but also of the connecting paths between them. This possibility lends an important piece to my critical approach, enabling further reflexivity around my own 'site' from which I observe, participate, interview, and review additional data.

Digital ethnography is a developing methodology – I am developing and innovating 'in the doing' of my empirical research (Kubitschko & Kaun, 2016). My field site-as-network became a collaboration between me as researcher and my participants (Burrell, 2017). Postill (2017) examines the ways in which remote ethnography can be planned or unplanned, making a

similar argument to Van Maanen (2011b) in noting that in any context, ethnographical researchers are often unable or unwilling to declare a physical endpoint to primary data collection as they leave 'the field'. Helpfully, Postill (2017) also considers some anxieties of long-distance fieldwork, which addresses some of the limitations I encountered undertaking digital ethnography. Postill (2017) makes clear that the 'fear of missing out' I often experienced as a researcher not in the field in person was in keeping with concerns of all ethnographers. It was not possible to be at each meeting, or bear witness to every discussion. Conversational asides, gossip, and other discussions between meetings were mostly not conducted online, so I missed debriefing opportunities and incidental insights from participants. This is always true of ethnography, so I turned to alternative means of collecting data that might replicate these more informal exchanges. After big meetings, I often phoned one or more of my participants to talk about the dynamics of the meeting and their interpretation of particular conversations and actions. These were set out clearly with my participants as ad-hoc conversations rather than interviews, where I explained that I wanted to hear their thoughts in the same way I would if we were in person, walking from that meeting to the next. I was able to turn to Slack, the team messaging platform used by Warm Hearts, to build a sense of how decisions made in meetings were actioned for the organisation. I found it was not always easy to pick the dynamics between my participants in online environments; without the communication incidentals of body language, my initial sense of Warm Hearts was tempered by an awareness I sometimes lacked the full picture. This was particularly true in early fieldwork, but ultimately informed the ways I looked to more reflexive approaches to data collection. As I became more embedded in the organisation, I was able to pose questions about specific conversations and interactions, sharing my impressions in a way that encouraged my participants to offer more context and clarity. The longevity of online content meant I could "return to and consider data outside the time an event took place" (Postill, 2017, p. 67). I offset any potential sense of 'covert' observation by using examples from Slack conversations when I checked in with participants to remind them I was witness to these exchanges. Another limitation often raised of this methodology is an aversion to 'thin descriptions' in ethnographic work; given description is key, there is concern around how online interactions will offer substantial depth. Again, Postill (2017) observes this is always true of ethnography – researchers follow points of

interest to develop key themes, often collecting 'thin' contextual data to situate discussion and findings. As I began to establish themes and develop coding, I could be strategic about where and when I spent my time collecting data. Overall, this project's emphasis on both meeting participants where they work (online) and when they work (most hours of the day) is well addressed with the incorporation of digital ethnographic methods.

There is a dearth of digital ethnographic work across critical organisation and management studies broadly, and entrepreneurship in particular. Martinez Dy et al.'s (2017) analysis of digital entrepreneurship considers the online space, but conducted in-person semi-structured interviews as a method of data collection to engagement with intersectional questions of inequality. My methodological approach offers a contribution to the field in terms of opening and challenging understandings of key data previously considered incidental and contextual. In addition to the fieldnotes, transcribed interviews, and archival data part of traditional ethnography, digital ethnography extended possibilities for the collection of data. These included text-based interactions on team communication tool Slack, Facebook posts and video, and importantly, meetings, workshops, and discussions via video chat platforms Zoom and Google Hangouts (Murthy, 2008). Entrepreneurship as a practice often happens in online and digital spaces (Martinez Dy et al., 2017, 2018), and my project looks to this context in a critical consideration of how power structures are reflected and reproduced in them to shape the social enterprise.

Positionality And Considerations Of Researcher Reflexivity

As I acknowledge in Chapter 1, as a white, queer, middle-class woman I share much in common with my participants in terms of the ways power structures determine my privilege. My curiosity as a researcher does not preclude me from an understanding that my own positionality is significant in the application of digital ethnography as my methodology. As a researcher, I am an interpreter and transmitter of data so I have a particular responsibility to make this transparent in the work (Madison, 2011). The nature of my research focus makes my project inherently critical, so I incorporate an understanding of the critical approach to ethnography into my methodology. Madison's (2011) book defines a number of aspects for which a critical ethnographer is responsible: the foregrounding of ethical responsibility, disruption of the status quo by closely examining taken-for-granted

assumptions, and exploring other possibilities by which to challenge institutions, regimes of knowledge, and social practices. A critical approach to ethnography lends itself well to complexity, enabling the researcher to describe, analyse, and open up to scrutiny the often hidden or obscured agendas and assumptions and structures of power that inform them (Thomas, 1993). Madison (2011) observes, "positionality is vital because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases, just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects" (p. 8).

My methodological approach is inherently political as a possible intervention, where I as the researcher too must lay bare the ways my own privilege shapes my work (Behar, 1996; Pierce, 2012). Nkomo's (1992) call to re-write race into organisation studies calls for the careful and explicit examination of whiteness as race, and so necessarily requires reflection upon my own whiteness as a researcher. Thomas (1993) suggests that critical ethnography implicates us as researchers in a way that lets us see, through the research, where we belong in society. Pierce (2012) reflects on the ways her participants 'read' or understood her during her ethnographic study as a white, middle-class, lesbian woman. She identifies assumptions made about her liberal politics and the particular kinds of stories she evoked in the interview process (Pierce, 2012, p. 156). Pierce (2012) reflects on her responsibility as a feminist scholar to publish *what* she knows as well as *how* she thinks she knows this, and *where* she is situated in the act of trying to understand (p. 154, original emphasis). My own whiteness also elicited particular assumptions, questions and stories from participants; by placing me as white, my participants incorporated me into their work and organising practices. Reflexive, critical analysis practices informed my understanding of the ways in which white middle-class femininities were rendered for my participants. As I consider in more depth in Chapter 7, the practices undertaken by my participants to diminish their own racial identities brings into clear focus the ways in which white supremacy hides itself through claims to universality (Nkomo, 2021). Critical scholarship requires this of research addressing structures of power. In understanding the privilege of my participants, I understand my own.

A critical approach to my digital ethnography equips me to examine how structures of power are reflected and reproduced at a specific moment in time in the social enterprise.

My project challenges the tendency of mainstream entrepreneurship scholarship to essentialise entrepreneurial traits as static and unchanging. My participants at Warm Hearts undertake their work within dynamic contexts and these proved key to identifying societal and historical factors informing understandings of power (Madison, 2011). Ethnography allows for the richness and depth of this context to emerge; Pierce's (2012) *Racing For Innocence: Whiteness, Gender, And The Backlash Against Affirmative Action* is an exemplary ethnographic examination of the ways affirmative action shaped law firms in the 1980s and 1990s in the United States. This critical approach to ethnography informed my own approach to digital ethnography as a method. Pierce's (2012) work offers significant findings, where she considers how the recipients of white privilege deny the role they play in reproducing racial inequality. The driving centre of Pierce's (2012) findings is the cultural and societal context she provides in the first section of the book; situating the organisation in time and place to deconstruct the complexities of her findings is insightful and critically robust. Her examinations of broader cultural understandings of affirmative action include the building of discourses through film and media, highlighting 'white innocence' and 'white racial progress' as key themes for her findings. In examining white privilege, she notes a consistent discomfort and often silence from those of her white male participants when asked directly about affirmative action; she highlights a challenge for the ethnographer as one of lack of access to the inner feelings and thoughts that may lie behind these silences. These silences are part of discourse, and might facilitate deeper understanding as well as new directions in research (Madison, 2011; Phillips & Hardy, 2012; Thomas, 1993). The silences Pierce (2012) describes around white privilege in the 1980s and 1990s persist in 2020. My discussion in Chapter 7 situates my findings and subsequent theorising within their specific socio-historical context. I do so to establish that while power structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy have endured over time, the ways they are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise in 2020 reveal much about relationships to privilege as well as the reflexivity of my participants. I do not exist outside this context as a researcher, and my positionality within the project affords me contextually pertinent critical insight.

In the next section, I detail my data collection, coding, and analysis processes. I consider the practical ways in which I approached fieldwork in terms of negotiating power balances

between my participants and myself, discussing how I negotiated this complexity. In doing so, I argue for critical research that is reflexive, understanding that the positionality of the researcher shapes all stages of fieldwork (Gilmore & Kenny, 2015; Grimes, 2001; Manning, 2018; Pessoa et al., 2019; Swan, 2017). An acknowledgement of my positionality and the privileges afforded by dominator culture in the research process is key. I work to whole-heartedly make this acknowledgement while keeping sight of the collective task to dismantle the power structures that shape that very privilege.

Data Collection

In this section, I provide an overview of my data collection strategies. I discuss the way I conceptualised the 'field' for a digital ethnography and consider the importance of understanding this in terms of networks. The context of each offers its own insights and understandings, and I discuss these for their strengths in building a robust and comprehensive data set. I also examine my strategies of collecting data in terms of the balance of power between researcher and participant, describing how I managed this.

Fieldwork And Field Sites

My project is an exploratory study; the breadth of my research questions invites a sense of possibility in terms of how I identify how power structures are reflected and reproduced throughout the organisation. I undertook fieldwork with a social enterprise I have named 'Warm Hearts'; a member of an incubator group in an Australian capital city. To recruit for the study, I looked to my established networks in the start-up industry to seek a suitable participant organisation. After meeting with several interested candidates, I secured a social enterprise willing to host me as a researcher for up to 12 months of part-time continuous data collection (Smith, 2007); that is, 2–3 days a week. I was seeking an organisation in an established position – more than two years old, and with more than four members of staff (Startup Muster, 2018). Being curious about contextual details of the start-up industry, I also looked specifically for a company connected to an incubator with an active start-up culture and strong networks. In wanting to build an understanding of the organisation's progress I selected a social enterprise with stated plans and goals for 2020 and confidence in their ability to meet them. I confirmed that I would have access across the year and that the

organisation was able to commit to sharing data and experiences throughout the year. Ethnography presents specific challenges and requirements of access and timing (Smith, 2007; Van Maanen, 2011a) that informed my final decision in recruiting Warm Hearts to maximise opportunity to observe and connect with my participants.

The fieldwork placement began with initial discussions in December 2019, with regular weekly work with the company beginning mid-January 2020. In the first months of my study, I explored internal and external dynamics, building connections, and gaining digital access to the Warm Hearts founders' calendar, which gave me permission to attend weekly and monthly meetings and volunteer recruitment interviews. I have mapped out my fieldwork schedule, included in Appendix A. I found my online access unfolded much like a snowballing sampling approach to participant recruitment; as I was introduced to volunteer employees, they would think of others to digitally introduce me to and Slack channels to add me to, and those introductions would lead to more introductions (Behar, 1996; Manning, 2018; Smith, 2007). I was mindful of my role as a researcher in the organisation and the power dynamic implicit in that relationship (Clifford & Marcus, 1986). In my first three months I focused on establishing a regular presence at Warm Hearts, taking on a role as note-taker for their weekly Work-In-Progress meetings. This role accelerated the process of embedding me in the organisation (Emerson et al., 2007, 2013; Watson, 2011) as part of the team. My intention was for the fieldwork to include observations at multiple sites, as Warm Hearts operated from various types of workspaces and meeting places as well as participating in events, workshops, and other programs. Attendance at all these 'sites' was possible as part of a digital ethnography (Murthy, 2008). Digital sites included weekly meetings via a video platform; the Warm Hearts Slack workspace and the range of channels within it dedicated to different teams and purposes; phone calls and text messages; the shared Google Drive for access to archival data; the incubator's mailing list and platform for workshops delivered via video platform; and Warm Hearts' mailing list. I also accessed the organisation's website as well as their social media accounts and consider these additional digital sites. The team leadership at Warm Hearts relied on the practice of remote work and work from home; the COO was living overseas and undertaking her work online, and all other team leads worked from home.

In the first three months of my fieldwork, I also had the opportunity to attend a range of physical field sites as part of my orientation to Warm Hearts. I went to the incubator, where the CEO had a desk that she worked from 1–2 days a week; I visited both warehouses that Warm Hearts stored and processed donated furniture and whitegoods. I accompanied the CEO on two visits to corporate donors and observed these meetings in person. These meetings are also identified in the meeting schedule included in Appendix A; over three months, I had five days of in-person observation at both the incubator and warehouse, attended one logistics meeting in person, and took a workshop at the incubator with the CEO. In this initial period I established trust and familiarity with my participants (Emerson et al., 2013). My fieldnotes from this time capture a sense of the pace of work, offering insights on person to person interactions and the variety of locations work was undertaken (Smith, 2007). I collected primarily observational data during this introductory period before broadening my approach to include semi-structured interviews and the collection of online and digital content (Hjorth et al., 2017; Murthy, 2008; Van Maanen, 2011b).

Considering my understanding of the 'field' of ethnographers (Emerson et al., 2007), I bring to my project a more flexible understanding of the 'messiness' inherent in digital ethnography (Hjorth et al., 2017; Pink et al., 2016; Postill & Pink, 2012). The 'field' as I consider it is not a pre-existing site I am discovering, fully formed in easily researchable pieces, but rather something I must construct in terms of boundaries and limits to my data collection (Atkinson, 1992). I brought some assumptions of the ways in which fieldwork was an embodied and spatial practice to the project; the physical participation and travel to and from fieldwork in the first three months in particular enabled me to hold onto this sense (Emerson et al., 2007). Van Maanen (2011b) reflects that ethnographers bring the 'field' home with them through the immersive process of the methodology that finds us revisiting reflecting on our experiences even while we undertake other activities.

While undertaking some fieldwork at physical sites was important, digital ethnography was most suitable for Warm Hearts as an organisation that undertook a significant amount of work in online spaces. While the physical provision of goods is the service provided by the company, much of the work to make this happen was all being undertaken by the team from their homes. Customer service and request management required work at a computer

almost always done from home; Human Resources were managed online, including recruitment and interviews of volunteers, on-boarding and training, performance management, and oversight of hours worked. Team communication tools as well as project management software were being used, with regular weekly meetings as well as frequent ad-hoc meetings held online via Google Hangouts. Board meetings were organised via email and held on Zoom. I predominantly treated these experiences as observations, and recorded fieldnotes to capture key detail. In some cases, I captured meetings with audio recordings to have additional transcription data on hand; this was incorporated to complement my fieldnotes. In the next section, I set out my data collection practices.

Data Collection

My fieldwork activity in the first three months enabled gaining access and immersion into the 'new social world' of the company (Emerson et al., 2007). I produced written accounts and descriptions (Emerson et al., 2013) that informed my preliminary themes by returning to my fieldnotes and building memos that explored points of interest, unpacking how these related to structures of power, for example through expressions of emotion about the work from my participants. An analytical consideration of these subsequently shaped my approach to the middle six months of my fieldwork. By this time, I had established a comfortable relationship with the eight people that constituted the leadership team. I had also participated in team-specific meetings, observing weekly operations of the HR team of six and an operations 'Engine Room' team of five. Slack was used regularly by approximately 40 of the 52 volunteer staff. Having volunteered for minute-taking duties while the organisation recruited a new Secretary for their Board, I was in fortnightly contact with all Board members and attended monthly meetings. Table 3.1 offers a broad representation of the range of data collected as well as approximate amounts of each type.

Description	**Type**	**Format**	**Amount**
Fieldnotes	Observation	Typed	40,000 words (2 x 400 word reflections a week over approximately 50 weeks)

Minutes	Observation	Typed	20,000 words
Interview	Semi-structured/reflexive	Audio recorded and transcribed	61,000 words / 17 hours
Ad-hoc phone calls	Informal	Audio recorded and transcribed	60,000 words
Slack chats	Observation	Screen shots	300 items
Planning days, training, and workshops	Observation	Some typed notes, some audio recorded and transcribed; screen captures	15 hours audio recording, 29,000 words transcription, 25 screen captures
Emails	Observation; archival data	Saved in original format	100 emails
Planning documents; internal and external	Archival data	Original text format	120 pages
Social media content	Observation, archival	Screen shots, recorded video and podcast transcribed	100 images, 45 mins videos, 2 hours podcast recording / 8,000 words transcription

Table 3.1: Data Collection Overview

The formats of my data facilitated recording detail in a range of ways and my decisions on formatting related to the most appropriate approach for the context of the event or phenomenon I was capturing (Emerson et al., 2007, 2013; Hjorth et al., 2017; Postill & Pink, 2012). Fieldnotes described observations, including adding personal insight when I was responsible for taking meeting minutes during weekly meetings with the team leaders as well as monthly Board meetings. Emerson et al.'s (2007) instructive chapter on participant observation and fieldnotes suggests that the "fieldnote corpus" (p. 353) is a body of writing that contains bits and pieces of incidents, beginnings and endings, accounts of chance meetings. The paper affirms that initial notes combined with further thoughts and expanded

reflections are the beginnings of analysis; the “recognition of sticking points” (p. 353) and points of interest. Often, a preliminary version of the minutes included notation from me, which was then removed for a version of the document to provide to the company. Additional context was added after meetings, particularly as more detail came to light to clarify specific interactions or topics. Audio recordings of meetings provided supplementary data during transcription, permitting the confirmation or correction of impressions noted during my observations. Interviews have been recorded and transcribed with additional notes around tone and dynamics, for context. Reports from Board meetings were also provided as additional data and were key for overview of the company. Planning documents, grant applications, and internal communications were also accessed, enabling the triangulation of data in terms of understanding more complex internal and external relationships (Henry et al., 2016; Jonsen & Jehn, 2009). Screenshots of Slack, the internal messaging system used throughout the company, were archived monthly as an additional form of observation, and to provide context to meetings.

I undertook my first round of semi-structured interviews via Zoom from late April 2020 to early June 2020, drawing from the understanding of Warm Hearts I had established in the first three months of fieldwork. Semi-structured interviews presented the opportunity to use this popular qualitative fieldwork technique (Czarniawska, 2011) to record the insights and opinions of my participants directly. Watson (2011) observes that for an ethnographic study, interviews are informed by the depth of understanding and context the researcher has through their embedded role in the field. While I established a set of questions for my participants (see Appendix A) that we followed in this first round of interviews, they led into discussion of specifics I understood about the social enterprise. In considering the role of the semi-structured interview in digital ethnography, Murthy (2008) argues that the logic of “communicating a social story” (p. 838) remains; the context of video platforms in the interview are a means of connection between researcher and participant, and a way of making the researcher visible in the virtual field site. He adds a caution that “though the internet projects an air of neutrality, it is a space of power relations” (2008, p. 840); my purpose in this first round of interviews was also to give a broad indication of my research interests to participants I had not yet met in a one-on-one encounter as a further explanation of my presence at meetings, in email trails and on Slack.

The use of Slack at Warm Hearts presented an opportunity for some ad-hoc or informal conversations with volunteer employees. Slack was used for a range of reasons, from logistics for the warehouse and customer service teams in terms of shifts and stock management to collaborative work on key strategic planning documents to an organisation-wide broadcast of check-ins and announcements. I found my conversations via the messaging function to be generally more relaxed (Murthy, 2008), and in one case resulted in an asynchronous conversation over 24 hours with a volunteer reflecting on Warm Hearts' political position. There was a sense of intimacy to be found in digital spaces despite our separation (Hjorth et al., 2017; Murthy, 2008) that helped me build rapport with my participants that yielded invaluable insights and reflections about their work (Mazzetti, 2016; Vincett, 2018). I invited these possibilities as a means of possible connection not structured with an interview dynamic, where a conversational style invited the minutiae of person-to-person interaction (Behar, 1996; Murphy & Dingwall, 2007). Often, such insights offered as asides gave me a point of entry for the more in-depth discussions I invited in my second round of interviews.

My second round of interviews were designed in a reflexive interview style. These were undertaken with participants in my final month of fieldwork. Over the course of the 12 months I had been collecting data, I identified a growing list of questions about comments participants had made, or points of view they had expressed. Pessoa et al. (2019) observe that during transcription or data analysis, researchers often uncover avenues of enquiry that were not discussed in-depth but pertinent to the project's focus. Examining how power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise was a matter of identifying and deconstructing complex dynamics in the organisation. In my first round of interviews, I had let the answers from my participants unfold as a means of understanding what was important and significant to their experiences. The more formal nature of this dynamic shaped a clear question and answer format, where the power balance between researcher and participant informed our interactions (Denzin, 2001; Madison, 2011; Thomas, 1993). This dynamic was also implicit in my interpretation of the data I had collected. While 12 months of embedded work with Warm Hearts gave me a detailed sense of the organisation and my participants, I wanted to undertake a type of 'sense-checking' to offer an opportunity for us both to confirm my interpretation given the personal nature of

experiences of systemic oppression and inequality (Gunaratnam & Hamilton, 2017; Linabary & Hamel, 2017). Alvesson (2003) observes that a reflexive approach to interviews in qualitative organisational research offers two advantages; firstly the researcher can avoid naively believing that the data they collect is a simple 'revelation' of reality, and secondly the "richness of meaning in complex empirical material" (p. 14) can be appreciated with more depth. This was true of my experience undertaking reflexive interviews. I reviewed my substantial collection of fieldnotes as well as the first round of interviews to design a set of interview questions, working to Pessoa et al.'s (2019) modelling of question format. This included shaping questions to set specific context, including reminders of ideas and opinions my participants had previously expressed. I include more substantial samples of my reflexive interview questions in Appendix A, but an example for the founders in our final interview together is:

> I've spoken with both of you individually about your approach to running and growing Warm Hearts in terms of building a 'safety to fail' into your organisation. You've spoken at various points throughout the year about what can come of challenges and of discomfort. Can you speak to me about something you'd describe as causing discomfort that has proven to be a valuable experience?

Throughout the year of fieldwork, my participants spoke often about how best to translate uncertainty or mistakes into opportunities to grow from such challenges. Setting up a question this way served to validate my assumptions in many instances, as well as clarify and confirm other impressions (Pessoa et al., 2019). While some reflexive interview strategies find researchers providing transcripts to their participants of previous meetings and interviews, I focused on framing my questions in terms of themes my participants had spoken about with me so they could get a sense of my impressions. I was able to share with them what I observed and frame this as an invitation for us to better understand the organisation, ourselves, and each other (Denzin, 2001). This approach to my final interviews was vital in justifying themes I established through preliminary analysis of the data and informed my subsequent secondary confirmation of themes.

Data Analysis

As I established in Chapter 2, critical entrepreneurship scholarship favours a focus on gender and experiences of sexism in entrepreneurship. There is limited research on additional power structures including white supremacy, and capitalism along with patriarchy as shaping dominator culture (hooks, 2013). I took an exploratory approach to this project, working to identify these reflections and reproductions of power structures by establishing codes as they emerged from the data. In this section, I detail my approach to data analysis, returning to my conceptual framework to discuss the ways I incorporated this in my analysis process. I explain how I established emerging themes during my fieldwork, before building the primary and secondary codes I used to organise my data, exploring these patterns to ultimately select themes that best address my research questions.

Analysis and interpretation of my data is informed by the conceptual framework I established in Chapter 2. Having identified the potential for a critical entrepreneurship project to incorporate theories of postfeminism (Idriss, 2021; Lewis, 2014; Liu, 2018a) and critical whiteness studies (Applebaum, 2010; Sullivan, 2014; Swan, 2017; see also Ahmed, 2004; Yancy, 2015) in a study of the social enterprise, my focus on power structures requires a specifically critical approach. The limited scholarship on this topic requires an exploratory approach. While I situate myself within a digital ethnographic approach, I draw from Holton's (2007) useful discussion of the coding process to articulate the steps of my data analysis strategy. I interpreted my data with a view to identifying power structures; to understand these through the phenomena that reflect and reproduce them (Miles & Huberman, 1994). I consider the ethnographic field itself as text (Atkinson, 2016), and suggest that digital ethnography requires consideration of multiple sites as texts (Burrell, 2017). The strategy I describe below reflects a relatively linear approach to this exploratory study, where first establishing and then examining everyday phenomena informs my findings and ultimately my contribution. While this approach has yielded key findings, the nature of exploratory ethnographic methodology required iterative analysis, returning to coding from early data collection to reinterpret these everyday phenomena in the context of structures of power.

Stage 1: First Order Concepts

I note above that the first three months were predominantly observational; my fieldnotes at this time were a mechanism of recording and flagging first order concepts. I made use of the analytical technique of memo writing as a means of expanding upon implications of themes emerging in my fieldnotes. I used the practice of memoing to extend my fieldnotes in a reflective way, which proved valuable to the conceptual development of my findings (Holton, 2007; Punch, 2014). Throughout a week of fieldwork I would make note of particular dynamics and points of interest I felt might reveal reflections or reproductions of power structures, often jotting down a quote from a participant. I would then expand upon this, writing between 200 and 600 words that considered implications of these different phenomena. I would often end by posing questions of my writing, and notes about what to look for in subsequent weeks of fieldwork for context to what I had observed. In this first stage, I wanted to gain a sense of 'how things work' (Watson, 2011) in the social enterprise. I mention in Chapter 2 that I started my project with the assumption that entrepreneurship is shaped by power structures; my conceptual framework informed how I paid attention to social categories of race, class, and gender as an avenue to interpreting my observations.

In this first stage, I identified emerging themes that I categorised as 'privilege', 'meeting a need', 'discomfort', and 'pride in the organisation'. I interpreted these from the most compelling quotes and observations I captured where there seemed to be a power dynamic at play. These themes included: privilege as a personal engagement with the idea of advantage and disadvantage, meeting a need as a means for an organisation to balance systems of inequality through re-distributing resources, discomfort with how to run a social enterprise or to have confidence in undertaking unfamiliar roles at work, and a pride in the organisation as a women-led social enterprise. I undertook the first round of semi-structured interviews and used this as a starting point to establish first order concepts (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Table 3.2 is a sample of this process:

Code #	Quote	Concept
1	"Keep away from the White Saviour Complex!"	Privilege

	"[The CEO] has obviously spoken about 'using privilege for good' with [the Communications Officer] and probably other staff. Some monitoring of race, class, and gender messaging in attention to stock photos from [the CEO]."	
2	"There's a real need across our communities" "Perceptions of need – the dialogue around people in need and giving – a wide range"	Recipients and need
3	"What sets us apart" "Traditional structures have not met the needs that we've recognised, or unearthed"	The organisation and the work

Table 3.2: First-Level Interpretive Codes

I used an open coding approach at this stage of my analysis, given the exploratory nature of my project (Holton, 2007). I coded my fieldnotes retrospectively, making an additional list of points of interest that did not fit into this first round of codes. This included emotions beyond 'discomfort', 'political engagement', and 'start-up language'. I highlighted each coded quotation with a corresponding colour in the transcript, but I also began building spreadsheets to capture quotes by theme.

Stage 2: Second Order Codes

As these spreadsheets grew, the coding matured. I drew from these to establish my themes. I re-named the preliminary codes I had identified to reflect these as 'Privilege', 'Vulnerability', and 'The organisation and ways we're special'. I found these captured the majority of phenomena I was observing that implicated power structures in some way. From here, I developed a more complex coding structure (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Each first-order code master spreadsheet was duplicated, and the duplicates were structured with separate sheets in each Excel spreadsheet labelled with the second-order codes. Figure 3.2 reflects my coding process.

First order concepts **Second order themes** **Primary theme**

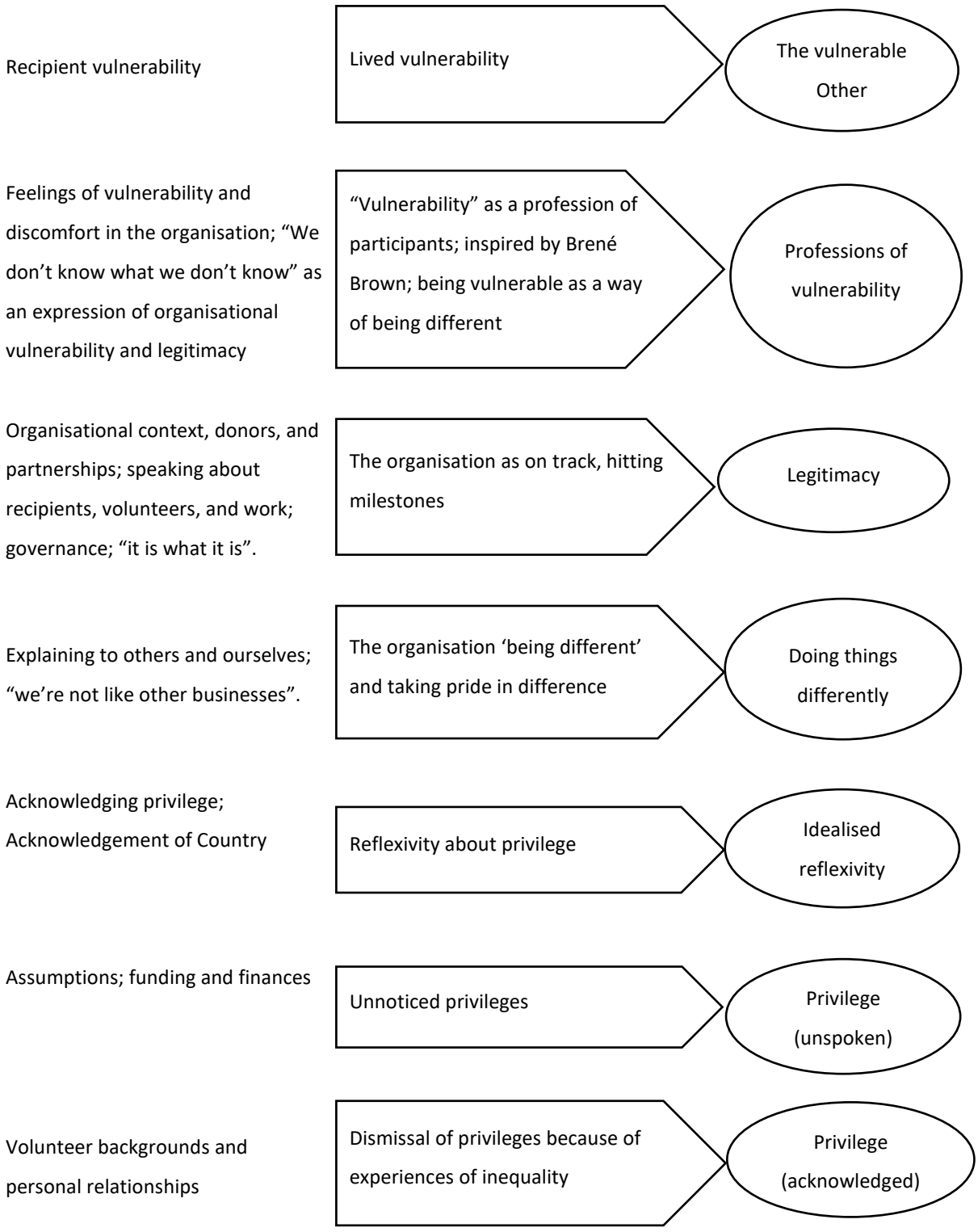

Figure 3.2: Stage 2 Coding

In each sheet, the data was contextualised in columns that noted the source of the data, type of data, quote itself, and who said the quote. An example is provided in Table 3.3, extracted from the 'Organisation and ways we're special' theme and coded as 'speaking about recipients'.

Source	Type	Quote	Who	Context note
AGM transcript 5 December 2020	Meeting	But we've also spoken a bit lately about the importance, while we're so proud of those big numbers that for us, it always always is a collection of many, many ones. And so each of those ones are somebody that is sleeping more comfortably, and sitting on a couch with their family or friends, eating better at a table with safe food from a fridge. And so I would invite you to all always look at our numbers as a very big bundle of ones.	CEO	Focus on individuals; notion of family

Table 3.3: Coding And Commentary Sample

This method of categorisation also enabled sorting. I was able to filter the data by the author of the quote, or data type, or time of year I recorded a quote. As my data set grew this was a practicality, but it also allowed me to begin observing patterns such as the tendency of one specific participant to discuss privilege in a way that others in the social enterprise did not. This is one example of the added depth possible from my data coding and sorting process.

Stage 3: Axial Coding

At this final stage, I found that my focus on how power structures were reflected and reproduced at Warm Hearts enabled me to draw connections between codes. This shift to an axial approach to coding (Holton, 2007) was developed from the secondary codes listed in Figure 3.2, where acknowledging privilege could be considered in context with how the organisation felt they were 'doing things differently', and explaining the organisation to

others necessarily meant a balance of demonstrating legitimacy with their incorporation of organisational vulnerability. Drawing these connections required a return to first order concepts, where the preliminary coding of my data was adjusted. As I mention in the preface to my thesis, my more idealistic understanding of Warm Hearts had shifted to a growing understanding of how structures of power were being reflected and reproduced. Returning to early discussions to recognise the construction of aspirational organisational discourses was vital, and proved fruitful for my findings. Capturing this complexity in my findings required returning to memo writing as an analytical exercise. Toward the end of my fieldwork, I found that my fieldnotes began to make more analytical observations, based on the ways I had established my coding. I considered these to be memos, and took the opportunity to focus on each of my identified themes to explore and solidify my findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The findings I produced for this thesis capture depth to my understanding of the ways power structures are reflected and reproduced at Warm Hearts. The amount of data I collected through a digital ethnographic approach was significant, but my open coding approach saw complexity emerge in a way that also offered me granular examples with which to support and elaborate upon the themes that emerged. My findings chapters address Warm Hearts' recipients as vulnerable people in Chapter 4, then the organisation as a social enterprise in Chapter 5, and finally address notions of privilege as well as organisational vulnerability in Chapter 6.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided a description and explanation of my research design and methodological approach. I established key contextual detail about Warm Hearts as a social enterprise in its third year of operations. I discussed ethnography more broadly before detailing digital ethnography as an appropriate methodology. Digital ethnography is a novel approach in the critical entrepreneurship field, and I argue that this is an additional contribution of my research project. I outlined my own role in the project as a researcher and highlighted the importance of reflexivity for a critical project. My strategies for data collection in a networked digital field (Burrell, 2017) have been described, and the

significant data set I drew from was itemised and explained. Finally, I detailed my 3-stage approach to data analysis, offering examples of my coding as it was developed.

In the next chapter I begin the description and discussion of my findings. Chapter 4 focuses on the recipients of Warm Hearts' material aid service, first building an understanding of how people experiencing or at risk of homelessness are constructed by the social welfare sector. I then describe how Warm Hearts sees their recipients, considering how this is shaped by both the social welfare sector and organisation itself as a social enterprise.

Chapter 4: Helping The Vulnerable Other

Introduction

Warm Hearts developed around a group of recipients broadly understood to be 'vulnerable people'. The organisation delivered material aid in the form of furniture and whitegoods as a service for their recipients. This group of vulnerable people held a central place for Warm Hearts as a motivation and focal point for growth and development, but were also central to stories shared both internally between volunteers and externally in social media posts and other media coverage. My analysis of findings begins at the level of the social welfare sector, to consider how Warm Hearts constructed recipients of their material aid as a 'vulnerable Other'. This relationship was key to understanding the ways power structures were reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. The vulnerable recipient groups serviced by Warm Hearts lived with direct impacts of dominator culture in their experiences of homelessness, but I observed almost total avoidance from the organisation in acknowledging how structures of capitalism, white supremacy, and patriarchy had positioned their recipients in such lived vulnerability.

In this chapter, I begin by offering some context to the lived experiences of Warm Hearts' recipients. I reflect on the insight provided by caseworkers working in partnership with the organisation to understand the ways the social welfare sector interprets the vulnerable positionality of these recipients, and how Warm Hearts took up this interpretation. The construction of recipient groups as a vulnerable Other served an organisational discourse at Warm Hearts that was highlighted in the organisation's purpose, mission, and values. I found that this organisational discourse both universalised experiences of vulnerability and disadvantage and individualised their recipients as "all the ones" (CEO) having their prospects changed by the provision of material aid. Finally, this chapter examines how recipients were constructed by Warm Hearts in specific ways to play the role of imagined representative recipient. This chapter provides a clear view of the growing group of recipients and who they were to Warm Hearts.

"People With Complex Histories": Understanding Lived Vulnerability In The Social Welfare Sector

As a central motivator of the work and growth of Warm Hearts, I found that recipients were 'present' from the very beginning of my fieldwork, and yet notably, there was minimal discussion in the first months of my work with Warm Hearts to give me a sense of who these vulnerable people were in a specific demographic sense. Understanding more about who Warm Hearts' recipients were was key to building a sense of the organisation, and better understanding of how power structures were reflected and reproduced throughout it. In this first section, I look to partner organisations of Warm Hearts to establish a clearer sense of the recipients accessing the material aid service. This clarity informs my subsequent examination of the way Warm Hearts positions recipients as vulnerable people.

Warm Hearts was not a frontline organisation; they did not work directly with those receiving their material aid deliveries. The organisation worked with community service partners, where the service was accessed by caseworkers to support their clients. I did not meet recipients during my fieldwork, instead interviewing caseworkers from two of Warm Hearts' community partners to better understand the lived experience of vulnerable people accessing material aid. These women, one Aboriginal, one white, worked as service providers in direct and regular contact with clients. From these conversations I was able to establish a sense of the challenges for those experiencing homelessness, where a caseworker would be working across multiple services to deliver support as needed. The first caseworker observed:

> Generally, homelessness is an indicator of other vulnerabilities […] so it's usually about figuring out what those things are, whether or not they have supports in place, wrapping around that support and then figuring out what exiting homelessness looks like for them […] What we find with long term homelessness is that generally intellectual disability or psychosocial disability or chronic mental health that is debilitating them from being able to sustain a tenancy. So, it's kind of figuring out all those things, putting all the pieces of the puzzle together and linking

> them with all the services to wrap it around, finding out what's the best way to support them, so that they can sustain something long term.

