

IS PHILANTHROPY THE WAY FORWARD?

LESSONS FROM FLINT, MICHIGAN'S RECOVERY EFFORT

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores the question: what can the Flint case teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and additionally, why do particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail? To answer this question, primary data was collected in Flint, Michigan through conducting interviews and attending community events. Next, a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was conducted, and additionally, the concepts of Power/Knowledge Formation and Path Dependency were used as a framework through which to analyze the information gathered. Here, the results of this analysis are presented.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Flint Water Crisis is one of the United States' most talked about cases of environmental racism, which involved the poisoning of the city of Flint by lead, and which led to the death of 12 of its residents (Milman, 2018). The crisis began in 2014, and since this time, it has been a focus of study for many academics. Hard scientists have focused on the blood lead levels of the city's residents and specifically its children, and it is their work that made visible the toxicity of Flint's Water and revealed the significant impact it was having on the city's residents (Hanna-Attisha, LaChance, Sadler, & Schnepf, 2015). The work of social scientists came after the crisis was brought to light, and has centered around ideas of environmental justice, environmental racism, neoliberal decision making, and failed democracy (Pulido, 2016; Ranganathan, 2016).

This thesis can be situated within the latter category of social science work. It aims to, using Flint as a case, uncover the role urban residents think philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis. Additionally, it aims to address why particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail. Philanthropy was selected as the specific topic of study, as upon my arrival in Flint, I was surprised by the large role that philanthropic foundations are playing in the city's recovery effort. I felt that this specific piece of Flint's story deserved further exploration, and also, that it was worth sharing with the academic community.

The city of Flint was selected as a case study, as since the start of the water crisis, the story of the city has been a point of personal interest. This master's thesis presented the opportunity to visit the city and to see first-hand, the impact that the water crisis continues to have on the city's residents, as well as what the city's recovery effort actually looks like. Naturally, this opportunity had to be taken.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM / RESEARCH GOAL

It appears that no research has examined the role that philanthropy is playing in Flint's post-crisis recovery effort. This thesis then, aims to do just this. The goal here is to uncover what the Flint case can teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and why particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail.

1.2 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the research problem stated above, 1 general research question and 3 specific ones have been formulated:

- GRQ: What can the Flint case teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and additionally, why do particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail?
- SRQ1: What are the various discourses that exist regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post-crisis recovery effort?
- SRQ2: How does the history of a city shape the various extant discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play in its post-crisis recovery effort?
- SRQ3: How are the discourses regarding philanthropy shaped by present-day power relations?

1.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

As the theme of this thesis is the role of philanthropic funding, a literature review which examines the debates surrounding philanthropy is presented below. The literature regarding philanthropy centers around two debates: The first is one regarding whether philanthropy strengthens or weakens democracy. The second revolves around whether or not philanthropy is a fitting solution for society's major problems.

1.3A PHILANTHROPY AND DEMOCRACY

The debate regarding whether philanthropy strengthens or weakens democracy is a complex one, as there are far more than just two takes on the subject, yes and no. While some academics believe that philanthropy undermines, or weakens, democracy (Barkan, 2013), some feel that it has the potential to strengthen it (Frumkin, 1995). Other academics see both sides, and argue that certain types of philanthropy serve to strengthen democracy, while other forms undermine it (Horvath & Powell, 2016).

Barkan is one such academic who argues that all "philanthropy undermines democracy" (Barkan, 2013, p. 635). She argues that philanthropic foundations are a form of plutocratic power, as they do not acquire their power through vote or consensus, but rather, through their wealth. Barkan goes on to explain that these foundations undermine democracy in various ways, with the most obvious being that they, themselves, have the power to decide which nonprofit organizations to fund. She

explains that while they may select the projects they fund with good intention, that they get to define what the 'good' in good intention actually means. She also states that a power imbalance always exists between a grantor and a grantee, and that this imbalance can, problematically, present itself in the form of staffing prerequisites and contract stipulations being attached to gifted money (Barkan, 2013).

To deal with this power imbalance, Barkan suggests a number of possible solutions, which she feels will lead to a "new progressive era" in which philanthropic foundations will not hold as much power as they currently do (Barkan, 2013, p. 650). She makes very specific recommendations, most of which center around tax regulations. Specifically she states that these foundations should not be tax exempt, that the cap for charity tax deduction should be lowered, and that the tax on net investment income should be increased. Additionally, Barkan calls for the establishment of a maximum size for a foundation's endowment. If this regulation were to be implemented, this would mean that foundations with large amounts of money would be required to break apart into multiple smaller foundations, causing power to be dispersed (Barkan, 2013).

Horvath and Powell agree with Barkan to an extent, but they make a distinction between contributory and disruptive philanthropy. They argue that contributory philanthropy contributes to democracy by providing services that supplement those of the state, while disruptive philanthropy provides services that compete with those of the state, thereby undermining democracy (Horvath & Powell, 2016). These academics make two important points. The first is that in carrying out disruptive philanthropy, foundations work to influence or mold public opinion regarding social services. The second, is that struggling governments often enable the establishment of disruptive philanthropy as, as they will turn to philanthropic partners in an effort to provide services, and in doing this, these "...impoverished governments further undermine their own legitimacy" (Horvath & Powell, 2016, p. 91).

While Frumkin stands on a different side of the philanthropy/democracy debate to Barkan, the two academics are not actually in total opposition, as Frumkin does not argue that philanthropy today strengthens democracy, but rather that it has the potential to. Frumkin believes that philanthropic organizations, pre the 1960s, played an important role in democracy, acting as independent third parties, that were not beholden to anyone, meaning that they served to disperse power. These foundations, Frumkin makes clear, could operate independently, as they had no real obligation to any party. This is because foundations were not dependent on others to survive financially, and because the grants that they provided to nonprofits were short-term ones, meaning they had no long-term obligations to these organizations (Frumkin, 1995).

Frumkin, however, makes clear that much has changed with regards to foundations' operational practices since the Tax Reform Act was implemented in 1969, and that they no longer have the freedom that they used to. He does not explicitly state that these foundations no longer serve to disperse power, and thus, promote democracy, but he does explain that the Tax Reform Act led to their unification, homogenization and professionalization. Frumkin does not speak of these changes within the world of philanthropy positively, and it could, perhaps, be inferred that he believes this more unified and homogenous group does not disperse power in the way that it used to. Frumkin,

however, does not blame these organizations, but rather, writes that their freedom has been strangled by government action (Frumkin, 1995).

So, as I hope has been made clear, the debate regarding whether or not philanthropy undermines democracy is multifaceted. Some academics argue that philanthropy always undermines democracy (Barkan, 2013). Others, somewhat differently, argue that philanthropy, in fact, has the potential to strengthen democracy (Frumkin, 1995). Others still, make a distinction between different forms of philanthropy, and state that some forms of philanthropy strengthen democracy while other forms undermine it (Horvath & Powell, 2016).

1.3B PHILANTHROPY AS A SOLUTION

The second debate regarding philanthropy centers around whether or not philanthropy is an effective way of addressing the world's social problems. Peter Singer, a moral philosopher, takes a strong stance on the issue. He believes that if everyone in the world who is in a position to donate money did, that the world would be a drastically different, and improved place. In fact, not only does he see philanthropy as positive, but he argues that philanthropic giving should not be viewed as charity, but rather as a duty, or moral obligation.

To make his point, Singer uses the story of a someone taking a walk and coming across a child drowning in a pond. He makes the argument that the person should wade in and save the child, as getting one's clothes muddy is not bad when compared with a child's death. This is an easy argument to accept, and it aligns with his belief that, "...if it is in our power to prevent something bad from happening, without thereby sacrificing anything of comparable moral importance, we ought, morally to do it" (Singer, 1972, p. 231). But, Singer, controversially, goes on to use this story as an analogy. The child, he says, represents those in the world in need, and in his case, specifically those experiencing hunger, and the person walking by, he says, represents those people in the world who are in a position to provide aid to the less well off. Singer asks, if you would, of course, help the child, why would you not, of course, help those experiencing hunger? (Singer, 1972). This analogy, Gomberg labels the fallacy of philanthropy (Gomberg, 2002).

Not all academics agree with Singer. This is because they do not all see philanthropy to be the solution to the world's problems, as they feel that it does not address the root cause of social issues. Gomberg is one such academic who counters Singer's position. He makes the argument that philanthropy is, in fact, harmful, as it does not address the root cause of social problems, but instead, provides a short-term solution (Gomberg, 2002). As Gomberg is responding to Singer, he writes specifically about philanthropy which addresses the issues of poverty and hunger, as this is Singer's focus. Gomberg explains that he sees capitalism to be the root cause of these social problems, and so, states that, "Focusing our attention on immediate help... tends to obscure that the ordinary workings of capitalist markets create and exacerbate poverty" (Gomberg, 2002, p. 55). He goes on to say that, "So the fallacy of philanthropy [the analogy of saving the child to helping those in need] narrows the discourse about hunger. It lets capitalism off the hook" (Gomberg, 2002, p. 55).

Gomberg sees alleviating poverty and addressing its root cause as an either-or situation. This is because, he says, both tasks are so large, and addressing one means that money and time are taken away from addressing the other, a point to which Wichmann and Peterson disagree (Gomberg, 2002) (Wichmann & Petersen, 2013). So, Gomberg says, to address the root cause of poverty, we must move away from society's current capitalist system, and in doing so, move away from philanthropy, which operates inside of this system (Gomberg, 2002).

While Sawaya, another academic does not comment on the work of Singer. She would agree with Gomberg that today's problems of poverty are due to capitalism (Sawaya, 2008). She states, "Why is there a breach to fill if the invisible hand regulates market society so well? The evident human and environmental failures of capitalism are placed in bold relief by voluntary philanthropic action" (Sawaya, 2008, p. 202). This suggests that she, like Gomberg, sees a problem with both the capitalist system and philanthropy as a solution to society's problems.

Not everyone, however, disagrees with Singer. Wichmann and Peterson, in fact, defend him, and instead point to Gomberg's argument as problematic. They claim that Singer has no issue with attacking the root of the problem of poverty, but that he is not willing to do so at the expense of people suffering today. As stated previously, the authors feel that doing both is, in fact, possible (Wichmann & Petersen, 2013). In response to Gomberg, Wichmann and Peterson write that, "...exclusive reliance on a long-term solution, such as a political revolution, has its own moral problems in as much as it prioritizes the poor of tomorrow over the poor of today" (Wichmann & Petersen, 2013, p. 7). They also state their belief that if those who could, donated money to help those in need, that, "There would be plenty of funds left to reform or overthrow capitalism if so required and desired" (Wichmann & Petersen, 2013, p. 7). They suggest that overthrowing the system and buying into it can happen simultaneously.

The two debates regarding philanthropy, that of philanthropy and democracy, and philanthropy as a solution to the world's social problems, will, in the discussion section, be applied to the Flint case.

1.4 WHAT TO EXPECT

7 chapters follow this introduction. The first is the **Theoretical Framework**, where Foucauldian Discourse Theory, and the concepts of Power/Knowledge Formation, and Path Dependency are detailed. The **Methodology** Chapter follows. This chapter makes clear why a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was selected as the method of data analysis to be used in this thesis, and also details how this analysis was conducted. In this section, too, how data was collected and processed is also made clear. The **Context** chapter, in which both the history of Flint and my experiences in the city comes next. This is followed by a 3-part **Results** chapter, with each section addressing one of the specific research questions. The **Analysis** chapter follows this. In this chapter the concepts detailed in the Theoretical Framework are applied to the data collected in Flint. The **Discussion** section comes next. Here, as previously expressed, the current situation in Flint is discussed in relation to the two debates regarding philanthropy which are detailed in the literature review. Finally, the **Conclusion**

follows. In this section, the results from the thesis are briefly summarized and the way in which this thesis is intended to contribute to positive social change is presented.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this thesis is to explore the question, what can the Flint case teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and additionally, why do particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail? Answering this question requires one to examine the many discourses that exist in Flint regarding philanthropy, and additionally, for one to reflect upon the forces that have shaped these discourses. For this reason, Foucauldian Discourse Theory, as well as the concepts of Power/Knowledge Formation, and Path Dependency, have been selected to form the framework through which the data collected in Flint will be analyzed. Each of these theories, or concepts, are elaborated on below.

2.1 FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE THEORY

To answer the question, what can the Flint case teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and additionally, why do particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail, a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis will be conducted. This type of discourse analysis has been selected for use, as Foucault stresses the importance of examining both the role that power relations and historical context play in the formation and continuation of a discourse (Foucault, 1981). In conversations I had in Flint, the city's history was often raised by the residents I spoke with, and their knowledge of this history informed the way in which they spoke about the role that philanthropy should play in the city today. For this reason, a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, with its historical emphasis, seemed a fitting choice.

The ideas behind discourse analysis and specifically Foucauldian Discourse Analysis are detailed here in the Theoretical Framework, and the ways in which these ideas are applied to the Flint case can be found in the Methodology section. This organizational decision was made, because as Jorgensen and Phillips make clear, discourse analysis "...is not just a method for data analysis, but a theoretical and methodological whole – a complete package," and, "In discourse analysis, *theory* and *method* are intertwined" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 4).

2.1A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVISM

Before delving into the ideas behind discourse analysis, however, it should be made clear that by carrying out a discourse analysis, one is partaking in the intellectual movement of social constructionism, or social constructivism, with its "...cultural backdrop [of] postmodernism...,"

sometimes referred to as poststructuralism (Burr, 1995, p. 10). Social constructionists do not believe there to be a pre-established structure to the world, but rather, believe that everyone in the world constructs their own reality through the social interaction they have with those around them. They reject the idea that the world is made up of already existing, hidden structures, that through exploration can be discovered (Burr, 1995).

Discourse analysts and social constructionists are similar in a few ways. First, both understand cultural and historical context to influence the way in which we understand the world, and second, both stress the importance of language. Social constructionists believe that we construct our world through social processes, and specifically through language, and the exchange of language (Burr, 1995). Discourse analysts, too, believe that language is powerful and understand that much can be learned from its study (Foucault, 1981).

