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**Corporate Philanthropy in New Zealand:  
Exploring the Corporate Philanthropic Relationship**

A dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Management

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## ~ Abstract ~

The claim of this research is that, in New Zealand, the corporate philanthropic relationship can be characterised as a ‘managed mutual dependency’. This study seeks to address the lack of corporate philanthropy research in New Zealand and to contribute to a body of international studies of corporate philanthropy that is predominantly positivist, giver-centric in orientation, and reflective of an apparent research preference for business-related outcomes. This research adopts an interpretive-qualitative approach and theorises corporate philanthropy as a ‘relationship’ of givers and receivers, thus drawing attention to the importance of both parties, and to the ‘gift’ exchange.

Social constructionist theory building was employed to determine the meanings New Zealand managers give to corporate philanthropic relationships. A sample of people who make allocation decisions regarding philanthropic contributions (giving-managers) and people who are primarily responsible for accepting those contributions (receiving-managers) were interviewed and narrative analysis was employed to interpret the interviews.

It was found that there are noticeable differences between the ‘egotistical’ narratives of giving-managers and the ‘laudatory’ narratives of receiving-managers. By bringing these narratives together for the first time in a New Zealand based study, the proposed theoretical basis for the corporate philanthropic relationship was examined. It was found that, although receiving organisations benefit from it, corporate philanthropy is a corporate driven vehicle for self-expression.

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**T.R.L.**

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~ Chapter One ~

## Corporate Philanthropy: Introduction and Overview

### Introduction

This research is an attempt to gain a more nuanced understanding of New Zealand corporate philanthropy. In 2003 I came across *The Competitive Advantage of Corporate Philanthropy* (Porter & Kramer, 2002) in a publication of the Harvard Business Review. In that article the authors take up a conceptual position advocating for context-focused philanthropy, a position that seems so removed from human emotions and virtues. That position argues that corporations can use philanthropy to strengthen their own competitive context; for example, to improve community education while simultaneously adding to the talent pool from which the corporation can draw its workers. What, I pondered, would the broader literature be reporting? What would managers in New Zealand say about corporate philanthropy? These questions have fuelled my curiosity and corporate philanthropy has remained a source of fascination ever since.

As my interest in corporate philanthropy grew, I became a member of Philanthropy New Zealand, an organisation committed to leading the growth of generosity in the New Zealand philanthropic and grant-making sector. It was there that I began to get a feel for what corporations were doing with philanthropy in New Zealand: substantial donations were being made by corporations and corporate-foundations; employees were volunteering; old stock was being recycled to charities; office space was being let to non-profit organisations at no or little cost; and adjustments to the corporation tax system were being made in an attempt to encourage corporations and their foundations/trusts to give.

With evidence of this practice, I took it for granted that there would be a body of academic literature reporting on corporate philanthropy in New Zealand. But this was not the case. My literature search revealed many publications authored by academics in the United States of America (here on in, U.S.) (e.g. Atkinson & Galaskiewicz, 1988; Buchholtz, Amason & Rutherford, 1999; Burlingame & Young, 1996; Edmondson & Carroll, 1999; Fry, Keim & Meiners, 1982; Himmelstein, 1997; Saiia, 2001; Saiia, Carroll & Buchholtz, 2003; Smith, 1994; Useem, 1988) and the United Kingdom (here on in, U.K.) (e.g. Campbell, Moore & Metzger, 2002; Marinetto, 1999; Matten, Crane & Chapple, 2003; Walker, 2002), but very few that had taken on corporate philanthropy as a research object in New Zealand (see Monin & Edmiston, 1999 as an exception).

In New Zealand, corporate philanthropy has instead appeared as a facet of studies more concentrated on broader notions of the business-society relationship such as business social responsibility (Walker, 2003), corporate citizenship (Higgins, 1997), corporate volunteering (Lee & Higgins, 2001), and corporate social responsibility (von Tunzelmann & Cullwick, 1996). As such, the research this thesis reports on is dedicated to understanding corporate philanthropy as a distinct social phenomenon and the broad aim is to theorise corporate philanthropy in New Zealand.

In this chapter I introduce the research by placing corporate philanthropy in context. I describe the practices of corporate philanthropy both internationally and in New Zealand over the past century, briefly outline my philosophical beliefs that underpin how corporate philanthropy is explored in this research, and broadly define how the ‘accomplishment’ of the research aim will be pursued. I make some comments on the use of terminology, and the chapter concludes with an overview of how the thesis is organised.

## **Corporate philanthropy in the international context**

Two distinct paradigms have been noted of corporate philanthropy. The ‘old’ paradigm was inspired by the industrial era of business and classical notions of charity, primarily in the U.S. and the U.K. This paradigm was characterised by the desire to advance humanity and its welfare by giving a portion of personal wealth derived from business enterprise back to the community through charitable aid (see Chesters & Lawrence, 2008; Meijer, de Bakker, Smit & Schuyt, 2006; Smith, 1996). The new paradigm, however, is integrative and takes its lead from economic theory to produce business benefits from social philanthropic investments (Smith, 1994, 1996). This more modern take on corporate philanthropy has prompted the need for professionalised philanthropic business programmes and structures to ensure philanthropy aligns itself with the corporate charter (Himmelstein, 1997). Chapter Two expands on these paradigms.

Given the considerable number of management research based publications, the practice and study of corporate philanthropy is well established in the U.S. (e.g. Buchholtz et al., 1999; Porter & Kramer, 2002; Saiia, 1999) and the U.K. (e.g. Adams & Hardwick, 1998; Brammer & Millington, 2004; Moore, 2001; Shaw, Gordon, Harvey & Henderson, 2010). Increasingly though, corporate philanthropy is becoming a global phenomenon. Researchers in Europe (e.g. Adamonienė & Astromskienė, 2010), Central America (e.g. Sánchez, 2000), South Africa (e.g. Ashley & Haysom, 2006), China (e.g. Zhang, Zhu, Yue & Zhu, 2010) and Australia (e.g. Cooke, 2008) are among those who have made contributions to the English printed management research literature over the past decade.

In practice, U.S. business elite have made significant contributions to human welfare organisations. Ostrander and Schervish (1990) believe corporate

philanthropy does indeed contribute to the betterment of society. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, giving was primarily practised by business people/tycoons (Sheth & Babiak, 2010) who benefited from long prosperous working lives and used their assets to establish charitable foundations (Bronfman & Solomon, 2010). In 1911, Andrew Carnegie formed the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the largest trust operating in the U.S. at that time. There was not a bigger philanthropic organisation until Henry Ford bequeathed his non-voting shares to the Ford Foundation in 1947 (Gregorian, 2007).

Corporate philanthropy came of age in the 1950s with the writings of F Emerson Andrews (1950, 1952) and Richard Eells (1956). An important legal case in the State of New Jersey in the U.S. (*A.P. Smith Manufacturing Company v. Barlow*) changed the corporate giving landscape and provided corporate managers with the guidance to make more informed decisions about the economic, social and legal implications of giving away corporate resources for philanthropic purposes (Himmelstein, 1997). Today, the world's richest business-people – Bill Gates (\$50 Billion) and Warren Buffett (\$40 Billion) – are responsible for the wealth of the world's largest philanthropic organisation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (Forbes, 2009). Corporate philanthropy and philanthropic business people are so salient in the U.S. that an organisation has been set up to represent it: the Committee Encouraging Corporate Philanthropy.

Business people in the U.K. have long engaged in social causes also. The post-war years sparked considerable efforts, where, despite difficult economic conditions, business mergers built on the earlier progressive amalgamations of the 1920s to form large powerful companies in the U.K. (Marinetto, 1999). While there appear to have been significant pledges made to social causes by wealthy business people, Armitstead (2008) observes how the leading 30

philanthropists donated a combined £2.38bn during the 2007-2008 financial year to social causes – a far cry from the wealth distributed by the business elite in the U.S. but understandable given the relative size of their economies.

Sir Tom Hunter, a Scottish billionaire, is reportedly the biggest contributor pledging around £1 Billion to educational and youth projects as well as his own charity, the Hunter Foundation (Independent, 2008). Lord Sainsbury of the Sainsbury's supermarket chain and Dame Anita Roddick<sup>1</sup> of the cosmetics company, The Body Shop are, and have been, among the biggest contributors in Britain more recently (Independent, 2008). The academic study and practice of corporate philanthropy in both the U.S. and U.K. are well established. However, while international research is starting to emerge in other regions of the world, New Zealand is falling behind.

### **Giving and corporate philanthropy in New Zealand**

Corporate philanthropy represents only a small portion of giving to the New Zealand social sector. Commissioned by Philanthropy New Zealand (here on in, PNZ), Slack and Leung-Wai (2007) estimated total philanthropic funding to charities and other community purposes in New Zealand to be \$1.27 billion over the 2005/2006 financial year. In that report, trusts and foundations funded 58 percent of total estimated giving (\$742,145,000), personal donations and bequests 35 percent (\$442,799,000) and businesses/corporations gave only 7 percent (\$89,180,000) of total contributions. It is appropriate to say of New Zealand corporate philanthropy today what Himmelstein (1997) said of the state of corporate philanthropy in the U.S. a decade ago: the philanthropic

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<sup>1</sup> Dame Anita Roddick passed away in September, 2007.

contributions made by corporations “...are but a few percent both of all dollars contributed... and of all corporate before-tax profits” (p.145).

In an earlier report to PNZ, researchers Robinson and Hanley (2002) at the Social and Civic Policy Institute estimated a figure of \$80,000,000 p.a. for donations (2.7 percent) made by corporations to the New Zealand non-profit sector. This followed the first ‘macro-type’ report commissioned by PNZ in 1998 (Robinson, 1998) which put the figure of contributions made by company-related trusts (directly associated with a business/corporation) at \$14,880,038 or 18 percent of total funding. While there are methodological inconsistencies prohibiting any real comparison over time, it is relatively safe to assume that corporations/businesses (as a collective industry) give less than their government, charitable trusts/foundations and individual counterparts in New Zealand. The publications aforementioned represent the most substantial attempt to tell us something about New Zealand corporate philanthropy.

One study carried out by von Tunzelmann and Cullwick (1996), albeit focussed on corporate social responsibility in New Zealand, did note something of corporate philanthropy: companies were happy to be associated with the philanthropy of their owners or to establish trusts to administer their philanthropy to get around governance constraints, yet saw no place in the corporate environment for philanthropy. Monin and Edmiston (1999) failed to offer much of an insight into corporate philanthropy other than to suggest that more research was needed. These observations represent the rather murky nature of understanding corporate philanthropy in New Zealand that still appears to exist today. There are salient players in New Zealand corporate philanthropy though.

Some of what the popular press in New Zealand call corporate or business philanthropy is indeed the philanthropy of wealthy business people/families

administered through foundations/trusts and in addition foundations/trusts carrying a corporate name. For instance, industrialists such as Sir James Fletcher Senior and Sir James Fletcher Junior were well known for heading one of New Zealand's largest businesses, Fletcher Construction. Since World War II there has been a philanthropic trust bearing their family and business name (today, The Fletcher Trust). Throughout the later part of the twentieth century, Sir James Fletcher Junior also had a reputation for writing personal cheques out to charities who failed in their attempts to secure the Trust's funds (South, 2009).

The McKenzie name is also renowned for philanthropy in New Zealand. John (J.R.) McKenzie was an entrepreneur who started the McKenzies fancy goods store in Dunedin in 1910 which eventually became a chain of 75 stores. At the time of his death, several charitable trusts had been established with his backing (Saunders, 2004). It was his second son, Sir Roy McKenzie, who was to carry on the legacy. A number of the family's trusts remain, including the J.R. McKenzie Trust – an iconic New Zealand philanthropic organisation. With a similar presence, the Todd family – of the Todd Corporation – have made a substantial philanthropic commitment particularly to New Zealand youth, families, science and the environment (Catherall, 2010).

Many other prominent New Zealand business people are well known for their generosity: Dick Hubbard (Hubbards Foods), Stephen Tindall (founder, The Warehouse), Sir Eion Edgar (investment banker), Sir Peter Leitch (founder, the Mad Butcher), Tony Falkenstein (founder, Just Water company), Sam Morgan and Gareth Morgan (founder/investor, TradeMe) are but a few (Catherall, 2010). It is the powers of the mass media under the control of certain commercial forces that have actively shaped and cast these prominent social figures as the heroes of New Zealand voluntary social welfare (e.g. Catherall,

2010; Villari, 2007). Some philanthropic corporate/business organisations have also been cast into the limelight.

Villari (2007) reports the philanthropy (as money contributed) of a number of corporate-foundations/trusts during 2005/2006: the Vodafone New Zealand Foundation (\$1.7 million); the AMP Foundation (\$300,000); the AXA Charitable Trust Fund (\$200,000); and the Mazda Foundation Trust (\$252,000). The article also reports on contributions made by those foundations and trusts previously mentioned: the Tindall Foundation (\$4.5 million); the J.R. McKenzie Trust (\$3.3 million); the T G Macarthy Trust (\$2.2 million), and; the Fletcher Trust (\$600,000). However, other than economic data driven reports and media articles such as these, little is known of corporate philanthropy in New Zealand and the same can be said of the broader relationship between business and society (Black, 2009; Lee, 2006).

### **The broad philosophical approach**

My reading of the predominantly international scholarly literature on corporate philanthropy suggests that, as a phenomenon, corporate philanthropy is reified and quantified through reports on how much corporations give, the economic and strategic motivations for giving, and the financial value of philanthropy to business (Chapter Two). Thus, corporate philanthropy has become a phenomenon that is expected to serve ‘business interests’ and in addition, explained in part by the attention to quantifying corporate philanthropy, most studies draw from a scientific mode of knowing, privileging the view that the only social objects worthy of consideration are those directly observable and measurable (Lawler, 2002).

Along with the paucity of research in New Zealand, the overwhelming attention to understanding what philanthropy is to the corporate giver means there is also a relative lack of research that considers: (a) the perspectives of people in

organisations in 'receipt' of philanthropic contributions; (b) the 'relationship' as a research object; and (c) how managers that both give and receive 'reflect on their experiences' of those relationships. This study leverages off these underappreciated aspects of research to build a research project on corporate philanthropy as reflections on the experiences of human working relationships.

In building this project, I question the use of scientific analyses and instead turn to *narrative analysis* (Cunliffe, Luhman & Boje, 2004; Czarniawska, 1999; Gabriel, 2000; Lawler, 2002) and *social constructionist theory building* (Charmaz, 1990; Turnbull, 2002) (Chapter Three). A scientific approach seems inadequate as a means for building knowledge from human experience, since human experience is essentially a cultural territory of non-material thoughts and meanings that are not static but rather enlarged by new experiences that are continuously being configured and refigured through human reflection (Polkinghorne, 1988).

Understanding human experience is the domain of qualitative research and narrative methods are particularly useful (Riessman, 1993). In narrating their experiences, as encouraged in this research, managers organise human experience using the poetic tropes of motive, agency, responsibility, and so on (Gabriel, 2000) that relate to the giving and receiving of corporate resources as philanthropy. Chapters Four and Five reveal how managers do this. Narrative analysis allows me to explore how these tropes are used by managers to infuse corporate philanthropic relationships with 'meaning'. Thus, narrative addresses the 'observable' and 'measurable' limitations associated with scientific methods (Riessman, 1993) and allows for a contribution to the international corporate philanthropy literature.

Turnbull's (2002) theory building process is adopted to offer some direction and purpose and takes the narrative analysis further by engaging in a rigorous,

critical and reflective process whereby decisions are made that are iterative and allow for deeper understandings of corporate philanthropic relationships to emerge.

### **The research aim and purpose**

The *aim* of this study is *to build a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand that is sensitised to the perceptions and experiences of both giving-managers and receiving-managers*. That aim is not about creating a universal, single and lasting theory (see Charmaz, 2000). The findings produced are depictions of a culture which exists in historical time between human subjects and as such the theory does not attempt to speak finally and with definitive authority for those subjects. Rather, the theory is contextual, partial, imperfect and selective (Riessman, 1993).

The *purpose* of building that theory is of critical importance. Because research on corporate philanthropic relationships in New Zealand is relatively new, the study is *exploratory* in nature. Inspired by Babbie (2007), there are three clear purposes: (1) to satisfy my motivation for better understanding the relationships New Zealand giving-managers and receiving-managers find themselves in and to offer practical guidance; (2) to identify the viability of, and opportunities for, undertaking more extensive studies into corporate philanthropy in New Zealand in future; and (3) to assess and develop Gabriel's (2000) method of poetic analysis and Turnbull's (2002) theory building process for their appropriateness and potential as tools for understanding business and society research phenomena including, but not limited to, corporate philanthropy.

### **The use of terminology**

This study acknowledges the range of terminologies used at certain points in time and in particular places to refer to the actor-agents (including managers) of

giving and receiving. To overcome the difficulty of distinguishing between organisational and human agents, I have committed, in parts of this thesis, to using the following working terms: corporate-giving organisation, giving-manager, non-profit organisation and receiving-manager.

*Corporate-giving organisation* is the donor organisation. The term is used to indicate either a corporation or a corporate organisation (a corporate-foundation or a corporate-trust) that gives away resources as philanthropy. Often these organisations subcontract philanthropy out to non-profit organisations which then take on the responsibility for delivering social benefits (Tracey, Phillips & Haugh, 2005).

*Giving-manager* is the person who occupies that organisational role which is recognised by the donor organisation to be most closely aligned to the everyday philanthropic decision-making of their organisation. That is, giving-managers are managers who make allocation decisions regarding philanthropic activity (Godfrey, 2005). They may be responsible for making recommendations to the board of a corporate-giving organisation (Campbell, Gulas & Gruca, 1999).

*Non-profit organisation* is the term used to indicate either a not-for-profit organisation or a non-governmental organisation in receipt of philanthropic contributions from a corporate-giving organisation. Non-profit organisations are independent of the State. They are often organisations motivated by the desire for institutional change (den Hond, 2010) and which take on the responsibility for delivering social benefits (Tracey et al., 2005).

*Receiving-manager* is the person who occupies that organisational role which is recognised by the recipient organisation to be most closely aligned to the everyday decision-making of their organisation. This term refers to the organisational actor-agent primarily responsible for accepting the philanthropic

contributions that corporate-giving organisations and their giving-managers make.

### **Organisation of the thesis**

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter One has described the background and context of the study. It captures my personal motivations for the study and sets down the broad intent of the research.

Chapter Two is the principal chapter dedicated to examining the academic scholarship around corporate philanthropy. It contains a history of corporate philanthropy as well as some contemporary views before offering some judgements on corporate philanthropy's treatment as a research object. Various theories of the firm are discussed in the chapter to demonstrate the diversity of approaches debating corporate philanthropy to date. The chapter also turns to gift-giving and non-profit literatures to guide the thesis toward more innovative and interpretive ways of exploring corporate philanthropy in the New Zealand context.

In Chapter Three the research design is presented. In this chapter the fundamental presuppositions of the research are extended and priorities closely aligned with personal ontological and epistemological assumptions are established. The sections present an account of the practical procedures that were carried out for selecting research participants, collecting data, analysing narratives, and constructing theory. The nested empirical process of poetic analysis (Gabriel, 2000) and then theory building (Turnbull, 2002) is explained.

Chapter Four presents an interpretation of the narratives produced in interviews with giving-managers. An analytical interpretation using Gabriel's (2000) concept of poetic analysis is offered to reveal how giving-managers attribute meaning to themselves and others in philanthropic relationships.

Chapter Five reflects Chapter Four, presenting analyses of narratives from receiving-managers. Chapter Six synthesises the empirical findings from Chapters Four and Five (as well as additional interview material) to build the foundation of a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand. In addition, the quality process for checking and refining the theory is explained.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis. Here, the main findings of the research are brought forward and an overview of some of the practical and research implications for both the New Zealand context and the global context are presented. The chapter ends with a brief reflection on the study.

~ Chapter Two ~

## Understanding Corporate Philanthropy: Interpreting the Literature

### **Introduction**

In Chapter One I stated that the aim of this research is to build a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand. The purpose of this chapter is to articulate why that aim is worthy of our research attention. In doing so, the chapter establishes what research has been completed on corporate philanthropy internationally, how corporate philanthropy has been researched and what the key issues are (Hart, 2003). The first part of the chapter presents some context to show how we have come to see corporate philanthropy the way we do. Next, the chapter presents the motivations for corporate philanthropy and the responsibilities that managers face, identifying two areas of corporate philanthropy research that are fundamental to its knowledge. Throughout these sections, reference to literatures on gift-giving and non-profit management directs our attention toward more innovative and interpretive ways of exploring corporate philanthropy. This research draws its methodological energy from these literatures.

### **The emergence of corporate philanthropy**

Understanding corporate philanthropy is, in general terms, about why and for what benefit corporations, through their managers, share their economic bounty with society (Burlingame & Young, 1996). As such, the study of corporate philanthropy is generally connected to the broader debate as to the role of business in society. The social role of business is not, however, so straight forward, since managers are often caught between meeting the competing expectations of socially oriented community organisations (Margolis & Walsh,

2003) and those of business shareholders (Friedman, 1970). These expectations create decision-making dilemmas for philanthropic managers and those dilemmas have encouraged business researchers to investigate certain aspects of corporate philanthropy in an attempt to offer managers some guidance.

With the benefit of hindsight, business researchers have written about corporate philanthropy and its management in ways that suggest there has been considerable change to the way corporate philanthropy has been managed over time. We can reasonably assume that such change reflects managers' responses or reactions to business and societal expectations about the direction and legitimacy of corporate giving. Figure 1 identifies general categories associated with the various eras of corporate philanthropy as proprietorial, managerial, modern free-market, corporate stakeholder and corporate strategic.

Corporate philanthropy has its practical roots in the practices of nineteenth century philanthropists. Leading up to the early twentieth century, philanthropic giving was primarily practised and managed by business people and industrial tycoons in the U.S. and U.K. who had personally benefited from long prosperous working lives and who used their assets to establish charitable foundations (Bronfman & Solomon, 2010; Sheth & Babiak, 2010). It was more likely to be an individual's assets, and not the company's, that were given away as philanthropy (Smith, 1994).

I refer to this early era as *proprietorial*, since philanthropy during this era was generally operationalised and managed by proprietors or business-owners. During this era, philanthropy had little place as an internal utility of the business corporation and was not considered to be a fully-fledged function of the business firm (Holmes, 1976). What marked this era was the distribution of wealth by individuals created through the latter stages of industrialisation in the

U.S. by tycoons such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller. That wealth spread throughout the world through various social initiatives.

THE EMERGENCE OF CORPORATE PHILANTHROPY			
Era	Features	Salient research publications	Period
<b>Proprietorial</b>	Business owners as the agents of philanthropy; family philanthropy; personal philanthropy.	Bronfman and Solomon (2010); Friedman and McGarvie (2003); Gregorian (2007); Holmes (1976); Irvin (2008); Phillips (1996); Sheth and Babiak (2010); Windsor (1980).	leading up to the early twentieth century
<b>Managerial</b>	Manager as an agent of the owner; philanthropy as a corporate activity to be managed; managers legally restricted from making contributions.	Andrews (1952); Eells (1956); Holmes (1976); Sharfman (1994).	1930s – 1940s
<b>Modern free-market</b>	Shareholder primacy; economic view prevails; proving philanthropy's financial performance; the emergence of business and society scholarship.	Andrews (1950, 1952); Bowen (1953); Eells (1956); Fremont-Smith (1972); Friedman (1962, 1970); Moskowitz (1972); Vance (1975).	mid-twentieth century
<b>Corporate stakeholder</b>	Theorisation of stakeholder view of the firm as alternative to shareholder view; value and wealth are not adequately defined solely by profit.	Clarkson (1995); Donaldson and Preston (1995); Freeman (1984); Jones, Wicks and Freeman (2002).	1970s
<b>Corporate strategic</b>	Philanthropy as a strategic function of the corporation; philanthropy required to prove itself similar to other functional areas of the firm.	Burlingame and Frishkoff (1996); Smith (1996); Saiia (1999, 2001); Porter and Kramer (2002); Campbell and Slack (2008); Dennis, Buchholtz and Butts (2009); Tokarski (1999); Zhang, Zhu, Yue and Zhu (2010).	1980s – present

Figure 1: The emergence of corporate philanthropy

Among others, Carnegie and Rockefeller made significant human welfare contributions as business people in their own right (Friedman & McGarvie, 2003). For example, reflecting his varied interests, Andrew Carnegie started the Carnegie Institution of Washington (1902), the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission (1904), and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (1910) to name a few (Brison, 2005). Carnegie also formed the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 1911, the largest welfare trust operating in the U.S. at that time. There was not a bigger philanthropic organisation until Henry Ford bequeathed his non-voting shares to the Ford Foundation in 1947 (Gregorian, 2007). Rockefeller established the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research (1901), the General Education Board (1903), and the Rockefeller Sanitary Commission (1909) to carry out his philanthropy (Brison, 2005).

