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THE FAITHFUL RISE UP: SPLIT IDENTIFICATION AND AN UNLIKELY CHANGE EFFORT

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Through a qualitative study of the emergence of unlikely activism from committed members of the Catholic Church, we examine how identification can trigger and shape a change effort. We uncover how crafting "split identification" allows members to retain their identification with normative aspects of an institution, while disidentifying with, and seeking to change, organizational aspects. Our process model traces how members split their identification, attempt to repair the split by seeking change, and respond when their claimed identification is challenged. We offer implications for identification theory and for literature on change originating inside organizations and institutions.

Keep the Faith, Change the Church.

-Voice of the Faithful motto

In January 2002, the *Boston Globe* published the first of a series of articles on the sexual abuse of minors by priests in the Archdiocese of Boston of the Roman Catholic Church.[1] In the following weeks, accusations of abuse by more than 70 priests were revealed and documents released showing that the Church hierarchy had known of some of the accusations for as long as 30 years, corresponded repeatedly with accused priests, and transferred them among parishes (Robinson, 2002). The ensuing crisis shook the Church deeply, exposing it to questions about its governance and stirring a crisis of faith for some members. A few dozen grieving laity began gathering to discuss their reactions in a suburban church basement. Within five months, the group grew into a 20,000-member organization, with membership drawn from across the country and around the globe. The group's name, Voice of the Faithful (VOTF), reflects one of its core goals of enabling laypeople to play a part in the Church's governance, thereby altering the passivity that members came to see as a root cause of the abuse and cover-up.

VOTF's emergence is particularly notable because its members come from the very core of the Church. Fully 93 percent of VOTF members were born into the Church, and nearly two-thirds attend Catholic Mass weekly, twice the level of the general Catholic population (Colbert, 2006). Their motto—"Keep the Faith, Change the Church"—captures their desire to remain deeply committed spiritually while aiming to change elements of the Church's governance structures. Although the founders intended their approach to be one of loyal insiders helping to renew an institution in crisis, Church leaders greeted it as provocative, because they teach that the faith and Church are inseparable (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007). Initially a temporary vehicle for organizing a lay response, VOTF became an enduring organization that continues to sustain a membership of 30,000, support worldwide chapters and a sophisticated web presence, and engage in tactical use of the secular media. For some, participation in VOTF enabled them to re-

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[1] The Archdiocese of Boston is the fourth largest archdiocese in the United States, with about 1.8 million Catholics within its boundaries. In 2002 it was led by Cardinal Law.

main Catholic rather than leave the Church. As one member put it, "If we didn't have some mechanism for seeking justice, I don't know if I could stay in this Church right now" (Paulsen, 2002).

We were intrigued by how exit from the Church was forestalled by the unusual combination of loyalty and "voice" (speaking up to address concerns [Hirschman, 1970]) exhibited in VOTF's change efforts. In particular, we sought to understand how VOTF's members crafted and sustained this combination, how it emerged from their relationship with the Church, and how it also altered the nature of that relationship over time. The identification literature provided the conceptual tools to investigate the nature of VOTF members' attachment to the Church and to probe how it might be realigned when it was threatened. This literature suggests that those who identify with an organization or other entity typically conform with and defend it at a time of crisis (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Dukerich, Golden, & Shortell, 2002; Dutton, Dukerich, & Harquail, 1994) but that their commitment may also make them valued participants in change processes (Ashford & Barton, 2007; Fiol, 2002).

Our inductive analysis of interviews, press accounts, and VOTF documents revealed a process model in which specific mechanisms explained how members (1) crafted a "split identification" with the Church, (2) attempted to repair it by redeploying the Church's own beliefs, practices, and teachings, and finally, (3) sustained split identification in the face of a response from Church authorities that forestalled swift repair.

Our analysis makes several contributions to theory. First, it builds theory on the crafting of split identification. Split identification is a way of relating to an entity that involves cognitively separating elements of a target of identification that are worthy of continued identification from other elements that demand "disidentification" (defining oneself in opposition to a target). In our case, split identification involves continued identification with normative aspects of the Church, including the teachings and practices of the faith, along with disidentification with organizational aspects, including Church governance structures. Going beyond "ambivalent identification" (Meyerson & Scully, 1995; Pratt, 2000a) or "schizo-identification" (Dukerich, Kramer, & McLean Parks, 1998; Elsbach, 1999), which accommodate mixed feelings about an individual's relationship to an entity, split identification is a mechanism for repairing identification. Through splitting, individuals can retain a high level of identification with valued aspects of an entity while calling for other aspects to be reformed or restored.

Our account shows how split identification was actively and collectively pursued and reflected emotional and behavioral, as well as cognitive, responses to triggering circumstances. Although the sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church may constitute an extreme case of circumstances triggering split identification, other organizational circumstances—such as those involving fraud, discontent, an unpopular policy, or some other potential conflict, perhaps not of the intensity or singularity of a crisis—can similarly trigger such a response. For example, in the months leading up to accounting firm Arthur Andersen's collapse, employees were surprisingly loyal, even rallying in support of the firm while distancing themselves from leaders who were being investigated for their involvement in the Enron scandal (Eichenwald & Glater, 2002; Toffler & Reingold, 2003). Soldiers may support the military and its values (honor, courage, and defense of country) while distancing themselves from certain military practices (particular campaigns or tactics). Or doctors may express "disquiet over . . . for-profit hospitals," and object to "corporatizing" their governance processes (Wiener, 2000: 32), while remaining firmly identified with the norms of good medical care.

A second contribution of our analysis is that it answers a call to explore the "subtleties and complexities of . . . identification and disidentification" (Pratt, 1998: 200) and to move beyond "snapshot images of identification" (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008: 340) by taking a process view and tracing how a split identification and efforts to repair it play out over time. We examined not just how split identification emerged, but also how it evolved and endured when there was no ready way to suture the split. Identification and disidentification have been portrayed as having distinct antecedents (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001; Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004) and distinct trajectories (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001; Pratt, 2000a) and, when both are present, as an unstable mix. Unlike depictions of schizo-identification as a fragile or even pathological state[2] (Dukerich et al., 1998: 250), our depiction suggests that crafting and sustaining split identification have some benefits, enabling coping and continued involvement (rather than exit) and offering a potentially useful source of corrective feedback (Hirschman, 1970) for an entity.

Finally, a focus on split identification draws at-

[2] We also distinguish our use of splitting from the psychological use of the term, which refers to an unconscious defense mechanism by which individuals separate related but contradictory aspects of experience.

tention to how identification, not just interests or identity, can mobilize individuals to participate collectively in a change effort and points to new ways to think about processes for insider change agency, adding to a growing literature. Whereas others have emphasized the instrumentality of change agents' tactics and the significance of interests in mobilizing change (Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004; Reay, Golden-Biddle, & GermAnn, 2006), recent work on social movements has shown that expressive and instrumental tactics are intertwined in change efforts based in identity (e.g., Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Our work extends this view by suggesting that identification shapes change tactics in distinct ways. Change efforts rooted in identification may begin expressively and come to take on a more targeted and instrumental cast, especially if split identification is challenged. Further, though identification can make some change actions particularly effective because they are deeply aligned with an organization or institution, it can also delimit the actions a change effort can attempt and tolerate.

IDENTIFICATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

In the organizational literature, identification has been understood as both a state (of being identified with an entity) and a process (of becoming identified with an entity) (Kreiner, Hollensbe, & Sheep, 2006). When identification is treated as a state, individual and organizational identities align (Whetten, 2007), so that individuals feel a sense of "oneness" with their organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) and use similar descriptors for self and organization (Dutton et al., 1994). Identification as a process is depicted as a reciprocal interaction between the individual and the target of identification (Ashforth et al., 2008) that occurs as an individual discovers affinity with the target or seeks to alter his or her identity to align with that of the target (Pratt, 1998). Treated as a process, identification can be defined as occurring "when an individual's beliefs about his or her organization become self-referential or self-defining" (Pratt, 1998: 172).

Our study draws on work that suggests that identification has both state and process characteristics (Kreiner et al., 2006), involving periods of apparent stability interspersed with episodes of realignment (Ashforth et al., 2008). Identification as process does not end when an individual has "become" identified but instead is "social, retrospective, and ongoing" (Pratt, 1998: 180). Our study tracks how identification may be reconsidered and altered as a result of an intense and abrupt change in the conditions surrounding identification.

Identification with a Religious Institution

Individuals can identify with a number of types of entities and a number of levels within them. These include employing organizations (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Rousseau, 1998), voluntary associations (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001), organizational "systems" or "forms" (Dukerich et al., 2002; Foreman & Whetten, 2002), professions (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt, Rockman, & Kaufmann, 2006), occupations (Kreiner et al., 2006), work groups (Fiol, Pratt, & O'Connor, 2009), and dyadic role relationships (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007). Scholars have long recognized that identification need not be based on an employment relationship or even organizational membership (Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001; Pratt, 1998). This rich vein of work invites further exploration of the processes and consequences of identification in which organizational membership is not the sole defining feature of the relationship, so that the nature, intensity, and duration of involvement with an entity may be more directly examined (Whetten, 2007).

We examined identification with an institution. Institutions encompass both a logic or belief system that guides action (Friedland & Alford, 1991) and associated governance structures (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In stable times, institutional beliefs and governance structures align, but events can dislocate them, as occurs when a merger brings competing logics into association (Thornton, 2004; Thornton, Jones, & Kury, 2005). The Catholic Church offered a setting in which we could examine individuals' identification with the religious beliefs, practices, and meanings that undergird Catholicism as an institution (Dillon, 1999; Wilde, 2004), which we refer to collectively as the normative aspects of the institution, and the organizational expression of these beliefs in the structures and governance of the Church; we refer to the latter as the organizational aspects of the institution. This approach follows a long-standing juxtaposition of normative and structural elements of institutions (Scott, 1987), recently reemphasized in studies of levers for institutional change (e.g., Maguire et al., 2004).

Elsewhere, religious faith, and the expression of spirituality in workplaces, have been described as having parallels with identification (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003; Ashforth & Vaidyanath, 2002). Organizations can direct individuals' adoption of religious beliefs through "sensebreaking" (challenging beliefs to invite exploration) and "sensegiving" (offering organizationally sanctioned beliefs) (Ashforth & Pratt, 2003; Pratt, 2000b) and collectively validate those beliefs (Ashforth & Vaidyanath,

2002). We regarded VOTF members' relationship to the Catholic Church through their faith as a form of identification, differing perhaps in degree, but not in kind, from identification with other entities portrayed in the organizational literature. The element of belief differentiates identification from concepts such as commitment. Pratt explained that "commitment [is] equated with the 'acceptance' of organizational values and beliefs (Meyer & Allen, 1991), whereas identification is equated with 'sharing' or 'possessing' organizational values and beliefs" (1998: 178) In the theological literature, "faith as response" is similarly differentiated from "faith as belief," with the latter requiring a church to create a communal sense of identity with which members associate (Johnson, 2004: vii).