2.1B SITUATING FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN THE GREATER FIELD

Although it has already been stated that this thesis entails a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, and why, it still seems that a moment should be taken to situate this specific type of discourse analysis within the greater field. Foucauldian Discourse Analysis is a type of Critical Discourse Analysis, a field which grew in the late 1970s in response to linguistics and sociolinguistics, which, as their names suggest, take a more linguistic approach to the study of discourse. The development of Critical Discourse Analysis was part of a shift in academia, in which academics openly expressed their stance against social injustice (Tenorio, 2011). About this, Tenorio writes that one of the goals of Critical Discourse Analysis is to, "...help raise awareness about the unequal social conditions of minorities" (Tenorio, 2011, p. 206). This is done through examining the "...discourse dimensions of power abuse and the injustice and inequality that result from it" (Dijk, 1993, p. 252). On this subject, van Dijk writes that Critical Discourse Analysis is "...admittedly and ultimately political" (Dijk, 1993, p. 253). This means that it takes a stance against academic work which desires to be, or claims to be, apolitical (Dijk, 1993).

But, this goal of addressing social inequalities does present its difficulties for those conducting Critical Discourse Analysis. Tenorio, for example, brings attention to the fact that while one of the primary goals of Critical Discourse Analysis is to bring attention to the inequalities faced by some, that at the same time, this analysis is "...mostly consumed by CDA [Critical Discourse Analysis] scholars, not by the average woman or man in the street" (Tenorio, 2011). This has been a concern for me in writing this thesis. I am using the city of Flint as a case study, and writing about the difficulties that the city has faced, yet, I am doing this for the academic world.

Van Dijk makes clear his belief that the success of a critical discourse analysis should be determined by how much it has contributed to positive societal change (Dijk, 1993). It is my hope then, that in both sharing the story of Flint with the world of academia, and in drawing attention to the difficulty of writing about social problems while, at the same time, fulfilling academic requirements, that more attention will be drawn to the need to build a bridge between the academic world and everyday life, in order for positive social transformation to really take place.

2.1C FOUCAULT ON DISCOURSE

Much writing regarding Foucauldian Discourse Analysis stems from Foucault's, *The Order of Discourse*, written in 1981, in which the argument is made that, "...in every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (Foucault, 1981, p. 52). As this quote makes visible, Foucault's interest lies with the relationship between discourse and power, and so, his understanding of this relationship is detailed below.

About power, Foucault writes that, "...discourse is not simply that which translates struggles or systems of domination, but is the thing for which and by which there is struggle..." (Foucault, 1981, pp. 51-52). Discourses, then, are not innocent (Diaz-Bone, et al., 2008). He states that prohibition, the division between madness and reason, and the division between true and false are the three procedures of exclusion which control discourse from the exterior. Prohibition refers to the fact that not everyone is allowed to speak about every subject, and also, that the topics one can and cannot speak about, depend upon the context in which one is situated. Of course, the fact that some people can speak while others are silenced is due to a power imbalance (Foucault, 1981).

The opposition between madness and reason and between true and false are the second and third principles of exclusion presented by Foucault. He makes clear that if certain words spoken, or texts written, are felt to diverge too greatly from the already existing dominant discourse surrounding a subject, that they can be labeled as madness, and as a result, be excluded from a discourse. In a similar vein, if a piece of knowledge is labeled as false, it too can be excluded. Both of these procedures of exclusion involve power plays, as certain individuals, supported by institutions, are able to define what madness is, what reason is, and what is true and what is false (Foucault, 1981).

There are also, "...the procedures of limitation of discourses..." (Foucault M. , 1981, p. 71), or the "...principles of classification, of ordering, of distribution" (Foucault M. , 1981, p. 56), which control discourse from the interior (Foucault, 1981, p. 56). These are discipline, commentary, and the author. With regards to discipline, Foucault states that sometimes certain truths are excluded from a discipline because they are too progressive an idea. They, perhaps, contradict things already accepted by the discipline, or fall onto a different "theoretical horizon" (Foucault, 1981, p. 61) to already accepted knowledge. For this reason, they are not included within the boundary of a discipline, and are instead, "...push[ed] back...beyond its margins (Foucault, 1981, p. 60). This means that disciplines are made up of both truths and errors and that both truths and errors also exist outside of their boundaries. Disciplines themselves, then, have the power to allow or prohibit new knowledge from becoming a part of them, and thus, from being heard (Foucault M. , 1981).

With regards to commentary, Foucault writes that there exists a gradation of text within every society, with those texts such as religious and literary ones which are repeated again and again at the top, and with commentaries which discuss these primary narratives, situated somewhere below them. He explains that while commentaries, on the one hand, create the possibility for speaking and for the "...endless) construction of new discourses," that at the same time, they restrict the speaker, as they require them, to an extent, to repeat what has already been said (Foucault, 1981, p. 57). So,

the production of new knowledge is restricted, as old knowledge is repeated. Hook labels this phenomenon of repetition “discursive ‘re-circulation’” (Hook, 2001). The primary texts to an extent determine what new knowledge, or new narratives, can be produced.

The author is the third internal procedure of limitation presented by Foucault. By “the author,” Foucault is not referring to an individual who wrote a text or spoke certain words, but rather to, “...a principle of grouping of discourses, conceived as the unity and origin of their meanings, as the focus of their coherence” (Foucault, 1981, p. 58). This means that the author, according to Foucault, should be thought of as a collective of people and text, and that new discourses should be viewed as having been shaped or constrained by this collective group (Foucault M. , 1981).

As I hope has been made clear, Foucauldian Discourse Analysis stresses the role that power plays in the production and continuation of a discourse. The concepts regarding power presented by Foucault will be used as a framework through which to study the discourses produced in Flint. Foucault, too, emphasizes the role that historical context plays in shaping discourse. This is elaborated on in the methodology section.

2.2 POWER/KNOWLEDGE

As this thesis entails a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, and as this specific type of discourse analysis is concerned with the role that power plays in the production and continuation of a discourse, Foucault’s concept of Power/Knowledge, will also be used as a framework through which to examine the discourses that exist in Flint today.

Power/Knowledge is a term coined by Foucault which is used to refer to the idea that power and knowledge cannot be thought of as two separate, or distinct entities, but rather, that they should be thought of as “...two sides of the same coin: power/knowledge” (Heizmann & Olsson, 2015, p. 759). About this, Foucault writes that, “We should admit rather that power produces knowledge (and not simply by encouraging it because it serves power or by applying it because it is useful); that power and knowledge directly imply one another; that there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations” (Foucault M. , *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 1977, p. 27). This means that power and knowledge are “relational” (Heizmann & Olsson, 2015, p. 758), or “co-creat[ed]” (Assche, Beunen, Duineveld, & Gruezmacher, 2017, p. 308).

Under the conception of power/knowledge, then, power is not a thing that is held by an individual. It is not, “...a commodity (something held or possessed; something embodied in a person, institution, or structure; something to be used for organizational or individual purposes” (Townley, 1993, p. 520). Foucault’s understanding of power counters the conception of “power as a resource” (Heizmann & Olsson, 2015, p. 758). This means that power is more than a force which is exerted in the top-down direction. This is because it is not a thing that a person at the top possesses, but

rather, is something that is co-created through the interaction of multiple parties (Assche, Beunen, Duineveld, & Gruezmacher, 2017).

As multiple discourses reflect multiple forms of knowledge, it will be useful to apply the power/knowledge concept to the discourses produced in Flint regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis. About power, knowledge, and discourse, Foucault writes that, "What makes power hold good, what makes it accepted, is simply the fact that it doesn't only weigh on us as a force that says no, but that it traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms of knowledge, produces discourse" (Foucault M. , Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977, 1980, p. 119). Foucault makes clear that power is a productive force, as it leads to the production of knowledge, to the production of discourse. The application of this concept, power/knowledge, to the Flint case, then, will help to reveal the power relations that have shaped the discourses which exist there, regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post-crisis recovery effort.

2.3 PATH DEPENDENCY

As stated previously, the goal of this thesis is to uncover what the Flint case can teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, *but also* to uncover why particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail. In an attempt to dive into the second part of this question, the concept of path dependency will be applied to the discourses produced in Flint. This will be done in an attempt to understand why certain discourses dominate. Working to determine whether or not these discourses are a product of a series of path-dependent events, should help with this endeavor.

The term "path dependency" has been used loosely in academia, and the lack of clarity regarding what the term actually means has meant that discussions over whether a thing or outcome is or is not the result of a path dependent sequence of events, have been weak (Mahoney, 2000). Quite generally, the term "path dependence" has been used to refer to the idea that past events influence future ones (Gaspar, 2011). Gaspar, for example, writes that, "...path dependence refers to the idea that events occurring at an earlier point in time will affect events occurring at a later point in time..." (Gaspar, 2011, p. 93). Berman, too, quotes North who states that path dependency, "'means history matters'" (Berman, 1998, p. 380). Similarly, Sewell writes that path dependence refers to the fact that, "...what has happened at an earlier point in time will affect the possible outcomes of a sequence of events occurring at a later point in time'" (Mahoney, 2000, p. 510).

Mahoney, however, argues that the term path dependency refers to something more specific than what the authors mentioned above suggest (Milman, 2018). He defines path dependency as "...those historical sequences in which contingent events set into motion institutional patterns or event chains that have deterministic properties" (Mahoney, 2000, p. 507). He defines a contingent event as one which cannot simply be explained by the events which took place before it or by the

conditions which existed prior to its occurrence. This means that the initial event which sparked the sequence that follows it, must have been somewhat of an anomaly (Mahoney, 2000). Gaspar, though mentioned above as one of the many academic who simplifies the subject of path dependency, does in his paper go on to, like Mahoney, say that for a final outcome to be considered path dependent, that the sequence of events which led to this outcome, must start with a contingent one (Gaspar, 2011).

Mahoney claims that there are two types of path dependent sequences, namely self-reinforcing and reactive ones. Self-reinforcing sequences are ones in which a pattern is established and in which new events in the sequence work to reproduce this pattern. In self-reinforcing sequences, "...the contingent period corresponds with the initial adoption of a particular institutional arrangement..." (Mahoney, 2000, p. 535). With reactive sequences, however, the contingent event is a "key breakpoint in history" and the pattern which follows it, is made up of a series of both reactions and counter reactions. In both types of sequence, the earlier events in the sequence, so those which took place further back in history, have a greater impact on the final outcome of the sequence than the later events (Mahoney, 2000).

Not all academics, however, make a distinction between different forms of path-dependency. Kay, for example, writes that "A process is path dependent if initial moves in one direction elicit further moves in that same direction..." (Kay, 2005, p. 553). Mahoney, however, would label what Kay has described, more specifically, as self-reinforcing path-dependency, and would argue that this definition does not encompass all that path dependency is.

Some academics argue that the concept of path dependency must be expanded. Bergek and Onufrey, for example, argue that thinking in terms of a single path is not enough, as they believe that not all outcomes are the result of a single path dependent sequence. Rather, these academics argue that the future is determined by multiple paths and their interaction (Bergek & Onufrey, 2013). Gaspar also argues for the expansion of the concept. He states that events today cannot be thought of simply as the outcome of path dependency, and that they should be thought of, in addition to this, as the outcome of what he terms path creation. He uses this term to refer to "...hopes, fear, or expectation[s]..." for the future, which also (like the events in a path dependent sequence) serve as "pull energies" that influence future outcomes (Gaspar, 2011, p. 95).

While some academics argue that the concept of path dependency should be expanded, others criticize the concept all together. Although Kay ultimately argues that he finds the concept of path dependency useful, he does, in his paper, present what he feels to be some of the primary criticisms of the concept. The first is that "...the concept [of] path dependency lacks explanatory power..." (Kay, 2005, p. 561). What is meant by this is that the concept can only be used to explain an outcome and the series of events which led to it, in retrospect. Kay also details another criticism of path dependency, which is that the concept is better at explaining continuity than it is change. In explaining this criticism, Kay writes that, "At the heart of any account of path dependency is stability: observations of change challenge the notion" (Kay, 2005, p. 565). Mahoney, however, would disagree with this, as he would argue that reactive, path dependent sequences can be used to explain change, as these sequences are made up of both reactions which perpetuate an established

pattern, but also counter reactions which disrupt, or change the direction of the sequence (Mahoney, 2000).

In this thesis, Mahoney's conception of path dependency will be used. This is because his definition of the concept seems to be the most complete. Additionally, it is my belief that his understanding of contingent events, as well as self-reinforcing and reactive sequences, will be useful ideas to reference in analyzing the data collected in Flint.

2.4 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK SUMMARIZED

In sum, Foucauldian Discourse Theory, and the concepts of Power/Knowledge Formation and Path Dependency will be used as tools for exploring the discourses which exist in Flint regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post-crisis recovery effort. The application of these concepts should help to make clear how both the city's history and power relations have shaped the discourses which prevail there.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 METHODOLOGY

Although Foucault provides a thorough explanation of the procedures by which he believes discourse to be controlled, he does not provide the reader with a clear method, or set of steps to follow, in order to carry out a discourse analysis. What Foucault does say, however, is that 2 sets of analyses, a critical and a genealogical one should take place, with the critical portion of the analysis addressing the principles of exclusion and control, and with the genealogical analysis addressing the historical context of a discourse (Foucault, 1981). Because Foucault's methodology is vague, those authors that do work to provide a more clear framework to be used in the analysis of discourse are careful not to provide too regimented a system of steps to follow. This is so that they "...avoid the trap of formalizing an approach that clearly eschews formalization..." (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 91). On this subject, Nicholls goes as far as to make the claim that Foucault, "...vehemently resisted any attempt to constrain the breadth and scope of his thinking with convenient labels or ready references to pre-existing norms and methodological conventions..." (Nicholls, 2008, p. 1). It is for these reasons that academics work to provide a "discursive analytic," or "methodological plan" to guide researchers, as opposed to a strict set of rules (Graham, 2013, p. 2).

There is, then, no single right way of carrying out a Foucauldian inspired discourse analysis (Diaz-Bone, et al., 2008). Diaz-Bone et. al. state that Foucault's work provides four broad steps to be followed in the analysis of discourse. These are, (1) to determine what area of knowledge is being discursively produced, (2) to determine how and for what purpose specific terminology is being used, (3) to examine who is allowing for the existence of the discourse, and finally, (4) to identify what goals are being pursued through the discourse (Diaz-Bone, et al., 2008). Hook, slightly differently, does not present steps to be taken in a discourse analysis, but rather, presents criteria that a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis must meet. He states that discourse analysis must, (1) consider the historical context of a discourse, (2) must stress that the production of discourse is a form of the production of knowledge, and finally, (3) must mention materiality (Hook, 2001). In this thesis, a specific set of steps will not be followed in order to complete the Foucauldian discourse analysis, but attention will be paid to both the influence of historical context and power on the production and continuation of discourse, as these seem to be the important themes that are repeatedly raised by discourse analysts.

Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine provide sound guidance for selecting specific statements of focus for one's discourse analysis. They write that the selected statements should reflect a variety of positions regarding your topic of study and that they should also be "historically variable" (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008, p. 100). This, they say, will enable the researcher to determine, not only the variety of opinions that exist regarding their subject today, but also how the various ways of speaking about the subject of study have shifted with time (Arribas-Ayllon & Walkerdine, 2008).

The selection of statements is a crucial step in one's analysis, as statements "...make objects, subject positions, concepts and strategies visible, and consequently they become amenable to analysis" (Nicholls, 2008, p. 3). In following the advice of Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine, in this research, the quotes selected as the statements of focus for the discourse analysis, do represent a diverse array of opinions. Counter to their recommendation, however, the statements are not historically variable. Attention, however, has been paid by the researcher to how the city of Flint's history has influenced the discourses that are present there.

3.2 METHODS

I collected data in Flint from the 2nd to the 25th of November. To gather the information I needed, I conducted interviews and attended community events. Each of the events served a different purpose. At some, the rebuilding effort taking place in the city was explicitly discussed, and for this reason, attending these events was beneficial. Other events, however, were useful in that they introduced me to both the culture of Flint and the people who live there, and so, they helped me to better understand the city in which I was situated and the people that I was surrounded by. Speaking with a diverse array of people and attending a plethora of events helped me to meet my goal of visiting as many neighborhoods as possible, and to immerse myself in the culture of the city to the best of my ability.

3.2A INTERVIEWS

I conducted 9 semi-structured interviews with 12 people (3 of the interviews were conducted with 2 interviewees). I asked each interviewee similar questions, but as the range of people that I spoke with was so diverse, it was necessary that I construct some new questions to be asked at each interview. Additionally the way in which I formatted the questions had to change for each person that I spoke with, as I wanted to make each interviewee feel comfortable sharing their thoughts openly with me, and did not want them to feel pressured or attacked by the questions I asked or the way in which I asked them.

I found that often I would end up having a more natural conversation with the person or people that I was speaking with, and that towards the end of our meeting I would review my list of questions to ensure that they had all been answered. I feel that this method worked well, as it enabled people to share with me what they felt to be most important, while at the same time allowed me to get all of my questions answered. About semi-structured interviews, Leech writes that they, "...allow respondents the chance to be experts and to inform the research" (Leech, 2002). In my interviews I found this to be the case.

I conducted interviews with 1 city planner, 1 new business owner, 6 non-profit directors, 2 real estate agents (1 of which was also an artist and activist), 1 resident of the Civic Park neighborhood, and 1 resident of the Central Park neighborhood (who was also a student at the University of Michigan). My interviewees were diverse, as my topic shifted with time, and so, the types of people that I felt I should speak with also shifted. The organizations at which I conducted interviews are listed and briefly described below. The names of the individuals I spoke with at each organization have not been shared in an effort to protect their privacy.

	Organization	Description
1.	City of Flint, City Planning Department	N/A
2.	Tenacity Brewing	A relatively new brewery in Flint which is located near to the downtown area.
3.	Neighborhood Engagement Hub	A nonprofit organization which provides support services to neighborhood groups.
4.	Coldwell Banker (2)	A real estate agency.
5.	M.A.D.E. Institute (2)	A nonprofit that provides transitional services for returning citizens and at-risk youth.
6.	Urban Renaissance Center	A nonprofit associated with the Joy Tabernacle Church, which engages in both social and physical environmental betterment projects.
7.	Court Street Village Nonprofit	A nonprofit focused on neighborhood revitalization.
8.	Flint Farming Project	A nonprofit associated with the Asbury Church, which works to promote urban farming as a method of neighborhood improvement and which strives to increase food security.
9.	N/A (Central Park resident/student)	N/A
10.	N/A (Civic Park resident)	N/A

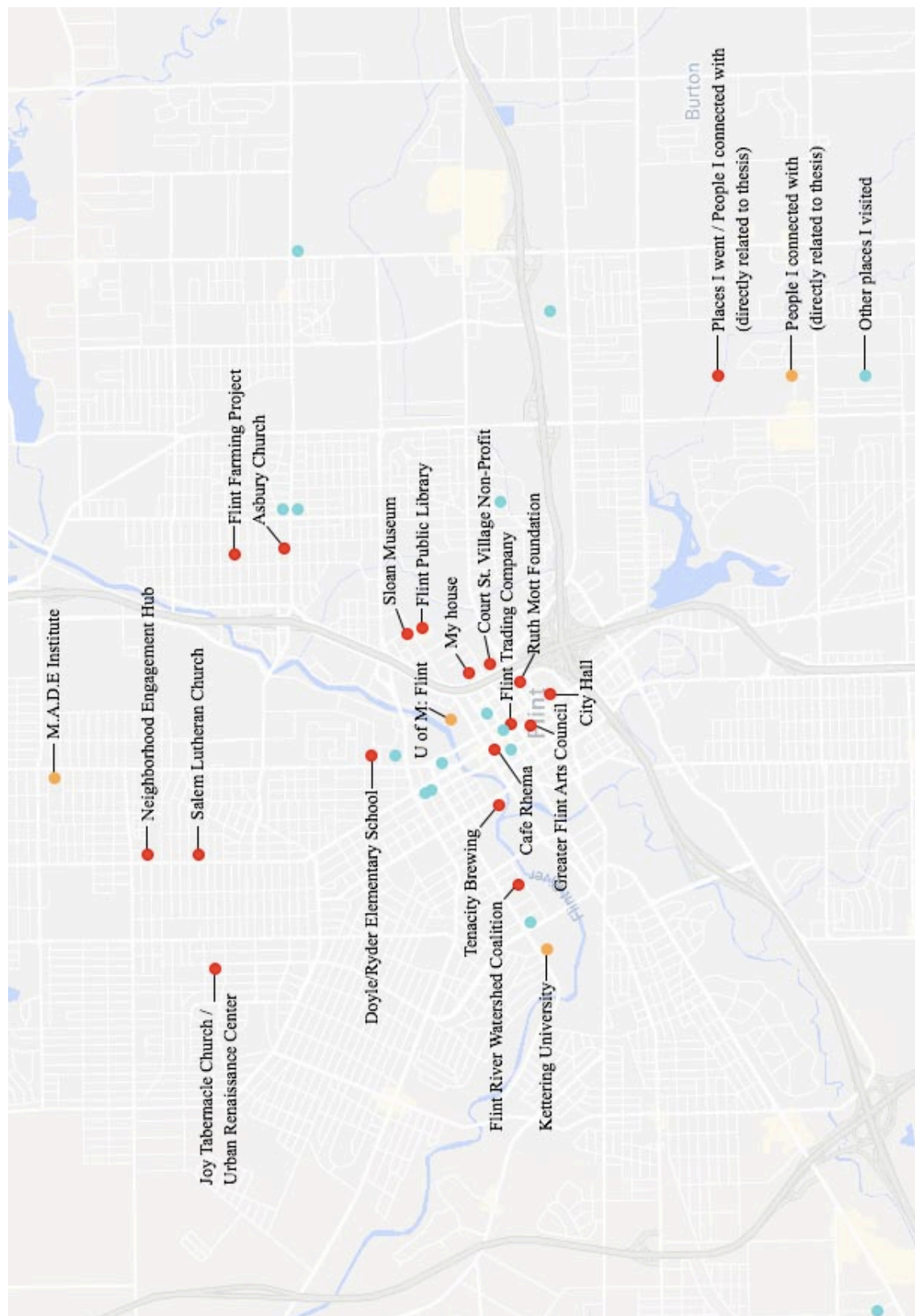
3.2B COMMUNITY EVENTS

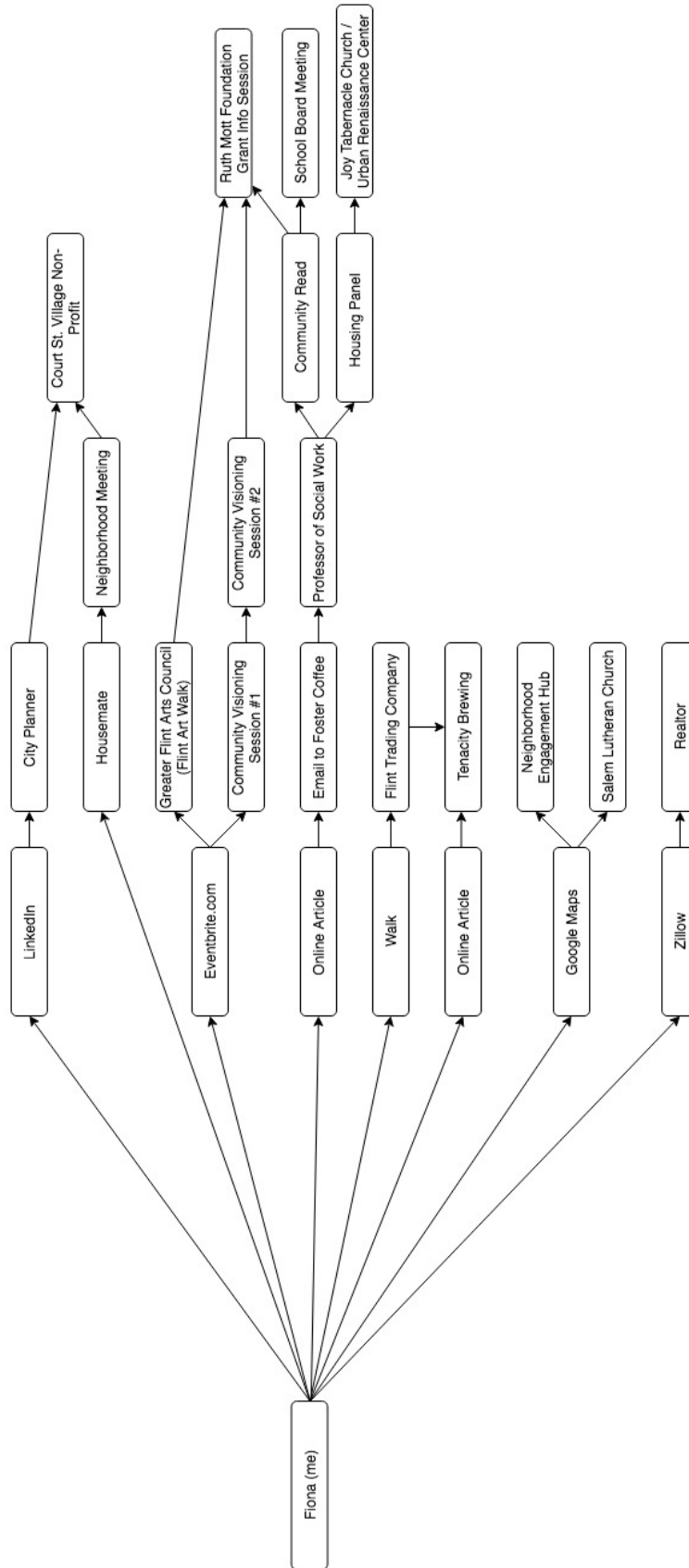
While in Flint, I attended 12 public events. At these events I tried to participate as a community member. In small group work, however, I did divulge that I was doing research for my master's thesis, though I never went into much detail. This was because I did not feel comfortable lying or withholding information from these group members. The events that I attended are listed and briefly described below.

	Event	Description
1.	Community Visioning Session (2)	A community workshop focused on truth, racial healing, and transformation.
2.	Central Park Neighborhood Meeting	A monthly neighborhood meeting in the Central Park Neighborhood.
3.	Community Read	A community workshop in which the first 2 chapters of Andrew Highsmith's book, <i>Demolition Means Progress: Flint, Michigan and the Fate of an American Metropolis</i> , were discussed.
4.	Panel for Journalists Scouting Stories	A panel with 4 speakers. (1) a pastor and director of a nonprofit in Flint (2) a professor of social work, (3) a historian, and (4) an affordable housing expert.
5.	Ruth Mott Foundation Grant Info Session	A Grant Info Session for Nonprofits interested in applying for funding from the Ruth Mott Foundation.
6.	Public Breakfast	A breakfast hosted by the Flint River Watershed Coalition.
7.	Church Service	A church service held at the Salem Lutheran Church in North Flint.
8.	Flint Art Walk	A monthly public art event.
9.	School Board Meeting	The Flint Public Schools, school board meeting.
10.	Hockey Game	A Flint Firebirds hockey game.

11.	Gospel Concert	N/A
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The map which follows, shows where the events I attended and interviews I conducted took place within the city. Next, the diagram makes clear how I learned about the individuals, organizations, and events, and indicates how one person or event often led me to another.





3.2C DATA PROCESSING

I audio recorded 8 of the 9 interviews that I conducted and transcribed each of these interviews. I made the decision to transcribe the interviews, as I felt that a transcription would enable me to easily locate information during the analysis phase of my research. At the events I attended, I took notes in my journal. Additionally, any casual conversations that I had in my day-to-day life that I felt to be relevant to my research topic, I also wrote down.

The coding of my data was a somewhat informal process. I did not use a computer program, but rather, created lists of important themes that ran through the interviews I conducted. I then compiled a list of quotes pertinent to each theme. This made it easy for me to locate quotes as I carried out my discourse analysis.

4. CONTEXT

In this chapter, the history of Flint is presented. Additionally, my personal experiences from the time I spent in Flint are detailed.

4.1 GENERAL MOTORS AND CHARLES MOTT IN FLINT

Flint is an old industrial city and the birthplace of General Motors, a company which has had an undeniable impact on the city's physical and social landscape. The company was founded in 1908 by Billy Durant, and it soon became one of the world's most successful automobile producers, causing large numbers of people living in the South to migrate North for work in its factories (Highsmith, 2015). When one thinks of General Motors in Flint, it is important to think of it, not as a company which simply operated within the city's boundary, but rather, as a company which shaped the city, making it what it was in the 1900s, but also what it is today.

General Motors played a large role in shaping the physical and social environment of Flint, specifically by involving itself in the city's housing market and public school system. In 1919 the company established the Modern Housing Corporation, a construction and real estate group, which by 1933 had constructed three neighborhoods, namely Civic Park, Chevrolet Park, and Mott Park, in the Northwestern part of Flint. General Motors mandated that these neighborhoods house whites only, and in doing so, contributed greatly to establishing and maintaining residential segregation within the city (Highsmith, 2015).