Indeed, throughout the proprietorial era, the reasons for philanthropy were varied. Among the reasons identified were business people's attempts to salve their own consciences and to compensate for former questionable business practises, to achieve positive public recognition, and to avoid inheritance taxes (Irvin, 2008). The history of the Quakers in Britain and the New World tells of philanthropic giving associated with business individuals, but also families such as the Rowntrees, Wedgewoods and Cadburys (Windsor, 1980). During the proprietorial era, British philanthropy was closely associated with religious and ideological concerns drawn from the strong tradition of Quakerism (Windsor, 1980).

Interestingly, one example of Quaker philanthropy in Britain was aligned with the manufacturing of chocolate and the development of rural satellite communities for employees and factories. The Cadburys established the Bournville chocolate factory outside Birmingham in 1878 which was designed to be a good model of housing for the working classes. Later, in 1900, George Cadbury transferred ownership of the estate to the Bournville Village Trust for

the direct benefit of his employees (Phillips, 1996). Philanthropic acts in the proprietorial era, such as the transfer of estate ownership, were often considered individual and family acts and not that of business entities. But this was to change.

The 1930s and 1940s saw the emergence of a *managerial* period of social responsibility which helped to establish philanthropy as an embedded corporate activity. Corporate philanthropy was managed by agents/managers of corporate owners/proprietors and generally not owners/proprietors themselves during this period (Holmes, 1976). Managers were increasingly coming under pressure to balance the claims of diverse groups (customers, employees, community organisations) and particularly government during this time (Sharfman, 1994). As such, rather than simply focussing on attempts to enhance the wealth of shareholders in the normal course of business (Holmes, 1976), research focused primarily on guiding managers about the social functions of management.

During the managerial era, the Great Depression created a number of challenges for governments and these led to pressures on businesses. In 1931 in the U.S. for example, business corporations were strongly encouraged by the Hoover administration to make philanthropic contributions. The Organization for Unemployment Relief was established as a quasi governmental organisation and more than \$100 million was raised, much of which came directly from major corporations (Eells, 1956). To provide business with an incentive to donate, a movement toward a corporate tax deduction for donations began and this led to a new era of corporate philanthropy in the U.S. (Andrews, 1952).

Philanthropy in the U.S. evolved from an illegal to a legal business activity in 1950s (Sharfman, 1994). It was the New Jersey case of *A. P. Smith Manufacturing Company v. Barlow* (1953, 1954) that overturned the requirement that corporate philanthropy must directly benefit the corporation

(Hall, 2006). This provided the impetus for a *modern free-market* era of corporate philanthropy. This era also marked, and was marked by, the start of a strong era of business and society scholarship.

Carroll (1979) commended Bowen's 1953 book on the *Social Responsibilities of the Businessman* as the first definitive publication of this modern free-market era. This era was characterised by a business awareness and recognition of its responsibility to, and involvement in, a broad range of community affairs while retaining a core business orientation. Bowen (1953) saw the largest corporations operating at the time as vital centres of power and decision-making. He argued that businessmen (few businesswomen held formal positions of business power at the time) were obliged to follow lines of action that would be deemed desirable in terms of the values of broader society (Carroll, 2008).

It is in the 1950s that corporate philanthropy started to claim critical scholarly attention as a form of business responsibility (Andrews, 1950, 1952; Eells, 1956). Scholarship on corporate philanthropy primarily aimed to provide managers with guidance on meeting the needs of community organisations based on sound business-oriented reasoning (Ricks, 2005). In his theory of prudential corporation giving, Eells (1956) accepted profit-orientation as the ultimate motivation for business managerial decision-making without rejecting the notions of business donations and business responsibilities to other stakeholders.

Corporate donating, according to Eells, was seen as a creative outlet for business managers to invest business resources (Fremont-Smith, 1972). But the concern was primarily for improving corporate profits and donating was merely a vehicle to that end. Corporate philanthropy was much less about building good community relationships. Still, a strong challenge to the broader business

responsibilities of business came from neo-classical economists, notably Milton Friedman (1962, 1970) during this time. Friedman (1970) claimed that economic theory dictates that the corporation's sole obligation is to maximize shareholders' profits. His position outlined in an article titled, *The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits* (Friedman, 1970), is frequently quoted as the antithesis of business philanthropy and social responsibility (Husted & Salazar, 2006). Friedman and other advocates of the free-market made substantial ground arguing for shareholder primacy in the distribution of business benefits.

With the emergence of scholarly debates as to the economic role of business philanthropy during the modern free-market era, Schuler and Cording (2006) point out that business and society researchers set out to investigate whether social conduct such as philanthropy led to corporate profitability and shareholder wealth and/or to show whether social investment detracted from or contributed to shareholder or owner interests (e.g. Moskowitz, 1972; Vance, 1975). The economic profit argument may have taken a strong hold over the community of scholars concerned with the social responsibilities and philanthropy of business at this point in time, but it was not long before a new approach to the firm emerged to challenge that position.

Van Over and Barone (1975) noted the emergence of that new approach to philanthropy, an approach I refer to as the *corporate stakeholder* approach. In the 1970s, advocates of this approach criticised the economic perspective for its narrow conception of the impacts of business practice and we started to see some progress towards the idea that corporate philanthropy was about meaningful business-community relationships. This approach emphasised that the proper role of the business corporation should be one dedicated to serving society at large. Van Over and Barone's (1975) empirical work confirmed thoughts that "...a balanced consideration [was] developing for the needs of all

constituents of society” (p.341). The challenge to Friedman’s doctrine that ‘the business of business is business’ was strengthened in the 1970s by with the articulation and popularisation of stakeholder theory (Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Freeman, 1984).

As part of a broader debate questioning economic driven desires, stakeholder theorists maintain that value and wealth are not adequately defined solely by profit, share price and dividends but that the purpose of the corporation is to distribute value and wealth through to primary stakeholders – employees, customers as well as the shareholding group (Donaldson & Preston, 1995). Since the 1980s there has been wide acceptance of stakeholderism in the business and society literature (Clarkson, 1995), although few theorists have mounted investigations of corporate philanthropy from a stakeholder perspective. Some have, however, made reference to the application of stakeholder theory for the exploration of corporate philanthropy (e.g. Buchholtz & Brown, 2006). The broader stakeholder perspective, and its widespread adoption by business practitioners, may have changed perceptions and practices relating to corporate philanthropy.

Because of its perceived value as a strategic management tool, philanthropy received revived attention from researchers toward the end of the twentieth century (Smith, 1996). Since then, empirical evidence suggests that firms are becoming more strategic with their philanthropy (Porter & Kramer, 2002; Saiia, 1999; Saiia, 2001; Saiia et al., 2003). This period also incorporates an awareness of stakeholder interests, and I have called it the *corporate strategic* era. The philanthropic aspect of the business enterprise has, for the past few decades since the 1980s, been required to prove its strategic value to the business (Tokarski, 1999; Worth, 2012). As such, managers have been placed under considerable pressure to align their philanthropic practices and desires with business strategy (Saiia, 2001). But once again, this era has been more

about the corporation and its objectives as distinct from the interests of meaningful business-community relationships.

What becomes apparent as we reflect on the past is that the decision-making manager has at various times taken on important yet diverse roles constrained by legislation, popular imagination, social expectation, and prevailing economic business ideologies. With the emergence of corporate philanthropy as a strategic endeavour, it is important to raise questions about corporate philanthropy's contribution to the communities it ostensibly serves.

### **Corporate philanthropy research by context**

As mentioned in Chapter One, researchers from different geographic contexts have contributed to the knowledge about corporate philanthropy. Since the emergence of the modern free-market era of corporate philanthropy, a significant research contribution has been made by academics studying corporate philanthropy in the U.S. This includes: work by researchers such as: Himmelstein (1997) who examined the culture and politics of large giving programmes; research by Saiia (1999) who examined the duties/orientations of giving managers; and an influential edited book authored by Burlingame and Young (1996) on corporate philanthropy at a time when corporate philanthropy was moving from 'doing what was right for the broader community' (corporate stakeholder era) to 'doing well strategically for the corporation' (corporate strategic era).

Researchers studying corporate philanthropy in the U.K. include those who have studied: the relationship between company specific factors and discretionary corporate donations (Adams & Hardwick, 1998); the relationship between corporate social performance and the economic performance of U.K. companies (Moore, 2001); the determinants of corporate charitable contributions to U.K. charities within a comparative study based on a

longitudinal data set (Brammer & Millington, 2004); and the motivations for corporate philanthropy based on a motivational and stakeholder framework (Moir & Taffler, 2004). A comparative analysis by U.K. researchers on corporate community contributions between the U.K. and U.S. has also been carried out (Brammer & Pavelin, 2005).

An array of studies into corporate philanthropy from other parts of the world have made their way to top-tier scholarly journals and published books, probably reflecting and responding to the widespread interest in the business world for knowledge on corporate philanthropy. Some of the findings from these studies confirm my belief that local factors are likely to influence the way philanthropy is viewed and practised but that there may be an international trend toward the strategic management of corporate philanthropy. To draw on some recent examples, Adamonienė and Astromskienė's (2010) study on Lithuanian business philanthropy found that corporations give most saliently out of guilt and to achieve short to medium term competitive advantage.

Zhang et al's (2010) research using data on Chinese firms' philanthropic response to the 2008 Sichuan earthquake found that Chinese firms (particularly those in competitive industries) are utilising philanthropy as a marketing strategy in an attempt to create competitive advantage. Basil, Runte, Easwaramoorthy and Barr's (2009) national survey of Canadian companies established that companies are selective about who their employees support through volunteerism (a type of philanthropic act) further arguing that this suggests a strategic application of corporate volunteering.

In New Zealand, as noted in Chapter One, a number of works have devoted their attention to business and society relations in general. Some of the broader studies include social/environmental reporting (Higgins, 2006), business social responsibility (Walker, 2003; von Tunzelmann & Cullwick, 1996), stakeholder

engagement and social responsibility (Walker & Olsson, 2001; Higgins, 2008), corporate responsibility and legitimacy (Higgins & Walker, 2008), corporate citizenship (Higgins, Olsson, & Walker, 2005), corporate volunteering (Lee & Higgins, 2001), business community partnerships (Lee, 2006) and corporate social investment (Black, 2009).

As also noted in Chapter One, there exist some useful historical insights into business philanthropy that analyse either individual philanthropic acts (see Hunter & Lineham, 1999) or the relationship between business and ‘voluntary welfare’ in New Zealand (Dalley & Tennant, 2004). Some investigations provide valuable empirical observations into the relationship between New Zealand businesses and society (von Tunzelmann & Cullwick, 1996; Walker & Olsson, 2001) and there have been a handful of publications dedicated to conceptualising corporate philanthropy (Love, 2006a, 2006b, 2007, 2008; Love & Higgins, 2006, 2007; Monin & Edmiston, 1999).

But little empirical research specifically targets corporate philanthropy and none appears to develop a New Zealand theory of corporate philanthropy that we can use to make some international comparisons. Fraser (2004) suggests that national culture shapes how managers manage and make decisions about the giving they carry out on behalf of corporations, and also how they envisage corporate philanthropy and speak to researchers about their place within in it. This claim highlights the importance of theorising, in an exploratory way, New Zealand corporate philanthropy for a greater local understanding. Some contemporary interpretations of corporate philanthropy from abroad can offer some guidance.

### **Contemporary interpretations of corporate philanthropy**

Ostensibly, modern corporate philanthropy involves a business corporation’s commitment to humanity and as such represents a broad philosophy of business

social engagement. Scholars associated with the Social Issues in Management (SIM) division of the Academy of Management and the International Association for Business and Society (IABS) have contributed much of the contemporary theorisation of corporate philanthropy. This section looks at how these contemporary theorists define corporate philanthropy, link philanthropy to other like constructs, and maintain philanthropy as a product of broader business and society constructs.

Definitions of ‘corporate philanthropy’ often rely on quite vague and contestable features to explain the phenomenon. These features include the intentions to: promote the wellbeing of humankind (Saiia, 2001); give for defined beneficial social purposes (Leisinger, 2007); support a non-profit cause or organisation (Wymer, 2006); and simply to help others (Adamonienė & Astromskienė, 2010). Among the ‘abstract’ intentions in the case of some definitions, are aims and vague descriptions of behaviour that serve to lure researchers into believing that corporate philanthropy is an activity independent of complex human agencies, beliefs, values, and desires.

Even in operational terms, corporate philanthropy often highlights behaviours such as donating money (Meijer et al., 2006), business resources (Leisinger, 2007, p.325) or portions of profit (Wymer, 2006). The idea that corporate philanthropy is a mechanical business act is exemplified by an accounting perspective, made apparent by Godfrey (2005), that interprets philanthropy rather objectively as “an unconditional transfer of cash or other assets to an entity or a settlement or cancellation of its liabilities in a voluntary nonreciprocal transfer by another entity acting other than as an owner” (p.778). Whilst this perspective might have gained traction in some circles, traditionally ‘philanthropy’ has meant something quite different.

By definition, traditional philanthropy has been seen as an act out of the love of humankind and has been typically regarded as an act of subjective human intentions and behaviours (Bremner, 1996; Comitini, 2005; Davey, 2007; Marts, 1991). Outside the business realm, Ostrower (1995) remarks on an important feature distinguishing philanthropy from charity: charity is directed at the poor and is often a contribution to alleviate immediate suffering whereas philanthropy is a broader concept that includes charity but also comprises giving for and to a wide range of public purposes – universities, museums, arts programmes, churches, et cetera – whether or not the recipients are considered poor.

But in the study of corporate philanthropy, charity and philanthropy are rarely distinguished between and consequently may constitute either “...charitable donations or corporate philanthropy” (Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007, p.248). The potential for confusion and the lack of clarity around terminology is not simply limited to charity and philanthropy but also extends to ‘benevolence’, ‘giving’, ‘community involvement’ and ‘sponsorship’. Non-profit commentators maintain some of the confusion by using corporate philanthropy as an umbrella term to include a range of actions. For example, Wymer (2006) suggests there are three categories of corporate philanthropy; corporate giving, corporate sponsorship, and cause-related marketing.

Corporate philanthropy appears as a derivative or associated theme in numerous business and society research publications dedicated to primary constructs such as corporate charitable contributions (Amato & Amato, 2007; Brammer & Millington, 2004); corporate giving (Amato & Amato, 2007); corporate community contributions (Brammer & Pavelin, 2005); corporate discretionary donations (Adams & Hardwick, 1998); corporate community involvement (Hess, Rogovsky & Dunfee, 2002; Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007); and sponsorship (Daellenbach, Davies & Ashill, 2006).

Of course, there are exceptions to these definitions and use of terms but in general there is a common ground that is broadly understood as corporates' desire to "... share their largesse with the larger society around them" (Burlingame & Young, 1996, p.xi). While this definition is usefully unrestrained for an exploratory study, it is symptomatic of corporate philanthropy research that appears to be 'giver-centric' and 'un-balanced'. Research guided by such definitions maintains the problematic perception that corporate philanthropy is, and should continue to be, less about collaboration, relationship, and partnership than about business.

### **Corporate philanthropy as both giving and receiving**

Corporate philanthropy is frequently considered a construct of broader business related business and society investigations into corporate social responsibility and corporate social responsiveness (see Barnett, 2007; Carroll, 1979, 1991; Dentchev, 2004). This view has been reinforced by the relegation of philanthropy to 'component' status with regard to corporate citizenship. This can be illustrated by the *Business Ethics* journal's approach to assembling its annual list of top corporate citizens. The process that *Business Ethics* employs uses corporate philanthropy as one signifier among many to determine how socially responsible certain corporations are (Koehn & Ueng, 2010).

Similarly, Brammer, Pavelin and Porter (2006) use philanthropy as a measure for examining corporate social investments because high levels of philanthropy are seen as a measure of good social performance. But Buchholtz and Brown (2006) suggest that this treatment of corporate philanthropy as a product of broader constructs serves to create confusion because philanthropy is regarded as a uni-dimensional construct that refers generally to corporate giving. Corporate social responsibility on the other hand is positioned as a broad multi-dimensional construct that includes services to the community, product safety,

environmental projects and minority relations among others (Buchholtz & Brown, 2006). This might be a valid positioning of corporate philanthropy vis-à-vis business social responsibility but a worrying concern is that such practices, like their definitions, tend to reinforce the ‘giver-centric’ orientation of much of the corporate philanthropy research.

But that concern is not limited to superficial definitions of business and society constructs. There is a tendency among corporate philanthropy researchers to consider the opinions of those who give and to place less emphasis on those who receive. For example, a number of researchers survey corporate executives (e.g. Amato & Amato, 2007), corporate giving-managers (e.g. Dentchev, 2004; Saiia et al., 2003), contributions programme managers (e.g. Knauff, 1989), top managers and/or CEOs (e.g. Buchholtz et al., 1999; Holmes, 1976; Dennis et al., 2009) and businessmen (e.g. Alexander & Buchholz, 1978). The fact that the receiver is implied establishes corporate philanthropy research as giver-centric, and within research studies of corporate philanthropy, recipients are largely marginalised.

A few researchers have sought to address this marginalisation of the recipient of corporate philanthropy (Burlingame & Young, 1996). Yankey (1996), for example, encourages us to think about the impact of the corporate philanthropic partnership on the non-profit organisation’s (i.e. the recipient’s) mission, and highlights the idea that corporate philanthropy is plurivocal, a theme that has since gained prominence through the work of several researchers (Cooke, 2008; Saiia, 2001; Smith, 2005). These researchers point out that we are right to consider, and take seriously, the voices of non-profit managers in our theorisations on corporate philanthropy. So doing reflects a commitment to the idea that corporate philanthropy is a complex web of intentional social relationships involving both givers and receivers (Saiia, 1999), that givers can only exist in relationship to receivers and that the origins and foundation of

givers and receivers are social and inter-subjective (Buchholz & Rosenthal, 2006).

Anthropology and sociology are the disciplines that have theorised giving and receiving in the form of traditional gift-giving as social relationships (Mauss, 1924; Liebersohn, 2011; Vandeveld, 2000). We learn from these disciplines that giving and receiving are acts that include progressions over ‘time’ – to give is to *then* receive. This establishes an enduring system of reciprocity where the receivers are then compelled to give back in some form (Mauss, 1924). The suggestion that, “getting is important, too, but giving comes first” (Bremner, 1996, p.xi) highlights the order of events carried out under the banner of giving.

A system of gift/counter-gift can be envisaged whereby recipient becomes donor in a re-occurring continuous spiral of giving activity motivating the economy of gift exchange (Godbout cited in Beatty, 2006). This notion has been developed in a business context by Sherry (1983) who proposed a typology demonstrating how patterns of exchange integrate formal relationships between consumers and receivers of their gifts. Sherry explained how both donors *and* recipients are driven to give, receive and reciprocate in a process of exchange where social relationships are formed, maintained, developed and severed over time. While the ‘time’ dimension appears to be a crucial component for understanding giving behaviour, it also appears to be a taken-for-granted notion in corporate philanthropy research. Thus, gift exchange with recipients over time warrants attention as part of a broader study of corporate philanthropy as relationship driven.

### **Why corporations and their managers give**

Despite criticism of giver-centric corporate philanthropy research, understanding why corporate managers give is fundamental to understanding corporate philanthropy. While corporate philanthropy is an organised action, it

is prompted by the individual decision-making of managers (Basil & Weber, 2006; Buchholtz et al., 1999; Zhang et al., 2010) and is a means for managers to please various stakeholders (Adams-Chau, 1988). It is commonly conceived that managers are motivated by either a concern for the welfare of others (Jones, 1994) or to increase shareholder wealth (Galaskiewicz, 1989). Furthermore, there are various positions of compromise.

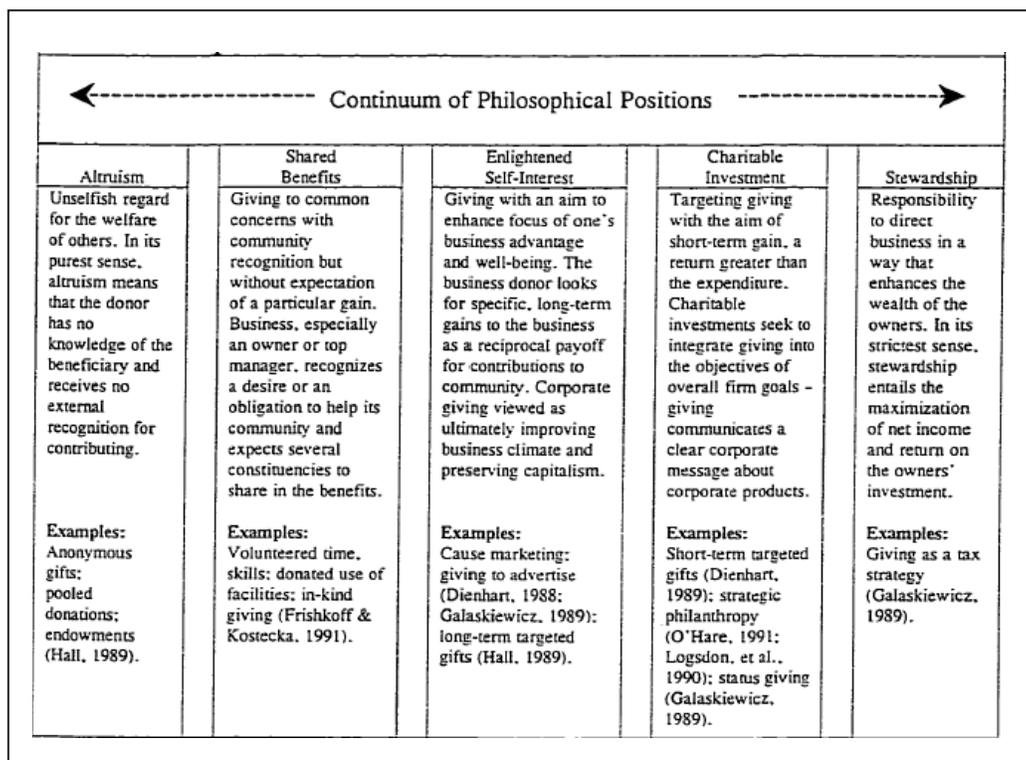


Figure 2: Burlingame and Frishkoff's (1996, p.97) philosophical framework of charitable business contributions

Figure 2 describes what Burlingame and Frishkoff (1996) believe to be the fundamental philosophical positions for corporate philanthropy. A number of business models and theories have been developed to explain the motivations/motives for giving and to remind managers of their responsibilities and duties to people and groups that have 'legitimate' claims on businesses and their philanthropy. Saia (1999) tries to distinguish more clearly than

Burlingame and Frishkoff (1996) the philosophical motivations/motives for giving without losing sight of the obvious nature of continua – that positions blend from one position to another (see Figure 3). Saiia (1999) used his model to ask managers questions about these positions and found empirical support for the hypothesis that “corporate giving managers believe that the practice of philanthropy is becoming more strategic” (p.88).

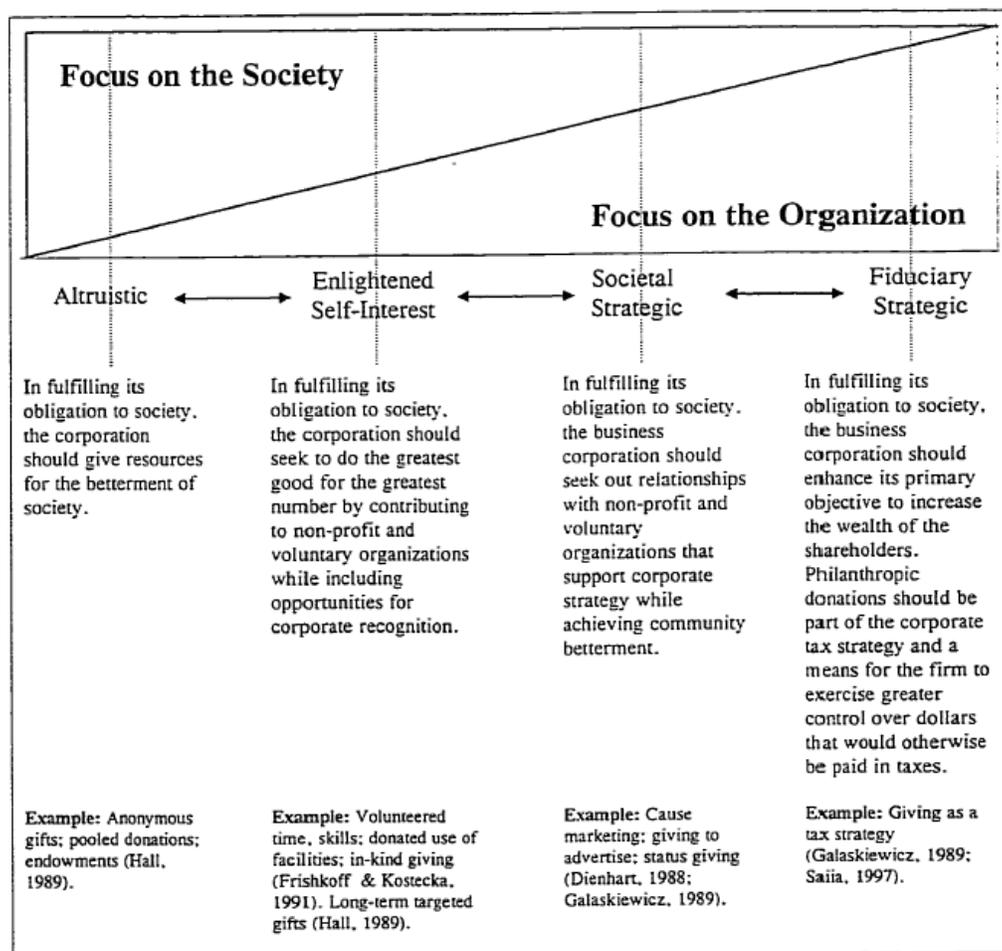


Figure 3: Saiia's (1999, p.18) modified continuum of corporate philanthropy

Moir and Taffler's (2004) integrative framework of corporate philanthropy is another useful tool devised by the authors to better comprehend and explain the motivational possibilities for corporate philanthropy. Their model captures the notions that corporations and their managers are motivated by the desire to

serve business interests (strategic orientation), to serve societal interests (altruism) or, to varying extents, serve both (enlightened self-interest). But Moir and Taffler's (2004) model goes further to add a stakeholder dimension (see Figure 4).