Identification Processes

Empirical studies of identification have yielded a number of processes associated with becoming identified with an entity (Ibarra, 1999; Pratt et al., 2006), restoring or altering identification when challenges arise (Fiol, 2002), or resisting efforts to manage identification (Pratt, 2000a). Such accounts have uncovered both top-down processes, such as sensebreaking and sensegiving (Pratt, 2000a), that leaders use to manage members' identification, and bottom-up processes, such as "enacting" experimental identities (Ibarra, 1999) as a means to try on new, concrete ways of relating to an organization (Fiol, 2002). These processes can work in a cycle, with individual enactment and organizational sensemaking validating and reinforcing a prototypical way of identifying with an organization (Ashforth et al., 2008).

Despite rich theorization of identification processes and their illustration with compelling empirical accounts, scholars have continued to note that "surprisingly little research has attempted to capture . . . [the] dynamics" of identification (Ashforth et al., 2008: 340). Notably, attention to how those who are already identified with an entity cope with challenges to their identification has been lacking. Prior work has suggested that the nature of triggering events may influence how identification is altered. A gradual erosion of identification differs from a dramatic break through crisis or betrayal (Pratt, 1998: 200). When organizations violate actions and beliefs that they have "sacralized," they produce profound consequences for member identification:

> To actually behave contrary to the sacred—a bank defrauding its customers, a doctor molesting his patients— . . . presents a unique crisis for organizations in that the very fabric that helps bind key stakeholders to the organization . . . is severely torn. (Harrison, Ashforth, & Corley, 2009: 244)

Recent models explaining the dynamics following organizational transgression focus on top-down sensemaking acts by management as they "confess" and "repent" (Harrison et al., 2009; Pfarrer, Decelles, Smith, & Taylor, 2008). Our analysis explores bottom-up responses to organizational transgression, offering a way to probe other aspects of the cycle of identification beyond sensegiving and to attend to situations in which sensegiving efforts may be unsatisfactory to their recipients. We answer the call to explain "how identification waxes and wanes as individuals and their contexts evolve" (Kreiner et al., 2006: 1032).

Broader Consequences of Identification

The identification literature offers a number of alternative accounts of how individuals cope when differences exist, or suddenly arise, between their beliefs and how a target of identification manifests those beliefs. For example, they may "deidentify," or decrease their level of identification (Fiol, 2002), which ultimately results in exit (Pratt, 2000a). Or they may disidentify (define themselves as in opposition to attributes they believe define the target [Elsbach & Bhattacharya, 2001]) and simultaneously identify, a process resulting in schizoidentification (Dukerich et al., 1998; Elsbach, 1999). For example, Elsbach described how a "policy wonk" legislative staffer may identify with policy ideals but disidentify with political maneuvering to advance those ideals (1999). Schizoidentification has so far been regarded as an "adaptive cognitive response" (Elsbach, 1999: 183), but it is closely related to ambivalent identification (Kreiner & Ashforth, 2004), which can manifest in behaviors that alternate between periods of active and no engagement with an entity (Pratt, 2000a).

At times such responses may not be adequate. Identification can be "infused with emotions" (Pratt, 2000a: 485), making individual cognitive adaptation unsatisfactory. It can represent "considerable investments of time, energy, and more" (Kreiner et al., 2006: 1052), making voluntary separation unrealistic. Accounting for such intensity suggests that understanding identification following a transgression may be less about how people weaken or shed their attachments, and more about how they cope by attempting to retain or restore identification. Although identification is frequently associated with a range of outcomes related to compliance—such as resilience, assimilation to

top-down change, member sense of well-being, commitment, motivation, involvement, positive affect, and prosocial behavior (Sparato & Chatman, 2007)—it is worth exploring the dynamics by which identification may motivate individuals to "speak truth to power" (Ashford & Barton, 2007: 240), perhaps instigating an effort to change their organization or institution. This investigation will amplify understanding of the nature and consequences of identification and illuminate a little-considered pathway to change.

METHODS

Research Setting and Approach

The Catholic Church has many institutional elements that bind members to it, including a hierarchical governance system that is deeply legitimated, clear boundaries and roles for members, taken-for-granted norms governing regular interaction, and valued, shared routines (Greenwood & Suddaby, 2006; Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2003; Scott, 2001), making data from this setting appropriate for examining the mechanisms of identification. Because these elements also contribute to institutional persistence, this setting is also appropriate for studying the genesis and mechanisms of an unlikely change effort—a type of effort that may arise only occasionally.

Other organizational scholars have looked at church settings to explain challenges of maintaining identification (Creed, 2003; Kreiner et al., 2006) or the genesis of change efforts (Plowman, Baker, Beck, Kulkarni, Solansky, & Travis, 2007). Many of these accounts have focused on marginalized members, those who either adopt positions that run counter to church beliefs, such as the acceptance of homosexuality (Creed, 2003) or ordination of women (Katzenstein, 1998), or who are weakly tied to the church and its core practices (Plowman et al., 2007). Our study uses a church setting to explore how core members—those who identify strongly with the Church but lack hierarchical power within it—seek changes that they see as aligned with core Church principles. We extend these findings to workplace and other settings outside of churches.

We undertook a case study approach (Yin, 2003) because we were most interested in understanding the processes that yielded and sustained VOTF's change efforts and in locating the specific mechanisms underlying the processes (Gutierrez, 2006). We focused primarily on the three-year period from January 2002, when the first stories on the crisis broke in the *Boston Globe*, to December 2004. By the end of 2004, VOTF had the features of an established entity, including multiple chapters, stable internal governance structures, and a recognized collective identity (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007). We augmented our case by collecting additional data in 2008.

Data Sources

We collected data from three sources—newspaper articles, interviews, and VOTF archival documents—to obtain a rich understanding of VOTF's emergence and its context. Information from these sources often overlapped, which helped establish the sequence of events and revealed recurring themes. Table 1 summarizes how the data from these sources, plus additional sources described below, were used in our analysis.

Newspaper articles. We collected all newspaper articles mentioning either the sexual abuse crisis or VOTF that appeared in four newspapers for the three-year period. To obtain a range of coverage, we chose both regional and national secular sources (the *Boston Globe* and *New York Times*), and regional and national religious sources (the *Pilot*, which is the newspaper of the Boston Archdiocese, and the *National Catholic Reporter*). A total of 2,729 articles on the crisis and/or VOTF were collected from these sources and imported into NVivo qualitative analysis software. Figure 1 documents VOTF's rise and continued presence in the news media by showing the monthly count of its mentions in the four newspapers.

Interviews. We conducted 17 semistructured interviews with founders, members, and close observers of VOTF. Interviews lasted from one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours and were recorded and transcribed. All but one of these interviews was conducted during a four-month period in 2004; informal interviews with a key informant (a founder) began in mid 2002 and continued throughout the case study period, alerting us to additional sources of data and guiding our emergent understanding of the case. Our interview guide (presented in the Appendix) probed interviewees' involvement in VOTF, the group's founding, and its goals, strategies, and evolution since then, including prompts about specific events and interpretations from the media data. Most interviewees were present at the early meetings and had remained involved, allowing us to gather information on the group's earliest days and interviewees' reactions to the crisis.

The key informant identified other initial potential interviewees for us, pointing us to several other founders who had been present at the first meeting and remained active in the group. This group of interviewees was expanded through "snowballing"

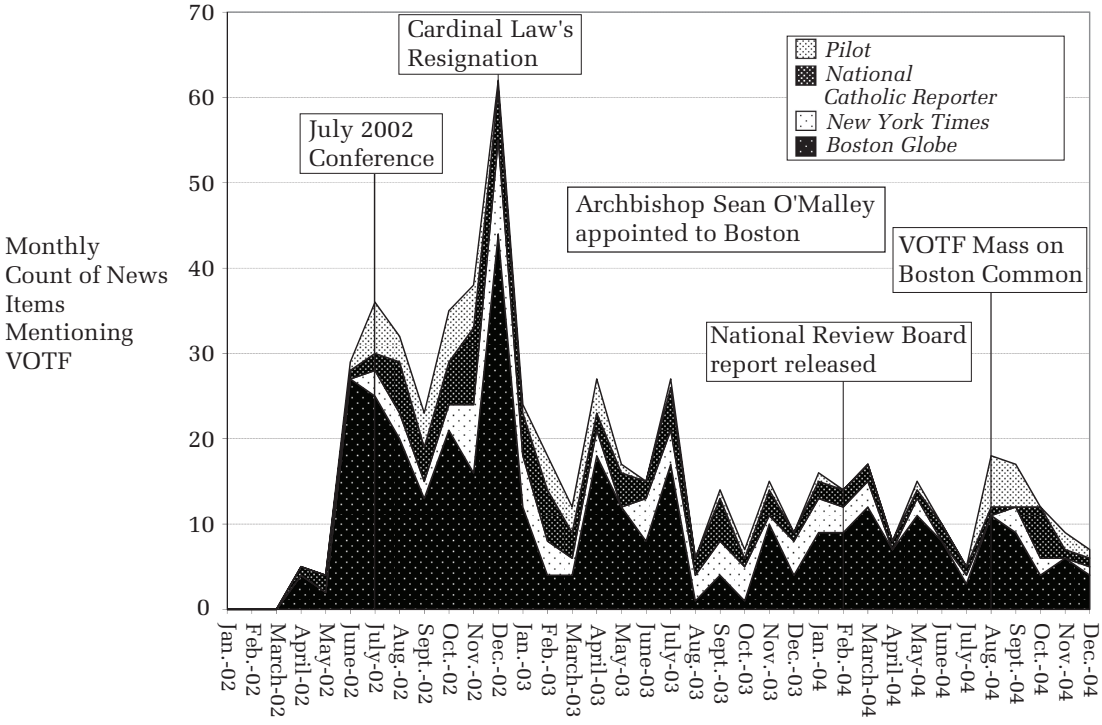
TABLE 1
Description of Data

Type and Dates	Amount	Use in Analysis
Newspaper articles		
All articles mentioning VOTF or the crisis in four newspapers (regional + national, secular + Catholic) between January 2002 and December 2004.	2,729 articles	Assess frequency and intensity of coverage on VOTF. Observe the corresponding intensity of coverage of VOTF in relation to key events. Track the rise of VOTF as distinct entity and its emergence as a media source. (See Figure 1.) Establish timeline of key events in unfolding of crisis. Add alternative paths, mentioned or theoretically possible, at each juncture. (See Table 2.) Articles were coded to understand how VOTF positioned itself and how others, including the Church hierarchy, portrayed its activities. (See quotes.)
Primary interviews		
Interviews with founders, members, and observers. March–July 2004.	Seventeen semistructured interviews (1 1/2 to 2 1/2 hours each)	Open coding yielded themes around Responses to the abuse revelations and efforts to cope. Reasoning behind VOTF goals and connection to crafting a split identification. Use of institutional practices and teachings in the change effort.
VOTF documents		
VOTF-produced reports, working papers, press releases, materials used to establish parish affiliates, first two annual reports, meeting minutes, leaders' speeches, and other documents. 2002–2008.	Several dozen	Reviewed to elaborate and confirm issues mentioned in interviews. Selectively coded for how institutional practices and teachings were used once these surfaced in interview coding. Primary source for VOTF goals, mission statement, and statement of beliefs.
Secondary sources (books)		
Book by VOTF cofounder (2004).	Two books	Elaboration on early meetings and further evidence of responses to the abuse revelations and efforts to cope.
Book containing survey data on VOTF members (2007).		Survey data supports interview and VOTF document data in showing members as highly identified with the Church.
Follow-up information		
Follow-up interviews with founder (two), two new leaders, and review of 2008 website and press.	Four interviews; additional documents and articles	Evidence of VOTF leaders' ongoing efforts in sustaining split identification. Updated account of VOTF accomplishments and ongoing challenges.

as each interviewee suggested others, with frequent overlap. We were aware that snowball sampling could tap a network of people who knew each other and held similar but not representative views. We discovered that, though a number of the interviewees did know each other from their involvement with VOTF, there had not been a preexisting network of parishioners; the process of creating a collective identity, particularly in response to a "moral shock," can create, rather than assume, a network (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 290–291). We were careful to ask for individuals who could give us a variety of perspectives, ensuring we spoke with at least one member working in support of each of VOTF's distinct goals or working groups. We also included among our interviewees some nonmembers of VOTF (i.e., two priests, one ex-priest, and one early member of VOTF who left the group) and two individuals who specifically mentioned struggling over the decision to join. We wanted to include interviews with leaders of the Church to trace their views, particularly to see how VOTF's attempted signaling of loyalty was received. After repeated efforts to gain interviews through the Archdiocese of Boston, we accepted that it would be difficult to get representatives of the Church hierarchy to speak with us. However, we also realized that the official Church position was publicly available, via reports and editorials in the *Pilot*. Accounts from other newspapers also provided the official Church reactions to VOTF and established the context in which VOTF emerged and operated.