One cannot really separate the workings of General Motors from that of Charles Mott, the company's largest stockholder, who played a major role in establishing and maintaining segregation in the city's public school system. Mott was involved not only in the development of the education system itself, but also in the provisioning of funds needed to realize the system he desired. In 1935, Mott brought the idea of community education to Flint. Under this education model, schools would serve as community centers where not only the city's youth would attend class, but where adults, too, could take classes, where groups could gather, and where individuals could receive health services (Highsmith, 2015). This education system is one which, today, is spoken of often, and highly, by the city's residents (Personal Communication).

This school system, however, was not perfect, as it was designed to promote and maintain segregation within the city, and to prepare white students for college, while providing black students with a more vocational education that would prepare them to work at General Motors. This educational segregation was established using a variety of techniques which ranged from the altering of school attendance boundaries, to the construction of new schools in fully segregated neighborhoods, the allowance of some school transfers and not others, and the establishment of

temporary classrooms, which enabled the separation of students in those schools that were racially mixed. Mott's support for this racist education system was made crystal clear when in 1975, the Federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare declared that Flint schools must desegregate. Upon this declaration, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation pulled its funding from the public school system, and instead turned its investment to the development of Flint's downtown (Highsmith, 2015). It is for the many reasons mentioned above then, that again, General Motors should not be thought of as one of many companies that operated within Flint, but as a very large company that had the ability to, and did, shape the city's physical and social landscape. General Motors should be understood as a company whose history continues to impact the city today.

4.2 POLLUTION IN FLINT

The city of Flint was also polluted by General Motors, as the company leached lead and other toxins into the city's air, water, and ground (Galea & Vaughan, 2016). This pollution, too, was not evenly distributed throughout the city, but rather, those poorer neighborhoods which housed a primarily African American population, were disproportionately affected (Highsmith, 2015). The term, environmental racism, then, can be used to refer to the practices of General Motors in Flint. In 1999, Bullard, an academic, wrote that environmental racism is, "... any environmental policy, practice or directive that differentially affects or disadvantages (whether intended or unintended) individuals, groups or communities based on race or color" (Bullard, 1999; p.5). This describes precisely the actions of General Motors in Flint.

4.3 GENERAL MOTORS MOVES TO THE SUBURBS

General Motors' impact on the city continued into the 1940s and 50s, when the company began its move to the suburbs. This move was motivated by many things. First, by moving to the suburbs, the company was able to escape paying city taxes, but also, the interior of Flint was filling up, and the suburbs did offer cheap and available land. The company's move was also motivated by an agenda of metropolitan capitalism. While General Motors was moving away from the city, it was the company's hope that the city would eventually expand to include it again. General Motors, along with the Charles Mott Foundation pushed for the establishment of a strong regional government, as they felt that they could more easily influence municipal politics than they could an array of smaller local authorities. The company's move to the suburbs was also supported by the federal government, which during the war sought to establish physical distance between populated neighborhoods and military defense contractors, like General Motors. Finally, the move was supported by the city government, which constructed the infrastructure that the company needed, but that was, at this time, not yet present in the suburbs surrounding Flint (Highsmith, 2015).

4.4 DEINDUSTRIALIZATION

General Motors also caused the city's deindustrialization, which began in the 1980s, when the company made the decision to move much of its manufacturing abroad to places where labor was cheaper, leaving 70,000 people in Flint unemployed. This move led to increased poverty rates, increased crime rates, and the exodus from the city by those who could afford it, which was generally, though not exclusively, the city's white population (Pulido, 2016). Between 1960 and today, the population in Flint has dropped by almost half, with today's population being approximately 100,000 people (Butler, Scammell, & Benson, 2016). As those who could, left, so did their tax money, which made the maintenance of the city's infrastructure, including the replacing of its lead pipes, near impossible. This reality was highlighted by the Imagine Flint Master Plan, published by the city in 2013, a year before the water crisis began. The document reads, "Water infrastructure has become an especially critical issue due to a 20% decline in water customers between 1999 and 2011, leading to a major loss in the city's ability to adequately maintain its aging water infrastructure" (Houseal Lavigne Associates, 2013, p. 24).

4.5 FLINT DEMOGRAPHICS AT THE TIME OF THE WATER CRISIS

Before delving into what the Flint Water Crisis was, or is, let us first take a look at the demographic makeup of the city in 2014 when the crisis began, as this will provide an understanding of who was affected. In this year, Flint was home to 99,002 people, 51.5% of which were African American, 38.9% of which were white, and the rest of which were other people of color. At this time, the median household income in Flint was \$26,179 yearly, with 41.6% of the total population living under the poverty line, and 60% of people under the age of 18 living in poverty (Department of Technology, 2016). These statistics make it clear that at the time of the switch, Flint was home to primarily people of color, many of which were poor, a demographic makeup that differed greatly to that of the state. In Michigan in 2014, whites made up 75.7% of the population, African Americans, 13.8%, and other people of color, the rest. Only 16.2% of this population was living under the poverty line, and only 22.6% of people under the age of 18 were living in poverty (Department of Technology, 2016).

4.6 THE FLINT WATER CRISIS

On November 29th, 2011, in response to the city of Flint's poor financial status, the state of Michigan appointed an Emergency Manager to oversee the city's finances (Butler, Scammell, &

Benson, 2016). This action was made possible by the Michigan Public Act 436 (2012) (Rutt & Bluwstein, 2017), an act which enables the state to appoint emergency managers, and allows these managers to, among other things, modify or terminate existing city contracts (Legislative Council - State of Michigan, 2012). In the case of Flint, governor Rick Snyder appointed Darnell Earley to fill this position (Pulido, 2016). In this role, Earley decided not to renew Flint's contract with the Detroit Sewage and Water Department, the city's current water provider, and instead, to have the city construct its own pipeline (Hanna-Attisha, LaChance, Sadler, & Schnepf, 2015). This was a financial decision intended to save the city 18 million dollars over an 8-year period (Pulido, 2016). Like the Detroit Sewage and Water Department, the new pipeline would carry water from Lake Huron, but, during the 2-year construction period, the city would temporarily source its water from the Flint River (Hanna-Attisha, LaChance, Sadler, & Schnepf, 2015). It is this temporary switch in water source that would ultimately have serious health implications for the city's residents. This switch to the Flint River was made on April 10th, 2014 (Butler, Scammell, & Benson, 2016).

In 2011, as the switch was being considered, the Flint River water was tested for quality and it was concluded that in order for it to be safe for drinking, it needed to be treated for its corrosivity, meaning that the water needed to be treated so that as it passed through the city's pipes, they would not deteriorate (Yan, 2017). This treatment, however, would cost the city money, approximately \$100 daily, and so the study was ignored (Gostin, 2016). This means that as the water traveled through the city's pipes and into people's homes, lead leached into the water, ultimately making its way into the residences' bloodstreams (Hanna-Attisha, LaChance, Sadler, & Schnepf, 2015). Not long after the switch, residents complained of skin rashes and hair loss (Rutt & Bluwstein, 2017). Additionally, they brought attention to the water's unusual color, odor and taste. In response to these concerns, however, the state falsely reassured residents that the water was safe to drink. The reality, though, was that this water was extremely toxic, and causing high blood lead levels amongst the city's residents, and specifically amongst children (Hanna-Attisha, LaChance, Sadler, & Schnepf, 2015).

Emails released in 2016, during the investigation of the water crisis, make it clear that Flint residents were poisoned knowingly, and these emails, in combination with information regarding the demographic composition of the city, suggest that the Flint Water Crisis was a case of environmental racism. An internal email of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), a government agency, in referring to tests which revealed the water's high lead content, for example, stated, "... I'm not sure Flint is the community we want to go out on a limb for" (Arter, 2016). It is now also known that the EPA failed to comply with Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA), as it took the organization 9 months to intervene after becoming aware of the dangerous lead concentrations in Flint's water (Butler, Scammell, & Benson, 2016). Additionally, it is now known that the Lead and Copper Rule (LCR), which details lead testing procedures that must be followed, was intentionally ignored (Butler, Scammell, & Benson, 2016).

4.7 FLINT'S WATER TODAY

With regards to the current state of the water crisis, it should be known that it is still debated whether or not the city's water is safe to drink. The EPA "...recommend[s] that residents drink filtered water until further notice" (City of Flint, 2016), but because of this organization's deceitfulness in the past, many residents are not trusting of this information.

My time in Flint made it clear to me that the distrust I had been reading about in articles is very much present in the city and even amongst people who have tested their water and obtained clean results. One woman that I spoke with at a community event, shared with me that her water had never contained lead, but that still, she will drink only bottled water, as it makes her feel the most comfortable. Additionally, I interviewed the director of a nonprofit at the organization's headquarters. The building is somewhat like a community center and is open to the public, and in the lobby stands a drinking fountain which dispenses filtered water. Above the water fountain, the nonprofit has pasted a sign which reads, "WATER FOUNTAIN *AND MORE*: Water is filtered and cold – contaminants and lead removed," but still, the director shared with me that while some people drink the water, she does not.

A friend that I made in Flint who had recently moved to the city, and who does drink filtered tap water, shared with me that since moving to the city he has begun to shower less. This is because using the water makes him a bit uneasy, and so he tries to minimize his contact with it. In Flint, while unlike this friend, I did not drink filtered tap water, but rather stuck to bottled water, I did have a similar approach to showering. I established a showering schedule in which I took less frequent showers and for shorter amounts of time than I typically do. This is because, like my friend, using the water made me feel anxious.

But not everyone, however, is distrusting of the water quality. While in Flint, I lived with 5 housemates in a single family home on a street which had had its pipes replaced in 2017. Prior to this, the house's water had been tested for lead and the test revealed that the water coming out of the pipes did, in fact, contain some traces of the element. Post the pipe replacement, however, our water had not been tested for its lead content, but most of my housemates trusted that the replacement meant our water would now be safe to drink. Some of my housemates even drank the water without filtering it first.

Wherever one goes in Flint, one is reminded of the water crisis. At a gospel concert I attended almost every performer mentioned the city's water and the impact of the water crisis on their community. At the Flint School Board Meeting I attended, which was held in a primary school gym, a sign posted next to the water fountain told people not to drink from the fountain until further notice. Finally, at a church service that I attended in North Flint, a wreath which read, "Flint: Death by Water" stood on the altar (see Figure 9). Additionally, this church provided cases of water, to be taken home by those members who needed it.

Regardless of the truth about the safety of Flint's water, the state has stopped supplying free bottled water to the people of Flint (Chavez, 2018). There are, however, a few stations throughout the city at which one can obtain both free bottles of water and water filters, supplied by private donors (City of Flint, 2016). Nestle, too, has agreed to supply the city with 1.8 million bottles of water within the first 4 months of 2019 (Fonger, 2018).

4.8 THE CURRENT POLITICAL SITUATION IN FLINT

15 people have been criminally charged for the role that they played in the Flint Water Crisis (Milman, 2018), and six former and current state and city officials have been charged with Manslaughter (Fleming, 2018). Former Governor, Rick Snyder, however is not one of these people. Rather, Nick Lyon, the director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, is the highest ranking official to be charged (Milman, 2018). No one, however, has as of yet, been convicted (White, January).

In Flint, the anger directed towards individual decision makers is strong. This was made clear to me when I attended a Community Read, where Dayne Walling, the former mayor of Flint was in attendance. At the opening of the meeting, one community member made clear that she felt the meeting was not a safe space for open and authentic discussion. When she first said this I was confused as to why, but upon speaking with her after the meeting's close, she explained that Dayne Walling had been in the room, and she expressed her belief that he needed to be jailed. Another woman at the end of the meeting also expressed her irritation at Walling's presence (Personal Correspondence - community read).

4.9 RECOVERY EFFORT AND THE RUTH MOTT FOUNDATION

The city of Flint is now in a phase of recovery, both from the Flint Water Crisis and the city's deindustrialization, and philanthropic foundations are playing a large role in this recovery effort. The Ruth Mott Foundation is a philanthropic foundation founded by Ruth Mott, the wife of Charles Mott, who was General Motors' largest stockholder (Ruth Mott Foundation, 2018). The foundation operates out of Flint and has been a source of funding for many nonprofits working to better the social and physical landscape of the city. The foundation's mission is to "...advocate, stimulate, and support community vitality, " and it's stated vision is to establish "...communities of hope and pride, whose neighborhood environments and urban core are safe, attractive and healthy, enriched by cultural diversity, and an engaged citizenry" (Ruth Mott Foundation, 2018).

In 2016 the Ruth Mott Foundation made the decision to, for a 5 year period, direct its funding exclusively to nonprofit organizations which serve North Flint. About this decision, the foundation

claims that North Flint is, “...the area in [Flint] where [the foundation] believes [its] efforts can make the biggest difference” (Ruth Mott Foundation, 2019). The foundation’s decision, however, has proven to be a highly controversial one amongst both city residents and nonprofits.

4.10 THE PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL STATE OF THE CITY TODAY

4.10A THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE

It is difficult to describe what the city of Flint looks like to someone who has never visited, as the landscape that exists in the city is almost unimaginable. The primary characteristic of the city’s physical landscape is the empty lots which exist in every neighborhood of the city (see Figure 1). I observed approximately 2-3 empty lots per block, in Central Park, the neighborhood in which I resided during my time in Flint, but during excursions I made to the East Side of Flint, I found that this number increased, and in some parts of North Flint, I came across areas in which only one home was left per block. Due to the demolition that has taken place in Flint, the city is sprawled. Additionally, as the empty lots have been planted with grass, the city is now unusually green.

Not all of the empty homes in the city, however, have been demolished, and so, many homes that are still standing are empty and deteriorating (see Figure 2). Some of these properties have been boarded up by organizations in the city that are working to eliminate blight and keep neighborhoods safe, but others have been left open and exposed to the elements. As one passes by them, one can see straight through the spaces where doors and windows once stood to rooms where, for example, the ceiling might be falling through.

Another unique characteristic of Flint’s landscapes is that many homeowners have purchased the lots adjacent to their properties, thereby expanding their property size (see Figure 6). This has been made possible by the Genesee County Land Bank’s Side Lot Program, which enables homeowners to purchase these adjacent lots for only \$80 dollars plus the taxes from the year in which the property was foreclosed (Genesee County Land Bank, 2019).

