

Underorganized Interorganizational Domains:
The Case of Refugee Systems*

by

Cynthia Hardy
Associate Professor
Faculty of Management
McGill University
1001 Sherbrooke West
Montreal
H3A 1G5

Tel: (514) 398 4020

Fax: (514) 398 3876

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Abstract

This article uses the example of refugee systems -- the government, nongovernment, and refugee organizations that are involved in the reception of asylum seekers; the determination of refugee status; and the settlement of refugees -- to further our understanding of underorganized interorganizational domains. The comparison of Canada, the UK and Denmark demonstrates that there are different forms of underorganization. Domains may be under-developed due to a lack of convergence around key values, the exclusion of relevant stakeholders, or both. The nature of underorganization has implications for the political processes that occur in them. Accordingly the example of refugee systems alerts us to a potential irony: domains that seem to be relatively organized and to display a higher degree of collaboration may have excluded key stakeholders who threaten existing domain definitions; while domains that display high levels of conflict and disorganization may do precisely because all the relevant stakeholders have secured equal access to the domain and are able to influence its definition. These findings have been drawn from a comparative study of refugee systems in the three countries. This study used indepth interviews and archival data to compare the structure, values, and relations of stakeholder groups in Canada, the UK and Denmark. Interviews were carried out with 81 civil servants, politicians, NGO officials, and refugees. Documentary and archival evidence was drawn from a wide variety of sources.

More and more often, it seems, today's problems traverse the traditional boundaries of a single organization. Political events frequently involve multiple levels of government in different jurisdictions; environmental concerns are attracting multi-sectoral initiatives; outsourcing and alliances are permeating traditional organizational frontiers; and the globalization of business is sparking transnational, multicultural joint ventures. As societal and business problems are increasingly characterised by blurred boundaries and fluid environments (Gray, 1989), a large, but fragmented, body of literature has emerged on interorganizational relationships (see Alter, 1990; Oliver, 1990).

Emery & Trist introduced the notion of turbulent environments as long ago as 1965, where problems characterized by uncertainty and complexity, and unclear boundaries are beyond the scope of a single organization to solve. They call for inclusive (Warren, 1967) or collaborative (Gray, 1989) decision-making where organizations pool their expertise and resources (Trist, 1983). In this situation, the appropriate level of analysis is the interorganizational domain not the individual organization. Domains form as individuals perceive that mutual problems can be resolved collectively. It is not an objective, predetermined process but one of social construction (McGuire, 1988) where social order is negotiated (Strauss et al, 1963; Gray, 1989; Nathan & Mitroff, 1991). As individuals come to share a vision of the problem and see themselves, collectively, as part of the solution, they become stakeholders. This

shared appreciation of the problem helps acquire an identity for the domain which may produce mutually agreed upon directions and boundaries, which may, in turn, become manifested in a more permanent structure (Trist, 1983).

Gray (1989; McCann, 1983) has identified three stages in domain development. During problem setting, the domain acquires an explicit form that enables stakeholders to communicate, be identified and legitimated, and acknowledge their mutual problems. Without consensus at this stage about the issue and its legitimate stakeholders, further domain development will be thwarted. In direction setting, stakeholders begin to forge common values to create a direction for the domain. Permanent structures to support collaboration are created during implementation. It is the latter stages of domain development, particularly the referent structures of the implementation phase, which have attracted the most attention, especially in the management literature. Writers have studied the formation of cooperative arrangements in response to a wide variety of competitive pressures. Such agreements represent structured forms of cooperation created, during the latter stages of domain development, to implement collaborative solutions. The initial problems associated with the identification of relevant stakeholders and the securing of agreement on actions have already been resolved, and efforts are subsequently devoted to the implementation of the appropriate referent structures.

Domains do, however, exist in a less developed state. Brown (1980) describes them as underorganized. In Strauss's (1978) terms, there is no clear, negotiated order (see Nathan & Mitroff, 1991), perhaps because actors have failed to achieve agreement on the legitimate stakeholders; fights over the interpretation of data have sabotaged collective efforts to define the problem; networks and search conferences have failed to materialize for lack of a suitable convenor; or conflicting philosophies have translated into competitive, rather collaborative, strategy (e.g. Gricar, 1981).

This paper examines this phenomenon of underorganization in more detail. Specifically, it seeks to demonstrate different types of underorganization using Gray's (1989) model, and to explore the consequences of underorganization. To accomplish these two tasks, it will use the example of refugee systems in three different countries. The following section will examine refugee systems in general, and explain why they can be considered to be underorganized domains. The refugee systems of Canada, the UK and Denmark are then contrasted to show that underorganization can take a variety of forms. From this comparative analysis, a model of underorganization is developed. Finally, the implications of underorganization are discussed. Before we start, a brief discussion of the research design and methodology is provided.