VOTF materials and secondary sources. We collected a large number of VOTF reports and working papers, provided to us by interviewees or

FIGURE 1
VOTF in the News Media (January 2002 to December 2004)[a]



[a] News items include articles, editorials, and letters to the editor.

obtained from VOTF's website. We also drew upon material used to establish VOTF affiliates in parishes, particularly to trace the emerging rationale for why a reform group was needed and why it was consistent with the faith for loyal Catholics to become involved. Several interviewees directed us to secondary sources, including a book written by VOTF cofounder Jim Muller (Muller & Kenney, 2004) and one written by theologians and sociologists using survey and interview data from VOTF members and founders (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007). We used these to fill in our timeline and, later, to get more data on VOTF members and founders and their involvement with the Church.

Follow-up data. We collected additional data in 2008 in an effort to understand whether and how VOTF had sustained itself after the triggering crisis had disappeared from daily public attention. Again, we drew upon multiple sources: four interviews, newspaper sources, and VOTF's website and documents. We used these data to add to our analysis of the processes and consequences of VOTF's continued existence.

Data Analysis

Taking an inductive, theory-building approach, we moved back and forth between our data and our emerging theoretical understanding of VOTF's founding and actions (Locke, 2001; Miles & Huberman, 1994). We directed our attention to uncovering the processes by which the group came into being, acted, and evolved following the crisis. A process focus requires a temporal view, with attention to unfolding events, decisions, and actions (Langley, 2007) and an understanding of the mechanisms that underlie and explain these (Davis & Marquis, 2005). Our analysis progressed in several stages as we developed and refined these elements.

Timeline and case history. We first constructed a timeline of key events and developed a comprehensive understanding of the overall case by reading and coding all the newspaper articles. Given the large number of articles, we used a parsimonious "start list" of general codes ("action," "actor," "relationship," and "strategy") to perform initial coding (Whyte, 1984). This approach allowed us to trace actions by VOTF as well as others (e.g., the Church hierarchy) and directed our attention to explanations of their actions and interactions that appeared in press accounts. In a second round of coding, we elaborated and refined the codes (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

We plotted simple monthly counts of articles that mentioned VOTF (see Figure 1) and the abuse crisis itself. Spikes in these plots helped direct our atten-

tion to particular moments and events that might hold significance for a process model. We used these spikes in two ways. First, we identified the event, action, or decision that was associated with a spike and explored whether and how it was represented in the four newspapers. Second, we included some of these events in our specific questions to interviewees.

Table 2 contains excerpts from our timeline; entries were augmented with additional information as we analyzed our other data sources. As our analysis proceeded, we added the conceptual significance of each event for our process model.

Development of the process model. After constructing the case history, we read the interview transcripts in full and consulted the VOTF archival material. The interviews were open-coded (Locke, 2001) for core themes. In all rounds of coding the interview data, we named incidents and observations with conceptual categories and then, using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), compared these categories between occurrences and across interviews, refining the categories as we proceeded. We were interested both in how VOTF emerged and what its members considered its central strategies and accomplishments. We developed and explored the utility of several theoretical frames at this stage (Gutierrez, 2006). Through interaction with reviewers and other readers, we realized that our early frames were not helping us to fully illuminate certain puzzles that we and others found interesting in our data, which urged us to continue our theorizing (Locke, Golden-Biddle, & Feldman, 2008). In particular, we were surprised by the extent to which VOTF members appeared to be devoted members of the Church and the degree to which they spoke of using practices and teachings of the Church in their efforts to bring about change within it.

Secondary data became available from a 2004 survey and interview study of VOTF (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007) that supported this observation about a strong relationship with the Church. Compared to a nationwide sample of lay Catholics, VOTF members were more likely to name the Church as the most important, or among the most important, parts of their lives (62 percent, as opposed to 44 percent). VOTF members attended Mass more frequently (66 percent attended weekly, compared to 34 percent), were more likely to be registered in a parish (85 percent, compared to 68 percent), and were more likely to have attended Catholic elementary schools (70 percent, compared to 49 percent) (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007).

We returned to our data to perform further rounds of coding and comparison, now focused on understanding how interviewees portrayed their relationship with the Church and how this informed their change efforts. Our reading of the identification literature continued, and we moved back and forth between the interview data and theory on the development, change, and consequences of identification. New categories and themes emerged at this stage (for example, the importance to members of differentiating between Church doctrine and Church governance in their calls for change), and previously identified categories were seen in new light (for example, the use of the institution's own language was both strategic and expressive). The idea of splitting identification offered an overall process that tied together the themes that had emerged. VOTF members neither fully broke their attachment to the Church (deidentified), nor developed full opposition to it (disidentified). Instead, they appeared to need to remain identified but also to need to alter their attachment as a result of what the crisis revealed. We returned to the data once again to elaborate mechanisms associated with this splitting and relate these to the account of the evolution of VOTF and its context that we had initially developed. At this stage, we named our categories at a level of abstraction that supported a more generalizable process model (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Locke, 2001). As we wrote up our analysis, we theorized possible alternative paths (see column 3 in Table 2) that could have been taken at various points in time, to remind ourselves that the unfolding process was not simply deterministic and to add to its generalizability to other settings.

SPLIT IDENTIFICATION AND ITS ROLE IN SHAPING A CHANGE EFFORT

Our analyses revealed three main processes. First, early members *crafted a split identification* with the Church by discerning their relationship with its normative elements (Church teachings, beliefs, and practices) from their relationship with its organizational elements (governance structure and activities of members of the Church hierarchy). Second, working as an emergent reform group, they continued to encourage split identification as a short-term coping mechanism, while *attempting to restore identification* by seeking to repair some organizational practices. When the Church hierarchy resisted these efforts, VOTF worked to *sustain its members' split identification* in the face of an apparently irreparable split, which shaped a more permanent, and more far reaching, reform effort. Figure 2 summarizes the main processes and notes

TABLE 2
Timeline of Selected Key Events and Their Significance

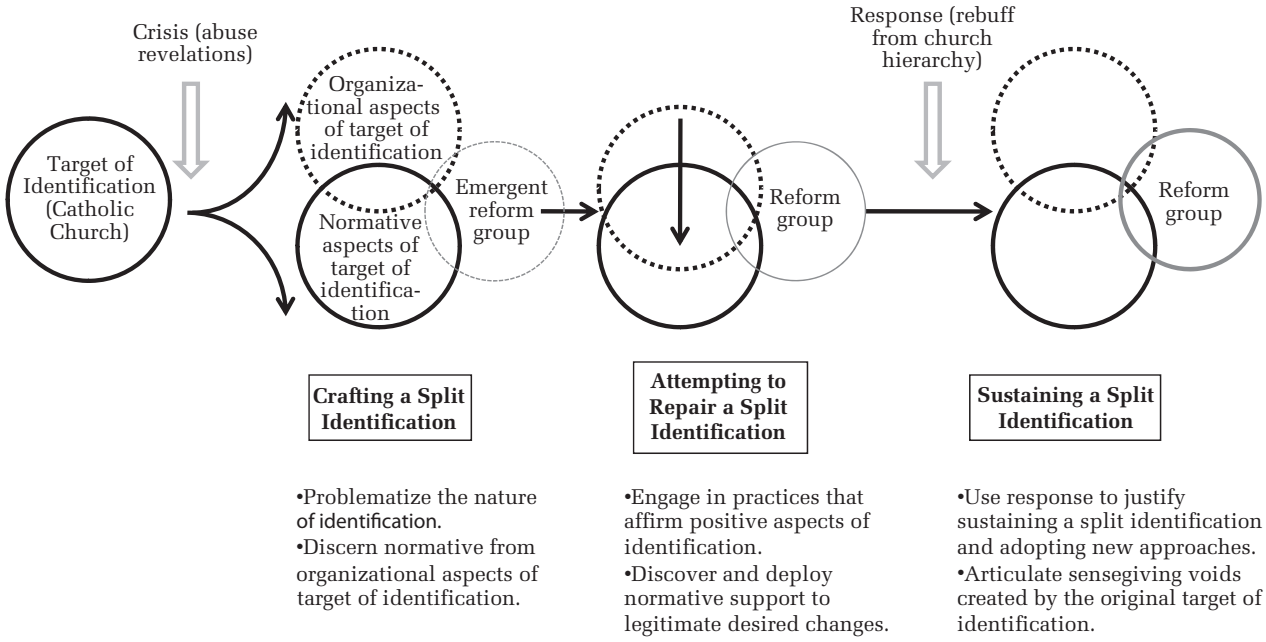
Date	Event	Significance for Our Conceptual Model	Possible Alternative Paths[a]
Jan. 6 2002	*Boston Globe* publishes first of articles	Initial triggering event.	
Feb. 2002	More allegations surface	Crisis for faithful, pain and anger as emotional fuel.	*Exit.*
Feb. 2002	Discussion group starts at St. John the Evangelist Church in Wellesley.	Wrestling over crisis moves from individual to collective in a Church setting.	*Individuals continue to struggle alone.*
Feb. 2002	Weekly discussion groups begin.	Shift from emotional support to asking, "Why did this happen?" and "What can we do?"	*Remain a group for emotional support.*
Feb. 2002	The name "Voice of the Faithful" is adopted, along with goals.	Name signals attachment to the faith; goals differentiate and assimilate group from Church.	*Group remains informal rather than taking on a presence with a meaningful name.*
March 2002	Boston Archdiocese convenes 3,000 lay leaders to discuss the crisis.	Top-down effort to manage an identification crisis, both for members and for public image.	*Identification is restored.*
April 2002	Cardinal Law goes to Rome and offers his resignation; Pope declines it.	VOTF had maintained its moderate stance and had *not* called for Cardinal Law's resignation.	*Leader resignation could signal changes that would help repair identification.*
May 2002	First meeting of VOTF with Church officials; offers to help are declined.	Group is rebuffed by the Church leaders; have not yet met with Cardinal or other senior figures.	*VOTF asked to become a consultative body within the Church.*
June 2002	U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops establishes Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People and the National Review Board (NRB).	VOTF watches to see what will happen with these guidelines and continues to call for more support for victims and transparency in dioceses.	*The Charter remedies the problem, and identification is restored.*
July 2002	VOTF's conference draws 4,200 in Boston. A few controversial speakers are on the program.	Solidifies identity of group. Elicits first public criticism from Archdiocese.	*VOTF radicalizes and loses members strongly identified with the Church.*
July 2002	Cardinal Law refuses to accept funds from the VOTF-sponsored Voice of Compassion Fund.	VOTF members feel rebuffed while trying to preserve lay giving.	*Church accepts the funds, VOTF comes closer to operating within the Church.*
Aug. 2002	Cardinal Law bans VOTF chapters from meeting in Church spaces.	VOTF increasingly treated as the enemy rather than as insiders.	*Exit by members who cannot withstand the dissonance of defying a Cardinal.*
Oct. 2002	Cardinal Law rescinds ban for chapters formed up until this date; ban remains for new chapters.	VOTF exerts influence directly as an oppositional group by citing Canon law supporting lay gatherings.	*VOTF yields to Church leaders' ban and stops meeting.*
Dec. 2002	Fifty-eight Boston priests call for Cardinal Law's resignation; VOTF calls on Law to resign. Cardinal Law resigns.	VOTF signals need to see new leadership in Boston Archdiocese in order for change to occur.	*Resignation could signal end of crisis and repair split identification.*
Feb. 2004	NRB-commissioned report released on extent of abuse in U.S.	VOTF places ad in *New York Times* and op-ed in *Boston Globe* calling for action stemming from report.	*NRB recommendations remedy the problem and identification is restored.*
Sept. 2003–July 2004	VOTF debates extent of involvement in fighting Church closings due to financial burden of crisis.	VOTF struggles to maintain focus on core issues of abuse and Church governance.	*VOTF loses focus and legitimacy.*
Aug. 2004	VOTF holds Mass on the Boston Common to bring members together and protest Church closings.	Increasing independence of the group's actions and gradual expansion of issue domain.	*VOTF loses focus and legitimacy.*
Dec. 2004	VOTF member appointed head of Archdiocese's committee to oversee financing of Church closings.	VOTF may not have completely distanced its members from the hierarchy.	*VOTF gains a seat at the table through this appointment.*