Addiction and mental health tended to be common examples given of challenges to those experiencing homelessness. Such detail from the caseworkers offered an understanding of the complexity of the lived experiences of their clients. Constructing vulnerabilities as a plural is significant in terms of establishing an understanding of the range of needs for recipients; furniture and whitegoods are one of those needs amongst a range of others.

My conversations with those working in the sector gave me a clearer understanding of how people experience homelessness and the additional vulnerabilities that often accompany homelessness. Knowing that Warm Hearts took a design thinking approach to establishing their organisation and consulted with caseworkers as their primary user of the service, I wanted to consider how caseworkers' views and experiences informed their own profile of recipients. In our interviews, the caseworkers all made a point of humanising their clients for me, and neutralising any of stigma or assumptions I may have been bringing to our conversation. One caseworker, an Aboriginal woman, spoke in simple terms of the ways the experience of homelessness affected their ability to address other concerns:

> When you're in crisis, and you're just worrying about keeping a roof over your head, you know, where you're going to sleep every night, where was your next meal coming from, you can't really work on anything else, or see anything else, like, you know, people might say 'your barrier is that you've got an addiction issue', but nobody's looking at their addiction issue when they're living in crisis.

Another caseworker, a white woman who disclosed to me she had experienced homelessness herself, observed:

> Now those people can come from any walk of life, anywhere, so they can have domestic violence in their history, they could, you know have a criminal history, a forensic criminal history. We could be working with perpetrators, victims, people who are all of the above, perpetrators and victims […] Before I worked in this area, I thought I'd have a certain view of the perpetrator and I really don't have that view anymore.

In both cases, the impact of structural inequality was clear. Lived experience of crises for these participants were challenges compounded by multiple oppressions. Any 'walk of life' might refer to race, gender, sexuality, class, or disability accounting for marginalisation of these clients. Both caseworkers made clear firstly, the tensions of managing multiple challenges at once, and secondly, the tendency to assume stereotypes or narratives around people experiencing homelessness.

The intention to humanise their clients for me as a researcher was clear throughout our interviews. My fieldnotes observing the dynamic of my second interview with the white female caseworker who had shared her own experience of homelessness demonstrates their emotional engagement with their recipients:

> She initially was quite formal and maybe even a little stern. I felt that she really came with a particular agenda in mind to ensure that her clients were understood with compassion – she really made it clear in the way she was talking that these are people with complex histories, with different reasons for having found themselves experiencing homelessness […] From here in the interview she really moved into more empathetic emotional language, to share with me [a] sense of how these people feel, really wanting to communicate how grateful people were to be in the system working with the caseworker to bring them out of homelessness. She used a few examples of stories where she would offer their reflections back to me, this understanding of 'I'm actually worth something, somebody cares about me, I'm important, I'm valued'.

Once the caseworker was confident I understood the complexities of those experiencing homelessness, which she communicated in this more formal tone, she moved into sharing examples to demonstrate the impact of her work as part of a social work organisation. Her demeanour shifted to more emotional language, where she invited me to understand the lived experiences of her clients through specific examples she shared. She mentioned the service offered by Warm Hearts as one of the needs her and her colleagues were working to meet for their clients, where she observed that the quality of the furniture provided helped recipients understand themselves as 'worth something'. This highlighted the impact of their

experiences of homelessness, often due to other vulnerabilities, indicating a larger question of how society values people marginalised by systemic inequality and oppression.

The caseworkers I spoke with spoke of individuals, using stories of clients that exemplified typical experiences of homelessness. Understanding these frontline roles to have heavy workloads and under-resourced teams, I looked to interview a participant with a strategic role. Seeking a sense of how the social welfare sector thought about overarching patterns of homelessness and community housing, I spoke with a newly appointed member of Warm Hearts' Board. This Board member, with decades of experience, was passionate about advocating for those experiencing homelessness. Speaking with him facilitated an opportunity to contextualise the sector in terms of larger structural challenges. Our discussion about the enduring challenge of homelessness as a political issue, and the consistent disinterest from government in addressing this in a meaningful way gave me some valuable insight into motivations for those working in social welfare:

> It goes to like short-, medium- and long-term thinking, I guess. Especially in the current kind of political environment because homelessness is a policy choice. That's it. Anyone who says anything different is full of shit. You can look at countries where that hasn't been the policy choice, if you look at Finland, which is pretty much the only one that people stick up every single time, homelessness was a policy choice and they fixed it. And we can fix it if we have the political will and desire to help poor people who might not vote one particular way or another or might not vote at all. If you really want to help those people who are more vulnerable, you need to do it at that level, and that would look like building more social housing, building more appropriate housing and they don't want to do it.

The Board member made clear that he was frustrated by diminishing funding support from state government in the face of broader population growth. He openly criticised both the government and opposition, noting that neither major party wanted to address homelessness nor allocate any meaningful amount of funding to the issue. He framed the issue as political. Ongoing avoidance and denial in our country, he noted, saw 'old white men' making decisions with no lived experience to draw from, and no interest in understanding the complexity of challenges facing vulnerable people experiencing

homelessness. He was the only participant from the sector who framed these issues in terms of structural challenges. My fieldnotes after our interview are energetic, and relieved:

> Finally, someone who does this for a living offering an understanding that there are larger structures at play that make a person vulnerable in ways that are beyond their doing or their personal responsibility! Pleased to have discussed this (so enthusiastically our interview ran over time), even if it is in my final week of 12 months of fieldwork. I wonder if [the Committee Member] will bring this more critical understanding into their Board meetings – I can't imagine there'll be an appetite for the discussion of politics.

My sense from this interview was that this participant's workplace approached their work with this more critical view of the limitations to their progress while 'old white men' were deciding on the allocation of government funding. The Committee member observed that when structural challenges of political support and funds made their work difficult, he and his team tended to return to a focus on the individuals they were helping:

> We've got a focus on the kind of clients that we're working with and helping them and providing the best possible environment, whilst at the same time, keep banging your head against the brick wall and asking for policy change …

Here, my participant centred vulnerable individuals again as a means of seeing rapid and tangible outcomes. The experiences of individuals were contextualised within the larger challenges of the social welfare sector, making clear some of the systemic issues having impact on the provision of community housing.

As Warm Hearts grew and partnered with agencies where qualified caseworkers became the primary point of contact and intermediary between the organisation and recipients of their material aid service, space opened between the organisation and their recipients. This step of removal and process of consultation with caseworkers and agencies meant in most cases, these experts primarily informed Warm Hearts' understanding of their recipients. Exploring the organisation's understanding, description, and imagining of the vulnerable people that received material aid from them is important to a larger understanding of their work as a social enterprise.

“All The Ones”: Vulnerable Recipients And Warm Hearts

Warm Hearts held a formalised relationship with the recipients of their material aid service. Stories of positive outcomes like grateful people in homes furnished by the organisation and families able to send children to school with clean clothes and full lunchboxes came back to Warm Hearts through the caseworkers from their partner organisations. Except for the Board member who spoke of homelessness as a political issue, my participants did not engage in discussion about the circumstances that led vulnerable people to experience homelessness. My participants at Warm Hearts focused on how their service helped individuals; this was a manageable and more easily negotiated discussion. In this section, I consider how recipients were positioned by Warm Hearts in a way that avoided addressing race or class, instead looking to a specific understanding of gender and ideas of family as a means of accessing empathy and a sense of connection with people experiencing homelessness. Before considering how such reflections and reproductions of power structures are negotiated for Warm Hearts as a social enterprise, I examine the role that lived vulnerability took in the organisation’s motivation to build connections with the recipients of their service.

Warm Hearts were empathetic and emotionally engaged with the understanding of their recipients of their service as vulnerable people. By considering the experiences of their recipients themselves, the organisation undertook significant work to position recipients in terms of their humanity. The organisation frequently discussed connections between those who are vulnerable and in need of support, and those in a position to offer help. The COO offered further insight into ways of thinking about vulnerable people in an interview captured for a podcast in February 2020:

> I think people that have gone through a hard time to have these labels that people assume on them forever, and it’s not, it’s just a moment, there may have been a successful something or other and then something happened, two or three things and here they are, and they need help, and that’s it. It’s not forever and so I feel really passionate about just, we’re just there in that time. At that moment, and

> that's it. And we hope we help ... But it's not about who they are forever. It's just what they're going through then and I might need it one day too (small laugh).

The COO preferred not to label their recipients in terms of this lived vulnerability. Her assertion that such vulnerability was 'not forever' avoided conflating the hard times their recipients were experiencing with their identities. Drawing out connections with recipients was focused around asserting that 'everyone needs help sometimes'. This sentiment appeared to operate for the founders as a reminder of a shared humanity. Broad statements like this often stood in place of any meaningful reflection on systemic issues that lead to homelessness, demonstrating a preference for focusing on individual situations over more enduring, structural challenges. My participants rarely framed their understandings of disadvantage in terms of power structures.

Understanding their recipients as individuals that needed help was how Warm Hearts worked to establish 'human connection'. This connection also shaped the way the organisation thought about the outcomes their material aid service could have for vulnerable people. They reminded themselves, each other, and their stakeholders that they wanted to have an impact on individual people's lives. It was a sentiment that showed up regularly in Warm Hearts' meetings and discussions. This idea often came in the form of a reminder from the founders to think of "all the ones"; while their monthly and annual reporting was of larger numbers, each of these was an individual or family that received essential furniture items. In fact, "all the ones" became a core expression of the organisational discourse in the time I was undertaking fieldwork. In the 2020 AGM, the CEO noted:

> But we've also spoken a bit lately about the importance, while we're so proud of those big numbers that for us, it always always is a collection of many, many ones. And so, each of those ones are somebody that is sleeping more comfortably and sitting on a couch with their family or friends, eating better at a table with safe food from a fridge. And so, I would invite you to all always look at our numbers as a very big bundle of ones.

The CEO shared with me that “all the ones” came from internal conversations at a strategic level, where the organisation had identified that sharing the stories of their recipients with donors and other stakeholders was a growing priority, and a means of remaining focused on their mission and vision as they continued to grow. The COO regularly commented in meetings as well as our conversations that remembering to focus on the individual people Warm Hearts helped was important for her own clarity and motivation. Warm Hearts was thinking in a way that emphasised the individual, even when reporting numbers to their Board. While a reminder of the impact of their material aid service on each person establishing a home was meaningful, focusing on improving living conditions for individual recipients enabled the organisation to set aside discussions of larger patterns and reasons for them.

Understanding who Warm Hearts had in mind when mentioning these ‘ones’ helped me consider the role recipients played for the organisation in informing how they approached their work. In some cases, there was personal stake in the outcomes for specific individual recipients. Warm Hearts’ understanding and profile of the vulnerable people who accessed their service began through the CEO’s participation in community groups supporting asylum seekers and refugees arriving in Australia. In the early ideation stage of Warm Hearts, the CEO was working with the recipients directly. The CEO would identify vulnerable people in need of furniture and whitegoods, personally delivering items sourced from friends and community members. One of my volunteer shifts at Warm Hearts’ warehouse gave me the opportunity to meet one of the first recipients of material aid. An asylum seeker that had been in Australia for eight years, this Sri Lankan man was now a volunteer with the organisation in a semi-regular capacity. He picked up shifts as needed, otherwise working six days a week across two paid jobs. I spent the day with the CEO before taking an evening warehouse shift. She realised that I would be working with this volunteer and took the opportunity to share some details of his story with me. My fieldnotes from the day reflect:

> [The] CEO shared a little bit of that kind of background with me […] She feels he has become part of their family, in a way. She told me the story, that she had helped him and that he had said to her, ‘we're going to be friends’. And he gets along well with her boys, for a while she said they were doing Sunday lunches, with him having a

> place to go. I asked about his family and then [the CEO] responded by giving me a bit of advice – a soft instruction not to bring it up with him. Apparently, it's complicated, it's a difficult situation. She said that what happens when people know the situation is that they want to help him and they start thinking about all the different ways they could help, or possibilities. She said she's already tried all of those same ways to help, and now she believes that 'it just is where it is'. She said it's actually not helpful to talk to him about the situation, that it's upsetting to him and makes him anxious because he could be deported at any point in time. That it's something that's an anxiety, on a daily basis, was a really interesting description and that sort of felt like a caution. She was very protective of him.

When I met this volunteer in person later that evening, we were working together to safety test electronics. I introduced myself briefly, and once he had explained to me how he needed me to help him, he very openly shared the same information the CEO had suggested I not bring up with him. My fieldnotes observe that he offered this detail:

> […] so immediately! I didn't prompt him, hadn't asked him any questions about himself yet, he just gave me that information. I didn't have any real questions about that, I just responded with openness and interest. I hadn't even had time to tell him I was researching [Warm Hearts]. I just thought that it was interesting that he had immediately offered me that detail where I'd been cautioned fairly strongly against asking in the first place.

This was the only opportunity I had during my fieldwork to work with and get to know someone who had been a recipient of material aid from Warm Hearts. It was helpful to meet and hear the brief story of this man's background, but also to observe the CEO's pre-emptive management of our interaction. Her caution was delivered to me in a way that limited detail but also indicated a sense of responsibility and protection, where I was advised not to mention his story as a difficult or potentially painful conversation she did not want me to push upon him. This relationship was not typical of the organisation's involvement with recipients, as almost all requests were managed by a caseworker. Meeting this volunteer led me to substantiate some assumptions I held about how the founders felt and thought about their recipients. Working alongside him for the evening was an

opportunity for me to understand a personal story of one of the 'ones' that Warm Hearts mentioned so often.

Warm Hearts were focused on their recipients as individuals in need of material aid to furnish newly established homes, which afforded them some opportunity to identify their recipients in terms of their experiences. It was difficult at times for me to understand how and why the organisation had established the categories of recipient type. My initial impression of this categorisation process came from the first Board meeting I attended. My participants were eager to ensure that some of the complexity of recipient experience was recognised. The organisation discussed their capacity to translate this complexity on an operational level during the meeting. I observed in the minutes (my commentary italicised):

> [S]ome further clarification is needed around capturing data for multiple categories. ACTION: Form to be changed to capture multiple categories with an understanding of data requirements. *A good amount of discussion about this – [the CEO] wanted to make the point that having one 'recipient type' is problematic as often the recipients fall into more than one category. She also noted that [to] be able to select multiple categories would allow for flexibility around funding allocation, meaning that Warm Hearts may have more funds for one category than another depending on grants. It was noted that there is complexity when it comes to [the] needs of vulnerable people, and it seemed from discussion as though they were keen to hit the right balance of meaningful data collection tools with realistic engagement with recipients and their needs. [Finance Officer] said "the data needs a lot of human intervention".*

The IT Officer updated the request form so the caseworker could list primary, secondary, and tertiary categories when lodging a request with Warm Hearts. The discussion in the meeting made clear that capturing complex details about their recipients was motivated by data collection as a means of accessing funding, particularly funding earmarked for specific recipient types. These 'Need categories' reflected input from the request forms, and for reporting purposes rolled the 'Homeless' category into a larger category that also included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, mental health, over 55, and 'other' categories. Domestic violence, refugee, and youth categories were kept as separate categories. This was a breakdown and grouping of recipients that the Board negotiated for reporting.

During my fieldwork, I regularly observed what I began to label “close but not too close”. I found that volunteer employees at Warm Hearts held empathetic connections to this understanding that people were in need. They were focused on ‘all the ones’ they could help, but continued the habit described above of avoiding any discussion of systemic inequalities or structural oppression. Despite their commitment to the work of providing material aid, they did not dwell on or express understandings of the specifics to me or each other. In meetings they spoke about recipients leaving violent households, or countries at war in broad terms. Alcohol and other drug dependencies were alluded to, as were mental health concerns of those experiencing homelessness. Where the caseworkers I interviewed offered me specific details, Warm Hearts spoke in general terms. My fieldnotes observed:

> Something I’m finding really interesting and actually also a little bit difficult is observing how the organisation seem simultaneously really engaged with helping people in need but are also speaking in very broad overarching terms. I only really hear specifics of what they think of as success stories, there’s not so much appetite for what seems to be a much more likely outcome, which is that maybe the material aid they provide will help, but as one small part of a much bigger picture. Sometimes they seem clear on this and other times it feels quite automated. Sometimes they’re thinking of their recipients as people and sometimes they’re being pushed to think of them as a data set.

While I was frustrated by what seemed initially to be inconsistent patterns, it became clear that this ‘push’ to think of their recipients as a data set was often indicative of the reporting structure that had been established by their Board, and that this way of discussing individuals was not always comfortable for the founders and team leaders of Warm Hearts. The tendency to speak broadly persisted, with the “success stories” I mentioned in my fieldnotes becoming part of the larger mechanism of building the organisation.

“Together, Let’s Furnish A Home For Mums Rebuilding”: The Imagined Vulnerable Recipient, And Building A Business

The value and impact of helping individuals is a key focus that motivates the social welfare sector. This focus informed Warm Hearts, who had taken up this motivation. I found that

because the organisation was not in direct contact with the recipients of their service, there were parts of this relationship that required Warm Hearts to imagine aspects of these vulnerable people's lived experience. As I mentioned above, the organisation thought of their recipients on an individual level, choosing not to dwell on factors of systemic oppression that contributed to such vulnerabilities. Focusing on individuals became a balance of implying the look and feel of positive outcomes or 'success stories' without incorporating a depth of information they did not have access to. Preserving anonymity of recipients was a priority, but as it was, unless a caseworker provided detail to Warm Hearts, they did not know identifying details. I found these factors to contribute to their most clear and enduring relationship with their recipients: as part of establishing and growing their service as a social enterprise. Generalisable and imagined vulnerable people's stories of need, home, and family were central to building their business. Balancing this motivation with their mission to help their recipients was complicated and showed the challenges for social enterprise organisations in managing growth and success. These tensions reveal some of the ways structures of power were reflected and reproduced at Warm Hearts.

From the first day of my fieldwork, Warm Hearts' positioning of their recipients as central to their motivation and focus was clear. My observations began with a series of volunteer recruitment interviews with the CEO. These proved essential for my understanding of the ways in which the work of helping vulnerable people shaped all aspects of the organisation. I observed of the interviews that "[the CEO] expresses that clients are central to their process, and this is what sets them apart". At my first Team Leaders 'Work in Progress' (WIP) meeting, I've noted alongside meeting minutes "the work is framed around helping the vulnerable; a core aspect of process and doing business". Making the people they sought to help central to their work came with a consideration of how to refer to this group. My notes from my first weeks of observations veer between 'clients', 'recipients', and 'vulnerable people' repeatedly. The list of terms used further expanded into 'beneficiaries', 'survivors', 'individuals', 'humans', and 'people in need' as my fieldwork continued. A discussion played out as part of Warm Hearts' planning day:

> Chair: Do we want to call them recipients, or vulnerable people? Because we've interspersed …

COO: We always talk about them as clients.

CEO: [emphatically] No. We can't call them clients because they're not our clients.

Chair: 'Recipient' is quite objective.

CEO: Yeah. And so is beneficiary.

Chair: I think in the context of the agency, it's knowing that they're dealing with vulnerable people.

The organisation's thinking around how they referred to recipients was informed by partner agencies. Beyond drawing the line to make a clarification that Warm Hearts did not lay claim to the recipients as their clients, these terms continued to be interchangeable.

Establishing the role of vulnerable people as a generalisable 'recipient' for Warm Hearts required me to consider how key ideas incorporated into their organisational discourse reflected and reproduced structures of power. I found the telling of their start-up story, which they formed around inspiration leading to mission, surfaced the primary idea of need. In a testimonial collected by the Communications Officer, a social worker with Drug and Alcohol Services observed "[h]aving a home with furniture is a basic human need according to Abraham Maslow". Warm Hearts referred to 'need' frequently in their work. The organisation often mentioned need when speaking about the establishment of the organisation, and subsequently informed internal communication used by volunteer employees in meetings and conversations online and in person. My observations throughout their meetings captured a range of examples such as "the individual is in need", "basic needs fulfilled", "we collaborate with social service agencies to address the needs of vulnerable people in establishing a home", and the CEO explaining to me in our first interview that "we talk about the broad issues, that every human needs these things, these are basic necessities, and we know where to find them and how to connect them". The idea of need was also core to all external-facing communication – media and social media, pitches – often positioned in relation to shelter as a basic human need. Speaking directly to donors through their Facebook page, Warm Hearts posted statements like "you're helping us keep providing kindness to those in need", "[recipients] get the basic household items they need and deserve", and "At [Warm Hearts] we're focused on sourcing goods according to our recipients specific need – WHAT items are needed and WHEN, to build hope and

create a functioning home". These statements also incorporated emotive elements, connecting the idea of need with having a furnished home.

Warm Hearts had undertaken strategic work to connect to a dichotomy of need and abundance, an understanding most often incorporated by the COO. In an early interview, as we discussed what motivated her to join the CEO in founding Warm Hearts, she shared her experience of witnessing this need: "I saw this waste on one side and then this real need across our communities … across global society we know there's so much need". She expanded on this idea in more detail in her February 2020 podcast interview:

> I saw this huge amount of waste that was going on in one part of society but then I also really knew that there was this other section that wasn't so far away, possibly two streets away, that people had nothing. So, for me it was like, 'How can this be happening? How can one side there be so much, and things are ending up in landfill?' ... And on the other side there's literally people in our community that are sleeping on the floor. And that have nothing.

This 'need', for the COO, was positioned in relational opposition to what she described as abundance. She explained excess as being in opposition to having nothing, understanding the experience of homelessness as lack of resources. It served the larger organisational discourse to emphasise shelter or home as a basic human need. This discourse indicated that the material aid service provided by Warm Hearts was a key determinant of success for those who had previously experienced homelessness. When I asked frontline caseworkers about what they considered a successful outcome for a client, the consistent answer was sustained tenancy, the ongoing placement of a client in housing. During our interview, the Board member who worked in community housing stated:

> [P]eople who've been rough sleeping who are then kind of put into housing, if that housing isn't really kind of everything they need, it can result in a really quick tenancy failure.

This was echoed by a caseworker, who explained this by placing me in a scenario:

> … if you could imagine getting a place and then sitting in an empty place, or […] only having a bed and no lounge, or not being able to have anything else, that can be quite depressing, and one, why would you want to stay there, but two, if you do stay there, how are you going to be able to work on mental health or an AOD [Alcohol or Other Drug dependency] when your environment and the walls you're surrounded by are bringing you down further?

The caseworker's response highlighted the immediate impact of a range of challenges for those who caseworkers move into housing and contextualised the provision of furniture and whitegoods as a contributing factor in one of her clients sustaining a tenancy. This need for a sense of home is an idea that Warm Hearts drew on consistently when discussing recipients. I found that the organisation was more comfortable to elaborate on helping vulnerable people when they were able to contextualise the experiences of their recipients in terms of home as a need and home as a site for family.

For Warm Hearts, their recipients' need was what made them vulnerable, but like the caseworkers I spoke with, the organisation avoided perpetuating negative ideas about recipients. At the organisation's 2020 strategic planning day, the CEO spoke of her aspiration around "changing the perception of need and giving in Australia. I think that [Warm Hearts] is one of the ways to do that". I found this sentiment echoed the COO's emphasis on their recipients' lived experience of vulnerability as just a moment in time, where anyone might find themselves suddenly in need of help. I found that throughout the organisation, volunteer employees shared this point of view. They wanted to offer help without judgement; to ensure recipients could collect material aid with dignity. In particular, the Communications Officer took great care with how Warm Hearts represented the vulnerable people they helped. She was focused on protecting the dignity of recipients. In our interview earlier in the year, she reflected on how she was approaching discussions with caseworkers from Warm Hearts' partner agencies, and seeking stories for the organisation to use:

> [W]e're kind of looking for key things to say in [a] way that can be de-identified … when I get on [the phone] I say this is going to be anonymous … but right off the bat. Like 'just letting you know, of course we won't be sharing identifying details and also

> to be clear, the story will be shared in a way that really promotes the dignity of the person, the recipient', because there's that risk that it sounds like it's going to be almost like poverty porn, do you know what I mean? Like, we're sharing it and it's going to be like, rather than [pauses] like this will be a hopeful story, it's not about really fixating on the bad, it's about the difference, you know, the good.

This was a helpful insight for the Communications Officer to offer me in terms of the notion of dignity for recipients. Dignity was a term used across the organisation when they discussed recipients. The term was predominant in introductory explanations of Warm Hearts, as well as in copy for social media, interviews, and grant applications. This was also a discourse shaping approaches to strategy; the Chair of Warm Hearts' Board, while running the planning day, observed to the group:

> [W]e set a standard of quality that we know delivers dignity. I think that's what it comes back to, right? So, is it the actual need, or is it the quality of what we deliver that brings about dignity, not shame?

She phrased the question to invite further reflection on their use of the term in their strategy document, but it also gave a sense of how Warm Hearts defined dignity, in opposition to shame. This was like the caseworkers ensuring my understanding of their clients was not informed by negative assumptions. The Communications Officer and Chair both articulated dignity as part of the organisational discourse. While the Chair was focused on strategic language, the Communications Officer was concerned about perception, the idea of 'poverty porn' not fully articulated but presented as a type of exploitation the organisation were explicitly motivated to avoid. Wanting to present success stories of Warm Hearts' recipients, conveying hope and 'the good' was an unsurprising approach, and further contributed to their organisational discourse that side-stepped systemic inequality and oppression in favour of a focus on individual lives improving through donated goods delivered to their new homes. The focus on 'the good' of recipient success stories was a way for Warm Hearts to demonstrate they were delivering on their mission to enable vulnerable people to thrive.

Delivering positive outcomes for recipients was core to the mission, vision, and values of Warm Hearts. This focus on the positive was expressed concisely by the CEO at their AGM in late 2020:

> With dignity, they can all recover and rebuild their lives with their basic needs fulfilled so that they can much more easily realise their full potential and thrive.

This language echoed the Warm Hearts Strategic Plan document, which stated that the organisation understood their purpose to be 'enabling survivors to thrive'. This language is consistently used throughout the organisation, where the notion of 'thriving' is constructed around whitegoods and furniture items, where the story to share is of a good night's sleep, clean clothes, fresh food. In social media posts, recipients of furniture and whitegoods are imagined undertaking activities such as "sending kids off to school in clean uniforms, preparing for work or job interviews", where lives are being "rebuilt" with beds, fridges, washing machines, and kitchen tables. My participants were eager to share these stories with me. I recalled a story in my fieldnotes about the volunteers at their warehouse sharing during our shift:

> [A member of a partner organisation] was picking up a delivery and had a video to show of the family who received the first load of donations – he was back to pick up a couch for them, but they firstly got beds. And he had taken a video of the kids, jumping on the beds, and saying, as they were delivered by the caseworker, "you know you've changed my life with these beds" […] I don't know how often volunteers in the warehouse get to hear those, they're really touched by it. They all described it to each other again, and described it to [the CEO], and we all talked about what a good feeling it was to hear things like that.

I found that the provision of this material aid service was often presented to shift a recipient from vulnerable to thriving; that a life could be changed by the delivery of a bed. The anticipation of what such changed lives might look like helped construct and frame the work of Warm Hearts in a way that could be used to invite donations of both furniture and funding, recruit volunteers, and motivate existing volunteers. Simplifying the complex issue of lived vulnerability for those experiencing homelessness was smart business for Warm

Hearts and imagining a generalised vulnerable group as representative of the organisation's recipients was a means of generating this simplification.

Warm Hearts provided material aid to a range of recipients. During my fieldwork, I identified there was a pattern to whom the organisation used as an example of a typical recipient. This person was a single mother with young children and functioned as a representation of the vulnerable people Warm Hearts were working to help. This 'single mother' characterisation of a recipient was referenced in meetings to work through hypotheticals – "How do you move a fridge when you're a single mother, and you have children? [emphatically] You *cannot* do it", "when it's a mother, a refugee with kids …" I found my participants imagined this representative recipient as a woman and mother first, often not mentioning her race. Social media posts referenced recipient families, a mother with two kids and a third child on the way receiving beds, sending kids off to school with fresh uniforms, and a young refugee family finally having a good night's sleep before the kids started their first day of school. Stock photography used in these posts included a woman and child of colour sitting at a table making breakfast, a white baby wrapped in a blanket and held in a parent's arms, and two young white girls of doing their homework at a table. The Communications Officer mentioned in our first interview that the CEO was "very sensitive" to ensuring Warm Hearts used a diverse range of people in the stock photography that accompanied graphics and posts. My fieldnotes recalling our discussion observe that:

> I was reminded that [the CEO] volunteered with [a refugee advocacy organisation] before starting [Warm Hearts] and so want to ensure refugee families are acknowledged and helped. The organisation isn't just helping white people.

Imagining recipients as vulnerable women and mothers was a powerful means of inviting donors, volunteers, and the community to connect to the work Warm Hearts. Warm Hearts undertook fundraising events that purposefully incorporated the vulnerable mother recipient figure, further establishing this focus. One of two specific campaigns run during my fieldwork, the 'Feather a Nest: help a mama bird soar' Mother's Day campaign made direct and explicit connection between vulnerable mothers as a recipient group and their work in a call for donations of funds or goods throughout May. One call to action posted in early May 2020 on Warm Hearts' Facebook page read:

> Lockdown is easing and for some mums that means a chance at a safe new life, a new home, and a better future away from family violence. But as you can imagine, you can't create a safe, comfortable home without the basics.
>
> Together, let's furnish a home for mums rebuilding, with things you can't put a ribbon around.
>
> Security. Hope. Kindness. Understanding. Dignity.
>
> With your help, we'll set up mums and kids with things every family home needs - beds for a decent night's sleep, a fridge to pop the milk and healthy food into, a machine to handle all those loads of washing, and a place to sit and enjoy time as a family safe from harm.
>
> With the basics covered, they'll have a much greater chance of rebuilding their lives. Without the stress of finding, affording, and moving all these tricky items, our brave, resilient recipients focus their energy [and] attention on everything else in front of them.
>
> Donate today and let's deliver the boost they need after all they've been through.
>
> Now that's how you say Happy Mother's Day.

This positioning of a specific 'type' of vulnerable recipient was strategic. Building emotional connections between recipients and donors was part of the larger discourse of us 'all needing help sometimes', where a mother in a more secure, privileged position could imagine herself in the place of a vulnerable single mother with no resources and be motivated to get involved, volunteering her time, or donating goods to Warm Hearts. Portrayal of the recipients as survivors played into this positioning, where mentions of trauma and crisis became more frequent in posts during Australia's preliminary lockdown to manage the spread of COVID-19 from March 2020. This increased frequency reflected larger community, state-wide, and national conversations acknowledging the additional pressures on households, resulting in increased reporting of domestic violence (ANROWS, 2021). In mid-2020, Warm Hearts received a donation from a well-known mattress company that was

to be directed specifically to women and families leaving violent homes. The organisation worked to ensure they were able to address urgent requests during this period as an essential service. The new resources page they built for their website stated (original emphasis included):

> While many take shelter at home in this challenging time, for some the isolation itself may pose a greater danger. One true legacy of COVID-19 will be how we choose to rebuild and support those most affected by its social and economic impacts.
>
> [The CEO of a women's shelter partner organisation] shared that [t]here has been a **30 per cent increase in calls to her services already in a single week.**
>
> **Google reports there's been a 75% increase in searching for DV help in Australia alone.**
>
> The financial and health pressures generated by Covid-19, combined with social isolation of lockdown have created a perfect storm for incidents of domestic violence to escalate rapidly.
>
> ***"What can any of us do!?!?"*** we hear you ask in exasperation. Here's a few ways you can help …

Language on their social media posts reflected the ongoing priority of the provision of essential material aid to those fleeing domestic violence, with increased use of terms like 'trauma' and 'crisis' as well as 'survivor'. Warm Hearts regularly referenced the idea of not having a safe place to shelter at home during the pandemic, which held emotive power for the organisation when calling for donations of essential items. Their visible activity to address the community issue of rising domestic violence cases fits their existing need categories as well as their regularly incorporated imagined vulnerable recipient, a mother with young children. During the strategic planning day, my participants spoke openly about avenues for grant funding; my scribbled fieldnotes read "Domestic Violence = grant $$". Warm Hearts were sensitive to the experiences of this recipient group, but were also

continuing to negotiate how best to leverage the potential of their material aid service for additional funding to build their business.

The imagined vulnerable recipient as a figure at Warm Heart Enterprise was typically a woman with children, but I had spoken with caseworkers as well as the Board member working in community housing as part of the social welfare sector, so I knew the range of vulnerable people experiencing or at risk of homelessness was much more diverse. Data from Australia's most recent census (ABS, 2016) shows that of 116,427 people experiencing homelessness that year, youth, older persons, people with disabilities, and culturally and linguistically diverse people were substantially represented. The report notes that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are overrepresented, making up 20% of this number despite only making up 3% of the Australian population (ABS, 2016). The reports do not indicate further detail about their family situations, but what is clear is that people across a range of races, ages, genders, and family structures experience homelessness. When I interviewed Warm Hearts' newest Board member, we discussed the community of tenants his team worked with, and how they co-ordinated their programming:

> Education, training, and employment [is] not such a big one for us because that client cohort is predominant[ly] single person households, aged, because of the nature of historic allocations into [local LGA] […] we've got a lot of [culturally and linguistically diverse] residents.

The demographics of the vulnerable people in this Australian capital city being supported by a community housing provider were older people from predominantly non-white and non-English speaking backgrounds. This detail from the Board member gave further depth to my understanding of Warm Hearts' strategic use of an imagined vulnerable recipient and left me with more questions about how and why this figure was so prominent in the organisation. In my final interview with the Finance Officer, I asked her about the need types in terms of categorisation of recipient data, and she gave an example:

> Finance Officer: And you know in the homeless Category A lot of the homeless categories are single men with mental health issues, they put homeless and mental health.

> Helen: And that has not been on the radar as a story that's been shared or told at all.
> Finance Officer: No, because it's not a pretty story.

Understanding that some data had been translated into 'stories', specifically success stories, and other data had not given me a stronger sense of where Warm Hearts felt confident of their position in the sector. Stories that were not pretty and might be seen as 'poverty porn', an exploitation of vulnerability, were not pursued. Warm Hearts preferred imagining the ways the provision of material aid would enable their vulnerable recipient, a mother with young children, to thrive.

Part of the work of contextualising recipients as family and community members was to enable donors, partners, and volunteer members of the organisations to understand the significance of every household Warm Hearts helps. In my final interview with the COO, she observed that corporate donors often requested these stories as a resource to build into demonstrations of corporate social responsibility and impact. They had learned that corporate donors were interested in stories of the recipients using the goods, and there was an ongoing requirement for stories and testimony. The Communications Officer had been working on this as a project when she could. She shared a collection of de-identified recipient stories with me, stories that caseworkers from partner agencies shared with her in phone interviews. The first stories she collected were all about women, mostly mothers with school-aged children. There was a consistent theme of fleeing domestic violence and abusive living situations:

> Hannah [not her real name] was supported by [the women's shelter] in a number of ways. Connected with mental health support, assisted in applying for a property that she found in [an] ideal area for her. Connected with outreach programs and assisted with move into property […] Hannah assured her caseworker she had furniture in storage in a garage ready for when she moved into her new home. She could not admit that she only had a plastic table and chairs and a box of miscellaneous goods. The caseworker had no idea until they arrived to help her move into her house […] [The caseworker] had to think quickly of a solution for her … by the next afternoon she had received everything she required from [Warm Hearts] despite being out of area for deliveries. Hannah was completely overwhelmed. Hannah is now doing

> really well; she has a cosy and comfortable home for herself and her son and is hoping to work in disability services.

The Communications Officer built this story into a social media post that focused on 'Hannah' living without furniture, and the caseworker putting in an emergency request with Warm Hearts. Most of the stories collected followed this pattern and offered this resolution, but the Communications Officer also shared a story she heard from a caseworker about the ongoing struggles a mother and her family were experiencing after having fled a violent home. The Communications Officer reflected on how confronting it was to hear a story without a 'nice' resolution, observing "you're kind of waiting till the moment where you can go 'oh I'm so glad we could help and how amazing and kind of great' and there wasn't, we didn't really get a moment like that". The Communications Officer noted the caseworker instead offered her another recipient story with a more positive outcome for her collected testimonials. The stories with positive outcomes are the ones that fitted neatly into the "Eat well + sleep well + present well" framing included in Warm Hearts' 'Plan on a page' for 2021. The organisation's imagined vulnerable recipient was not only a mother with young children, but she would also thrive in a home with furniture and whitegoods delivered to her cosy and comfortable home.