A variety of different methodologies have been used to study interorganizational domains (Oliver, 1990; Nathan & Mitroff, 1991). This study relies on indepth interviews and archival data to compare the structure, values, and relations of stakeholder groups

in Canada, the UK and Denmark. These countries were selected because they represent very different contexts in which theoretical issues are relatively transparent (Eisenhardt, 1989). Interviews were carried out with key stakeholders in each country. 81 civil servants, politicians, NGO officials, and refugees were the subject of open ended interviews. Documentary and archival evidence included government statistics, annual reports and minutes from annual meetings from refugee councils and other NGOs in each country; published documentation; Hansard reports of parliamentary speeches in the UK and Canada; and newspaper articles.

Interviewees were identified by contacting the key organizations in the domain. Where possible, the heads or leaders of the relevant organizations were identified and, in addition, through informal networks and contacts other interviewees were identified. Interviews took place between 1990 and 1993: in Canada on a continuing basis; in the UK and Europe on annual visits. Anonymity was guaranteed to all interviews and nobody refused to be interviewed. All interviews were conducted in english (the majority of Danish interviewees were fluent in english; in the two cases where this was not the case, the interview was translated; the Danish Refugee Council also publishes a considerable amount of information in english). The interviews lasted between one and three hours, with two hours being the average. They were all tape-recorded and transcribed. Quotations from these interviews are included in this article.

Secondary data included government statistics, annual reports, minutes from annual meetings of the refugee councils, published documentation, Hansard reports of parliamentary speeches, and newspaper articles. Data were compared through coding and content analysis to evaluate the formal and informal structure and mandate of stakeholders; their values concerning the rights and roles of refugees during and after determination; and formal and informal relations between them. From the convergence in the patterns of these multiple sources of data it was possible to establish different forms of domain organization. Readers should note, however, that space constraints preclude the possibility of providing more than a handful of illustrative data.

Refugee Systems as Underorganized Domains

The 1948 United Nations (UN) Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserts that everyone has the right to seek asylum from persecution. The UN defines refugees as people who have left their own country because they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of race, religion, nationality, political opinions, etc. During the 1980s, the number of asylum seekers, from among the 18 million refugees world-wide, claiming refuge in Western Europe and North America increased considerably. As this refugee "problem" took on increasingly global dimensions, western governments were confronted with a dilemma: how to respect their humanitarian commitments at the same time as maintaining sovereignty and control over state borders.

The "refugee system" is a policy domain (Laumann & Knoke, 1987) that comprises the determination of the status of refugee claimants and the settlement of those granted asylum.¹ It encompasses the formation and implementation of policies and practices that relate to: the rights of individuals to claim asylum; the procedures whereby claimants are awarded asylum; and the support provided once asylum is awarded.

Three broad groupings of stakeholders are involved: government, NGOs (non-governmental organizations), and refugees. The organizational interactions within and between these groups constitutes the domain, as well as the impact of events in other countries, media coverage, public opinion, and court rulings. This system represents a metaproblem (Chevalier, 1966), beyond the scope of a single organization to solve. As one refugee lawyer described it:

You can never do just the legal work ... refugees never have anything together. They have no social services, no housing, no language training, no medical services. As soon as you start dealing with them, you find they've got no housing or they need medical services and you've got to ring someone up you know. You end up doing the social welfare. It's inevitable. You feel sorry for the people because they are desperate and helpless and you start plugging in. You go to all the social welfare agencies, you go to all the church groups. These people need all these

overlapping services. And then you need to know something about their country to represent them at the hearing, so you need to know something about Amnesty. [They] don't just arrive with a nice legal problem.

Stakeholder Relations

Interactions within and between stakeholder groups are complex because both collaboration and conflict occur. For example, NGOs often adopt a confrontational stance to pressure governments to change policies but, at the same time, they rely on public funding, which creates a complex dependency relationship with the government (see Levy, 1982). While NGOs work with and represent refugees, conflict can still occur if the latter feel frozen out of decision making by paternalist attitudes on the part of white professionals who are reluctant to share responsibility with ethnic groups.

Contradiction

There is a tension between the human rights and sovereignty. For the government, the refugees provoke "a reaction dominated by the notion of state security and the control of immigration, to NGOs it invites a notion of democratic rights and solidarity" (Rudge, 1989; p.28-9). For example, many countries have introduced fines for airlines that bring in undocumented individuals and imposed visa requirements on nationals from "refugee-producing" countries to control the flow of asylum-seekers. While such actions are often justified by the need to reduce "economic" or "illegal" refugees, genuine asylum seekers are, nonetheless, affected by these controls and may,

as a result, find it more difficult to escape the country of persecution. Governments have found it difficult to legislate procedures that protect genuine asylum seekers, at the same time as identifying and discouraging other migrants.

Uncontrollability

A third source of underorganization concerns a high degree of uncertainty that results from a number of factors. The flow of asylum-seekers is beyond the ability of governments to control. It is influenced by events in distant countries, such as war, famine and political upheaval. Public and media reactions are also unpredictable and range from the large-scale, private sponsorship of Vietnamese "boat people" by Canadians in the late 1970s, to the recent firebomb attacks on refugee hostels in Germany; from features on families fleeing the horrors of war and persecution, to headlines on "floods" of refugees entering the country; and from coverage of individuals who stand to be murdered if they are returned to their homeland, to articles alleging that groups of refugees have fraudulently obtained social welfare payments.