[a] Alternative paths are those that might have been taken but were not. We observed the events noted in column 2 and theorized the alternatives (in italic) as part of our analysis, to remain open to other possible ways split identification might unfold.

underlying mechanisms that contributed to them, which we describe in detail below.

The figure initially depicts the institution of the Church, the target of identification, as a solid circle on the left side of the figure. The crisis of the abuse revelations triggered the three processes just mentioned, and the figure depicts an accompanying split of the target of identification into normative

FIGURE 2
A Process Model of Splitting Identification[a, b]



[a] The leftmost solid black circle depicts the Catholic Church as the initial target of identification. Following the crisis, solid black circle represents normative aspects (e.g., beliefs and practices) and a dashed black circle represents organizational aspects (e.g., governance) of the Church.

[b] A gray circle (dashed then solid) represents the emerging reform group (VOTF) as an additional, and increasingly significant, potential target of identification.

(solid outline) and organizational (dotted outline) elements. As the reform group emerges, it is depicted first as a circle with a dotted gray outline and then as one with a solid gray outline, representing the emergence and establishment of the VOTF organization as a third potential target of identification for lay Catholics. The overlap of the circles roughly represents the relative intensities of identification with different targets (Bergami & Bagozzi, 2000), visually capturing the unfolding identification. Before discussing each process and its underlying mechanisms in detail, we describe the immediate aftermath of the abuse revelations and the early emergence of VOTF. These founding conditions are critical to understanding how the later processes unfolded.

The Crisis and Its Aftermath

Following the initial abuse revelations in the *Boston Globe*, new allegations against priests and new evidence of the cover-up appeared almost daily. Three weeks after the first articles, evidence was published showing that claims involving 200 victims had been settled quietly in the Archdiocese in the prior ten years (Robinson, 2002). The response from the Catholic community and the community at large was one of shock, anger, and disbelief. A Catholic commenting on the news coverage observed, "When you thought you had heard the worst there was more. . . . It just kept hurting, for weeks and months" (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007: 12).

The VOTF members we interviewed recalled similar feelings of pain, and of anger, betrayal, and shock. One interviewee remembered: "I really was in such a whirl of disbelief and denial, . . . many people felt the same way, that they just didn't want to believe that this was happening." Other interviewees described visceral responses, using the terms "horrifying," "sickening," or "like being punched in the stomach." One recalled:

> People were angry with the Church, they were angry with Cardinal Law and the other bishops for having let this happen. So much sexual abuse, so much injury to children. You can't make this pretty.

A VOTF cofounder later summed up the experience as "the 'Catholic Watergate experience,' the betrayal of something fundamental that we deeply treasured" (Murnion Lecture, 2005: 2).

Often, an event that disrupts identification and produces "felt pain and disequilibrium" is followed by deidentification, the significant weaken-

ing or breaking of ties between an individual and entity (Fiol, 2002: 659). A number of Catholics took this possible path. The Boston Archdiocese's own numbers indicated a 14 percent drop in Church attendance from 2001 to 2002, and a Gallup Poll showed an 11 percent drop nationwide (Pfeiffer, 2003) in that period. This path was not possible for those laity who eventually chose to join VOTF. They described themselves in our interviews and in news articles as "concerned Catholics," "Catholics looking for solutions," or "Catholics who want to help," thus continuing to affirm their identity as Catholics. An interviewee described the early days of VOTF as "a movement of the Spirit" and expressed her need to remain in the Church, using language distinct to Catholicism, such as references to sacraments (valued rituals that confer spiritual benefits) and specifically to the Eucharist (receiving communion during a Catholic Mass):

> [I] recognized the sacramental, Eucharistic difference that made me Catholic and . . . I needed that for sustenance. I needed that for my soul, I needed that for my life. I think that is a connection that so many of us in Voice of the Faithful feel. . . . It's not a matter of just shedding it off, putting on another coat. It's so deep within.

At the same time, these Catholics were facing others who questioned their continued identification with an institution that was so visibly being held to account for the shameful acts of some of its members. As in other settings in which an organization's unfavorable image or attributes begin to taint its members (e.g., the New York Port Authority, facing homelessness in its facilities, or Exxon, following the Valdez accident [see Dukerich et al., 1994]), interviewees spoke of being asked, Why do you stay? Defending an institution in which the degree of transgression and its apparent pervasiveness are high is very difficult because of the "more stigmatizing labels and punitive responses" applied by outsiders (Harrison et al., 2009: 248). One interviewee recalled, "I felt great shame in those days," but went on to explain that participating in VOTF enabled her to say, "Yeah, we've got a Church that's fallen, but we're talking about it. And I'm part of that." These individuals, for whom denial, defense, and deidentification were unsatisfactory responses, converted the pain of the revelations into "emotional fuel," as one interviewee described it. The shared pain from the public scrutiny brought them together. Though upset with the Church, the Church also offered a natural gathering place.

In its earliest moments, VOTF was simply a discussion group conducted in a church in the Boston suburb of Wellesley, with the priest's approval. Cofounder Jim Muller recounted that stillness followed his opening of the first discussion group, until:

> The quiet voice of a woman broke the silence. . . . She started sobbing audibly, and as she did so she said: "I don't know what to tell my children. . . ." There was a stunned silence . . . for she seemed to embody it all—the overwhelming emotion of it, the confusion, the terrible hurt. (Muller & Kenney, 2004: 19)

The group began to meet each Monday, opening the meeting with a prayer, which was followed by introductions, comments on the crisis, and a closing prayer. "We started as a group of heartbroken people who needed to talk," observed one attendee (Paulsen, 2002). "Part of the magic in the early days [was that] people could say anything [they] wanted to. And that's what it was, literally listening to the voices of the faithful," recalled one interviewee.

Several others noted the importance of finding support from fellow Catholics at a time of crisis. One interviewee recalled that "I was happy to get it off my chest and hear other people felt just as strongly as I did." Although emotional responses dominated the early discussion groups, conversation quite quickly moved to explore ways to help. As one interviewee noted:

> There was this need to continue, so we did . . . we continued to share our feelings and our emotions as the *Globe* revealed every day what was happening and then it came time to [ask]—"OK, what are we going to do about it?"

And another recalled:

> It was spreading like wildfire, that you could come to St. John's [the church in Wellesley] and you could state your piece, say what you needed to say. . . . That's how Voice of the Faithful really got off the ground. It was an early, unspoken sentiment that we needed to do something. It wasn't just about venting. That we wanted to do whatever it would take to make sure this would never happen again.

Crafting a Split Identification

VOTF's early discussion groups initiated two mechanisms by which the overall process advanced. First, through their conversations in early meetings, attendees started to "problematize" the nature of their identification with the Church and began to envision an alternative. Second, they actively discerned the normative from the organizational aspects of the Church and asserted that the abuse and cover-up stemmed from organizational failings. Together these mechanisms led early par-

ticipants to split their identification with the Church, allowing them to remain identified with the normative aspects and loyal to those in the hierarchy whom they saw as innocent and unfairly tainted by events but to disidentify with organizational practices that, in their view, had lead to the crisis. This split was an intendedly temporary solution to help highly identified laypeople cope with the crisis; by envisioning an alternative way of identifying and parsing the failings as organizational and therefore subject to correction, the move to split identification already anticipated the possibility of repair.

Problematizing the nature of identification. As they made sense of the abuse revelations, individuals in the early meetings began to label their relationship with the Church as "passive," to contrast this stance with alternatives, and to assert that their passivity partly contributed to the crisis. One interviewee recalled the following about the early meetings:

> You'd have 700 people come . . . and they would break into smaller groups [to discuss] . . . different issues [including] how could this happen within the structure of the Church? And we discovered that we had all been rather blindly following leaders in the Church with a blind trust . . . [otherwise] it would not be possible that this could take place, certainly not to the extent that it had taken place.

This characterization was pervasive in our interviewees' accounts, VOTF's statements to the media, and its internal documents. Although trust in the Church leadership may once have been consistent with devotion to the Church's principles, the abuse and its cover-up had revealed blind trust to be problematic. As one interviewee remarked, "The average, everyday Catholic . . . has just 'yes-Fathered' their whole life and hasn't thought for themselves." Another noted, "You show up at Church, you write a check, and you go home. . . . And so for generations, we've been trained, in a way, in acquiescence, 'Father knows best.'" Some bemoaned "a distance between [their] secular lives and faith lives," with one interviewee observing:

> Many Catholics have adopted what I call the "yes, Father" . . . attitude, even though in their professional lives . . . their attitude is "I'm going to speak my piece," "I'm going to advocate the issues that I think should be advocated."

Early VOTF members envisioned a relationship with the Church described by interviewees as "active," "energetic," and "empowered," but also as "moderate" and "challenging but not radical." They envisioned laypeople gaining a "seat at the table," "speaking truth to power," and exercising responsibility as "adult laity." As one member quoted in VOTF's 2002 Annual Report noted:

> The structure I had so devoted so much of my time and energy to [offered no] room for me to participate fully as an adult in terms of ideas, influence, and decision-making.