4.10B SAFETY

Because the city is so depopulated, however, and because this depopulation has been coupled with demolition, the city is now extremely quiet - there is little noise in the city, but also little movement. One could, for example, at times, walk for a 15 minute period and only pass a single person on the street. This quietness is something that took me a while to get used to, and something that initially, made me feel a bit uneasy. The longer I stayed in the city, however, the more normal the silence became and the less uneasy I felt.

Crime rates, however, are quite high in Flint, and in 2017, the city was ranked the 6th most violent city in the United States with a population of over 50,000 people (Adams, 2018). While I, myself, never felt unsafe in the city, one night as I walked home late at night, I was approached by a homeless man who opened his conversation with me by saying, “I know this is Flint and all, but...” an experience which made me realize the level of concern that exists regarding crime in the city. On the day before I left the city, too, a young man was murdered on the main road running through the city’s downtown. I say all this, however, not in an attempt to make Flint sound like a terrifying place, as is often done by the media, but in an attempt to paint a complete and honest picture of the kind of place that Flint is.

4.10C BEAUTY

The city, despite the difficulties it has faced, is also somehow an incredibly beautiful place, and when one walks around it, one can see that it used to be a place of wealth, as many of the houses are quite grand.

The city’s downtown has received a lot of investment in recent years, and so is well maintained (see Figure 4), though the investment in this area of the city is somewhat controversial. The main street is tiled with brick, metal archways line the main road, and the old art-nouveau style buildings are well preserved. The capitol theater recently received a 37 million dollar renovation, and reopened in 2017 after being closed for about a 20 year period (see Figure 3) (DeVito, 2017). The downtown is also home to trendy businesses like Foster Coffee, and Café Rhema. Additionally, the Flint River which runs alongside the downtown area, offers a lot of potential for recreational development.

4.11 NONPROFITS IN FLINT

Nonprofits are extremely active in Flint. The work of three nonprofits that I spoke with, and which I found to be particularly inspiring, are presented below

4.11A URBAN RENAISSANCE CENTER

The Urban Renaissance Center, a nonprofit associated with the Joy Tabernacle Church, is an organization which operates out of the Civic Park neighborhood on Flint’s North Side. The organization has done an array of work in the community, ranging from cooking free meals for the public, to establishing its Health House, which provides free health services to the community. While there is so much that this nonprofit has done, however, one of its projects that caught my

attention, is its blight elimination one, as the solution it provides for addressing a neighborhood's physical collapse is incredibly innovative.

The Civic Park neighborhood contains a large number of abandoned homes. As demolishing a house requires a large sum of money, many of the homes in this neighborhood have been left to collapse. The director of the Urban Renaissance Center recognized the emotional effect that being surrounded by physical collapse can have on an individual, and also the safety hazard that open and collapsing buildings present for children that may be playing. As a result, he decided that he wanted to board up the buildings, but instead of using a standard wooden board, he decided to print photographs of windows and doors onto the boards, so that boarded homes would appear inhabited (see Figure 7). This, he felt, would give those residents that were still living in the Civic Park neighborhood a feeling that the place in which they were living was not empty, but instead, full of people (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018).

4.11B COURT STREET VILLAGE NONPROFIT

The Court Street Village Nonprofit is a nonprofit organization which operates out of the Central Park neighborhood, just east of the city's downtown. The director of this nonprofit has, since the start of the water crisis, emphasized the need to ensure that the city's neighborhoods do not collapse as attention and funding is turned towards the city's water. It was this nonprofit's Central Park Paint Project that sparked my attention. The director noticed that many homes in the Central Park neighborhood were not looking their best, as many of the homes were renter occupied, and so were not the primary concern of their owners. To address this, and to bring a new life to the neighborhood, the director obtained grant money to be used for house painting. She approached home owners, and offered for the Court Street Village Nonprofit to pay for 75% of a new paint job if the landlord agreed to pay for the remaining 25% (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). This project proved to be wildly successful, and because the newly painted homes were concentrated in such a small area of the city, the impact of these new paint jobs was quite large (see Figures 11 and 12).

4.11C NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGEMENT HUB

The Neighborhood Engagement Hub is a nonprofit which operates out of North Flint and which provides supportive services to neighborhoods throughout the city. One such service is its tool shed, from which residents of the city can rent tools to be used for home or neighborhood improvement projects. In 2018, there were 2,009 rentals, meaning that more than 2,009 tools were rented, as people are able to, and do often, rent multiple tools at a time (Interviewee 3, personal communication, Nov 7, 2018).

4.12 PHOTOS TAKEN IN THE FIELD



Figure 1: Empty block.



Figure 2: Abandoned home.



Figure 3: Recently renovated Capitol Theater.



Figure 4: Downtown Flint

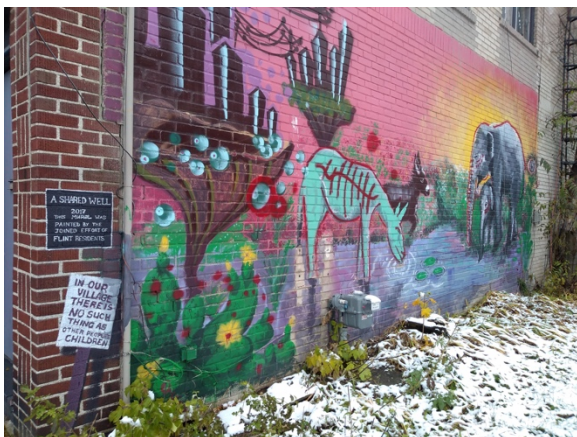


Figure 5: Mural in the College Cultural District.



Figure 6: Home in Central Park.



Figure 7: Home with fake windows and doors.



Figure 8: Home which acquired adjacent lot.



Figure 9: Wreath found in a church in North Flint.



Figure 10: Abandoned home in Flint's East Side.



Figure 11: Home pre-paint.



Figure 12: Home post-paint.

5. RESULTS

In this section the data collected in Flint will be used to answer the three specific research questions presented in the Introduction. For your reference these questions have been listed again below:

- SRQ1: What are the various discourses that exist regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post crisis recovery effort?
- SRQ2: How does the history of a city shape the various extant discourses, regarding the role that philanthropy should play in its post-crisis recovery effort?
- SRQ3: How are these discourses regarding philanthropy shaped by present day power relations?

5.1 SRQ1:WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS DISCOURSES THAT EXIST REGARDING THE ROLE THAT PHILANTHROPY SHOULD PLAY IN A CITY'S POST-CRISIS RECOVERY EFFORT?

In studying the Flint case, it became clear that there are two prominent discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post-crisis recovery effort. *The first is that philanthropic foundations have too much power to decide what the future of a recovering city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal. The second discourse is that philanthropic foundations and the funding they provide are crucial to a city's recovery.* In Flint, these two discourses take the following form: (1) that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to mold the city to fit its vision for it, and (2) that this foundation, and the funding it provides to nonprofits, is crucial to the city's recovery from both deindustrialization and the Flint Water Crisis.

5.1A FIRST DISCOURSE

The discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to shape the city into the place it wishes for it to become, is a discourse that is produced and reproduced by both city residents and nonprofits operating in Flint. This discourse revealed itself to me as I conducted interviews and spoke with people at community events. It did not, however, present itself in newspaper articles or other forms of text throughout the city.

In Flint, this discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to shape the city into the place it wishes for it to become, is in part, driven by a frustration held by some regarding the

foundation's decision to begin directing its funding almost exclusively to the Northern part of the city. The connection between the belief that the foundation holds too much power and the frustration over the foundation's new North Flint priority, became clear to me as I spoke with the director of a nonprofit operating in Flint. About the new North Flint priority, the director stated, "And then we're told that, oh we're just going to focus on the North End. Huh? Why? You really want to flush your money down the toilet?" (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov19, 2018). This was followed by, "It's ridiculous. Flint, Michigan has gone from a population of 300,000 people to under 100,000 people. And you really think every single neighborhood that was viable when I was growing up as a kid is viable today? It's not. And you will never have enough money to save every single neighborhood! Quit being stupid!" (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov19, 2018). This bold remark made clear that this woman's dissatisfaction with the Ruth Mott Foundation's power is tied to her unhappiness with the foundation's decision to direct its funding almost exclusively to Flint's North Side. Whether or not her upset over the foundation's new North Flint priority truly grows from a belief that the Northern part of the city cannot be saved, as she stated, however, must be questioned, as this director also made clear that because of the foundation's new regional priority, her nonprofit can no longer receive its funding.

But the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to decide what the future of Flint should look like and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal, is also shaped, or driven by a belief that the regulations and operational practices selected for use by philanthropic foundations, include some people in the recovery effort, while excluding others. Furthermore, some Flint residents believe that through what they perceive to be this exclusion, that the foundation is able to more easily achieve its desired vision for the city.

The idea that the practices of philanthropic foundations are exclusionary, as a driver of the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to shape the city of Flint, was made clear by a Flint resident, and activist, at a Community Read. The woman I spoke with at this event appeared to have no problem with the foundation's North Flint priority, yet she was the most visibly angry of everyone I spoke with about the power that the foundation holds, and so, its ability to shape Flint into the city it wishes for it to become. For this woman, her belief that the foundation has too much power, grows from her belief that the regulations and operational practices selected for use by the Ruth Mott Foundation, leads to the inclusion of some people in the recovery effort and the exclusion of others. This woman implied that those people being excluded from the rebuilding effort are part of a lower income, minority population. Quite a number of people that I spoke with, expressed similar thinking.

In Flint, the Ruth Mott Foundation will only provide funding to nonprofit organizations with a 501(c)(3) tax status, and this practice was presented in multiple conversations as being an exclusionary one (Ruth Mott Foundation, personal communication, Nov 14, 2018). A 501(c)(3) status is given to organizations which do charitable work, and so, are tax exempt. Additionally, it is worth noting that these organizations cannot be involved in political work of any kind, and that here what is and is not "political" is determined by the United States Government, a fact which can be viewed as problematic in and of itself (IRS, 2018).

Acquiring a 501(c)(3) tax status requires paperwork, time, and organization, and this is seen by some as getting in the way of people with good ideas being able to get work done. On this subject, a Flint resident whom I spoke with stated that, "...a 501(c)(3) is...a non-profit designation. You have to have a board. So basically, if I have a good idea, I can't start it, because in order to get a non-profit, I need like 7 other people who are willing to sit on this board, meet monthly, put their names on stuff." (Interviewee 12, personal communication, Nov 20, 2018). This speaker expressed that because of the Ruth Mott Foundation's 501(c)(3) requirement, that some people with great ideas, cannot put them into practice. This individual went on to say though, that "... it makes sense because if you don't have a 501(c)(3) ...are you going to run your money through an individual bank account? The other option could be to have Mott hold that money, have Mott establish a bank account" (Interviewee 12, personal communication, Nov 20, 2018). He expressed that while he sees the positive side of 501(c)(3)'s to be that they work to prevent corruption, that he feels them to be restrictive. This speaker expressed his belief that corruption could be prevented using other methods, such as the provider of funding, in this case, the Ruth Mott Foundation, managing the money it donates itself.

A nonprofit that I spoke with also touched upon how needing this 501(c)(3) tax status to receive philanthropic funding can be restrictive and exclusionary. Though this nonprofit, itself, has a 501(c)(3) designation, its director still stated, "We [nonprofits] don't have to touch no money. This is how serious it is. I don't care about that. I just want to see the actual work being done and happening in the community. That's it...because everything is like that. Well, we [foundations] can't give this person \$250,000 because they're not financially responsible. Okay, you can set your offices right next door to them and manage every dollar that [comes] out of them as long as it [goes] into the community..." (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). This speaker made clear that his priority is bettering the city of Flint and that he feels the Ruth Mott Foundation's 501(c)(3) requirement impedes progress.

The grant writing process was also presented by some as a required procedure which makes it so certain individuals cannot participate in a city's recovery. Writing a grant requires an individual to have a certain degree of education, reading and writing skills, which all people with good ideas regarding how to improve a city may not have. Additionally, even people with a high level of education may not know how to successfully write a grant application. On this subject, the director of one nonprofit in Flint spoke of the organization's management and stated that, "[The management] had to learn it all. The average person will give up. Because before we even got the first grant, it was times...and we did this out of our pocket, it was just the passion, the love for what we are doing, so, the average person will give up. The average entrepreneur. You've really got to be committed long term and really see some benefit in it" (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). While this individual emphasized how difficult the grant writing process can be, and so that it can block both progress and some people from participating in the recovery effort, he did suggest that anyone with enough passion and dedication can learn to successfully write a grant. The truth to this statement, however, could certainly be debated. Additionally, it should be considered

that this director may feel pressured to speak about the foundation's regulations in a somewhat positive manner, an idea which is touched upon later in this chapter.

In sum, one prominent discourse regarding philanthropy in Flint is that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to shape the city into the place that it wishes for it to become. This is a discourse that has grown from multiple beliefs. It is shaped by the dissatisfaction expressed by some regarding the foundation's new North Flint Priority, but, is also shaped by a belief held by others, that the regulations or operational practices selected for use by philanthropic foundations are excluding some groups from participating in the North Side's recovery effort, and that by excluding these groups, the Ruth Mott Foundation is able to more easily achieve its desired vision for the city.

5.1B SECOND DISCOURSE

The discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation and the funding it provides to nonprofits is critical to the city's recovery, is a discourse that nonprofits in the city produce and reproduce. Additionally, it is a discourse that is perpetuated by philanthropic foundations, and also, by newspapers writing about the city.

This discourse revealed itself to me as I spoke with nonprofits operating in the city about the work that they are doing. Nonprofits in Flint eagerly shared with me their successes, or the positive impact that they feel they have had on the city, and many made clear that the Ruth Mott Foundation has aided their organization in making this positive impact possible. One nonprofit explained that they received an operational grant from the Ruth Mott Foundation. About this the director stated, "...it pays my salary and all those things ...I didn't get a salary before this ...Don't ask me how, because we really, we all ask ourselves, how did we survive this, how did we do this?" (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018).

Another nonprofit that I spoke with which was upset with the foundation and its new North Flint priority, did concede that one of their current employees "...wouldn't be here without the Ruth Mott Foundation," (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). This is because the money that the nonprofit received from the foundation in the past "...allowed [them] to bring another body on" (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). Although, generally speaking, the director of this nonprofit expressed frustration over the role that the Ruth Mott Foundation plays in Flint, even she could see that the foundation has had some positive impact on the city's ability to recover. This speaker, then, was not involved exclusively in one discourse, something that I found to be quite common in Flint.