Conclusion

Building an understanding of the vulnerable recipient group that motivated Warm Hearts' provision of material aid as a service is a key piece of my project's consideration of the organisation. By establishing a clear sense of the social welfare sector, I have identified a range of ways power structures have shaped firstly, the circumstances that placed recipients in vulnerable positions that included experiencing homelessness, and secondly, an understanding of Warm Hearts' relationship to these recipients. The lack of resources and security for Warm Heart's recipients through lived experience of poverty is indicative of larger structural inequalities. Capitalism as a power structure values the white, male, able-bodied worker (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; hooks, 1984, 2013); those marginalised by disability, challenges with mental health, race, gender and age are frequently alienated from society by structures of power (Daya, 2014). Under capitalism, there is a push to emphasise

individual responsibility over social or community welfare (see Marttila, 2013). Such a priority sees the social welfare sector stretched not only to provide resources to those experiencing poverty and marginalisation under capitalism, but also for case workers to advocate for their clients as humans deserving of care and support (Fook, 2016). The impact of structural inequality under capitalism translated into a focus on individuals for not only the case workers, but for Warm Hearts as a social enterprise. The organisation took a lead from case workers as expertly trained in the sector, which found the individualism of a capitalist system of social welfare expressed through stories of "ones"; the construction of a vulnerable Other (Daya, 2014). Taking positive focus on individual stories was not only an opportunity to describe success, it was also a mechanism through which Warm Hearts could remain silent on many of the reasons recipients were experiencing homelessness (Gill & Kanai, 2018). Impacts of capitalism, but also white supremacy and patriarchy, could therefore unfold unmentioned in plain sight. Warm Hearts not only reflected power structures in this way, the organisation ultimately reproduced capitalist, patriarchal and white supremacist assumptions by choosing to focus storytelling on looking forward; the constructed motivations of their vulnerable Other recipient prioritising a distinctly white, middle-class upward social mobility (O'Sullivan, 2021; Quah, 2020; see also Skeggs, 1997). By celebrating success as the accomplishment and aspiration of establishing the type of home and family the organisation recognised, unspoken expectations of 'thriving' perpetuated practices and behaviours of recipients of Warm Hearts' material aid. The anticipation of recipients thriving because of the organisation's work informed a larger organisational discourse of meeting need as a social entrepreneurship opportunity, which is described further in Chapter 5.

Examining the sector in this way is important because the social enterprise as an organisation is in the business of offering help and support to vulnerable people. This chapter has looked to caseworkers in community housing and the social welfare sector to understand vulnerable people experiencing homelessness, and how they became recipients of the material service from Warm Hearts. While the recipients were central to the work of Warm Hearts, it is vital to understand the organisation in terms of internal processes and structures as a social enterprise. My next chapter looks inward to describe Warm Hearts as an organisation, considering the social enterprise and their place in the social welfare

sector, as well as the resources they drew from vital to their ongoing ability to deliver their material aid service.

Chapter 5: Work At Warm Hearts – The Social Enterprise

Introduction

Warm Hearts was a social enterprise in its third year when I undertook fieldwork, working in partnership with the social welfare sector. As I described in Chapter 4, both the organisation and their caseworker partners shared a focus on the provision of support for recipients both experiencing and at risk of homelessness. This shared focus and purpose was central to a range of actions at Warm Hearts including the development and implementation of strategy into day-to-day activities, as well as sourcing and managing resources including donations, volunteers, and corporate partnerships. Warm Hearts operated within a recognisable social enterprise landscape. As they worked to deliver material aid to vulnerable people, they were navigating a range of challenges typical for a social enterprise. Having effectively moved from early stages of ideation, the organisation was now established and motivated to continue growing their success. In this chapter, I move to on organisational level of analysis. I examine Warm Hearts as a social enterprise, firstly identifying how their place in the sector shaped the innovation of their services, informing their strategy as well as governance and reporting practices. Secondly, I show the ways they were resourced as a social enterprise to understand the range of capital they had access to. I address their management of finances as an organisation, which includes their approach to funding and future grant prospects.

I found that Warm Hearts were motivated by a certainty that they offered a unique service, arguably a commonly held belief of start-up companies in general. This certainty shaped the ways the organisation understood and reported on their work as output and results. In this chapter, my identification and consideration of the dynamics of their operations are framed as typical to a social enterprise. The incorporation of the typical and expected speaks to how structures of power are reflected and reproduced, and this chapter makes clear a range of dominant entrepreneurial discourses at work at Warm Hearts.

"We Deliver Stuff People Really Need": Warm Hearts And The Social Welfare Sector

Warm Hearts' place in the social welfare sector established the legitimacy of their organisation as a social enterprise. In this section, I describe their approach to the sector in terms of establishing a place for themselves through researching and laying claim to the opportunity addressing the needs of vulnerable people. Understanding Warm Hearts' strategy requires considering the role innovation played in the organisation. I describe the ways that dominant entrepreneurial discourses were at play in their approach to establishing a 'gap in the market', also considering how their Board's reporting requirements presented tensions between the compliance required of a registered charity and the generative, innovative thinking required of a social enterprise at this stage of growth. Examining these dynamics makes clear a range of challenges for the organisation as they proved themselves and looked to stabilise their organisation.

Opportunity And The Sector: Building Warm Hearts Into The "Ecosystem"

The establishment and ongoing work of Warm Hearts was understood and framed by the organisation in terms of having discovered an opportunity to supply help to address need. At the time of my fieldwork in 2020, the organisation was well into their third year of operations. Warm Hearts were focused on delivering a material aid service that continued to be effective for recipients to set up new homes. This was a need in the sector the CEO first identified while working as a volunteer with a refugee advocacy organisation, when she realised that setting up a house with basic furniture and whitegoods was often a challenge for those made vulnerable by forced migration. I heard this story when I first met the CEO before my fieldwork began. I captured the broad strokes of this in my notes:

> Moving into a home with nothing has to be addressed by a caseworker, who has limited time and budget – [Warm Hearts] provides all necessities in a delivered package.

In the first two weeks I was observing Warm Hearts, I heard the origin story from the CEO with full context for the first time. My fieldnotes observe:

> [The CEO] started the work just with a trailer on the back of her car, asking her friends and their friends for their unused furniture and whitegoods to deliver to families arriving in the country seeking asylum. She was working as a photographer at the time, but told me animatedly that this quickly became a more exciting part of her day, because she was seeing the need from having worked with [a volunteer refugee advocacy group]. From there, she started to wonder about others moving into new homes with nothing. She started speaking with caseworkers and realised this was a real challenge; even when caseworkers had funding to furnish homes, they had to devote valuable time to sourcing items. Often because of a limited budget these were poor quality and would need replacing 12 months in. Others with no support had to find items, and somehow get them into their homes.

The establishment of the need of their recipients was key to the organisation. The origin story, a staple of the social enterprise, made clear the ways 'need' translated to an opportunity to help. This drive to define the need was pressing; I have discussed the ways this incorporated the recipients and their experiences as vulnerable people but observed that Warm Hearts were simultaneously constructing need as an entrepreneurial opportunity.

Need was constructed carefully in terms of Warm Hearts having discovered an opportunity to contribute a solution to a problem. I heard members of the organisation refer to this as "the problem we're here to solve", "there's a need in this space", and the "significant demand" in the sector. As I spent more time with Warm Hearts, I found that the story of opportunity discovery was incorporated regularly into strategic discussions as well as external-facing media content. A local news article about Warm Hearts in March 2021 shows how this need was constructed with a type of urgency:

> The social enterprise was first established in [the local area] in 2017, given there was a clear need for household goods in a hurry. "I think having this realisation that there are people that live rough in their own home, struggling behind closed doors was what prompted [Warm Hearts]. The things they lack are all around us. We deliver stuff people really need" … notes [the CEO].

Need as a prompt to establish the organisation made clear this was an opportunity the CEO had grasped enthusiastically. In terms of framing opportunity discovery as a social enterprise, Warm Hearts' origin story was clear. This story grew into a discourse within the organisation; while structural inequality persisted and homelessness continued as a frequent outcome of disadvantage, demand was ongoing. As Warm Hearts grew, so did the opportunities for them to provide their material aid service.

Continued growth of Warm Hearts was shaped around the connections the organisation made to define and address the opportunity they discovered as a "gap in the market". This required them to situate themselves confidently within the sector, or the "ecosystem" of social work and community housing, as they referred to it in their strategic plan. The growth of Warm Hearts had proven that the opportunity discovered was significant and held great entrepreneurial potential. Warm Hearts discussed this "gap in the market" by wanting to do "what nobody else was doing well". The CEO reflected in my first interview with her and the COO:

> At the time where [the service is] needed and where the connection doesn't exist, we've said "well, how do we bring those two things together?" I think that's actually what we do, is recognising that there is a gap between supply and demand and figure out how to bring it together.

In response to this observation, the COO reiterated her own understanding of the 'gap':

> I kind of thought there must be a way to harness, some platform to do this better because people need it to be easy but there's a real need and there doesn't seem to be anything out in the world right now that's connecting, more effectively.

'Discovering' this need was an opportunity to deliver a unique solution to address this gap in the market. I recognised much of the terminology used by the founders as a type of entrepreneurial discourse common among start-up companies. Discussing how the organisation had grown took this gap in the market and incorporated the entrepreneurial concepts of design thinking (Brown & Wyatt, 2010), where the consumer or customer's needs are centred in the development of the product or service that 'solves' the problem.

While centring the vulnerable people Warm Hearts was providing material aid to was core to the provision of their service, they aimed to provide help by collaborating with caseworkers, who were experts in the sector. In tandem with the CEO's Warm Hearts origin story, the COO identified this expertise as key to addressing the challenge she saw as the 'gap between supply and demand'. In my first interview with the founders, the COO recalled:

> I created questionnaires, and I started to just send out to agencies and caseworkers that I thought 'I don't know the answers but they might', so I just said, you know, 'would you help me try and figure out ... I've got an idea and I'd love to hear your experience because I don't have it'.

This was a use of the well-established practice of design thinking as a means of incorporating feedback from the proposed customer base of a start-up company in the ideation phase. The logic of testing a minimum viable product or service with its future users *as* it is designed rather than *after* significant resources have been invested (Ries, 2011) was clear in Warm Hearts' early days. In entrepreneurial terms, caseworkers were the organisation's primary customer. I found that centring their customer needs grew from preliminary questionnaires into the establishment of collaborative partnerships.

Warm Hearts made clear that delivering a solution for the gap they discovered required understanding of how best to support caseworkers as "frontline workers" in the larger challenge of addressing homelessness. Deferring to this expertise and experience was a core practice for Warm Hearts, who continued to embed themselves in the sector by establishing partnerships with these agencies. During a workshop held by the incubator in April 2020, I sat with the CEO as she suggested some wording to inform the strategic approach of Warm Hearts. She suggested:

> We have supply and access to demand – this embedded understanding of social services has enabled us to work alongside those experiencing challenges to build an offering for the community that meets needs in a clear and simple way.

By the strategic planning day in May 2020, the group workshopped language around their role, where statements like "we collaborate with agencies to inform ourselves of the typical

need" and being part of the "ecosystem" of the social welfare sector. Having secured a place and role for themselves with caseworkers in the sector, Warm Hearts were working toward establishing the stability and clarity required to innovate and grow as an organisation. The pursuit of growth through innovation was in keeping with entrepreneurial strategy, which meant this reproduced the dominant discourse shaped by capitalist priorities. This was a matter of a strategic approach that would support the transition from their 'start-up' phase to the 'scale-up' phase of the social enterprise.

Innovation And Strategy

Warm Hearts were motivated by a drive to improve their service and grow as a social enterprise. I identified that for the organisation, the concept of innovation was closely connected to anticipation of growth. Warm Hearts believed that innovating to improve their systems would facilitate offering their service for more partner agencies and more recipients. Improving their systems was a constant and ongoing focus throughout the organisation. In their warehouse, I noted the drive of volunteers to streamline processes. Inefficient use of time frustrated them, particularly lack of clarity on process. After a shift with this team, I observed in my fieldnotes:

> [One of the regular warehouse volunteers] has actually since written up some procedures for both donors or recipients to our partners to be told as part of their briefing from the customer service folks, as well as procedures for people in the warehouse working to the logic that there always is one, at least one staff member that's probably a little newer than the others. And just to have some consistency so she took it upon herself to write those up at home and then was going to type them up.

This input to streamline the donation of goods was satisfying to the volunteer, who made a point to share with me how she had set this out. The weekly 'Work In Progress' meetings of the team leaders were another instance of regular and ongoing discussion of improvements underway. I took minutes at these meetings for the organisation, noting action items such as "web form to be updated with new categories" where this would streamline data collection, and "[IT lead] working out processes for testing, tracking issues" for the proposed

platform that would shift Warm Hearts from a complex Google Forms system to purpose-built software. Such innovations to their systems recognised that the 'work-around' options that had developed with the organisation needed to be upgraded. Developing these solutions was a priority; innovation that enabled growth was built into Warm Hearts' values as a social enterprise.

The language of innovation was prevalent throughout Warm Hearts. "Being collaborative and innovative in our work" as an organisational value and "innovative thinking" as a pillar of Warm Hearts' strategy were two assertions shared by the team with members at the AGM in December 2020. The pairing of collaboration and innovation as values formalised the incorporation of design thinking as noted above. The role of data collection was also emphasised as an additional means of informing innovative decision-making for Warm Hearts. This data was representative of the ways partner agencies as well as recipients were accessing their service. During the strategic planning day, participants were asked by the Chair to share what they were individually most proud of achieving in the past year, who herself reflected on how more work with their data had given them much-needed detail:

> We had no idea, 9 months ago, how many items went out to [domestic violence survivors] – we were looking at large, small, single set up, right? Now, we can look at that by recipient group.

The Finance Officer echoed this sentiment, offering:

> What am I most proud of? I think just the evolution of the data we're capturing, from my perspective – we've got a long way to go, but hopefully the evolution of the data capture leads to better decision-making tools.

The enthusiasm for translating the data available from three years of operations into meaningful statistics and better decision-making showed a focus from the Chair and Finance Officer on the importance of controlled innovation. Thinking innovatively was shaped carefully by the organisation during my fieldwork, as a year of streamlining and stabilising the organisation ahead of Warm Hearts' goal to grow and scale up.

Strategy discussions were a key piece of the entrepreneurial discourse at Warm Hearts. The organisation's drive to innovate and grow was balanced by the development of strategy that required planning and goal setting. The founders identified the need for more clarity in terms of next steps, with the COO observing at the strategic planning day in May:

> I think it's just general clarity external facing and inwards facing as an organisation [we need]. I think we are where we are because we've just built organically, that's been a really great strength, but we're kind of at a position now that it's limiting us.

The nature of their work as a social enterprise held an expectation of growth, but it was agreed across the organisation that this needed to be tempered with control and forward planning. At the strategic planning day, we opened with a session to map the highlights and challenges of the year just passed. These were predominantly growth-focused, with a list the Chair captured on the whiteboard reading:

Highlights:	**Challenges:**
Founders paid!	Being let down – [company withdrew pro bono help]
Quick thinking around COVID	Onboarding limited
Supporting people through COVID	Processes to enable volunteers
Leadership team – ownership, collaboration, communication	Mindset of volunteering of start-up
TEAM!	Reliability of volunteers
Impact study – values others can deliver - not just altruistic	Retaining knowledge/processes over long period
System – processes roadmap	Information access – links on Trello/Slack
Corporate donors!	6-month induction period

"Grateful Mike" stories – connecting what we do with real stories	Representing [Warm Hearts] culture to donors + caseworkers
Cashflow + enough to pay	Lack of training
Better decision-making	Remote working. Not understanding other ways of working
Board change – collaborative	Key person syndrome
Transition to new model -> could exist beyond us	Launched + then changed model -> impact on systems
Consistent Ops team – since November - stepping up - Just do it!	
People demonstrate capability + gain belief	
Documenting detail. Process depth	
Partnerships	

In terms of making changes to processes or introducing new ideas, the group agreed there was a need to settle or 'ground' the work Warm Hearts had been doing. The highlights reel from the list above celebrated mapping processes, documenting detail, better decision-making, and the development of a model closer to being replicable as innovations. The challenges noted on the board around reliability of pro-bono partners and volunteers, retaining corporate knowledge, and 'key person syndrome' revealed more clearly the strong desire of all employees for stability. I noted the range of metaphors used throughout the planning day, building a sense of this desire from the Chair who initially observed "we've got a ship moving, but it's got a few holes and leaks in it", then suggesting the next year should be a 'more boring one', before offering a more productive sentiment of working on 'grounding the ball'. As the team engaged in more focused consideration of what stability could mean, the COO observed:

> COO: [Chair], I think when you say [the next financial year]'s gonna be boring, I think it's been this incredible trajectory. But now I feel like we have a solid model that can work and it's really about getting good at that.
>
> Chair: Yep, maturing the foundation.
>
> Finance Officer: Taking us out of the pot and planting us in the ground.

This collection of metaphors was apt and telling of an organisation period of rapid growth. They had an idea that worked but needed finesse and oversight. The nature of their work as part of the social welfare sector ecosystem, as they saw it, required the guidance and accountability that a governance structure like their Board could provide. The Board operated to connect accountability with growth, shaping the trajectory of the organisation as a social enterprise.

Governance And Reporting

For Warm Hearts as a registered charity, a clear governance structure was key for the organisation. The Board comprised of five members as I began fieldwork, growing to six in the final three months. Members included the CEO, COO, and Finance Officer as well as the Chair, bringing expertise in start-ups as well as charitable foundations. The other member offered insight into public relations and high-level communications strategy. She was outgoing, replaced late in 2020 by a member working in community housing. The additional member had a background in technology, specifically the development of platforms to facilitate organisational growth. Five of the Board members were white middle-class women and the sixth a white middle-class man. The combination of expertise the Board members offered informed oversight to Warm Hearts. These new members were introduced at the AGM in December 2020, with the Chair stating:

> We have recently gone out to market and interviewed a number of people around the potential of joining the committee with particular skill sets. The biggest area that we wanted to recognise for the first role was really having someone that was an advocate from the housing and social services sector. The second need we had identified was someone that brought digital and technology skills to really lead us

> into the future in terms of enabling how we work with caseworkers, and volunteers and employees. So the big focus was on finding people that bought that capability, as well as the passion, the values, and everything else that they bring.

This range of expertise was intended to deliver a balanced approach to facilitating the continued growth and stability of Warm Hearts. Bringing a member from the sector onto the Board was a means of contextualising the organisation's challenges and motivations for agency partnership management. The technology expertise was anticipated to inform process on the development of a purpose-built platform that Warm Hearts would need to leverage as proof of their growth and move into the next phase of scaling up their service.

Warm Hearts presented an annual overview of the organisation's progress to their members at the AGM as part of their reporting structure. Introducing and nominating new Board members was part of due process of the organisation and recorded in the minutes. In terms of public-facing discussions of growth and achievements, the AGM painted a rosy picture of an organisation hitting strides and meeting milestones, which was to be expected. The Founder's Letter, sent out to all members of Warm Hearts ahead of the AGM, presented the organisation's achievements over the 19/20 financial year. This included an overview of their 'reach' in terms of people helped that compared results with the 18/19 numbers, 'impact' in terms of data gathered from recipients of material aid and caseworkers from partner agencies, 'noteworthy achievements' that highlighted special projects as well as Warm Hearts' COVID-19 response, and the CEO's professional development. Volunteers were acknowledged, including Board members, and donor partnerships were listed, highlighting donations of goods, collaborative work, and funding.

The work of the Board in monthly meetings was more formal and direct. The Board of Warm Hearts ensured that the accountability required was prioritised throughout the organisation with their drive to grow and innovate. While Warm Hearts were a social enterprise working to stabilise, streamline, and grow, they were also beholden to their status as a registered charity. This meant they were accountable for their financials in a specific way that included a formal auditing process. Accountability and growth were addressed through monthly reports that provided detail of progress against set Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The KPIs were all informed by the budget and reported on by the CEO, COO, and Finance Officer.

The reporting system had developed in the three years in which Warm Hearts had been operating to a structure intended to cover all high-level concerns of the organisation. The CEO reported on highlights, challenges, and top priorities for the coming months, recording these in a numbered list. Activities around funding as well as special projects were listed in tables. The CEO also had opportunity to note additional support she would require from the Board. These reports were increasingly concise as my fieldwork progressed, with the Chair regularly remarking on detail not as relevant at this level of overview. The Chair effectively coached the founders toward these briefer reports, and each month these documents grew more succinct. The CEO's reporting reflected her focus on funding and fundraising, flagging progress of grant applications and identifying other avenues she was pursuing to raise money for Warm Hearts. The reports also incorporated detail on the HR and Communications teams, as these fell under her remit as CEO. While brief, her reports offered a snapshot of the organisation and were helpful for building a sense of the range of responsibilities being addressed by the CEO and her team. A sample CEO report from the final Board meeting I attended in February 2021 reads:

FOR NOVEMBER, DECEMBER 2020 AND JANUARY 2021

HIGHLIGHTS

1. AGM, New Committee Members welcomed, & 1st Audit completed
2. [Funding body] Awards – 30k grant as well as a powerful marketing and PR opportunity
3. [Warm Hearts] online fundraiser $3150
4. [Funding body] grant submitted with incredible support
5. [Local Council] Award

CHALLENGES

1. [Local area] COVID Outbreak, with our truck in the [local] area on the key dates, we quickly assessed possible risk of transmission with contractor and his team, communicated with our teams internally and assessed schedule for necessary changes.
2. Coverage over festive season and school holidays – tricky for both leadership team and general volunteers.

TOP PRIORITIES FOR FEBRUARY-JUNE 2021

1. [Funding opportunity] Preparation March (Target $50 000+)
2. [Community Housing Provider] Pilot to determine impact of our service on sustaining tenancy. Possible revenue stream upriver from caseworkers.
3. Recruitment focus into HR, Customer Service & Comms teams
4. Townhall event [with Warm Hearts volunteers]
5. Tech Improvements- [a range of new platforms for tech solution]
6. WHS Induction to be formalised – Print and Video
7. Video Campaign strategy and stage 1 to boost power of funding and partnership proposals

FUNDING – ACTIVITY

STATUS	GRANT	AMOUNT	NOTES
AWARDED	[BIG 4 BANK PROGRAM]	30,000	APPLIED FOR 75K, GOOD SUPPORT EXPECTED
APPROACH	[PHILANTHROPIC BODY]		SEEKING RENEWAL FOR YOUTH AT RISK FUNDING
COMPLETED	[MARKET STALL]	2000	ANOTHER IN MAY
APPLIED	[COMMUNITY DONOR GROUP] CAPACITY BUILDING	TBC	3 GROWTH IDEAS SUGGESTED – TECH, TRANSPORT, PARTNERSHIPS
APPLYING	MINOR LGA GRANTS	2 X 2000	[2 LOCAL LGAS]

SPECIAL PROJECTS/OTHER

PROJECT	EXTERNAL SUPPORT	STATUS
Ongoing Impact Data Analysis	[Student program]	Requested
CHP Pilot Design	[Student program]	Requested
Strategic Comms & Media Training for CEO	[External communications expert]	½ day offsite training set for Mid November
Secure next primary warehouse space before Q2 2021	[Corporate warehouse ownership group]	Connecting to more developers via industry and peak bodies. [Donor organisation] has agreed to create video about our partnership and recommendations to share with prospective sponsors

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDED FROM BOARD – NONE

Figure 5.1: CEO Monthly Report

This excerpt from the monthly report makes clear the range of areas the CEO was reporting on to the Board. Progress on projects as well as the status of grant applications were discussed each meeting in response to these updates and the CEO was often called on to explain and further discuss key aspects.

The COO's reporting focused on operations, so reflected management of the warehouse, details about stock levels and incoming donations, and the management of relationships with partner agencies and corporate donors. In addition to this, the COO's report included a 'dashboard'. This was a series of tables that reported actual numbers against projected numbers for the month (see Table 5.1). These numbers included Homes and Items KPIs, Transport KPIs, and Operational KPIs. The COO's report was indicative of the growing sophistication of Warm Hearts' use of data, where patterns could be more easily identified and possible issues flagged at Board level. The COO report also measured actual figures against projected or budgeted figures, which meant these reports were contextualised against the Finance Officer's budget reports and the CEO's reporting on fundraising efforts. The connection between material aid delivered and the ongoing success of Warm Hearts was made clear. The organisation set their targets around homes established, but the measure that held across these reports was "total items", where the dashboard indicated how many items were 'funded' or paid for by partner agencies. The items delivered were also broken down by recipient category, which put this data in the hands of the Board who interpreted these patterns as possible "growth areas", or demographics that might yield possible pitches for funding. As such, 'Homes' and then 'Items' were broken down as below, in a sample from the February 2021 report. This report shows that while targets for homes furnished in November and January were not reached, in context the COO does not have a concern about this shortfall. The comments section of the report was used by the COO to explain or justify figures, and often also to suggest or indicate actions being taken. Management of unfunded or sponsored items was also reported on monthly – agency partnerships are discussed in more detail further into the chapter, but it is clear from this

report that the organisation was closely focused on hitting a more even distribution of funded to unfunded requests as a priority that would ensure both growth and ultimately, longevity.

Homes and Items KPIs

Note: (1) 10 homes per week x 48 weeks; (2) ~6 items per home; (3) 50% funded by agencies, 50% sponsored by grants or fundraising.

	NOV Target	NOV Actual	DEC Target	DEC Actual	JAN Target	JAN Actual	FY Target	FY Actual YTD	FY Gap	Comments
Homes	42	38	22	52	42"	30	480	326	154	**68% of total # homes target completed in 58% of the year.** **Jul 1 - Jan 31: 27 dispatch weeks Average: 12 / homes week**
Homeless								165		Represents 52 % of total orders (NB. includes: Homeless, Mental Health, ATSI, Over 55, & other)
DV								49		
Youth at Risk								84		
Refugee								28		
People Impacted		83		113		65	N/A	669		**Avg 96 people / month**
Total Items	230	224	172	240	230*	115	2880	1667	1213	58% of the year target completed in 58% of FY. Jul - Jan: Avg 5.1 items/home (fee for service item only included in this average)
Funded items	115	77	86	102	115*	46	1440	833		50% of all items Funded by fee for service Jul - Jan 58% of the year target completed in 58% of FY.
Homeless		62		84		52		643		

DV		14		18		10		161		
Youth at Risk		0		0		40		60		
Refugee		1		0		13		21		
Unfunded / sponsored items	115	157	86	138	115*	69	1440	844	803	59% FY Unfunded/ sponsored target complete in 58% of FY. **Nov, Dec, Jan:** 67 % unfunded items covered by DV / Youth grants Action: working to improve control of unfunded order volume within FY budget.
Homeless		28		9		5		120		
DV^		25		51		10		112		$30,000 [Donor] DV sponsor - used $5,475 to date. **Action:** offer to unfunded DV partners.
Youth at Risk^		65		53		40		436		100% [Donor] sponsored $2,775 remaining **Action:** present data to [Donor] - apply for further support.
Refugee		39		11		14		162		**Action:** Target sponsored funds for refugees

* Although budget reflects full month operation targets – January only operational 3 weeks.

Table 5.1: KPI Dashboard – COO Report

The top note on KPIs was a reminder of the organisation-wide targets set for the 2020/2021 financial year, where these targets had been broken down to monthly numbers for Warm Hearts to hit. In the report, figures that had fallen just below target were flagged in orange, with significant shortfall flagged in red for quick reference to challenges. This sample incorporates three months because the Board had not met to discuss figures since early November 2020. The reports took up half to two-thirds of the 2-hour monthly meetings, where challenges and setbacks were discussed at length in terms of insights they could provide, and future decision-making. Here, I observed the entrepreneurial process of iteration in action, with decisions about when and where to direct the team's attention mediated through the Board. The interconnected nature of these reports was utilised with the specific purpose of expanding Warm Hearts.

The process of reporting enabled the oversight of the Warm Hearts Board. The Board ensured accountability in terms of attention to how funding was allocated and why. This form of governance was also a means of measuring growth and success in the organisation. The management of resources was another key piece to ensuring the growth and success that Warm Hearts were measuring. In the next section, I describe the resources the organisation had available to them as a social enterprise and consider the range of ways they were understood and valued.

"Excess Goods, Excess Skills, Excess Space, Excess Time": Resourcing The Social Enterprise

The organisation followed a typical financial trajectory as a social enterprise. During ideation and implementation stages, Warm Hearts incorporated a range of resources to ensure they could operate on a small budget with minimal overhead. The organisation was resourced by volunteer hours, donated goods, and donated warehouse space. Their personal relationships, public reputations, and online presence were all incorporated into the work of growing the organisation. In this section I examine how Warm Hearts established and built a social enterprise, identifying how the resources required to operate and provide a material aid service were accessed and incorporated into the organisation. I show that access to

resources was central to the organisation and highlight some of the ways power structures are reflected and reproduced at Warm Hearts.

Personal Resources – Establishing A Social Enterprise

Warm Hearts' progress and growth as a social enterprise was shaped by the range of resources the organisation had access to. The most significant resource relied upon was volunteer work. Donated time, labour, and expertise enabled Warm Hearts to develop systems and processes that facilitated the delivery of material aid to their recipients. For the CEO and COO as founders, their work equated to full time hours. In our first interview, I asked them to reflect on the work they had put into building Warm Hearts. For both, the ability to devote full time unpaid hours to their organisation was possible because of the well-paid work of their husbands. The COO made first mention of this, acknowledging this financial position and ability for her to do the work as a 'luxury':

> Just to flag at this stage, I guess, it also is a luxury. You know, I don't want to undervalue that. For me, with the support of my husband, [I] was able to put enough time to this, without, you know, and that was a family decision as well, so that comes together and yes you're making do with less, but it also, it is a luxury that some people don't have, or (pauses) it's harder to achieve.

The CEO was agreeing with the COO as she made this point, adding:

> Well, we're able to make that decision because one person in the family unit can support the financial needs of the family unit. My husband also put to me that I was making the social contribution for our family that he wished he could make and couldn't do both.

Both agreed that there was a balance of sorts they had reached with their husbands, a "joint decision and equal contribution" as the COO put it later in the interview. These observations from both founders were delivered with a degree of self-consciousness, coupled with later mentions of the challenges of being taken seriously as women business owners. While the founders had been comfortable disclosing this background to me, their capacity to work

unpaid was not mentioned on an organisational level. In my fieldnotes from early in the study, I reflected on this as unsurprising:

> Working for free doesn't seem to be ok to talk about in terms of how my participants can afford it, at least not in any group settings. In a one-on-one capacity, most of the team leaders who are volunteers have given an indication as to how they manage their unpaid work. Some are retired, some are balancing their hours with paid work elsewhere. Speaking about money directly is awkward, so this makes sense to me.

In our final interview, the CEO and I spoke more frankly about money, and I reflected this was one of the "things not to talk about at a dinner party". She laughingly included "religion, and politics". I found that my reflection from earlier in the year remained true, and that while the founders were not necessarily hiding their financial status as middle-class white women, they did not tend to discuss it unless asked directly in our interviews.

While the founders made clear their work could not have progressed without this family-based financial stability, they were also quick to make clear they did not consider themselves extremely wealthy. The CEO shared that she had a working-class upbringing, and her work prior to starting Warm Hearts, as well as her husband's work, had put them into a 'middle-class' category as a family:

> I came from a working-class family. No financial privilege there but I've been able to earn that for myself, we're really comfortable, sort of white-collar family. So friggin middle class suburban.

This was the only conversation we had where we spoke directly about class. I found that both the CEO and COO used the idea of being financially "comfortable" in our interviews and avoided any specifics. The COO reflecting that her family was "making do with less" also implied that her work had an impact on their finances, but she demurred against offering clear details. This seemed more private and personal for her. However, in my first interview with the Finance Officer, we spoke more openly about money, and in reflecting on her own previous experience with start-up companies specifically focused on managing money, she observed that her work with Warm Hearts was different because of the founder's backgrounds:

> [The CEO] and the people I'm working with now are a bit different in that, in that they don't come from exceptionally wealthy backgrounds.

The Finance Officer had made this comparison with her previous employers. The "exceptionally wealthy" were founders of for-profit start-ups who had multi-million-dollar waterfront properties. Her frankness about financial details throughout my fieldwork was a vital piece of my understanding of Warm Hearts as a business. I found the way the Finance Officer differentiated the founders of Warm Hearts from 'exceptionally wealthy' founders to echo claims the founders themselves made to being typical or average in terms of financial and social status. Motivations for other volunteers at Warm Hearts tended to vary more significantly throughout the different teams and roles within the organisation. Warm Hearts had grown from the unpaid work of the founders in terms of establishing the organisation, and now relied on their work meeting the roles and responsibilities of CEO and COO.

At this stage of the organisation's growth, it was clear that Warm Hearts had developed a way of explaining their work within the sector to consider the vulnerable recipients of their material aid service as well as the donors of the goods they delivered. At the planning day, we sat down to refine the strategic plan for the upcoming 20/21 financial year. The Chair took the opportunity to question the founders on some of their language, querying the word 'excess' in the organisation's 'Purpose' – "We connect excess to benefit both people and planet". The CEO expanded on this wording:

> The reason we kept it ambiguous is that we are actually made up of excess goods, excess skills, excess space, excess time, and volunteers and so, wanting to lead people more towards a mindset of abundance versus scarcity. We chose that word because of all the forms of abundance and if we think about the fact that [Warm Hearts] is currently focused on furniture and white goods because that is the gap that nobody else is doing well. But it comes down to this wish to … there is enough in the world. This is, I'm giving you [the COO]'s words, she's helped me to understand – there is enough in the world for all of us to do well and have what we need. So how do we reshuffle that resource, redistribute that resource around?

This reflection of the founders' shared understanding of resources indicated their ongoing work with 'excess' as goods, skills, space, time, and volunteers. These were positioned against the idea of scarcity. As a social enterprise delivering a material aid service, Warm Hearts did have access to an abundance of resources. Their most significant for delivering material aid was a broad volunteer employee base. In this next section, I describe the range of volunteer employees working for the organisation and illustrate the value of their work as a resource. I also show the ways this volunteer work was weighed in the organisation in terms of time-based versus task-based work.

Volunteer Work

Time-Based Volunteering. Warm Hearts' organisational structure reflected the ways volunteer work was accessed and understood as a resource. The structure presented as a simple organisation chart in Figure 3.1 reflected the distinct types of volunteer work undertaken at Warm Hearts. I found that volunteering at the warehouse and in the customer service team was time-based, where volunteers would attend shifts 'on site'. For the warehouse volunteers, these shifts were physical; this group were moving couches, beds, fridges, washing machines, and kitchen tables around the warehouse, on and off the delivery truck. On average, these volunteers had a shift once a week, which they fit in with other priorities. Volunteer work at the warehouse was not something the team would 'take home' with them, beyond often having the Slack app on their phones to keep across logistical detail about shifts. I undertook occasional volunteer shifts at the warehouse, on one occasion reflecting in my fieldnotes:

> We had a busy morning moving couches, but took time to sit down for lunch, which was great … some good banter back and forth. Clearly, they are really good friends, it's really social. We don't speak about who is receiving the items, just the logistics of what needs doing and who will move which things. They are friendly with everyone – it doesn't feel like I'm a stranger, we all fit into working as a team really quickly. I think that's because of the few regulars who keep things on track.

The work this team did was very straightforward and having such a clear to-do list was satisfying to those who had reflections to share with me about the work. The customer

service team, who typically had on one or two 4-hour shifts a week, undertook shifts from home, managing the 'site' of Warm Hearts' donations and requests inbox by logging in on their personal computers. This team assisted both those wanting to donate items to the organisation and caseworkers putting in requests for their clients. The HR team recruited volunteers for these teams regularly, receiving applications for and inducting volunteers into these roles.

Volunteers engaging with Warm Hearts to undertake these shifts in the warehouse team and the customer service team were a range of people with a broad range of reasons for volunteering. Across the course of 12 months of fieldwork I met people of colour, white people, volunteers from both working class and middle-class backgrounds, able-bodied volunteers, and volunteers with disabilities. The volunteer group were from a range of ages, working full time or part time, or had retired. Mostly, the team members held regular weekly shifts. While I did not directly question any of the volunteers about their reasons for volunteering, I was able to build a sense that some were engaged with the work because of an interest in 'giving something back', others were building skills for their resumes, some were building their conversational English skills, and others were keeping active in the community to be connected to other people. These sentiments informed social media posts to encourage volunteering in the community as helping in 'small ways', with one such post reading:

> When you have superstars like [volunteer] showing up at [the warehouse] to work their magic, it's easy to forget just how much goes into getting those home essentials ready and on the road to where they're needed. Tagging and testing appliances is one of those small deeds our volunteers carry out that make a huge difference.

This post was accompanied by an image of a male volunteer at an open, unplugged fridge, holding the testing hardware. The photo itself was captioned: "[Volunteer] ensuring donated appliances are safe and ready for a new home." 'Small' tasks were connected to the 'huge' difference it would make for Warm Hearts' recipients to have a safe fridge in their homes.

Recruitment for both the customer service and warehouse teams framed the work prospective volunteers would undertake as 'simple' and 'easy', ensuring it was clear that Warm Hearts welcomed all types of help. These two teams were made up of the volunteer employees that Warm Hearts recruited on social media through posts that referred to the work as 'being involved in your own way', inviting prospective volunteers to "sprinkle it all around and make lives better together". The organisation also framed these calls for volunteers around assumed volunteer types, focusing on mothers in one post:

> We're looking for super helpful customer service stars to join our operations team. If you're looking for a volunteering opportunity where you can work from home or our office around school hours, helping connect kindness with vulnerable families, then this is the perfect role to make your own or to job share.