By problematizing what they labeled as a passive way of identifying with the Church, and specifically with its leadership and governance, and articulating an alternative, founders and early members of VOTF could portray themselves as helpful insiders. One interviewee noted:

> We love the Church. We want to be part of the change. Being part of the change means being more active than just paying, praying, and obeying.

Discerning normative from organizational aspects of target of identification. Early members of VOTF redefined what they meant by "loving the Church" by deliberately discerning the Church's teachings and beliefs from its governance. In their discussions about the abuse, they settled within weeks on the structure and culture of the Church's hierarchical governance as "root causes." In the words of one interviewee, "Clearly, it's . . . the victims that got us to our feet . . . but we realize that the victims are just symptomatic of the flaws that exist in the structure of the Church." Others spoke of the "clerical culture" and "culture of secrecy" surrounding the operations of the Church hierarchy. And one interviewee noted:

> We knew we needed to go one step beyond . . . that at the heart of the sexual abuse scandal was this clerical culture and the structures, formal and informal, of secrecy and lack of transparency.

Members articulated the organizational failings very specifically, commenting in interviews that "the abuse scandal reflected some basic flaws in the way the Church is governed," and critiquing "structures of governance that have not served the Church in the U.S. well." In particular, early members asserted that the management of the Church had been inconsistent with central normative elements of its identity. One observed that "the sexual abuse crisis was the product of . . . a Church that wasn't operating as it should, and certainly was not grounded in gospel values of justice, mercy, inclusion." Another argued that VOTF emerged from:

> A hunger for a Church that we know is what Jesus would want. . . . It's a Church that would be inclusive, that would be transparent, would be accountable, fair and just. A Church that would not hurt little children, a Church that would not lie to the people who are members of it. . . . We are not dealing with doctrinal issues. . . . We are dealing with

how the organization is run, the governance and guidance of the Church.

Discerning that the target of identification was separable into its normative elements and its organizational elements enabled members to craft a split identification. The VOTF motto, "Keep the Faith, Change the Church," conveyed how members could remain identified as Catholics but disidentify with the organizational failings that gave rise to the abuse. This discernment was formalized in the group's mission statement, goals, and statement of beliefs, which are presented in Table 3.

Together these documents served as sensegiving vehicles, as they offered a language that enabled early members—and potential members—to craft a split identification with the Church. For example, members' identification with the normative aspects was affirmed in the reference to a "prayerful voice" in the group's mission statement and in the recognition of their "love and support" for the Church and its teachings (in the statement of beliefs). Their disidentification with the hierarchy was selective. The second goal, "to support priests of integrity," enabled them to continue to honor the normative aspects of the priesthood, acknowledging that priests answered a spiritual calling, performed valued rituals, and provided spiritual guidance, but emphasizing that members would be guided by their faith, not by blind deference to any authority figure in the Church. The alternative form of identification, crafted to replace the problematic one, was captured in the portion of the mission statement calling for "the Faithful [to] actively participate in the governance and guidance of the Catholic Church," and in the third goal, "to shape structural change within the Church." In the words of one interviewee: "[Goal three] means that we want to work to break down the kind of structures that allowed the abuse to occur . . . the secrecy, the lack of transparency." This third goal captured the emerging group's vision for change and opened the possibility that they could suture the normative aspects of the Church to a governance structure that fulfilled, rather than subverted, them.

As VOTF shared this message through its website, the press, and at its meetings, it offered a way for laypeople to join VOTF and engage in the change effort, yet retain their identification with the normative aspects of the Church. The 2002 Annual Report stated:

> We encourage all Catholics who care about the Church to join Voice of the Faithful and fulfill our baptismal right to "actively participate in the governance and guidance of the Catholic Church."

The importance of crafting of a split identification to recruiting was reflected in one member's comment that she was "always keenly interested in encouraging [her] more traditional friends . . . [who] didn't want to question authority, and yet it was authority that had let us down." Another member who had been reluctant to join recalled admiring the group early on but "didn't want to be part of it at that point . . . I'm not by nature a rabble-rouser, I've never been a protester." In her interview, she went on to say:

> I had read enough about . . . Voice of the Faithful . . . saying "we are faithful Catholics," "we are not seeking to overturn the Church," "we want to make it whole again," . . . and I thought, I believe all those things, I'm all of those things. I'm a faithful Catholic, I'm not seeking to overturn the Church, I love the

TABLE 3
VOTF's Mission, Goals, and Statement of Beliefs

Motto	Keep the Faith, Change the Church
Mission statement	To provide a prayerful voice, attentive to the Spirit, through which the Faithful can actively participate in the governance and guidance of the Catholic Church.
Goals	To support survivors of clergy sexual abuse.
	To support priests of integrity.
	To shape structural change within the Church.
Statement of beliefs (excerpts)	We are faithful Catholics in communion with the universal Catholic Church.
	We love and support our Church and believe what it professes.
	We accept the teaching authority of our Church, including the traditional role of the bishops and the Pope.
	We will work with our bishops, clergy, and other members to strengthen unity and human moral integrity in our Church.
	We believe that sexual abuse by clergy and the response of bishops, protecting abusers and forsaking the abused, have caused great human suffering and damaged the moral authority of our Church.
	We believe that the laity has the graced dignity, intelligence, responsibility and obligation to cooperate in Church governance in a meaningful way according to the norm of law (cf. Canon 129) to correct the profound flaws that have been revealed in the human institutional life of our Church.

> Church and I want it to remain a healthy, spiritual entity, and if this is how I can do it, I want to be part of it.

The goals, mission statement, and statement of beliefs also served to frame the group's collective identity for outsiders (the media and the public at large) and insiders (the Church hierarchy and other laity). Without articulating a split identification as viable (and even necessary) for its members, the group would likely have had a harder time gaining acceptance. An active laity could otherwise be seen as attacking Church governance *and* doctrine and be labeled as dissenters. "From the beginning," noted one interviewee, "the purpose has been not to espouse a particular doctrinal change, but simply to speak up for the rights of the laity to participate in their own religion." Another interviewee noted that distinction was "a very critical separation . . . because we're not dealing with the matters of our faith." Many others saw this as an important difference between VOTF and other reform groups. As one stated:

> We've presented a face of lay Catholicism that challenges the institutional hierarchy without being a voice of dissent. And that's important, because prior to 2002, the image of Catholics [was that they] were either very conservative [people] who supported the hierarchy no matter what they did, or . . . people who . . . really want to change the doctrine of the Church.

Secondary data support these claims. A large fraction of VOTF leaders and members were very involved in their parishes (76 percent of VOTF leaders and 37 percent of VOTF members served on parish councils), but a much smaller proportion (20 percent or less) had participated in reformist Catholic social movements that sought to alter Church positions on women's ordination, homosexuality, and other issues (D'Antonio & Pogorelc, 2007). VOTF actively sought to distance itself from "radical" groups (Hines, 2007), and its leaders refused from the beginning to take positions on controversial issues such as women's ordination.

In sum, crafting a split identification arose as a collective response. Church members articulated it as a way to cope with and respond to a crisis. Split identification enabled individuals to hang on to a high level of identification with an institution by clearly distinguishing what parts of it merited ongoing, and even enhanced, devotion and what parts required reexamination and change. Leaders sometimes provide "mediatory myths" to reconcile apparent inconsistencies between an institution's espoused values and how it behaves (Abravanel, 1983; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). In our case, highly identified followers came up with their own story to mediate between their devotion to and horror at their institution. Split identification generated ideas about change. Problematizing aspects of the original nature of identification allowed VOTF members to envision a new way of identifying that would knit the split back together and renew identification with the organizational structure and their place within it. It enabled them to become part of the solution in an embattled institution; without a more active role for laity, the split as articulated by VOTF was irreparable.

Attempting to Repair Split Identification

Once they had carefully articulated a split identification, the emergent group deliberately set about to repair the split. Two mechanisms drove the repair process. First, the group's members engaged in practices that enabled them to continue to identify with valued normative aspects of the Church yet also signal their more active lay stance. Second, they discovered and deployed normative support (in the form of Church teachings and policies) to help them present the desired organizational changes as legitimate. They used Church texts and teachings to frame their efforts to themselves and potential new members as plausibly loyal. Framing processes are "collective processes of interpretation" (McAdam, McCarthy, & Zald, 1996: 2) that inspire action inasmuch as they are resonant with beliefs and values (Snow & Benford, 1988). Framing processes provide a legitimated way to speak to the audience for proposed remedies, in this case the bishops and Church hierarchy (Gamson, 1992; Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Together, the two mechanisms—affirming positive aspects of identification and framing change as legitimate—redeployed institutional practices and knowledge in service of the change effort, but they did so in a way that drew on members' very identification with the institution.

Engaging in practices that affirm positive aspects of identification. When asked in our interviews about how they sought to make change, members and founders of VOTF consistently spoke of drawing on the resources of their faith, which included prayer. The importance of prayer to VOTF's change efforts can be seen in the fact that one of its six working groups is called Prayerful Voice. One member of this working group noted that "[our] vocation is to make sure that we remain centered in prayer and that we do not lose our Catholic identity as we organize." The website page for this group notes that "daily communal prayer is foundational to our tradition." A VOTF prayer was displayed prominently in the group's first annual report.

One member observed, "We pray it and we believe it." One interviewee who was not a VOTF member suggested that prayer was an antidote to some of the group's difficult discussions but concluded that it was largely an expression of "who they were."

Although rarely described in the organizational literature, "tapping spiritual resources" has been seen as source of energy for renewing and managing a sense of self in a religious setting (Kreiner et al., 2006: 1049). Here we see it serving a similar purpose, particularly when individuals were depleted by the emotional toll of the events. One interviewee recalled, "It was so important for us to be a healing element in the situation. . . . I think it was essential that we pray together." Another observed that they prayed because it

> reaffirm[ed] the identity of who [we] are as Catholic laypeople. And . . . in doing that, [it] reminds everybody that that's what brings us together. So we may have other business, but this is what brought us together.

In addition to enabling members to affirm their identification with normative aspects of the Church, prayer was recognized as a source of energy for VOTF's change effort. The website noted: "We acknowledge the need for more prayer, to keep us . . . united and in communion with the Spirit that energizes and supports each of us in this important work." One interviewee noted that prayer guided members in their decision making, and kept them open to possibility: "It's so easy for us to think we have the right answers. If we don't have that openness to begin with, we can so easily go down a blind alley. So . . . prayer . . . [has] got to be the starting point." Another explained:

> When [we] talk about a prayerful voice . . . it's not a picture of a kid kneeling down and reciting the rosary, it's a picture of an adult thinking hard about and asking for some kind of inspiration to think about . . . guiding this institution.

Primarily affirming and expressive, prayer could also be seen as serving strategic purposes for the group. First, it signaled the group's legitimacy to external audiences. One interviewee observed that "it's very important that we never forget that we are rooted in prayer, and that we also seem to be rooted in prayer." Another noted how "prayer [is] central. . . . There is no concession to any radical belief at all. We are absolutely mainstream and centrist, and we call ourselves that." The group's use of this practice, however, was both traditional (engaging in prayer individually and in groups) and nontraditional, as they began to engage it in a way that circumvented normal involvement of the Church hierarchy. One notable example was the first VOTF convention, which established the group's practice of organizing the celebration of a Mass, led by priests who were allies of the group, at their large gatherings. VOTF leaders questioned whether to include a Mass or simply a prayer service, but they settled on a Mass, because, one noted, it is "central to the practice of our faith."