Another factor that introduces uncertainty are the courts, which can prompt major changes. For example, the 1985 Singh decision accorded asylum-seekers the same rights as Canadian citizens under the new Canadian Charter of Rights. One such right was an oral hearing -- a requirement that had to be incorporated into existing procedures on a temporary basis and around which a whole new system was later designed.

In summary, the uncertainty and unpredictability of world events, public opinion, media coverage, and the legal system, coupled with complex stakeholder relations, and contradictions between the demands of the nation state and humanitarian ideals, all serve to render refugee systems underorganized domains.

Different Forms of Underorganization

This section examines the phenomenon of underorganization in more detail by examining the way in which stakeholder groups are structured, and the relations between them in Canada, the UK and Denmark. Differences between these countries suggest that the nature of underorganization can vary. The following discussion examines these differences.

Government Stakeholders

Government groups in Canada are relatively decentralized because of the existence of both provincial and federal levels of government, and the delegation of responsibility for determination to the Immigration and Refugee Board (IRB). They are also relatively ambivalent in regard to the conflict between humanitarianism and sovereignty, which can be seen in a number of different arenas.

First, the ambivalence can be seen in terms of the objectives of the 1987 legislation, which have been described in terms of both humanitarian goals and increased control of arrivals. The Immigration and Refugee Board described the purpose of the new procedures as restoring "national and international credibility to the

manner in which Canada treats people claiming to be Convention refugees" (Annual Report, 1989; p. 10). The 1990 Auditor General's Report, on the other hand, advocated their deterrent effect, necessary to address the increasing number of claims "made by economic migrants who claimed refugee status under false pretences" (p. 347).

A second example of ambivalence concerns the safe country provision which, while vigorously defended by government, was never implemented, apparently because of the dilemma caused by the return of some 35,000 Central Americans by the US during the 1980s to countries considered repressive by Canada (Allen & Michnick, 1987). Canada would have been forced either to return asylum seekers from Central America to the US and jeopardize their safety; or to omit the US from its list of safe countries (Young, 1989). The response was to do nothing. Canada's prevarication can be contrasted with Denmark's rigorous application of third safe country.

Third, ambivalence can be seen in the divisions between different parts of government. The 1987 legislation provoked considerable dissension, as summarized by a civil servant during an interview in the following way.

The process of reform started in early 1980 and culminated in Bill C-55 in 1987. It was a horrendously long process ... because it divided most of the individuals and groups who had a stake in it. The NGO sector adopted an adversarial role against the government on any move to give the government more control. Parliament was split on the issue. The

opposition was split on the issue. The parliamentary committee of the house split on non-partisan lines. There was as many Tories voting against it as non tories. Cabinet split on it and so did Senate. The Conservative minority in Senate was split on it. It was a tortuous passage.

Finally, ambivalence is also evident in the views of individuals. The following quotation, taken from an interview with an immigration officer, reveals an individual who holds contradictory views of both the archetypal refugee and the role of policy.

It is frustrating for the staff [of the Immigration department]. Even of those allowed to stay, some of them are undoubtedly bogus. They are taking advantage of a system that is cumbersome. There are many delays with repeat appeals. There are three or four opportunities for a review. Even when the system works the way it's meant to work, there's abuse. People feel that genuine refugees don't get the chance to get here while many of those who do are economic migrants but we have 250,000 [legal] immigrants [enter the country each year] -- the bulk of people are coming through normal channels. We are not overwhelmed by refugees.... We're so Canadian -- we invite people in but the potential of large scale abuse is there. Look at the unprecedented return of the boatloads of Haitians by the US. We don't have a mechanism to turn them back. We wouldn't turn away boatloads of people. It's un-Canadian and that's

good... Where the decision has so much impact on human life, when you can send people back into danger ... the benefit of the doubt is so important. Also one more doesn't matter. In fact, another 10,000 don't matter.

At one point in the interview, refugees are portrayed as "abusers" who exploit the system but, at another, they are perceived to be in need of protection. Similarly, the official wants, at one point, tougher legislation to prevent abuses; yet she later suggests that legislation is irrelevant.

The Canadian situation contrasts strongly with the UK, where government stakeholders are highly centralized within the Home Office. All determination decisions, interviewing, government funding of settlement services, and policy formulation fall within the parameters of this single government department. It is a very closed society: civil servants rarely interact with either the public or NGOs. Determination procedures have not been published, unlike the situation in the other two countries. Nor is there any of the ambivalence that characterizes Canada: the civil service and government are united in supporting a policy that emphasizes the control of national borders to reduce the number of asylum-seekers entering the country, as illustrated by the following comment by a civil servant.

The pressure groups have made the point that: "Shouldn't every asylum seeker have the right of appeal?" Basically, the government's response was: "No. We don't want to do that sort of thing because the more you give asylum seekers procedural advantages... the more you'll draw them in".