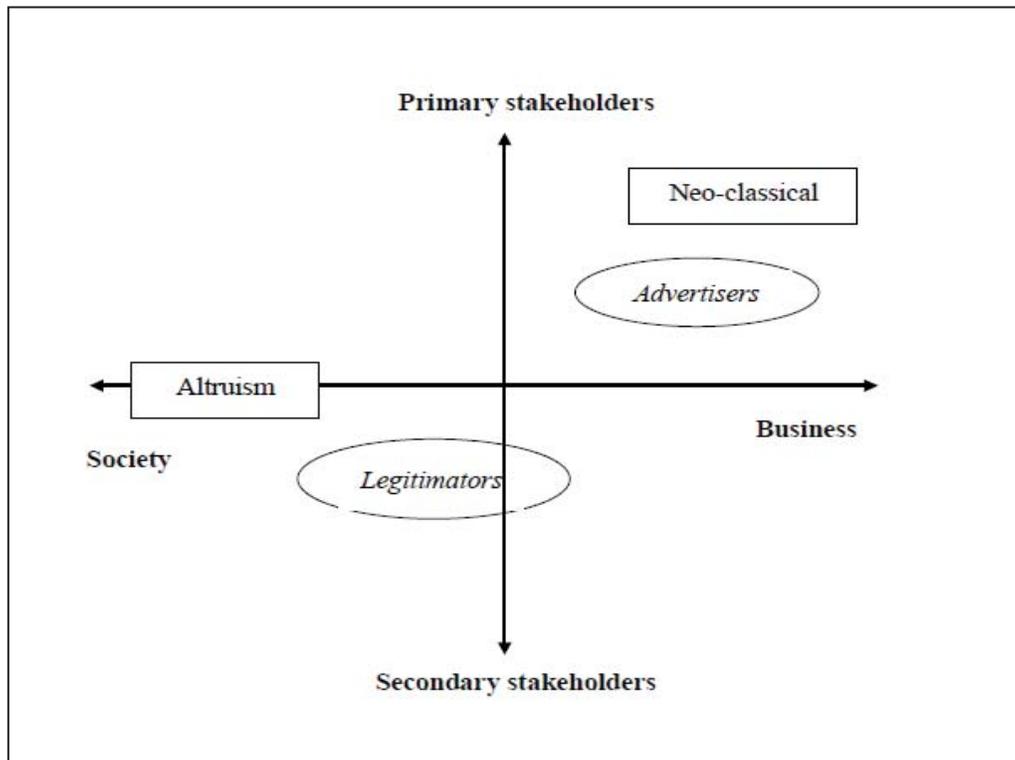


Figure 4: Moir and Taffler's (2004, p.158) developed framework of corporate philanthropy

Moir and Taffler's (2004) model departs from Burlingame and Frishkoff's (1996) and Saiia's (1999) in that the authors argue a neo-classical response is characterised not only by a focus on business benefits but also the actions of particular stakeholders. The model further argues that while altruism focuses on society, there is no discernible attention to particular stakeholders. Moir and Taffler (2004) go on to suggest that there are two main motivations/motives among givers: 'advertisers' who use their giving "as a form of direct marketing" (p.159) and 'legitimators' who seek, in contrast, to use giving "in an attempt to influence a broader group of stakeholders" (p.159). All firms, say Moir and Taffler (2004), engage to some extent in stakeholder management.

In essence, empirical studies of motivations/motives have been more about trying to capture what drives the giver to give. That research has proved rewarding but it, in part, is predicated on the assumption that corporations, through their philanthropic efforts, act ‘upon’ society. This is distinct from the notion that corporations are embedded *within* society and are engaged in interactions with members of society and stakeholders, a view that Saiia (2001) makes apparent. The view that corporations do not simply give but rather engage in giving-receiving relationships warrants further consideration. Equally important is why non-profit managers choose to engage in relationships with corporate-giving organisations and their managers and how non-profit managers perceive the motivations/motives of corporate-giving managers.

Another consideration is the nature of the knowledge that researchers are getting when they study motivations/motives. The study of motivations/motives is simply problematic since managers are likely to respond to requests for them to divulge their motivations/motives to give, depending on their audiences, who are often researchers but also any perceived readers of their research publications (Chesters & Lawrence, 2008; Moir & Taffler, 2004; Zhang et al., 2010). It is reasonable to expect that managers will have the impulse to report their actions in the best light in the public eye. Of course, this presents us with an opportunity to explore how managers, both giving and receiving, wish their motivations/motives to be perceived. It seems that qualitative instruments may appropriately assist us with the complexity that surrounds the study of motivations/motives (Shaw et al., 2010).

Traditionally, giver motivation/motive research has been the product of certain kinds of limited survey-based data. The prevailing empirical methodology of ‘population survey’ has, for some time, drawn the attention of researchers looking to establish motivations/motives for philanthropic giving (Brammer, Millington, & Pavelin, 2006). Survey instruments such as force-choice

questionnaires (e.g. Saiia et al., 2003) and postal/mail surveys (e.g. Basil & Weber, 2006) have led to some strong claims, regarding what impels or encourages managers to make philanthropic acts, even though the shortcomings of such research methods are frequently underplayed; surveys constrain participants' voices and native vocabularies by forcing managers to respond to pre-established questions constructed by the researcher (Crane, 1999).

Indeed, the lack of attention to a wide variety of methodological research instruments has prompted the call for novel exploratory research methods (Dentchev, 2004) and disciplinary diversity in the study of the motivations/motives for corporate philanthropy (Buchholtz & Brown, 2006). That call needs answering. A closer look at the research reporting the motivations/motives of international managers for corporate philanthropy is needed to provide further context; the following section looks specifically at the research regarding the motivation/motive to enhance shareholder wealth, particularly through strategic initiatives.

### **Enhancing the wealth of owners**

As the corporate strategic era has revealed, corporate philanthropy as an operational aspect of the firm has become increasingly strategic since the 1980s (see Himmelstein, 1997; Moir & Taffler, 2004; Saiia, 1999). The spread of corporate philanthropy as a strategic practice is an 'isomorphic development' - an expansion of policies and procedures championed by leading philanthropic corporations into the institutional field of corporate philanthropy (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

At their most strategic, corporate managers are seen to exercise stewardship of the enterprise, a conceptualisation that captures the notion whereby managerial decisions are made for the pure benefit of corporate owners (Burlingame & Frishkoff, 1996). Saiia (1999) extends this thinking by including the tax

objective as a firm outcome and Tokarski (1999) notes how tax write-offs have been prevalent objectives for more strategically focussed corporate philanthropy organisations. Other relevant literature has also established that these objectives legitimize and protect economic power (Moir & Taffler, 2004).

The core commercial benefits from strategic corporate philanthropy are not always obvious, but they are present (Ashley & Haysom, 2006). The association with corporate philanthropy can mean a boost to organisational 'identity' and 'reputation' and thus corporate philanthropy becomes a strong source of competitive advantage for companies (Meijer et al., 2006). Simply, investing in philanthropic activities can improve brand equity and corporate image (Ricks, 2005; Smith, 1994). Recent empirical evidence in the U.S. suggests philanthropy does indeed contribute to firm differentiation, competitiveness, and increased brand reputation (Fioravante, 2011).

While it has been suggested that few methodical research investigations have been devoted to understanding strategic corporate philanthropy (Campbell & Slack, 2008; Rumsey & White, 2009; Saiia et al., 2003), there is a body of work that has something useful to contribute to our understanding. For example, Tokarski (1999) studied the strategic philanthropy of companies in a county in the U.S. to conclude that the majority of companies participate in lengthy programmes that benefit employee relations, long-term company objectives and the social causes in general. Tokarski (1999) realised that "to interpret the full extent of benefits gained by the social causes from a corporation's program would require primary and secondary research with various nonprofit organizations." (p.39). Yet, despite this call and as previously mentioned, only a handful of business-based research publications report the perspectives of non-profit organisations/managers toward strategic philanthropy or corporate philanthropy in general (Cooke, 2008; Saiia, 2001; Smith, 2005).

Saiia (2001) was one of the first accessible<sup>2</sup> studies to consider non-profit organisations as the subjects of research investigation into strategic corporate philanthropy. Saiia used semi-structured interviews with corporate giving managers and group interviews with non-profit leaders. Saiia (2001) claimed that “while corporate donors find strategic philanthropy appealing, some non-profit organisations (NPOs) are disturbed by this ongoing shift toward a more strategic practice of corporate philanthropy” (p.59). The importance of considering the recipient is therefore apparent; recipients may have competing perspectives on corporate philanthropy that can complement the prevailing corporate-centred literature.

In apparent recognition of the knowledge deficit regarding the recipient perspective, Rumsey and White (2009) recently examined, using a qualitative interview method, how managers of non-profit organisations perceive the benefits and motives of strategic philanthropic relationships with corporate partners. The researchers find that if corporations do not have clear motives, this is a barrier to in-depth strategic ‘partnerships’. They further reveal that satisfaction arises from partnerships whereby both giver and receiver realise mutual and equivalent benefits. In the area of strategic corporate philanthropy, Rumsey and White’s (2009) acknowledgement of the recipient’s voice – as a valuable tool for understanding corporate philanthropy – is to be commended.

Among the strategic tools available to managers, and one that is frequently directly associated with business philanthropy, is cause-related marketing. Cause-related marketing, or cause marketing, offers corporations a publicly visible vehicle for matching philanthropy with the values of important publics

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<sup>2</sup> An article by Carroll and Horton (1994) has proven difficult to access. Saiia (2001) acknowledges the publication as an important one which reports on the relationship between corporations and non-profits.

and target market segments in the pursuit of business advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Cause-related marketing operates primarily through the direct linking of business products and services to charity in such a way that each time a consumer uses the particular service or buys the particular product, a contribution is made to the charity by the business (Caesar, n.d.). In cases when this association between cause-related marketing and philanthropy is at the forefront, philanthropic giving is likely to be dominated by the interests of the giver and altruism has little part to play in the transaction.

From a stakeholder perspective, corporate philanthropy becomes a strategic management tool too. At the cornerstone of the business case for corporate social responsibility, stakeholder theory highlights the importance of a corporation's relationships with an expansive set of organisations and individuals (Barnett, 2007). As Levy explains, "the body public gives fuller rein to businesses that demonstrate commitment not just to profit but to employees, customers and community. Corporate giving is one form of discharging a broader social responsibility" (Levy, 1999, p.4). In contrast to purely economic conceptions, from a stakeholder perspective, corporate social responsibility and corporate philanthropy stand to increase financial performance by improving a firm's relationships with relevant stakeholder groups including, but not limited to, shareholders. The purpose of the firm then is to generate and allocate value to broader stakeholder groups, without favouring shareholders or any one group at the expense of any others (Clarkson, 1995).

In practice, stakeholders perform reputational assessments of the corporation's various activities that can generate either positive or negative reputational capital for corporations (Fombrun, 1996). Godfrey (2005) argues that corporate philanthropy can earn positive moral capital for corporations among stakeholders but only when corporate actions are seen as genuine attempts to act for the benefit of the 'greater good' or 'broader society'. He continues by

stating that stakeholders look for evidence of both good and bad character in their ongoing assessments of firms and that “these assessments may help shape any consequent feelings toward or dealings with that firm” (Godfrey, 2005, p.788).

It is because of these reputational assessments that philanthropic and community contributions have become renowned as strategic instruments in maintaining positive relationships (Berman, Wicks, Kotha & Jones, 1999; Wood & Jones, 1995). In some instances, attention to stakeholders by managers who make allocation decisions regarding philanthropic activity can reduce risk. Barnett (2007) notes stakeholder theory as a substantive theoretical framework to explain how corporate social responsibility produces increases in corporate financial performance by improving a corporation’s relationships with appropriate stakeholder groups. He goes on to argue that “as these relationships improve and trust builds, transaction costs decline and certain risks decline or are eliminated” (Barnett, 2007, p.798).

Managers face pressure from certain stakeholding groups and philanthropic contributions may mitigate some of this pressure. In their study, Brammer and Millington (2004) put forward the hypothesis that “charitable contributions will be positively related to industry environmental and social costs” (p.1418) and report a positive and increasingly significant relationship suggesting philanthropic expenditures are significantly determined by strategic factors. This research is useful, not least because it tells us that corporate philanthropy as a tool for stakeholder management is strategic, but the value of hypothesis testing requires some reflection.

The testing of hypotheses, as is common among the research approaches for studying corporate philanthropy, is more focussed than setting research questions or objectives. In some respects, the testing of hypotheses only allows

for the rejection or confirmation of correlation statements (Polonsky & Waller, 2011). Hypothesis testing has become a strong method for pre-determining the statistical outcomes of data, yet stakeholders' narratives/stories hold promise for extending the research boundaries with regard to corporate philanthropy, and for helping to improve our understanding of business-society relations in certain contexts.

Narrative approaches serve to open our minds to diverse and potentially competing world views without prioritising one over the other, thereby complementing the wealth of current studies (Welcomer, 2006). Welcomer maintains that "...narrative analysis can be a powerful means of describing and potentially understanding stakeholders' core interests, relationships and ethics" (p. 272). A narrative approach toward stakeholder stories provides a gripping stage from which to engage with those people whose worldview may be drastically different and as such, Welcomer (2006) maintains, "...narratives hold great promise" (p.272).

Recipients, along with the managers who make allocation decisions regarding philanthropic activity, are the key stakeholders in corporate philanthropic relationships; there is considerable value in Welcomer's (2006) line of thought if we are to understand the meanings both giving-managers and receiving-managers give to corporate philanthropic relationships. Narrative approaches further offer the opportunity to temper the strong tradition of economic theory inspired research.

### **Economic theory and giving for financial performance**

The most prevalent area of study in the field of corporate philanthropy research is the economic theory inspired search for a link between social and economic performance (Andrews, 1950, 1952; Bowen, 1953; Eells, 1956; Fremont-Smith, 1972; Friedman, 1962, 1970). That research has been heavily practitioner

driven – giving-managers face immense pressure from shareholders to show how philanthropy can impact the bottom line (Buchholtz et al., 1999; Burlingame & Young, 1996). In response to that pressure, business and society scholars have sought to offer some leadership and direction on the link between philanthropy and positive financial performance.

In particular, managers who are passionate about philanthropy have a vested interest in research projects that seek to identify such a link because shareholders are less likely to query giving corporate resources for philanthropic purposes when a logical link can be made between philanthropic giving and firm profitability. This might be why the bulk of studies underpinning the knowledge of contemporary corporate philanthropy reside in the scholarship examining the relationship between corporate social performance (more broadly defined) and corporate financial performance (CSP-CFP) (Demacarty, 2009; Fioravante, 2011; Godfrey, 2005; Margolis & Walsh, 2003; Seifert, Morris & Bartkus, 2003). An analysis of research published over the 30 years up to 2002 put the number of CSP-CFP studies at 109 (Margolis & Walsh, 2003).

The earliest research into the CSP-CFP relationship suggested socially responsible firms were, by and large, better investments than their counter-parts (Moskowitz, 1972) and that business expenditure on the environment was linked with positive financial performance (Bragdon & Marlin, 1972). Perhaps reflecting the status of business research within embryonic disciplines seeking recognition as respectable ‘scientific’ disciplines, this plethora of quantitatively oriented, positivist survey-based research has proven extremely influential.

Two of the first papers to offer a meta-analytic review of the CSP-CFP relationship were Griffin and Mahon (1997) and Roman, Hayibor and Agle (1999). As mentioned, Margolis and Walsh (2003) extensively surveyed the

published research spanning a 30 year period. Their work offers an exhaustive account of the empirical literature relating to CSP-CSF relationship and published internationally between 1970 and 2002 (Margolis & Walsh, 2001; 2003).

Out of 109 published studies between 1972 and 2002, Margolis and Walsh (2003) suggest there is strong evidence to suggest a positive relationship, and little evidence of a negative relationship, between the social and financial performance of firms. This challenges an earlier observation made by Griffin and Mahon (1997) who claimed that a number of studies, in comparison to their sample size, reported a negative relationship. But some researchers suggest the CSP-CFP relationship is simply inconclusive leading to ambiguity given the almost equal number of studies showing positive and negative results and those reporting no significant relationship at all (Rowley & Berman, 2000). There is the added complexity of comparing studies with different variables and methods.

Godfrey (2005) notes that “the relationship between philanthropic activity and shareholder wealth represents one facet of a larger debate over the link between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and corporate financial performance (CFP)...” (p.777). This supports my earlier claim that corporate philanthropy is frequently seen as a subset of corporate social responsibility or social performance (Amato & Amato, 2007; Buchholtz et al., 1999). At one point, studies found a positive statistical relationship between corporate philanthropy and financial performance (Wokutch & Spencer, 1987). Yet, there is uncertainty as to the extent to which corporate philanthropy creates profit (Wang, Choi & Li, 2008) and this observation supports earlier claims made by Galaskiewicz (1997), Griffin and Mahon (1997) and Bartkus, Morris and Seifert (2002).

Examining the research literature on the CSP-CFP link, Barnett (2007) found that the lack of conclusive arguments, for or against, can be attributed to research approaching the topic from a multitude of theoretical angles. Furthermore, liberally defined variables may also lead to the elusive nature of the CSP-CFP link (Schuler & Cording, 2006; Wood & Jones, 1995). In another piece of work, Aupperle, Carroll and Hatfield (1985) indicated that the methodological procedures were simply inadequate and too simplistic. Rowley and Berman (2000) summed up in a pithy manner that perhaps there is little use in carrying out research that tries to deduce a causal relationship between social and financial performance at all.

Recent projects have called for some transparency in the research, requesting that researchers be clearer and more precise about the types of returns that can be expected from a wide range of corporate structures investing in an array of social causes (Barnett, 2007; Halme & Laurila, 2009). One flow-on effect is that studies investigating the link between corporate philanthropy and corporate financial performance (CP-CFP) help address the issue of a liberally defined CSP construct/variable because the quantification of the money contributed by corporations, as a measure of philanthropy, is much easier for researchers to gauge (Wokutch & Spencer, 1987).

Overall, the search for statistically significant measurable correlations – a uniquely positivist oriented approach (Gray, 2004) – is somewhat unsatisfactory since such an approach maintains the illusion that corporate philanthropy is a ‘real object’ to be measured, analysed and evaluated by searching for abstract laws to explain its nature. That is, corporate philanthropy becomes a “concrete, measurable activity” (Wokutch & Spencer, 1987, p.65). Inconclusive answers suggest that viewing corporate philanthropy in objective ways may be futile. Human motivations/motives and explanations of behaviour surely matter. The preference among corporate philanthropy researchers to test

hypothesis statements, including testing the causal relationships between stable economic and social variables such as those previously discussed, loses sight of the importance of meaning as it relates to people ‘experiencing’ the phenomenon of corporate philanthropy.

### **An unselfish regard for the welfare of others**

In opposition to ‘stewardship’ (Burlingame & Frishkoff, 1996) and ‘fiduciary strategic’ (Saiia, 1999), or the ‘business end’ of corporate philanthropy continua, is the idea of ‘altruism’– a selfless interest in the welfare of others. Some researchers suggest that corporate altruism and self-interest are not mutually exclusive, but can co-exist as ‘enlightened self-interest’ (Keim, 1978) whereby corporations see philanthropy as both an investment in their community and as a way to help boost their image as good corporate citizens; achieving both business and community goals simultaneously can be done through marketing budgets and corporate sponsorships (Wilson, 2008).

Broadly, altruism is the human act of giving without knowledge of the recipient and without receipt of recognition for any contribution made (Burlingame & Frishkoff, 1996). As a giving orientation, under an altruistic conception of giving, the corporation should receive no recognition from those external to the corporation (Burlingame & Frishkoff, 1996; Saiia, 1999). Some theorists have found that managers give for altruistic reasons above business reasons (Campbell et al., 1999). Others suggest altruism is empirically unlikely (Moir & Taffler, 2004). Indeed, Derrida (1994) suggested that altruism in the corporate context is an ‘impossibility’ because as soon as the corporate intends to give, it would be paying itself recognition, praising itself, gratifying itself, congratulating itself with the value of the thing it intends to give. Management theorists are equivocal about the possibility of corporate altruism, but no such ambivalence could be attributed to Peter Drucker (1984) who was reported to

have suggested that "...altruism cannot be the criterion by which corporate giving is evaluated..." since social responsibilities are always transferred to business opportunities (cited in Yankey, 1996, p.9).

Of course, altruism is a complex construct to understand. Because altruism is about motivation/motive, the philosophical debate about altruism versus self-interest in corporate philanthropy is possibly irresolvable. This has seen many researchers 'sit on the fence' as to the motivations for corporate philanthropy – if altruistic motives are claimed, how can any person judge that this is, or is not, so? In the context of a 'corporation', managers and/or the board of directors may authorise a contribution to a charity out of an altruistic belief that the corporation has an obligation to selflessly assist social causes. But, as Brown, Helland and Smith (2006) make apparent, this "is an 'agency cost' since it indulges the agent's utility for 'doing good' while shareholders incur an opportunity loss" (p.856).

Agency theory assists us in making this observation. Agency theory is based on the premise that the interests of principals (owners or shareholders) and agents (managers) are potentially incompatible, and that managers, if not appropriately controlled, may use organisational resources for reasons not acceptable to shareholders (Jensen & Meckling, 1976). To minimize agency problems, corporate governance mechanisms are designed to reduce managerial discretion by aligning manager's interests with the owner's interests (Bartkus et al., 2002). Indeed, 'value enhancement' (a positive impact on the bottom line) and 'agency cost' (a manager's and/or board member's taste for charity) are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Brown et al., 2006).

The construct, 'enlightened self-interest' has recently made substantial ground as a philosophical perspective for explaining corporate giving (Landrum, 2008). Today, enlightened self interest is a term used extensively in relation to

corporate philanthropy and business and society scholarship more generally (Keim, 1978; Landrum, 2008; Saiia, 1999). Indeed, Wilson (2008) claims that “enlightened self-interest is the mantra for corporate giving” (p. 82). Burlingame and Frishkoff (1996) position enlightened self-interest as gains to the corporation for their long term commitment and contribution to the community, including the preservation of capitalism and the business environment. Saiia (1999) also sees potential to align enlightened self-interest much more closely with altruism suggesting that the corporation should seek to do as much as possible by contributing to voluntary and non-profit organisations whilst developing opportunities for acknowledgment of the business’s philanthropic contribution.

Whether the intent of corporate giving is altruistic or self-interested may be of little interest to individuals aligned with recipient organisations. As yet, little is known about how both giving-managers and receiving-managers perceive the intentions of corporate-giving organisations and how those intentions impact the corporate philanthropic relationship between corporate organisations as givers and non-profit organisations as receivers.

### **Research approaches and studies of corporate philanthropy**

As this chapter reveals, the research objectives of studies undertaken to date, with their focus on the ‘intentions of giving-managers’ and emphasis on the ‘business case’ for corporate philanthropy, have perpetuated the ‘giver-centric’ orientation of much of the corporate philanthropy research. Few critical studies have sought to challenge the maintenance of such giver-centricity, notable exceptions being Cooke (2008), Saiia (2001) and Smith (2005). The predilection for corporate philanthropy theorists to choose quantitative methods grounded in positivist philosophies such as surveys (e.g. Basil & Weber, 2006; Saiia et al., 2003) and hypothesis testing using statistical reduction (e.g.

Atkinson & Galaskiewicz, 1988; Brammer & Millington, 2004; Campbell & Slack, 2006; Ricks, 2005), tends toward studies that ‘explain’ stable states of practices relating to corporate philanthropy.

Examples of broad areas of positivist research include studies that explore the relationship between social investment/philanthropy and the creation of firm profitability (Alexander & Buchholz, 1978; de Bakker et al., 2005; Griffin & Mahon 1997; Lewin & Sabater, 1996; Mackey, Mackey & Barney, 2007; Margolis & Walsh, 2001, 2003; Moore, 2001; Roman et al., 1999; Schuler & Cording, 2006; Wang et al., 2008), and those that examine corporate philanthropy as a strategic undertaking (Ashley & Haysom 2006; Brammer et al., 2006; Campbell & Slack, 2007; Campbell & Slack, 2008; Landrum, 2008; Ricks, 2005; Saiia, 1999; Saiia, 2001; Saiia et al., 2003; Varadarajan & Menon, 1988; Walker, 2002).