This Mass and others held later signaled that the laity could engage directly in Church practices and, by implication, that the hierarchy had not adequately fulfilled its role; as Mass was not typically organized by laypeople, their doing so was a departure from organizational practices. One interviewee observed, "The Mass was for healing in the Archdiocese of Boston, for survivors and their families, for the Church that was so fractured, for the pain that came with what [Cardinal] Law did." A second example of enacting core practices without hierarchical involvement or sanction is seen in VOTF's choice to accept donations to a "Voice of Compassion fund" from laypeople who no longer felt comfortable donating to their parishes. After the Archdiocese declined to accept money from the fund, Catholic Charities accepted it directly. One VOTF member recalled, "I was proud of Catholic Charities, and I was proud of us, because I think it highlighted . . . our intentions . . . to be about taking care of the neediest amongst us, the genuine job of the Catholic Church."

Discovering and deploying normative support to legitimate desired changes. In addition to prayer, a second main theme that pervaded our interviews was the use of education to inform laypeople about Church structures and ways in which they might be involved in Church governance. For example, when asked what was the most effective way to bring about change, one interviewee answered, "an organized and educated laity . . . and it would have to be grounded in gospel values." Connecting education to the normative elements of the Church was critical to VOTF's efforts. The group drew on the Church's own texts, teachings, and policy (canon law) to frame and justify the changes it sought.

Very early in the group's existence, VOTF founders and members began to educate themselves very specifically about Church structure and governance. One founder recounted how they developed study programs around the third goal (structural change) that included "learn[ing] about canon law, lots of consultations with specialists in Church structures, and [finding out] what had happened during Vatican II." The 1962–65 ecumenical council, Vatican II, is regarded as a watershed event in the history of the Church (Dillon, 2007) that

produced a number of influential texts and sought to reconcile Church teachings with contemporary social trends. VOTF used direct quotes from Vatican II documents to lend credence to its claims that the laity have the right to be involved in issues of Church governance. Through its website, the Voice of Renewal/Lay Education Working Group, and its parish affiliate network, VOTF presented excerpts from these documents so that individuals could decide whether a more active laity was consistent with Church principles.

Knowledge of canon law, governance structures, and Vatican II texts helped the group to devise some strategies for approaching the hierarchy, some of which they brought to bear later, once rebuffed. For example, in countering Cardinal Law's imposed ban on VOTF gatherings at churches (see Table 2 and further discussion in the next section), the group wrote to the regional bishop and cited a specific canon law that would recognize them as a valid association. This approach "just knocked the legs out from under that argument that somehow we were an improper association" recalled one interviewee, adding that "the only way you can challenge them is to know what the real law says, and we did."

In addition to discovering and deploying this normative support for their substantive claims, the group also saw education as a way to awaken members to what was needed to repair their split identification. Repair would only come about, according to VOTF, if individuals restored their relationship with the hierarchy to one that was more consistent with the normative expressions of the Church. Education was deployed by VOTF as both a sensebreaking vehicle—encouraging laity to question their relationship with the Church—and a sensegiving vehicle—enabling them to discover an alternative. Sensebreaking is demonstrated in the comments of several interviewees. One noted:

> [It] is very clear [that] Catholics need to . . . have a more adult-adult relationship with the bishops and priests, rather than this child relationship. . . . Part of that is understanding that it's not immoral for Catholics to gather to talk about where the Church should go. . . . That's actually not exactly Church teaching. Now, maybe that's what the Church practices, but you can't find that in canon law. You actually can't find that in Vatican II. It's certainly not in Jesus' teachings.

Another asserted that "education is the vehicle for asking the hard questions about the Church as a modern institution" and went on to say:

> It's an institution that is so encrusted with characteristics that are not divine, they're very much man-made, and people don't know how to even ask the question of where does one stop and the other one begin.

As a sensegiving tool, education was recognized as a practice congruent with laypeople's identification with the Church, and therefore a valid way to engage those who would reject more confrontational approaches. One interviewee suggested:

> I'm not going to get you to come and stand in a picket line, necessarily. But you might be interested in knowing more about spiritual practices. . . . You might be interested in knowing what our theology is telling [us].

Each of the processes involved in attempting to repair identification was to some degree both affirming of valued aspects of members' identification and generative of a change effort. Even prayer, which appears primarily affirmational, was deployed as a vehicle for energizing and guiding individuals in their change efforts. Education most directly informed a change agenda, yet it was also regarded as a way to engage individuals around their identification with normative aspects of the Church and motivate them to participate in the change effort. VOTF's use of prayer and education should not be regarded as purely or even primarily instrumental, however. These were institutional elements that resonated deeply with the group's members precisely because they were highly identified, engaged Catholics. Scholars of social movements have noted the importance of identity-affirming practices for their expressive, not simply instrumental, value:

> Models of strategic choice that had movement leaders selecting among strategies, tactics, and organizational forms by instrumentally assessing environmental opportunities and constraints missed the fact that strategic options may also be intrinsically appealing. They reflect what we believe, what we are comfortable with, what we like, who we are. (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: 284)

Approaches to repairing a split identification may be selected because they are comforting and familiar. Using prayer may have come across as tactically clever, but in this case, it was more accidentally than prospectively strategic. Its affirmational appeal and connection to the core of laypeople's identification with the Church gave it value in this setting. One member explained:

> We feel we are most authentically Catholic Christians at the Eucharist. It was an amazing spiritual experience [referring to the Mass at the first convention]. And it's the best of who we are.

At this point in VOTF's existence, its claims about change were small and centered on how the

organization was supporting laypeople and enabling them to make sense of their attachment to the Church following the crisis. The president's letter in VOTF's first annual report stated, "This year, VOTF helped laypersons ask what it means to be Catholic, to be active members of the Church." One interviewee said, "I don't even think of us as an advocacy organization right now. I think we're creating a leadership model for lay Catholics to grow up." This approach was the foundation for repairing the articulated split in identification, even if it was less specific about strategies that would advance the group's three goals.

Sustaining Split Identification

An early response from Church authorities that acknowledged the nature of VOTF members' identification with the Church and accepted their offers to help might have enabled a restoration of the split. Targets of identification may offer, through sensegiving efforts, an "identity echo" that can affirm an individual's sense of self (Ashforth et al., 2008: 343). Such a response was not forthcoming, and the "echo" disputed rather than affirmed VOTF's proposed way of relating to the Church, triggering for some a second crisis of identification. This led to the split identification being sustained rather than repaired. We found two mechanisms important to sustaining split identification. First, the group used the rebuff from Church authorities to justify maintaining a split identification and engaging in new approaches. Second, it sought out and articulated voids in the Church hierarchy's sensegiving to lay members, thereby expanding the range of issues on which it exercised a voice. Both of these approaches contributed to VOTF's taking on a more permanent existence, a condition not foreseen by its founders. The group itself became a more permanent target for identification, rather than a temporary vehicle through which a split identification could be crafted and repaired. As one member said of VOTF:

> I guess in a way, it's part of my religion at this point. If it wasn't there . . . I think I would have a hard time just continuing in the Church, because I still don't see a lot of change as far as accepting laypeople and their role.

Using the response to justify sustaining a split identification and adopting new approaches. The splitting of identification happened in a context and triggered responses from that context. VOTF had identified the highest figure in the Boston Archdiocese, Cardinal Law, and bishops in other archdioceses, as its immediate audience and hoped to be accepted as helpful. One interviewee recalled, "When we first started, we thought we were going to be welcomed with open arms, like 'here are the people who have stayed.'" However, the Church hierarchy made no public comment about VOTF during its first five months of existence. The first public communication was largely critical and came immediately following the group's first conference, which attracted 4,200 Catholics from the United States and seven other countries to Boston in July 2002. Our interviewees all pointed to the conference as the pivotal event that cemented the group's sense of itself and elevated it to prominence as a voice in the media coverage of the crisis (see Figure 1). An editorial in the Archdiocese's official newspaper was openly critical of several speakers, noting this:

> The July 20th Voice of The Faithful (VOTF) Conference confirmed our worst fears. Overriding an initial "mainstream" position on Church issues, keynote speakers derided the hierarchical structure of the Church, calling it a "medieval monarchical model"; [and] asserted the need to "democratize" the Church. (*Pilot*, 2002)

Further critical reactions followed, including the ban on groups meeting on Church property mentioned earlier. One member, commenting on the mobilization of people and interest around the first conference, observed that "our success was also the source of [tension] . . . it produced this very defensive behavior by the Bishop . . . we were seen as adversaries for sure at that point."

Despite this reaction, VOTF continued its efforts to meet with Cardinal Law. A meeting was finally granted in November 2002 and, as one interviewee recalled:

> On the positive side [it was] a recognition of our legitimacy as an organization, that the laity could have this separate voice, and that Cardinal Law had to at least pay lip service to it. . . . But the outcome of it was just this continual dismissiveness towards us.

Another interviewee noted the meeting showed up stark differences between how VOTF members saw themselves and how the hierarchy saw them:

> It became very clear that they felt they were meeting with the enemy and we thought we were meeting with our good Shepherd.

Even while the group continued to deploy its knowledge of canon law, as mentioned, to bolster its substantive claims, there was a qualitative shift in how members expressed their relationship with Church leaders. One interviewee recalled the pain of being banned from meeting on Church property:

> You can imagine what it meant to be banned . . . we were this faithful remnant. . . . And the Church threw the word "dissident" at us, and other Catholics threw the word "dissident" . . . of all the words.

Another observed that "to be seen as a dissenter, and confronting, is very difficult. . . . It's not us against them. They set us up as 'them' and 'us.'" Being labeled as dissidents appeared to drive VOTF members to alter their tactics. They became progressively disenchanted with the hierarchy's unwillingness to affirm their identification and accept their help. One interviewee recalled an encounter with Cardinal Law that led her to conclude, "You can't be our shepherd anymore. . . . You don't know the flock that you're supposed to lead." Another noted,

> Eventually it evolved that we felt that it was no longer important to meet with the Bishop. That we had been marginalized, . . . and that we had other work to do.

No longer expecting that they would be welcomed as helpful insiders, group members began to find and use alternative channels for conveying their message. A founder reflected:

> I think that at first we thought that . . . if we protested and insisted on change, that somehow it would happen. . . . Now, we've discovered that the bishops are not going to change. . . . [Now our strategy] has to be direct action.

VOTF's actions became increasingly directed through the media, and its voice was increasingly sought by the media, shifting it into the position of being a media voice for lay concerns, rather than a voice of direct advice to the hierarchy. As shown in Figure 1, VOTF's media presence spiked noticeably around major events that followed from the initial abuse allegations. Commenting on Cardinal Law's resignation in December 2002, VOTF's then-president recalled:

> I did 28 media interviews that day plus a major press conference out in the parking lot. . . . We were in every major newspaper, we were on every major media outlet, not just in the United States, but also around the world.