Although not as concentrated as the Home Office's control of determination in the UK, government stakeholders in Denmark are still, relatively speaking, centralized. The existence of the independent Refugee Board serves to delegate some responsibility concerning determination, but reception remains the sole concern of the Directorate for Aliens, while the Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the settlement program. These government stakeholders are also relatively united in their attitudes to refugees. Denmark has always considered humanitarian values to be important (proportionately, it is one of the largest contributors to the UNHCR), but this humanitarianism depends upon a relatively strict interpretation of the third safe country rule to ensure that the number of claimants remains of manageable proportions. Denmark uses this mechanism in a far more aggressive manner than Canada, whose legislation required a consultative committee to advise on and review the list of safe countries and their human rights records. Denmark's definition of a third safe country is simple -- any country that had signed the 1951 convention regardless of whether it had adhered to it (Danish Refugee Council, 1989: 5). Furthermore, while Canada never implemented the

legislation because of concerns about refoulement (returns to a country of persecution), Demark did.

So, government stakeholders in Denmark display none of the prevarication of their Canadian counterparts: they are united in support of a programmatic approach to reception and settlement which depends on controlling the numbers of claimants. This unity, which combined humanitarianism and sovereignty, took a different form than in the UK, where government officials were far more committed to controlling borders.

NGO Stakeholders

The NGO sector in Canada is highly decentralized. In fact, the Canadian Council for Refugees has deliberately resisted centralization. Established in 1977, it was 1989 before a permanent staff was established. Its 1991 revenues amounted only to \$200,000 and permanent staff numbered 2½. The Canadian Council for Refugees is a loose alliance (Mulford & Rogers, 1982) of member organizations, defined by them, rather than being a organization in its own right.

This situation results in a complex set of interactions between member organizations which display overlapping rather than convergent values. Settlement agencies (that typically receive funding from and work with government bodies) and protection groups (independent lobbying organizations) have disparate interests as indicated in the following comment by a Council member.

The Canadian Council for Refugees hasn't been an effective advocate in my view. It's too much: "give us the money but fuck off". Governments don't like that -- they say "it's no money for you". That then becomes the issue. It takes time, everyone gets stressed out, and the organization loses its funding base ... [This] has created its own contradiction. I think that's the main political problem [is] the need for settlement agencies to have cordial relationships with governments against the need to have protection groups agitate strongly on behalf of individual claimants.

Despite these tensions, the Council's members have been able to work together.

I don't believe there is any conflict in the Council, there's no hidden agenda otherwise they would never have passed 24 resolutions in two and a half hours [at the May 1992 six-monthly meeting]. No one used points of order to manipulate things because everyone assumed everyone else was acting in good faith (Council member).

The NGO sector in the UK is relatively centralized. Many NGOs operate under the umbrella of the British Refugee Council which, like its Canadian counterpart has a membership of over 100 organizations. Unlike the Canadian organization, however, the British Refugee Council has a staff of nearly 200 and a budget of \$10 million. It exists as a independent, autonomous organization with its own decision making structures, which operates a federation of NGOs (Warren, 1967; Mulford & Rogers, 1982).

The NGO sector is most centralized in Denmark, where it is restricted to two large, unitary "corporations" -- the Danish Refugee Council and the Red Cross -- that provide clearly demarcated services (Warren, 1967; Mulford & Rogers, 1982). The former, responsible for determination and settlement, consists of only 12 member agencies. It has almost 1,000 employees and a budget of around \$100 million (mainly from the government). The latter has a self-contained division of more than 1200 employees who carry out all reception services.

Government/NGO Relations

The Canadian Council for Refugees maintains an independent relationship of government, financially speaking. It does not accept government-funding and aims at an arms-length relationship. As a result, the Council conducts only advocacy activities in its own name, and not settlement or determination: it sees itself as a critic rather than a tool of government policy.

The British Refugee Council is relatively dependent on government since it receives some three-quarters of its budget from the public purse. This situation has led to a somewhat schizophrenic relationship. In many respects, officials from the Council and the government are close. For example, once a year, senior British Refugee Council officials have an off-the-record discussion with civil servants.

It takes place in a barrister's chambers with a glass of wine. Some people might see that as compromising with the enemy but quite frankly, we

have so many issues of concern which we try and influence the government on, we would be much less influential and persuasive if we simply treated them as the enemy (British Refugee Council official).

On the other hand, the British Refugee Council is also a government critic. It is a lobby group and a founder member of the Asylum Rights Campaign which was set up to challenge government legislation.

The relationship between the Danish government actors and the NGOs is far more straightforward than in either of the other two countries. It is contractual and based on a clear demarcation of responsibilities between the two parties.

We are not afraid of the Danish Refugee Council and they are certainly not afraid of us our views might differ, of course. It would be strange if they didn't. They are an NGO and they are supposed to fight for refugees and help them. We are supposed to administer the legislation (civil servant).

It's not that the Directorate doesn't like refugees, it's that they deal with figures and we deal with people.... They are doing another kind of job. They are there to control and account for the money.... We never go out to the media and criticize the Directorate. We deal with them behind closed doors (Red Cross worker).