Such explanations tend to reinforce corporate philanthropy’s nature as concrete, measurable and static. Such attention to, and maintenance of, quantification and positivism as the research ‘norm’ may have stalled the discovery of new and complementary methods by which to explore the experiences of partners to corporate philanthropy and to understand the relevance of, for example, profitability and strategy in the context of lived human social experience.

Social constructionism, as part of the interpretivist tradition (Charmaz, 2006), provides philosophical prospect for this study since it encourages us to question giver-centricity as an unproblematic research orientation (Burr, 2003). It directs our attention toward features of human experience and the language based interactions between human-beings in order to create meaning and understanding (Allan, 2006) and heightens our awareness that such meanings and experiences are in part defined by time and place and as such vary across and within cultural contexts (Lock & Strong, 2010).

Understanding the meanings and experiences, as both limited and boundless by time and place, of participants to corporate philanthropy can be achieved through the application and exploitation of narrative methods. Narratives are socially produced interpretive devices through which managers represent themselves; both to them-selves and other-selves (Feldman, Skölberg, Brown & Horner, 2004) and thus narrative methods which encourage and analyse narrative structures give researchers access to meaningful representations of corporate philanthropic relationships.

The narrative approach holds particular appeal within the New Zealand context where corporate philanthropy has received scarce attention, and thus the importance of location too has been ignored. This study seeks to address the deficit of New Zealand corporate philanthropy research, and simultaneously extend the range of corporate philanthropy research by putting under scrutiny the philanthropic relationship – privileging neither the giver nor the receiver.

### **Conclusion**

Both giving-managers *and* receiving-managers as actor-agents have privileged insights into corporate philanthropic relationships that have yet to be theorised in New Zealand. Further, there is an overwhelmingly positivist, quantitatively informed, slant on corporate philanthropy research internationally, reflecting a more general shortcoming in the business and society field that has been identified by a number of commentators (Aupperle et al., 1985; Rowley & Berman, 2000; Schuler & Cording, 2006; Wood & Jones, 1995). These factors, taken against a backdrop of New Zealand business and society research and practice, offer a unique opportunity to explore corporate philanthropy. In the following chapter I detail the aim of this study, and the process undertaken to explore and theorise the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand, using narrative methods. The originality of this research lies in the attention to

theorising corporate philanthropy as a 'relationship' and by including the voices of 'receiving-managers' as participants in the building of that theory.

~ Chapter Three ~

## Building a Theory of Corporate Philanthropy: Collecting and Analysing Giving-managers' and Receiving-managers' Accounts

### Introduction

Chapter Two reviewed the topic literature to establish what research has been done on corporate philanthropy, how corporate philanthropy has been researched and what the key issues are (Hart, 2003). It is argued that a generous portion of the literature is giver-centric and positivist. By this I mean that researchers have over-played the importance of understanding the needs, motivations and responsibilities of givers (corporations and their managers) and that quantitative and survey methods have been preferred over qualitative methods. That corporate philanthropy research is generally giver-centric, positivist and often quantitative presents the scholarly field with an issue of imbalance.

That imbalance, Chapter One stated and Chapter Two argued, can be addressed by researching the perspectives of managers in organisations in receipt of philanthropic contributions, by considering the relationship as the research object, and by exploring managers' reflections on experience in a qualitative narrative manner. I also established that researchers have not theorised New Zealand corporate philanthropy and that this presents researchers with an opportunity to satisfy curiosities about corporate philanthropy in the New Zealand context. Given my interpretation, and as Chapter One stated, the aim of this research is *to build a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand that is sensitised to the perceptions and experiences of both giving-managers and receiving-managers.*

In this chapter I explain the research strategy for reaching this aim. I introduce social constructionism as a broad philosophical approach to building theory and provide some detail as to the narrative approach I employ to empirically explore the meaning attributed to New Zealand corporate philanthropic relationships. The central data collection and analysis methods are explained before the chapter details the process of moving from analysis to building the study's theoretical components. Finally, the chapter touches on the ethical issues and limitations of the research. In short, this chapter is about explaining the decision-making process and activities I undertake to build a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand.

### **The methodological framework: narrative analysis**

The culturally embedded meanings I wish to explore in this study relate to corporate philanthropy in New Zealand and my first chosen methodological approach is narrative analysis (Chase, 2005; Czarniawska, 2007; Czarniawska-Joerges, 1998; Gabriel, 2000; Riessman, 1993). Positivist researchers investigating corporate philanthropy have sought to assure us of unambiguous and accurate knowledge of corporate philanthropy. Narrative methods of data collection and analysis offer some serious strengths for building a theory of corporate philanthropy that help address some of the shortcomings identified in positivist corporate philanthropy research.

In the collection of data through 'interviewing', narrative approaches offer the tools to encourage participants as interviewees (here on in, participants) to craft their own stories about their working-lives and the incidents that interest them revolving around corporate philanthropy (see Bruner, 1991; Bryman & Bell, 2003). This enables me to delve into the phenomenon of corporate philanthropy, by encouraging participants to characterise and represent aspects of their working lives in their own words (Schreyögg & Koch, 2005). Such

questioning does not force participants to explain current states of matter, but rather to present reflections on their giving/receiving roles and relationships; data is thus likely to be rich in participants' crafting of their experiences (Bamberg, 2007). A narrative approach also demands that I, as researcher, be an attentive listener (Flick, von Kardoff & Steinke, 2004), and that I find ways of inviting stories (Myers, 2009) and providing "a facilitating context in the research interview" (Riessman, 1993, p.54).

In the analysis of interview transcripts, narrative helps researchers to see how working-lives are constructed by managers as active subjects (Myers, 2009). Because researchers offer managers the opportunity to generate meaning by turning information into experience in interview situations, narrative analysis gives researchers a way of either making sense of specific parts in the narrative productions of participants or a way of making connections between different parts over time (Gabriel, 2000).

The narratives that managers produce are privileged forms of language, since they are socially produced interpretive devices through which managers represent themselves both to them-selves and other-selves (Feldman et al., 2004). A narrative is a piece of language that consists of states of affairs plotted together into a meaningful whole through chronology/time and causality involving characters (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1998; Lawler, 2002). The narratives we experience in the course of everyday organisational life are inherently related to culture, meaning, and language systems upon which they draw for substance and these narratives allow researchers to make sense of managerial experiences (Gabriel, 2000). They are seen to circulate culturally, to provide a repertoire (though not an infinite one) from which people can produce their own stories or narratives (Lawler, 2002).

A narrative approach is useful for understanding the motivations and intentions of managers of corporate philanthropy because the narrative form of knowing is about organising experience around the intentionality of human action (Czarniawska, 1999, p.14). It is plotted causality that is central to the narrative device distinguishing it from positivist forms of knowing (Ricoeur, 1991). Thus, the truth of a narrative/story lies in its meaning not its accuracy (Gabriel, 2000).

Gabriel (2000) suggests that how people attribute motive to organisations and their actor-agents (including themselves) can tell us much about the outcomes they hoped to achieve. Gabriel's approach helps understand the desires of New Zealand giving-managers for their philanthropic actions. Motive and agency are at the forefront of understanding lived human experiences and Gabriel's method of *poetic analysis* is useful for interpreting managers' use of motive (altruistic, strategic, fiduciary, etc) and agency (the corporation's, the managers, etc.) when they narrate their experiences.

Gabriel's method also allows us to uncover and interpret how managers cast organisations and managers with responsibilities and human-qualities; additional components important to understanding corporate philanthropy. The remainder of this chapter will seek to explain how narrative is operationalised in the research.

### **The methodological framework: social constructionist theory building**

Reading in the broad areas of social theory and organisational analysis (Burrell & Morgan, 1979; Crotty, 1998; Deetz, 1996; Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, & Lowe, 1997; Girod-Seville & Perret, 2001; May, 1997), I developed a preference for the writings of social constructionism. This was, in part, out of dissatisfaction with positivist modes of knowing – prevalent in the literature on corporate

philanthropy – that appeared to be treating philanthropy as a measurable object, particularly as a ‘determinant’ or ‘product’ of profitability (Czarniawska, 1999). Chapter Two revealed this criticism.

My reading taught me that social objects are all meaningful human constructs (Allan, 2006) and that language marks their co-ordinates, fills them with meaning and has the unique capability of preserving that meaning (Berger & Luckmann, 1966). In addition, it revealed how face-to-face interaction affords the optimal situation for gaining access to such meaning (Stryker, 1980), allowing us to define and re-define meaning in an ongoing manner (Allan, 2006, p.11). But what is social constructionism as a broad philosophical perspective?

Social constructionism urges us to “...take a critical stance toward our taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world...” (Burr, 2003, p.2) and while it teaches us to question the existence of an unproblematic world, it warns us to be suspicious of our own critical assumptions. Social constructionism is also concerned with meaning and understanding as the fundamental features of human experience and it is the language-based interactions between human-beings that allow us to create meaning and understanding (Allan, 2006). Certain events and experiences and ways of understanding them are, social constructionists maintain, defined by time and place and as such vary across and within cultural contexts (Lock & Strong, 2010). Narrative analysis seems an appropriate partner to social constructionist theory building.

In this research, social constructionism is regarded as a much needed and timely critical approach for interpreting corporate philanthropy, since it encourages us to be “suspicious of our assumptions about how the world appears to be” (Burr, 2003, p.3). In this research thesis, the statement has relevance. The literature maintains the problematic illusion that the world of corporate philanthropy

research is, and should be, centred on guiding giving-managers and their corporations to more efficient, effective and profitable ways of conducting their giving programmes. Suspicion was aroused in Chapter Two and that suspicion materialises through the research aim which seeks to explore corporate philanthropy as a construct of importance to those who receive.

Social constructionism invites critical reflection on practices that involve constructing knowledge and this starts with the acknowledgment that people, as cultural members of society, cannot disconnect from cultural surroundings or systems of meaning (Eagly, Beall & Sternberg, 2004, p.213). My research embraces this simple principle. I am not an objective neutral observer existing outside the social world being studied but rather culturally and locally situated within the processes being studied. This commitment, in the production of knowledge, is an explicit commitment to the idea that there is simply no such thing as a value-free research project. The research is participatory and collaborative, joining multiple players in an ongoing dialogue (see Denzin, 2001).

This research is interested in understanding how managers attribute meaning to the corporate philanthropic relationships they engage in (Turnbull, 2002; Charmaz, 1990). We know that understanding human language constructions of their experiences is closely aligned with qualitative methods (Carroll, 1979; Fioravante, 2011). Qualitative methods allow researchers to explore culturally located vocabularies (qualities), instead of privileging the researcher's vocabularies and then seeking responses from participants to them (Alvesson & Kärreman, 2007; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000). Of course, qualitative approaches are varied but it is generally accepted that they allow researchers to discover meanings and understandings that researchers do not already know (Weinberg, 2002).

Social constructionism offers some variation to the broader landscape of qualitative approaches in that it is less about discovery than it is about comprehending how humans experience the world and make sense on it (Burr, 2003). For social constructionists, the publicly available social institutions that precede us, and that we inhabit and are inhabited by, are the source from which we make meaning (Crotty, 1998; Fish, 1990). Meaning is thus constructed through the inherent engagement between humans within a shared experiential social world (Lock & Strong, 2010).

Since we influence each other and make sense on the world through ongoing negotiations of meaning, meaning-making is “embedded in socio-cultural processes...specific to particular times and places” (Lock & Strong, 2010, p.7). Given the lack of research attention received to date, my engagement with managers who experience corporate philanthropic relationships in New Zealand on a day-to-day basis, provides a unique opportunity for exploring how they experience, make sense of and give meaning to corporate philanthropy.

Turnbull (2002, p.324) has outlined a process including eight iterative steps to building theory from research that adopts a social constructionist frame of reference. Figure 5 outlines Turnbull’s process and this framework is adopted, with slight variations, for my own research purposes.

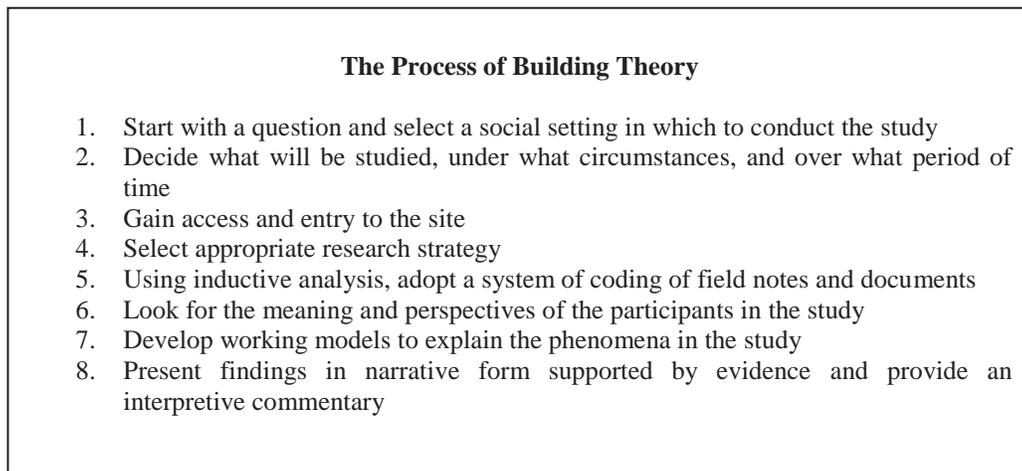


Figure 5: Turnbull's (2002, p.324) steps in the process of social constructionist research

Turnbull's process embraces some of the same basic procedures proposed by Charmaz (1990) for building theory drawing from social constructionism. Turnbull's theory building process is intuitively simple yet looking deeper into it relies on a rigorous and critical process whereby decisions are made that are consistent with social constructionism in that they are iterative and they allow the researcher to seek deeper understandings of the phenomenon under study. The aim of my study into New Zealand corporate philanthropy has been established above which, in part, satisfies Turnbull's (2002, p.324) first step in the theory building. The balance of this chapter explains the remaining steps toward building a theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship, beginning with the second aspect of Turnbull's (2002) first step: where to study the topic (a social setting).

### **Engaging with giving-managers and receiving-managers**

Exploring the meanings attributed to corporate philanthropic relationships by managers as participants in those relationships, required me to engage with managers of corporate-giving organisations (giving-managers) and managers of non-profit organisations (receiving-managers). This was done through semi-

structured interviews, which I will later elaborate on. The first process was to identify and recruit giving-managers for the interviews which were held between September 2008 and May 2010.

*Identifying and recruiting giving-managers*

First, I identified and recruited giving-managers who were considered closest to the everyday corporate philanthropy decision-making of their corporate organisations (what I refer to as corporate-giving organisations). They were the individuals who actively positioned organisations to satisfy certain [philanthropic] ends (Wood, 1991). Internationally it has been found that giving-managers are likely to be professional managers gaining experience in various positions of the firm, as part of their career building journey, who are looking for ways to advance their careers (Himmelstein, 1997). I expected to find that the participants in this research would be fairly knowledgeable about a range of other organisational activities.

Additionally, corporations positioned as ‘philanthropic’ tend to have formal internal structures in place and make monetary contributions through an established corporate-foundation/trust while others are less systematic (Campbell et al., 1999; Seifert et al., 2003). Indeed, the New Zealand organisations I targeted all had a systematic, institutionalised approach, four of the five administering their corporate philanthropy through a corporate-sponsored foundation/trust and one through direct giving to non-profit organisations.

The fact that giving-managers are not giving away their own resources or moneys, but rather those of the firm whose shareholders may either approve or disapprove of their actions and decisions (Friedman, 1970), means that some ambiguity is inherent in the term, giving-manager. ‘Giving-manager’ is

nevertheless the preferred term among researchers (Buchholtz et al., 1999), and so I use it in this study as a starting point for analysis, remaining open to the prospect of discovering a better term for those individuals who are the philanthropic decision-makers on behalf of the corporation (Buchholtz et al., 1999; Campbell et al., 1999).

Since New Zealand has relatively few large corporate entities and in which philanthropy is less institutionalised in business (von Tunzelmann & Cullwick, 1996), my strategy was to first locate corporate entities, corporate-foundations or corporate-trusts (corporate-giving organisations) with a formal giving programme. I consulted (a) the membership list of Philanthropy New Zealand, (b) publicly available media, and (c) professional people working in philanthropy. From the information received I in turn identified (a) New Zealand corporations operating in New Zealand, (b) New Zealand based subsidiaries of a multi-national corporations, and (c) philanthropic foundations and trusts of these corporations. Twenty organisations emerged as ‘potential’ candidates to target for the study.

The next step was to locate the key decision makers (giving-managers) in those targeted corporate-giving organisations. Web pages and direct contact with organisational administrators assisted with this task. Giving-managers were emailed to establish whether or not they were the person responsible for making decisions around contributions, to inform them of my study and to request an indication of their willingness to participate in an interview. Once giving-managers had signalled that their role was consistent with that of a giving-manager, and that they were willing to take part in the study, a follow up email with an Information Sheet (Appendix 2) and a Participant Consent Form (Appendix 4) was sent. Both types of email were tailored to individual organisations and their individual managers. Five giving-managers agreed to participate in the study. Mutually convenient interview times and places were

established. This step equates to Step 3 in Turnbull's (2002) process (gaining access to the site).

In two cases, the giving-managers recommended I talk with chair-people of their organisations, probably believing it would provide a beneficial insight into corporate philanthropy and their organisation. This, to me, presented a unique opportunity which had not been planned for but nevertheless could be accommodated into the broader interpretive design of my study. So, in addition to the five giving-managers, I interviewed a board chairperson of a corporate-foundation and a board chairperson of a corporate-trust bringing the total giving-managers interviewed to seven. The roles and entity types are listed in Table 1.

<b>Giving-managers, chair-people and the corporate-giving organisations</b>			
<b>Participant (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Entity type</b>	<b>Business industry</b>
Mary	social investment manager	corporation	energy
Megan	manager	corporate-foundation	investment
Claire	manager	corporate-foundation	communications
Louise	executive director	corporate-foundation	energy
Robert	manager	corporate-trust	construction
Craig	chair-person	corporate-trust	construction
Lance	chair-person	corporate-foundation	energy

**Table 1: Giving-managers, chair-people and the corporate-giving organisations**

#### *Identifying and recruiting receiving-managers*

Receiving-managers, as previously mentioned, are the organisational actor-agents primarily responsible for accepting the philanthropic contributions that corporate-giving organisations and their giving-managers make. In line with the agent status of the giving-managers, receiving-managers' roles positioned the

individuals as actor-agents seeking corporate philanthropic donations on behalf of what I refer to as ‘non-profit organisations’ and includes not-for-profit organisations and non-governmental organisations. These organisations are independent from the State and are often organisations motivated by the desire for institutional change (den Hond, 2010), usually having a principal responsibility for directly delivering social benefits to individuals and communities (Tracey et al., 2005).

Consistent with Smith’s (2005) strategy, receiving-managers were recruited as a consequence of giving-managers identifying them as important recipients of their corporate philanthropic donations. This process completes Step 3 in Turnbull’s (2002) theory building model. Thirty-three non-profit organisations and/or managers were identified and individuals were approached and invited to participate according to the same protocol used for their giving-manager counterparts: they were emailed to formally request an interview along with an Information Sheet (Appendix 3) and a Participant Consent Form (Appendix 4). I responded to acceptance by receiving-managers by setting up interview times and places.

The process of recruiting receiving-managers proved to be much more difficult than had the recruitment of giving-managers. I wished to match the five giving-managers with a similar number of receiving-managers for balance in role perspectives. While I chose to interview two chair-people of corporate-giving organisations, these interviews were ‘opportunistic’ and in response to requests from giving-managers. No such requests were made by receiving-managers.

Possibly reflecting the resource constraints of many such small social sector non-profit organisations, many requests for interviews with receiving-managers went unanswered. Early on in the project, I contacted one manager and interviewed that manager (September, 2008). Later, I sent emails to four

receiving-managers but three failed to reply to my initial email. I then sent follow-up emails two days later and I managed to recruit a further participant giving me two in total.

My priority was to recruit those managers who were discussed at length in interviews with giving-managers and so I worked my way down the list and eventually recruited five receiving-managers in total. Each manager agreed prior to the interview that they were the person responsible for the decision-making around accepting corporate philanthropic contributions and dealing with giving-managers. The participants' roles and entity types are listed in Table 2.

<b>Receiving-managers and the non-profit organisations</b>			
<b>Participant (Pseudonym)</b>	<b>Role</b>	<b>Entity type</b>	<b>Industry</b>
David	operating manager	sporting academy	sporting academy
Tania	sponsorship manager	non-profit organisation	youth education
Oliver	chief executive officer	non-profit organisation	youth care
Karl	executive director	family-trust	disadvantaged families
Fiona	funding manager	non-profit organisation	youth development

**Table 2: Receiving-managers and the non-profit organisations**

Having established the research question and social setting, I then explained the decision to study corporate philanthropy in a range of corporate-giving organisations and non-profit organisations in this section. I also specified how I recruited giving-managers and receiving-managers and that this would be done between September 2008 and May 2010 (Step 2). I further explained how I gained access to those managers and their organisations by making contact,

carefully explaining the project through information sheets initially, and offering participants access to the study's findings (Step 3); these elements are also significant in the interview situations and will become clearer in the following section. The ensuing section also details the circumstances under which I would consult managers (Step 2). This moving between steps reflects the iterative process Turnbull (2002) writes about.

### **Collecting data in face-to-face semi-structured interviews**

Choice of data collection method relates to my aim to explore the meanings attributed to corporate philanthropic relationships by managers as partners in those relationships. As corporate philanthropy in New Zealand is an under-developed construct and little written about phenomenon, the semi-structured narrative interview was chosen as the primary data gathering approach. The process of arriving at the semi-structured narrative interview reflects Step 4 of Turnbull's (2002) theory building model (select appropriate research strategy) and is discussed here, along with the circumstances under which I consulted managers (Step 2).

#### *Semi-structured narrative interviews*

Semi-structured narrative interviews had the advantage of enabling me to gather data in a two-way conversation whereby the participant could be prompted to elaborate (Schensul, Schensul & LeCompte, 1999). Similarly, the participant would be able to ask me questions and thus the conversation could be extended along any line that was considered relevant to corporate philanthropic relationships, reflecting the informal aspects of the interview situation (Holloway, 1997).

The fact that interviews were designed to be fairly open and flexible with few questions being asked (Wengraf, 2004), whilst nevertheless following a broad

plan that focussed on corporate philanthropic relationships, allowed the opportunity of novel themes coming to light (Lewis, 2009), thus enhancing insights into the philanthropic relationship. That interviews themselves were potentially time consuming (Miller & Brewer, 2003) was not considered a disadvantage as I was seeking rich narrative information that could be interrogated for meaning. Interviews typically lasted for 40 – 50 minutes but one lasted 1 hour and 50 minutes.

*The interview process*

The first interviews were with the five giving-managers and two chair-people. In the wake of these interviews, receiving managers were recruited and interviews were held with these five participants. Interviews were carried out between September 2008 and May 2010.

All interviews opened with a brief introduction in which I explained my research aim and ensured the individuals were clear as to their rights as participants. Permission was then sought to record the interview. I then asked participants a broad ice-breaker question which was designed to elicit information about their organisational role and context. This prompt was the same for both giving-managers and receiving-managers: ‘tell me about yourself and your organisation’.

Second, to guide and encourage participants into talking about corporate philanthropic relationships, I encouraged them to reflect on their experiences with those individuals and organisations to whom they gave or from whom they received. I asked:

- a) ‘tell me about the relationships your organisation has with the non-profit organisations to whom you contribute’ (prompt for the giving-manager);  
or

- b) ‘tell me about the relationships your organisation has with the corporate organisations from whom you receive’ (prompt for the receiving-manager).

Third, I asked managers to tell me about their understanding of corporate philanthropy. While asking managers to reveal ‘organisational context’ and their ‘understanding of corporate philanthropy’ were seen to be useful, these prompts largely yielded ‘descriptions’ of what their organisations do (something you would expect from a company or non-profit annual report) and ‘definitions’ of corporate philanthropy that lacked social context. Most of my focus during the interview, therefore, was to delve into the relationships that individuals perceived. I assisted the conversation to move from descriptive accounts (pre-narrative answers) toward telling of work-related experiences associated with the giving or receiving of corporate philanthropy (Gabriel, 2000). Typically, I used open-ended prompts to encourage participants to elaborate (Lamb, Hershkowitz, Orbach & Esplin, 2008): (a) ‘tell me more about that relationship’; (b) ‘how did that relationship develop?’; (c) ‘what else can you tell me about that relationship?’.