This discourse that the philanthropic funding provided by the Ruth Mott Foundation is critical to the city's recovery, is one that is also visible in, and perpetuated by, periodicals in which Flint is discussed. In an opinion piece published in the East Village Magazine in 2019, the author responded

to an article written in another periodical, in which Flint was listed as the 11th worst city in the United States to live in. In response to that article, this author constructed a list of 13 reasons why Flint is, in fact, a nice place to live, and he cited foundational support in Flint as his seventh reason why (Ford, 2019). In this article, while the author did not argue that philanthropic funding is critical to the city's recovery, he did make the argument that it is beneficial for the city, and so, through his writing, does in a way still support, or bolster, the discourse that philanthropic funding is crucial to the city's recovery. It is worth noting, however, that the East Village Magazine does receive about \$30,000 of funding yearly, not from the Ruth Mott Foundation, but from the C.S.Mott Foundation, another philanthropic organization which operates in Flint. This means that the motivation behind this article should be examined critically (Worth-Nelson, 2018).

An article posted in the Philanthropy News Digest in 2016 is another example of an article which supports the discourse of philanthropy as crucial to the city of Flint's recovery. The article announces that 10 philanthropic foundations have agreed to, together, donate \$125 million dollars to aid in the effort to rebuild the city of Flint. It names the Ruth Mott Foundation as one of these organizations and suggests that philanthropic foundations are stepping in to make improvements to the city that it claims the government is failing to bring about itself (Philanthropy News Digest, 2016). In speaking poorly of the government's efforts, and in speaking so highly of the work of philanthropic foundations in the city, this news source produces or reproduces the discourse that philanthropic foundations play an important role in cities' recovery efforts.

So, it seems that nonprofits in Flint, as well as various publications and philanthropic foundations, together, work to both produce and reproduce the discourse that philanthropic funding, and specifically that provided by the Ruth Mott Foundation, is crucial to the city of Flint's recovery.

5.2 SRQ2: HOW DOES THE HISTORY OF A CITY SHAPE THE VARIOUS EXTANT DISCOURSES REGARDING THE ROLE THAT PHILANTHROPY SHOULD PLAY IN ITS POST-CRISIS RECOVERY EFFORT?

This section will explore how historical context influences discourse. More specifically, it will examine how the historical context of Flint may have influenced present day discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play in its post-crisis recovery effort. Foucault labels this type of analysis a genealogical one (Foucault, 1981).

In conversation, people often spoke of Flint's history and they did so with emotion, and it is an accepted idea that the history of a place and the way people perceive it, does have some influence on the discourses that are produced there (Foucault, 1981). In the analysis that follows, I suggest that certain aspects of Flint's history may have had some influence on the present day discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis.

Before drawing connections between historical context and these discourses, however, the pieces of the city's history that were often raised by the people I spoke with and the way in which they were spoken about by these individuals are presented below. While I do not draw explicit connections between every single one of these topics and the two discourses presented in the previous section ((1) That philanthropic foundations have too much power to decide what the future of a struggling city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal, and (2) that philanthropic foundations and the funding they provide are crucial to a city's recovery), it is my belief that they constitute the context in which these discourses were produced, and so are worth mentioning.

5.2A ANGER TOWARDS GENERAL MOTORS

Many people in Flint feel anger towards General Motors. More specifically, these people feel angry about the company's decision to move its manufacturing away from the city of Flint. About this decision, one individual stated "I'm so pissed at General Motors and others. It should be a humanitarian, they should be charged in the courts of humanitarian...How do you bring people from the Appalachian, from the South, and bring them all up here, and then you decide to leave them. And this is what you left the generations to come" (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). What this speaker meant by "and this is what you left the generations to come" was described by another speaker involved in this conversation. He made clear to me that General Motors did not only leave people to a city that would become physically dilapidated, but to one in which a social collapse would take place. This speaker emphasized that a link exists between the decisions made by General Motors in the past, and the poverty, crime, and even murder experienced in Flint today. This young man had been released from 7 years in prison just 3 weeks prior to us speaking, and hearing his life story and the difficulties he faced growing up in Flint in the post-industrial period, made the connection between the city's history and today's social struggles more real to me.

The connection between the city's physical and social collapse and the decisions made by General Motors in the past, was made often by interviewees. One person I spoke with stated, "And to see how black families started coming in and now they're taking pride and purchasing homes and raising their families and they [General Motors] pulled a rug from under there. And look what happened when General Motors left. Our city went rapidly down" (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). This speaker was referring specifically to the Civic Park Neighborhood in the Northwestern part of Flint, which was at one time a middle-class, primarily white community constructed by General Motors' real estate and construction company, the Modern Housing Corporation, but which today is a poor, and primarily African American neighborhood. African Americans in Flint had started to move into this neighborhood, but when General Motors left the city, this period of hope and positive social transformation disappeared. Another individual, too, that I interviewed, also spoke of the "...devastation brought on by General Motors" (Interviewee 4, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018).

5.2B PRIDE IN BEING THE VEHICLE CITY

An interesting thing about Flint, however, is that while on the one hand many people express anger over the damage they feel General Motors inflicted upon the city, on the other hand, the pride connected to being “The Vehicle City” is still very much present. This pride is visible in Flint’s physical landscape. Saginaw Street, the main street which runs through the city’s downtown, is lined with metal archways with signage reading, “Flint: Vehicle City.” Additionally, buildings throughout the city associated with General Motors are often accompanied by a large plaque explaining the building’s historical significance.

When I asked about this, what I at the time perceived to be a dichotomy, one person responded with, “I mean it’s easy, you’ve got to think, especially when it comes to black folks, we migrated from the south to go work for GM. So we’re coming off of sharecropping, farming...So, people were really building families, were excited, and this was passed down from generation to generation. So, it was in the psyche of so many people...these glory times and glory days. So, it’s easy to look at that and say, that was everything, you know?” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). Another individual added to this by saying, “That’s why I say it [GM] was kinda like God for them. It was their savior” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). Hearing these things made me understand how the anger towards General Motors and the pride associated with the history of automobile production in Flint can exist simultaneously. While in retrospect one can see that General Motors damaged the city of Flint both physically and socially, at the time, the jobs that the company offered, presented those people moving from the South with hope for a better future, and this has not been forgotten.

5.2C CONCERN OVER DEPENDENCY

Dependency was raised as an issue by a number of people that I spoke with. One person I interviewed spoke of the city’s historical dependence on General Motors for survival. He stated that, “We depended on that [General Motors] for so long and I just remember my grandmother and grandfather telling us at a young age, get your education, this shop ain’t gonna be here” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). This was followed by, “But I know personally, my grandmother and grandfather, they were big on us getting an education and not being dependent on General Motors, because...they were dependent on that. If it hadn’t been for General Motors, what would they do? They’d come, my grandparents came from Mississippi, sharecropping and all that. So, if they didn’t have General Motors, where would they be?” (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). In reference to the city’s collapse which followed General Motors’ departure from the city of Flint, one interviewee stated, “That’s why one thing that we think is important moving forward is having a diverse economy. You can never put all your eggs in one basket. Because this [the current state of Flint] is the end result of that” (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018).

5.2D THE FLINT WATER CRISIS

The water crisis, of course, is another piece of the city's history which is spoken of often, and with fresh emotion by the city's residents. First and foremost, the residents make clear their belief that the water crisis took place because the government prioritized financial gain over the people of Flint, a group which was made up primarily of working class, minorities. One person I spoke with stated that he realized, "...like wow, people...who we elected as leaders, made a decision on hundreds of, no thousands of lives to save money. So, it lets me know it's classism, environmental racism, and all kinds of isms if you ask me" (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). In a similar vein, another resident said that to him, the water crisis is "...a prime example of greedy capitalism at its worst...where the community was screwed" (Interviewee 11, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). Finally, another individual made clear his belief that had Flint, in 2014, been a city with a different demographic, that the water crisis, "...wouldn't even have happened" (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018).

But quite interestingly, some residents also shared with me their belief that the water crisis brought both attention and funding to Flint, and even to non-water related problems that the city faces. One person that I spoke with, in our conversation detailed the horrible health effects that the water crisis has had on his community and specifically its children, but still, he said that "...I say all the time, and then came the water. And then came the water. It's because Flint was dying. And if it had not been a water crisis, we would have died silently and unnoticed by anybody" (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). He explained that, in his experience, the water crisis made getting funding for projects quite a bit easier, and so that in a sense, it saved the city. This, for me, was a dark reality to accept.

Others I spoke with expressed similar thinking. When I asked the director of a nonprofit about what he felt the impact of the water crisis had been on the ability of his nonprofit to operate, he stated, "I think it brought attention. Because I believe...everything is being paid attention to now....I believe the water crisis made people pay attention" (Interviewee 7, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). On a slightly different note, but also worth mentioning is something that this speaker's colleague stated, which was that when the water crisis was revealed, that people within the city really bonded together in an effort to move forward, that "...everybody came together..." regardless of "...the color of [their] skin or anything" and that this was driven by a sentiment of "...we're all faced with this..." (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). This speaker went on to say, though, that as money started rolling into the city and different organizations began to compete for the available funding, that the city again became divided and the sense of unity amongst all residents dissipated.

Not everyone that I spoke with, however, found that the water crisis made it easier to get funding. In fact, one woman I spoke with stated that post the water crisis, she found it more difficult to get funding for projects that were not water related. In conversation she stated, "I was told by one foundation, show me how what you do ties into water. Well I'm like everything ties into the water because that's the livelihood of our people, but what you ought to be interested in is that everybody didn't pack their bags and flee. There are still people living in our neighborhoods...And I'm

saying...the neighborhoods are continuing to deteriorate" (Interviewee 10, personal communication, 2018).

5.2E HISTORY OF "RESILIENCE"

How resilient a population the people of Flint have been over the years was another theme raised by the residents I spoke with. One person I interviewed stated that, "Flint has a heart and a core of people that are absolutely amazing because, while we don't all suffer the hurricanes or the typhoons or the earthquakes or the other traumatics, the devastation brought on because of the exodus of General Motors, the devastation that has been brought on because of the economics that have hit this city, they continue to rebound, they continue to always rebuild it. And it's a lot, for some, most, that's been a life struggle" (Interviewee 4, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). This sentiment was also expressed by many of the Flint residents I met at the two Community Visioning Sessions that I attended. These residents often spoke of being a resilient community made up of people with a drive to make positive change.

Not everyone that I spoke with, however, spoke so positively of this "resilience." One person, in a community forum expressed not a frustration with the resilience of the people of Flint, but rather with all the talk of this resilience. This person stated that he is tired of the "we're strong," or "we survived" narrative, and he powerfully stated that this is not the narrative that he wishes to leave for his children. He made the point that the people of Flint should not have to struggle through the difficulties that they have historically been faced with and that they should not have to be as strong and resilient as they are forced by their circumstances to be. He suggested that this fact is overlooked when so much attention is placed on the grit that the city's residents display and that it is an overly sentimental way of speaking about a dark reality.

Some people I spoke with also pointed to the determination of Flint residents to improve their city. In conversation, one person stated that, "The city of Flint has a lot of challenges and a lot of issues, but one thing that I think is...really unique about the city is the way that community members really dedicate themselves, all of their time, all their energy, to trying to do something. You know, wherever it is that their passion lies. There's a lot of dedication and commitment there that you don't often see in other places" (Interviewee 3, personal communication, 2018). This was reiterated by another resident who stated that Flint residents are "hardworking people" (Interviewee 11, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). This was something that I, too, was impressed by. I was, for example, shocked by the turnout at each of the community events that I attended, as I had never witnessed such consistently high attendance in other cities. At one meeting I mentioned this to another attendee and he told me that the active citizen participation that I was witnessing had grown out of necessity. Somewhat similarly, in another conversation, the interviewee explained that when the water crisis was first revealed, that Flint residents really began to work together because, in his words, residents realized that "...no one [was] coming to save [them]" (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). While some people might label the community involvement described above as acts of resilience, it could also be argued that these efforts, in actuality, are acts of desperation. Terms such as desperation, however, seem to have been pushed

out of the prominent discourses in Flint, to make way for more sentimental words, such as resistance and strength.

5.2F HOW THE DISCOURSE THAT PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS HAVE TOO MUCH POWER TO MOLD RECOVERING CITIES IS INFLUENCED BY HISTORICAL CONTEXT

With so much repeated talk about these five aspects of the city's history ((a) anger towards general motors, (b) pride in being the vehicle city, (c) concern over dependency, (d) the Flint Water Crisis, (e) history of "resilience"), it cannot be denied that they play some role in the shaping and perpetuation of the discourses in Flint regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's post-crisis recovery effort. With regards to the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to shape the city into the place it wishes for it to become, it appears that the history of General Motors in Flint, and people's perception of the automobile company, has definitely had influence.

The Ruth Mott Foundation was founded by Ruth Mott, the wife of Charles Mott, who was General Motors' largest stockholder, and people are well aware of the Mott family's ties to the automobile company (Highsmith, 2015). Additionally, as expressed previously, people feel very angry towards General Motors, and this anger stems from the company's decision to move away from the city in the 1980s. In speaking with people in Flint, I noticed that many draw a connection between the Ruth Mott Foundation and General Motors. More specifically, it seems that they extend their negative feelings regarding the automobile company to the Ruth Mott Foundation, and in doing so, that they contribute to the discourse that the foundation holds too much power to shape the city to fit its vision for it. It is interesting, though, that although a pride in being The Vehicle City does still exist in Flint, that the anger people have towards General Motors overshadows it. People do not seem to translate the pride associated with General Motors to the Ruth Mott Foundation, as they do with their anger. The people of Flint have seen the damage that can result from a single company with large amounts of money holding decision making power, and have seen that these companies do not always make decisions that are in the best interest of the city's residents. This is something that seems to have stuck with them.

One person that I spoke with confirmed my hypothesis that the history of General Motors in Flint influences people's current opinion of the role that the Ruth Mott Foundation plays in the city. When we spoke about the dissatisfaction that many people in Flint have with the foundation, this person stated, "I think it's because of the history" (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). Other people that I spoke with, however, simply talked about the history of the city and their feelings about the foundation in tandem. But, from these conversations, it could be inferred that a link exists between the city's history and people's perception of the Ruth Mott Foundation's activity in Flint.