The demarcation between government and nongovernment helps to minimize conflict because each is perceived to be doing a different kind of job.

You get funded but you don't feel restricted. It's a matter of critical cooperation. You don't feel bound, you don't feel as if you're in their pockets but you do look at it from the point of view of government. You try to be realistic and pragmatic (Refugee Council employee).

The NGOs assume that government stakeholders are operating, broadly speaking, within the same humanitarian framework; and they accept government's concern for controlling access. Within this corporatist system, common in Denmark (Johansen & Kristensen, 1982), fundamental values are not in question, nor are the benefits of cooperation.

We are working for the refugees. We don't care that we are funded by the government. That doesn't influence our work. On legislation and amendments we are heard officially. We have to strike a balance though. Our secretary general is very good at managing that balance. We try not to have major conflicts. We aim for compromise ... We have a relatively productive relationship and it's better than in most countries where NGOs like ours are in conflict with the authorities all the time. There is more negotiating here (Danish Refugee Council employee).

Refugees and their Relations with other Stakeholders

Refugee groups have had little influence until recently on either mainstream NGOs or government in Canada. Fewer than 10 of the 100 organizations operating under the umbrella of the Canadian Council for Refugees are refugee-based (compared with one third of the membership and executive committee of the British Refugee Council). This situation started to change when a representative of the Ghana Refugee Union (a refugee-based organization) was voted on to the executive committee. A resolution was also passed to explore ways of increasing the participation of refugee organizations in the Council. In this way, refugee organizations are emerging as a viable constituency.

With the NGOs the initial stage was more of a client-helper relationship. When we first attended the Canadian Council for Refugees, we were there on that basis but soon we were on the same level as other NGOs. The difference is they have a lot of [funding], we don't. So, on that issue we are not equal but on most other issues, we are equal. I think now, after this last meeting [May 1992], they are committed to refugee participation. Earlier there had been much debated about whether refugees -- by which I mean refugee-based communities -- should participate. Whether it was their function or not.... But a resolution was passed by the end of the session to examine refugee participation and with

[one of our representatives] on the executive committee, it is an indication that they are serious (representative of Ghana Refugee Union).

Refugees are also developing into a legitimate constituency in the eyes of government.

In the initial stages [interactions with government officials] it was full of resentment but it was part of a long term strategy. People take time to accept new ideas, also being black from a third world country meant they had certain stereotypes. But we kept on and we succeeded in organizing a series of cultural meetings with IRB and our community to highlight certain cultural differences. From there it evolved on its own and we had a good relationship (representative of Ghana Refugee Union).

The emergence of these groups is starting to challenge the priorities of the established NGOs. It is important to note, however, that the process of mobilization of refugees is at an early stage when compared with the UK.

The refugee community in the UK is the most active. It represents a strong constituency in the eyes of both government and NGOs. One hundred and fifty such organizations operate in London alone, working with local government authorities and other groups to provide housing, welfare, counselling and other services to refugee communities. Some forty of these organizations are members of the British Refugee Council (which employs many refugees) and one third of the executive committee comprises representatives of refugee organizations. A study of 27 refugee organizations

(Salinas et al, 1987) found that the development of these self help groups started in the early 1980's. A follow up study (Majika, 1991) found they had been able to increase their power, presence and funding.

This community is not totally united, however, and dissident groups have adopted an alternative route to the BRC by emphasizing self-help and autonomy. One example is the Refugee Forum set up in 1984 as an alternative to the institutionalized refugee agencies which failed "to allow refugees to speak for themselves or be part of the decision and policy making process" (The Refugee Challenge, document published by the Refugee Forum, 1985: 3). The Forum is openly confrontational towards the NGO sector and the government, and advocates helping individuals facing deportation to go "underground" illegally.

The established institutions have created a divide and rule mechanism.

They have been part of the problem -- they cannot be part of the solution.... The British Refugee Council does not give out the money. They take everything and just throw out a few crumbs here and there. And they select who -- they actually create refugee groups. That is why you find such division. The British Refugee Council is funded by the government and it cannot bite the hand that feeds it. Refugees were dependent on the established organizations. The begging bowl mentality. Now they are in control of their own destinies (director of Refugee Forum).

This form of challenge has, in turn, been countered by members of the established NGO community, on the grounds that it is divisive and counterproductive.

Refugees in Denmark receive far more systematic and programmed support than elsewhere. In this way, their role, responsibilities and rights during and after determination are clear: they are the clients of the system (Steen, 1993).

There are always people ... who want more. it is our job to figure that out, to see the reality of their needs. If they really need something, then we can get it for them. But some say "We need this, we need that" when they don't really. When they ask for something there has to be some background, so I know ... whether it is good for them (Refugee Council employee).

This practice disenfranchises refugees because they are not equal participants: both reception and settlement programs produce asymmetrical power positions between refugees and hosts (Steen, 1993).