I found that the nature of this work meant these two teams were the largest in the organisation, as without the presence of volunteers to process donations and requests, Warm Hearts would have ground to a halt. The work of their volunteers was acknowledged regularly, and the organisation were very aware of their reliance on these teams. These shifts meant this work was time-based because of the constant flow in and out of requests and donations. I observed that the other volunteer 'type' at Warm Hearts was the task-based volunteer, who came to offer expertise rather than time with repetitive tasks. The two types were treated differently in terms of how their work resourced Warm Hearts to deliver a material aid service.

Task-Based Volunteering. Warm Hearts discussed their volunteer workforce often, reflecting on motivations for volunteering in their management and recruitment of volunteers. These conversations made clear the difference in volunteer types working at Warm Hearts, where those undertaking shifts at the warehouse or managing the inbox as the Customer Service team were one, and those working in a more strategic role were another. At the organisation's 20/21 planning day, the Chair of the Board positioned their discussion of managing volunteers as a workforce by sharing her experience recruiting volunteers. She observed:

> I used to interview volunteers for [a national organisation] and my three qualifiers, when I asked them why they were volunteering – if they said to give back to the community they were [in the no pile]. It's someone that says, I actually want to use my skills, I want to develop, I want to connect with people, I've got pressures at home, so I want to get away … people that really [practice] self-reflection with their actions.

I found this insight particularly helpful in building my understanding of how Warm Hearts tended to think hierarchically about their volunteers. In comparison with the volunteers undertaking time-based work, the task-based volunteers participated in the more strategic side of the organisation. These volunteers, like the Chair's ideal volunteer, tended to be engaged with the organisation for a range of reasons that I quickly understood to align more closely with those of the founders.

Warm Hearts looked to recruit volunteers with specific expertise they had identified as a need for the organisation. This expertise and the skills this group of volunteers brought to Warm Hearts were a resource the organisation relied upon for strategic growth. Recruitment for these positions read differently to the social media posts calling for extra hands at the warehouse or in customer service. Wording on social media posts played to the same motivations the Chair had mentioned, using skills, professional development, and connection to a community beyond work or home to recruit. One such post read:

> Are you ready for an opportunity to give back and put your skills to use, while gaining valuable new ones? If you'd like to volunteer with an organisation where imperfect is the new perfect and innovative ideas are welcomed with open arms, please reach out via the link below.

Another post read:

> We've got a swag of new volunteer roles listed on our website, including Grant Writers and Fundraisers, Project Managers and Relationship Managers. In return for your time, your generosity, and your skills we can promise you a supportive and flexible team environment, working alongside an amazing bunch of kindness superstars.

Warm Hearts was calling to a group of prospective volunteers that had and claimed to have skill sets that would lend themselves to innovation, where flexibility and the 'imperfect' were a part of the workplace dynamic, and co-workers shared values of generosity and kindness. The shaping of these calls for volunteers were met with a much narrower demographic than those volunteering time-based work; these were almost all white women, in ages ranging from 30s to late 50s with some in early retirement. Like the founders and team leads, these volunteers offering expertise were mostly mothers, married or in long-term partnerships. All had corporate experience to offer, and in most cases had some type of tertiary education at the beginning of their careers.

The incorporation of these expert volunteers as a resource showed me that Warm Hearts valued their contributions highly. I had the opportunity to meet one such volunteer in person late in my fieldwork, on a day she was working with the CEO to develop an overview on the types of services offered in the social welfare sector more broadly. The volunteer was building from her corporate knowledge to put together a statistics-based report that drew insights from the statistics to build grant applications. The CEO was excited for me to meet her and spoke enthusiastically of the possible impact of this report. At lunch, I observed a type of connection-building work being undertaken. My fieldnotes observe:

> We had a nice lunch and just sort of chit chatted, [the CEO] as always family focused and bonding with the volunteer over those particular similarities. They have very similar backgrounds, down to the kind of person their husband is. They've both got boys. Quite interesting, to think through and look for the crossover there into the kind of people that are working with CEO and volunteering for [Warm Hearts].

Sitting in on this conversation showed me how these shared experiences of gender, age, and family were important at the organisation. Drawing on the expertise of these volunteers was also community-building through similarities. It was often the case that while such volunteers tended to lend their expertise to a particular deliverable for the organisation and then finish up with Warm Hearts, they would suggest friends and colleagues for their expertise or interests. Warm Hearts played to the fact they were 'women-led' or 'women-run' in these exchanges where a volunteer referral was being offered.

These volunteers were a resource for Warm Hearts that strengthened their strategy, but also their standing in the community. The CEO would often share details about incoming volunteers by indicating which organisation they were currently working for or had worked for – KPMG, Deloittes, and more than one of the major Australian banks yielded these expert volunteers. Their knowledge and experience were valued not only as a resource for the project they were helping with, but as an opportunity for the organisation to let it be known the calibre of their volunteer employees. The KPMG volunteer was a particular point of pride for the CEO. My fieldnotes from an ad-hoc phone catch up with her in late June observe:

> [The CEO] is so excited about [KPMG employee] working with [Warm Hearts] in coming months. She has mentioned KPMG over and over; after bringing it up in the strategic planning day last month as something she was really looking forward to, her and [the Chair] brainstormed some of the ways they could make best use of his expertise. [The Chair] was impressed [the CEO] had been able to 'nab him' and had a list of options to suggest, all strategic.

Access to this level of expertise was a big deal. This work culminated in a strategy workshop volunteers delivered in October 2020, focusing on an assessment of the organisation with a view to ways he said Warm Hearts might "become more efficient", to which the COO enthusiastically replied:

> I think that sounds like a fantastic framework. I think we're all in our little bubbles, you know, doing the best we can, but I think this is the kind of raising your head moment.

Working with a volunteer at this expertise level was a great opportunity and resource for the organisation. The ways that Warm Hearts valued and praised this volunteer for donating his time and expertise to 'helping them grow' was typical of how they responded to these task-based projects delivered by this type of volunteer.

The recruitment and use of volunteer time was the most significant resource for the organisation. Warm Hearts were grateful for all their volunteers, celebrating them often online, in meetings, and during the yearly organisation-wide events that normally fell right

before the December break. The shift work undertaken by the warehouse and customer service teams maintained the flow of donations and requests, incoming and outgoing. The strategic work from the expert volunteer group across a range of projects both focused and grew the organisation, who were working to yearly goals. While both making important contributions, these two groups were different in terms of demographics of gender, race, and class. The ways they were managed and understood at Warm Hearts speaks to how they were framed as resources for the organisation.

In this next section, I further explore the resourcing of Warm Hearts. I describe the organisation's finances in terms of their relationship to funding from grants and through partnerships. I also consider their approach to financial management as a means of showing the ambivalent relationship Warm Hearts held with this aspect of running a social enterprise. I tease out some of the anxieties associated with the finances to consider the power dynamics reflected at Warm Hearts.

"When You Start Talking About Money": Organisational Finances At Warm Hearts

Funding came from a range of sources for Warm Hearts. In this section, I examine the organisation's finances in terms of how they funded their work. I begin closest to home, first outlining the ways their growth set them at a milestone of paying employees. I then turn to funding sources, describing their agreements with funded and unfunded partner agencies. Beyond this incoming funding were Warm Hearts' corporate partnerships that provided in-kind donations of goods. Finally, in this section I discuss the nature of fundraising at Warm Hearts, and the implicit anxiety for the organisation that surrounded their reliance on grants and other philanthropic funding.

Warm Hearts had followed a typical trajectory as a social enterprise in terms of financial growth. Right as I started my fieldwork, the Board had confirmed that the organisation had hit the milestone of having enough incoming funding to pay employees. From 1st January 2020, the CEO and COO were paid a salary. This milestone was agreed throughout the organisation to be an important achievement. For the founders, reaching this point was a cause for pride. They were pleased at what being paid for their work meant for Warm

Hearts. In our final reflexive interview together in February 2021, we spoke about how being paid had held to build a feeling of legitimacy in their work. They also considered how being paid shaped their ongoing relationship to their roles. The CEO observed:

> For me I guess first of all, it does feel like a proof point, that the concept is worth it. We've gotten it to a point, we're succeeding because we're so careful about getting the organisation into order over chaos. So that is great. Just that it occurred and then personally, it really does, it does feel different […] we've agreed the percentage we are paid and the percentage we are volunteering and that feels better. We've started off with a low salary. Payday's freaking awesome. Love it. So it does make a difference to my family, my relationship, financially, and my feeling of contribution.

They always clarified that their payments were calculated pro-rata at a part-time basis, and ensured it was clear they were still volunteering the rest of their time to Warm Hearts. The Finance Officer confirmed with me they were being paid a 'minimal' amount; the CEO was paid $35,000 AU per annum, and the COO $30,000 AU. Others in the organisation had a keen sense of what paid positions meant for Warm Hearts and shared with me their observations about some shifts in processes as well as the sense of seriousness or commitment to the business.

Through the course of 12 months with Warm Hearts, I was able to observe the establishment of additional paid positions. The warehouse supervisor role was advertised as a paid position in May 2020, and after a few false starts, was filled by a Māori man with previous warehouse and stock management experience. The Program Manager had her role formalised as a paid position in late 2020, with her employment announced at the AGM in December 2020. With the founders, this made four paid positions in the organisation. This progression was significant for a social enterprise who had run on volunteer work and minimal overheads. This growth milestone proved the legitimacy of their business, but also set budget requirements in a way that necessitated a consideration of risk. The Program Manager observed that the introduction of salaried roles had begun to tighten the approach to finances organisation-wide, including relationships and partnerships. She reflected to me in our first interview that with the establishment of formal partnerships came a new stage in operations for the organisation:

> When you start talking about money, you start having to get much more particular. And that has had a knock-on effect back up through the ops team in terms of tightening processes and training because you can't just wing it when it comes to money. I've noticed that it's had a big impact.

At the time, I noted the gentle criticism implied with 'you can't just wing it'. Her main concerns were always around a lack of stability and established processes. The Finance Officer reflected to me when I interviewed her the first time that "I think the grounding thing for [the CEO] and [COO] has been, we've got a commitment to pay salaries now". The minimal overheads in the first three years of operations had enabled flexibility, where their services as an offering could be continually adapted and iterated based on insight from agencies and caseworkers as their customer. Now, the organisation had a responsibility to ensure incoming funding that enabled them to continue meeting demand as well as to pay employees.

Agency Partnerships

Effective provision of material aid from Warm Hearts relied significantly on the larger networks established around securing and maintaining housing for vulnerable recipients. The organisation managed each of these groups differently but had an overarching categorisation of 'we support them' for outgoing services versus 'they support us' for incoming donations of a range of resources. In this section, I discuss both funded and unfunded agency partners of Warm Hearts. Partnerships were an important contributor to ongoing financial stability for Warm Hearts. An examination of these relationships establishes the dynamics of the social enterprise as an organisation and shows the ways underlying structures shape the social welfare sector as a 'market' to which Warm Hearts delivered their service.

Agency partners as a stakeholder group played a role in clarifying the shape of the need experienced by Warm Hearts' recipients, but more significantly for the business they often dictated the flow of funding. Warm Hearts served both funded and unfunded requests, where 'funded' agencies had a budget to furnish their clients with essential items and cover delivery costs, and 'unfunded' agencies did not. Funded agencies were most commonly

social or religious organisations and included government agencies. Advocacy groups and charities could have funding to spend on material aid depending on grant money or their own partnerships but were often making requests for items in an unfunded capacity. Supporting unfunded agencies was a key focus for Warm Hearts. The organisation had set a strategic goal to meet a 70:30 ratio of unfunded to funded agency requests, building to 50:50 in their fourth year. To meet this goal, Warm Hearts were devoting time and attention to the management of partnership agreements with funded agencies. The planning day helped the group consider how important the funded partners were to the organisation, with the COO observing:

> … all our partners are incredibly valuable, for me the funded are really … it's an incredible asset, every partnership we have in the funded space, and our capacity to grow on that, but it's really going to be an experience where, if we don't get it right … our purpose is to make their life easier. Our purpose is to save them money, save them time.

Over the course of my fieldwork, partnership management moved from a planned future role to a necessity, falling under the remit of the COO with support from the Program Manager. Formal agreements were negotiated and established with agency partners, which included the decision to begin invoicing mentioned by the Program Manager at the planning day. The establishment of formal agreements was a key piece of ensuring that Warm Hearts was setting and meeting expectations where funding was involved. While the documentation itself was standard, the introduction of these agreements was important for Warm Hearts as the formalisation of relationships and commitments that had previously been implied, but never articulated. This took their involvement in the sector into a professional realm, where they were now responsible for guaranteeing reliability and consistency for their partners, and through them, vulnerable recipients. Putting these agreements in place was an ongoing part of relationship management work, and the COO would report on this each month to the Board. Securing these agreements translated to ongoing financial stability for Warm Hearts, but the founders tended to talk around the financial implications. They preferred to discuss these agreements as a means of further

embedding the organisation in the sector and focused on how they could deliver their services in the most helpful way.

These funded partners were extremely valuable to Warm Hearts. The incoming funds were important, but the establishment of paid agreements also gave the organisation's service legitimacy as a response to the 'gap in the market' the founders had identified. Empowered by this legitimacy, I found that the organisation were also very clear that delivering material aid to un- and under-funded agencies was always going to be part of their service. Unfunded advocacy groups and charities were more likely to be volunteer-run, where a volunteer worked as an advocate for a recipient in need of material aid. Other organisations who fit into this category of partnerships for Warm Hearts were focused on support for survivors of domestic violence, where sums of grant money were allocated specifically to support this group of recipients. Underfunded or unfunded agencies and the cases and demographics they represented tended to be central to the hypotheticals and "how might we" -lead discussions frequently considered by Warm Hearts. My second interview with the COO offered clarity in terms of how she framed their work as an organisation. She made the assertion that "the space of the unfunded is something deep that we need to address as a society", ultimately stating that only providing material aid in a fee for service model was "not why we exist". This reflexive interview made clear a tension at Warm Hearts between being successful as a business and addressing the need they had identified for vulnerable people in the community. The COO took this understanding into her own fundraising remit, which beyond managing agency partnerships included procuring corporate partners and other in-kind donations.

Corporate Partnerships

Addressing need through agency partnerships was one side of Warm Hearts' stakeholder relationship management. This was an easy dynamic to understand, as most of the work I observed was focused on delivering services to recipients through agencies. While Warm Hearts was founded through the sourcing of private donations, the organisation was increasingly working at a larger scale, which meant bulk donated goods from corporate donors. Warm Hearts' corporate stakeholders included a range from smaller to larger levels of support. Relative to the goals set for the 2020/2021 financial year, many of these did not

represent a significant pool of funding. I found that Warm Hearts' grasp of their own standing in terms of stakeholders and donors was often uncertain. This was not obvious to me right away, as members of the organisation tended to be able to speak confidently about donors in a way that implied long-standing, secure relationships. One example of this was an ongoing relationship with a mattress company, who supplied two-thirds to three-quarters of the mattresses Warm Hearts delivered. This relationship was representative of the direction the organisation wanted to take in establishing a reliable supply of high-quality goods. Reviewing the flow of goods to Warm Hearts, it was the establishment of key partners in this space that offered the type of organisational growth that put scalability in their sights. The COO described these partnerships in a podcast appearance she did in early 2020:

> We work a lot with corporate, so corporate is becoming a really big part of what we do. So big hotel decants, big projects. So that's really becoming, how much effort for return. Because when we're going out to pick up one bed, one thing, the formula doesn't quite work. So, the corporate space there's so much amazing stuff that is going straight to landfill if you're not able to fit their timeline, you know. [We] work with amazing people that are willing to shift just a little bit. They focus and adapt a little bit and redirect the truck your way and allow you to select the good quality and take away the waste.

These corporate donors were stars to feature in monthly reporting and inspired the setting of strategic goals for the organisation in terms of securing additional donors. The COO echoed her earlier sentiments from the podcast at the planning day:

> [W]hen I look at our sweet spot as an organisation where I see us is in the corporate space of goods. If we can really get nationally incredibly good at collecting, in having the partnerships of where great quality goods go and have capacity to collate them. Have a great user experience to get them, for the caseworkers, and it becomes just this efficient, not loud, not shouting, trumpets out, but just for corporate we make it easy enough to have great partnerships.

Corporate partnerships also translated to consistency and reliability, which was a key aspect mentioned by all the caseworkers I spoke with. Being able to anticipate a level of quality and type of product was valued by their agency partners and recipients. Time was being invested in securing additional donations of goods through such partnerships, highlighted during the planning day as strategic goals for 20/21 were mapped out. This aspect of Warm Hearts' finances is important to understand because it shows that the redirection of resources was contributing to a growing capacity for the organisation to support vulnerable people.

The COO's distaste for having 'trumpets out' to be loud about the service they were providing also revealed an interesting tension I had observed regularly at Warm Hearts. The COO making this statement at the planning day in front of the team leads and Board members present revealed an interesting dynamic that tempered ambition with reluctance or discomfort. I also highlight these partnerships to show the complexity of the organisation's relationship with this growth; there was a balancing act between helping vulnerable people and facilitating bigger agreements with corporate partners. This reveals the ways dominant entrepreneurial discourses that demand growth were both embraced and resisted at Warm Hearts. I found this same tension to be an underlying dynamic for the CEO in her fundraising responsibilities.

Fundraising

Fundraising for Warm Hearts was constantly in focus for the founders and the Board. The organisation was structured with a reliance on grant money, as they worked toward a 50:50 balance of funded and unfunded agency partnerships. The founders of Warm Hearts had a complex response to this stage of growth and the focus they agreed was necessary to stabilise the organisation. In organisation-wide conversations, such as the planning day, or AGM held in early December 2020, they addressed the financials and paid funding model in terms of a clear overview. The COO had reflected at the planning day earlier in the year that a key 'learning' from the 19/20 financial year was "that building a system of invoicing as core, as opposed to, we kind of did it as an add-on". The Chair spoke about Warm Hearts' fee for service model at the AGM specifically in terms of reducing which she referred to as the 'risk of fundraising', meaning that Warm Hearts was working toward a fee for service

model that would cover all operational costs. Achieving this would allow for fundraising to be directed to specific projects, campaigns, and 'extras' for Warm Hearts. At the AGM, the Finance Officer's report acknowledged that "grant funding and fundraising has been specifically targeted at as CEO called it, 'keeping the wheels turning'". Where the COO oversaw development of relationships with partner agencies and corporate donors, fundraising in terms of actual dollars was the CEO's remit. Throughout my year of fieldwork, I observed unease and reluctance from the CEO in undertaking the work of fundraising, as well as a determination to build this skillset.

The nature of Warm Hearts' work as a provider of material aid to vulnerable people established powerful context for the 'ask' that was required of fundraising. In the 2019/2020 financial year, Warm Hearts reported $65,900 AU in grant money, which included corporate grants, government capital grants, government operating non-recurring grants, and philanthropic grants. Other fundraising efforts had yielded $6,700 – this was the result of two campaigns run through social media over the year. As I ended my fieldwork midway through the 2020/2021 financial year, the organisation had secured approximately $30,000 AU in grant money, with three upcoming grant prospects the CEO had flagged in her report (replicated in Figure 5.1). Applying for grant money was a complex process with specific requirements, and many of the grants were competitive. As I finished fieldwork with Warm Hearts, the CEO was preparing for an ask for one of Australia's big banks, as well as a pitch competition that had the potential to secure the organisation up to $50,000 AU. In our final interview, she said:

> I just had the 30 minutes with two people from [the bank] and the one from [a crowdfunding network] about that 'pitch for $50,000' event. (Mimics hyperventilation). Even talking about it is making me anxious.

The CEO was open with me about the pressure she felt undertaking this part of her role at Warm Hearts. I had observed this type of anxiety around fundraising from her before, and although in this instance it was the live pitching that she said she was most worried about, I found that raising money more broadly was a point of tension in the organisation.

Outside of government grants, philanthropic grants had become an industry entirely of their own, with grant writers identified by Warm Hearts as a specific volunteer role they were looking to fill. I attended a grant writing workshop with the CEO in April 2020, which gave us an opportunity to speak frankly about the stress of the grant-writing process, and the pressure of fundraising as a responsibility. We had a late-night phone call to debrief and discuss the 'homework' set for the second part of the workshop the next day. My fieldnotes read:

> [The CEO] notes this is too much pressure from one person and states she is 'out of her depth'; sharing her view that they should pay the experts to do the work in this case. She notes that the Board needs to "assess their key person risk" (referring to herself as CEO and the impending burnout) […] This frustration is explained by her in this context as an inability to rest, knowing there are families out there experiencing domestic violence. She names and acknowledges the frustration, stating that part of it is not knowing who to ask or seek to work with to solve this problem. She wonders aloud if this is "the frustration that comes before a breakthrough" and I wonder if she has other experiences like this that might be worth questioning her about.

Her drive to secure this funding was explained to me as an emotional connection to Warm Hearts' recipients, but the frustration was also reflective of her not knowing how best to proceed. I found that she tended to think in terms of the specifics of a recipient group, and how different groups might be supported with different grant types. Later in this same phone conversation, she shifted to speaking about state government, and I've noted:

> She states "I don't understand why people don't see it. How do we bring their gaze to it, so they can see that something as simple as furniture can have [such a significant] impact?"
>
> [The CEO] shares that she spoke with the Minister for Small Business – even acknowledging that even though it's not his portfolio, him not knowing about [domestic violence] concerns during COVID-19 is a motivator to her: she says, "it's about how we help people know".

I was interested to hear her build connections between fundraising and awareness raising. This highlighted the role relationship building had in securing government grants; a goal for Warm Hearts they spoke about frequently with the Board. Government funding was seen as a goal to pursue that had a better opportunity for stability, and part of the strategic support the Board offered was around planning for how best to connect with state ministers.

Including fundraising activities in the CEO's monthly reporting to the Warm Hearts Board kept discussions about the organisation's financial position and future strategies front of mind. Approaches tended to focus on obtaining ongoing funding, which meant the organisation was focused on how best to secure an agreement with state or federal government. The Chair facilitated a discussion about this goal at the strategic planning day, beginning by drawing on her previous experience with not-for-profits, stating:

> So the strategy we employ for [other not for profit] is [a] 3-pronged approach – private donations, which is fundraising events to campaigns. We have grants which are corporate and philanthropic, and then we have government.

My fieldnotes observe that a discussion of the best strategy to approach government went for around 30 minutes of this planning day and included "brainstorming a list of possible connections to ministers through people they knew". I listed the names of six people working in or with state government, as well as the observation that "[Warm Hearts] want buy-in on the problem of homelessness from a government that won't raise the [Australian welfare benefit] payments!!" I sat quiet on this reflection, as the CEO had moved the conversation into the territory of:

> How to build up a relationship with both current sitting ministers and shadow ministers, so that we can ride out any change […] we've got enough data to start the conversation and request more funds so that we can prove to them that we are reliable, we can do what we say we're going to do. So let's take the small funds this year, so that we can start asking for the year-on-year funding.

This ambition to build relationships that would lead to more reliable sources of funding was plainly stated at the planning day and mentions of befriending politicians continued throughout meetings at Warm Hearts discussing strategic approaches to funding. This

dynamic and reliance upon these types of governing bodies reflected a belief throughout the organisation that their continued success and growth would require this type of funding support.

In my second round of interviews, I wanted to hear from Warm Hearts about how they felt the organisation's reliance on grant money shaped their work. Because these were reflexive, I shared my observations that fundraising presented an ongoing challenge for Warm Hearts. The Finance Officer stated bluntly that the organisation was going to need to be more conscious about fundraising and incoming funds:

> You've got to be conscious of this from the perspective of that we've got enough money to continue to employ people. Like we are not all volunteers who can just pack up our bags and shut the door anymore.

The Finance Officer unsurprisingly considered the practicalities of the 'bottom line' for Warm Hearts, and the responsibilities they now had to pay employees. I was also curious about the way fundraising was perceived in terms of the longevity of Warm Hearts. The COO indicated some resistance to the idea that philanthropy and grants should be their primary source of income. She saw the possibilities of more collaborative work with corporate partners, framing the ask of corporate partners as:

> Do you want to be part of this, it works, it's needed, it makes sense, and it benefits everyone involved. Do you want to be part of it? And so that's where the funding for me is like, we need that support, we need those big corporates with huge pockets that can write it off, and that say, 'you know what, we've actually gained on the back of a lot of whatever, and we want to be part of something else'. And so these guys actually make the dollar work. They don't do us a favour, we take something off their plates, and we solve it.

Her interest in how the question of funding could be about mutual benefit positioned her ambition in a slightly different place to those indicated by those discussing how best to win government grant money. The COO's view of these possibilities was not one that had been considered in the strategic conversations Warm Hearts were having with their Board during my fieldwork. The Board were concerned with ensuring the organisation had a future and

had positioned themselves to support fundraising to this end. Ensuring longevity of Warm Hearts held growth and sustainable approaches to funding their work in an often uneasy balance. I found that motivations revealed some of the ways power structures were implicated in the work of Warm Hearts as a social enterprise.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I turn my analysis on Warm Hearts inwards to examine their work at an organisational level. Managing entrepreneurial ambition through the 'discovery' of the needs of vulnerable people as a business opportunity and gap in the market reflects familiar entrepreneurship discourses that prioritise profit and innovation (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Capitalism is a power structure that values economic growth, and entrepreneurship works to a model of fast iteration, emphasising innovation as an indication of success (Ries, 2011; Shane, 2000). The discovery of an opportunity to deliver material aid to a group of vulnerable recipients was also an opportunity for Warm Hearts to show their legitimacy as a business. The ways in which innovation was valued, showcase and prioritised showed that Warm Hearts understood these capitalist expectations (Heckler, 2019), and ultimately reflected these in how they presented the organisation.

Managing and delivering organisational growth ultimately demanded ongoing pursuit of funding. The complex relationship my participants held with capital demonstrated to me a clear reflection of capitalism as a structure of power. Proximity to economic, cultural, social and symbolic capital (Skeggs, 1997; see also Bourdieu, 1986) through privilege was evident throughout the organisation. I found that the ways the founders and team leads in particular related to these types of capital reflected class as an example of how power structures shape the social enterprise. The significant access my participants had to capital through their privilege as white and middle-class women was either downplayed, or unacknowledged. Here, structures of patriarchy and white supremacy were interconnected with capitalism; the discomfort and caution taken with our direct discussions of funding or economic capital reflected the relatively privileged position of my participants. Steps to downplay and discount this privilege rendered white middle-class femininities 'universal' to the social enterprise (Nkomo, 2021). My participants relied upon their networks, their

educations, and their ability to work unpaid for 3 years to ensure Warm Hearts continued to operate, but rarely discussed these sources of capital as access to entrepreneurial opportunity. Instead, their discussions of how best to secure more funded partners and financing through grant money tended to reproduce entrepreneurial myths of meritocracy and neutrality (Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017). This attitude towards capital also functioned as a means of legitimising their work as a social enterprise; in this way, they reproduced structures of power through the reprising of dominant discourses of entrepreneurship.

As a social enterprise, the ambition for growth and financial success needed to be balanced with accountability and governance (Calás et al., 2006; Peredo & McLean, 2006). The Board oriented themselves around this growth, which included work to manage the organisation's assets. The nature of reporting-informed governance saw the organisation often reducing the human component of their work to objective figures; goods received, requests fulfilled, volunteers recruited. Warm Hearts' ongoing success depended on resources that started with volunteer employees working at various levels, relied on partnerships in the social welfare sector, and continued to hold ambition for long term financial support from government, corporate donors, and philanthropic organisations. These dynamics were complex, and the maturing of the organisation also made clear a growing push for political 'neutrality'; a strategy to ensure the appeal of Warm Hearts translated across a range of political parties at state and federal level. Being seen as 'playing by the rules' was a strategic choice of the organisation to ensure longevity (Lewis, 2014). Deferring to conservative government by way of neutrality reproduced rather than challenged power structures of capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy. In a potentially precarious position as women entrepreneurs (Marlow & McAdam, 2015), my participants communicated their legitimacy in these spaces by nature of their whiteness and their middle-class status (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Nkomo 2021). Reproducing political neutrality as central to their work made clear they understood and could adhere to familiar and established practices of entrepreneurship (Bruni et al., 2004; Tedmanson et al., 2012).

Building an understanding of what is typical throughout this chapter as well as Chapter 4 establishes key context for comparison in the next chapter, where I examine Warm Hearts'

organisational discourse of ‘doing things differently’. In Chapter 6, I bring together what Warm Hearts did as a social enterprise with how they understood themselves and their work. Moving my analysis to a closer focus on employees at Warm Hearts, I explore how they constructed themselves as an organisation that was ‘doing things differently’ and consider this in terms of their pursuit of empowerment and reflexivity around their own privilege as white middle-class women. I observe the ways that professed vulnerability was used as a means of navigating these complexities, offering a sense of some of the ways power structures were reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

Chapter 6: “Doing Things Differently” At Warm Hearts

Introduction

In Chapters 4 and 5, I considered how the power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise through an examination of everyday and typical practices and processes. I made clear who Warm Hearts worked to help and how the organisation did this work. It is evident Warm Hearts made good progress for a social enterprise in their third year as a start-up, hitting recognisable and meaningful milestones. In Chapter 5, I examined the organisation as a social enterprise, establishing their place in the sector and their relationship to innovation, strategy, and governance. I also described the range and role of resources that enabled their work.

In this chapter, I consider how my participants negotiated the complexities of their positionalities as white middle-class women. I shift my analysis to focus on social entrepreneurship on a personal level to capture a sense of the multiplicity of white middle-class femininities presented by the volunteer employees at Warm Hearts. The women at Warm Hearts held privilege as social entrepreneurs by virtue of race, class, and gender as interconnected social categories shaped by power structures. I found that my participants framed their experience of social entrepreneurship through an organisational discourse of “doing things differently”. Their discourse of difference was key to the way my participants negotiated an often-uncomfortable relationship to privilege and disadvantage. Firstly, I describe how Warm Hearts pursued legitimacy through their difference as women entrepreneurs, considering how experiences in traditional workplaces were constructed for comparison. Secondly, I examine my participants’ negotiation of privilege, where their reflexivity was idealised as a confession of difference. I observe there were limits to this reflexivity. Next, I show the ways difference was employed as a defence, where good intentions were incorporated to balance lack of experience and expertise. Finally, I describe what I named ‘professions of vulnerability’ from my participants, examining how these were asserted as a point of difference and means for the women at Warm Hearts to both create and claim safety to fail. The nuances and complexities of social entrepreneurship at Warm Hearts were evident in the ways my participants grasped imaginings of ‘difference’. In this

chapter, my examination of such tensions and contradictions show how power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

"Our Feminine Style Strengths": Pursuing Legitimacy Through Difference

The white middle-class women at Warm Hearts had a conflicted relationship with social entrepreneurship. Their work was motivated by addressing the needs of vulnerable recipients in an efficient way, but they were also very clear on their desire to be taken seriously and considered as legitimate business owners and team leaders in their own right. They were aiming to build a successful social enterprise and implied respectability and legitimacy were an important part of their approach to their work. My participants at Warm Hearts were focused on constructing their work as being 'different' to other start-up companies and social enterprises. One of the consistent ways the organisation constructed these differences was by verbally rejecting the business practices they saw to be typical of traditional or 'corporate' organisations. The founders would often share with me that while they valued their Board, parts of the governance and reporting process were difficult for them to navigate; they referenced "trying to be grown-up and corporate about it" while developing their systems and processes, instead of being seen as "just cute". For my participants, being perceived as cute implied a lack of competence and credibility. The CEO observed in our final interview:

> It's tricky at the Board meetings, because some of the more vocal people in the Board meetings are very corporate. And so, and quite direct with their questions and requiring us to meet certain KPIs and to report back and that's a very formal process, and perhaps not always appreciating the flux and the softness and the other benefits that we love. So, it's tricky at the Board meetings and sometimes I feel a bit battered by them in particular, but then that's kind of what the Board's for. So I think that's just about me being more certain. In the beginning I wasn't sure, I thought I just wasn't getting it and wasn't good enough, and now I think I need to grow my confidence to speak about that and to stick up for why we do things differently and the benefits of that. So I just need to find a bit of a voice there, I think.

'Corporate' was used at Warm Hearts to mean focused on results in a way that required more rigid reporting on outcomes from the founders as well as the Finance Officer. Despite considering the Board necessary to Warm Hearts, the CEO positioned their 'softness' as a quality that was being battered by reporting requirements and more formal expectations. Her growing confidence empowered her to defend their 'doing things differently' approach, and this was reflected in the multi-layered construction of an organisational discourse that prized difference.

For Warm Hearts, prioritising doing things differently often centred their identities and the pursuit of legitimacy through experiences as women in the workforce. My participants at Warm Hearts maintained a keen sense of themselves as women, and often as mothers, in a workplace they had established. This was informed by how they constructed their difference in a traditional or corporate working environment specifically in terms of their femininity, centring their experiences of exclusion or discrimination in a way that foregrounded gender. I found that the focus on gender left the organisation silent on their race and class. My participants celebrated social entrepreneurship as an opportunity to construct something new. They saw this as a different way of participating in the workforce. The founders, who had been in the organisation the longest and had given this the most thought, enjoyed speaking about how their approach to social entrepreneurship felt very different to the corporate world. In our first interview, I asked about the dynamics in the team, specifically relationships between the team leads who met weekly. The CEO observed:

> I wonder about the … if you'll allow me to maybe accidentally say some wrong words, but I am reflecting on how our feminine style strengths, and we talk about intuition and heart and that's not typical to a masculine workplace – I'm sure the words I could be better with, but it's not about, you know, us being born female, but there is something to do with the different strengths and weaknesses of the average way we identify.

Although I had not made any mention of the fact that this group were all women, the CEO was eager to discuss this with me. This fascination with difference incorporated gender identity, framed in terms of strengths. Drawing on notions of intuition and heart as not

typically masculine gave real insight into underlying assumptions that ran through Warm Hearts. Speaking with my participants in our interviews revealed a belief held throughout the organisation that the way they operated was special.

Establishing Warm Hearts as a welcoming workplace for women required a construction of other workplaces in a less positive way. This included roles that universalised particular qualities of traditional organisations. Understanding such organisations as 'masculine' enabled my participants to reflect on the differences in their experiences at Warm Hearts, and this was extended and described in a range of ways. The women working in team lead roles at the organisation were almost all white women in their 30s, 40s, and 50s, married or in long-term partnerships, predominantly straight, and almost all mothers. They often had tertiary education, with work experience that ranged from self-employment to corporate settings. In the case of the Program Manager, taking a volunteer team lead role for Warm Hearts was motivated by a need to gain experience and build skills. I met her at a point when she wanted to shift from volunteer work to paid employment, having spent around 12 months with Warm Hearts. She spoke openly with me about her experiences looking for work before she decided to volunteer with the organisation:

> I had three kids. So, I wasn't working during that time, and I did some study, I did a diploma with business and marketing thinking, well, I didn't want to go back to the full-time corporate type of environment, and I thought maybe I could try something different and being requalified should help me get back into the workforce, having a gap in employment. Turned out it didn't, I'm essentially unemployable by everyone's standards, you know, recruitment companies wouldn't touch me with a bargepole.

For the Program Manager, returning to the workforce after starting a family did not prove to be as easy as retraining and looking for a job. When we spoke again for our second interview, she reflected on her own experience, observing:

> So for me the self-interest of getting back into the workforce, whether [Warm Hearts] was going to end up paying me or not, I was working, for all intents and purposes so, and I was getting my experience and my confidence back and all of that. So the self-interest is what pushed me massively to work full time for nothing.

It was clear that this experience of feeling unemployable had a more profound impact on her than she had shown in our first interview. She drew from this personal experience of gender-based discrimination as she re-entered the workforce to share with me that her difference as a woman had negatively affected her employability. Warm Hearts was constructed favourably as an organisation that provided self-confidence and experience that she could convert into a paid position.

Warm Hearts also looked to differentiate themselves from other workplaces by expressing an aversion to what they considered 'corporate' qualities. Members of the organisation in all teams compared Warm Hearts favourably with their experiences of more 'typical' or traditional workplaces. 'Corporate' qualities included being motivated primarily by profit, working to hierarchical management structures, and growth-focused management strategies. Most often, these favourable comparisons mentioned the value my participants found in helping vulnerable people as a source of meaning and a different motivation for working. For the Finance Officer, Warm Hearts was different as a workplace because her role meant she was able to "help people who need my help, rather than make people who are already wealthy […] even more wealthy". In our first interview, we discussed the founders' approach of offering regular appreciation and thanks at length. She observed:

> I do feel that they value what I do […] Acknowledgement and positive reinforcement. Yes. And again, you know, I've not seen that a lot through my corporate career either.

The Finance Officer found that the Warm Hearts workplace was more supportive than her previous work with property funds management start-up companies. I noted that neither the Program Officer nor the Finance Officer mentioned the similarities of identity that they shared with their co-workers, preferring to contrast this organisation with other workplaces to emphasise they were different to work for.