5.2G HOW THE DISCOURSE THAT PHILANTHROPIC FUNDING IS CRUCIAL TO A CITY'S RECOVERY IS INFLUENCED BY HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The discourse that philanthropy, and specifically the Ruth Mott Foundation, is crucial to Flint's recovery, like the previous discourse, also seems to have been shaped by the city's history. More specifically, it seems to have been shaped by people's recognition that the city of Flint has historically been dependent on private funding, and by an inability to imagine a situation in which private funding would not be needed for the city's survival.

It is easy to see that the city of Flint, in the past, was dependent on General Motors for survival. The city's economy was not diversified, but rather, large numbers of the city's residents were dependent on the company for work. The city itself depended on General Motors for the construction of new homes, and the public school system was dependent on money provided by Charles Mott. Finally, the businesses located in the city's downtown depended on the existence of workers from General Motors and their families spending money at these locations (Highsmith, 2015).

The dependency of the city of Flint on General Motors is something that people today, speak of as being problematic. This initially made it difficult for me to understand how people, then, could argue that the Ruth Mott Foundation is crucial to the city's recovery. This is because the relationship of dependency between the Ruth Mott Foundation and the city of Flint, arguably mirrors the historic relationship of dependence between General Motors and the city.

In conversation, however, I learned that some people do, in fact, view the relationship between the city of Flint and the Ruth Mott Foundation as being a problematic one. In one interview I shared with the interviewee my experience attending the Ruth Mott Foundation Grant Info Session. I explained my surprise at the fact that no one at the event raised any issues or concerns regarding the foundation's operations, as in conversation, many people had shared these concerns with me, so I knew that they existed. In response, the woman I was speaking with stated, "No. Again, when you have a city that's completely economically oppressed and this is the only source of money...They're not going to say anything...They're reliant and dependent on the [Ruth] Mott Foundation" (Interviewee 5, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). Here, this woman expressed to me her concern over the relationship of reliance that nonprofits have with the foundation. But, hearing that some people in the city do view the relationship between the Ruth Mott Foundation and the city to be problematic, I was left even more baffled by the existence of the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation is crucial to the city's recovery.

Upon closer scrutiny, however, I realized that these two lines of thinking are not necessarily contradictory. Saying that the Ruth Mott Foundation is crucial to the city's recovery is not saying that the relationship between the city of Flint and the Ruth Mott Foundation is a good or healthy one. It is simply saying that it is a necessary one. Perhaps, then, this discourse that the foundation is crucial to the city's recovery, grows from a recognition that the city of Flint has, for decades, been dependent on private funding, and so, from an inability to imagine things being any other way – in other words, from a feeling that there is no way to escape this long-established relationship of reliance. It should also be considered, however, that some people may not recognize this relationship of dependency, as they are so wrapped up in it. This means then, that the discourse

that the foundation is crucial to the city's recovery, may also grow from a habituated way of living, in which a single organization has great influence on the workings of the city.

5.3 SRQ3: HOW ARE THESE DISCOURSES REGARDING PHILANTHROPY SHAPED BY PRESENT DAY POWER RELATIONS?

Attention will now be turned to how power influences discourse. Specifically, attention will be paid to how present-day power imbalances in Flint influence the discourses that exist, regarding the role that the Ruth Mott Foundation should play in its post-crisis recovery effort. From things that were said during the interviews I conducted and events I attended in Flint, it can be inferred that people are under pressure to speak in a certain way about the Ruth Mott Foundation's role in the city.

5.3A HOW POWER HAS INFLUENCED THE DISCOURSE THAT PHILANTHROPY IS CRUCIAL TO A CITY'S RECOVERY

It seems only natural that individuals in Flint, and particularly those associated with nonprofits in the city, feel pressured by their current or desired relationship with the Ruth Mott Foundation, to speak positively of the organization, and so, to adhere to the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation and the funding it provides is crucial to the city of Flint's recovery. For those nonprofits who have received funding from the foundation in the past, it seems that their involvement in this discourse grows, in part, from a pressure to appear grateful for the funding that they have received. Additionally, for these nonprofits, as well as those which have never received funding from the foundation, it seems that a pressure exists to remain in the good books of the foundation, so as to remain a potential candidate for future grants.

With regards to gratitude, in an interview that I conducted with two directors of a nonprofit, one stated, "I mean, to be honest, the Ruth Mott Foundation has been very, it's been very humbling. So, I have nothing bad to say about them. They were the first ones to invest in [us]" (Interviewee 6, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). The second director added to this by saying, "You know, I don't know what others may feel about it. I mean I have heard some things, but I just look at our organization. To be honest, even if that were, what people say were to be true, look at the change they've made. Like they decided to dedicate their attention to the Flint North Side and they actually gave [to] an organization...led by returning citizens" (Interviewee 7, personal communication, 2018).

While at a certain level it must be true that these two speakers are grateful for the money that the Ruth Mott Foundation has provided them and for the chance this foundation has given to two former felons, and why wouldn't they be, one does have to wonder if they truly have no criticism of the foundation at all, or if they feel silenced by the power relationship that unarguably exists

between the foundation and themselves. This occurred to me, as during this interview, when I first expressed my interest in the many opinions that seem to exist in Flint regarding the role that the Ruth Mott Foundation plays in the city, I was met with a chuckle, and one which suggested that the interviewees not only knew what I was referring to, but that they, too, had some issue with the foundation. The laugh, however, did not match the discourse which followed it. It was this exchange which made me consider that the unequal power relationship between the nonprofit and the Ruth Mott Foundation may be causing the directors of this nonprofit, and of others, to speak in an exclusively positive way about the role that the foundation plays in the city.

In the above example, however, the positive talk of the Ruth Mott Foundation, may be influenced not only by a desire to appear grateful for the financial support that the nonprofit received from the foundation in the past, but as stated previously, may grow from a desire to remain a potential candidate for future funding. Quite a few people that I spoke with, reminded me that though nonprofits are not profit-making enterprises, that they do, of course, have a desire to remain in operation, and to do so, that they must receive funding. One woman that I spoke with who had worked for nonprofit organizations in the past, stated, “I mean, I feel like there’s, you know, in order for nonprofits to stay alive they need to service someone. So, you’re not really trying to remedy the problem, you’re just trying to stay in business, you know” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). While here the woman is questioning the intention of nonprofits, an issue that, while interesting, will not be touched upon in this thesis, the quote is useful as it makes clear that one of the priorities of nonprofits is to stay financially afloat.

A director of a nonprofit that I spoke with also touched upon this topic. She explained that after the water crisis many nonprofits were “...running off after the water money” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). About this she said, “But I’m like quit chasing money. You know what, you chase the money without a plan, you get the money and go oh damn, we’ve got the money, we need to figure out how to spend it. What kind of plan is that? And the city does the same damn thing! It’s like a culture. And maybe that’s not just Flint. I don’t know...But it’s bad. It’s a bad habit, it’s a bad habit” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). These comments caused me to consider that perhaps the discourse in which people speak positively about the Ruth Mott Foundation and state that it is crucial to the city’s recovery, may be part of this money chasing effort, or this desire to remain in operation. The Ruth Mott Foundation has the power to give or withhold money from nonprofits operating in the city, and nonprofit organizations are well aware of this reality. It makes sense, then, that for this reason, these organizations would make an effort to stay in these foundation’s good books.

Not every nonprofit that I spoke with, however, spoke only positively about the role that the Ruth Mott Foundation plays in Flint. Rather, some people stated that the Ruth Mott Foundation and the funding it provides to nonprofits is crucial to the city’s recovery, but also, to a degree spoke negatively of the foundation. These exchanges made clear that one can speak negatively of the foundation, if one does so in a particular way, and if one suggests that the foundation is improving.

One director of a nonprofit spoke of the changes that he has seen in the foundation over the years and he suggested that a positive shift has taken place with regards to the way the foundation operates. This individual stated that in the past, there existed, “...such a gap...” or a very clear

hierarchy between the organizations that the foundation served and the foundation itself, and that, “...the Ruth Mott, and the C.S. Mott Foundation were [in the past] high echelon” (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). But, this same speaker went on to explain that the former president of the Ruth Mott Foundation, who recently resigned for personal reasons, really changed the way that the foundation operated for the better. He told the story of receiving a phone call from the then president, who on the call explained that he wanted to come out to the nonprofit’s headquarters in one of the most rundown and violent areas of the city for a meeting. The director of the nonprofit explained to me, that in his eyes, this act showed that the president was looking to break down the barrier between the foundation and the organizations to which it provided funding (Interviewee 8, personal communication, Nov 19, 2018). So, while the director spoke positively of today’s Ruth Mott Foundation and spoke of its necessity, he did point to problems with the way the foundation operated in the past. These negative comments about the foundation did make his positive remarks seem more genuine. Still, though, one must wonder whether this talk of the foundation’s improvement is at all influenced by a fear of the foundation’s ability to retract or withhold funding.

5.3B HOW POWER HAS INFLUENCED THE DISCOURSE THAT PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATIONS HOLD TOO MUCH POWER TO SHAPE RECOVERING CRISIS

While it seems that a great deal of pressure exists to speak of the Ruth Mott Foundation as being crucial to the city’s recovery, or at least to a degree speak positively about the foundation, that some pressure too, influences people’s decision to state that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power to shape the city of Flint into the place it wishes for it to become. The power dynamics that may have some influence on this discourse are examined below.

As discussed earlier, the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to shape the city of Flint into the place it wishes for it to become, is in part, driven by the argument that the North Side of Flint needs the most help, but that the regulations and operational practices selected for use by the foundation exclude some groups from participating in the recovery of this area. In speaking with people in the city of Flint, and in attending community events there, however, I began to realize that people may make this argument, in part, out of a social pressure to say the right thing, or the politically correct thing, about the city’s North Side. The North Side of Flint is one of the most physically devastated areas of the city, and because the city has such a racialized history connected to its physical collapse, it may be that there is a pressure today to speak of North Flint as an area of the city that needs extra help, and as a place where attention and finances should be concentrated.

It was the director of a nonprofit I spoke with who suggested that people in the city feel pressured to say the right thing about North Flint, and to speak of it as the place that deserves the most attention and financial investment. It should be noted, however, that this woman, herself, did not argue these things. Rather, she openly expressed her belief that investing in North Flint was a poor financial choice, as she stated that that area of the city will never be saved. She did recognize,

however, that this was a controversial argument to make. In conversation she said, “It’s not politically correct, but you know what, I’m not [politically correct], and I never have been, and I never will be” (Interviewee 10, personal communication, 2018). In saying this she seemed to acknowledge that there is a societal pressure to speak in a certain way about North Flint, but she suggested that there is no real empathy behind what is being said about it. She suggested that a pressure exists to state that North Flint needs the most attention and investment, and so, to argue that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to shape the city of Flint to fit its vision for it.

Another woman that I spoke with seemed hesitant to say anything negative about the foundation’s new North Flint priority, yet I was under the impression that she was not truly satisfied with it. When we spoke about the different views that exist in the city regarding the foundation’s North Flint priority, she stated, “...I think there’s some frustration because all the neighborhoods need help” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). Shortly after saying this, however, she stated, “...but I do believe that North Flint does need that reinvestment” (Interviewee 5, personal communication, Nov 15, 2018). She seemed to want to reinforce that when she said that all areas of the city need help, that she was not saying that North Flint does not need or deserve the extra help that it is now getting from the Ruth Mott Foundation. I had to, however, question whether she really was satisfied with the foundation’s North Flint priority, and considered whether she felt societal pressured to express agreement with it.

So it seems that the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to shape the city of Flint into the place it wishes for it to become, is very much intertwined with the debate over the Ruth Mott Foundation’s investment in the northern part of the city. Additionally it seems that the argument that that area of the city deserves the greatest attention and financial investment may be influenced by a societal pressure to speak in a certain, politically correct way, about the city’s North Side.

6. ANALYSIS

In this section, the concepts detailed in the theoretical framework (Foucauldian Discourse Theory, Path Dependency, and Power/Knowledge) will be applied to the Flint case. Before doing this, however, it seems that the discourses regarding philanthropy which are produced and reproduced in Flint should again be briefly presented, as they will be referred to in this section, time and time again. The first of these discourses is that philanthropic foundations have too much power to decide what the future of a recovering city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal. The second is that philanthropic foundations and the funding they provide are crucial to a city's recovery.

6.1 FOUCAULDIAN DISCOURSE THEORY

Foucault writes about the procedures of exclusion which shape discourse. These are prohibition, the division between madness and reason, and the division between true and false. Additionally, he writes about the "principles of classification, of ordering, of distribution," which too, control both discourse and specifically the distribution of discourse (Foucault M., 1981, p. 56). These he labels discipline, commentary, and the author (Foucault M., 1981). Some of these procedures, or principles, are certainly visible in Flint.

Prohibition, one of the procedures of exclusion presented by Foucault, can be used to, in part, explain the existence of the discourse that philanthropic foundations have too much power to decide what the future of a recovering city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal. For some, this discourse is driven by the belief that all people should have the opportunity to partake in the North Side's recovery effort and by the belief that the Ruth Mott Foundation's regulations and operational practices are excluding some potential participants.

As detailed in the results section, it may be though, that power plays some role in the production of this discourse, and that people feel a societal pressure to speak in a certain way about the North Side of Flint, and specifically, to speak of it as a place that needs and deserves extra attention and financial investment. This means, then, that within the context of Flint, it may be that one is, to a degree, *prohibited* to speak about North Flint in any other way than to say that it is an area of the city that needs the most help. This, it seems, is due to the history of the city, as the physical and social despair which exists in North Flint is unarguably connected to Flint's highly racialized past. It seems then, that in order to be labeled as a sensitive individual, who is cognizant of racial and economic inequalities, that one is prohibited from speaking of North Flint in a way that does not present it as an area of the city which makes for a reasonable priority of the Ruth Mott Foundation.

Foucault details three types of prohibition. These are, "...the taboo on the object of speech... the ritual of the circumstances of speech, and the privileged or exclusive right of the speaking subject" (Foucault M. , 1981, p. 52). He goes on to say that these 3 types of prohibition intersect in a "complex grid," and that sexuality and politics are, at the time in which he is writing, the points at which the grid is the tightest. What he means by this is that these are the topics for which discourse is the most constrained (Foucault M. , 1981, p. 52). Perhaps in Flint, it is North Flint, and specifically the subjects of race and class, that are the points at which the grid is tightest, or the topics for which discourse is the most restricted.