The precision of recall was not at issue nor did I encourage participants to think that questions/prompts would be judgemental or critical, as these feelings would likely discourage them from answering in such a way as to elicit deep narrative material (Gabriel, 2000). I was conscious throughout these interviews that the treatment of participants as ‘narrators’ was vastly different to treating them as ‘respondents’ (Czarniawska, 2007). I wished to remain consistent with a narrative way of knowing that, while firmly rooted in the qualitative camp, departs from the typical interview, seeking question and answer type exchanges (Riessman, 1993).

By casting the participants as narrators, I sought to acknowledge that they had voices of their own and stories to tell (Chase, 2005). Failure to take practical steps to ensure that I persisted with this positioning of the participants would be likely to re-assert the dominance of discursive-objectivity (Gabriel, 2000); a view that this research seeks to challenge.

Each interview was digitally recorded to preserve the meaningful whole and the sound of my participants' spoken accounts (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1998), thus effectively addressing the limitations of my memory and short-hand and capturing the tone and the intricacies found in their voices (Silverman, 2003). In the event, I did not analyse for tone but the textual detail of their spoken accounts was preserved.

### **Selecting and analysing narratives**

Having collected the interview material, I then sought to select short and specific relationship-based narrative accounts from the interview material using a selection process and then subjecting them to analysis. By incorporating a selection process and a narrative based analytic strategy in the research, I was carrying out and completing Step 4 of Turnbull's (2002) theory building process. As with any qualitative research project, the integrity of this research comes from the transparency with which the study was carried out and from a clear explanation of the interpretive decisions made (Lewis, 2009). As such, what follows in this section of the chapter is an explanation of the process of selecting narrative accounts from interview materials and the process involved in analysing them.

#### *Selecting the narratives: a preliminary interpretation*

On completion of the interviews, I started to interpret managers' interview talk (Cunliffe, et al., 2004) by first downloading digital voice recordings to my

computer and then listening to them in order to identify particular narrative structures. As earlier described, a narrative, for the purposes of this research, is a piece of language constructed by managers that consists of states of affairs plotted together into a meaningful whole through chronology/time and causality involving an array of characters (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1998; Lawler, 2002). As such, and given the ‘relationship’ centred aim of this research, to be considered a narrative for analysis, participants must have (a) cast both giving *and* recipient characters (organisations and/or individuals) in successfully established philanthropic relationships; (b) linked together meaning (e.g. intentions, actions, events and incidents) related to giving and receiving; and (c) narrated these elements into a meaningful structure showing signs of time/temporality.

As I listened to the interview recordings, I came to recognise some common language features that were not considered narratives. Primarily they included strongly held views about what philanthropy was, or should be, lacking plot (opinions), or plotted accounts that seemed too inflexibly factual (reports) on what corporations give, how much they give, etc (Gabriel, 2000). As I established earlier in this chapter, these language constructions have considerable value, yet there is little need to search for deeper or hidden meanings since the meanings are explicit, uncontested and incontestable (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1998).

It soon became clear to me that giving-managers and their organisations were taking centre stage in the interviews with both giving-managers and receiving-managers. This was perhaps understandable given that corporate philanthropy is generally understood in ‘giver-centric’ ways (Chapter Two). But this meant that the ‘relationship’ based narratives I had tried to encourage participants to talk about in interviews (i.e. giver-receiver collaborations) were not so prevalent. An initial impression was that, given the active and purposeful

narration of corporate philanthropy, ‘hierarchical’ relationships were more prevalent than ‘heterarchical’ (see Gergen, 2001).

Of course, there were instances in managers’ accounts that exhibited features that went beyond ‘descriptive accuracies’ and into the realm of the ‘evocative’, many of which reveal ‘egotistical’ and ‘laudatory’ accounts of philanthropic relationships. It was these expressive and evocative accounts that I was most interested in. Six narratives authored by three giving-managers were identified and selected for analysis based on managers’ ability to narrate giver-receiver relationships into a meaningful structure using time/temporality. For balance, I selected six narratives authored by three receiving-managers. The connections between participants and narratives are identified in Table 3.

Narratives and Authors	
Participant (Author)	Narrative
Mary	Giving for the corporate good
	Heroes, villains and victims
Megan	Filling the void
	Engaging staff in active duty
Claire	In support of a community hero
	Raising hope and expectation
Louise	
Robert	
Craig	
Lance	
David	The corporate saint and the indebted inheritor
Tania	Beyond the call of duty
	The provider
	The spoils of good giving
Oliver	The indispensable manager
	The dispassionate engagement
Karl	
Fiona	

Table 3: Narratives and authors

As is evident from Table 3, the interviews of six participants were not used for analysis. Indeed, the reduction of the full interview accounts of other participants to narratives was quite radical. Perhaps only ten percent of the interview-talk produced by giving-managers and receiving-managers was used for initial analysis.

*Analysing the narratives: a poetic interpretation*

Once the narratives were identified in the voice recordings, the spoken texts were transcribed into written commentary. Because they are essential meaning-making accounts with ‘structure’, the short narratives were preserved verbatim in an attempt to respect participants’ ways of organising meaning (Riessman, 1993). Importantly, as detailed in information sheets to participants, I replaced participant’s names with pseudonyms (see Table 1 and Table 2 above) in an attempt to ensure confidentiality (pseudonyms are recognised in the verbatim transcriptions by the use of square brackets; e.g. [the organisation], or [Oliver], etc). Those narratives were then subject to detailed analysis.

A question was devised to help analyse the narratives. That question was; what do the selected narratives assume about corporate philanthropic relationships? I have based the analytic approach on my familiarity with Yiannis Gabriel’s (2000) work on *poetic analysis*, which led me to believe that this analytical approach would assist me in answering this question. Some help on understanding time as an essential narrative component was also sought from Cunliffe et al., (2004). Gabriel (2000) argues that managers use eight mechanisms to attribute meaning to characters, incidents and events when they narrate their experiences as organisational agents. These include the attribution of *motive, agency, unity, responsibility, character qualities, emotion, causal connection, and providential significance*.

Each mechanism represents a way of either giving meaning to specific parts in participants' narratives or making connections between those parts (Gabriel, 2000). I used these mechanisms as a framework (Step 5 of Turnbull's process) to interpret the narratives. I also chose to incorporate a temporal element in my analysis, thus seeking to address a limitation in Gabriel's analytical method; the lack of attention to time. Time is an important aspect of understanding the temporal nature of corporate philanthropic relationships because time casts giver and receiver in an ongoing exchange of behaviours. I established this in Chapter Two. Narrative researchers highlight the salience of time as a central component to narrative understandings (Riessman, 1993) and I looked to Cunliffe et al., (2004) for guidance on how to look for participants' use, and experience, of objective (e.g. clock) and subjective (e.g. durational) notions of time.

With Gabriel's eight mechanisms and Cunliffe et al.'s (2004) work on time, I established a set of nine *narrative mechanisms* to interpret each of the narratives selected for analysis (see Charmaz, 2006). Several questions were posed to guide the analysis. Table 3 states the narrative mechanisms and the specific questions used for analysis.

The analysis of all six narratives created in interviews with giving-managers is presented in Chapter Four, and in Chapter Five the analysis of all six narratives created in interviews with receiving-managers is presented. In those chapters, I show that by narrating their experiences of being engaged in corporate philanthropic relationships, managers make use of a wide range of narrative mechanisms.

NARRATIVE MECHANISMS AND QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS	
<b>Motive</b>	How do participants cast themselves and others with motive/intent? Was an incident, event or action aimed at achieving a particular outcome?
<b>Agency</b>	How are people cast as active and purposeful actor-agents?
<b>Unity</b>	How are collectives of people activated and made into something capable of being a single actor-agent?
<b>Responsibility</b>	How are actor-agents held to account for their actions? How are actor-agents attributed with blame and credit and how does this help determine whether their actions are right or wrong?
<b>Character Qualities</b>	How are actor-agents cast in positive or in negative ways? How does this allow us to make assumptions about how actor-agents see each other?
<b>Emotion</b>	How is emotion invested in actor-agents?
<b>Causal connection</b>	How are incidents or events and the actions of actor-agents connected or linked?
<b>Providential significance</b>	How do participants craft incidents that are engineered by superior beings <sup>3</sup> ?
<b>Time</b>	How do participants structure events and incidents through the use of time? How is time used to organise objects and actor-agents?

Table 4: Narrative mechanisms and questions for analysis

When interpreting those narratives, I came to recognise that managers wish their ‘motives’ to be well known and that they find it easy to ‘blame’ and ‘credit’ people and organisations for the good and not-so-good behaviours they carry out. Much less utilised are the mechanisms of ‘emotion’ and ‘providential significance’. Of course, there is much more to the narratives and the analysis is presented in Chapters Four and Five.

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<sup>3</sup> As Gabriel (2001) explains, providential significance, “presents an incident as having been engineered by a superior intelligence in order to achieve a particular end, such as a radical conversion in the hero...[or] a test of character” (p.40).

### **Establishing themes and creating theory**

The narrative mechanisms employed by participants to make sense of corporate philanthropic relationships revealed certain meanings. Those meanings were then collated and linkages made across narratives to establish themes. Establishing themes was a way of “identifying the structures of experience” (Van Maanen, 1990, p.86) across narratives and these themes were more abstract than the participants’ own narrative constructions (Charmaz, 1990). Having established themes, and carrying on with Turnbull’s (2002) theory building process, I conducted Step 6 to deduce meaning from the data. This was an important process for arriving at a theory. In order to allow the meanings of participants to become evident in the themes, three distinct processes that Turnbull (2002) suggests as quality measures were carried out.

*1. Immersion in the interview data.* The first process was to re-listen to the voice-files of the full interviews with the twelve participants. I sought to derive from the original interview material any further evidence for the themes established. The empowering and novel characteristic of the research was that the theory would be built from ‘narratives of relationships’. Re-listening to the voice-files of the full interviews allowed me build further evidence for the themes. Chapter Six provides that evidence.

*2. Checking the themes and theory with supervisors.* The second process was to check the interpretation of narratives and the preliminary themes with supervisors in order “to allow for any alternative explanations of the data to emerge” (Turnbull, 2002, p.327). A number of conversations were had with two supervisors of the research in particular. Supervisors, as distinct from colleagues, were chosen because they were close to the doctoral process and had spent time reading through transcripts, listening to voice files and offering advice throughout the research process.

3. *Checking with participants.* The final process was to check the preliminary theory statement with two participants who were initially interviewed; one receiving-manager and one giving-manager (Turnbull, 2002). The first interview with the giving-manager lasted just over 24 minutes. The second interview with the receiving-manager lasted just short of 35 minutes. Each interview was carried out in November, 2011. It was important that all the previous stages had been completed prior to this stage of checking with participants. In the interviews I showed each manager a written version of the theory statement. Practical guidance on carrying out this stage came from Odegard's (2009) use of the method, 'member checks'.

Member checks increase the reliability of qualitative research investigations because they allow participants to comment on the research findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Three of the questions I asked participants at this stage were stimulated by Odegard's (2009) study:

- In what ways does the theory fit your experiences of being engaged in corporate philanthropic relationships?
- In what ways does the theory *not* fit your experiences of being engaged in corporate philanthropic relationships?
- Are there any elements that you feel are missing from the theory?

I then asked two additional role-reversal questions designed to elicit imaginative insights into the position of their counterparts:

- *Question for giving-manager.* Place yourself in the position of a manager receiving a contribution from a corporation; how would you see the corporate philanthropic relationship?

- *Question for receiving-manager.* Place yourself in the position of a manager giving a contribution to a non-profit organisation; how would you see the corporate philanthropic relationship?

Chapter Six explains the outcome of the processes mentioned here and places those processes in the context of the overall study. Chapter Six proposes the theory that explains corporate philanthropic relationships in New Zealand (Step 7 of Turnbull's process). Along with Chapters Four and Five, Chapter Six moves the research from the field to the thesis and this represents Turnbull's final step in the theory building process, Step 8 (to present findings in narrative form).

### **Further considerations: limitations and ethical issues**

*Researcher bias.* Narrative approaches share the same shortcomings as other interpretive approaches to research and theory building. Most particularly, criticisms of narrative analysis that might be brought against this study relate to the inherent subjectivity which has been suppressed, and even denied, in positivist approaches to studying corporate philanthropy and other business and society areas of research interest (Crane, 1999).

Subjectivity and bias are not problems in that they are a recognised facet of this type of research. My interpretation of the interview talk produced by participants creates and distorts their constructions of experience and I cannot act as if I am presenting those experiences without bias or value imposition. This is because bias is a fundamental component of research; there is no unbiased access to people's subjectivities (Lawler, 2002).

Related to this subjectivity is the positioning of myself as researcher vis-à-vis the participants (research subjects). The interpretation of interview material and narrative analysis recognises that I will inevitably impose my own

interpretation on the textual material. As a New Zealand male PhD candidate I am removed from the everyday practice of corporate philanthropy, yet through my associations with Philanthropy New Zealand, I have aligned myself with key individuals who have influenced and continue to influence corporate philanthropic practice in New Zealand. Indeed, my association would likely have an impact on the participants' narrations.

*'Appropriateness' of my interpretive account.* My role as researcher requires me to question, rather than automatically sanction, and to maintain a critical and analytical stance, yet bias is inevitable. In the process of interpretation, a reconstruction occurs and that reconstruction reflects something of my own personality and experience. However, the process of theory building in this study addresses the accusation that my proposed theory might be too far removed from my participants' constructions in three ways: by cross-checking analysis of narrative-based themes with (1) other interview talk, (2) supervisors and (3) by going back to participants seeking feedback from one giving-manager and one receiving-manager who were originally interviewed. This iterative process allows for alternative interpretations of data to emerge and provides a level of inter-subjective confirmation of the claims (Turnbull, 2002).

*Limitations of the focus on the corporate philanthropic relationship.* This study relies on managers' narrations of their philanthropic relationship experiences. As such, it is predicated on the assumption that managers engage in relationships and that those relationships, as experienced, are rich enough and meaningful enough to facilitate narration. Asking managers about why they give or why they receive and how they go about those activities would have been likely to reveal considerably more empirical material about the intentions and methods behind philanthropy than my narrower focus. This study seeks, however, to address a shortcoming in the prevailing literature on corporate philanthropy rather than to present a corporate construction of corporate

philanthropy (an approach that prevails). Thus the specific and confined focus on the philanthropic relationship, including relationship partners, is justified despite the potential for the study to yield a less significant amount of empirical material.

*Ethical challenges.* Questions that arise regarding the ethicality of interviewing managers and reporting their perceptions on the gift relationships they inhabit were raised in the application to the appropriate Human Ethics Committee<sup>4</sup>. It was agreed that participants would be ‘offered’ confidentiality in any reporting. But since narrative has traditionally concerned itself with identity (Czarniawska, 2007), the problem of concealing identity was apparent. Although there was potential for this research to report sensitive perceptions and even disagreements between giving-managers and receiving-managers, all participants were made aware of this potential and no issues of this nature emerged in the study.

Consistent with the requirements of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee and at the point of recruitment, all participants in this project were offered certain rights. These were made clear in the information sheets (Appendix 2; Appendix 3) provided before the commencement of participation and repeated verbally in the interviews. I sought each participant’s consent to use the interview transcript. Participants were contacted via email and asked to look at the relevant transcript and to let me know what changes they wanted made.

*Sample size.* The sample size, although small, allows for a richer insight into managers’ constructed human experiences. It is common for studies drawing

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<sup>4</sup> This project was reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 07/76.

from interpretive, inductive and constructivist positions and using the qualitative interview method to report useful findings having interviewed ten participants (Cooke, 2008; Lewis, 2009). The emphasis for the collection of narratives, of course, was to be placed on the quality of the narrative material produced and not its quantity (Mano & Gabriel, 2006).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an account of the research design that guided this study. Use of a narrative approach enables me to see how managers sequence the flow of experience to make meaning of the events and actions in their philanthropic lives. Studying managers' narratives is an appropriate approach, useful for what the managers can reveal about corporate philanthropic relationships. The meanings that managers attach to their experiences are not accidental, they are deliberate, related and biased and therefore essential to the construction of knowledge and theory. This is a strong means of addressing the methodological shortcomings inherent in the present body of knowledge on corporate philanthropy. The ensuing chapter presents the analysis of interviews with giving-managers, and provides one side of the relationship – the side that is more frequently highlighted and almost always typically presented as the more dominant.

~ Chapter Four ~

## Strategic Philanthropy and the Creation of Social Credibility: Interpreting Giving-managers' Narratives

### Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of six selected narratives from three giving-managers. The purpose is to highlight how giving-managers create meaning with respect to corporate philanthropic relationships. Overall, it emerges that these three giving-managers see the corporate philanthropic relationship as an organisational interaction involving human agents but that human emotion reportedly plays little part in directing philanthropy. Corporate-giving organisations are shown to be concerned more with achieving strategic objectives, maintaining control over resources and building a positive public image than helping non-profit organisations to achieve their own self-established social/community objectives.

For each narrative, I offer a brief synopsis of the account and then a detailed passage-by-passage analysis. Each passage is reproduced verbatim and is easily identified by indentations, single line spacing and font. I show how giving-managers attribute *motive, agency, unity, responsibility, qualities, emotion, and providential significance* to organisational agent-actors and how incidents are linked through *causal connection* and *time*. The chapter is presented narrative-by-narrative, rather than by theme, to retain narrative sequence and to understand each narrative in its totality (Riessman, 1993).

### **Interviewing giving-managers**

Six narratives by *Mary*, *Megan* and *Claire* were selected for analysis to appear in this chapter. What follows is a brief process overview and account of the interviews with each of these participants.

#### *Mary*

The energy corporation Mary worked for had been well represented in the New Zealand media as a philanthropic organisation at the time of interviewing. When I made contact with Mary to request an interview in September, 2008, her response was very positive and immediate and we managed to meet up within two weeks. During the interview, Mary appeared very professional in her approach and she projected a serious authoritative tone. She revealed herself as a manager interested in increasing her experience and building her managerial career with this particular corporation as distinct from one interested solely in community investment or corporate philanthropy. Mary's narratives revolve around the corporation's relationship with two non-profit organisations, a community museum and a child-centred organisation.

#### *Megan*

I met *Megan* at a Philanthropy New Zealand conference about a year prior to interviewing her in April 2009. The corporate-foundation Megan worked for had been consistently reported in the public media as a supporter of youth through a scholarship programme run by the foundation. I emailed Megan a number of times to arrange for an interview. She was very responsive on each occasion and finally I managed to secure an interview. During the interview, Megan brought out a number of publications identifying recipients of the corporate-foundation's philanthropy and the amount of money it donated. Her narrative was predominantly structured around the principles espoused by the

corporate-foundation yet two non-profit organisations made their way into the conversation. I sent an interview transcript to Megan for review and a few days later I received it back with amendments (spelling changes, omission of utterances, and punctuation clarifications), along with permission to use the transcript in the research.

*Claire*

The corporate-foundation Claire worked for had also been well reported as a corporate-based philanthropic organisation at the time of interviewing. I had emailed *Claire* to request an interview in April, 2009 and her response was immediate. As distinct from Mary and Megan, Claire seemed energised by the prospect of talking about the organisations her own organisation supported through philanthropic means. I travelled to Auckland specifically to interview her at the corporate offices. If Mary and Megan narrated their experiences of being engaged in philanthropic relationships in a relatively laconic way, then Claire showed a penchant for elaboration. At one point she credited her unborn child (“...we’ll blame it on Bubs...”) for her excitement when talking about those organisations her foundation supported. While Mary and Megan returned their transcripts with minor changes, Claire went to great lengths to alter hers before agreeing to have them released for inclusion in this research. It is to the narratives that we now turn.

**Giving for the corporate good (Mary 1)**

Mary’s first narrative concerns the partnership between her energy corporation and a community museum. Mary tells of her corporation’s intentions to serve its own purposes more than those of the community museum’s. Let us consider this narrative, passage-by-passage:

A partnership we have is with [Non-profit A]. It's a museum library complex in [a north island city] up in [a north island region]. And [this] is where we have all our operations and that is where we do all our [operational work]. It's a really important area for our operations so a lot of our community investment is actually situated up there... (Mary, 8:19)

In this passage we experience Mary's use of the *attribution of agency through unity* and this has implications for how the actor-agents involved in the relationship are perceived. Mary casts clusters of people through her use of 'we', 'our', 'museum library complex' and 'partnership'. The first person plural 'we' denotes her corporation of which she is a part. The plural possessive 'our' suggests the corporation is in possession of the ability to carry out certain activities, including business-related operations and community investment. The collective noun 'museum library complex' refers to an active, collective actor-agent and Mary's use of the noun 'partnership' suggests a business-like affiliation between the corporation and the non-profit organisation.

Thus, it is not any one person that is an active, motivated, responsible actor-agent but rather the organisations themselves – whatever their nature may be. Casting 'organisations' as actor-agents of the partnership in this way suggests Mary subscribes to the notion of 'organisational agency', the idea that corporations and collective entities can intend and are therefore actor-agents and selves in their own right (Arnold, 2006).

From this passage we also get the distinct impression that the partnership between the corporate-giving organisation and non-profit receiving organisation is most saliently grounded in the intentions and interests of the corporation. Mary's narrative interpretation reveals *attribution of motive* and *attribution of causal connection* that work to give meaning to the apparently rather one-sided partnership. Investment in this museum library complex, and the intention to

partner with them, is due to the importance of the museum library complex's particular geographical location for the corporation's business operations.

Interestingly, nothing in Mary's narrative suggests that investment in the community is because the museum library complex provides the community with a useful service. The corporation's community investment is necessarily, not coincidentally, linked to its business operations in the geographical area (*attribution of motive; attribution of causal connection*) and the museum library complex is used as an instrument of the corporation in the achievement of its objectives. This observation becomes even clearer in a later narrative. Let us consider the second passage:

...so, [Non-profit A] - we were one of the founding partners, I think we were the first supporter of the museum and that helped them go get funding from other partners and from government and so we have been partners with them for 8 years now and we are just looking at renewing it at the moment... (Mary, 8:51)

Through *attribution of agency* Mary casts her corporation as a founding partner and possibly the first supporter of the museum library complex. The meaning of this narrative emerges as we experience Mary's use of the *attribution of causal connection*; the museum library complex acquires funding due to the corporation's inaugural support. That is, the corporation is actively cast as the actor-agent responsible (*attribution of credit*) for funds the museum library complex subsequently receives (*attribution of causal connection*). Thus, funding successes for the museum library complex come to fruition not on the museum library complex's own merit (*attribution of credit denied*) but on the back of the corporation's generosity (*attribution of credit*).

Through the *attribution of a positive character quality*, Mary casts the corporation as a hero generously bestowing a philanthropic good. This casting works to convince us (myself as the immediate audience in the interview and

you as the reader of this thesis) that the corporation is to be applauded for its actions.

Through the *attribution of time*, Mary reveals the duration of the partnership (8 years) and goes on to suggest the potential for a renewal of the partnership as the passage comes to an end. This representation of time as ‘years’ is precise and measurable (Ancona, Okhuysen & Perlow, 2001). This construction of time as ‘measured in years’ and the time driven event of ‘partnership renewal’ (*attribution of causal connection*) is a way for Mary to ‘control’ this philanthropic partnership and the corporate resources used to service it (see Cunliffe et al., 2004).

The concluding passage of Mary’s account is where the motive to give for corporate-related purposes, introduced earlier, becomes clear:

...but that sort of evolved, we had a [product] exhibition there which helped us demonstrate our technology and you know [our products] are such a huge feature of [the region]...and people sort of wonder what [the business does] so it helps explain to the community and tourists what’s there and at the same time promotes our technology. (Mary, 9:12).

This passage begins by Mary suggesting, through the *attribution of time*, how the relationship has evolved and it is what it becomes that is revealing. Here, the *motive* of the corporation is most confidently represented. From Mary’s perspective, investment in the museum library complex is for the corporation to explain its activities and to promote its technology (*attribution of motive; attribution of causal connection*).

Having anthropomorphised her corporate employer, Mary’s narrative exposes an ‘egocentric’ corporation whereby community investment is tied to the corporation’s business operations and the corporation is even credited for the non-profit’s successes. That Mary mainly talks about organisations suggests

corporate philanthropic relationships may be more about the collective than about any individual decision-making manager. The narratives that follow build on the ideas that corporate philanthropic relationships are about corporate-giving organisations achieving their own strategic objectives. It is to Mary's second narrative that we now turn.

### **Heroes, villains and victims (Mary 2)**

This narrative concerns the partnership between Mary's energy corporation and a child-centred non-profit organisation. In a similar vein to the first, Mary offers an interesting narrative for analysis that reinforces the notion of a philanthropic relationship dictated by the corporation.