Warm Hearts were proud to be a women-run social enterprise. They celebrated their shared gender identities. Their collective understanding of their relationship to their work was informed by an enthusiasm for legitimacy; being taken seriously motivated them. An assumed shared purpose pervaded the discourse of the organisation. Their understanding of

themselves centred around being working women; meetings began and ended with reference to all of us being “amazing women”, “fabulous women”, “kick-ass women”. Beyond these affirmations in meetings, this language was regularly reflected to them in social media posts from followers, posted in response to news from Warm Hearts about their achievements. Newsworthy achievements ranged from grant money and donations secured, to end of year numbers on homes furnished by the service. Those that replied to posts would often comment using descriptors like “gorgeous”, “fabulous”, “beautiful and selfless”, “big hearted” and “Wonder Women”. While I found that this discourse relied upon gendered language to establish values of caregiving and compassion as feminine, I observed that my participants had some unease about the impacts of perpetuating these assumptions.

Warm Hearts reflected on how gendered performances of entrepreneurship informed their work as an organisation in a range of ways. I found that what I observed in meetings, such as praise of the team as “amazing women”, was much less self-conscious than in our interviews, where my participants were giving a lot more thought to how they were being perceived. They stepped out of a more instinctive or embodied sense of their legitimacy as social entrepreneurs, and into a register of self-reflective language. The CEO’s quote above that found her ‘maybe saying some wrong words’ is exemplary of an enduring hesitancy I observed in the organisation around making any absolute statements to me around identity. This hesitancy appeared elsewhere as a type of awkwardness around making more direct public statements the organisation saw as more opinionated, or ‘political’. I considered this to be an unintended performance of a white middle-class femininity, where the organisation were confident to assert their place as a women-run social enterprise but drew the line at more assertive or radical observations. My role as a researcher putting questions to them and recording their responses also seemed to result in hesitation. This did not read to me as my participants worrying about misrepresenting the organisation, but as a broader dislike of absolutes. In the case of the founders, they wanted me to help them with what felt to be ‘wrong words’. They saw me as an expert and wanted my affirmation that the organisation was special and worthy of my study. They had some clarity about their strengths as a women-run organisation, but also carried a self-conscious rejection of the possible perception of their work being diminished by their gender. The COO explained:

> A thing that [the CEO] and I touched on yesterday quickly, like we just spoke quickly about [is] we don't want to be cute and soft. But it's really about the smart way, a smart way to do things.

The founders as well as members of the organisation had a sense of which parts of their identities and their work might be translated or perceived in a potentially negative way. It was this understanding of the role gender played in their relationship to their work that made clear the complexities of navigating their positionality as white middle-class women.

My participants at Warm Hearts emphasised the ways in which gender was a point of difference for their individual experiences of the workforce. Often reflecting on their negative experiences at past employers, these women felt valued at Warm Hearts and found affirmation in their similarities as white middle-class mothers. Beyond affirming their abilities for meaningful, important work, the organisation's team leads embraced their femininities as a strength. They were proud to be a female-led social enterprise but also expressed a feeling that gender limited them. In pursing legitimacy through their difference, my participants were frustrated by constraints to their work. A focus on the gendered nature of these constraints should be considered in the context of Warm Hearts' negotiation of privilege.

"Acknowledging Privilege Feels … Privileged?": Negotiating Privilege Through Difference

My participants at Warm Hearts interpreted systems of oppression through their own experiences of gender and the challenges and assumptions that had shaped their experiences of work. In broad terms, the volunteer employees who made up Warm Hearts' team leadership understood that their positionalities as white middle-class women afforded them privilege. This understanding meant that the organisation practiced a level of reflexivity, and aspects of this reflexivity were built into organisational routines. In this section, I examine how reflexivity was constructed in the organisational discourse of difference at Warm Hearts.

The performance of Acknowledgement of Country was the predominant way Warm Hearts incorporated the confession of and concession to privilege in their work. It situated the notion of privilege in proximity to the organisation in a way that signalled their reflexivity and self-awareness. Each meeting opened with an Acknowledgement of Country. The CEO of Warm Hearts tended to 'personalise' aspects of the Acknowledgement of Country she used to open each meeting. In addition to naming the Country and First Nations people specific to where she was located, the CEO also included an acknowledgement of her own privilege. In a Slack message to the team leaders the CEO had posted:

> Hey team, I did some digging for a meaningful start to our meetings beyond the standard minimum and came up with this as a suggestion, up to you. 'I acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we have gathered on and dialled in to today. I pay my respects to the Elders past, present, and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, culture, and hopes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation. Personally, I am on the lands of Wattamattagal clan of the Darug nation, whose cultures and customs have, and continue to nurture, this land since the Dreamtime. It is important to note that sovereignty was never ceded, and this is, was, and always will be Aboriginal land.'
>
> Hope it helps – I also like to add something around respect to our community around us and recipients, though it could do with some work? 'I acknowledge my own privilege in having [been] born in this country and having the fortune of good health, a safe home, and often more than enough than I necessarily need, surrounded by my family and friends.'

All Acknowledgements tended to include each aspect addressed in this example, with either the COO or CEO then adding their own personal touches. The COO tended to reflect on a theme of wisdom, "[we] are in the land of some very wise cultures and people, and may we acknowledge that"; "I ask of myself that I may be part of passing on wisdom and that I do my part in passing it on"; of the value of "plugging into" the wisdom held on Country; and "wisdom and balance from the traditional owners of the land bringing prosperity to a world out of balance". In adding these comments, both the founders effectively brought themselves into the Acknowledgement, seemingly offering an example to the rest of the

organisation, but to varying degrees, centring themselves as part of the performance. Their own *personal* position on Aboriginal lands, as well as their interpretations of Aboriginal traditions including the expression 'emerging Elders', frequently used by non-Aboriginal people to offer unwanted additional layers of Acknowledgement, are notable here. I noticed that when there were new attendees at these meetings, or guests to the meetings, the CEO always took extra time with this more personal, emotive element. An Acknowledgement from a weekly WIP meeting that included five new volunteers included significant additional comments:

> So, before we get started, we'll do our usual paying of respects, admiration, and such to the traditional land owners of the country on which we're all individually working and living and laughing and crying together. And I would like to pay my respects to the Walumedigal People of the Eora nation. They are the traditional owners of this land and sovereignty was in fact never ceded to white people, so they are the traditional owners of knowledge and wisdom for the land we stand on and I personally would like to pay my deepest respect and gratitude for the custodianship that they have maintained for many, many years and now their grace in sharing these lands with us, against their will originally, and now in working together for a brighter future together. Thank you.

It was clear that for the organisation themselves, these opening words were heartfelt, but I found the way the founders inserted themselves into the Acknowledgements to be telling. The COO's tendency to lay claim to the 'wisdom' of First Nations peoples was notable; whether she inserted herself into the practice of passing on this unspecified wisdom, or attempted to 'plug into' it, her personal interpretation of the role of Acknowledgements for Warm Hearts complemented the CEO's claim to a true experience of gratitude and deepest respect. The CEO explained her effusive way of speaking in these Acknowledgements as her consciously focusing on 'meaning it'. In our final interview, she echoed the sentiment of "beyond the standard minimum", saying that she felt their approach to Acknowledgement was about this being more than just "lip service". This organisational practice was positioned favourably as a point of difference with other organisations. Through a

confessional approach to the difference that white middle-class femininities afforded them, Warm Hearts were idealising their reflexivity.

Incorporating the Acknowledgements was important to the founders of Warm Hearts. As the most visible way in which reflexivity was demonstrated in the organisation, I observed a range of responses from the volunteers. It was embraced by some, with one of the white middle-class women working in the HR team sharing that she had been "very impressed with the way [the COO] and [CEO] are so sincere with their Acknowledgement of Country over Zoom". She shared this sentiment on the HR 'channel' on Slack, the team messaging platform, telling the team she had suggested her children's school 'Parents & Citizens' meetings incorporate the same practice. When I reminded the CEO of this story from HR in our second interview, she responded "[it's] awesome. That makes me so happy". The evident pleasure taken from this interaction was a good opportunity to observe the impact of organisational discourse the founders had worked hard to establish, but it stood out to me as one of only a few times the practice of Acknowledging Country was ever directly discussed in Warm Hearts. Curious to hear how other volunteers made sense of this practice, I mentioned this to one of the team leads in our second interview. She had given this some thought and held a more sceptical point of view. She expressed that she saw the frequency and repetition of these words of Acknowledgement as "the done thing", questioning their sincerity in context of what she believed was a broader purpose for the organisation of "patting ourselves on the back for being woke enough". I mentioned the CEO's habit of including an acknowledgement of her own privilege in the Acknowledgements, and the volunteer replied "yes … acknowledging privilege feels … privileged?" She offered a point of view that highlighted some of the ways this reflexivity was idealised as a way to negotiate the privileged held by Warm Hearts. It offered a sense of the complexity of managing and negotiating this privilege.

The personal engagement with performances of Acknowledgement of Country was intended to convey a sense of genuine connection, and with it, reflexivity. However, the organisation simultaneously preferred an approach to political statements that communicated a neutral stance. The intentions of the founders to avoid a sense of doing the bare minimum or paying lip service with their Acknowledgements were at odds with this

organisational approach. In our final interview, I spoke with the team leaders about this disconnect. In June 2020, when Bla(c)k Lives Matter was at the centre of attention across the globe, we discussed Warm Hearts' response to the rise in conversations about race and activism. During a weekly WIP meeting in mid-June, the team leads discussed whether or not to post something acknowledging this ongoing issue on the organisation's social media accounts. The CEO was not part of that week's meeting, and the COO was very tentative to offer input, stating she was a 'novice' when it came to social media. In the meeting, I mentioned I would be happy to cast my eyes over a proposed post as a second opinion. I chatted with the volunteer responsible for social media via Slack immediately after the meeting, and through our text exchange understood that the founders shared a hesitancy to make any sort of statement that might be perceived as 'political'. The volunteer made clear that my assumptions that Warm Hearts had a progressive political stance were incorrect. The volunteer messaged:

> oh … so they are resolutely non-political … which I don't agree with […] it's that relentlessly positive tone … they don't want to be controversial.

My own understanding of Warm Hearts' work to support marginalised people in a sustainable way as an inherently political act gave way to the white, middle-class, liberal privilege of deciding what constitutes 'political', the volunteer suggesting "[the CEO] did say they want to stay on side with politicians". This event and the founders' response in contrast with the organisation's practices of Acknowledgement informed my understanding of the range of motivations for Warm Hearts' choices around what was appropriate to speak about in public. In our final interview, I reminded the volunteer of this experience. We reflected on our exchange, the volunteer observing:

> I had a real cringe moment about that because I wanted to get it right but at the same time, I knew there was nothing underneath what I was writing. I wanted to make sure […] that the social media part was right but at the same time was like, 'this doesn't mean anything, we're not doing anything', you know what I mean? I mean the messaging is really important, I do believe in the importance of social media and making sure that you're raising awareness by saying the right things and stuff like that, but that loses meaning if there's no, there's no action behind it.

Her criticism indicated she had a larger question of what drove these practices. Lack of a specific type of action, inability to address the 'root cause' of systemic inequality, a driving need to be 'woke enough', and employing empty rhetoric were a significant list of criticisms for this volunteer to level at the organisation. Hers was only one voice at Warm Hearts, and the organisation's negotiation of these dynamics was more complex than simple performativity. Negotiating this privilege was an inherently difficult proposition.

Warm Hearts was an organisation that relied on funding and grant money from government as well as philanthropists. This seemed to be the main reason they turned to when explaining why they preferred to hold a boundary between the personal politics of their employees and the position they held as a social enterprise. In our final interview, I asked the CEO directly about refugees and asylum seekers as one of Warm Hearts' recipient categories. I asked if this was a possible risk for the organisation given the current political climate, with Australia's recent history of detaining asylum seekers offshore. She replied:

> [F]or me the refugee beneficiary group is more important because they get less help. But they're also a sensitive topic for many funders and many followers and supporters. So, we basically said what if we personally, [the COO] and I, say we want to help them. And we know that they need to be helped. We don't need to tell everyone about it. What if we just make sure that the work is done? Because we have so many groups and we believe wholeheartedly that it doesn't matter who you are, where you come from, who you pray to or don't, how you identify, any of those things. Everybody needs a bed, fridge, sofa, table, and chairs, and preferably a TV and a washer. So, if we follow that line or that mindset and that way of being, and we can just quietly lead people towards it, you don't have to put the spotlight on certain groups. So we talk about the broad issues, that every human needs these things, these are basic necessities, and that we know where to find them and how to connect them.

This implication of silence in their work to help refugees and asylum seekers build homes in Australia interested me, given the CEO's previous work with a refugee advocacy group is what inspired her to begin Warm Hearts. This was the first and only time I had spoken

explicitly of the politics of this scenario in such a way at the organisation. I did not hear it discussed at Warm Hearts in any other context over the 12 months of fieldwork.

The privileges that were acknowledged by my participants at Warm Hearts showed an emerging understanding of the ways their experiences were shaped by structures of power that established their race, class, and gender. I found that integrating these understandings into their work was not consistent. Despite mentioning privilege frequently, I had not heard any members of the team explain what privileges they held. In our final one-on-one interview, I asked the CEO directly to describe what she meant when she mentioned her own privilege. She responded by listing her whiteness, being able-bodied, and coming from a working-class upbringing to now being part of a 'comfortable, white-collar family':

> When I first started with [Warm Hearts], I really thought about part of why my voice might be useful is because I am a middle aged, white mum in the suburbs. And if I can have tough conversations and think about these things and try to make a difference … (she pauses). Part of it is that I kind of think I like, I am choosing that I wish to do that because I recognise my privilege. But also, if somebody like me can step up and decide to change something then anybody can, because I'm also, I'm really quite average in my privilege.

I found this response to contradict her earlier observation of the specifics of her privilege, and instead to have slipped into a more 'soundbite' style response that might be used to recruit donors and volunteers. The understanding of herself as being 'quite average' in terms of privilege had echoes throughout Warm Hearts, from how recipients were imagined most often as white single mothers to the recruitment of volunteers. I was intrigued by the way this response both conveyed an awareness of privilege and simultaneously centred whiteness and middle-class status as average. Working to be a politically conscious person living under systems of oppression finds everyone at different places with differing levels of reflexivity. While white suburban mums have access to significant privilege which may have the potential to affect change in the lives of marginalised folks, centering this group unselfconsciously is a long-held habit of white middle-class women.

I found that others working with Warm Hearts held their own personal understandings of their privilege. Other participants tended to individualise their understandings. When I reflected on the notion of privilege with the Program Manager in our final interview, she was quick to observe:

> I think it's a little bit more complicated than (pauses) we hear a lot about the privilege of being, having white skin, living in this country etcetera, but I don't think it's as clear cut as that, because I've been discriminated against because of having children and not being in the workforce for a while. I have been discriminated against in the past by not being paid as much as my male colleagues, and not being able to do anything about it.

While she acknowledged having white skin as a privilege, she seemed to hesitate at saying 'being white'. This minor shift mid-sentence was not uncommon; my participants often avoided more direct word choices in favour of euphemisms. The Program Manager promptly dismissed whiteness as a privilege to focus on her experience of difference and of discrimination as a mother and woman in the workforce. Her response was defensive in tone once I mentioned privilege, a question I had put to her in context of how the founders spoke about their own privilege. She wanted her experience of gender-based discrimination to be very clear. It was much more common for discussions of inequality at Warm Hearts to centre gender-based disadvantages in the workforce. Gender was frequently separated from race and class in these discussions.

Negotiating privilege through the positioning of difference was important for Warm Hearts as part of their broader understanding of doing things differently as an organisation. It was also the least directly and clearly discussed in day-to-day operations or more strategic conversations. My participants would speak on privilege when asked directly in our interviews but preferred to let their performances of Acknowledgement of Country stand in as a means of signaling their reflexivity. I highlight these silences and the unease they revealed as important to understanding the types of 'difference' they wanted to celebrate and discuss. In the next section, I describe the types of difference the organisation was fascinated with, and then consider the ways these differences were constructed by my participants at Warm Hearts.

"Just Come To It With Your Big Heart And Your Good Sense": Difference As A Defence

Warm Heart Enterprise's negotiation of their shared privilege was focused on performing Acknowledgements of Country as a visible communication of reflexivity. The approach of personalising these Acknowledgements was intended to speak to my participants' deep connection with this reflexivity, but it also translated to a regular expression of their work as being undertaken with good intentions. I found that good intentions did a significant amount of heavy lifting at Warm Hearts; they were a motivator, but also a form of defence. These good intentions were what Warm Hearts believed made their approach to social entrepreneurship different, and the organisation celebrated doing things differently in all forms.

The framing of good intentions at Warm Hearts was emotive. Organisational discourse constructed good intentions in terms of having "big hearts", which established a range of approaches to work to Warm Hearts. Lacking expertise or experience, working to a gut feeling or instinct, and making mistakes in the process were permitted under the guise of good intentions. The Finance Officer shared with me in her first interview:

> I think the other thing is, you know, there was a lot of gut feel about what they were doing. You know, 'we think there's a need in this space, there's a gut feel that we think …'

This 'gut feel' was permission the founders had given themselves to jump into the work of doing good. Good intentions stood in as justification or permission for Warm Hearts' work in a range of contexts. For the Communications Officer undertaking interviews of caseworkers, a 'big heart and good sense' stood in for expertise and experience:

> I had an interesting conversation with [the CEO] where I told [her] that I was uncomfortable doing those casework interviews initially, because I said, "I'm not a social worker and I don't know the right language" and I was really aware of my shortcomings in terms of having those conversations, and she just like was like, "no, don't worry about it. Just come to it with your big heart and your good sense". And I

> think there's a deeper insight to [the CEO] in that comment, but she's not worried by that lack of knowledge around any of those issues, because if you come at something with the right intentions that that's all that matters and then of course there's a broader argument about, is intentions all that matters?

The Communications Officer was coached into doing the work through a confidence from the CEO that good intentions could speak for themselves. Here, a big heart was interpreted by this volunteer as indicating good intentions. The Communications Officer went on to reflect on her experience, also observing "that's a very white thing to say, isn't it – 'I had good intentions'". I regularly observed this approach throughout my fieldwork with Warm Hearts. This made them 'different' as an organisation where the primary requirement was not a skill set, but an intention to do good.

The valuing of good intentions at Warm Hearts meant that possession of a 'big heart and good sense' functioned as a type of self-authorisation. Warm Hearts often explained any lack of expertise and experience to be a positive, defending this difference. The organisation emphasised this as a strength when reflecting on their earlier experiences of establishing Warm Hearts:

> Chair: [Stop] saying we don't know what we're doing.
> Finance Officer: Who says we don't know what we're doing?
> CEO: Me.
> Helen: I've heard that before.
> Chair (to the CEO): You're doing what you need to be.
> CEO: Yeah, but in the beginning, it was an honesty thing to say we don't come from a casework background, we're not … haven't been in the social sector. In the beginning it was true, and it was one of our strengths because we just asked, 'we don't know how you work, what do you need?'

This regular return to the 'beginning' of Warm Hearts gave their origin story a sense of mythology. I saw that this professed lack of expertise was regularly framed as a strength, a reassurance and even a motivational tool. The CEO took an opportunity in a weekly WIP

team meeting to encourage a new volunteer to move from observing to participating. My fieldnotes captured the CEO's emphatic language:

> There comes a point where you need to dive in; now it's more dynamic, there's even less we all know. We're all working it out; your lack of knowledge is a superpower!

Such calls to embrace not knowing were common in weekly meetings as the best way to solve operational problems. My fieldnotes also observe:

> The week has been a lot of 'let's try this' – the meeting is focused on what has happened during the week, so team leaders will share what they've learned this week […] a thankyou is expressed from [the COO] for 'rolling with the punches' and adapting while things are so uncertain in [Warm Hearts] and in the world. She notes, "because we're being clear about our challenges, we're coming up with beautiful solutions".

Being transparent about what they didn't know, and the possible value of this for problem solving carried through to broader strategic discussions. This transparency was often disarming to observe in an organisation working in an industry where solving a problem was about claiming to know your sector, your customer, and your service. Leveraging what they didn't know as an opportunity to work out answers was coupled with an understanding of good intentions as permission to feel comfortable with not knowing. Difference as a form of defence and protection was a key piece of the 'doing things differently' discourse at Warm Hearts.

Despite the interest in establishing different ways of working as a social enterprise, some core business practices were required to be upheld as a matter of requirement from the ACNC. One such aspect was the organisation's finances. This responsibility was regularly pushed back to the Finance Officer, where financial details including monthly figures and cashflow as well as budget and the management of outgoing expenses fell under the broad category of "[the Finance Officer]'s numbers". The Finance Officer reflected on her early months as a volunteer with Warm Hearts in our first interview:

> I mean [the CEO] and [COO], they don't know what they don't know when it comes to the accounting stuff. So, there was a lot of 'just do it'. And the information of that was being provided to [the previous admin volunteer], she didn't know what she didn't know either. She was just doing the best with the information she had, and there was a lot more that needed to be done. So, I suppose me coming in going, 'oh, hang on a minute, I need to very gently but slowly move this in, let's get some structure, let's get some reporting. What do you actually want to know?'

It was clear that the Finance Officer's work to establish that structure had been key to growing Warm Hearts since she began working with the company. From the Finance Officer, 'they don't know what they don't know' operated as both criticism and excuse. The Finance Officer's retelling of this encounter highlighted that 'difference' as an approach to business practices presented a challenge in terms of practicalities and operational requirements.

During my fieldwork, a practical need to develop and strengthen skill sets grew as a point of tension to the 'doing things differently' discourse at Warm Hearts. This challenged the ways the founders represented Warm Hearts to the Chair and Board more broadly. As an organisation determined to avoid the traditional and corporate, the founders were increasingly called upon to defend their pursuit of doing things differently. Speaking with me, the CEO unpacked this tension:

> So, I think, you know, choosing what we put into our version of an organisation is, is interesting, instead of me feeling a bit stressed by it. And I do find that interesting when I think about the Board and leadership team in particular. Then, reflecting some of this to them for different reasons. Yeah. So, for when I think about [the] Chair, she is so corporate corporate corporate. And, and a bit more in traditional structures and "this is how it's done, and these are the models you use" and, yeah, so maybe we have something to offer her in leading her towards softening some of those edges.

The founders welcomed my questions about how they were doing things differently as a social enterprise. At times, it seemed that they felt this interest was an endorsement of their approach, and at others they took it as an opportunity to 'think out loud' about the challenges they encountered. The CEO's response above reflected such a moment, also

demonstrating an example of a broader interest the founders held in drawing people into their discourse. 'Softening edges' of the corporate was an interesting reflection from the CEO, when the organisation had also worked to make clear their dislike of being perceived as 'soft' women. Here, the gendered difference my participants often worked against was incorporated as a central premise of their approach to social entrepreneurship. This understanding of softness as strength was a premise for Warm Hearts' approach to accounting for their lack of expertise, which I categorise as professed vulnerability.

"What Doesn't Kill Us Makes Us Stronger": Vulnerability As Difference

Warm Hearts' incorporation of difference as a defence worked to construct good intentions as an asset. This emotional connection to and translation of motivation was meant to give my participants confidence in situations where they lacked expertise. I observed that while good intentions lent a sense of permission to my participants, they were still experiencing feelings of doubt and discomfort as they undertook this work. A compelling finding of my project was how my participants, founders, and team leaders at Warm Hearts, encountered and experienced these emotions. As enthusiastic fans of Brené Brown, their understanding and interpretation of Brown's work on vulnerability gave me insight into just how structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy shaped the negotiation of expressions of difference I have explored in this chapter.

Brené Brown And The Construction Of Vulnerability

Brené Brown is a public figure with a significant amount of published work on vulnerability and shame. These concepts have been applied to the personal and professional lives of people across the globe. Brown holds a PhD in social work, has published 15 books, given 2 TED Talks, and currently produces 2 podcast series. Her work calls for each person to come to terms with themselves as individuals experiencing fear and vulnerability, and her overarching themes are delivered through stories from her own life as well as those she has collected data from for her research. Described by some cultural theorists as a 'vulnerability celebrity' (Cole, 2016), Brown's work traverses both the personal and professional. In more recent years, she has dedicated a thread of her work advocating vulnerability to the business sector. The insights she shares through her work were incorporated consistently by

members across Warm Hearts. Brown's conceptualisation of vulnerability affirmed the legitimacy of white femininities in the workplace, which gave my participants at Warm Hearts confidence.

For Brown, defining, explaining, and applying vulnerability is the work of her career. Briefly, I look to her writing to give a sense of how she speaks of vulnerability. From her TED Talk "Listening to Shame" (2012b):

> Vulnerability is not weakness. I define vulnerability as emotional risk, exposure, uncertainty. It fuels our daily lives.
>
> Vulnerability is the birthplace of innovation, creativity, and change.

From her book *Daring Greatly: How The Courage To Be Vulnerable Transforms The Way We Live, Love, Parent and Lead* (2012a, p. 37):

> Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they are never weakness.

And from her book *Rising Strong* (2015, p. 4):

> Vulnerability is not winning or losing; it's having the courage to show up and be seen when we have no control over the outcome. Vulnerability is not weakness; it's our greatest measure of courage.

From this small sample of quotes from some of her most viewed and best-selling work, it is clear that Brown's construction of vulnerability holds the potential to offer encouragement and affirmation for the very experiences and situations my participants at Warm Hearts frequently reflected on. The strength of Brown's work is that it is built to be interpreted across a broad range of lived experiences, so it has something to offer anyone happy to name what they are experiencing as vulnerability. I found that the ways my participants incorporated ideas of vulnerability into their work compelling, observing that their own interpretations of these ideas revealed much about their work as social entrepreneurs. It also offered a way into the complexities of white middle-class femininities of my participants, where their own version of vulnerability was constructed. Warm Hearts'

founders and team leaders as a group enthusiastically took up vulnerability as a means of negotiating their challenges as a young social enterprise.

The uptake of vulnerability as a means of negotiating and understanding their work was evident throughout Warm Hearts. On a day-by-day basis, pressure and stress were acknowledged by the team leaders as a means of encouraging volunteer employees through challenges. Their vulnerabilities were frequently discussed in weekly WIP meetings in the form of affirmations, exemplified in my fieldnotes from a meeting in late March, as the team discussed implications of the COVID-19 lockdown for Warm Hearts:

> CEO: What doesn't kill us makes us stronger – like Bréne Brown says.
> COO: We're all so vulnerable right now! So vulnerable (everyone laughs).

This naming of vulnerability was an impassioned statement in the moment, a declaration to the team. The COO regarded this way of running meetings to be about her and the CEO modelling an approach to the work that encouraged more confidence to be creative in problem solving, to meet challenges in an 'open' way. She reflected on this in an interview:

> [A]s people have been there longer, and they've watched each of us kind of fumble sometimes, get somewhere [or] sometimes not hit the mark of the week, it allows this kind of, suddenly things flow, because there's not all these perceived blocks along the way. And I think that is something really critical to efficiency and output in the end, is to be, to feel safe.

This insight was offered as part of an answer to my question about what the COO felt made Warm Hearts special to work for as an organisation. Here, the notion of 'fumbling', of being transparent in making mistakes, was paired with the need for safety. The founders carefully considered how vulnerability could be expressed at Warm Hearts for its value to the organisation in terms of encouraging team leaders.

The frequent consumption and discussion of Brown's work at Warm Hearts meant that much of the organisation's discourse incorporated her ideas and language. Throughout the organisation, my participants spoke to each other about Brown's books and podcasts. At times, these discussions would be small asides throughout weekly meetings. At other times,

specific podcast episodes or books of Brown's would be recommended to us all. During the first month of COVID-19 lockdown in 2020, the weekly meetings became a space of support and reflection amongst discussion of business as usual. My fieldnotes observe mentions of Brown's podcasts several weeks in a row, noting "[the CEO] mentions the organisation's Facebook post about Brené Brown at the WIP meeting, saying the [IT officer] got her onto the podcast", then the next week "[the CEO] has recommended another episode of BB's podcast to me", then "vulnerability mentioned by both founders this week in terms of [Warm Hearts] managing fear around COVID-19: Brené strikes again!" Brown's podcast *Unlocking Us* (2021) was a resource that led to ongoing insights for the volunteer employees of Warm Hearts. It was not until our final reflexive interview that I asked the CEO directly about the ways Brown had shaped her experience with Warm Hearts. She replied:

> *Unlocking Us* has really helped me to think about our team internally, and how I want to be with myself, with [the COO], with our leadership team, everybody. So that idea of being vulnerable and just going "oh my god", like in our meeting yesterday, our strategy meeting for example, starting off and trying to pull everything together and then just saying, "oh god is anyone else like me and just looks at this document and thinks hang on, *what* were we saying we're gonna do? I've got to totally restart my brain at this time of the year" and so then we all laughed, and it was easier. And then I also said like "I know that I call these meetings, and I try to bring some structure to these meetings but it's not my meeting that you attend and have input to when asked, it's about us being together alongside each other" and so [the COO] and I are both really passionate about that. We're all here to bring our strengths together. So [the COO] and I have spoken about that a lot. And I feel like I've gained so much calm and serenity and wisdom from her.

She was eager to give me examples, the same way Brown does as a device for imparting wisdom throughout her work. When the CEO shared it was 'easier', she did not articulate how, confident I would understand because of an assumed knowledge of Brown's work. This response also draws on the organisation's goal to do things differently, verbally working to deconstruct hierarchised or traditional approaches to strategy meetings. 'Walking alongside' is a concept of Brown's I heard often amongst the team leads when speaking about the

internal workings of Warm Hearts. This was one of many examples where Brown's expressions have been taken up in the organisational discourse as a means of managing and supporting volunteer employees.

Vulnerability at work was often demonstrated as a means of connecting with volunteer employees. My curiosity around the impact of this way of approaching social entrepreneurship compelled me to mention what I observed in my second round of interviews with other participants. I invited them to reflect on how the interpretation of Brown's vulnerability shaped their experience of working for Warm Hearts. The Communications Officer had given the discourse itself a lot of thought as part of what she understood to be a brief around the tone the founders were seeking for external-facing messaging. In building social media posts and web content, she shared with me it was a Brené Brown podcast recommended to her by the CEO that gave her a clearer understanding of the discourse she observed in the organisation. She noted:

> It's not my usual genre of listening I have to say … [I'll] be honest with you, I found that out pretty quickly, but I listened to enough and it really, I had a moment like, 'oh!', because I heard all of this language that I had not fully understood the context of that [the CEO] and [COO] use.

The language of Brown's podcast helped build her sense of the tone the CEO wanted in Warm Hearts' external communications:

> I really grappled with the right language for social media, and I feel like I'm finally understanding better how to write the copy for [Warm Hearts]. It's something I probably should have got my head around a while ago, but now understanding where [the CEO]'s drawing her inspiration from because she wants us all have the same voice, you know. Obviously, she wants a consistent voice across the organisation. And that was the most helpful thing I could do, was listen to that [podcast] to understand.

Volunteer employees like the Communications Officer were able to make direct connections between the 'voice' the founders wanted for Warm Hearts in social media and other online spaces, but this overarching discourse was taken up in diverse ways across the organisation.

Tensions between these approaches broadened a sense of the relationships that participants held with their privilege as predominantly white middle-class women.

Vulnerability And Legitimacy In Social Entrepreneurship

Warm Hearts were in a constant state of negotiation in terms of reckoning with their work as a social enterprise. The work to continue operating as a material aid provider on a basic logistical level was often obscured by their interests in being an organisation that did things differently. The organisation wanted to reject traditional or corporate motivations, values, and ideals but found the negotiation of these dynamics complicated. I identified a tension in the balance of making clear what they did not know with the need to be seen as a legitimate social enterprise. There was also the concern that the COO had expressed multiple times in terms of gendered expectations of them as 'suburban mums with a cute story' and an aversion to their work being described that way. Gender was central to this reflection on her experience and practice of social entrepreneurship. She noted, "I think there's this tendency in women probably more, but you need to be overqualified for a job before you can apply". This sentiment was expressed by many women in the organisation. Reflecting on this experience, the COO connected this internalised doubt with courage, and the possibilities inherent for her in 'not knowing':

> [F]or me personally in this space it was around the courage to step in, but without thinking we know it all. I think that's sometimes been our greatest power is not pretending we know it and learning to accept that as an acceptable model and trusting we will know it. And if we don't, we will get the support from people that do.

The vulnerability of not knowing it all and 'stepping in' to perform the work anyway was framed here in terms of strength, but also as grounds for collaboration. Warm Hearts' role in the community housing sector as a partner to agencies supporting vulnerable people saw them emphasising their openness to collaboration. It enabled the legitimisation of those gaps in their experience and expertise as avenues to greater success.

In legitimising this incorporation of vulnerabilities into their work as a social enterprise, I observed an ongoing interest from the founders in their potential roles in the sector and

beyond as 'thought leaders'. This was carefully negotiated; rarely overtly stated as an aspiration, it emerged as an idea underpinned by the organisation's 'doing things differently' discourse. I observed the CEO was often drawn to public figures who had taken up thought leadership roles; Brené Brown had demonstrable impact on the organisational discourse at Warm Hearts, but I found the way the CEO consumed and recited insights from Brown's work to also be true of other figures she was inspired by. The regular effort to seek input, advice, and mentorship that underpinned their collaborative approach to social entrepreneurship played a role in legitimising how they understood their vulnerabilities as an organisation, but were also fascinated with their experiences of being inspired. Warm Hearts taking up a role of thought leadership surfaced as a "long term ambition" in a strategic planning day for the organisation as we looked to the future for Warm Hearts. On a longer list of goals that included "change perception of needs" and "[be a] voice for recipients", we considered how Warm Hearts might be seeking to position themselves long term. The Chair pushed back against this ambition later in the day:

> So are we the thought leader, or are we the facilitator of the conversation, and what role are we playing in that discussion? We're the active listener, we're a facilitator, we're a connector. But we're not as arrogant as to say, 'we know what they need'. On experience, of course we do […] I'm just cautious and having, you know, we had that conversation around being a thought leader, I think it's just being careful how we position, are we trying to facilitate the conversation in the industry for the better, because we've got a human, humanistic approach not a systematic approach. I'd rather us be seen as that facilitator and yes, be an agitator but not say "you don't know what you're doing, but I know" […] But again, our other design principle is to collaborate. We're not saying we're the experts, we're just saying we know how to hold hands with lots of different people and try and help.

The Chair was not comfortable with Warm Hearts claiming a role as thought leaders. For her, their legitimacy as a social enterprise in the industry was best expressed through their role as listener, facilitator, and connector. She discouraged their interest in thought leadership as potentially arrogant. I observed two different expressions of white middle-class femininities at play in this dynamic. Firstly, there was a draw to traditional models of

entrepreneurship, where thought leadership and the individualisation or celebrification of a founder was a tangible possibility. This was a way of communicating legitimacy in not only the social enterprise industry, but more broadly as entrepreneurs and businesswomen, just like Brené Brown. The aspiration to pursue thought leadership was underpinned by the belief Warm Hearts held in the value of their approach to social entrepreneurship as inherently different to traditional organisational structures and approaches. Secondly, and in opposition to this, was the voice of the Chair urging caution in terms of perceived arrogance, where signalling expertise in this way was discouraged in favour of the continued role of collaborator. 'Holding hands' with partners in the sector was suggested by the Chair as a more appropriate way for Warm Hearts to position themselves.

The Chair was a voice at Warm Hearts that reiterated more traditional or 'corporate' entrepreneurial discourse in strategic conversations. In bringing professional expertise to the organisation through her role on the Board, she often focused on her understanding of challenges for Warm Hearts rather than being interested in the possible value of how the organisation were doing things differently as a social enterprise. I observed that this resistance to and sometimes dismissal of Warm Hearts' discourse highlighted tensions between her understanding of social entrepreneurship and the specific way white middle-class femininities were rendered in the organisation. For example, she shared with me that she did not find the organisation's emphasis on kindness to be either consistent in the internal workings of Warm Hearts, or helpful to them delivering a strong financial position. Kindness was mentioned regularly in the organisation; the Founders Letter circulated ahead of their AGM in December 2020 referred to one "kind hearted" donor, and another organisation as having "kindly donated", and finally signed off as "Co-Founders and Kindness Conspirators". The Chair observed wryly:

> [I]f we could only put as much energy into our fundraising as we do talking about kindness, we would actually … do you understand what I mean? Like, I don't want to … I kind of I don't get involved in all of that. But it's just, it's just fluffy air.

In evaluating the effectiveness of the organisation's approach to their work as a social enterprise, the Chair made clear the gaps in their expertise and experience and expected them to work to address these. We discussed their regular response to her pushing and

expectations as believing her "too corporate" in terms of them wanting to 'do things differently', to which she flatly responded, "it's an excuse". She saw her role as Chair to be keeping the founders and team leaders focused on key strategic goals, and to push them to take responsibility for their work. The Chair's assessment of Warm Hearts' incorporation of vulnerability into their organisational discourse as 'fluffy air' ultimately showed that she did not hold the same shared belief in vulnerabilities as an avenue of legitimacy for Warm Hearts as a social enterprise.