This "media turn," as one interviewee put it, is best illustrated by VOTF's actions following the release of the Church's National Review Board report early in 2004. The report documented over 10,000 abuse cases nationwide between 1950 and 2002 (Goodstein, 2004). VOTF published a full-page ad in the *New York Times* on February 29, 2004, that read, "Our trust had been violated. But not our faith . . . add your voice to the Voice of the Faithful. It's time to return responsibility to Catholicism." The ad included three petitions, addressed directly to the Pope, demanding that a papal meeting be held with victims, bishops be held responsible, and details of the transfer of accused priests be disclosed. An interviewee noted that the ad "brought tremendous attention, national television exposure, and lots of discussion about Voice of the Faithful action."

As they were expanding their voice through the media, VOTF members also renewed their effort to make change at the local parish level by encouraging the formation of affiliates and continuing to provide them with training and education materials. Many interviewees spoke of putting in place the representative parish councils called for in Vatican II and encouraging laypeople to ask their parish leadership for transparency on financial, personnel, and other issues. One noted that this approach made the enormous scope of the third goal seem possible:

> Change the Church, uh-uh. Ain't gonna happen. Let's say, ok, let's make sure every parish has an effective pastoral council where people can feel that their voice is heard. Begin with the simple steps.

This local engagement may also have reflected the reality that VOTF remained relatively small. Debate around a mass membership versus local affiliate strategy had been ongoing within the group, according to those we interviewed. The parish affiliate approach appeared to show acceptance that, even as they were exercising a national media voice, the group saw limits to their vision of an active laity. One interviewee expressed his opinion that mass mobilization was "not the reality in Catholicism," saying:

> Catholics don't come out. If everything we know today about the number of priests who raped kids, about the number of kids who were raped by priests, if all that . . . hasn't brought every Catholic out into the streets, nothing will. Nothing. . . . So there's no such thing as getting millions of Catholics to do anything, except maybe write checks.

Although the crisis had seemed initially to demand rapid, discontinuous response, VOTF leaders began to accept both that change would be gradual and incremental and that VOTF would become a more permanent entity in stewarding the calls for change.

Articulating sensegiving voids created by the original target of identification. VOTF also became more direct in pointing to voids in the Church's efforts to manage its members' identification. One member reflected on the meeting with Cardinal Law:

> Fine, we met with the Cardinal. But . . . there was no acknowledgement of our value. There was no acknowledgement of the fact that we were providing something for laity in a time when they weren't doing [it], when they certainly were not providing any solace, not only to survivors but also the laity in this Archdiocese.

The group more directly signaled their dissatisfaction with the hierarchy's engagement with laypeople. This shift is illustrated in the way group members spoke of their decision to hold Mass outside on the Boston Common in 2004, when a number of parish churches were slated for closing, one financial repercussion of the crisis. In contrast to the first VOTF Mass, held in 2002, which had been largely motivated by a need to heal and bring Catholics together, this Mass conveyed VOTF's independence: "Having it outside was symbolic of the fact that the Church is built on living stones," noted one interviewee; "You can take our buildings away from us, but the Church still stands." Another explained:

> Why on the Common? Because the Pope was the only other one who had organized a Mass on the Common. Because it would demonstrate very clearly that we . . . are [the] Church, whether the Bishop is there or not. So it was a symbolic choice as well as a practical, demonstrative choice.

Issues such as the church closings connected to the founding concern of VOTF, because the public, press, and many Catholics attributed them to the financial pressures that arose from expensive settlements with abuse victims. But such issues also went beyond the group's self-defined mandate, raising questions about its claims to have specific and bounded goals.

To counter concerns that the group was losing its original emphasis, VOTF's leadership issued a renewed "Statement of Identity" in 2007, in which they wrote: "Affirming their responsibility for the good of the Church, VOTF members continue to offer their experience of faith and their competencies in the Church" (VOTF website). The group continued to try to reach a middle ground among members. One interviewee noted, "For a lot of people, . . . we're not going far enough, we're not loud enough, we're not angry enough." Another suggested that "I think we stay on message and I think now, I think we're recognized for that message."

Leaders interviewed in 2008 shared details on one struggle that reflect the group's founding in identification. An internal study had been conducted to develop a position on priest celibacy, an issue not originally in VOTF's domain. A celibate priesthood is often regarded as a fundamental, normative aspect of the faith, and some VOTF members felt this issue must remain untouchable. Other members tied this issue to the group's goals of supporting abuse survivors and preventing future abuse. A 2007 *New York Times* article quoted a VOTF board member's comments on this struggle: "The minute the word celibacy is in anything, it's going to be: 'There they go—they've lost their center,' and other people will be saying 'finally'" (Belluck, 2007: 2).

Many groups seeking internal change have to balance pushing too hard with not pushing hard enough (Meyerson & Scully, 1995). For VOTF, being born from members' strong identification, rather than from an already skeptical position on the margins of an institution, gave this challenge a particular cast. The lack of affirmation for its claimed identification triggered the group's sustaining its efforts, altering its tactics, and expanding the issues on which it exercised voice. Members' desire to remain identified also limited their ability to advance their work through tactics that have been found to be successful in other change efforts, such as "issue bundling" (connecting an issue to other issues [Dutton & Ashford, 1993]) or "frame extension" (moving beyond original issues and concerns [Benford & Snow, 2000]). Even as VOTF's founding in identification imposed some limits, it also gave the group resources for managing potential internal rifts, which bedevil many change efforts (e.g., Breiner, 2007); the shared commitment to prayer was one such resource. As an interviewee who was not a member of VOTF noted:

> [Prayer] was something that would resonate with the whole community. . . . Some of the discussions . . . became so vitriolic that prayer was sort of a counterbalance. . . . I think that [it] was very helpful to give expression to who they were, first and foremost.

As of this writing, VOTF leaders remain focused on sustaining the group's work at the cusp of loyalty and voice.

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

In this section, we return to our opening puzzle about how individuals can remain identified with and loyal to an entity by which they feel deeply betrayed. Following the sexual abuse revelations, lay members of the Catholic Church experienced a mix of emotional reactions, including anger, sadness, and betrayal. Those who chose to form or join VOTF channeled their concerns and energies toward voice, rather than exit or quiet loyalty, and they sought a legitimate platform for change by

drawing on the Church's own normative elements. By documenting an effort in which we saw both a split and an attempt to repair identification, our analysis suggests that highly identified members may be among the most—rather than the least—motivated and able to engage in a change effort from within an organization or institution. In this section, we expand on the nature of split identification and consider its wider applicability, and we then discuss implications for the literature on change efforts within institutions and organizations as well as implications for managers.

The Nature of Split Identification

Split identification arose in our study as a response to a crisis that revealed serious organizational failings. Crafting a split identification enabled members to retain their high level of identification with valued aspects of a target of identification while discerning other aspects that were unworthy of continued identification and demanded repair. Our qualitative analysis revealed three processes associated with splitting identification: crafting a split identification, attempting to suture the split and repair identification, and finally, sustaining split identification and attendant change efforts in the face of an apparently irreparable split.

Split identification differs from other constructs in the literature in several ways. First, the construct of split identification highlights the processual nature of identification (Ashforth et al., 2008) and the capacity (and need, in some cases) for individuals to recraft it from the bottom up. Unlike resilient identification, which can occasion defense of an organization in trouble, split identification is actively crafted as a coping mechanism whereby people can retain identification yet not "blind faith." It builds on the constructs of ambivalent identification and schizo-identification, characterized as states of mixed feelings about one's identification with an entity (Dukerich et al., 1998; Meyerson & Scully, 1995; Pratt, 2000a), by demonstrating one way that members may act to resolve their ambivalence. In the case studied here, a sudden crisis, which caused confusion and pain for those who were highly identified, triggered potential ambivalence. Splitting identification offered a way out of confusion and pain, rather than constituting a problematic state, as schizo-identification has been described as being (Dukerich et al., 1998). Theorizing the construct of split identification reveals how members might move from confusion to engaged activity, extending work that calls for identification to be regarded as a "social accomplishment" of members who shape their own and others' identification with an entity (Bartel & Dutton, 2001).

Second, the splitting of identification is a collective, cognitive, and partly emotional response to circumstances that reveal a previously unarticulated, or perhaps inconsequential, distinction within a target of identification. Conflict between multiple, existing loci of identification is often managed via individual cognitive tactics, such as decoupling, ordering, or sequentially enacting identities (see Ashforth and colleagues [2008] for a summary). Such strategies may be inadequate for managing the disjunction that occasions a splitting of identification and the potential birth of a change effort to restore it. The emotional dimensions of identification (Harquail, 1998; Pratt, 2000a) may be particularly salient in such situations. Below, we discuss boundary conditions under which members may use splitting to sustain an intense identification.

Finally, split identification may evolve, in complex and unforeseen ways. A split need not be resolved by any of a range of top-down processes (Pratt & Foreman, 2000), but its persistence poses distinct challenges for those who craft it. Unsuccessful repair efforts may lead to ongoing ambivalent identification, or an uneasy combination of identification and critical outspokenness. Somewhat ironically, a group's limited success in accomplishing its original goals may solidify the need for its ongoing existence. VOTF increasingly became a more permanent target for identification, becoming meaningful to its members in its own right. This development led to ongoing tension, as VOTF partly persisted because it mediated members' identification with the original target, the Catholic Church, and partly inspired a new identification with VOTF's increasingly critical push for change in the Catholic Church.

Boundary Conditions for Split Identification and Applicability in Other Settings

Certain boundary conditions are associated with crafting a split identification. First, split identification relies on aspects of a target of identification being decomposable; that is, individuals can discern aspects of an entity with which they need to remain identified from those with which they wish to disidentify. In the absence of decomposability of the target of identification, exit, quiet loyalty, or radicalizing voice may be the only routes available, and the combination of loyalty and voice seen in our case will be hard to envision or enact. Further, one of the separable elements of a target identification must be particularly valued, and beliefs asso-

ciated with it seen as inviolable. Normative aspects of an entity such as a professional code, a belief system, or a close-knit community of practice may elicit such intense identification. For example, the professions have an autonomous basis for normative attachment that crosscuts organizations; codes and standards bind individuals to their professions and also provide a yardstick for measuring fulfillment of espoused values by particular organizations. In such settings, individuals may identify strongly with the higher-order, more encompassing professional identity, and split identification may arise if they disidentify with an organizational governance structure, an externally imposed set of regulations, or a leadership style that fails to meet the normative standards.

Kellogg (2009) studied physicians' responses when a medical resident apparently made a fatal medical error after a long shift and found that senior male physicians joined female doctors in pushing their hospital administration to reduce long hours for residents. The senior male physicians were motivated by how the tragic incident tainted their institution and their professional norms (e.g., "Do no harm"). They could be seen as crafting a split between their identification with these norms and the organizational practices that had undermined them. In contrast, the female physicians seized this political opportunity to advance their long-sought cause of reduced work hours, in a manner akin to pursuing "tempered radicalism" (the process by which organization members on the margins use their differences but also their loyalty to push for change from the inside [Meyerson & Scully, 1995]). This example shows the importance of decomposability of normative and governance elements for the crafting of a split identification. It also begins to show how splitting identification differs from other processes of insider change agency, in that committed and central insiders as well as more historically marginal members can become mobilized for change.