Then we've got, one of our other ones which is sort of interesting and I don't even know, this isn't really a partnership yet, but [Non-profit B] is one of our national – well, it is a national partner. So, we've been with them for 10 years but we're very much more philanthropic donation, you know; that traditional model where you hand over the cheque – you know you might do a few things with them... (Mary, 11:12)

Mary casts her corporation and the non-profit as a potential partnership (*attribution of agency through unity*). She is hesitant to call the relationship a partnership and we are right to question such hesitation given what eventually comes to surface. In addition, through the *attribution of time*, Mary describes the duration of the relationship as 10 years but the significance of this does not come clear until later in the account. At the end of the passage, Mary starts to reveal her preferences for what constitutes philanthropy or a 'philanthropic donation'. It is what follows that commands our attention:

...[Non-profit B] used to have a fundraising day and we had [our corporation's] employees go and help them fund-raise money, so there was some involvement there, but then they got rid of that

fund-raising day so it kind of went back to just handing the money over and not much of a relationship... (Mary, 11:54)

This second passage exposes Mary's use of the *attribution of motive* to the corporate and of a special kind; the *attribution of motive* to benefit, to assist, to engage, and to aid in a worthy cause. But this is only temporary as Mary has more to divulge later in the narrative. The corporation through its employees (*attribution of unity*) are all cast together (*attribution of unity*) as champions (*attribution of a positive fixed quality*) at the outset where their fundraising actions were intended to support the non-profit organisation (*attribution of motive*) in its worthy cause. However, through the abolition of the fundraising event (*attribution of motive*), the non-profit organisation (*attribution of unity*) is *attributed blame* and cast as a villain in the relationship. Accordingly, through the *attribution of causal connection*, the corporation and its employees are re-cast as victims of the non-profit's actions, stripped of their attempts to serve and so reduced to banal benefaction.

This casting of villain (the non-profit caused the change) and victim (the corporation suffered from it) is an attempt to afford the corporation sympathy for its predicament (Gabriel, 2000) but also to absolve the corporation of resulting blame from the possibility of the relationship not continuing. This becomes clear as the narrative progresses. Saliently, in this passage, Mary positions her corporation to be seen as an active fundraiser, perhaps in an attempt to create some sort of public recognition for its philanthropy. Let us continue with the account:

...so this year is actually our ten year anniversary so we have had talks with the Chief Executive there trying to see if there is a future relationship for us. So we're trying to explain to them that we are moving away from just pure donation and try and understand if there is a way that we can work together as partners...(Mary, 12:11)

Once again, time appears to have some constructive effect upon the gift-partnership. Through the *attribution of time*, Mary reinforces the earlier stated duration of the partnership as 10 years, and it appears at this point that this necessitates a conversation with the non-profit's Chief Executive (*attribution of agency*) over the 'future' of the partnership. Of course, that future is in doubt and we might put that doubt down to the point that the partnership is not ideal for Mary's corporation. Ten years – a lengthy period of time – seems to become a justification for Mary to suggest a review of the philanthropic arrangement given the lack of an alignment with corporate strategy. The narrative progresses:

...he's basically got to go back to his board and see if there is a need where [the corporation] can be involved. From [our corporation's] perspective, we try and link it, to be strategic, we also try to link it to some of our business drivers... (Mary, 12:41)

In this passage, Mary shifts responsibility from her corporation to the Chief Executive and the board of the non-profit (*attribution of agency through unity*). We learn from this narrative the explicit desire on the part of the corporation to be strategic with its giving (*attribution of motive*) and to explicitly link giving to business drivers (*attribution of causal connection*).

Mary, through the *attribution of responsibility*, also affords any future blame or credit to the non-profit's Chief Executive and his board. That is, the Chief Executive will either be credited for the partnership's success or blamed for its demise, despite evidence that the corporation appears to be the partner altering the terms of the partnership. Mary continues:

...but with [Non-profit B] you kind of think, well where do kids fit, where do youth fit? and you know just thinking about these things that we have at our [stores] for instance, you know high level of violence and crime and that's the same sort of things that

[Non-profit B] work on, so you know maybe there is a fit there for us to work on a programme in the future... (Mary, 13:07)

Mary sets out in this passage to identify the objectives of each actor in the relationship and both are cast as organisations (*attribution of unity*) intent on supporting children/youth (*attribution of motive; attribution of unity*) and so it seems there is an opportunity for the partnership to take hold at some point (*attribution of time*). She goes on:

...so we're just not sure. We're just having discussions and it may end up like any relationship, whether it's your boyfriend or husband where sometimes things don't work out and you go your separate ways but sometimes when you have those talks you can have a stronger relationship as well. So we're hoping that is what is going to happen... (Mary, 13:33)

In her choice of metaphors associating a gift-relationship with the intimacy and instability of a marital relationship ("boyfriend or husband"), Mary frames problems with the gift-relationship as resembling a spousal feud. It is from the final passage that we get a sense of how the relationship is likely to pan out:

...but they didn't have the people, we didn't have the people dedicated our side to really build a relationship and they perhaps didn't have that same commitment either, so it's just one of those relationships that is partly, well not been damaged, but hasn't been ideal. So that's an interesting one where we hope that we can have a really successful partnership but you'll have to just watch this space. (Mary, 13:55).

As the account comes to an end, Mary *attributes blame* to the non-profit (*attribution of unity*) but not as a scapegoat since she also *attributes blame* to her own corporation (*further attribution of unity*). Essentially, both are to blame and as such neither organisation is cast as a villain, a victim or a hero in this instance; equally they are *attributed shared responsibility* for the lack of a potentially rewarding, useful and fulfilling 'partnership'. Mary goes on to

suggest that this lack of commitment has created a poor partnership (*attribution of causal connection*). But that initial blame still lingers and it seems that power resides with the corporation. Mary's attempt in the last passage to share responsibility for an unstable relationship shows that each organisation is dependent, in varying degrees, on the other. But this narrative also serves as an attempt to mask the reality that the corporation wields significant power. As this passage closes, Mary is optimistic yet cautious about the future of the partnership (*attribution of time*).

Mary reveals a discontented corporation and that it is the non-profit that must 'come to the party' if there is to be any future relationship. Mary gives no indication that the non-profit's objectives, goals or desires have any bearing on the 'success' of the philanthropic relationship, only that her corporation is dissatisfied and that affects the corporation's ability to give. The corporation is intent on achieving strategic objectives, has the desire for control over its resources, and is interested in building social credibility through a public event.

### **Filling the void (Megan 1)**

This narrative concerns the partnership between a corporate-foundation and a non-profit that offers a budgeting service for those in the community. It is a short narrative but it works to reveal how a problematic situation was identified in a conversation between the managers of each organisation. The narrative conveys how that situation was resolved by Megan, the corporate-foundation manager and narrator. The narrative reveals more explicitly how the abstract notion of time works to confine the gift-relationship and we see how positive character qualities of the narrator's organisation are enhanced at the expense of the qualities of others. To a look at the narrative's first passage:

We do have the ability to partner with whoever we feel is sharing our sort of values and ideas on making a difference, so we wanted

to continue with [the budgeting service] who we make a long term 3-5 year commitment to during which time we get together and because they really epitomise what we are here for and that's to give people financial advice and security through their lives. So, [the non-profit] is like one of our core partners... (Megan, 7:26)

The justification for giving to this one particular non-profit organisation (*further attribution of unity*) is because both organisations share the 'mutual' goal to give people financial advice (*further attribution of motive; attribution of causal connection*). Megan's interpretation of her corporate-foundation's (*attribution of unity*) giving reveals the use of the *attribution of motive*; it is the corporation's intention to make a difference. Thus, the partnership allows the corporate-foundation to carry out its noble (*attribution of character qualities*) agenda of offering people "security through their lives".

A particularly interesting element consistent with Mary's previous narrative, is around 'time'. We come to accept temporality as an essential narrative device (Cunliffe et al., 2004) and Megan's rather short account demonstrates its centrality. Particularly interesting in this passage is that instance when time and commitment are explained; a long-term 3-5 year commitment is made by the corporation (*attribution of motive*). But why would it be necessary to restrict the relationship? It seems there is an attempt on the part of the corporate actors to control the relationship through time. Back to the narrative:

...things like [the non-profit], I went down when I was at the conference and sat with [Kate], the CEO, and she said "there are so many mortgagee sales at the moment you know with the current economic crisis" and so I said "are all your advisers up to the play in how to advise people on their mortgagee sales?" and she said, "they are probably struggling because it's a fairly new area for them"... (Megan, 14:10)

In this passage, Megan moves on to narrate a particular event whereby the CEO of the non-profit and Megan meet and identify a problem that needs to be

solved, mounting mortgagee sales. Essentially, Megan's narrative suggests that the reason for giving support in this instance (*attribution of motive*) is based on this perceived community need (*attribution of causal connection*). But there is more to the passage, and the tenor of this is only partially captured in the transcript of the interview. Megan reveals a limitation of the employees/volunteers of the non-profit in addressing that perceived community need. It is Megan who has identified such incompetence/ineptitude, and she reinforces this in her impersonation of Kate, the CEO (*attribution of blame*). Megan makes use of the *attribution of blame* to reveal how the advisors lack certain skills that undermine their ability (*attribution of a negative character quality*) to support those community members who need advice on mortgagee sales. The reason for relating this incident becomes apparent:

...so, in two weeks we're running, our mortgage team, is running workshops for their advisers and forming tool sheets to say, "this is the process, this is what we'd recommend they advise Joe Bloggs to do if he's falling behind in his payments and the bank is on their back" and that sort of thing. So we just work together so closely that everything we are doing is just in tune with what's happening in their world and where we can be of any help. (Megan, 14:39).

Accordingly Megan, along with the mortgage team and her corporate-foundation (*attribution of unity*) are cast as heroes (*attribution of character qualities*) since they are offering the service (*attribution of agency*), offering the tools to endure the economic crisis (*attribution of credit*) where the non-profit has fallen short (*attribution of blame*). We might accept that such heroism (*attribution of a character quality*) is enhanced in the narrative through the *attribution of responsibilities in juxtaposition*, as the corporate-foundation (*attribution of unity*) comes to the aid of the 'struggling' non-profit and the incompetence/ineptitude of its advisors (*attribution of character qualities; attribution of blame; attribution of unity*). Had Megan simply felt that the values and beliefs across both organisations were 'mutual', and therefore

grounds for a philanthropic relationship, she may have left the account at the first passage. Megan makes use of the exaggeration of *character qualities* in opposition (Gabriel, 2000) to exaggerate the heroism of her corporation's response to the community where the non-profit had failed.

In addition, as is evident through the *attribution of unity*, Megan represents characters as undifferentiated collective entities; 'advisers' and 'mortgage teams' and 'people in general'. The plural pronouns 'we', 'them' and 'their' and the collective possessives, 'our' and 'their' confidently allow us to make this interpretation. However, she also differentiates Kate, the CEO, as a person in a particular organisational role. Megan also refers to herself as an individual when elaborating on an incident where the two meet to discuss an opportunity for partnership. While the corporate-foundation is cast as the philanthropic hero, it is Megan and Kate that might be credited with identifying the underlying need for the partnership (*attribution of credit*) through their interaction bringing about, and reinforcing, partnership. Megan also reveals the *attribution of motive and agency*, where Megan refers to the ideals of the corporate-foundation. It is the corporate-foundation's intention (*attribution of motive, attribution of unity*) in all their giving to make a difference and to give people financial advice.

In this narrative, a community problem was essentially resolved by Megan and the corporate-foundation. Megan's narrative seeks to build some social credibility by attributing positive qualities to the corporate-foundation and to enhance them at the expense of the qualities of the non-profit. There is also some sort of attempt to 'control' the relationship and the corporate-foundation's resources through the imposition of time periods.

### Engaging corporate staff in active duty (Megan 2)

This short account highlights the relationship between a corporate-foundation and a non-profit organisation that builds houses for people in need. While brief, the nature of the contribution raises some interesting questions and, as with previous narratives, time again plays a role in confining the gift-relationship albeit in ways distinct from those in the previous accounts. The account begins with Megan divulging her organisation's reasons for making the contribution, the duration and value of that commitment, and the perceived outcome of the contribution to the community.

And then the year I joined [this corporate-foundation] we took on [a housing non-profit organisation] because we felt that was again giving people the first step to owning their own home, financial security and things like [the housing non-profit organisation] – we made a commitment from the beginning to build two houses a year so our staff – I think it's about 250 staff – build 2 houses each year in Auckland and Wellington, and we build in the same area so we're building up a nice little community of families in South Auckland and in Porirua down in Wellington... (Megan, 8:36)

As with most of the narratives in this chapter, Megan casts her corporation as having the intent to support this non-profit organisation (*attribution of motive*) given its 'mutual' values (*attribution of causal connection*). Yet, we might infer, it is Megan herself who is the one responsible for establishing the relationship (*attribution of credit*) given her appointment to the position. As the narrative continues, Megan shows more specifically how the corporate-foundation's staff (*attribution of unity*) are *attributed with the motive* to serve this non-profit by building houses, specifically two houses per year. Through the *attribution of causal connection*, Megan reveals how the foundation's continued pledge of employees (or employee time) to the cause serves to maintain the commitment it made at an earlier stage in the relationship. Megan's account continues:

...so I guess we're looking ahead and we'd like to work with the other partners of [this housing non-profit organisation] to further the neighbourhood. So we want to, eventually, we're looking at the areas near these houses where they're building parks and we want to have big street party days and you know get everyone together and bring back the community. So our staff are engaged on so many levels. (Megan, 12:56).

Here, Megan casts the corporate-foundation as a progressive and ambitious team-player (*attribution of credit*). As such, if the realisation of that ambition to engage 'other partners' is not successful, it will not constitute proof of the corporation's own incompetence/ineptitude (*attribution of blame denied*) since, essentially, responsibility lies with the 'partnership'.

Just as organisations, corporations and individuals can be attributed with agency, we might also consider 'staff' as a distinct collective entity (Gilbert, 2006) broadly equivalent to the collective 'employees' evident in a previous account. Additionally, Megan's interpretation on the giving event as 'time-limited' is again, an abstract one, an unambiguous structuring of time (Cunliffe et al., 2004). But what does confining a gift-contribution to an abstract period of time mean for the gift-relationship?

This narrative is a brief account of a corporate philanthropic relationship but it offers insights that lend further weight to the themes that are already evident. Once again, it is the corporate-giving organisation that is at the centre of the narrative. This rather egoistic interpretation of the philanthropic relationship largely fails to acknowledge the non-profit organisation's ambitions or goals. Giving (as the giver sees it) is thus underpinned by the giver's desires.

### **In support of a community hero (Claire 1)**

This is how Claire, a giving-manager, explained the relationship between her employer, a corporate-foundation, and a sporting academy that teaches martial-

arts and self-defence to young boys. It is an elaborate account that draws on a number of characters. The account stands out because it invests these characters with qualities that inspire and arouse emotion, albeit limited, for the first time. Claire draws from her working experiences with the corporate-foundation and its employees to actively construct the account through an enthusiastic pitch that excites the imagination. Let us turn to the opening passage:

Oh [David]...he runs the [sporting academy] which has got a focus on, it's a [sporting] academy for boys but it's actually a fitness club and he gets huge support from [a judge] and [a college head-teacher]... (Claire, 36:25)

Here Claire describes the sporting academy (*attribution of unity*), its operator (David) and the support he receives from prominent individuals in the community for the work he does (*attribution of credit*). It is this simple interpretation that leads us, at an early point in the narrative, to believe David is a person of stature in his community; an honourable person (*attribution of a character quality*). Claire continues:

...all of these testimonials coming from the parents that say, "I can't believe how my son has changed, he was on this medication and on these drugs and these drugs, he was in trouble with the law, he had this happening in his life" and it's actually not about the [sport], but [David] and their crew and the safe space and guidance they provide for these young men... (Claire, 36:44)

Claire sustains admiration for the quality bestowed on David previously, but no longer is he simply an honourable person. Rather, David, the team and the space are cast as hero-like thereby capable of transforming male youth, absolving them of their addictions and their lawlessness (*further attribution of character qualities*). These qualities are further conferred upon others in the non-profit organisation (David's workers) as Claire continues:

...the organisation gets stigmatised because funders look at the application and the first thing they see is [the sport] which gets a bad rap and they say, “that’s terrible, they must be a bunch of thugs and encouraging violence” – which couldn’t be further from the truth. But it’s actually not about the [sport], it’s about fitness, a safe space for the kids and really strong mentoring and role models for the young men... (Claire, 37:00)

Claire’s account reveals an extensive use of the *attribution of unity*, whereby entire classes of people are treated as undifferentiated; in this case, the non-profit organisation, those people/organisations belonging to the sport, and funders. But it is through the connection between these collectives that the meaning starts to emerge. Sharply, the account moves from one of praise toward David and his organisation, toward the culpability of other funders (*attribution of responsibility as blame; attribution of unity*); that is, to other funders in the ‘institution of giving’ who “stigmatise” (*attribution of character qualities*). The *attribution of unity* in relation to the sport’s culture, and the *attribution of character qualities* via the perceived ruthlessness that comes with that culture, are both attributions that pivot on the quality of sameness through labelling and stereotyping (Gabriel, 2000). Thus, by association, the non-profit organisation appears to carry qualities attributed to the sporting culture.

But it is not Claire’s corporate-foundation (*attribution of blame denied*), it is other funders (*attribution of unity*) that are accorded blame (*attribution of responsibility*) for stigmatising (*attribution of a negative character quality*). Thus, ‘other’ funders are cast as naïve or oblivious (*attribution of a negative character quality*). But Claire is building up to a point, leaving us in suspense – the quality of a good narrator or storyteller (Gabriel, 2000). She proceeds:

...David is incredibly fussy and he only allows coaches who have a certain approach with the young people which is really affirming, really strengths based – is very much about caring for the young people and their safety... (Claire, 37:22)

Through further use of the *attribution of character qualities*, Claire casts David as a caring person (*attribution of emotion*) and she works to convince us that David is a person who can be differentiated from the sport's culture (*attribution of unity denied*). Thus, David and his coaches are exempt from assuming the *character qualities* of thuggery and violence attributed to others in the sport's culture (*attribution of negative character qualities denied*). This point is re-affirmed in the following passage:

...there are some aspects, especially in [the sport's] professional culture, where hits to the head are common and some trainers will put winning ahead of ensuring the young men are kept physically safe and not out of their depth. [David] is of the opposite school, he is a champion [at the sport] but he is all about not putting the kids into dangerous situations, protecting the [body] at all costs. So in terms of a lot of the stigma that goes with [the sport] even though it's a [sporting] club and a fitness club for young men, it goes deeper than that and it goes against a lot of stereotypes... (Claire, 37:40)

Here, Claire overstates David's caring nature by contrasting him against others (in similar roles) through the use of *attribution of character qualities by juxtaposition*: David is unique among his peers and worthy of corporate support. Claire amplifies this point:

...and it's achieving great stuff, we know it's achieving great stuff, we know that youth crime is really low in the region, we know there is no longer tagging in the area (this was a big issue before), we know that there are hundreds of testimonials and stories from all these parents going "[David] what have you done, this is amazing, what's happened to my son?... (Claire, 38:16)

As she *attributes credit* to David and the sporting academy, Claire reinforces the descriptive accuracy of events by the repetition of "we know". This description of 'knowable' facts works to serve, through reiteration, the purpose of further enhancing David's credibility/reputation and that of his organisation

*(attribution of credit; attribution of unity; attribution of character qualities)*. As the account progresses, Claire's engaging narrative strategy becomes apparent:

...David is dyslexic and incredibly busy with the gym, so he hasn't got the right skill set or the time to write funding applications. Andrew, who does funding applications, is an older, retired guy with a great heart who has no training or experience in the fundraising arena... (Claire, 38:29)

Despite his good work and that of the non-profit *(attribution of through credit)*, according to Claire, David lacks the ability *(attribution of negative character qualities)* to continue supporting the community given some personal hurdles *(attribution of causal connection)*. What is more, neither does Andrew *(attribution of character qualities)*: both are *attributed with blame* here. The reason for this casting of characters becomes evident as Claire's account comes to an end:

...so part of it is actually about building the evidence base and that's our primary objective with it...part of it is also because we know the organisation really struggles to articulate and quantify the difference they are making and break down the barriers and the stigma (due to their sport) and if they can actually tag an external evaluation to a funding application, and say "this evaluation has been compiled by [a professional body] – an external organisation – that has come in and done this" and they can talk in the language the funders will respond to. So the primary objective is to build the evidence base (so it's bigger picture stuff) but another objective is around supporting the organisation to try and secure future funding. (Claire, 38:43).

Through the *attribution of motive*, Claire demonstrates her corporation's intentional objective to build a reputational portfolio for the non-profit organisation. But, as the seemingly disparate elements come together, through the *attribution of character qualities in juxtaposition*, Claire casts her corporation as a saviour *(attribution of positive character qualities)*. This heroic corporation persists in supporting the non-profit organisation *(attribution of*

*credit*) in the face of adversity imposed by the ignorance of other funders (*attribution of unity; attribution of a negative character quality; attribution of blame*) and David's and his academy's skills shortfall (*attribution of a negative character quality*). This deficit results in an inability to continue to seek funding and to make a difference in the community (*further attribution of blame*).

In this account, individuals are merged and generalised into undifferentiated entities; people and organisations belong to the institutions demarcated by a culture of 'sport' and 'funders'. In addition, blame is foisted on those broad cultural structures but the non-profit organisation stands apart from the cultural institution of sport and this works to exaggerate the 'good' that the non-profit does. This works in the corporate-foundation's favour. The corporate-foundation too is 'different' in that it is distinguished from other funders. The corporate-foundation and non-profit, in their commitments to society, become exaggerated in light of, and opposition to, prevailing cultural norms. The corporate-foundation is 'heroic' among funders and wishes to be seen as such, and while the non-profit is cast as valiant, its lack of inherent capacity requires the generosity of the heroic corporate-foundation. This further maintains the corporate-foundation's heroism and simultaneously allows the giver to control the gift relationship by creating non-profit reliance and ongoing 'dependence'.

### **Raising hope and expectation (Claire 2)**

In this detailed narrative, the manager constructs the gift-relationship between her corporate-foundation and a youth-centre operated by Jill. Consistent with the previous narrative, Claire casts herself and her corporate-foundation as heroes in the funding-sector championing spirited heroes of the community-sector and, like the previous account, the narrative generates a sense of admiration and pride. In the first passage, Claire talks about the effort put into

an ‘application for funding’ that Jill and her youth centre (the applicants) were to submit to Claire’s corporate-foundation:

I worked really closely with [Jill] on her funding application (which was an extraordinary application), and she told me “I think in the time that we’ve been partnering with you guys, I’ve seen you about five times face-to-face” which is over about a 12 month period. That’s just how we work or how we usually work. We have a high engagement model and relationship is very important... (Claire, 41:48)

The foundation’s intent to engage closely with the non-profit seems apparent (*attribution of motive*). Claire *attributes credit* to Jill and simultaneously to herself for the success in the development of the application for funding and as such, both characters are acclaimed (*the attribution of mutual responsibility through credit*) for this achievement. Claire then takes on Jill’s voice to further *attribute credit*, but this time to the corporate-foundation collective (*attribution of unity*) and the foundation’s face-to-face engagement with Jill. She then tries to generalise this one particular partnership to other relationships/partnerships that the corporate-foundation has enjoyed (*further attribution of credit; attribution of character qualities*). Thereby we gain a sense that the face-to-face interaction evident in the telling on this relationship is standard for Claire’s corporate-foundation (*attribution of character qualities*). The account goes on:

...she is awesome, so they run - [Jill] in line with her husband – they work for [a non-profit] which is a church-based organisation in [a region of New Zealand]. They run a youth centre through the church and organise hip hop competitions, dance competitions, every Friday night they have the homework centre running and they have just different activities and different stuff going on. The work that they wanted to do, was to expand it in to something bigger, expand all their premises and I guess upscale what they were doing to reach more young people in their community... (Claire, 42:45)

As the narrative progresses, Claire *attributes a positive character quality* through her admiration and esteem for Jill (Jill is awesome). As Claire continues, the quality bestowed on Jill may also affect our interpretation of the church-based organisation (*attribution of unity*) that she and her husband operate. That organisation is held in the same high regard as Jill herself – the organisation, despite its other members, carries the qualities invested in Jill. While the narrative quality is to be admired, in places Claire employs the method of descriptive precision to list actions and behaviours (they run..., organise..., they have..., they have...). Thus, the narrative rapidly becomes an abstract compilation of disparate elements working fleetingly against the narrative form. But this is merely a blip in the full account.

...but when she initially came to us for funding, I think she was asking for \$30,000 or something like that, and I actually went to her and I said, “it’s actually not enough, come to us and ask for more” and we started talking. I sat down and said “what is your real vision?, what is really in your heart?, what do you really want to do?”. So we did all this brainstorming and before you know it she has submitted an application with three different funding options - she has got really crisp about what her priorities are... (Claire, 43:37)

In this passage, Claire moves back in time to the first interaction with Jill, detailing the intentionality/motives of each organisational actor. We gain some clarity around Claire’s casting of the relationship as it becomes apparent that Jill is actively seeking funding (*attribution of motive*) from the corporate-foundation (*attribution of unity*) for her community venture. As the account progresses, the giving-manager enters in to a conversation with Jill and suggests that Jill ask the foundation for additional funding. This proactive response by the giving-manager casts her in a positive light (*attribution of fixed quality*) and this is juxtaposed against Jill’s underestimation of her and her organisation’s needs (*attribution of fixed qualities in juxtaposition*).

