

# **ARE YOU ONE OF US?**

**AN EXPLORATION OF DISCURSIVE IDENTITY FORMATION  
IN THE SALVATION ARMY**

**A thesis submitted to  
The University of Technology, Sydney,  
as partial fulfilment of  
the degree Doctor of Education**

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## **CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signed

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## Glossary - Organisationally Specific Terms

Applicant	An individual (lay Salvationist) who commences the application process to become an officer.
Articles of War	Soldier's covenant document signed upon being accepted as soldier of The Salvation Army.
Australia Eastern Territory	The international Salvation Army is divided into geographical Territories and Commands. In Australia there are two such Territories.
Cadet / Novice	These two terms appear interchangeably and represent someone who is accepted by the organisation for training to become a Salvation Army officer (normally residential two years full time).
Candidate	An individual (lay Salvationist) who has been accepted by the organisation in the period prior to actually commencing training to become a Salvation Army officer
Corps	Equivalent to a local parish (church)
Corps Officer (CO)	Equivalent of a local parish minister
Divisional Commander (DC)	An officer responsible for organisational operations within an assigned geographical area (a Division). A middle management position.
Division	A Territory is further divided into geographical divisions for which the Divisional Commander is responsible
Field (the)	Work place context, normally in a corps (parish)
Field Officer (interchangeable with Corps Officer)	Officer appointed to be responsible for a local corps (parish)
O&R	'Orders and Regulations' – official instructions regarding policy and practice (internationally)
Official minutes	Territorial official instructions regarding policy and practice (locally)
Soldier / Salvationist	Lay member of The Salvation Army normally associated with a local Corps (ie parish)
Territory	A geographical region, in this research it encompasses NSW, ACT and QLD.
Territorial Commander (TC)	Territorial Commander (CEO of the Territorial organisation – responsible to the General in London)
Training Officer	An officer appointed to the College generally responsible for the practical aspects of cadet training. They also function as formation officers and assessors.

## **Abstract**

Within any organisation individuals are presented with particular identity positions which they take up in the process of becoming organisational members. Often such identities are taken for granted, assumed to be naturally occurring and therefore not open to contestation or negotiation. This thesis focuses upon the formation of professional identity within a particular organisation – The Salvation Army. Through applying Foucauldian discourse analysis and narrative identity formation, I seek to deconstruct the object: a Salvation Army officer professional identity, and to illuminate the ways it is co-created through discourse. To achieve this I map the discursive terrain that produces ‘officer’ through disrupting the normalised, the natural, the invisible, the unspeakable, and the silent assumptions that govern officer identity thus giving insight into current practice.

The data generated in this study was produced through undertaking in-depth interviews with three cohorts: six cadets (novice officers of varying prior organisational experience) in their second (and final) year of training, four experienced officers (of greater than ten years organisational experience) and two past officers who had resigned from officership. Organisational documents (both contemporary and historical) were also exegeted in an effort to show how the organisational historical archive has its material effects upon the contemporary experience of participants and thus how discourse produces and works to maintain a particular kind of object named Salvation Army officer.

Analysis of the data revealed that the Salvation Army officer is an object produced by socio/historical forces sustained by the circulation of power/knowledge in contemporary organisational discourses. The discourse seeks its own stability through the very objects it creates – Salvation Army officers. Subjectivity is the result of technologies of power which circulate via discourse and through discursive practices. Through technologies of discipline, self and performance, officer subjectivities are co-created primarily by means of surveillance, assessment and confession.

This study has revealed that through the twin conceptions of divine call and the divinely authorised organisation, the officer life is marked by a narrative of costliness, sacrifice, loss, and radical availability, and an identity that embraces the discursively produced attributes of loyalty, obedience, commitment and conformity. Individual identity within the prescribed limits is formed in the crucible of resistance to the circulation of

power/knowledge.

Through applying a Foucauldian approach to discourse analysis I deconstruct and disrupt the 'invisible and pervasive necessity' that discursively defines the object Salvation Army officer. I show that there is no overarching 'realist' necessity for the object 'officer' to be any particular way, save for the historical particularity that acts to produce it in the contemporary world.