The discussion of funding and financials made clear the limits to embracing doing things differently as a strategy for Warm Hearts. I found the Finance Officer was another example of a voice in the organisation that followed a less emotive, reflexive approach to her understanding of the work and of social entrepreneurship. The Finance Officer evaluated the CEO's work favourably to a degree, deeming her a 'rainmaker' or an 'ideas person', driving aspects of growth at Warm Hearts. However, she shared the Chair's concerns about governance and financial responsibility. The Finance Officer shared with me that the founders would avoid discussions about money and the financial standing of Warm Hearts. The Finance Officer saw part of her role to be equipping the organisation with financial detail needed for them to discuss strategy decisively and grow:

> I think, firstly, and I'm still working on it, I'm trying to get [the CEO] and [COO] to own the financial information. And look, this is the same in so many roles that I've been in in the past, people go, 'oh that's the numbers'. And that's like 'that's [the Finance Officer]'s numbers or [the Finance Officer]'s report […]' and it's like, no, it's actually not mine. It's yours. And you've got to own it and understand it because if you're directing this business and making these decisions you need to own this. Because without these numbers you have nothing.

I found the Chair and Finance Officer to be driving a significant amount of the progress Warm Hearts had made in terms of financial transparency. This had been undertaken quietly, but frustrations were being expressed in one-on-one conversations and smaller meetings. As they began to prioritise discussions about finances that made the founders uncomfortable, I observed tensions in how vulnerability was used and acknowledged. 'Doing things differently' was not considered to be effective as a strategy for financial management

or governance by key members of the organisation. I saw a tension between the implications of poor financial management and the enthusiastic expressions of vulnerability. Warm Hearts' capacity to do their work this way relied on the shared privilege of having constructed the safety to fail.

Safety To Fail And Accessing Vulnerability

Warm Hearts incorporated discussions of vulnerability as a mechanism for legitimising their 'doing things differently' approach to social entrepreneurship. I found this approach required an assurance that the 'failure' often entwined with vulnerability could be situated in safety. While failure as a core aspect of growth was not 'different' in terms of dominant entrepreneurial discourse, Warm Hearts' access to safety to fail was shaped by their privilege as white middle-class women. Both the privilege of their white middle-class status and the perceived challenges of working as women in this industry were key to establishing their safety to fail. This positive relationship to failure was part of a larger entrepreneurial discourse common to the sector, where failure meant a start-up company was evaluating their product or service, and each failure was not only a learning opportunity but one step closer to delivering the 'right' offering to their customers. Having a safe space to fail was understood by the founders as encouraging vulnerability. The COO noted "[the CEO] and I remind each other of this a lot, that it's okay to be imperfect, it's okay to do what we can". She expanded upon this:

> [S]omething that I think hasn't, a word that hasn't been raised yet is also safety. There's something I see in our team, and you know [the CEO] and I try and live this as well and try and reflect it for our team, but I think for it to be a safe place, so when I talked before about, you know, high achieving, but we need to be safe enough to make mistakes. We're not in the traditional sense of what a mistake, 'mistake' holds this weird weight, which actually it's just the life step or, you know, it's just finding your way.

The COO often adjusted her language during our interviews to reframe ideas she had expressed that she perceived to hold negative connotations; here, mistakes were reframed

as ‘finding your way’. The safety the COO referred to here was also about constructing a space to fail safely through language.

The privilege of my participants in having the ability to fail and yet remain safe was only acknowledged and discussed in our interviews. In the daily work of social entrepreneurship at Warm Hearts, my participants worked from their claim to vulnerability to construct a need for safety. Justifying a right to a safe place to make mistakes was often mentioned throughout informal discussions, through weekly meetings, and in reflections about staff volunteers in the organisation in planning days and workshops. The CEO often observed that staff should be confident to voice their ideas and opinions. She envisioned an organisation that was “brave”; brave to own mistakes, try new things, speak honestly. This was referred to by the Communication Officer as Warm Hearts’ ‘ethos’, observing “the one thing they say repeatedly is that they don’t expect perfection from anyone; just show up and do your best”. After a weekly meeting which had focused on several ongoing changes, the COO reflected:

> [T]here’s something in [Warm Hearts] that we are striving to create, and I think you see it in small pockets, but it’s a safe place to be.

I found an interesting tension in the way this ‘safe place’ was constructed in the organisation. Reiterating that volunteer employees were safe to try new things and make mistakes was part of how Warm Hearts understood themselves to be doing things differently, but I also observed a disconnect in how different members of the organisation accessed this ‘safety’. Some employees had more at stake than others; paid employees were at risk of losing income if Warm Hearts failed to generate enough funding to pay wages. Others in a more secure financial position could afford the range of potential failures that would have an impact on the organisation’s finances, so were able to commit more enthusiastically to trying innovative approaches to practices of social entrepreneurship. Privilege played a clear part in the organisation’s negotiation of safety to fail.

Privilege And Professed Vulnerability

My participants enjoyed a range of privileges as white middle-class women working at a social enterprise. Their incorporation of vulnerability in their relationship to this work began

with Brown, but the interpretation of her ideas into their own negotiations of social entrepreneurship shows much of the tensions at play. In this final section I establish a final interpretation of vulnerability as it was constructed at Warm Hearts to propose the term 'professed vulnerability' as a way to understand the specific privileges and often emphatic claims to vulnerability made by my participants.

I propose 'profession' as a term to offer a sense of how my participants related to their own vulnerability. More than simply confessional, the ways the founders and team leaders claimed vulnerability and constructed it as a significant piece of their relationship to social entrepreneurship was a clear and specific statement. Professing vulnerability was a practice of making clear those experiences of doubt and discomfort through speaking them aloud. To do so in relative safety was a privilege, as was the way these professions were interpreted. Warm Hearts constructed the practice of speaking of weaknesses and shortcomings as a different, non-traditional way of organising a social enterprise. My participants professed their vulnerabilities in a practiced way; during my fieldwork, the regularity of such professions became obvious. This was a performance that was self-aware and self-reflexive to varying degrees. My fieldnotes reflected on a branding workshop I attended with the CEO, and recall a conversation we had while we worked:

> In amongst these writing exercises, [the CEO] and I get to talking about how messaging like this within the team leaders might be helpful to [Warm Hearts] – internal culture building. She observes they are currently worried about one of their volunteers 'burning out' – a real concern in this industry and of particular worry given the person is a volunteer. [The CEO] explains that her and [the COO] have been keeping an eye on this concern for a few weeks now – by modelling 'human' behaviour – noting when tired or struggling, modelling a check-in with each other publicly in the Slack channel to encourage setting limits around workload, and then a direct check-in on Monday.

In our interviews, the founders spoke with me about their intentions to model such vulnerability for their team leads through their own professions of fatigue or struggle. They intended for this practice to be taken up across the organisation, believing that transparency around mistakes and challenges would enable Warm Hearts' team to more

effectively find and address improvements. In one interview, they spoke about using this to "protect the team", with the COO making a clear point of managing her volunteer employees with care:

> [W]e work in a system that requires us to be gentle. So, for me to lead a team, I need to be gentle, or I don't have a team. It's one or the other, you know, and for me to be able to make sure that our volunteers are at the warehouse to pick the item, I need to be nurturing.

I also found that professions of vulnerability were informed by personal values and beliefs. The way the founders modelled this practice for the organisation called for the team to incorporate these values and beliefs. This included the motivation to learn from mistakes, concede lack of individual knowledge, and undertake collaborative discussion for constructive problem solving. Professing vulnerability as part of the organisational discourse of doing things differently was not just a business practice; it needed a personal stake in self-awareness and desire for reflexivity and self-improvement. The personal nature of this work was not unusual as an aspect of social entrepreneurship, but Warm Hearts' discourse tended to expect a degree of incorporation of professed vulnerability as a means of participation.

In asserting the value of doing things differently at Warm Hearts, 'we don't know what we don't know' was often expressed by the founders and team leaders. This discourse served to differentiate the organisation from other start-up companies and social enterprises by professing the vulnerability of inexperience or lack of expertise. I observed that the founders used this to justify or explain how they were approaching their work as an organisation, and it was done with pride. The CEO reflected in the first interview I took with the founders:

> [W]hat I find a bit uncomfortable sometimes [is], I don't always know the difference between, what do we not know about how things should be done, and where is it useful to us and our organisation and our purpose to learn how things are typically done, and where should we actually try and stay quite different.

Not knowing was constructed as a positive quality by the founders specifically. They put it forward as a strength of the organisation by emphasising that this made them 'different', in this case to other social enterprises. In the same interview, the COO observed:

> [The CEO] and I speak about this a lot, but there's something in our society that drives us to be rational thinkers and strategic thinkers, but I think most of the magic comes from allowing, you know, it to be more open, because sometimes the fastest way isn't from A to B, you know, and sometimes you can fly over to somewhere completely different without a rational pathway. I think, to stay open to that.

In these examples, what they did not know was granted a kind of undefinable power or 'magic'. There seemed to be an understanding the founders shared that there were parts of Warm Hearts' development somehow inexplicable, or that as an organisation they had simply happened upon key volunteer employees, partners, and donors. Conceding this openness as a result of not knowing showed the ways the organisation valued the pursuit of a different approach, an alternative to the rational and strategic thinking the COO attributed to societal expectations or practices. Professing vulnerability through difference here was an expression of pride, a sense of building something new.

The organisation's performances of reflexivity were shaped significantly by an ongoing engagement with the work of public figures in the business of motivation and self-help. In particular, the work of Brené Brown on vulnerability informed Warm Hearts' relationship to the business of running a social enterprise. Professing vulnerability was a discursive strategy taken up by Warm Hearts in service of doing things differently. While this notion of vulnerability did not originate within Warm Hearts, the organisation claimed this and made it their own.

Conclusion

Considering how white middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship requires an understanding of how 'doing things differently' was constructed at Warm Hearts. Difference was incorporated as means of pursuing legitimacy, of negotiating privilege, and as a defence. Doing things differently through professed

vulnerability established claims to legitimacy, and laid claim to safety to fail in the pursuit of entrepreneurial success.

This examination of the ways in which participants at Warm Hearts understood their work allows for the consideration of reflexivity in social entrepreneurship. The chapter demonstrates how white middle-class femininities are rendered in this organisational context. There were tensions inherent in pursuing a feminine Perfect (McRobbie, 2015) through a performance of gender that needed to be balanced with entrepreneurial legitimacy, and an uneasy relationship to privilege negotiated through good intentions (Applebaum, 2010; Sullivan, 2014). This offers further complexity to understandings of how power structures of capitalism, white supremacy and patriarchy are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. Gender was the most central concern of participants in leadership positions in the organisation. I found that rendering femininities 'strengths' in social entrepreneurship was in the discursive work of conveying legitimacy through a challenge to traditional hierarchised organisational structures (Lewis & Henry, 2019). This construction of legitimacy enabled the establishment of safety to fail for participants leading teams in a growing social enterprise (Peredo & McLean, 2006), and the organisation were in constant, shifting negotiation with how best to claim this safety.

This chapter builds a sense of reflexivity as a work in progress for Warm Hearts. The organisation's incorporation of Acknowledgement of Country offers a sense of their emerging grasp of privilege (Kowal, 2015; McKenna, 2014), but the role this practice plays and the depth it is intended to communicate fall short. The organisation's deferral to political neutrality discussed in Chapter 5, a choice shaped by capitalist priorities of gaining government grant funding, introduces contradiction into Warm Hearts' Acknowledgement practice. Expressions of respect and solidarity find limits, and entrepreneurial legitimacy is instead prioritised throughout the construction of 'appropriate' public statements online. In this way, capitalist priorities also further perpetuate white middle-class femininities in the social enterprise; the possibility for advocacy or political statement are set aside (Daya, 2014; de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019). Understanding a sense from the founders of their motivations and priorities as 'typical' of white middle-class suburban mothers further

embeds the safe and non-radical nature of their work; an upholding of whiteness as universal (Nkomo, 1992, 2021) is a reproduction of power structures in the social enterprise.

Finally, in this chapter I describe how participants at Warm Hearts have interpreted and constructed a particular type of vulnerability, born of Brené Brown's influential work. Understanding the role of this vulnerability and the ways in which it is professed, claimed and performed through white middle-class femininities illustrates the ways power structures of white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy can be reproduced through social entrepreneurship. The privileges of these participants ensure safety to fail (Lewis, 2014; McAdam, 2013); professing vulnerability is held up as an empowered expression of gender and rather than presenting a real risk to the organisation, becomes part of a white, middle-class feminine Perfect (McRobbie, 2015). Where professed vulnerability inferred discomfort, participants engaged in their own interpretation of entrepreneurial iteration and innovation.

In my next chapter, I discuss the findings I have detailed to highlight how the structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy are at work in this organisation. Next, I consider gender, race, and class as social categories in social entrepreneurship, arguing that proximity to power as well as access to capital are key considerations for critical entrepreneurship studies. Finally, I argue that my project requires us to set aside one-dimensional understandings of women and social entrepreneurship, instead incorporating a conceptual framework that supports complexity.

Chapter 7: The Social Enterprise, Privilege, And Vulnerabilities

Introduction

This project has presented meaningful opportunities to more closely examine the multitude of ways power structures are reflected and reproduced in social entrepreneurship. I am participating in the broader project of critical entrepreneurship studies, considering the ways capitalist, patriarchal, and white supremacist structures of power are reflected and reproduced in Warm Hearts as a social enterprise. Dominator culture (hooks, 2013) is embedded into everyday practices, professions, and performances of social entrepreneurship; I observe whiteness, middle-class status, and uneasy negotiations of femininities at Warm Hearts. What then has the ethnographic study of a social enterprise shown us about these structures of power? In this chapter I bring together my findings across a range of levels of analysis, firstly considering Warm Hearts on an organisational level as a social enterprise. In the context of the social welfare sector, I observe how this organisation navigates the dominant entrepreneurial discourse of opportunity discovery (Ries, 2011; Shane, 2000; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), and argue that despite efforts from my participants to humanise the recipients of their material aid service, this discourse inevitably objectifies them as a vulnerable Other (Daya, 2014). As an organisation, the social enterprise can address inequalities perpetuated by structures of power (Lewis & Henry, 2019; Peredo & McLean, 2006), but it is also a site where these structures are reflected and reproduced.

Secondly, I consider social entrepreneurship as a practice (Bruni et al., 2004; Calás et al., 2009; de Bruin et al., 2007). I discuss gender, race, and class in social entrepreneurship to consider legitimacy and respectability for members of the organisation, and draw on postfeminist notions of empowerment in a discussion of the entrepreneurial myth of meritocracy (Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017). I examine how my participants negotiated their pursuit of the Perfect (McRobbie, 2015): a career as well as achievement of feminine ideals intwined in heteronormative norms of motherhood and femininity. Their positionalities were complex; white middle-class femininities cannot be understood in terms of a single axis of power or clear binary (Butler, 2013; Idriss et al.,

2021). A person can be simultaneously oppressor and oppressed, disadvantaged and privileged. I address my participants' engagement with reflexivity, considering their relationships with their own privilege through the examination of conversations that rendered and anchored whiteness, middle-class status, and femininity.

Finally, in this chapter I address the ways white middle-class women in social enterprise have often been reduced to one-dimensional "sharing and caring" traits (Lewis & Henry, 2019). This section considers the role of what I term 'professed vulnerability' at Warm Hearts. I consider how white defensiveness informed an organisational discourse of professed vulnerability (Cole, 2016; Gilson, 2013), and informed my participants' claim to safety to fail. In considering the good intentions of white women in social enterprise, I explore the potential of vulnerability (Applebaum, 2017; Liu, 2020; Swan, 2017; Yancy, 2012) and consider how capitalist white supremacy has co-opted radical political language to appropriate this vulnerability as a marketable type of self-help (Cole, 2016; see also Gilson, 2013). Discomfort does not precede radical change at Warm Hearts; rather, it is curbed and shaped by structures of power to reproduce the same.

Power structures persist throughout the social enterprise as an organisation, and race, gender, and class are central to establishing a critical understanding of social entrepreneurship. This thesis works to make clear the complexities of dominator culture, and the many varied tools it wields (Lorde, 2007) in perpetuating ongoing inequality and oppression.

The Social Enterprise As An Organisation

My project focuses on the ways in which the social enterprise reflects and reproduces power structures. In this section, I examine the social enterprise as an organisation and consider how these power structures shape the organisational discourses at Warm Hearts. 'Opportunity discovery' is part of a broader entrepreneurial discourse that reflects and reproduces capitalist priorities of exploiting resources for gain (Shane, 2000; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). In Chapter 5, I highlighted how this is framed as innovation at Warm Hearts and how innovation is prioritised by the social enterprise as a type of progress (Calás et al., 2009; Tedmanson et al., 2012). Motivated by these priorities, in this section I show

that the organisation translates the perceived need of people disadvantaged by structural inequalities into an opportunity to discover a 'gap in the market'. I consider this dominant discourse in the context of the organisation's partnerships within the community housing sector, examining the shared construction of the client/recipient as vulnerable. Despite continued efforts of Warm Hearts to avoid perpetuating stereotypes of the social enterprise as a 'saviour' of vulnerable people (Daya, 2014), the eventual 'thriving' of their recipients is a core assumption that informs the work of the organisation. 'Thriving' is an expectation applied to vulnerable recipients, and reflects notions of success, family, and social mobility that idealise the white Western heteronormative middle-class. Warm Hearts' centring of individual lived experiences serves a range of purposes for the organisation and in doing so, leads to an inevitable objectification of their recipients as a vulnerable Other (Daya, 2014). The social enterprise is an organisation that reflects and reproduces structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy.

Opportunity Discovery And The 'Market'

Establishing opportunity is key to proving the legitimacy of a social enterprise. In constructing themselves as a social enterprise, Warm Hearts framed the opportunity to provide a material aid service to their recipients in terms of building a business. They explained the needs of their customer as an unaddressed issue in the sector. As I explore in Chapter 5, this was an opportunity to 'discover' (Shane, 2000) that delivered social value, established by Peredo and McLean (2006) as central to the social enterprise model. The mechanism of opportunity discovery in the social enterprise makes clear the ways capitalist business practices of entrepreneurship facilitate exploitation of resources (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Marttila, 2013, 2018). Warm Hearts had a well-established 'origin story' the founders shared that made clear the organisation's motivation and claim to entrepreneurial opportunity. The 'humble, grassroots beginnings' were included in their press; the CEO identified a need in the refugee community for furniture and whitegoods when setting up homes. The moment this one-person work shifted to a social enterprise was the CEO asking how big this need was, and how far it ranged beyond the refugee population. As a discovery of a business opportunity, the founders translated the need of those coming out of homelessness for household goods to a gap in the market. They defended their place in this

market by frequently observing that nobody else was doing what they were doing; their offering was framed as a unique entrepreneurial proposition (Ahl & Marlow, 2012). This gap in the market was constructed emotively for their predominantly white middle-class audience of donors and corporate partners. Having discovered this opportunity justified claims to success (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000); as a social enterprise, Warm Hearts had proven their entrepreneurial expertise.

Capitalism has an unambiguous hand in entrepreneurial pursuits (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Marttila, 2018; McAdam, 2013). For a social enterprise operating around the provision of material aid for people who have experienced homelessness, capitalism was clearly reflected at Warm Hearts in a range of ways. The reality of poverty as a lived experience of systemic inequalities is a key contributor to how Warm Hearts established a market for their service. Generational experiences of inequality and disadvantage found vulnerable recipient groups without housing (Pawson et al., 2018, 2020). The organisation grew to support not only refugees and asylum seekers, but women and families fleeing domestic violence, young people at risk, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, women over 55, people with addiction, and/or mental health challenges. As the Warm Hearts Board member working in community housing observed, there is an ongoing failure of state and federal governments to address homelessness as a growing social issue in Australia (Pawson et al., 2020). Social enterprise has been discussed as a means of addressing social inequalities (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; Peredo & McLean, 2006); these inequalities are evidence of the harmful impact of structures of power. Capitalism ensured a need for material aid and shaped the means of addressing that need. For Warm Hearts, this inequality offered a strong prospect for creating social value by recognising it as an entrepreneurial opportunity (Ahl & Marlow, 2012b; see also Peredo & McLean's social entrepreneurship framework, 2006). The organisation communicated this social value with calls for donations and volunteers that encouraged their audience to join them in taking up the opportunity to help with a significant social issue.

Warm Hearts translated an entrepreneurial opportunity into a legitimate social enterprise organisation by establishing and capitalising on partnerships with community service and housing organisations. This strategy situated them in proximity to their recipients and

communicated the organisation's credibility as a social enterprise (Peredo & McLean, 2006). Design thinking is a well-known approach for start-up companies generally (Brown & Wyatt, 2010; Ries, 2011), where the organisation develops their offering by centring the actual needs of their customer. Warm Hearts ensured they were effectively and efficiently filling the gap in the market they had discovered. Chapter 4 describes how the organisation further emphasised this seamless fit in the sector through the incorporation of the language of their caseworker partners, understanding recipients as 'vulnerable people' (Daya, 2014). However, I found that their enthusiasm for the credibility offered by this proximity to their recipients found a limit in how they reckoned with lived vulnerabilities. The caseworkers spoke openly of addiction and mental health concerns, the realities of living on the streets of an Australian city, and the complexities of the criminal histories of their clients. These interviews highlighted systemic disadvantages and challenges in detail in a way Warm Hearts did not. Preferring to emphasise shared humanity, Warm Hearts refused to deal in specifics of experiences of inequality and oppression. This informed a non-specific expression of white benevolence (Applebaum, 2010) that sat in uneasy tension with how they described the gap in the market they were addressing and the specifics of the opportunity they had discovered. To successfully pursue the work of doing good as a social enterprise (Peredo & McLean, 2006), the objectification of their recipients was inevitable.

The Objectification Of A Vulnerable Other

The nature of the social enterprise requires adherence to reporting processes that further objectify recipients. Registered with ACNC as a charitable organisation, Warm Hearts were not in the business of making profit for shareholders, but were expected to maintain steady financial growth in terms of funding procured to expand their reach (ACNC, 2021). Numbers of homes furnished was part of the monthly report from the COO, and expected to continue to grow, with the CEO presenting 5- and 10-year goals for the organisation in terms of these numbers. Grassroots beginnings had grown to a more specific understanding of cost per item, per delivery, per established household. Itemising recipients of material aid from Warm Hearts as well as the furniture and whitegoods delivered to their homes had the effect of alienating the service from the people (Daya, 2014). As described by case workers in Chapter 4, social work and community housing organisations considered their caseloads

in terms of individuals (Fook, 2016), and Warm Hearts took up this individualist logic. The insistence on individualisation translated into reportable achievements and growth. A focus on deliverables obscured connections between the lived experiences of vulnerable individuals and the systemic inequalities that situated marginalised people in vulnerability (Daya, 2014). Over the course of 12 months of fieldwork, only two of my interviewees ever directly discussed the systems of oppression that led to Warm Hearts' recipients experiencing homelessness.

Warm Hearts' individualisation of recipients and their lived experiences served a range of purposes, and reflected priorities shaped by structures of power (Ahl, 2006; Gill, 2008; Marttila, 2013). The relationship the organisation held with their recipients was an ongoing negotiation that made clear how a social enterprise balances 'doing good' and successful business operations (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010; Peredo & McLean, 2006). Constructing individual recipient experiences through de-identified testimonials was a storytelling mechanism that encouraged the donations, volunteer recruitment, and corporate partnerships that ensured the continued success of Warm Hearts. Individual success stories implied a degree of the lived experiences of vulnerable people but focused on the moment of delivery of material aid. Deliveries were framed as positive outcomes both within and beyond the organisation. Warm Hearts intended for these stories to translate as evidence of the tangible value and impact of their work and were often looking for more stories to provide to corporate donors, who had their own Corporate Social Responsibility goals to meet. The exchange of donations for testimonials indicated a larger pattern in the organisation of a relationship with recipients that pushed them from subjectivity into objectivity (Daya, 2014; see also Gill, 2008). Stories of 'good outcomes' were interchangeable and purposed for organisational success. Daya (2014) has stated that objectification of recipients is inevitable in the social enterprise. For Warm Hearts, ethical protections of anonymity also enabled the organisation to disconnect from the entirety of their recipients lived experience outside the parts of the story deemed most compelling to share. A disconnect was reflected by the organisation's focus on individuals, which obscured the ways collective experiences of systemic inequality had positioned them as vulnerable. This disconnect contributed to the reproduction of these inequalities through a failure to engage with them (Gill & Kanai, 2018). The social enterprise capitalised on aspects of the

story that legitimised their continued work and denied an opportunity to present the fullness of the lived experience of their recipients.

The ways in which Warm Hearts constructed their recipients as a vulnerable Other offered further indication of how power structures were reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. The practice of generalising and imagining this recipient functioned to test and develop their services (Ries, 2011), where a vulnerable person's need was hypothetical. This was justified as part of the process of design thinking (Brown & Wyatt, 2010) and shows the ways the social enterprise prioritises capitalist motivations of productivity and growth (Ahl & Marlow, 2021). In Chapter 4 I describe an imagined vulnerable recipient; a recipient type the organisation most commonly drew from to recruit volunteers and advertise for donations of goods. This figure, a mother with young children, allowed the organisation to reproduce their own white middle-class ideals of family and mothering (O'Sullivan, 2021; Quah, 2020; Shome, 2011). An assumption of the priorities and concerns of this figure revealed projected ideals; hierarchies of manageable need could be understood, explained, and leveraged for further support (Lewis & Henry, 2019). This practice of imagining permitted my participants to project their own assumptions about lived experiences of vulnerability. The ways gender and family were constructed communicated unspoken assumptions of white, Western family units and gender roles that reflected and reproduced structures of power (McRobbie, 2009; O'Sullivan, 2021). A valuing of specifically white middle-class priorities shaped both symbolic and actual expectations of their recipients. A failure of vulnerable people managing compounding impacts of systemic oppression to meet or aspire to these expectations was met with confusion and alienation from the organisation and a sense of 'unfinished business' that could not be shaped into shareable testimony.

While the social enterprise model called for testimonies that fit familiar patterns and confirmed assumptions, I also observed that Warm Hearts as an organisation was eager to avoid the fetishisation of suffering. Making clear an aversion to the practice of charities in producing 'poverty porn' (so named by the Communication Officer at Warm Hearts) led to the production of more sanitised testimonials. Avoiding a discussion of trauma was respectful of anonymity, but also allowed Warm Hearts to remain quiet on the specifics of

how their recipients were marginalised by poverty, racism, and sexism (Applebaum, 2016; Macalpine & Marsh, 2005). The silence from the organisation on their recipients' lived experiences of disadvantage had a range of implications. Firstly, the lack of specifics offered a vagueness to the identities of these individuals. Without knowledge of their race, class, or gender, it was much harder to address or even acknowledge the power structures that positioned recipients in lived vulnerability. Secondly, the smoothing over of the stark realities of experiencing homelessness made helping Warm Hearts through donations or volunteer work much more palatable for those with considerable privilege. Thirdly, it meant that stories and assumptions described in Chapter 4 could be generalised in a way that helped the organisation grow by accompanying reported numbers with individualised stories that gave a sense of "all the ones" being helped. As a social enterprise, the organisation wanted to emphasise the humanity of their recipients, while simultaneously capitalising on their need for material aid as a marketable opportunity.

The distance between Warm Hearts and their recipients helped the space between to fill with ideas of recipients that made clear how structures of power were being reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. This was true of the generalisable stories of recipients, and also of the example of the Warm Hearts volunteer who had been an early recipient of the organisation. My interaction with the CEO showed the ways this rarer personal connection also reinforced a power dynamic. The CEO tried to pre-manage my interaction with the Sri Lankan asylum seeker by strongly discouraging me from asking any questions about his story, suggesting it was too traumatic and best avoided. She used emotive language to re-tell the story on his behalf, disclosing detail to dissuade me from discussing this with him. I took the protective nature of this action on face value, but when the volunteer shared this same detail with me within the first 10 minutes of our introduction, the earlier intervention from the CEO sat differently. My participants deferred any claims to being rescuers of any kind, but the white saviourism of the CEO telling the story of a vulnerable, man of colour ahead of my introduction to him laid a claim in a way that was possessive (Cole, 2012; Daya, 2014; Yancy, 2012). He was an individual objectified by his vulnerability. This complicated her emotional declaration that he was 'family' to her, an inclusion that conferred acceptability through his proximity to their whiteness and middle-class status (Skeggs, 1997; Yancy, 2012, 2015). The work of doing good by a social enterprise

(Peredo & McLean, 2006) holds complexity that requires an understanding of how systems of racism, sexism, and classism are shaping relationships between recipient groups and those who work to help them.

The Social Enterprise As A Site Of The Reflection And Reproduction Of White Supremacy, Capitalism, And Patriarchy

Power structures perpetuate the inequalities that justify a marketplace for social enterprise. The provision of necessities was constructed by Warm Hearts as meaningful work (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) and a business opportunity to address a 'broken system'. The organisation used language that explained the work of Warm Hearts in terms of fixing systems, offering solutions, and improving processes to provide vulnerable people with material aid. This is a dominant discourse of social enterprise organisations (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; Peredo & McLean, 2006) that fails to recognise that the systems holding a significant portion of the Australian population in homelessness and poverty are not broken. Rather, they are functioning to keep poor folks, Black, Indigenous, and people of colour, women, LGBTIQ+, and disabled folks in positions of marginalisation and poverty to serve a large purpose of perpetuating dominator culture (hooks, 2013). Under capitalism, there is little to no impetus for the state to support its citizens (Calás et al., 2009; de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019); their existence serves a larger narrative in which those who 'work hard' are deserving of success, care, and comfort. As I describe in depth in Chapter 2, capitalism is racist and sexist, perpetuating multiple systems of domination (Collins, 2002; Davis, 1981; hooks, 1984, 2000). The imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy dictates that hard work is most recognisable and best paid when undertaken by wealthy, Western white men (hooks, 1984; see also Leong, 2013). For Warm Hearts, capitalising on an opportunity to collaborate with other providers in the social welfare sector was profitable; making the work meaningful (Dempsey & Sanders, 2010) and volunteer-led meets a need for us as a society to believe we are addressing issues of poverty and other marginalisation (Peredo & McLean, 2006). Warm Hearts is a social enterprise that delivers social value but is not looking to solve the societal issue of homelessness. In this way, it not only reflects but reproduces structures of power.

Avenues for the pursuit of political action are limited under dominator culture. Warm Hearts' insistence on their political 'neutrality' was a strategy to ensure their longevity regardless of political leadership. This pursuit of political neutrality was stated overtly in strategic conversations at Board level discussing public relations and networking opportunities and presented as a common-sense approach to the success of their organisation (Marlow & McAdam, 2015). This claim to political neutrality was also made clear through the careful crafting of their online presence, which included the hesitation I observed in acknowledging the Bla(c)k Lives Matter movement on their social media accounts in June 2020. Under the Board's governance, Warm Hearts were instructed to uphold capitalist, white supremacist understandings of 'good business' (Applebaum, 2010; Lewis, 2014). Grant money secured by the organisation came from a range of sources which included two of the 'Big Four' banks in Australia as well as philanthropic foundations; all managed by white, wealthy men, these funding sources were competitive (Heckler, 2019; Martin & Osberg, 2007; Peredo & McLean, 2006). In the case of the big banks, these were also organisations under scrutiny for the ethics of their business practices (see Hayne, 2019). As a typical social enterprise, Warm Hearts were seeking financial stability, which they anticipated would come with the establishment of ongoing relationships with reliable funding sources (Calás et al., 2006; Sarasvathy & Venkataraman, 2011). This direction saw the organisation openly capitulate to state and federal governments, where their outputs could be seen as favourable across a range of political parties. Appearing neutral to all parties required affirming their ability to fall into step with the current conservative government.

The organisation's intention was to conform to expectations of the same politicians who upheld policy decisions that directly affect the recipients of their material aid service. The current government has both inherited and made decisions to detain asylum seekers (Peterie, 2019), failed to address the significant gap in health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and white settlers in so-called Australia (Cunneen, 2018), and visibly perpetuated a culture of sexual violence and discrimination in their own workplaces (see Durbach, 2021). Despite challenges of the current COVID-19 context, they also continue to fail to prioritise mental health key concerns, and resisted calls to raise national welfare payments to support a general living standard for all (see Carbone & Jorm, 2020). While

Warm Hearts continued to pursue government grant money, they operated within power structures that do not allow systemic change. Limited by the understanding that 'neutrality' is required for success, a focus on innovation over social justice becomes the priority for a social enterprise that wants to succeed (Heckler, 2019). Warm Hearts could rightfully anticipate success in securing such funding provided their compliance and complicity to expectations of political neutrality, but also by maintaining an acceptable role as a social enterprise. INCITE!'s (2017) discussion of implications for non-profits as an industry sets out clear challenges for such organisations motivating for real political change, where the foreword observes the tension of securing state funding to be a "necessary evil" (2017, p. ix). The organisation was clear about the necessity of a divide between personal opinion and business practice, with the CEO often making clear to me that her personal politics were kept separate to the work she undertook as CEO of Warm Hearts. Our conversation about their work to support asylum seekers and refugees happening unmentioned, offered to me with a conspiratorial wink, seemed constructed to communicate a rebellious or radical practice of care. However, Warm Hearts was bound to a careful negotiation of the values inherent in their work in balance with opportunities for funding.

The social enterprise reflects and reproduces power structures through prioritisation of innovation as a type of social value over the pursuit of social justice (Heckler, 2019). Warm Hearts constructed their processes and systems as innovative (Peredo & McLean, 2006) and central to supporting their mission to partner with caseworkers and deliver material aid to vulnerable people. 'Innovation' sat as a central pillar in their 2020 Strategic Plan. The organisation constructed their work diverting resources from wealthy households and corporate donors to vulnerable people moving out of homelessness as an innovative business model. The focus on this innovation permitted Warm Hearts to operate within existing systems, creating social value (Peredo & McLean, 2006). The social enterprise as an organisation is premised on social value built from opportunity discovery, so it centres innovation in a way that reproduces these structures of power. At Warm Hearts, innovation was prioritised at all levels of the organisation. Volunteers in the warehouse were often most enthusiastic about the most efficient way to move furniture, volunteers taking requests and donations were focused on the fastest way to process these, and team leaders spent hours each week on adjustments to improve overarching systems. The Board required

monthly reports on progress of work expected to mature the organisation from start-up to scale-up phase, an approach to governance that demanded accountability for progress. All my interviews at all levels included reflection on what had improved since the participant joined Warm Hearts as well as an animated discussion of all the challenges still to address. These findings show the ways innovation drove the organisation as a priority. Innovation is theorised by Liu and Pechenkina (2017) as organisational violence, where experiences of working innovatively perpetuate harm at societal, organisational, and individual levels. Heckler (2019) makes the argument that under white supremacy and patriarchy, "incessant innovation" (p. 276) is a priority that ultimately diverts resources away from race and gender justice. Warm Hearts inserted itself into a gap in existing systems to redirect resources in a way that was innovative, but as a typical social enterprise it was limited in its capacity to challenge structural oppression. As a site that reflects and reproduces these power structures, the social enterprise can avoid the pursuit of social justice (a political minefield), by centring innovation as a path to social value.

Social value as a key contribution of the social enterprise (Peredo & McLean, 2006; Zahra et al., 2009) encourages an expectation of favourable, reportable outcomes. I found that at Warm Hearts, the provision of a material aid service equated to an implicit social contract; they were aspiring to assist their recipients with the "bulky essentials to make a home, enabling them to thrive". This contract was an expectation shaped externally by donors and corporate partners and internally by governance-stated reporting requirements and the organisation's volunteer employees. The organisation imbued the furniture and whitegoods they delivered to their recipients with a significance beyond simple practicality. A kitchen table was not just a place to eat but a connection to physical health and stability; a couch not just a place to sit but a means of connecting to family and community. The receipt of material aid was translated into a capacity to 'thrive'. Caseworkers I spoke with indicated that having a place to live was important for those coming out of homelessness but made very clear that this was only one step in addressing multiple concerns (Fook, 2016; Pawson et al., 2020). While Warm Hearts spoke often about their service fitting into meeting a larger range of needs, the social enterprise discourse that emphasised meeting a gap in the market to produce social value (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; Peredo & McLean, 2006) often overpowered the quieter, more realistic observations. Communicating the social value their

service offered was a means of 'inviting in' present and future contributors, and the testimonials shared by Warm Hearts were shaped to demonstrate their impact as an organisation. Recipients demonstrably 'thriving' were highlighted in celebratory discourse constructed internally as well as through numerous posts to the organisation's social media accounts. 'Thriving' was an accomplishment Warm Hearts expected of their recipients, and a key outcome the organisation translated into social value. The centring of white middle-class heterosexual values (Quah, 2020; see also Ingraham, 1994) in the organisational understanding of what it was for their recipients to thrive regarded clean clothes, healthy food, and a good night's sleep as priorities. For vulnerable people marginalised by systems of domination, it was not as linear as translating such luxuries into the stability Warm Hearts asserted would then lead to kids at school and adults taking up jobs. The organisation gravitated toward the stories that implied their recipients were thriving. They were unsure how to manage stories without the accomplishment that meant a tidy ending. A linear journey to success for Warm Hearts' recipients assumed aspirations of upward social mobility that centred financial stability on the path to wealth (Bennett et al., 2021; Skeggs, 1997). For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, asylum seekers, refugees, Black folks, and people of colour, upward social mobility was a value the white middle-class understood; it could be understood as a desire for proximity to whiteness (Ahmed, 2004), and a non-threatening reflection and reproduction of structures of power through dominator culture.