Now the narrative becomes increasingly interesting. Essentially, Claire suggests Jill gains clarity about what is important to her, not because she has talked with her husband or consulted others at the youth centre, but because Claire and Jill engaged in a brainstorming session to determine what is important to ‘Jill’ (*attribution of causal connection*). Jill’s priorities become entangled with Claire’s and those of the corporate-foundation. The next passage develops the story:

...and then the application went to the board and the board looked at her funding options and they said “wait a minute she is actually putting in all her own time for free, she is not even putting in any time for project management or admin funding” so they looked at the top option and increased it to include administration. It was an amazing application... (Claire, 44:13)

Maintaining the order of events, Claire details her one-to-one interaction with Jill and the development of the application for funding. She then moves to the corporate-foundation’s board (*attribution of unity*) and its consideration of that application. The application for funding, with all Jill’s priorities exposed, is recognised by the corporate-foundation’s board (*attribution of unity*) as being unique. Through the narrative, Claire further *attributes credit* to both Jill and herself for their efforts in developing the application and presenting it to the board – after all, it was Claire who helped devise the application.

But according to Claire (the giving-manager), Jill has largely failed in her duty to her youth-centre since she has under-estimated its needs and essentially its value (*attribution of blame*). The ‘application’ is applauded (*attribution of credit*), but primarily because Claire was instrumental in its development. The narrative continues:

...when they came in to present to the board it was cool, they had just had a baby and the baby came too and so of course everyone fell in love with them and none of us will ever forget that board

meeting - the baby kept piping up at really opportune moments, it was funny, it was cool... (Claire, 44:35)

In this passage, Claire details an event where the applicants came to a board meeting at the corporate-foundation and the various incidents that transpired. Claire *attributes the positive emotion* of love on the part of the corporate-foundation board not only toward Jill but also her husband and their baby through the *attribution of unity*. No one on the board is denied the emotional feeling of love (*attribution of emotion through unity*) toward each of this family – Jill, her husband, and the baby (*further attribution of unity*).

The coming together of these people becomes a memorable event for the board in part due to the baby's interactions. Accordingly, the family is cast as an object of admiration (*further attribution of emotion through unity; attribution of positive quality*). Let us continue with the account:

...they are really credible; they have got so much experience with young people. They have worked in one stop shops that have failed (they worked in the [regional] one that failed) and they understand why it failed. They get all that stuff. They are just really credible, really great, wonderful people with amazing skills and experience and passion and heart... (Claire, 44:53)

In this passage, Claire *attributes character qualities in unity* to the youth centre. Jill and her family (*further attribution of unity*) are cast as trustworthy, sincere people (*attribution of character qualities*) and therefore worthy of whatever good may befall them. Applying her craft, Claire is working up to something and suspense is aroused:

...the board said “actually we want to give them the maximum option that they have asked for and we want them to add on 30k for some FTE components, some support...”. When I told [Jill] she said “what? They want to give us more money?” So they came to us asking for 30k then through the process of actually meeting with them and working through their real vision and dreams the Board

ended up increasing their financial support significantly. The area is a high crime area, it really needs this and this could help bring the community together... (Claire, 45:22)

Here the narrative begins to show the donor organisation's philanthropic character. As an actor-agent of the contributing organisation, Claire makes apparent her organisation's intention (*attribution of motive*): to make a contribution to the youth-centre thereby casting it into a potential recipient role. This 'contribution from one to another' fits the common management construction on corporate philanthropy. The decision on the part of the board to make a more significant contribution than that asked for, further justifies the contributing organisation's decision to give (*attribution of credit; attribution of motive*). Thus, it casts the corporate-foundation into an heroic role – one that might equate to a 'true' philanthropist and one that might exceed all expectation. Claire's construction of Jill's response is used to further exemplify this.

Claire then jumps to the issue confronting the region in which Jill's centre operates, and the reason why the corporate contribution may have been given. The community is cast as needy. It is for this reason that the corporate-foundation has decided to make the contribution (*attribution of motive; attribution of unity; attribution of character qualities; and attribution of causal connection*). To continue:

...and I mentioned we should go out there and meet [Jill and her husband]. It's an example of working closely with an organisation, realising they are a great fit with our objectives and really encouraging them to reach for the sky. But then there is the risk that this particular project is 100% funded through the [corporate-foundation]. Now, we have funded that initially for 2 years and I have discussed the risk of dependence with the board. Having said that, their work is strongly in line with Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, so they are well positioned to secure future

government funding down the track - they are smart, it's brilliant...  
(Claire, 46:18)

The corporation is cast with the intention of encouraging this organisation (*attribution of motive*) and Claire is *credited* for such a successful relationship. As she continues, however, Claire apportions some blame to the 'project' (*attribution of responsibility; attribution of agency*) and possibly the corporate-foundation for creating a gift-situation of reliance. Indeed, it is Claire and the Board (*attribution of unity*) who are charged with the responsibility of resolving that situation (*attribution of responsibility*), although some of this responsibility is off-loaded to "Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa" (*attribution of unity; attribution of responsibility*). Through the *attribution of character qualities*, the non-profit organisation is cast in a positive light as an intelligent organisation. At this point in the narrative, it appears that any failure to achieve future funding is not the fault of the corporate-foundation (*attribution of responsibility denied*) but rather the non-profit (*attribution of responsibility*). But Claire continues to shore up where the responsibility lies:

...but I would suspect that we may need to consider bridge funding beyond the 2 years. We really need to be thinking longer term as we've in a sense let this creation happen, we can't drop the ball on it, you know we've got an obligation so I will be having those discussions with the board. We will get [the non-profit] in to the [next] board meeting to give an update on the project and later this year (or early next year) the board will need to consider its potential future commitment. Assuming the project is going well and has positive feedback from young people in the community I believe our support does need to be longer term. (Claire, 46:54).

Claire links the corporate-foundation's instigation of the gift-relationship to an obligation to continue funding the non-profit (*attribution of causal connection; attribution of causal connection*). To some extent the future of the relationship is left open, and time will tell as to how far the corporate-foundation goes with its funding. It is to the substantive themes in the account that we now turn.

Claire casts herself and her corporate-foundation as ‘heroes’ in the funding-sector supporting gutsy ‘heroes’ of the community-sector. In places, the heroics of the corporate-foundation are exaggerated by the deficiencies of the youth-centre’s actor-agents. In short, the narrative generates admiration and pride: emotions characteristic of epic narratives/stories (Gabriel, 2000). While credit for the success in acquiring funding (and the further success in acquiring additional funds to that requested) is attributed to Jill and her cause (the youth centre), it is fundamentally attributed to the largesse of Claire and her foundation’s board. This relationship may also be interpreted as ‘paternalistic’, given that the recipient’s objectives are essentially created by the giver.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an analysis of corporate philanthropic relationships from the perspective of the giving-managers. The chapter presents a picture of corporate ‘egoism’, lending weight to the argument corporate-giving organisations are motivated to act in ways that meet their own self-interests (Eccles & Viviers, 2011). Corporate philanthropic relationships allow corporate-giving organisations to achieve strategic objectives, to build social credibility and they allow them to control relationships in ways that lead to these objectives. Corporate-giving organisations rely on non-profit organisations to accomplish such objectives.

At times, the heroic qualities bestowed on corporate-entities are exaggerated by the qualities of incompetence that are invested in recipients. These heroic qualities are further enhanced when managers blame other contributing entities in the institutional field for their lack of community support. The mechanism of exaggerating fixed qualities through juxtaposition works to confer a sense of superiority on the giving-managers’ own corporate-giving organisation and at the expense of non-profit organisations and other corporate giving organisations

thereby conferring a sense of ineptitude and negligence on them. It is to the narratives of receiving-managers that we now turn.

~ Chapter Five ~

## Sustaining the Philanthropic Relationship: Interpreting Receiving-managers' Narratives

### Introduction

In this chapter I present and analyse six selected narratives by three receiving-managers reflecting on their interactions with corporate donors. Generally considered an under-theorised constituency in the corporate philanthropic relationship, receiving-managers have shown more divergence of views about the role of corporate philanthropy than their giving-manager counterparts (Saiia, 1999; Smith, 2005). In this respect, receiving-managers were considered to be good prospects for theorisation.

Echoing the analytical approach adopted in Chapter Four, I offer a brief synopsis of each account before presenting a detailed passage-by-passage analysis. I work to show how receiving-managers attribute *motive*, *agency*, *unity*, *responsibility*, *qualities* and *emotion* to organisational actor-agents and how incidents are linked through *causal connection* and *time*. As in Chapter Four, the narratives are presented narrative-by-narrative rather than by theme, in an attempt to retain narrative sequence and to understand each narrative in its totality (Riessman, 1993). The six narratives by *David*, *Tania* and *Oliver* were selected because they are rich descriptions of the relationship. I start with a brief account of my meeting with each manager and then move to the analysis of narratives.

### Interviewing receiving-managers

What follows is a brief process overview and account of the interviews with *David*, *Tania* and *Oliver*.

*David*

David is the founder and operator of a sporting academy for boys. David's response to my request for an interview in February 2010 was immediate, a feature that set him apart from other receiving-managers. In contrast to the giving-managers' plush offices with reception areas and receptionists, the interview scene resembled a beaten down barracks with inch-thick iron bars across the windows, GIB-board dusted tables and poster-clad walls. David's narrative was selected to serve as the core of analytical discussion in this chapter because it illustrates, with confidence and fervour, his insights into corporate philanthropic relationships.

*Tania*

Tania is the sponsorship manager of a youth education organisation. I had sent three emails to Tania in April and May 2010 before she replied accepting the request to be interviewed. The office of her non-profit organisation was housed within a newly built corporate office. Tania talks about this corporation in her first account. She also talked about a number of other corporations that had made sponsorship-type contributions to her employing organisation; however, some of those stories were not developed sufficiently to form narratives. Three of Tania's narratives are included in the ensuing analysis.

*Oliver*

Oliver is the chief executive officer of a large youth care non-profit organisation. I had sent an email to Oliver requesting an interview with him (March 2010) and, having had no response, a couple of days later I sent an email to his secretary asking if Oliver had received my invitation. She replied promptly explaining he would contact me on his return from leave. The

interview took place four weeks later. Rapport was easily established once we had introduced ourselves and it transpired that our families had crossed paths on a number of occasions. Oliver was very thorough in his responses to my prompts. He went through corporation by corporation offering his perspective on the relationship his non-profit organisation had with each. He mentioned a number of relationships, offering depth of narrative around two in particular. Let us now turn to the narratives. The first is authored by David.

### **The corporate saint and the indebted inheritor (David 1)**

David tells of a sponsorship-type relationship with two telecommunication corporations (Corporate A and Corporate B). David is clearly motivated by the desire to reciprocate the corporate support given him and his organisation by applauding the corporations in the interview. He employs some interesting techniques to enhance and exaggerate the responsibilities and qualities of various characters involved in the relationships with these corporations:

Well, for instance, we've just come back from the States and [Corporate A] and [Corporate B] sponsored our trip which was a very, very, big thing, so every opportunity we got we wore their T-shirts with [Corporate B] and [Corporate A] written on them. So we did that and when we had photos at the airport and when we met [a famous sports person] we all had our [Corporate B] [Corporate A] things on, so we look after the people that look after us and that sort of thing... (David, 6:00)

In this passage, David, through the use of the *attribution of motive*, reveals how it was the intention of both corporations to sponsor the non-profit organisation. From the outset, as we saw in the narratives of giving-managers, David makes widespread use of the *attribution of unity* to refer to the corporate sponsors (Corporate A and Corporate B). He also *attributes unity* to his own organisation through the use of the collective possessives (we've, our) and plural pronouns (we and us).

Thus, indistinguishable from one another, all actor-agents of the three organisations (Corporation A, Corporation B and the non-profit) are cast in a ‘sponsorship’ relationship. Furthermore, at this point in the narrative, donor corporations are not differentiated; the same characteristics ascribed to Corporation A are also credited to Corporation B. Accordingly, people as corporate actors take on responsibilities and motives that are undifferentiated.

Through the *attribution of credit*, David applauds the corporations for their sponsorship. It is through the *attribution of causal connection* that David reveals the non-profit’s desire to reciprocate the corporations for their sponsorship by profiling and advertising the corporations’ brands (*attribution of motive*). David does not wish to publicise his own sporting academy. At this point he hopes to give back the support received by the sporting academy.

...then we managed to get on TV right through the States on cable worldwide, it was a massive interview, huge for us. And they said “no advertising, take the Adidas gear off” (inaudible), that was good as gold, but underneath we had [Corporate B], you couldn’t see it but we had it underneath [Corporate B] and then after the interview with me the guy said “how about your boys, would they like to give a skipping exhibition?” and I said “yeah good as gold, boys take your jackets off” and they took their jackets off and there was [Corporate B] throughout the world - [Corporate A] and [Corporate B] right throughout the world, it was really good advertising and it’s that sort of stuff. So any opportunity we can to support them, we support them ... (David, 6:38)

David and the academy’s commitment to serving its sponsors is exaggerated through this passage’s message of perseverance and resolve; despite the TV organisation saying “no” to any corporate advertising (*attribution of causal connection*), David managed to promote the sponsoring organisations. David and his non-profit are not allowed (*attribution of motive/agency denied*) to show the world who sponsors them, but through his own intellect and ingenuity (*attribution of a positive character quality*), and given the TV people’s lack of

nous (*attribution of a negative character quality; attribution of character qualities by juxtaposition*), David is able to deceive and gain some public recognition for his corporate sponsors.

Interestingly, as did his giving-manager counterparts, David uses *character qualities through juxtaposition* as a mechanism to exaggerate his determination and will – the hardship he personally endures in his quest to bring about some positive recognition for the corporations. Although it did not come easily, David eventually gets what he wants, publicity for those corporations who had supported him. David is thus subsequently glorified for pulling the publicity stunt off (*attribution of credit*). Let us continue:

...they allow stuff to happen and by supporting me with the funds, to be able to do things that is basically it but they also, especially [Corporate B], they invite me to Auckland when they've got staff training on and things like that and I sit in with them. I won [a corporate philanthropy award], have you heard of that? (*Interviewer: yeah*) and I won that not last year but the year before and they supported me for a year that was really good so we've got a good relationship now and when something's going on they ring me up and say, "[David] do you want to come up to this?" so I get the training for it which is fantastic and they pick up the tab, they're very very generous, plus [Frank] is a cracking fella you know... (David, 20:28)

Here, David offers an insight into the relationship between himself as an individual (*attribution of unity denied*) and the corporations (*attribution of unity*). Not only does David receive funds from the corporations but he personally receives training. David, through his narrative, credits himself (*further attribution of unity denied*) with the attainment of an award (*attribution of credit*) that supports him and his work. This narration serves to distinguish David from his academy; the academy cannot be credited with the achievement (*attribution of credit through unity denied*), only David. At first, through the *attribution of a positive character quality in unity*, David praises the

corporation for its philanthropic efforts and in a positive light (the corporation as generous). Then, David brings in another individual character, Frank, who is vested with admiration through the *attribution of a positive character quality* (a cracking fella). Thus, not only is it the corporation, but also an individual in the narrative who is hailed as a heroic figure. In addition to elevating the corporate character, the narrative arouses a sense of inspiration and dutiful fulfilment on the part of an individual character (*attribution of agency*).

Once again, as was evident in the previous chapter, the construction of a time-period as a specific mechanical construction (they offered support for a year) appears to confine or restrict the philanthropic partnership. The idea that Corporation B sponsored David for a finite time, a year, once again suggests corporate ‘control’ of the philanthropic relationship (Cunliffe, et al., 2004). We will move on with David’s account:

...and then he (Frank) introduced me to [Corporate A] which is part of theirs – one of their businesses and [Vince] from [Corporate A] he said “well how can I help?” and I said “well you know, to tell you the truth, we always need money you can help out in that way”. He said, “well what about trips how do you get on for trips?” and well I said “you know I do have a great contact in Colorado Springs who would let us train there...and we’d learn a lot from it but we haven’t got the airfares for that, you could help out with that”. “OK” he says “twenty grand? What else do you want?” ...*twenty grand!*...it’s like you’re worth *twenty grand?* ...so things like that it’s a huge thing for us. I mean there wouldn’t be many [sporting] clubs in New Zealand that would go and do trips like that. But we’ve made lifelong friends, they just love us to pieces and we’ve actually taught them a thing or two too... (David, 21:05)

David here introduces another character, Vince. Through *the attribution of character qualities in juxtaposition*, David exaggerates the value of the contribution made by Vince to his non-profit organisation by comparing it to the gifts made to other non-profit organisations. This serves to heighten David and his non-profit’s importance as a recipient. But he is not finished. David

then *attributes the positive emotion* of love to the corporations and by doing so *attributes the character quality* of being loved to the non-profit organisation. Thus, emotion works to emphasise the worthiness of David's non-profit. David culminates by *attributing credit* to his non-profit organisation ("we've taught them a thing or two"). Such an effusive account serves to augment David's and his non-profit organisation's admirable qualities as recipients (*attribution of a positive character quality*). David continues by recounting another event:

...they (Corporate B) have, they had a big sports day up there and they got [a famous New Zealand sports person] out there and they've got blimmin' you know all the superstars and [another famous New Zealand sports person] and they invite all the people up from the [corporate philanthropy programme] and they give staff training – how to raise money, how to approach funders and stuff like that. It's basically training, brilliant training from [Corporate B] they've got very very good at that and they pay for everything too - they fly you up, accommodate ya and everything like that, feed ya, and then I come back more equipped from the training and that so they're really really good... (David, 23:12)

Here David elaborates on the relationship with Corporate B by discussing the sports/training day. David casts Corporate B as corporate hero (*attribution of character qualities; attribution of credit; attribution of unity*). He does this by aligning Corporate B with sporting celebrities, and is impressed by the proximity to stars that, by association with the giving organisation, he himself now enjoys. In particular, David applauds the corporation for its training programme and the reason for this reverence (*attribution of character qualities*) is due to the benefits he personally has received (*attribution of causal connection*). His story continues and ends with this passage:

...[Corporate A], well so far they haven't done staff training but you know they've allowed me to be able to organise things, and they say "well how else can we help?" they give us a cushion for a wage...they send a certain amount each month which goes in to our account which supports the wage for Nicky. (David, 23:44).

Here, David makes a comparison between Corporations A and B dismissing Corporation A's commitment which further amplifies Corporate B's status as corporate hero (*attribution of character qualities by juxtaposition*). But then, through the *attribution of causal connection*, shows that, despite a perceived lack of commitment, Corporate A has still made a generous contribution, though we might read in to it a rather diminished one.

David's reflection on the philanthropic relationship with these corporations is interesting. As organisational actors, people take on responsibilities and motives that are both differentiated and undifferentiated (Gabriel, 2000), as in the case when both individuals and organisations are cast as givers and receivers. In addition, David is forthcoming with his praise of the two corporate entities, but praise is equally afforded David and his non-profit organisation. We get the feeling that these relationships are ones of mutual benefit; the recipient receives funding and training and in return the corporations receive both approbation and positive publicity through the promotion of their brands. Thus, giver and receiver rely on each other for common benefits to arise. However, there is also some inclination that the corporations are in control of the relationships.

### **Beyond the call of duty (Tania 1)**

Tania's first account, as represented and analysed here, concerns a relationship between a freight-distribution corporation (Corporate E), Tania's non-profit organisation, and a number of schools. The account tells of various ways in which the corporation supports the non-profit and its programmes that are primarily targeted at school aged children. As did David, Tania describes the corporation's contribution as a sponsorship. This has implications for how the relationship is perceived. To the first passage:

Our biggest relationship is with [Corporate E]. They sponsor over 30 schools on our programme and they also sponsor an annual [Corporate E] award for every school on the programme - currently 547. The [Corporate E] award gets given out at the end of the year to an outstanding student for 'Excellence in Attitude'. It is given to a student that is about to leave and change over to intermediate or high school. Most of our schools go up to year 6 but there are some that are full primary or intermediate schools that goes up to year 8. So [Corporate E] sponsor that... (Tania, 9:07)

Through the *attribution of agency*, both the corporation (*attribution of unity*) and the non-profit organisation (*further attribution of unity*) are cast as active actor-agents in the philanthropic relationship. In addition, through the *attribution of motive*, the corporation is cast as a “sponsor” and a number of schools as the sponsored. It appears to be the non-profit, in its role as facilitator, that is enabling that relationship to take place (*attribution of credit*). This brief account announces the importance of the relationship and also reports on the sponsorship activities carried out by the corporation in conjunction with the non-profit. As it is merely the beginning of the account, it serves a useful contextual purpose. Tania continues:

...they also give us office space and cover a lot of our expenses here. So that's obviously a huge contribution. We've only been in this building; actually when I first started, they had only been in this building a couple of months. So they purposely built that area for us down stairs and they have lots of writing on the wall about the value of books and reading and they are very supportive, they get right in behind anything and everything. [John Ray], who started [Corporate E], is the chairman of [our] Board as well....so they are a major contributor... (Tania, 10:12)

Through the *attribution of motive*, Tania's interpretation reveals how the corporation (*attribution of unity*) intentionally built an office space for the non-profit and Tania praises (*attribution of credit*) the corporation (*attribution of unity*) for their giving activities. As she continues, making use of the *attribution*

*of agency*, Tania casts one person (John Ray) into two distinct, but simultaneous, roles: both as corporate-founder and as non-profit chairman. This acknowledgement raises questions around role conflict and corporate control of philanthropic relationships. Tania proceeds with her account:

...as it is their award they obviously pay for the book – it's usually quite a big book, over the last couple of years it's been a big beautiful atlas that the kids get to have. They ([Corporate E]) get to choose what book they want to give out. Our involvement with [Corporate E] is on a daily basis because we're in their building so it's quite different from other sponsor relationships - although we still do run independently of them... (Tania, 14:21)

In this passage, Tania casts the corporation in a favourable light (*attribution of a positive character quality*) and elicits admiration for the corporation's efforts. So far in this account, Tania distinguishes the partnership with Corporate E (*attribution if unity*) from other partnerships the non-profit has with corporations and this works to heighten the credibility of Corporate E through their extensive involvement in the work of the non-profit (*attribution of character qualities by juxtaposition*). Toward the end of the passage, Tania acknowledges her non-profit's daily involvement with the corporation, although she suggests that, at least operationally, there is some distance. It seems reasonable to expect, however, that there is a sense of mutuality that comes with sharing premises. Equally, it might also seem reasonable to accept that by being housed in the corporation's offices, the non-profit organisation is subject to certain responsibilities and 'obligations'. For now let us consider more of the narrative:

...we try and encourage the schools as strongly as possible to establish a relationship between themselves and their sponsors, so that it isn't just about my relationship with them as it is with the schools. The sponsors are invited to go to the assemblies, to go in and help present the books, to be there with the role models as well. Often sponsors have spoken at assemblies as well to talk

about what they do and why they support our charity... (Tania, 14:39)

In this passage, Tania reveals the direct relationship between the corporation and the schools that receive the corporation's support/sponsorship. She describes how her organisation fosters the giving relationships (*attribution of motive*) and that it is the responsibility on the part of the schools to engage with sponsors (*attribution of responsibility*) as if to suggest that in order to maintain those relationships, schools must reciprocate in some way. This becomes clearer as the narrative progresses. As the passage comes to a close, Tania reveals an event (school "assemblies") whereby the corporation engages in publicising its philanthropic sponsorship (*attribution of motive*). The corporation sees such an event as a strategic opportunity to display its philanthropy but the receiving-manager is also aware of the importance of such an event for maintaining that philanthropic/sponsorship relationship. Thereby the non-profit organisation is also seen as 'strategic'. Tania continues:

...[Corporate E] have a very good relationship with all their schools, they also produce a [Corporate E] calendar every year and they run a competition within their schools to submit drawings that they will use as the pictures for each month's page and that gets sent around to their schools as well. They also give out apples, buckets of apples to their schools once a year... (Tania, 15:01)

In this passage, Tania casts the corporation in a favourable light by announcing the activities the corporation engages in (*attribution of credit; attribution of positive character qualities*). She makes the point that this corporation is committed to her non-profit's work (*attribution of credit*), thereby having the affect of reducing the value of the other corporation. It is the following passage that the idea of 'reciprocation' becomes clearer:

...they're obviously quite involved. We do let the schools know that to enjoy the best relationship with their sponsors it is dependent

on them building and investing into that. Sometimes they find that if they do that they get a lot in return. Because of [Corporate E] and their sponsorship, one school in particular changed its name from '[Hilldown] School', but now it's '[Hilldown] [Corporate E] School', because they've just done so much for them and the school wanted to do that to acknowledge their contribution and support. [Corporate E] were also behind investing in and creating a computer lab for this particular school. So the benefits have obviously been well over and above just receiving the programme. (Tania, 16:04).

Through the *attribution of responsibility*, Tania casts the schools as accountable for the relationships between them and the corporation; the relationship is thus dependent upon the schools as recipients to offer something in return. This descriptive praise for this corporation (*attribution of credit*) continues as Tania explains the giving events and incidents the corporation is involved in. This helps Tania demonstrate the importance of the corporation and the work they do. Through the *attribution of credit*, Tania offers varied examples of incidents and events in an attempt to amplify the corporation's 'social credibility' (*attribution of causal connection*).