A second boundary condition for the splitting of identification is that individuals craft a distinction from the bottom up. Others have drawn attention to how organizational arrangements maintain a split between normative commitments and organizational practices through "loose coupling" (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) and to how leaders may manage a split through "mediatory myths" (Abranavel, 1983) that symbolically manage normative contradictions. Our case differs from these because it shows how members themselves developed and articulated a split as a way of coping with a revealed divergence between institutional norms and organizational practices. Further, members used the crafting of the split as a call for reform, not as a façade to create the appearance but not the actuality of change. Importantly, crafting a split identification is a collective effort. A sense of conflict between norms and practices must be both significant enough and sufficiently widely shared that a number of individuals are compelled to articulate a split identification and seek its repair.

The circumstances triggering the formation of VOTF were traumatic and extreme, yet there are a number of other settings, including work organizations, in which the above boundary conditions hold and the splitting of identification can be observed. For example, teachers may identify strongly with their professional belief in providing equal educational opportunities but disidentify with how regulations about standardized tests are implemented in their schools (Hallett, 2010). Frontline workers may identify with their company's values but disidentify with leaders over a contentious issue. For example, workers at Pepsi who were striking for wages to match Coca-Cola's described themselves as old-fashioned, loyal, hard-working believers in the company seeking a slightly larger share of their beloved product's success (Grow, 2000). This stance let them go on strike while simultaneously proclaiming their loyalty. The Arthur Andersen case is another example of employees disidentifying with certain leaders while proclaiming their identification with an organization described as having a strong shared culture. When the company was collapsing under the weight of accounting cover-ups, employees appeared at rallies chanting "I am Andersen" (Toffler & Reingold, 2003), distancing themselves from the behavior of some in the firm while embracing their attachment to the firm itself.

We focused on a split along normative versus governance lines, triggered by a particular issue or a jolt. Other splits may occur between potentially conflicting targets of identification, and arise more emergently. A large body of work shows that individuals discern loci of identification within and beyond their organizations, including identification with work groups, divisions, and occupations (see Ashforth et al., 2008). Some of these targets may nest within others (e.g., a work group within a department), but others crosscut (e.g., a union and a work organization) (Ashforth & Johnson, 2001). The crafting of split identification in such circumstances may yield, as in our case, new organizations or groups that mediate members' identification with the original targets. It may also prompt new ways that mediating groups legitimate their standing to propose changes as both loyal insiders and advocates seeking change. For example, the

American Auto Workers Union may simultaneously permit strong identification with General Motors and strong identification with the union itself. Workers may at once claim their strong and deserved identification as "GM men" (the "GM man" is a canonical example of organizational identification), while also standing somewhat outside the organization to push change. Like the organization in our case, unions are located at the point where people pursue collective, bottom-up efforts as they seek to cope with potential conflicts associated with complex organizational commitments (e.g., to the health of the industry in which they work and to pride in their workmanship) and normative or professional commitments (e.g., to social justice and the rights of workers). But unlike our case, their change efforts are ongoing and do not necessarily arise from a singular crisis. When the auto industry does face a crisis, workers and unions seek legitimacy in negotiations by emphasizing their strong identification with their companies, not just their advocacy for social justice.

Future work might explore in detail the processes surrounding the crafting and sustaining (or repair) of a split in cases of nested or cross-cutting identification and examine its similarities and differences with crafting a split around normative and organizational dimensions of identification. For example, what kinds of circumstances give rise to a persistent split, and under what circumstances can split identification be fairly readily resolved? Future work could also further probe the particular challenges of sustaining a mediating organization that becomes a target of identification in its own right. When does it become institutionalized as part of a landscape of change efforts, either effectively or counterproductively, and when might it disband?

Implications for the Literature on Change Efforts Inside Institutions or Organizations

Studying the process of splitting identification can also contribute to the growing literature on how individuals seek to make change from inside organizations and institutions. This literature highlights mechanisms such as tempered radicalism (Meyerson & Scully, 1995), institutional entrepreneurship (Maguire et al., 2004), issue selling and resourcing (Dutton, Ashford, O'Neill, & Lawrence, 2001; Howard-Grenville, 2007), and microprocesses that build the momentum of small changes (Plowman et al., 2007; Reay et al., 2006). It draws attention to the benefits of "embeddedness" (Reay et al., 2006) for insiders seeking change, in contrast to the view of embeddedness as a constraint that produces conformity. Recent work has demonstrated how embedded insiders can deploy their specialized knowledge, expertise, and valued "subject positions" skillfully to make their change efforts both legitimate within existing institutions and effective at altering these very institutions (Maguire et al., 2004; Rao et al., 2003; Reay et al., 2006; Scully & Segal, 2002). These approaches share the concern expressed in research on social movements about issues of mobilization and selection of tactics, and they increasingly draw on its concepts (Davis, McAdam, Scott, & Zald, 2005). Our work on insider-driven change agency founded in identification makes three extensions.

First, our findings suggest that scholars should pay more attention to identification as a basis for potential mobilization, because highly identified individuals may rapidly and unexpectedly mobilize for change, especially when conditions threaten the basis of their identification. The inherently relational nature of identification (Albert, Ashforth, & Dutton, 2000) means that the relationship between an individual and a collective is already salient, suggesting that highly identified insiders may readily "find each other" and be able to express their concerns when conditions are ripe. Mobilization has traditionally been treated as stemming primarily from shared interests, and more recently it has been treated as stemming from social identity (Creed, 2003; Polletta & Jasper, 2001; Rao et al., 2003), often conceptualized in demographic terms as gender, race, or nationality (Kurtz, 2002). Attending to identification as a basis for potential mobilization offers advantages similar to those of focusing on identity. A focus on identification not only brings attention to emotional and symbolic aspects of mobilization, placing them alongside rational and political aspects, but also offers a new line of sight, highlighting that groups of individuals united by their relationship with an entity may be readily available to participate in a change effort. Social identity as a basis for mobilization requires the creation of a consciousness of the shared identity as a basis for collective action, whereas identification need not do so. Mobilization through identification may be a natural way for individuals from disparate groups to come together to seek change within a valued entity.

Second, examining identification as a basis for collective action expands understanding of the types of tactics and practices insider change agents may undertake. We found that change agents selected strategies on the basis of how well they signaled, reinforced, or repaired identification. VOTF members deployed their insider knowledge, which

others have noted as a benefit of embeddedness (Maguire et al., 2004; Reay et al., 2006), when, for example, they grounded their calls for lay participation in Vatican II texts. Importantly, they also used approaches that tapped and authentically expressed members' relationship with valued aspects of the institution. Authentically expressive tactics are a less well considered resource in change agency, but are starting to be regarded as both important and intertwined with more instrumental tactics (Polletta & Jasper, 2001). Our study shows empirically how actions, such as VOTF's celebration of Mass at its large gatherings, can be at once expressive and instrumental, binding members to an institution and legitimating their participation in it, even as they signal their discontent with and effort to change aspects of it. Paying attention to split identification as a mechanism for change alerts scholars to consider the actions of embedded insiders not simply as skillful and politically informed, but also as simultaneously expressive of their relationship with an entity. Further, it can enable a more nuanced exploration of simultaneous institutional maintenance and change (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006), as those who split their identification redeploy valued institutional practices and norms, seeking to restore institutional foundations while also altering their enactment.

Finally, although a high level of identification may be one of the "birthing conditions" for a change-oriented group, these founding conditions also can stamp and delimit (Stinchcombe, 1965) what the group can tolerate and attempt. Highly identified insiders seeking change need to legitimate both the split they craft and their efforts to repair it both to themselves and to their primary audiences. These complex needs may limit their choice of actions, tempering their ability to seize political opportunities (Campbell, 2005; Meyer & Minkoff, 2004). We found that VOTF did not pursue certain approaches because they would have been inconsistent with members' identification with the Church. For example, the group voted down an early proposal to call for Cardinal Law's resignation, for they continued to regard him, despite his handling of the abuse crisis, as the leading figure in the Archdiocese. The phrase "pick your battles" is used in studies of insider change efforts mainly to denote picking smaller wins and waiting to pursue larger changes; our study adds a new denotation: it can also mean declining options that may damage an effort's credibility. Future research might track how change efforts evolve through the opportunities foregone.

Implications for Managers

Finally, our study has implications for managers and leaders faced with managing members' identification with an entity, particularly when it is threatened. Managers fulfill their interest in stability, commitment, and alignment when they have strongly identified members. They are often depicted as, or encouraged to become, shapers of members' identification (Fiol, 2002; Pratt & Corley, 2007; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). For example, managers can create meaning voids or construct meaning for members (Pratt, 2000a), particularly in a time of external or internal disruption (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Fiol, 2002). We have added a dynamic, contextualized approach in this case by tracing how Church leaders responded to members' efforts to craft split identification and showing how such "managerial" responses might have unintendedly sustained the split.

Ironically, leaders who successfully court identification through clear and uncompromising stances may end up being the least able to retain that identification when a split happens. Church leaders who labeled VOTF members as dissenters, perhaps in an effort to protect the institution by not capitulating to pressures for change, triggered VOTF's taking up tactics that sustained and perhaps even deepened the split. Such responses may push the very members who are typically allies of change and defenders of an entity in a time of crisis (Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Fiol, 2002), not those already skeptical of leaders' pronouncements (Gamson, 1982; Scully & Segal, 2002), to become particularly intent and surprising drivers of a change effort.

Though split identification followed an escalating path in our case, the process need not lead deterministically toward solidifying a reform group. Leaders and managers can alternatively respond to members' efforts to split identification by changing organizational structures or practices so they realign with valued norms. They might engage in sensegiving to explain why the sought-after changes cannot be made and offer alternative ways to restore identification. Future work could explore such responses and their implications, or could pick up where our study ends, to explore the ongoing implications of managing a split identification, both for managers and those involved in crafting the split.

Conclusion

In closing, we note that our focal construct, the splitting of identification, is a new way of thinking about how members cope with transgression or

conflict in an organization or institution to which they are deeply attached. We suggest that those who are highly identified may seek to renew or restore what is broken, rising up in protest while simultaneously rising up to express and affirm their devotion to what is cherished. Our title deliberately includes this double entendre in the phrase "rise up." Standing up for an organization and standing up to its leaders to seek changes are usually seen as separate dynamics, coming from different members. Our work connects them to show how identification can trigger and shape an unlikely change effort.

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APPENDIX

Protocol for Interviews with VOTF Members

VOTF Questions

1. How/When/Why did you first get involved with VOTF?
2. What do you do at VOTF?
3. How did VOTF start? What is VOTF?
4. Do you think VOTF is different from other Catholic reform groups? How?
5. What do you think is VOTF's main strategy to affect change?
6. Have you seen this strategy change/evolve?
7. What do you think is the most effective way to bring about change?
8. What do you think has been VOTF's main accomplishment in its history?
9. Which do you think have been major highlights/milestones for VOTF?
10. What are VOTF's goals?
11. What has helped or hindered VOTF to achieve its goals since it's foundation?
12. How do you see VOTF in 5 years/10 years?
13. Can you think of other people I could talk to? Key people?
14. Is there anything else you can think of that I have not asked?

Key Events Questions

15. What do you think the July Conference did to the relationship between VOTF and the Archdiocese? How do you think the July Conference affected that relationship?
16. What did the meeting with Cardinal Law mean for VOTF? Why so important?
17. What was the significance of having the funds accepted by Catholic Charities?

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