When refugees come here, we take away all initiative but afterwards we expect them to use their initiative.... They are in a completely new culture and system and you take everything away from them and tell them they have to obey strict rules and then, at the same time, they are told to do the best they can for themselves (Danish Refugee Council employee).

There is none of the involvement of self help organizations found in the UK; ethnic based groups exist only for cultural activities and there is no tradition of political organization; nor are individual refugees employed in any meaningful numbers by the NGOs.

Table 1 compares the differences between three countries in terms of the structure of and relations between stakeholders. The Canadian domain appears to be the least organized because of decentralization and ambivalence among government and NGO stakeholders; and in the emergence of refugee stakeholders whose active participation is starting to introduce new values into the domain. The UK domain displays under-organization in terms of the number of organizations and lack of convergent values in NGO and refugee sectors, although all three groups display more organization than their Canadian counterparts. The Danish domain appears the most organized owing to centralization, convergent values, and clear demarcation of roles within and between government and NGO sectors -- but the refugees have been denied equal participation.

- Table 1 near here -

A Model of Underorganization

These differences can be incorporated into a model of different forms of underorganization. In Gray's (1989) terms, an underorganized domain can be defined as one that is still struggling with the earlier stages of domain development, and

characterized either by a lack of consensus around the legitimate stakeholders and/or a lack of common values. Gray's model suggests that underorganization can take a variety of forms -- the exclusion of legitimate stakeholders, a lack of convergence around mutual values, or both. A domain with agreement on neither stakeholders nor values can be said to be unorganized. A contested domain is characterized by agreement on participating stakeholders but a lack of shared values because stakeholders are divided by conflicting views. A domain is partial if values are shared but potential players are excluded (table 2).

- Table 2 near here -

The Canadian refugee system displays both an absence of convergent values and a lack of clarity concerning legitimate stakeholders. The ambivalence of government and NGO stakeholders reflects their attempts to wrestle with conflicting values and legitimate stakeholders. For the government, it concerns the dilemma between humanitarianism and sovereignty; for the NGOs it concerns the struggle between the old paternalism and the new approach in which refugees are equal partners.

Government, NGOs and refugee organizations are all accepted players in the UK. These players have, however, radically differing views concerning their obligations to refugees. The government is united in its primary goal of strict border controls, which brings it directly into conflict with the other two stakeholder groups. The NGO sector has to juggle working with the government and opposition to it. The refugee

organizations are split between those who work with the established agencies and those who advocate an alternative, and sometimes illegal, route. This lack of convergent values manifests itself in challenges within and between stakeholder groups in a contested domain.

In many respects, the Danish domain seems organized until one considers the exclusion of the refugees: it is a partially organized domain. In fact, the legitimation of refugees as equal partners would probably be a powerful disorganizing force since they would undoubtedly challenge the existing values of limited entry, integration, and client-passivity that currently shape the domain.

Given that refugee policies ostensibly exist to provide protection to those individuals determined to be refugees (conflict with the control of state borders notwithstanding), criteria concerning the rights of individuals seeking and awarded refugee can be compared across the three countries (summarized in table 3).

- Table 3 near here -

For the most part Canada, the least organized domain, appears to have the most impressive record from the point of view of refugees' rights. The rate of acceptance is highest in Canada; the UK is not far behind but a large percentage of acceptances are granted under the Exceptional Leave to Remain (ELR) categories which accords the individual fewer rights than full refugee status. The average process time is shortest in Canada, thereby reducing the period of time that asylum seekers remain in limbo. It is

the only country with the legal right to an oral hearing. It has independent decision makers, provides the right to legal counsel, allows a limited right to appeal, lets refugee claimants work, grants them access to medical care, education, legal aid and welfare payments. The other countries make some but not all of these provisions. Once refugee status is awarded, individuals receive immigrant status in Canada and can immediately apply for family reunification. Denmark has a similar system, whereas the UK places certain restrictions on refugees and even more on those granted exceptional leave to remain. Canada has a large quota program and has not resisted implementing the third safe country rule because of refoulement concerns.

So, if refugee systems exist to protect refugees, the least organized domain seems to be the most effective. Why? By reconceptualizing "effectiveness" in terms of relative influence on the domain, we are in a better position to understand this phenomenon. Normally, government stakeholders are the most powerful because they have the authority to legislate, access to privileged information, and control over resources. In an organized domain, where the "rules of the game" are specified, government stakeholders are best placed to ensure that those specifications reflect their concerns about security and sovereignty, rather than refugee rights which are usually of greater concern to NGOs and refugees. Disorganization may, then, create a space in which less powerful stakeholders can influence events in a way not possible in domains where rules, processes and structures are more clearly defined. This view is compatible with

work on the ability of institutional entrepreneurs to shape their environment in immature fields (Di Maggio, 1988; Oliver, 1990); and structuration which maintains that "all social actors, no matter how lowly, have some degree of penetration of the social forms that oppress" (Giddens, 1979: 2), although that task is made harder the more entrenched social forms become (Lawrence, 1993).