It seems that Foucault's understating of the division between madness and reason and true and false, can also be applied to the Flint case. Foucault writes that the opposition between madness and reason are "...supported by a whole system of institutions which impose them and renew them; and which act in a constraining and sometimes violent way" (Foucault M. , 1981, p. 54). It seems that the Ruth Mott Foundation is the institution whose actions are perpetuating the narrative of the foundation's importance, and in doing so, suggesting the counter narrative, that the foundation holds too much power to shape the city, to be mad or untrue.

With regards to the discourse that philanthropic foundations are crucial to a city's recovery, it may be that this more positive view of the Ruth Mott Foundation is in part supported, or promoted, by the foundation itself, making the discourse seem reasonable and true. The Ruth Mott Foundation, of course, promotes itself as an organization which is doing important work in the city of Flint, and others have now adopted this narrative. The foundation's website confidently states that it is "cultivating community vitality" and "nurturing hope and pride" (Ruth Mott Foundation, 2019). Additionally, the first news article about the foundation that it shares on its website is titled, *Place-Based Philanthropy Proves Its Worth*. The foundation is clearly stressing its importance in Flint, and the success that it feels it is having. Others in Flint, as described in the results section, adhere to this discourse.

6.2 PATH DEPENDENCY

While the concept of path dependency is usually used to examine events which have taken place, here the concept will be used to explore the discourses which now prevail in Flint. These discourses, then, can be thought of as the final outcomes under examination. It can be argued that both discourses identified in Flint, (1) that philanthropic foundations have too much power to decide what the future of a recovering city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal, and (2) that philanthropic foundations and the funding they provide are crucial to a city's recovery, are each the result, or outcome, of a path dependent series of events. Moreover, it can be argued that General Motors' departure from the city could be labeled as the contingent event which sparked the start of these path dependent sequences. The city's deindustrialization and the Flint Water Crisis could be pointed to as other crucial event which fall along these event chains. Had the city never collapsed as a result of General Motors leaving, one

could argue that the Flint Water Crisis would never have happened, that the city would not be struggling as it is today, that philanthropic foundations would not be playing the role that they are now playing in the Flint, and people in the city would not be debating whether the role that they are playing, is the one that they should be playing.

As mentioned in the theoretical framework, some academics argue that the concept of path dependency must be expanded. Bergek and Onufrey, for example, argue that we should not think in terms of an outcome, or event, being caused by a single path-dependent sequence, but rather, that we should think of outcomes as being caused by multiple sequences and their interaction (Bergek & Onufrey, 2013). Maybe, then, the two primary discourses identified in Flint should not be thought of as two outcomes which result from their respective path-dependent sequences. Instead, perhaps, it should be considered that these two differing discourses have also interacted and worked to shape the other.

In the theoretical framework, Gaspar's ideas regarding path dependency were also made clear. He believes that things today, cannot be thought of simply as the outcome of path dependency, but that they should be thought of, in addition to this, as the outcome of what he terms path creation. This term, he uses to refer to aspirations or expectations for the future, which he also feels influence events (Gaspar, 2011). Thinking about the concept of path creation in relation to the discourses in Flint, made me consider that perhaps the discourse that the Ruth Mott Foundation and the funding it provides is crucial to the city of Flint's recovery, is a hopeful one, which is shaped, to some extent, by a desire for the physical and social situation in Flint to improve in the future. Perhaps this desire for a better future, has served as a "pull energy" which has worked to mold the discourse which is present in the city today (Gaspar, 2011, p. 95)

6.3 POWER/KNOWLEDGE

One of the prominent discourses in Flint is that the Ruth Mott Foundation has too much power to decide what the future of the recovering city should look like, and too much power to morph the city to fit this imagined ideal. In applying Foucault's concept of Power/Knowledge Formation to the Flint case, we are forced to reevaluate whether stating that the Ruth Mott Foundation holds too much power is the right way to speak about the current situation in Flint.

Foucault makes clear that power is not a thing that is possessed by an individual or organization, but rather, that it is a thing which is co-created through the interaction of multiple parties (Townley, 1993). This means that it may be inaccurate to speak simply of the foundation as holding power. This does not mean that the foundation does not have the ability to shape the city into what it wishes for it to become, and that this ability to morph the city cannot be referred to as a form of power. What it means, rather, is that one should not forget that this power is something that would not exist without the established relationship between the foundation and the nonprofits it provides funding to. In a sense, then, by accepting a submissive relationship with the Ruth Mott

Foundation, nonprofits participate in the creation, or formation, of this power that they claim the foundation holds. Without them, this power would not exist.

7. DISCUSSION

In the literature review which can be found in the Introduction, the two primary debates surrounding philanthropy are detailed. In brief, the first debate centers around whether philanthropy strengthens or weakens democracy, and the second regards whether philanthropy is an effective method for addressing the world's social problems. Here, these debates will be examined in relation to Flint.

7.1 PHILANTHROPY AND DEMOCRACY IN FLINT

With regards to the debate over whether philanthropy strengthens or weakens democracy, after visiting Flint, my thinking most closely aligns with that of Barkan, who argues that philanthropy undermines, and so, weakens democracy. Barkan argues that philanthropic foundations are a form of plutocratic power, as it is their wealth that provides them with their power, and not the public which appoints this power to them (Barkan, 2013). This is certainly true for the Ruth Mott Foundation in Flint, as the power it has to shape the city, has unarguably grown from its financial status.

Barkan, too, argues that philanthropy undermines democracy, as philanthropic foundations, alone, decide which organizations they will fund (Barkan, 2013). This is also true of the Ruth Mott Foundation, as the foundation, on its own, selects the nonprofits to which it will provide funding. In Flint, residents made clear that not only is the Ruth Mott Foundation able to decide which nonprofits to fund, but that it is able to decide which neighborhoods of the city to invest in, a reality that many view to be problematic. As detailed previously, in the case of Flint, the Ruth Mott Foundation has selected North Flint as the area of the city to which it will provide this investment.

While I personally am pleased with the Ruth Mott Foundation's new North Flint priority, as from what I saw in Flint, it seems that the northern part of the city has experienced the greatest physical and social despair, I do feel that I must not allow my personal beliefs regarding the outcome of the foundation's decision, to influence my feelings about the way in which this decision was made. The reality is that Ruth Mott Foundation's decision to concentrate its funding in North Flint, was not made through democratic procedure. As explained previously, the foundation, without public input, made the decision to direct its funding to the northern part of the city. I feel, too, that the foundation tries to conceal this reality, as its website reads, "Thank you to the 500+ people who told us what matters as we shifted our focus to north Flint during our strategic planning process. We listened!" (Ruth Mott Foundation, 2019). This statement diverts attention away from the fact that the organization's selection of North Flint as its area of investment was, in fact, not made democratically, by instead turning attention to the fact that post making this decision, the foundation has involved the public more in its decision making process.

I must concede, however, that after the Ruth Mott Foundation made the decision to concentrate its funding in North Flint, that the foundation's practices did become somewhat more democratic. As the foundation worked to establish what its specific goals would be with regards to North Flint's improvement, the foundation did hold public forums in which they invited residents to provide their input. Specifically, the foundation held 8 forums in North Flint, where it engaged over 500 people. It was at these events that the community's priorities within the categories of Youth, Safety, Economic Opportunity, Neighborhoods, Community Health, and Arts were identified, and the Ruth Mott Foundation claims that it is now using this information to inform its decisions regarding which specific nonprofits to fund (Ruth Mott Foundation, personal communication, Nov 14, 2018). Ultimately, however, it is still the foundation that makes the final decisions regarding to which organizations it will provide money, and so, it has the power to override public opinion.

Barkan writes that philanthropic foundations also undermine democracy, because a power imbalance always exists between the foundation providing the grant, and the organization receiving it. Additionally he writes that this power imbalance sometimes presents itself in the form of staffing prerequisites and contract stipulations being attached to gifted money (Barkan, 2013). While these specific practices are not something that I witnessed in Flint, I do see the foundation's policy to provide funding exclusively to nonprofits with a 501(c)(3) status, and the need to write grant applications to receive money, to be regulations imposed by the foundation, which, like those described by Barkan, undermine democracy, as they exclude some people from participating in the city's recovery effort. Many people that I spoke with in Flint suggested that these procedures exclude the lower classes from participating in the city's rebuilding effort. Democracy is about everyone, regardless of socio-economic status, or level of education, being provided the opportunity to have their voice heard, and so, about everyone's views being represented. Because, however, I perceive some people to be silenced by the Ruth Mott Foundation's operational practices, I perceive this philanthropic foundation to be one which undermines democracy.

As detailed in the Literature Review, Frumkin argues that pre the 1960s, philanthropy played an important role in strengthening democracy, as philanthropic foundations could and did act as independent third parties that were not beholden to anyone (Frumkin, 1995). Frumkin explains that this freedom grew from foundations not being dependent on anyone for funding. Additionally, he writes that these foundations provided only short-term grants, meaning that did not have long-term obligations to the nonprofits they funded. These two things are still true today. While Frumkin presents this freedom as positive, however, after observing how the Ruth Mott Foundation operates in Flint, I have to question whether this freedom is in fact a good thing. I have seen in Flint that philanthropic foundations have the power to make decisions that greatly impact the city in which they are situated and I think that to have this power, while having no real obligation to anyone, is a bit frightening. In my view, it is problematic that a private company has the ability to make decisions that will impact an entire city and the public which resides in it.

7.2 PHILANTHROPY AS A SOLUTION IN FLINT

With regards to the second debate over whether philanthropy is an effective method for dealing with the world's social problems, I position myself close to Gomberg and Sawaya, as these academics believe that philanthropy, problematically, does not address the root of social problems, which they, like myself, perceive to be capitalism (Gomberg, 2002; Sawaya, 2008). One cannot, I believe, argue against the reality that the city of Flint's collapse was a direct result of capitalism. The city's deindustrialization took place because General Motors made profit-driven decisions in which both the well-being of the people who worked for the company, and the well-being of the city in which the company was situated, were not considered. Additionally, the Flint Water Crisis, in my view, and in the view of residents I spoke with, resulted from the government's decision to prioritize profit making over the people of Flint, a primarily low-income, minority population. It is now known that the government was well aware that the Flint River water needed to be treated in order for it to be safe for drinking, a procedure that would have cost the city money. But, in an effort to save funds, the government made the decision, to the detriment of Flint residents, to leave the water untreated (Gostin, 2016). The collapse of the city which ensued, then, was too, caused by capitalism. But, somehow today we are not attacking capitalism. Rather, the city is being rebuilt using philanthropic funding provided by foundations which, as Gomberg makes clear, operate within the capitalist system (Gomberg, 2002).

I agree with Gomberg's argument that turning attention to philanthropy, diverts attention away from addressing the root cause of societal problems, and additionally, I agree that philanthropy provides a short-term, Band-Aid, solution to these problems. I did, however, witness some amazing work being done by philanthropic foundations in Flint, and so, find it difficult to accept the part of Gomberg's argument, where he states that philanthropy is harmful (Gomberg, 2002). I came across nonprofits in Flint that were working to eliminate food insecurity, that were developing innovative solutions to lessen the emotional effect of blight on Flint residents, and a nonprofit that assists neighborhoods in organizing themselves to make positive change. The work that these nonprofits were doing makes me think that Gomberg's argument may be too extreme.

At the same time, however, I see Wichmann and Peterson's argument that philanthropic giving and addressing the root cause of our social problems can happen simultaneously, to be a problematic one. I view their argument to be somewhat absurd. It is my belief that one cannot buy into the system that one wishes to overthrow, as this is not only hypocritical, but also, counterproductive. I, then, appear to be stuck somewhere in between the views of Gomberg and Sawaya and Wichmann and Peterson, with no sense of where the solution may lie.

8. CONCLUSION

This thesis strove to answer the question, what can the Flint case teach us about the role that urban residents feel philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, and additionally, why do particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail. This research question was selected, as in reading about Flint, I noticed that a gap exists in the social science research which is centered on the city. Much research has focused on the city's deindustrialization and the Flint Water Crisis, but no attention has been paid to the role that philanthropy is playing in the city's recovery from both of these events. This thesis, then, was conducted in an attempt to change this.

In Flint I was surprised by the large role that philanthropy, and specifically the Ruth Mott Foundation, is playing in the city's recovery effort. Additionally, I was intrigued by the various opinions that exist amongst both nonprofits and city residents regarding the role that they believe philanthropic foundations should be playing in this effort. These two things, then, influenced my selection of the general research question, as I felt that they deserved further investigation.

To answer the general research question a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was conducted, and additionally, the concepts of Path Dependency and Power/Knowledge provided a framework for exploration. A Discourse Analysis was selected as the method of analysis, as it is my belief that the voices of the people in Flint deserve greater attention. Flint residents have experienced a great deal of hardship over the years, and it is my thinking that they might best know what the city needs. Specifically, a Foucauldian Discourse Analysis was selected for use, as this type of discourse analysis emphasizes the role that both power and historical context play in the production and reproduction of a discourse (Foucault M., 1981). Power and the city's history are influencing the present day discourses in Flint, and so, this form of discourse analysis seemed a fitting choice.

But, I can see that my thesis may have left some wondering how exactly it connects to Urban Environmental Management and specifically to Land Use Planning, and so I would like to make this connection explicit. With regards to Urban Environmental Management, this thesis addresses the way in which, using philanthropic funding, a city is being rebuilt both socially and physically, post its experience of a social and environmental crisis. This means that this thesis addresses the way in which a city's recovery from an urban environmental crisis is being managed. With regards to land use, first, this thesis acknowledges the land changes that have taken place since the 1980s, when General Motors left the city of Flint, but also since the Flint Water Crisis began in 2014. It references the city's large number of empty lots, how green the city is, the physical despair and the emotional impact that this has on the people living there, and the increase in lot size as a result of people acquiring abandoned and foreclosed property. Additionally, and most importantly, however, this thesis examines the role that urban residents believe philanthropy should play in a city's effort to improve its social and physical landscape post a social and environmental crisis, and also, why particular discourses regarding the role that philanthropy should play, prevail.

It is my hope that the discourses examined in this thesis, regarding the role that philanthropy should play in a city's recovery from a social and environmental crisis, be noted by philanthropic foundations operating in Flint and elsewhere. If the goal of these foundations is truly to help those in need, then my hope is that they are open to hearing about how those people they aim to help, would like to see their efforts manifested. Additionally, and perhaps above everything else, I hope that this thesis had drawn greater attention to the city of Flint and to the hardship that has been experienced there, but also, of course, to the residences' hope for the future.

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