Gender, Race, And Class In Social Entrepreneurship

I have established the social enterprise as an organisation that reflects and reproduces structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. For my participants, gender, race, and class were key social categorisations that made these power structures evident in how they understood their work. Social entrepreneurship is an organising practice that reflects and reproduces these power structures (Bruni et al., 2004; Calás et al., 2009; de Bruin et al., 2007). In this section I examine social entrepreneurship as a practice, drawing connections between the organisational and participant levels of analysis. I discuss the organisation's strategy of centring gender in an organisational discourse driving Warm Hearts to establish legitimacy and respectability. I question if my white middle-class women participants might

be understood as ‘empowered’ (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Lewis, 2014; McRobbie, 2009), and consider their experiences of social entrepreneurship at Warm Hearts in terms of McRobbie’s (2015) notion of the Perfect. An aspiration of the founders to pursue thought leadership roles surfaced in strategic discussions. Their positionality afforded access to a range of types of capital (Bennett et al., 2021; Skeggs, 1997; see also Bourdieu, 1986), and this access gave them privilege through proximity to power. I examine the silence of my participants on resources and capital, with exceptions that further emphasise gender as a preferred focus for Warm Hearts. My participants held a degree of reflexivity around their privilege, and I suggest that this reflexivity was idealised as part of the work of social entrepreneurship.

Legitimacy, Respectability, And Gender

For Warm Hearts, social entrepreneurship was an organising practice that clearly reflected and reproduced power structures. The proximity of my white, middle-class, female participants to power made clear a range of strategies of negotiation undertaken in their pursuit of legitimacy and respectability (Butler, 2013; McRobbie, 2009, 2015). Firstly, these women shared that they had all experienced forms of gender-based discrimination and disadvantage in the workforce (Gill & Ganesh, 2007; Rottenberg, 2017). They argued they had been undervalued and their potential underestimated by previous employers. Participants shared challenges in finding work after having children, others recalled inhospitable work environments where productivity was prioritised over humanity. In a range of ways, all my participants shared a sense they did not fit in ‘typical workplaces’ or that they no longer wanted to work in places they did not feel respected. At Warm Hearts, these women regarded themselves as having established a workplace of their own; a workplace where their genders were valued. They insisted upon the right to set their own terms and build an organisation with ‘new rules’; my participants believed that social entrepreneurship promised all their previous workplaces could not deliver.

Scholarship in the critical entrepreneurship field has addressed an enduring romanticisation of entrepreneurship as a site of neutral socioeconomic opportunity creation (Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Tedmanson et al., 2012). At Warm Hearts, I found this translated into an organisational discourse that emphasised they were challenging the status quo, ‘doing

things differently'. For the women at Warm Hearts, the meaning of this work was entwined with their gendered experience of work. As I describe in Chapter 6, consistent claims to their womanhood were a meeting point; a commonality that built confidence within the team. The CEO contextualising this in an interview as the "feminine style strengths" of "intuition and heart" expressing the value the founders saw they could offer as a women-led social enterprise. This construction of their contribution in the sector echoes Lewis and Henry's (2019) discussion of the ways women's participation in social entrepreneurship might be considered as a "deliberate rejection of hierarchical organisational structures of business" (p. 122). The interpretation of social entrepreneurship as a neutral socioeconomic opportunity was central to Warm Hearts' work. My participants shared a certainty that their work was meaningful because social entrepreneurship offered them a sense of ownership, control, and independence. This certainty informed their construction and development of claims to legitimacy.

Another key piece to understanding social entrepreneurship at Warm Hearts was the entrepreneurial myth of meritocracy (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018; Martinez Dy et al., 2017). I observed this to be a complementary piece to the idea of neutral socioeconomic opportunity; not only could anyone from any background be an entrepreneur, but anyone could be a successful entrepreneur if they just worked hard enough. Progress and the pursuit of success is a motivation of social entrepreneurship shaped by power structures. For the white middle-class women of Warm Hearts, the sense of legitimacy they gained from pursuing social entrepreneurship was a significant part of what made this a meaningful work endeavour. While my participants did not claim to be 'empowered' outright, they were confident they had secured a level of respectability and legitimacy. Questioning their proximity to power invites questions of the conditions placed on the founders and team leaders at Warm Hearts, best considered in terms of postfeminist understandings of power. For Warm Hearts, their claim to legitimacy was in the 'doing' (Bruni et al., 2004; de Bruin et al., 2007); in the practices of social entrepreneurship. Throughout Chapter 6, I note their frequent refrain of a desire not to be seen in the sector as "cute suburban mums". This revealed an ambition for the legitimacy and respectability they believed the success of their organisation would bring. Participants pushed against what they understood as societal limitations to their work on the basis of gender by pursing social entrepreneurship as their

avenue to success (Ahl & Marlow, 2021). This response found Warm Hearts enthusiastically embracing postfeminist ideals. McRobbie (2015) discusses the ways that the collectivist focus of past feminisms has given way to an "individualistic striving" (p. 4) that encourages in women a type of competitiveness against ourselves. The founders rejected a perception of feminised 'cuteness' in favour of being smart, where smartness was equated with legitimacy.

I found that while the organisation worked to be their own cheerleaders, a clearer picture of social entrepreneurship as a suitable pursuit for white middle-class women emerged. Their work offered them respectability (Gill & Scharff, 2011; Skeggs, 1997) and the opportunity to model the establishment of the organisation as an achievement. They were claiming their rights to work, dictate the nature of that work by establishing their own organisation, and the ongoing success of the organisation was happening alongside their roles as mothers and partners. Women who had sought to establish their own organisations and structured these to include their family commitments were empowered to hold these roles, but the standards to which they were holding themselves were increasingly high. Their pursuit of success saw them overworked, with frequent discussions of burnout and managing workloads. The fact that they were often uncertain about parts of their work and often overwhelmed by the 'many hats' they wore as women was a clear symptom of how the idealised workplaces they endeavoured to establish were demanding the same "exacting terms and conditions" (McRobbie, 2015, p. 8) they had sought to escape elsewhere. Participants insisted upon what they saw as more favourable working conditions, not understanding that their work had been capitalised. Working for legitimacy and respectability required my participants to believe in social entrepreneurship as a freedom from glass ceilings, but simultaneously found them aspiring to future roles as 'thought leaders' where a logical avenue for entrepreneurial success might be increased surveillance and visibility as women business leaders. Self-governance and self-surveillance (Rottenberg, 2017) come with the pursuit of legitimacy. Dominator culture perpetuates harms for white middle-class femininities, obscured by the promise of success.

Privilege And Access To Capital

Warm Hearts centred gender in an organisational discourse that replicated postfeminist notions of power. My participants were positioned in a particular way because of their gender identities, but it was also clear they preferred to trade in a story of success *despite* their positionality as women rather than *because of* their whiteness and middle-class status. In this section I argue that Warm Hearts had access to a significant amount of capital, and this access was mostly unmentioned, and often unnoticed by my participants. Access to the range of types of capital discussed by Skeggs (1997, see also Bourdieu, 1986) makes clear the ways race and class shape gender. As discussed in Chapter 5, access to capital reflects the proximity to power of my participants and is interpreted as privilege in this section. I have defined privilege throughout my study specifically in terms of how my participants are positioned within dominator culture (hooks, 2013), noting that privilege is an advantage or benefit, in contrast to a disadvantage or restriction. I argue that for Warm Hearts, privilege was not frequently front of mind. The nature of social entrepreneurship had my participants focused on scarcity of funding, money being central to monthly reporting as well as strategic planning for the future. This meant they rarely reflected on other ways they had been resourced to succeed that were due to their positionalities as white middle-class women. Throughout Chapter 5, I have made clear the often-obscured nature of these resources to consider them as forms of capital. Both the access to opportunity through these types of capital and the ways Warm Hearts understood and related to the concept of privilege are important to discuss in terms of establishing how white middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship.

Social entrepreneurship is a pursuit that requires capital, and accessibility of capital is a means of understanding my participants' proximity to power through race, class, and gender. Employees and volunteers at Warm Hearts were able to access a significant range of capital. Some types of capital were understood by the organisation, and their discussion of these made clear that this informed broader understandings of privilege within Warm Hearts. The founders mentioned their financial standing as a type of economic capital to me during our first interview, making clear they had been able to work unpaid for 3 years because of the capacity for their partners to financially support their respective families. The

COO naming this as a luxury gave me a sense that she understood that her family living on the one salary of her husband was an indication of privilege (Lewis, 2014). Many of the team members in lead positions at Warm Hearts worked to similar financial arrangements, where they volunteered their time to the organisation and their partners had full-time paid positions. The implications of this were not often discussed in the organisation, despite the emphasis Warm Hearts put on the milestone of establishing paid positions that was passed during my fieldwork. The capacity to interpret this milestone as a symbol of legitimacy rather than the actual salary paid to the founders was underpinned by symbolic capital (Skeggs, 1997; see also Bourdieu, 1986); the organisation could trade in the reputation of having the financial stability and success to pay employees. In contrast to this relationship to paid work was the one held by the Program Manager, who made clear she needed to have paid work by the end of 2020 to support her family. Economic need from this key employee further highlighted the privileged position from which the founders negotiated their relationships with money. The founders explained to me the 'trade off' they had discussed with their partners, an agreement that they were making different types of contributions on behalf of and for their families. The time worked unpaid by the CEO was considered alongside the salaried work of her husband in a type of equivalence that they used to further legitimise what I consider the social capital (Skeggs, 1997) of social entrepreneurship. The capital was reputational; here, the generation of social value could be shared by a partner who contributed financially to the family. This discussion of the value of one person's work in direct comparison to another was rare but shows that economic and financial concerns had been considered at Warm Hearts.

Social entrepreneurship requires more than simply economic capital (McAdam, 2013), and Warm Hearts were more resourced than they acknowledged or understood. The dominant discourse of entrepreneurship more broadly dictates a sense of lack or under-funding, which motivates the hard work expected of entrepreneurial success (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). However, such a discourse distracts from establishing a clear sense of the range of capital that set up Warm Hearts. Considering the capital 'on hand' at Warm Hearts, described in Chapter 5, makes clear the privileges that race, class, and gender offer social entrepreneurship. Making these resources obvious also challenges the ways social entrepreneurship discourses romanticise how much an organisation can do with so little,

and discounting or disregarding these types of capital indicates that these types of organisations are focused on financials. Skeggs (1997) takes up Bourdieu's (1986) work to categorise capital types as economic, cultural, social, and symbolic. A drive for financial security and financial growth preoccupied the Warm Hearts Board, specifically the Chair and Financial Officer. A continual hum of low-level anxiety peaked at various times throughout my fieldwork with outright concerns shared with me about the financial sustainability of the organisation. Concerns around how focused the CEO was on her fundraising responsibilities surfaced, underpinned by frustrations with the founders' tendency to disconnect from finances in general. This combination of unease and disinterest in finances spoke to a relationship with money that belied an assumption that things would work out, and despite the concerns expressed by the Finance Officer and Chair, things did work out. Funding opportunities continued to come through, often at the last minute. It is a particular privilege of the middle- and upper-classes to assume funding will not run out (Bennett et al., 2021; Connell, 2002). I suggest that it is the access to cultural, social, and symbolic capital that permitted Warm Hearts to make such an assumption.

Social entrepreneurship demands access to a range of types of capital to facilitate success, as well as legitimacy. The white middle-class femininities of my participants should be considered as cultural capital; in an embodied state (Skeggs, 1997), privileged positionalities facilitated an understanding of this type of social entrepreneurship as acceptable, and ultimately celebrated. As I note throughout Chapter 5, capitalising on their embodiment as white middle-class mothers from the suburbs gave them legitimacy as social entrepreneurs. Education as an institutionalised form of cultural capital (Bennett et al., 2021) gave my participants a range of skills with which to undertake their work, and their negotiation of education systems was facilitated through their whiteness and femininities, as well as class status. University educations were held by some but not all of my participants, although very few were educated in entrepreneurship or business. Skeggs (1997) observes masculinity and whiteness as "valued (and normalised) forms of cultural capital" (p. 6). The ways education and training were celebrated even if they were not required or expected centred dominant categories of difference. Drawing from this type of cultural capital to build Warm Hearts reproduced systems of domination and shaped values at the core of the organisation.

Warm Hearts drew heavily on their social capital to ensure success, and this also served to make visible their privileged positionalities. Warm Hearts made regular and persistent invitation for community members to join them in their work. This was firstly a literal invitation to donate, to volunteer, to signal boost. As capital generated through relationships (Skeggs, 1997), social capital both implied and constructed social value (see Peredo & McLean, 2006) for the organisation. Warm Hearts relied on social capital as a means of recruitment. It was my participants' positionalities as white middle-class women that encouraged community involvement; in our final reflexive interview, the CEO articulated her belief that her visibility could be enough to inspire others like her to contribute. Social capital yielded donated time, goods, and money (Bennett et al., 2021). As the organisation matured, these connections through community were organisation-based as well as on an individual level. Strategically, the Chair pushed the founders to invest in organisational partnerships as more efficient use of time and resources, and it was clear that operationalising social capital for partnership building in turn yielded more goods as well as larger and in-kind financial donations. Warm Heart's success in generating social capital was due to the visibility of their work as white middle-class women and mothers. They offered a socially acceptable outlet for others to participate in a politically neutral way that did not challenge or threaten established positionalities or the privileges that came with them (Bennett et al., 2021; Connell, 2002). The organisation worked within power structures, accessing the resources they needed to succeed in a way that further legitimised their place as social entrepreneurs.

The ease and confidence with which Warm Hearts claimed and used economic, cultural, and social capital ensured their white middle-class femininities were rendered legitimate for social entrepreneurship. Skeggs' (1997) discussion of symbolic capital for working- and middle-class white women informs a consideration of how Warm Hearts relied upon their privileged access to capital to translate their legitimacy as social entrepreneurs. Having access to these types of legitimacy was key in the "conversion to power" (Skeggs, 1997, p. 6–7). Without the economic, cultural, and social capital of white middle-class motherhood, Warm Hearts' work as social entrepreneurs would have more abruptly encountered the invisible barriers to entry (McAdam, 2013) that make a lie of the entrepreneurial myths of neutral socioeconomic opportunity and meritocracy. The organisation's continued success

and growth both shaped and was shaped by their access to a level of financial support that enabled them to work three years unpaid. As I explore in Chapter 5, this privileged 'luxury' translated into legitimacy as symbolic capital, and an indication Warm Hearts belonged in the industry, further rendering their practices of social entrepreneurship white and middle-class. They capitalised on the notion of a community donating time, funding, and furniture items to demonstrate the validity of their business model. The COO argued that most people want to help and do 'good things' and Warm Hearts simply made that easy to do. This understanding legitimised not only the opportunity the organisation had discovered (Shane, 2000), but implicated the community offering social capital in such a way that this was made natural and even inevitable. Those with the resources to help were generously offered the benefit of the doubt, and the way to helping was eased by Warm Hearts.

Warm Hearts remained silent on their access to and reliance on most types of capital by focusing on the work of helping. Securing further funding was always a priority, and the organisation did not regularly mention the access and resources their shared privilege as white middle-class women afforded them. I found that my participants were reflexive around their privilege on a personal level in a way they were not in terms of the operation and ongoing sustainability of the business. This reflexivity was a key part of their construction of white middle-class femininities as a means of signalling their education and awareness of current political issues (Ahmed, 2004; Sullivan, 2014). My participants subsequently established an emotional connection to their work that still reiterated the political neutrality of the organisation. Reflexivity became part of Warm Hearts' organisational practices in interesting ways. In this next section I discuss the acknowledgement of privilege as an idealised performance, where reflexivity operates as another type of symbolic capital. Warm Hearts looked to incorporate organisational practices to represent this acknowledgement, which functioned to legitimise the positionality of my participants in the sector.

Idealised Reflexivity

My participants' relationship to the privileges they held was complex. As an organisation, Warm Hearts operated on an assumption that most people want to help others and will do so as long as there are minimal barriers for them to overcome. This assumption indicated

Warm Hearts' tendency to universalise their positionality and privileges and project this onto their community of present and future donors and volunteers (Nkomo, 2021; Yancy, 2012). When the organisation spoke of these groups, they imagined themselves. Constructing white middle-class femininities as universal reflects and reproduces power structures (Moreton-Robinson, 2000). Warm Hearts regarding themselves as typical or "average" in their privilege further objectifies not only the recipients of their material aid service by rendering them not average or atypical, but also others those in the community who have their own help to offer. Universalising their privilege meant the organisation also worked with an assumption there was a means of addressing this in a reflexive way that would include everybody. The practice of Acknowledging Country was one tangible way Warm Hearts as an organisation performed reflexivity.

The organisational practice of making an Acknowledgement of Country is common in so-called Australia (Kowal, 2015; McKenna, 2014; see also Kowal, 2010). As I show through a number of examples in Chapter 6, Warm Hearts had a genuine desire to remind all participants they were on Aboriginal land. The heartfelt nature of these Acknowledgements were meaningful and moving for my participants. Understanding these Acknowledgements as a tangible means of communicating reflexivity, I also regarded them as a performance that demonstrated much about Warm Hearts. The organisation's understanding of their positionality as white middle-class women meant the way they addressed their privilege during Acknowledgements was confessional. There was an implication of absolution; a sense of having addressed this privilege so it could be set aside for the rest of the meeting. Asserting emotional connection during Acknowledgements also enabled the founders to convey a sense of superiority through feeling, a way of differentiating themselves from other organisations that recited Acknowledgements word by word from a script. Such connections laid claim to a ritual that was not theirs to claim and softened it with white emotion. The reflexivity of my participants Acknowledging themselves as white settlers living on stolen land did not extend to considering the further harms perpetuated by making use of a practice intended to decolonise understandings of land ownership to 'make it their own'. The incorporation of personal emotional connection, additions, and embellishments were a means of colonisation through confession, and I label this as performative because of this appropriation and because of the limits of Warm Hearts' reflexivity. In the context of

social entrepreneurship, the organisation was necessarily limited by structures of power that implied ownership and dominance and reproduced hierarchies and binaries of race, gender, and class.

Taking up Acknowledgement of Country was a performance that signalled the reflexivity of my participants at Warm Hearts. This reflexivity about their privilege sat in tension with the political neutrality also practiced there. Acknowledging that "sovereignty was in fact never ceded to white people" holds significant political weight, as a statement that incorporates language of resistance speaking to a history of activism from First Nations peoples and non-Indigenous allies (McKenna, 2014). Because Warm Hearts had no intention of engaging in public political statements, making use of this language was a means of co-opting the radical challenge of such words, and colonised them with whiteness, middle-class status, and femininities. Accessing this connection to ideas of challenging structural oppression in this way was a means of demonstrating reflexivity without considering deeper implications. It was evident that acknowledging privilege was an ideal for the founders; hearing others comment positively and having an audience for the Acknowledgements was pleasing to them, having echoes of being a type of role model or inspiration. The CEO's understanding of her own privilege, shared with me in our final one-on-one interview, indicated her knowledge of the many ways people experience discrimination or oppression under dominator culture, but her answer ultimately betrayed an understanding of herself as typical or "average" in her privilege. The claim to the disadvantage experienced by white, middle-class, heterosexual, able-bodied women at the hands of patriarchy is frequently used to obscure other privileges they hold (hooks, 1984; Lorde, 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Ortega, 2006), and Warm Hearts was entirely typical in this way. I note in Chapter 6 that while the beginnings of extended awareness were present in the organisation, the simple act of stating they held privilege stood in for more in-depth, reflexive conversations. I observed a predominantly performative type of allyship from Warm Hearts (Ahmed, 2004; Swan, 2017). My participants intimated a meaningful understanding of power structures and collective experiences of oppression, but underneath this was an absence of meaningful challenge to these structures. Performative allyship at Warm Hearts was idealised and celebrated, the limits to its political impact left unexamined.

My role as a researcher embedded in the organisation found me at times disappointed with the evident limits to more radical political potential. I hoped to observe conversations that extended what regularly appeared to be beginnings of more politically engaged discussions. I had a conversation in my first week of fieldwork where the CEO mentioned her desire to avoid playing into the white saviour complex (Cole, 2012). That same day, she also made a point of her discomfort with outdated language around people receiving benefits from the state, often still referred to as 'Work for the dole' programs. This derogatory approach to describing the way the Australian government managed those on benefits is underpinned by classist, racist, sexist, and often ableist assumptions. At the time this signalled to me the potential for some intriguing future conversations about privilege, racism, and classism, but such discussions never eventuated. These brief comments operated as a shorthand that was intended to convey "wokeness", an understanding of the complexities of critical race theory through a performance of allyship that demonstrated self-awareness (Ahmed, 2004; Nash, 2019; see also Liu et al., 2021). The founders held enough fluency in these discourses that they could draw fragments from them into our conversations at Warm Hearts, slipping terminology like 'White saviour complex' into broader statements about the values of the organisation. The incorporation of such fragments was a form of appropriation of more radical politics, performed by my participants as part of a larger project of developing themselves as 'good white people' (Sullivan, 2014). Access and exposure to books, podcasts, and TED Talks offered a range of ideas and terminology to draw from and incorporate as their own. This signalling pre-empted criticisms or potentially uncomfortable discussion about the privilege they held by demonstrating their familiarity with the political discourse. They appeared to have 'done the work' and had the language to demonstrate this.

This is not a phenomenon unique to Warm Hearts. Much of critical whiteness scholarship approaches this practice of taking on radical political language as a shield against criticism or accountability. Ahmed's (2004) paper considers the ways in which the declaration of anti-racist statements of acknowledgement, rejection, or confession are not in and of themselves meaningful action. Swan (2017) cautions white allies within the academy against the all-too tempting fantasy of transcending our own whiteness through empathy with people of colour, of indulging a systematic forgetting of our own implication in structural inequality. Having made note of the fragments of reflexivity I observed at Warm Hearts with

enthusiasm, I held onto the anticipation of more substantial discussions in the organisation about privilege, race, and class for some time. They did not expand upon these ideas to any meaningful extent in meetings, online discussions, social media posts, or in ad hoc conversations. The separation of personal/private and business/public allowed my participants to continue hinting at their well-developed reflexivity around their privilege, while neatly avoiding more significant consideration of power structures as they related to their work at Warm Hearts. Others in the organisation reflected with me on the Acknowledgements of Country and interwoven mention of privilege in ways that ranged from enthusiasm to acceptance to cynicism. I observed that the founders' personal development of reflexivity was not incorporated into Warm Hearts' organisational discourse in a substantial way.

Warm Hearts performed an idealised reflexivity suitable for social entrepreneurship as white middle-class women. Throughout Chapter 6, I show how radical statements were softened to support the political neutrality they favoured, maintaining their appeal for present and future donors. This also allowed them to make it clear they were versed in matters of societal inequality. This complimented their focus as a material aid service and allowed them to engage in conversations about gender inequality. While Warm Hearts were well-versed in an organisational discourse of reflexivity when it came to discussing their own privilege, they also continued to lay claim to experiences of discrimination as women and mothers in the workforce. For them, such experiences of discrimination were a means of explaining how they came to their roles with Warm Hearts, taking an opportunity to step out of a traditionally male-dominant workplace (Lewis & Henry, 2019). The women were connected by their shared gender identities, and their frequent claiming of womanhood throughout my fieldwork was insistent. As is so often the case in white feminist movements, acknowledgements of privilege were set aside to emphasise their marginalisation through gender as a specific marker of inequality (hooks, 1984; Lorde, 2007; Ortega, 2006). The justification of a focus on gender was used to mediate their reflexivity around privilege. In this closing section, I look to add complexity to commonly held assumptions about white middle-class women working in social enterprise.

Beyond One-Dimensional Women: Sharing And Caring, And White Middle-Class Femininities

Establishing and growing a social enterprise under structures of white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy is not a straightforward endeavour with a clear path to financial, social, and political success. My participants at Warm Hearts were in constant negotiation to balance the limits and requirements of running a social enterprise; their purpose of providing vulnerable people with the "bulky essentials to make a home, enabling them to thrive" had to be mediated through their own positionalities. My participants were working to reconcile their own privilege with the challenges of where their power was limited. They were often learning as they grew, seeking a means of protecting themselves against repercussions of failure. In this final section, I challenge the ways women in social enterprise are often reduced to one-dimensional traits of being caring and selfless, motivated only by the act of helping (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019; Lewis & Henry, 2019). Social entrepreneurship renders white middle-class femininities simultaneously entitled and uncomfortable. I examine my participants' incorporation of Brené Brown's conceptualisation of vulnerability and add further theoretical context to the term 'professed vulnerability' that I proposed in the final section of Chapter 6. I discuss how my participants used professed vulnerability as an approach to entrepreneurship that modelled the value of 'doing things differently'. Considering this project as an exploration of white middle-class femininities rendered through social entrepreneurship, I offer a clearer sense of the complexity of doing good for work in a context unavoidably shaped by structures of power.

Reconciling Privilege With Positionality

The employees and volunteer employees at Warm Hearts held a relationship to privilege made complex by the ways power structures were reflected and reproduced in the organisation. My participants' white middle-class femininities were rendered in part by this relationship; a confessional acknowledgement of privilege sat in uneasy tension with their drive for legitimacy and success. Reconciling privilege with positionality at Warm Hearts was a complex negotiation of systems of inequality, and the range of interpretations of and relationships to privilege I observed at the organisation are all indicative of white middle-

class femininities. Except for the one more critical member of the Warm Hearts team, I found my participants more comfortable to centre gender, focusing on their experiences of sexism and discrimination. As I highlight in Chapter 6, a strong statement from the Program Manager about her personal understanding of privilege where she did her best to avoid mentioning race only emphasises the insidious nature of white supremacy as a structure of power that operates best when unmentioned and so universalised (Grimes, 2001, 2002; Parker & Grimes, 2009). White feminism insists upon claiming power as a means of challenging patriarchy by normalising all the ways white middle-class women are privileged as a default (Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Ortega, 2006). Understanding the social enterprise as a site that reflects and reproduces power structures requires accepting that access to privilege is complex. Each time my participants chose to reconcile their privilege in binarised terms, these structures made themselves clear.

Navigating the complexities of privilege and disadvantage required the construction of an organisational discourse at Warm Hearts around the notion of 'shared humanity'. This helped make sense of disparities between themselves and recipients of material aid, who they had inferred connections with on the basis of motherhood, family, and presumed aspiration to 'thrive'. This insistence that 'all of us need help sometimes' echoed across the organisation, indicating that Warm Hearts preferred to conceptualise their recipients as individuals, rendering systemic inequalities invisible (Cole, 2016; Yancy & Butler, 2015). The organisation was not equipped or motivated to address the root causes of their recipients' vulnerability. Reconciling the structures that positioned them with the resources to offer help and their recipients in need of help became an exercise in not seeing difference. The founders both side-stepped ideas of structures of oppression to share ideas that the problem was not the needs or vulnerability of people, it was the stigma associated with needing or asking for help. This stigma is a product of capitalism, as are poverty, racism, and sexism. The avoidance of discussing the causes of homelessness experienced by Warm Hearts' recipient groups was consistent. I found the COO's comment in her podcast appearance in early 2020 to reflect this clearly, where after saying that everyone needs help sometimes, she observed it might be her in need of help tomorrow. A construction of lived experiences of homelessness and other vulnerabilities as having had some 'bad luck' reflected and reproduced power structures in the social enterprise by denying the ways in

which intergenerational trauma and disadvantage shape lives (Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Slater, 2019). Warm Hearts was focused on addressing and managing the effects of dominator culture on those marginalised by it rather than the structures of white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy themselves. Warm Hearts drew on social and cultural capital to produce an emotional centre to this discourse, insisting all people are equally deserving of safety, comfort, and security in a way that did not hold the structures reproducing inequalities to account (Cole, 2016). An understanding of community that assumed universality of experience enabled my participants to sideline their privileged positionalities as white middle-class women.

While Warm Hearts had incorporated the language of caseworkers in naming recipients "vulnerable people", my participants also claimed a vulnerability of their own. For Warm Hearts, to be a woman working in social enterprise was to be vulnerable. Exploring this interpretation of vulnerability contributes an understanding of how emotions are navigated as a means of expressing white middle-class femininities in the social enterprise.

Professed Vulnerability

The construction and conceptualisation of "vulnerability" at Warm Hearts is an intriguing finding of my project. Vulnerability has been considered in philosophy and cultural studies, (Cole, 2016; Gilson, 2013; Mackenzie et al., 2014) as well as in critical scholarship as both a lived experience (Ahmed, 2012; hooks, 1984;) and approach for navigating privilege (Applebaum, 2017; Swan, 2017; Yancy, 2012). It has rarely been considered in terms of MOS (Liu, 2020; Rumens & Ozturk, 2019), and has not been discussed in relation to social entrepreneurship, except when discussing beneficiaries (de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019). The lived experience of marginalised people was a type of vulnerability that shaped discourse across the organisation and beyond, into the sector. The vulnerability of the recipients of the furniture and whitegoods Warm Hearts delivered daily was in many ways monolithic; a positionality my participants did not discuss in detail, preferring to make use of generic examples. As I discuss above, the vulnerable Other was central to Warm Hearts' construction of their work as a social enterprise providing material aid services (Daya, 2014). This language invited a softened, more generalisable sense of the need the organisation was working to address without an explicit reference to detail of how their recipients had

experienced this vulnerability. Quite separate from this was the way my participants used vulnerability within the organisation about themselves and their experiences of social entrepreneurship. As I examine in detail in Chapter 6, vulnerability was claimed by my participants at Warm Hearts as a means of navigating their work that allowed the organisation to claim space to learn and fail as social entrepreneurs. It is correct to say that over the course of my 12 months of fieldwork, not once did any of my participants make a connection between their use of 'vulnerable people' as a descriptor of the recipients of their service they worked daily to provide and their expressed 'vulnerability' as a women-owned and operated social enterprise. Warm Hearts often declared a lack of expertise and experience throughout the work of delivering their service, growing their business, and improving their systems and processes. The insistence on claiming a vulnerability of their own from positions of privilege showed the limits to the reflexivity they idealised, particularly in acknowledging they had the resources to establish and grow a social enterprise. My participants navigated the challenges of social entrepreneurship by incorporating vulnerability as a legitimising practice. Re-interpreting the iterative process of a start-up company (Ries, 2011) as emotional and personal informed my consideration how vulnerability was used to render white middle-class femininities through social entrepreneurship.

For Warm Hearts, vulnerability had a role to play in the negotiation of structures of power that shape social entrepreneurship. While my participants had conceded an understanding of the ways their positionalities yielded privilege, the daily work of operating a social enterprise was still challenging. These challenges held emotional weight for those making decisions in the organisation and were often internalised as a gendered issue. The women at Warm Hearts were determined to succeed as a women-led organisation in a male-dominant industry (Ahl & Marlow, 2021; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Tedmanson et al., 2012) and drew on this to establish defensive strategies constructed to help them feel legitimate through evangelising their 'difference' as a strength. The founders of Warm Hearts encouraged an environment within the organisation that enabled the team to be open about their limits, lack of confidence, or expertise. They constructed this in their organisational discourse as 'safety to fail' and asserted that this made them different to other organisations. As I note above, clear communication about what works and what doesn't in the early years of a

start-up company is customary practice (Pride, 2018; Ries, 2011). What was compelling about Warm Hearts' approach was the emotional attachment they held to this idea, and their interpretation of this practice in their organisation as vulnerability. I have named this 'professed vulnerability' in Chapter 6 as a means of capturing the confessional, emotional nature of the practice often modelled by the founders. Professed vulnerability was an organisational strategy inspired by the work of Brené Brown (2011, 2012c, 2012a, 2015, 2018; 2010). Brown's work has moved from the social work context in which it was originally undertaken into business and organisational spaces. Vulnerability for Warm Hearts incorporated an emotional effusiveness that soothed my participants; they reframed their shortcomings as a learning opportunity. The process of sharing these openly helped them reassure themselves this was a legitimate part of social entrepreneurship, which motivated them to continue their work. Their positionalities as white middle-class women granted them the privilege of safety to fail as they worked to improve their systems and processes. The capital their whiteness and middle-class status gave them access to (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018) was not jeopardised by their mistakes. Despite the aversion of the founders to being seen by the sector as 'cute suburban mums', their white middle-class femininities afforded them the capacity to concede a lack of expertise as women working in a male-dominated industry. They safely made this concession while they learned how to run their organisation successfully. Safety to fail was a privileged means of accessing vulnerability.

Overall, Warm Hearts wanted to do good and be taken seriously while doing it. Warm Hearts avoided addressing the ways the organisation reproduced systems of oppression by asserting their legitimacy as a social enterprise through professed vulnerability. White middle-class femininities are rendered through social entrepreneurship as predominantly innocent and well-intentioned (Applebaum, 2010; Sullivan, 2014). This dynamic in the organisation was complex to observe. In the final months of my fieldwork, I concluded my fieldnotes by reflecting:

> Thinking about the organisation, what they imagined it to be, what it is, and what they'd like it to be are all different things. I think for them, what they've done is they've built a safe space where they can confess their privilege, in a way, and call that confession a type of vulnerability and do so on the strength of the fact they

> founded a business that helps vulnerable people. So by virtue of what they're doing, they're able to access a place they've built themselves, an organisation where they're kind of aspiring towards a very particular kind of imperfection and vulnerability.

Social entrepreneurship renders white middle-class femininities an ongoing negotiation. My participants were being pulled in a range of directions: they wanted to help vulnerable people, collaborate by working in well-established systems that perpetuated inequalities by addressing symptoms of disadvantage rather than causes of it, feel legitimate and respected as women in a workplace they were learning how to build as they grew, and confess a certain type of privilege in a way they were comfortable with and feel safe to make mistakes. I found that Warm Hearts constructed their professions of vulnerability as a means of racing to (Pierce, 2012) and protecting (Applebaum, 2016) their innocence. As they had already conceded they made mistakes and were not experts, it was their good intentions to help vulnerable people that my participants wanted to stand as representative of who they were as an organisation. The need to claim innocence in this pre-emptive way makes clear the pressure of the Perfect that McRobbie (2015) discusses as part of the pursuit of success as a postfeminist white woman (see also Idriss, 2021; Kanai, 2020). Confidently conceding a lack of expertise was a profession of vulnerability couched in privilege.

Working to understand the ways in which race and class were at play alongside gender, I also understood this claim to innocence through professed vulnerability as an extension of the reflexivity they idealised. They made a privileged choice of political neutrality to protect future funding prospects and the longevity of their organisation, which I understood as a type of defensive discourse (Applebaum, 2010). I describe in Chapter 6 a moment in our final reflexive interview when I asked the CEO about this choice directly, and she reframed the organisation's silence on political matters as a purposeful, intentional disruption. Part of Warm Hearts' conceptualisation of the Perfect (McRobbie, 2015) included developing some articulation of privilege and of power. However, their attempts to suggest to me that this was politically disruptive in our final reflexive interview were not entirely convincing.

Good White Women And Discomfort

My study of Warm Hearts offered clarity on how whiteness as race and racial privilege was clear in the work of social entrepreneurship. Nkomo's (1992) documentation and discussion of historical resistance in MOS to the critical consideration of race as more than simply a variable builds to a call for scholars to engage in more determined ways with what she asserts must be an central analytical category. I offer my findings on white middle-class femininities as a meaningful and compelling contribution to critical whiteness studies as well as to critical entrepreneurship studies. Examining whiteness as race is a commitment to deconstructing what has previously operated as a universal positionality. As Ahmed (2004) observes, whiteness is not 'invisible'. Whiteness was demonstrably central to the everyday work of Warm Hearts; while not invisible, it *was* mostly unmentioned and unnoticed. In my findings chapters, I observed the ways race was inextricably embedded in my participants' relationships to each other as an organisation and the work of providing material aid to vulnerable people. I had countless opportunities to observe the 'good white person' (Applebaum, 2010; Sullivan, 2014) in action through performative practices and the confession of privilege. This final section examines political possibility, and purposefully implicates me as the researcher in the discussion.

The founders of Warm Hearts purposefully made it clear to me that their private lives included the pursuit of knowledge that would be considered awareness raising, or even adjacent to anti-racism. They were reading books, listening to podcasts, consuming artefacts that provided them with the language that became so familiar to me over the course of my fieldwork. They were engaged in the pursuit of self-transformation (Ahmed, 2004); self-development as a means of demonstrating their commitment to being good white people (Sullivan, 2014). Sometimes, Warm Hearts took up the practices of awareness building and reflection from their personal lives in their organising work at Warm Hearts in symbolic ways. Such performances stood in for action that was more radical or politically controversial than they felt comfortable or confident to undertake as a business. In the same breath they acknowledged their privilege, these women were exercising it in a choice to remain 'politically neutral'. One of their more critical volunteers had mentioned to me the disconnect between their practices of Acknowledgement and opportunity to make a

public acknowledgement in a politically charged environment. The founders continued to hold a line between the private or personal and the public, professional space they occupied as Warm Hearts. In the pursuit of self-transformation through education (Bennett et al., 2021; Skeggs, 1997), their access to more radical political conversations equipped them with language that appeared to do a lot while in practice holding the same politically neutral line. This appropriation of anti-racist work (Ahmed, 2004; Liu, 2020; Sullivan, 2014) allowed them to excuse themselves from more meaningful political action. Rather than consider the radical political possibilities for Warm Hearts, my participants were unwilling and unable to challenge such structures, instead working within them to redirect excess goods to those in need. Challenging the dominant norms of whiteness and middle-class status as preferred, as neutral, and as universal (Grimes, 2002; Nkomo, 2021; Yancy, 2012) in this way was not in the realm of possibility for Warm Hearts. I found I held a hope that the organisation might be building to a more substantial push for radical change, but such possibilities were significantly limited.