Conclusions

This study raises some interesting questions for future research concerning the political dynamics of domain development. Clearly, the legitimation of stakeholders and the development of congruent values are linked. Bringing new stakeholders into the domain may well challenge the values that previously defined it. To put it simply, the fewer and more homogenous the stakeholders, the more likely values will converge. Allowing new stakeholders into the domain is problematic for dominant stakeholders because they may try to redefine it. Accordingly, they often try to control the access or, failing that, the participation of new stakeholders, as has been noted in other human service organizations (Warren, 1974; Pinderhughes, 1983; Hasenfeld & Chesler, 1989). These political dynamics call into question two taken-for-granted assumptions that pervade the literature on interorganizational relations: that organization is preferable to fragmentation; and that cooperation is preferable to conflict (e.g. Gray, 1989; Nathan & Mitroff, 1991; Alter & Hage, 1993). On the contrary, organization may entrench dominant interests; and cooperation may mask that entrenchment (Warren et al, 1974).

Empirical results suggest disorder may be more creative than previously thought (Selsky, 1991; Westley, forthcoming). It may provide a more receptive structure of political opportunity (McAdam et al, 1987). A fragmented, unorganized domain may be easier for less powerful stakeholders to enter and influence because the contradictions and tensions give rise to a dialectical process of change (McGuire, 1988; Chua & Clegg, 1989). A partially organized domain may be the most difficult for less powerful stakeholders to enter because the "rules of the game" that exclude them have been institutionalized. So, refugees experience a harder time in staking out a place as an equal player in Denmark than in Canada, even though both countries are renowned for their humanitarian treatment of refugees.

Similarly, conflict may mean that "upstart" newcomers are successfully redefining the domain to reflect the needs of a broader constituency, as in the case of the UK where refugee organizations challenge both government controls and NGO paternalism. This enables us to explain Knoke's "unexpected" finding. Knoke wonders why opposition groups should "promote an association's success in its public policy influence goals ... facing opposition seems more critical than alliance formation (Knoke, 1990; p. 213). A more productive way of looking at this puzzle, however, might be to ask whether opposition results from influence -- that the fact of a potential new entrant exerting influence may engender opposition, while cooperation may reflect successful moves by existing stakeholders to shut out such efforts.

Ironically, while many writers have criticized internal organizational structure, and advocated disorganization, decentralization and disorder (e.g. Pascale, 1990; Peters, 1988), the work on interorganizational structures remains wedded to an "organizing" paradigm that criticizes fragmentation and conflict. This is not to say that organization and collaboration are necessarily bad -- obviously they are not -- but, clearly, underorganization and conflict warrant closer examination. In particular, we need in a more explicit analysis of power and powerlessness. While writers have acknowledged the importance of power to domain development (e.g. Gricar & Brown, 1981; McCann, 1983; Gray & Hay, 1986), political processes per se have not been a major feature of the research, particularly those whereby powerless groups influence domains. Since the most likely impetus for change comes, not from the dominant stakeholders who have nothing to gain from it, but from the periphery (Leblici et al, 1991) i.e. from the arrival of previously unknown, relatively powerless players, this is a significant omission. When we understand how the powerless exercise power, we will be in a better position to understand and evaluate the social construction and development of domains.

Appendix 1: Country Profiles*

Canada first formalized procedures in the 1976 Immigration Act which also provided for the private sponsorship of refugees. It led to the sponsorship of 60,000 Vietnamese Boat People, and earned Canada the UNHCR's Nansen medal in 1986. In 1987, Bill C-55 (which took 14 months to pass) introduced a new system to speed up procedures. Also the Singh decision, a Supreme Court ruling in 1985, that granted refugees the right to an oral hearing, and had to be incorporated into the new procedures. Provision was also made for returning claimants to any Safe Third Country they had passed through. The Cabinet was expected to draw up a list of safe countries, but never did so. Following a claim for asylum, a two-stage hearing (since collapsed into one) is conducted by members of the Immigration and Refugee Board to consider the claim. In the event of a negative decision, the claimant can appeal to the Federal Court on technical grounds and with leave to do so. Refugees also come to Canada as part of a quota program. A large number of NGOs are involved in lobbying, protection and settlement. The umbrella body -- the Canadian Council for Refugees -- was created in 1978 and has retained a very loose, decentralized structure linking over 100 NGOs across the country. Refugee groups have recently started to organize, gaining representation on the Council's executive committee, proposing resolutions to increase refugee participation, and helping to create the Montreal Coalition of Refugees.

The UK has never formalized the rights of refugees in law and, as result, determination procedures have grown in an ad hoc way and vary according to the

applicant's status on making his or her application. Individuals who apply on arrival request asylum from the immigration officer (part of the Home Office), who carries out an initial examination. If the officer feels that a return to a safe third country may be warranted, the information will be immediately forwarded to the Asylum Division for a quick decision. The case is then turned over to the the Asylum Division -- a sub division of the Home Office -- for determination. The claimant has no right to an oral hearing but may be interviewed in the course of providing information. Two categories of asylum exist in the UK: full refugee status and exceptional leave to remain, which confer different rights. If asylum is denied, only those who have the legal right to be in the country have a formal right of appeal, to an independent immigration adjudicator. There is no settlement program in the UK, although the government provides funding to NGOs for some settlement services. The central player is the British Refugee Council -- a government-funded umbrella body. Refugees are relatively organized there are 150 refugee organizations in London alone. Many work closely with the established NGOs; others have established an alternative self-help route.

In Denmark, following an eight-fold increase in the number of claimants, the 1983 Aliens Act, initially one of the most liberal policies in Europe, was amended to allow returns to a third safe third country (which reduced numbers by two-thirds). Claimants enter one of 60 reception centres run by the Danish Red Cross on behalf of the Directorate for Aliens, where accommodation, food, clothing and an allowance are

provided. Refugees are not allowed to work or have access to the regular education system, but may leave the centre with permission. If the Directorate does not grant asylum, the case is referred to the Refugee Board, an independent tribunal chaired by a judge, with representatives from the Danish Refugee Council and the Ministries of Justice, Social Affairs and Foreign Affairs, and the Bar Association. The Refugee Board conducts a hearing at which the claimant is normally present. Its decision is final. Successful claimants have permanent residence and the same rights as Danish citizens. Denmark also resettles around 500 quota refugees each year. Once granted asylum, the individual is transferred to the Danish Refugee Council's 18 month integration program, funded by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Individuals are obliged to attend the program to qualify for the various services and allowances. A counsellor helps find permanent housing and jobs (only about 5 percent secure jobs by the end of 18 months), and language lessons are provided. At the end of 18 months, individuals are free to live where they want. No other NGOs are involved, nor are there any active refugee organizations.

* These summaries relate to the situation in each country in 1992, drawn from the following sources: Immigration & Refugee Board, 1988, Annual Reports, 1989-91; Matas, 1989; Young, 1990; Amnesty International, 1991; British Refugee Council, The Refugee Advisor's Handbook; Danish Red Cross, Welcome to the Danish Red Cross and Asylum Work of the Danish Red Cross; Danish Refugee Council, 1989, 1990, Annual Report, 1991.

TABLE 1
A Comparison of the Refugee Systems
in Canada, the United Kingdom, and Denmark

	<i>Canada</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Denmark</i>
Government stakeholders	Decentralized Ambivalent	Centralized United	Centralized United
NGO stakeholders	Decentralized Alliance	Somewhat centralized Federation	Very centralized Corporation
Refugees stakeholders	Emergent	Active	Disenfranchised
Government/NGO relations	Independent	Schizophrenic	Contractual
NGO/refugee relations	Emergent constituency	Constituencies and dissidents	Client
Government/refugee relations	Emergent constituency	Constituencies and dissidents	Client
Domain development	Least organized	Somewhat organized	Most organized

TABLE 2
Forms of Underorganization

		Convergent Values	
		Yes	No
Relevant Stakeholders	Legitimated	Towards Domain Organization	Contested Domain [UK]
	Not Legitimated	Partial Domain [Denmark]	Unorganized Domain [Canada]

TABLE 3
Comparison of Determination Procedures
and Rights of Claimants (1992)

	<i>Canada</i>	<i>United Kingdom</i>	<i>Denmark</i>
Acceptance rate (1989-1991 average)			
Refugee status	70%	22%	
Other categories	7%	53%	
Total	77%	75%	45-50 ^a
Average processing time (1991)	6-10 months	14-20 months	9-18 months
Legal right to oral hearing	Yes	No	No
Decision maker	Independent	Government	Independent
Right to counsel	Yes	Yes	Yes
Right to appeal	Limited	Limited	No
Work permit during determination	Yes	After 6 months	Not until claim approved
Legal aid during determination	Yes	Yes	Yes
Medical care during determination	Yes	Yes	Yes
Education until claim	Yes	Yes	Not until claim approved
Welfare payments	Yes	90% of regular welfare payments	Special allowance during determination
Status following determination	Landed immigrant	Refugee or ELR ^b status	Refugee
Right to apply for permanent residence	Immediate	4 years for refugees, 7 years for ELR	Immediate
Family reunification	Immediate	Refugee: immediate, ELR: after 4 years	Immediate
Regular quota program	Yes (13,000 + p.a.)	No	Yes (500 p.a.)
Penalties for carriers	Yes	Yes	Yes
Third safe country legislation	Yes but not implemented	Yes	Yes

a. Figures are not officially compiled.

b. ELR = Exceptional Leave to Remain.

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Note

1. The terminology used here is as follows: asylum seeker or refugee claimant is used to denote an individual seeking asylum; refugee refers to an individual granted asylum whether as a refugee or some other category. Determination refers to the process whereby an individual's status is ascertained. NGOs (and lawyers) who represent and advise claimants concerning their rights in this process are known as protection agencies. Settlement refers to the services provided to refugees to help them adapt to the new country. It is (at least partially) funded by government but administered by NGOs in all three countries.



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Hardy, C

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