My participants sunk their whiteness and comfortable middle-class status into their identity as women. This had the effect of universalising their experiences of parenthood, of day-to-day household structures and work (Ingraham, 1994; Quah, 2020), and shaped their interpretation of what 'thriving' would look like for recipients. As an organisation, they believed that the comfortable lives they had – safe, well-furnished homes, clean clothes, a way to store food so it didn't spoil – should be accessible to everyone. This mission of Warm Hearts was honourable, and a purpose to believe in. What was telling of this embedded whiteness (Nkomo, 1992; Yancy, 2012) was the way this purpose was shaped; the possessions and experiences that volunteers and employees of Warm Hearts enjoyed and valued in their own homes was assumed to represent basic human needs. Good white people hold the white middle-class privilege that grants access to education, whether formal or self-directed (Sullivan, 2014). It is easy to consume content across a range of mediums and platforms that gives those of us who are white and middle-class an understanding of current conversations around privilege and allyship as well as the negotiation of our own relationship to power structures that afford us these privileges. What is not easy is to sit in the discomfort of understanding how we are implicit in the reproduction of systemic inequality and oppression (Applebaum, 2017; Swan, 2017; Yancy,

2015, 2018). Warm Hearts negotiated this discomfort through the incorporation of professed vulnerability as a practice by which to centre their own experiences of social entrepreneurship as a challenging environment. I found that the lack of more in-depth and prolonged 'tarrying' with anti-racist ideas (Yancy, 2015) was easily smoothed over through the organisation's performance of reflexivity. My work to engage with the implications of this project as a white, middle-class researcher involved careful reflection on my own role in the collection, analysis and translation of 12 months of data. This was data collected from women who offered me such detailed, personal and complex information about their organisation because I was also a well-meaning white woman; my positionality elicited a level of assumed community. As I discuss in Chapter 3, I was involved in expressions and practices of whiteness and middle-class status; of the privileges that come with these positionalities. Tarrying with questions of my own responsibilities as a critical researcher and the ways I was implicated in this project (Thomas, 1993) led me to reflect on how best to convey not only what I know, but how I think I know this, and where I was situated in the production of this knowledge (Pierce, 2012). I hold white middle-class femininities up for critical analysis with the purpose of denying their status as universal (Nkomo, 1992, 2021). Refusing to further embed whiteness and other privileges afforded by class and gender is part of a larger political intervention of re-thinking how we understand and know organisations and organising practices in MOS.

White people who consider ourselves allies and co-conspirators, who understand their privilege and are motivated to address inequality and oppression are addressed directly by scholars and writers of colour (Ahmed, 2004; Eddo-Lodge, 2017; Kanai, 2020; Liu, 2020; Nkomo, 1992; Saad, 2020) as well as white scholars within the academy (Sullivan, 2014; Swan, 2017) and beyond it (DiAngelo, 2018). This scholarly work entreats us toward political action, understanding the radical possibilities of such action. While powerful calls for Business Schools to step up and address institutionalised and everyday racism as it is perpetuated through the organisation entreat scholars of colour to act up (Dar et al., 2020), white scholars have a different type of activist approach to take. We can enthusiastically agree that "MOS scholars cannot afford to ignore the terrifying resurgence of white supremacist ideology, given our involvement in (re)producing and promoting racist capitalist scholarship" (Dar et al., 2020, p. 2), and work purposefully to undertake collective,

collaborative work with scholar-activist colleagues of colour. Swan's (2017) paper considers the responsibility of white academics to look to their own complicity in racism in the academy, observing the ways in which white middle-class femininity has a history of association with being and doing good. She notes that white people are involved in a "deep, systemic forgetting" (p. 551) of how we are implicated in domination, subordination, and privilege. Swan (2017) importantly offers a caution against the ways in which white allyship can turn into unhelpful feelings of self-congratulation about our own empathy with people of colour, observing a white fantasy of transcending whiteness and racism. For both myself, and the participants of my research, this caution is key to understandings of our roles in perpetuating harm, even unintentionally. Self-congratulation can easily be packaged by neoliberal post-feminist discourse as empowerment (McRobbie, 2015), and such emotions and impulses require critical reflexivity. Admitting failure or weakness through professed vulnerability does not render white middle-class women innocent of harm, nor free of the power structures reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise.

Conclusion

My ethnographic study of Warm Hearts has supplied rich insights into the ways power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. The organisation operates within the same structures that position their vulnerable recipients in poverty. The organisation centres those in need as the focus of their work yet must conceptualise their recipients' vulnerability as an opportunity to discover and a gap to meet in a market (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Martinez Dy et al., 2017; Shane, 2000). As a social enterprise they are beholden to expectations and limits of funding bodies that perpetuate white paternal Western wealth; they obscure the political nature of helping vulnerable people with a practiced political neutrality that values 'all lives' (Bonilla-Silva, 2014, 2020). The social enterprise as an organisation is, by its nature and societal context, inherently political.

I have also shown the ways structures of power shape the positionalities of my participants as social entrepreneurs. Social entrepreneurship as a practice renders white middle-class femininities through proximity to power. My participants pursed empowerment by centring

their genders in their relationship to work (Butler, 2013; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018), enjoying the access to privileges afforded them by whiteness and middle-class status. While they held an emerging awareness of these privileges, I found that their enthusiasm for reflexivity was limited by their aspirations toward business success. Under dominator culture, whiteness and middle-class status complement femininities that do not aspire to radical change and challenge.

This project is exploratory, seeking a more nuanced understanding of how white middle-class women in social enterprise undertake their work. Rather than assuming one-dimensional traits of my participants that essentialise this work as gendered (Lewis & Henry, 2019), I show the ways privileges of whiteness and middle-class status are reconciled with Warm Hearts' drive to succeed. Constructing safety to fail as Warm Hearts grew through the profession of their vulnerabilities was undertaken in a privileged comfort that the vulnerable recipients of their material aid service did not have. These complexities informed my consideration of the role of discomfort for white middle-class women (Applebaum, 2017; Slater, 2019; Yancy, 2012), concluding that radical political possibilities are curbed by structures of power to limit the ways those structures can be challenged and changed.

In my final chapter, I examine the implications of these discussions for the critical entrepreneurship field. The political project of re-writing race into MOS scholarship (Nkomo, 1992) requires research that extends understandings of power structures beyond patriarchy. I have produced a contribution to the scholarship that proves the richness of examining race, gender, and class in critical studies of entrepreneurship for future research.

Chapter 8: Conclusion And Future Directions

Introduction

Extending the critical entrepreneurship studies field beyond one-dimensional constructions of white women in social enterprise requires an understanding of how structures of power are reflected and reproduced. The purpose of this work is not to demand neat categories of social entrepreneurship, or demand perfection of white middle-class femininities. It is to undertake a curious, critical approach to structures of power as they shape and are shaped by white middle-class women. Whiteness and middle-class status sit in tension with femininities at Warm Hearts, reflecting the complexity inherent in holding a positionality both privileged and disadvantaged. While deferring to experiences of gender inequality and discrimination enabled a connection point for my participants in their understanding of their recipients, the relationship to their privilege was much more difficult to negotiate. That privilege is complicated, and while it is tempting to believe we are absolved of it through acknowledgement of it, under the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy there is no way of giving it up or stepping outside the 'system' (Brod, 1989, cited by Liu, 2020). My thesis considered privilege in the context of structures of power to show that white middle-class femininities are rendered through the negotiation of privilege and disadvantage. I answer Nkomo's (1992, 2021) call to re-write race into organisations, showing that this requires an understanding of the ways race operates with gender and class.

In this closing chapter, I reflect on the contributions of my project. I articulate my theoretical contributions to the critical entrepreneurship field. I also consider my use of digital ethnography in this field as a contribution drawn from media and communications, anthropology, and sociology disciplines that holds compelling possibilities in MOS. I then discuss the limitations of my work in terms of my own positionality, as well as broader limits to this research in a global context. I conclude by suggesting some generative future directions for the field.

Contributions

My project has been consistently shaped by the understanding that despite the promise of freedom and possibility implied by entrepreneurship, there are real and tangible limits to what is possible and for who. My contributions to the critical entrepreneurship field articulate some of the tensions between privilege and disadvantage, establishing an understanding of power structures in social entrepreneurship. Recent scholarship invites more depth and nuance to understandings of gender (Ahl & Marlow, 2021; Heizmann & Liu, 2020; Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018), which I consider in context of Nkomo's (1992, 2021) well-founded assertion that race needs to be re-written into MOS. Women in social enterprise are not one-dimensional (Lewis & Henry, 2019); rather, their positionalities can be understood in terms of race, class, and gender, and their priorities as shaped by dominant discourses that reflect white supremacy, capitalism, and patriarchy. My project is exploratory, drawing from scholarship beyond critical entrepreneurship studies including postfeminism and critical whiteness studies to incorporate a conceptual framework that helps frame my focus on white middle-class femininities in the social enterprise. Critical scholarship has established the mechanisms of entrepreneurship as socially constructed. My thesis teases out some of the complex social hierarchies that influence how resources are accessed (Martinez Dy et al., 2017) and the privilege afforded my participants by structures of power. In this section, I highlight my theoretical contributions, which establish that the social enterprise is an organisation working within power structures that limit options and approaches. The ways legitimacy and success can be pursued by white women through social entrepreneurship are varied; privileges of whiteness and middle-class status are reproduced in complex ways. I have articulated some of the tensions between privilege and gender-based disadvantage in social entrepreneurship, rendered through reflexivity and what I have termed 'professed vulnerability'. More briefly, I return to digital ethnography as a methodological contribution to the critical entrepreneurship field, suggesting that this approach offers further possibilities for the study of entrepreneurship and other types of organising practices located in digital and online spaces.

Theoretical Contributions

The social enterprise as an organisation relies heavily on notions of opportunity discovery (Shane, 2000) and 'need' in the social welfare sector as a marketplace. This prioritisation of innovation to address a gap in the market means recipients are objectified as a vulnerable Other (Daya, 2014), a common social entrepreneurship practice examined in Chapter 4. Where social enterprise is often framed as an 'answer' to systemic inequality and oppression (Diochon et al., 2011), it is ultimately working within the same structures that perpetuate these inequalities. After I articulate these as power structures of capitalism, patriarchy and white supremacy (hooks, 1984, 2013), I highlight the tensions I have described throughout chapters 4 and 5. While I demonstrate how self-awareness and reflexivity are idealised within the organisation, ultimately I have found that opportunities for radical change are limited for social enterprises working to maintain successful outcomes under dominator culture.

For white middle-class women in social entrepreneurship, proximity to power is a seductive proposition (Liu, 2018) that promises success through legitimacy and respectability (Marlow & McAdam, 2015; Skeggs, 1997). My conceptual framework incorporates postfeminist understandings of success, and through my consideration of reflexivity at Warm Hearts, I find that white middle-class femininities are limited in their pursuit of entrepreneurial success. An imposition of the Perfect demands focus on individual progress (McRobbie, 2015). Gender inequality continues to be a preferred focus of white middle-class women, with privileges of race and class often unnoticed or unmentioned (hooks, 1984; Kanai, 2020; Moreton-Robinson, 2000). The universalisation of white middle-class femininities is perpetuated by aspirations of entrepreneurial empowerment. Ultimately, the privileges of the women at Warm Hearts facilitate access to opportunity, which reflects and reproduces power structures of patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy.

Finally, tensions between privilege and disadvantage in the social enterprise are navigated through emotion (Ahmed, 2004). Understanding emotion as a defensive practice and protection of white supremacy, I demonstrated that what I have named 'professed vulnerability' is an emotive expression of uncertainty at work infused with good intentions (Pierce, 2012; Sullivan, 2014). The practice of professing vulnerability is constructed as a way

of working that is different to traditional workplaces and prioritises securing safety for these social entrepreneurs to make mistakes or fail. Accessing and professing vulnerabilities in a social enterprise is a rendering of white middle-class femininities that foregrounds gender-based oppression over race and class privilege. The universalization of whiteness persists, and the centring of these privileges both reflects and reproduces structures of white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy.

I have taken the understanding of entrepreneurship as socially constructed to trouble the idea that white middle-class women, often the focus of research on female entrepreneurship, are representative of all women (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018). I question the assumption that a person is either empowered or disadvantaged by considering my participants' complex positionalities. My thesis moves away from the persistent reproduction of binaries that universalise race and class. Nkomo's (1992) call to re-write race as a central analytical category is a key motivation of my project. With this contribution, I join a rich tradition of critical scholarship.

Methodological Contributions

Digital ethnography offered an effective methodological approach for understanding how power structures shape social enterprise. The use of digital ethnographic data collection and analysis practices allowed me to contextualise communications, community building, relationships, place, and infrastructure (Hjorth et al., 2017) in the online and digital spaces Warm Hearts was undertaking their work. The digital and online world of Warm Hearts was still personal, nuanced, and messy with contradictions and patterns. Online culture replicates social dynamics shaped by structures of power (Murthy, 2008; Postill & Pink, 2012), and digital ethnography, used to meaningful effect across other disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and media and communications studies, presents a means of understanding social dynamics in context of entrepreneurial work specifically. Traditional ethnography is well established as a significant methodological approach to organisation studies (Gilmore & Kenny, 2015; Pierce, 2012; Van Maanen, 2011b), and extending this approach to online and digital spaces offers new ways of knowing and understanding organisations. For example, digital entrepreneurship is a growing industry (Martinez Dy et al., 2017), that might be studied specifically in the digital context. For my project, the use of

this methodology invited a more nuanced understanding of social enterprise, through consideration of additional platforms from internal team messaging to social media. Increasing use of online work environments mean that such a methodology is well-suited to the study of not only social entrepreneurship, but management and organisational phenomena in a much broader sense.

Limitations

The limitations of my project are shaped by the same structures of power I have studied and documented in this study. I returned to my own positionality frequently throughout my work to make clear that there are limits to what I can observe, understand, and argue. I am a white, middle-class, able-bodied queer woman resourced by the university to undertake research. While my positionality and way of being in the world invited an immediate sense of ease in the relationships I held with my participants, it also limited what I could recognise and understand of privileges we shared. I do not know what it is to be oppressed by nature of my race, my class, or my ability, so I have endeavoured to develop critical and reflexive skills that help question and make strange what is enduringly familiar (see Berger, 1963). I am relegated to studying these phenomena from 'within', both in terms of the embedded nature of my digital ethnographic methodology, and my position within white middle-class femininity. This is a strength of this work that shapes my findings and contribution through my own knowing, but is also a limit.

In designing my project, I posed exploratory qualitative research questions motivated by an interest in understanding how privilege is balanced by disadvantage or discrimination. Digital ethnography gave fine-grained data I interpreted with analysis that layered the societal, organisational, and individual experiences I observed. I acknowledge the limits to this methodological approach. I concede that practical limits of access and transparency follow from traditional ethnography (Clifford & Marcus, 1986; Murphy & Dingwall, 2007). Missing key context, commentary, and explanations shape what can be understood this way, even while working as a researcher embedded in the organisation. My focus on structures of power informed how I understood Warm Hearts, and the sheer quantity of data collected required me to make careful decisions about where to establish boundaries

(Atkinson, 1992; Postill, 2017). In some instances, I was limited by circumstances beyond my control, where a plan to observe at a physical field site in complement to online and digital data was jeopardised by social distancing requirements enforced during the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic. My findings were skewed toward team leaders, founders, and the Board, as these participants were more frequently online and present in the digital spaces I had established as my field sites. Having used the ethnographic practice of 'following' the themes (Burrell, 2017; Marcus, 1995) informed a specific understanding of Warm Hearts and in places I gave the actions and their outcomes much more attention than the organisation themselves did. The decisions I made regarding significant phenomena and the framing of these relied upon the voices I was hearing, but I note the inclusion of past employees is largely absent from my project. Being in the field meant managing personal relationships with my participants. While this was vital for collection of data dealing with experiences of privilege as well as discrimination, it bears conceding that as a researcher I can only present the part of the social enterprise I was shown. I note these are common limitations for qualitative research (Pessoa et al., 2019; Smith, 2007; Watson, 2011); my data analysis process reflects the work I undertook to mitigate these limitations where possible. The 12 months spent in the field gave me many opportunities to contextualise and reflect upon my findings and I am hopeful my process indicates the care I took to be as reflexive as possible in my work.

Finally, my project is limited by the literature from which I extend my own critical contributions. My review of critical entrepreneurship literature centres Western scholarship, overwhelmingly from the USA, UK, and Australia. I have been mindful of citation politics (see Ahmed, 2017) and worked to inform my understandings of the dominator culture through the reading of those working from the margins (hooks, 1984). However, I understand that entrepreneurship is not solely a white, Western phenomenon. Looking at the literature I include in my review, I question the ways structures of power construct entrepreneurship in a more global sense: who is considered a capital-E Entrepreneur, and who is not? How we value and interpret the work of some versus others reveals much about Management and Organisation Studies: all the more motivation to continue re-writing race into organisations as a central analytical category (Nkomo, 1992). Colleagues from the Global South contribute important scholarship that insists upon

understanding entrepreneurship across the globe, where recent research has addressed gender, race, and class in compelling ways (Al-Dajani et al., 2019; Ojediran & Anderson, 2020; Okesina, 2021; Pasillas et al., 2017; Roberts & Mir Zulfiqar, 2019; Zahra, 2021). This thesis is a beginning point. I acknowledge there is much more for me to learn about entrepreneurship and social enterprise beyond the West. The role of imperialism on entrepreneurial practices and the study of entrepreneurship is a compelling critical angle for further study. Reflections and reproductions of imperialism as a power structure might be examined in connection with white supremacy, capitalism and patriarchy.

Importantly, I also acknowledge there are local impacts of colonisation of so-called Australia on my work. Seeking first to frame white middle-class femininities in terms of the white supremacy capitalism and patriarchy, I also note that the project has offered limited engagement with colonisation as a structure of power. Incisive work from Indigenous and First Nations scholars across the globe offer insights into not only colonisation, but also frames entrepreneurship in ways that resist dominator culture (Dana & Anderson, 2007; Foley, 2000; Foley & O'Connor, 2013; Frederick & Foley, 2006; Furneaux & Brown, 2008; Light & Dana, 2013). My engagement with specific types of literature and particular scholars poses limits to how I, as a white middle-class female scholar, can engage with critical entrepreneurship scholarship. Understanding these limitations should be directed into my future contributions to the field.

Future Directions

My contribution to critical entrepreneurship studies insists upon the re-writing of race into the study of organisations (Nkomo, 1992), observing the ways power structures are reflected and reproduced in the social enterprise. I am mindful of the caution offered by Marlow and Martinez Dy (2018) for critical entrepreneurship scholars about the limitations of the 'gender agenda' in entrepreneurship research. White middle-class femininities are part of a multiplicity of genders from which social entrepreneurship can be more clearly understood. I suggest such understandings of multiplicity should extend to race and class alongside gender. Understanding these multiplicities helps us better understand these social categories and the systems and structures that shape them, and future research offers

exciting possibilities to continue challenging binarised understandings of power. I have contextualised my research at the site of the social enterprise, but this is an approach to critical scholarship in MOS that invites more expansive conversations.

Re-writing race into the study of organisations continues to offer rich and fruitful future directions for research. Understanding white supremacy as pervasive and complex has produced powerful scholarship from MOS that document the overt and explicit as well as the subtle and inherent forms of oppression, discrimination, and inequality perpetuated by this structure of power (Grimes, 2001, 2002; Liu, 2017, 2018, 2020; Nkomo, 2021; Nkomo & Al Ariss, 2014; Parker & Grimes, 2009; Swan, 2017). To understand the everyday ways race shapes our lives is to acknowledge how privileges that come with whiteness are maintained (Bhopal, 2018; Bonilla-Silva, 2014; hooks, 1984; Lorde, 2007; Moreton-Robinson, 2000; Ortega, 2006), and to see these privileges instead of denying they exist. White people are implored to see what has always been visible for people of colour (Ahmed, 2004), and join them in a project of challenging and dismantling oppression in all its forms (Applebaum, 2016; Sullivan, 2006; Swan, 2017; Yancy, 2015). Critical discussions of whiteness clearly emphasise the need for white people to play a role in dismantling harmful structures of oppression that continue to disadvantage marginalised folks. Future directions for this research should hold true to the personal, political work in which we are implicated as critical scholars (Ahmed, 2004; Liu, 2020; Swan, 2017). To meaningfully engage with the promise of new political possibilities in entrepreneurship (Essers et al., 2017), further shifting my scholarship requires active commitment to a critical approach that looks to engaging with the significant body of work on entrepreneurship in the Global South (Al-Dajani et al., 2019; Ojediran & Anderson, 2020; Pasillas et al., 2017; Roberts & Mir Zulfiqar, 2019; Zahra, 2021; see also Yousafzai et al., 2018) as well as research on Indigenous entrepreneurship (Dana & Anderson, 2007; Foley & O'Connor, 2013; Frederick & Foley, 2006; Henry & Dana, 2019; see also de Bruin & Teasdale, 2019). My political purpose picks up the call of management and organisation scholars more broadly (Grimes, 2001; Liu, 2017, 2020; Nkomo, 1992, 2021; Parker & Grimes, 2009) to discuss and examine race, class, sexuality, ability, and beyond in our organisations and organising practices. While the globe continues to be dominated by power structures that centre white, wealthy, Western masculinity, I suggest that the rich history of resistance and challenge that comes from the

margins is a promising place from which to continue building the critical study of anti-racist, anti-capitalist, and feminist entrepreneurship. There are radical possibilities for approaches to entrepreneurship that necessarily acknowledge the ways race, class, and gender are inherently connected and constructed. Recent work considers entrepreneurship on social media as a means of expressing resistance through identity performances (Heizmann & Liu, 2020); connects postfeminist assumptions to enterprise policy development (Ahl & Marlow, 2021) and examines 'hustle' discourse among young migrant women (Idriss, 2021). The questions of the potential for empowerment and emancipation in entrepreneurship in the Global South (Ojediran & Anderson, 2020) suggest that 'empowerment' is a slow process for women who must "continually chip at the glass ceilings" (p. 12). Lewis and Henry (2019) suggest there is potential for progress in social enterprise that moves us away from traditional hierarchical structures, briefly describing the value of "rebelling" (p. 122) against such capitalistic forms of entrepreneurship. The possibilities inherent in remaking entrepreneurship as a site of challenge to the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy are a hopeful note on which to conclude my thesis, and this recent scholarship offers encouragement and a sense of purpose.

Conclusion

My project extends the critical entrepreneurship field by examining the ways structures of power are reflected in the social enterprise. My contribution adds complexity through consideration of how white middle-class femininities are rendered through negotiation of privilege in social entrepreneurship. I rejected one-dimensional constructions of white women in social enterprise to better understand how legitimacy and success are promised but also limited by the imperialist white supremacist capitalist patriarchy. In my concluding chapter I considered the contributions of my work, both theoretical and methodological, in context of the limitations of my project. I find motivation in these limitations as ways of further understanding structures of power and finish this chapter with suggestions about future directions for research. As an exploratory study of the social enterprise, the potential of new directions I might take as part of a collective of scholar-activists dedicated to the political project of dismantling dominator culture is informed with a sense of enthusiasm, responsibility, and certainty. The complexity inherent in a critical examination of power

structures in the social enterprise is generative, and full of potential for a future in which all of us are free.

Appendix A: Fieldwork Documentation

Participant List

Job title	Gender*	Race*	Class*	Time employed	Work background	Employment status
CEO / Board member	Female	White	Middle-class	Founder – 3 years	Professional photographer, volunteer for refugee advocacy group	Paid part-time and ongoing
COO / Board member	Female	White	Middle-class	Founder – 3 years	Conservation management, film and television production manager	Paid part-time and ongoing
Project Manager	Female	White		12 months	Telecommunications – Operations manager	Paid part-time and ongoing
Finance Officer / Board member	Female	White	Middle-class	12 months	Financial services sector; property funds management start-up	Volunteer and ongoing
Communications Officer	Female	White	Middle-class	10 months	Retail – product display, marketing; antiques and second-hand goods; volunteer social media	Volunteer and ceased work with Warm Hearts October 2020
Warehouse Supervisor	Male	Māori		2 months	Logistics and warehouse management	Paid part time and ceased work with Warm Hearts March 2021
IT Officer	Female	White		18 months	Retired. Recreation management; IT management &	Volunteer and ongoing

					systems development	
HR Officer	Female	White	Middle-class	3 months	Retired. HR management	Volunteer and ceased work with Warm Hearts October 2020
Board member – Chair	Female	White	Middle-class	12 months	Change management, Expert in Residence at incubator, start-up business owner	Governance role, unpaid
Board member	Female	White		4 months	Digital transformation and online businesses	Governance role, unpaid
Board member	Male	White	Middle-class	4 months	Community Housing	Governance role, unpaid

Volunteer Teams List

Team	**Volunteers****	**Broad demographics*****
Warehouse	25-30	Broad range of genders, races, class backgrounds. Range of ages. Range of work experience and employment status.
Customer Service	20	Predominantly women with school-aged children with dedicated work space and computer at home.
Special projects	10	Predominantly white middle-class women working part- or full-time.

* Only indicated where participant self-identified

** Figures based on verbal detail from HR Officer

*** Demographic detail purely testimonial from team leaders of these groups. Access to volunteer list with contact information was not granted.

Schedule Of Meetings

Date collected	Description	Site
20-Feb-20	Logistics Consultation Meeting	Face to face
6-Mar-20	Team Work In Progress (WIP)	Online
13-Mar-20	Team WIP	Online
17-Mar-20	March Board Meeting	Online
20-Mar-20	Team WIP	Online
27-Mar-20	Team WIP	Online
3-Apr-20	Team WIP	Online
17-Apr-20	Team WIP	Online
30-Apr-20	Team WIP	Online
7-May-20	Team WIP	Online
14-May-20	FY 20/21 Strategic Planning Day	Face to face
21-May-20	Team WIP	Online
4-Jun-20	Team WIP	Online
11-Jun-20	Team WIP	Online
18-Jun-20	June Board Meeting	Online
25-Jun-20	Team WIP	Online
3-Jul-20	Platform testing	Online
9-Jul-20	Team WIP	Online
22-Jul-20	July Board Meeting	Online
16-Jul-20	Team WIP	Online
6-Aug-20	Team WIP	Online
12-Aug-20	August Board Meeting	Online
13-Aug-20	Team WIP	Online
13-Aug-20	Team Talent (HR)	Online
3-Sep-20	Team WIP	Online
13 Sep-20	September Board Meeting	Online
10-Sep-20	Team WIP	Online
10-Sep-20	Team Talent (HR)	Online
24-Sep-20	Team WIP	Online
14-Oct-20	October Board meeting	Online
11-Nov-20	November Board meeting	Online
24-Nov-20	Steering Meeting	Online
1-Dec-20	Steering Meeting	Online

8-Dec-20	Steering Meeting	Online
9-Dec-20	Annual General Meeting	Online
21-Jan-21	Team WIP	Online
4-Feb-21	Team WIP	Online
10-Feb-21	February Board meeting	Online

Schedule Of Interviews

Date collected	Description	Interview type
29-Apr-20	Interview 1 - Project Manager	Semi-structured
5-May-20	Interview 1 - Communications Officer	Semi-structured
10-Jun-20	Interview 1 - Finance Officer	Semi-structured
22-Jul-20	Interview 1 - CEO and COO	Semi-structured
3-Aug-20	Interview - IT Officer	Semi-structured
15-Jan-21	Interview 2 - Program Manager	Reflexive
19-Jan-21	Interview - HR	Semi-structured
20-Jan-21	Interview 2 - Communications Officer	Reflexive
28-Jan-21	Interview - Warehouse Supervisor	Semi-structured
29-Jan-21	Interview - CEO - Part 1/2	Reflexive
4-Feb-21	Interview - COO	Reflexive
4-Feb-21	Interview - CEO - Part 2/2	Reflexive
9-Feb-21	Interview 2 - CEO and COO	Reflexive
10-Feb-21	Interview - Chair	Reflexive
12-Feb-21	Interview 2 - Finance Officer	Reflexive
15-Feb-21	Interview - Caseworker 1	Semi-structured
22-Feb-21	Interview - Board member	Semi-structured
25-Feb-21	Interview - Caseworker 2	Semi-structured

Measurement Instruments: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

CEO/Founder Of Organisation

1. How do you describe your organisation to someone who isn't familiar with your work?
2. From your description, it sounds like **** is an important part of the organisation. Did you have this in mind when you started the organisation?
3. I'm particularly interested in understanding challenges for non-typical organisations in the startup industry. Can you speak about experiences you've had since you founded this organisation that you feel are unique?
4. Have these experiences shaped any of your decisions in running the organisation? Is this something you speak about openly with your employees?
5. Do you have a specific approach for addressing experiences that might have their origins in issues of inequality with your employees?
6. Tell me some more about your team – how did you draw this group of people together, and what are they doing for the organisation?
7. What sorts of expertise and experience have you drawn on to establish this organisation? Did you begin with specific ideas around inclusivity in mind?
8. Were there particular challenges for the organisation in its early stages that you're no longer faced with now? What sort of impact did these have these have on the organisation, and how do you think about them now?
9. How are such challenges spoken about in the broader startup industry, in your experience?
10. Are there any experiences or resources you've been able to use that have been helpful for responding to these challenges?
11. What does your professional network look like? Are there particular colleagues or connections that have been helpful?
12. Are you active in the startup community, as far as events? What does that look like for you?
13. What reflections can you offer around the experiences of non-typical organisations in the startup industry more broadly, given your experiences of entrepreneurship as a founder?

14. What are you currently focusing on? What is coming up for the organisation while I'm working with you that you think I might find interesting?

Staff Member

1. How do you describe your job and the organisation to someone who isn't familiar with your work?
2. Can you speak a little about working for the organisation since you started here? How long have you been with them?
3. Did you know much about the organisation before you joined them? Why did you apply for the role?
4. I'm particularly interested in understanding challenges for non-typical organisations in the startup industry. Can you speak a little about experiences you've had since you began working for this organisation that you feel are unique?
5. Are the sorts of experiences you've described significant to the organisation? How do you work through challenges?
6. How are the experiences you've mentioned spoken about? Is there a difference between how you discuss these within the organisation and outsiders?
7. [Organisation founder/s] mentioned [a particular event/change] for the organisation. How was that experience for you as a [staff member's role]?
8. From getting to know the startup industry, I've heard people talk about how important networks are for work and support. Has that been your experience? Are there events, programs or even people that you're connected to within your industry? Are there particular types of events or groups within the industry that feel like a better fit for the organisation and role?
9. Have you worked in startups before? Is there anything that makes a job in a startup different from another job? Are any of the experiences you've described familiar to you from working in other industries?
10. Knowing my interest in intersectional understandings of this industry, what sort of observations might you share with me, someone who hasn't worked in a startup environment before, about the startup industry (this can be as broad or as specific as you like)?

Sample Of Reflexive Interview Questions

CEO And COO Shared Interview

1. Since I started studying [Warm Hearts], you have reached the milestone of paying your employees. How does that feel, 12 months into paid employment? Have your feelings changed about the work, the organisation itself? What does it feel like to not only be paying yourselves, but also paying staff?
2. Central to your work and the way you tell the story of Warm Hearts are your recipients. I would love to hear you reflect on the intermediary role Warm Hearts play, where mostly your volunteers and staff never meet the people they help. You often bring things back to all the 'ones' you're helping which I have seen as being a great way of motivating and focusing both yourselves and your teams. Can you share your thoughts on this?
3. It seems like you focus on understanding that these recipients have found themselves in a position where they need help to get back on track, and you're working on making that possible at that particular point. How do you think this understanding has been informed by work with caseworkers and agencies?
4. How is the relationship between you and caseworkers working this year? I see these relationships as key for the obvious reason of connecting you with recipients, but I also see its potential for being leveraged as a means to draw in and sustain volunteer interest. Are there examples you can share about things you've learned in the last year about ways for Warm Hearts to help?
5. Do you ever find your assumptions about your recipients are challenged, have they had to shift?
6. You're working to a particular goal around scalability. Do you think about how your underlying values may or may not be included in this? Is it important that your approach to and understanding of the work is part of any future models? Are there any aspects you're working to avoid?
7. Are there any other barriers you feel as though you've come up against that make it more difficult to get Warm Hearts to where you want it to be?
8. I've spoken with both of you individually about your approach to running and growing Warm Hearts in terms of building a 'safety to fail' into your organisation. You've spoken

at various points throughout the year about what can come of challenges and of discomfort. Can you speak to me about something you'd describe as causing discomfort that has proven to be a valuable experience?

9. How would you like the work Warm Hearts does to inspire others? You speak about both actions to take and awareness raising often, can you offer an example?
10. In our last interview, you likened parts of your work together as calling on skills you find you use as parents. In that context it was about the way you tended to need to lean on each other at different points of the year for different reasons. Does that still ring true? Are there other ways you connect parenting with this work?
11. Is there anything you want to ask me?
12. How have you found the experience of having a researcher observe you this year? Do you feel I have had a good opportunity to get a sense of Warm Hearts as an organisation?

Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet

UTS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
Negotiation and resistance in the margins: an intersectional examination of entrepreneurship
ETH19-4041

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?
My name is Helen Taylor and I am a student at UTS. My supervisor is Dr Helena Liu – [redacted].

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?
This research is to find out about the experiences of a non-typical startup company and how challenges are negotiated by the company within the startup industry.

FUNDING
N/A

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?
You have been invited to participate in this study because you are a startup company with qualities that make you non-typical in the startup industry, according to data from the 2018 Startup Muster. You have indicated an interest in sharing your experiences from this position. Your contact details were obtained from [redacted], a mutual contact in the startup network.

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?
If you decide to participate, I will invite you to incorporate me as a participant observer within your company. I will sit within your team 2 – 3 days a week over an eight month period, watching the ways your company works on a daily basis. I will seek to be included in meetings and events as well as decision-making conversations at your discretion.

At the beginning of this period, I will also ask each member of your team to participate in a 1-hour semi-structured interview – some questions will be asked of everyone, but the conversation will enable each member to reflect upon their particular position and expertise in the company. I will also plan further conversations with each member to check in as my work with the company progresses – this will be organised to avoid significant interruption to work by fitting in with staff availability.

Notes I take over this period will be handwritten and typed up regularly to be recorded as field notes. The interviews will be audio recorded. I may also take some photographs for the sole purpose of enhancing my own notes and reflections over the period – these will not be included in any publications or presentations. Notes, recordings and photographs will all be stored securely on a UTS server as confidential and de-identified data.

This is a significant request for access and an extended commitment from your company. In order to minimise inconvenience to the company I can offer skills in note and minute taking in meetings, data entry, social media expertise, record keeping, front of house skills and more. I look forward to working with you to decide how best I can minimise the inconvenience of having a research as a regular part-time presence in your workplace.

ARE THERE ANY RISKS/INCONVENIENCE?
There may be some inconvenience. In addition to scheduling time for interviews, I am interested to understand more about day-to-day work in the company and will be observing this work on days I am with the organisation. I may also have questions for different members of the company after significant events or decisions which could involve both positive and negative reflection. All such discussions will be guided by members – we will only speak about topics in as much depth as is comfortable.

As required by UTS Human Research Ethics Committee, if I become aware of illegal activities during my time with your company, I will follow guidelines as set out by the Department of Family and Community

Services on mandatory reporting. In cases where reporting is not mandatory, I will seek your consent in the removal of this information from my data collection. In all cases, a protocol has been agreed upon by the university and my supervisory team in referring participants to support services.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?

Participation in this study is voluntary. It is completely up to you whether or not you decide to take part.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

If you decide not to participate, it will not affect your relationship with the researchers or the University of Technology Sydney. If you wish to withdraw from the study once it has started, you can do so at any time without having to give a reason, by contacting Helen Taylor –[redacted].

If you withdraw from the study, transcripts, audio recordings, photos and notes taken will be destroyed.

If you decide to leave the research project, we will not collect additional personal information from you, although personal information already collected will be retained to ensure that the results of the research project can be measured properly and to comply with law. You should be aware that data collected up to the time you withdraw will form part of the research project results. If you do not want them to do this, you must tell them before you join the research project.

CONFIDENTIALITY

By signing the consent form you consent to the research team collecting and using personal information about you for the research project. All this information will be treated confidentially. My field notes and all digitised work will be secured at UTS Business School. Your company will be de-identified which means any potentially identifying characteristics will be excluded and a code developed in their place. Only me and my supervisors will have access to this information. Your information will only be used for the purpose of this research project and it will only be disclosed with your permission, except as required by law.

We plan to discuss and publish the results as research, specifically a thesis as well as potential journal articles and book chapters. I may present findings at academic conferences. In any publication, information will be provided in such a way that you cannot be identified.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I or my supervisor can help you with, please feel free to contact one or both of us - Dr Helena Liu – [redacted] or Helen Taylor –[redacted].

You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

NOTE:

This study has been approved in line with the University of Technology Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee [UTS HREC] guidelines. If you have any concerns or complaints about any aspect of the conduct of this research, please contact the Ethics Secretariat on ph.: +61 2 9514 2478 or email: Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au], and quote the UTS HREC reference number. Any matter raised will be treated confidentially, investigated and you will be informed of the outcome.

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