In the narrative, the corporation engages in a wide range of events and demonstrates a variety of philanthropic activities. Recipients of this philanthropy benefit greatly from this support, and Tania reveals a mutually dependent relationship. Yet, we also get the distinct impression that the corporation is at the heart of the philanthropic relationship and that it is up to the schools to maintain the relationship with this corporation by offering the corporation opportunities to promote its philanthropy. Tania reveals a corporation that has gone beyond the call of duty and, for my benefit as the audience, wishes to convey an image of a 'credible giving organisation'. The underlying theme is her wish to sustain the corporation's ongoing support. Let us now consider Tania's second account.

### The provider (Tania 2)

Tania announces a significant relationship with a large book retailer (Corporate F) in this narrative. Tania constructs a complex set of relationships and roles here: a corporation as giver, sponsor, partner and recipient; and her non-profit as supporter, partner, facilitator, and recipient. She also presents a collective of schools in dual roles as recipients and contributors. Again, this narrative offers insight into how the corporation has partnered with Tania's non-profit to assist schools. The account also highlights how there are complex relationships between schools, the non-profit and a corporation where roles are switched.

[Corporate F] are another major sponsor, they partner with us, we've just started doing an annual appeal week - we've done that for 2 years and they've been partnering with us on that, trying to help us through their stores also, collecting money, and that's been a massive help... (Tania, 10:24)

Here, Tania casts this corporation (*attribution of unity*) as a sponsor (*attribution of motive*) and both the corporation and her non-profit organisation enter into this relatively uncomplicated partnership (*attribution of agency*). The passage is a little convoluted but she explains how the corporation's stores are utilised for the soliciting of funds from the public for the non-profit organisation. This becomes clearer:

...[Corporate F] again, they sponsor schools all over NZ and usually in a place where there is a [Corporate F] store, well that's how it was set up, and so again the schools get given the contact for the manager of that particular branch, and so they have that personal relationship with them, whereas I just deal with head office for payment and anything else we want to talk about. You know, the everyday or weekly contact that happens is between the school and their local store and I do know that some schools work that relationship really well and have a fantastic relationship with that store and will go in and visit them and will go in and have readings at the store... (Tania, 18:54)

Here, Tania explains how the corporation sponsors schools (*attribution of unity; attribution of motive*) in the local areas where the corporation has a physical presence. It appears the sponsorship relationship is determined by the physical location of the corporation (*attribution of causal connection*). Details are clarified as Tania elaborates:

...so again, it's really about the school developing that relationship. And we do try to make that clear with the schools, that it's really important to keep that relationship happening and to regularly thank their sponsors and send them stories or cards from the kids, send them photos. We've just had a 'schools and sponsors get in touch week' so we make a real effort to make sure that they are looking after their sponsors – obviously it makes my job a lot easier. So [Corporate F] are fantastic... (Tania, 19:51)

As with Tania's previous narrative, it seems the 'onus' is on the schools to grow the relationships (*attribution of responsibility and unity*). Tania constructs corporations as recipients (*attribution of agency*). She does this by casting the school children as reciprocators (*attribution of motive*) since they are offering gifts back to the corporation (*attribution of motive*). Tania, once again, comes across as a strategic manager concerned with maintaining the philanthropic relationship between giver and receiver. Tania, through the *attribution of a positive character quality*, casts the corporation (*attribution of unity*) as worthy of respect. It is likely this quality would endure throughout her account. Let us consider Tania's final passage:

...we've just done this twice so it's kind of changed a little bit both times but [Corporate F] had donation boxes in their stores so that people can give. We're always talking about different ways to do that. We're working together on that. Last year we organised for some of our role models to go into [Corporate F] stores to do reading to children during that week, obviously promoting our brand and what we do as well so that people are aware and hopefully willing to support the programme... (Tania, 20:38).

In this passage, Tania offers further insights into two particular gift-relationship events revolving around donation boxes and non-profit brand development. In the first, “people” in general (*attribution of unity*) are cast as potential givers (*attribution of agency*), the corporation provides the avenue for doing so (*attribution of motive*) and both the corporation and the non-profit organisation (*attribution of unity*) are recognised for discussing innovative ways to carry that out (*attribution of credit*). In the account of this second event, Tania’s non-profit organisation appears to have been working strategically to get some recognition for her non-profit organisation. It seems both the corporation and the non-profit organisation are bound by these events in partnership (*attribution of agency*).

This narrative re-affirms earlier observations that corporate philanthropic relationships are about mutual obligations whereby the giver and recipient are both dependent on each other, but also in ways that are mutually beneficial. Once again, Tania is congratulatory towards the corporation and discloses an image of a reputable corporation. Even the interview situation is likely to provide Tania with a means to bolster the corporation’s ‘credibility’, and thus reinforce the giver-receiver relationship. Tania’s final account further elucidates.

### **The spoils of good giving (Tania 3)**

In this narrative, Tania discusses her non-profit’s relationship with a book-publishing corporation (Corporate G). There is considerable praise for the corporation, as there is for other donor corporations with which her organisation is associated. The account stands out for its descriptive character:

[Corporate G], they supply all the books to the schools, so they do that for us. They offer the books on the programme for just over four dollars per book which makes it very very cheap for us to get the books to the children. They also sponsor a number of schools

as well. They also provide every school, for every book offer, they get what's called a preview pack so they get to see one of each book that's going to be in the book offer which every child gets which shows all the books they can choose from. So they supply a preview pack to the school so the kids can look through the books if they wanted to so [Corporate G] pay for that and that's obviously massive as well... (Tania, 11:07)

In this passage, the corporation (*attribution of unity*) is cast as a supplier of books (*attribution of motive*) to the children the non-profit assists (*attribution of agency*). The corporation is commended through the *attribution of credit* for providing the resource at a favourable price. We are encouraged to think of the corporation, in a positive light, as a committed organisation (*attribution of a positive character quality*). The superlative “massive” appears to be a reference to the impact of the corporation's contribution (*attribution of credit*) and this also works to paint a favourable picture of the corporation (*attribution of a positive character quality*). Tania elaborates:

...[Corporate G] send out all the books. [Corporate G] are in schools nation-wide anyway. They run [a book programme] - the same programme really but the kids are paying for the books. So they're in schools anyway, but they came on board with this programme and they're just absolutely fantastic, they're really supportive, they always go above and beyond, giving more stuff, you know, wanting to help out... (Tania, 21:36)

Here it becomes clear that the corporation's contributing may be in line with its business practice and thus the contribution is simply taking advantage of a set of operational systems the corporation already has in place (*attribution of causal connection*). We saw in the narratives of giving-managers how corporate philanthropy is strategic and this account serves to uphold that notion. But this does not detract from the corporation in any way as Tania further praises it through the *attribution of positive character qualities*, and her approbation

works to cast the corporation as a heroic figure. The corporation's philanthropy is further explained:

...we started to do a day where we kind of reward co-ordinators in the school, because every school has their own [programme] coordinator, who might be one of the teachers, or it could be a teacher aide, or even in some of the smaller rural schools it's the principal and they are the ones that receive the books and we give them labels to stick in each book which has space to write the child's name and it also says who the school is sponsored by... so in the past couple of years we've rewarded the [programme] coordinators and bringing them up to Auckland for a '[programme] day-out' and [Corporate G] came on board with that and so they go to the [corporate G] office and have a look around their site and get to take some books home. So, they're fantastic and we work really closely with them. (Tania, 22:11).

Not only does the corporation supply books to children and give them opportunities to preview books, they also offer coordinators in schools the opportunity to engage and network at the corporation's offices where they also receive products (*attribution of credit*). This repetition of the *attribution of credit* serves to accentuate the heroic stature of the corporation and its service to schools, which is both direct and through the non-profit's programme. While Tania applauds the corporation for its work, her narrative also implicates the non-profit in the mix. It is not only the corporation that is cast as laudable, but also the non-profit (*attribution of credit*). Thus, by association, we are drawn to feel respect and approval for the non-profit in its facilitation and enabling of the relationship.

Tania's relatively short account is primarily concerned with the attributions of positive character qualities and credit. Again, we see a mutually dependent relationship but the corporation appears to shrewdly take advantage of its business operations in order to assist the non-profit organisation. So it seems that business strategy once again has a part to play in the relationship. Tania is

also strategic in that she recognises the importance of reciprocation; to reciprocate the gift is to maintain the relationship that generates the gift.

### **The indispensable manager (Oliver 1)**

In this narrative, Oliver speaks about a philanthropic relationship in which the corporation (Corporate C) has made a number of contributions in a variety of forms ranging across finance, school bags, assembled bikes, and foster-home packs for children in need. The diversity of the gift initiatives makes for interesting reading:

[Corporate C] is very interesting because their chief executive built a relationship with us and he said, “I want all of my staff involved in this proposition” and we’ve had that in place now for about 2 years. There’s some money involved but not a lot. But what they do is the staff come up with mechanisms for supporting the organisation. So there have been three major initiatives so far... (Oliver, 5:57)

In this passage, both giving and receiving organisations are cast into the relationship through Oliver’s use of the *attribution of agency and unity*, but it is the corporation’s chief executive who is cast as the initiator of that relationship (*attribution of motive; attribution of credit; attribution of a character quality, attribution of unity denied*). Through the *attribution of motive*, Oliver further casts the corporate chief executive as the one offering the services of the corporation’s staff (*attribution of unity*). Through the *attribution of responsibility*, it is the staff who will eventually be credited or blamed for the outcome of any programmes they devise to assist the non-profit organisation. As we saw in some of the accounts narrated by giving-managers, time is an element of this first passage by Oliver (a partnership “in place now for about 2 years”). Such a construction, we have come to realise, displays certain abstract temporal presuppositions (Cunliffe, et al., 2004). Oliver merely suggests how long the relationship has endured; however, we get the sense that time does

‘confine’ the relationship. In the following passage, Oliver begins to offer insight into the three philanthropic initiatives with which the corporate staff were involved:

...the first was around school bags. So [Corporate C] provided us with about 45 school bags fully equipped with stationery, calculators, writing equipment for different ages and presented them to us and we distributed them to families immediately prior to the start of the school year. A really cool initiative, staff had come up with it, it was a wee bit of initiative on their part, the organisation (corporate), I suspect, paid for some of the cost and the staff contributed things... (Oliver, 6:23)

In this passage, the ability on the part of the non-profit to provide school bags and supplies to these children is due to the contribution made by the corporation (*attribution of causal connection*). Oliver praises the corporation’s staff for their resourcefulness (*attribution of credit*). Thus, staff (*attribution of unity*) contributed material objects (*attribution of agency*) while the corporate (*attribution of unity*) paid some of the expenses (*further attribution of agency*). Through his word-choice, Oliver suggests that the staff of the corporation are differentiated from the corporation itself.

Oliver narrates an event around the provision of school bags and school supplies for children distributed before the school year started. Unlike the previous passage, such an insight suggests a giving event structured through periodicity, a synchronisation with the cultural calendar and the formal structuring of a repeated event (Sherry, 1983). While there may be instances where a corporation makes a one-off or ad hoc contribution at some point, the repetition of ‘school year’ has the potential to affect the corporate relationship because the recurrence of that school year can bring about the expectation of an ongoing, recurring, gift relationship. The next passage details the second initiative:

...they then did an exercise - an executive team building exercise - and they had, I think, seven or eight teams and they built bikes. They had packaged bikes, you know proper sized push bikes and the team exercise was to assemble the bike and having assembled them they then gifted them to us. So a really nice way to say “well where’s an activity that can develop some capabilities in the team, where we can do some good leadership things in the organisation (corporation) and yet there’s an outcome?” Now the bikes went via a bike shop to make sure they had been assembled properly, to make sure they were nice and safe and things... (Oliver, 7:00)

Here, Oliver describes a corporate team building event (assembling bikes) whereby the result is the gifting of ‘staff efforts’ (*attribution of agency*) and no doubt materials purchased at a cost to the corporation. We might exercise our critical license to argue here that the corporation’s priority was not simply to contribute to the receiver organisation, but to carry out a corporate team building task, thus accomplishing simply another ‘strategic’ outcome. It might thus be interpreted that the material objects contributed were not because the non-profit wanted/needed them (*attribution of gift agency denied*), but because they were by-products of the corporation’s exercise. However, Oliver praises the corporation for its efforts (*attribution of credit*) and the sense aroused by the passage, at this point in the account, is a positive one. This carries through to the following passage:

...most recently they put together some packs for children in foster care who often don’t have anything they can call their own and they put these bags together with dressing gowns, slippers, books and toiletries, soft toys, games, really quite imaginative things and they gave about seventy eight of those packs I think. So really nice initiatives and that feels like it has sustainability and that it’s a better model for us than someone just giving us money cause you’ve always got an engagement with the staff... (Oliver, 7:35)

Oliver implies a more altruistic type of giving here. Through the *attribution of credit*, the corporation is commended for being creative with ideas (*attribution of character qualities in unity*). Interestingly, as the passage comes to a

conclusion, Oliver acknowledges that staff engagement is much more beneficial to the non-profit organisation than the contribution of money in the long-term, because this type of contribution is seen as having an element of (strategic) “sustainability”. Thus, the non-profit organisation appears to have a preference for certain types of contributions that embed relationships through personal involvement, because interpersonal engagement increases the likelihood of longer-term relationships. The narrative ends on this short but interesting passage:

...now the big disappointment this week for me is that the chief executive of [Corporate C] has left his role so I'm a bit worried about what that relationship looks like now... (Oliver, 8:42).

Oliver, through the *attribution of causal connection*, announces his concern over the future of the gift-relationship due to a particular person leaving the giving corporation. This has negative implications for Oliver. But it cannot be the ‘role’ that Oliver is concerned about since no doubt the role will be re-occupied at some point. Rather, we might assume, it is the personal human qualities the executive brought to the relationship by way of his/her role (*attribution of credit*).

This narrative was a relatively straight-forward account detailing three initiatives as operationalised by the corporation and its staff. Oliver is clearly concerned about the longevity of the corporate philanthropic relationship and his concerns appear to have some basis. This suggests that, as with Tania’s accounts, Oliver is careful about ‘maintaining’ the philanthropic relationship and he reveals this even more clearly in the next narrative.

### **The dispassionate engagement (Oliver 2)**

This narrative concerns a ten year philanthropic relationship between Oliver’s non-profit organisation and an energy corporation (Corporate D). Issues around

the sustainability of the relationship and the reputational risk of being associated with the corporation's controversial industry are highlighted. As we have seen in the other narratives, Oliver makes use of some interesting techniques to enhance and amplify the responsibilities and qualities of various characters involved in the relationship.

With [Corporate D] - the relationship has gone back over 10 years and essentially they've gifted us \$100,000 each year. It's a very interesting relationship with them. I met with the managing director about 2 years ago now and said "I have a concern you don't get enough value out of this relationship" and he said, "well we don't do it for that, we don't need to" and I said "well actually I think you do need to because I suspect when times get hard and something's got to go, if you don't get any perceived value out of this, then this will be the first thing to go..." (Oliver, 3:19)

In the first sentence, Oliver announces the relationship between two collective bodies (*attribution of agency through unity*). The corporation is represented both by a proper noun (the pseudonym, [Corporate D]) and by the plural pronoun, 'them'. The narrating manager's organisation (or perhaps some part or group of it) is represented by another plural pronoun, 'us', so both collective entities are party to the relationship. The corporation also becomes an active actor-agent of the gift (*attribution of agency through unity*).

The manager, through the *attribution of time*, invests further meaning into the relationship in two distinct yet related ways: (1) the duration of the relationship (a 10 year period), and (2) the annual event of giving (contributions made on a yearly basis of \$100,000). This regularity of giving over a certain period gives us some historical context to the relationship.

As the account progresses, Oliver reflects on an experience of dialogued interaction (a situation) between himself and the corporation's managing director, now two years in the past (*attribution of time*). In his re-construction

of that situation, Oliver casts himself as a manager concerned over the future of the gift relationship (*attribution of time*). He questions the managing director's intentions to give for selfless reasons (*attribution of motive; attribution of agency through unity*). Rather, Oliver makes clear, through the *attribution of causal connection*, that giving, and therefore receiving, is linked to the corporation's prosperity. With the benefit of hindsight, Oliver is working up to a point, thus holding us in suspense for a moment. Eventually, Oliver's agenda becomes apparent:

...and as it turns out our sponsorship is quite a lot lower with them because there's been a refocus and they give us a bit less than that now and part of that's because they didn't get enough value out of the relationship and I knew that. They basically wanted to give us some money and not be too interested in what happened to it. That had some sustainability issues for us I think in terms of its ability to be a core part of their corporate investment... (Oliver, 3:45)

Effectively, through Oliver's use of the *attribution of blame*, the corporate managing director is cast as the one who has failed to foresee issues that the non-profit manager had identified and conveyed to him. Thus, given the resulting reduction of the value of the contribution made, the receiving manager's concerns are retrospectively vindicated (*attribution of credit; attribution of causal connection*). This *attribution of credit* to himself is exaggerated through the *attribution of blame* to the managing director.

We have seen how managers on both sides of the relationship have cast themselves and their actions in juxtaposition to others in order to embellish or inflate their own worth. Since blame and credit are essentially responsibilities and thus responsibilities appear exaggerated by the inherent lack of responsibility on the part of others, Oliver (non-profit manager) in this instance is cast as knowledgeable, educated and informed on the state of the economy and the volatility that brings to the gift-relationship or sponsorship (*attribution*

*of a positive character quality*). The managing director and his corporation, on the other hand, are seen as lacking knowledge - as comparatively ignorant partners in the relationship (*attribution of a negative character quality*). Having established this deficit, Oliver moves on and, as the next passage reveals, something quite controversial comes to the fore:

...[Corporate D] also had some hooks in it, I guess, for some of our staff given some of the reputation of the [industry] and some of the ways they've behaved in perhaps developing nations, so we've got to manage those implications as well because we have staff who are highly values based and passionate - that's great, that's something that gives the organisation its capability and strength. But also they've got strong views on things like who we should connect with... (Oliver, 5:04)

Here, Oliver makes apparent a perceived conflict between the values of the non-profit's staff and the corporation's activities through a generalisation to its industry (*attribution of agency; attribution of unity*) and its apparently dubious reputation (*attribution of negative character qualities implied*). Some doubt is cast over the relationship because of a perceived mis-alignment of values (*attribution of causal connection*). Oliver's account suggests his non-profit's strength (through its employees' values) may break down due to its relationship with such a controversial corporation (*attribution of causal connection*). The non-profit's staff are cast as passionate with high morals and principles (*attribution of unity; attribution of a positive emotion; attribution of positive character qualities*); yet it appears such a casting might be compromised by the corporation and its associated negative connotations (*attribution of blame; attribution of negative character qualities; attribution of causal connection*). Oliver continues:

...so, [Corporate D], it's what I, and I wouldn't do it publicly, but it's what I'd describe as...it's quite a dispassionate engagement really so it's about saying, you know a cheque comes in the mail once a year and that's about the extent to what they want to know.

Very little accountability around that which on some occasions is good because we get to apply the money where we think it is best used... (Oliver, 13:50)

Unlike his construction of his own staff as passionate, Oliver casts the corporation, or at least its ability to engage with the non-profit, as “dispassionate” (*attribution of a negative emotion*). The mailing of a cheque (*attribution of agency*) constitutes little in the way of accountability on the part of the corporate (*attribution of credit denied*) though it isn’t seen as necessarily a bad thing because it affords the non-profit the ability to do what its managers want – a free license to use the funds for the non-profit’s own ends (*attribution of responsibility denied*). The account goes on:

...Increasingly though, I mean [Corporate D] have talked about this more recently, is they want to hear some stories – stories of how we use money and what the impact on the organisation has been and we’re keen to encourage that because we’re then saying, “we stuck this money into it, what happens? what happens to families? what difference does it make when we invest it?” So that’s part of the journey, saying “well ok, for everything you put into the organisation there’s an outcome and let’s persevere and find out what that outcome looks like and then that’s where the kudos to the organisation comes from... (Oliver, 14:20)

Just as narrative and story have been embraced in this research in an attempt to explore meanings around gift-relationships intimately linked to peoples’ experiences, Oliver casts the ‘story’, and its apparent value, into the limelight explicitly in the passage above. Indeed, the narrative takes a turn; despite the previous lack of accountability, the corporate appears to be re-engaging (*attribution of motive*) – its managers want to know what’s happening with their investment. Oliver elaborates:

...we did establish a thing called the [Corporate D]-Fund that originally came out of a gift from [Corporate D] – they had some sort of staff welfare fund or something and they closed it down and gave us some money and we established the [Corporate D]-

Fund which was used as an emergency fund for families. So families that were in particular strife and need some emergency funds we can fund that out of this fund. It's been called the [Corporate D]-Fund for, since whenever, years ago. The [Corporate D] money is long gone, it's subsequently been topped up and yet they've been quite interested in the [Corporate D]-Fund and what it does. So we've actually quite recently changed the name of that fund. Those funds, we've found, are particularly valuable and particularly interest corporates in terms of the difference they can make for children and families in need... (Oliver, 14:55).

In this passage, Oliver, through the *attribution of motive*, reveals how the non-profit developed a fund for families (the people they serve) in need (*attribution of unity; attribution of a character quality*). Its ability to do so was through the generosity of the corporation (*attribution of causal connection*) as Oliver shows through the *attribution of credit*. As the passage comes to a close, Oliver makes a generalisation about the interests of corporations (*attribution of motive; attribution of unity*). Thus, through the *attribution of credit* and the *attribution of positive character qualities*, corporations are attributed with the desire to do good (*attribution of motive*).

For Oliver, the corporation must gain from its philanthropic acts since this is an essential component in 'sustaining' and 'maintaining' the gift partnership. Oliver is conspicuously aware of the corporation's strategic motives and because Oliver desires a mutually rewarding partnership, he wants the corporation to achieve its objectives. The non-profit organisation simply relies upon the corporation to do well in business and also out of its giving in order for the corporation to be able to produce and confer surplus resources as gifts on an ongoing basis. Further, Oliver's commentary provides an example of how corporations have the ability to compromise non-profit integrity since, through the relationship, qualities attributed to the corporation are potentially

transferred to its recipients by association, thereby impacting the non-profit's reputation.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an analysis of corporate philanthropic relationships from the perspectives of the receiving-managers. On the whole, this chapter presents 'laudatory' narratives whereby corporate-giving organisations are applauded for their philanthropic acts/sponsorship. Receiving-managers exercise their political license to construct favourable pictures of givers as a way to repay or reciprocate the support they have received. Narratives also expose how conspicuous 'giving events' bring about positive publicity for corporate-giving organisations and their managers. This factor serves to reveal receiving-managers' aspirations, and strategies to maintain the givers' social credibility – apparently in order to sustain the relationships they benefit from. Chapter Six will highlight the ideas that emerged from giver' and receiver' narratives, and further explore the corporate philanthropic relationship.

~ Chapter Six ~

## Managed Mutual Dependency: Strategy, Partnership and Social Credibility

### Introduction

Most commentary on corporate philanthropy has been provided by business and society researchers outside of New Zealand. Moreover, New Zealand research is limited to studies on broader aspects of business social issues, or those studies seeking to quantify the contribution made by businesses to the philanthropic sector. International studies provide a range of insights and commentary on the motivations for corporate philanthropic giving and normative claims about the responsibilities giving-managers face. Rarely, however, are there in-depth accounts that capture the experiences of, and insights into, the relationships between those managers responsible for giving *and* those managers who receive philanthropic contributions.

To address this deficit, giving-managers and receiving-managers were recruited and asked about their experiences of being involved in corporate philanthropic relationships. The previous two chapters have discussed findings resulting from that process. In this chapter I take the analysis of narratives to the next level to build a theory statement. There are three parts to this chapter.

In *Part One* I briefly revisit the attributions of meaning discovered in the previous chapters and in *Part Two* of the Chapter, I establish three broad themes that identify common elements – known as “structures of experience” (Van Maanen, 1990, p.86) – across the narratives analysed in Chapters Four and Five that form a theory statement. In *Part Three*, I give details of the quality process for checking and refining the theory. I also explain the outcome of the process of taking this theory statement to two of my research

participants, to test the face-validity of the findings and to begin to refine the theory (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### **Revisiting the attributions of meaning (Part One)**

As the content of Chapters Four and Five shows, participants in this study employ a number of mechanisms through which meaning is generated thereby turning information into experience (Gabriel, 2000). Less obvious are the attribution of *emotion* and the attribution of *providential significance* in managers' narrations on philanthropic relationships. Yet all other attributions are apparent. By way of the *attribution of agency through unity*, both giving-managers and receiving-managers are inextricably linked with the activities, actions and purposefulness of their respective corporate-giving organisations and non-profit organisations, revealing an important aspect of the relationship between management and organisation; participants express feelings, ideas and beliefs about a world of philanthropy that appears to be dominated by organisations and the organisation of people.

The prevailing themes aroused by the narratives of giving-managers are egotism and organisational self-interest. Participants, through *the attribution of motive* and the *attribution of causal connection*, expansively cast corporate-giving organisations as agents of strategy seeking to create social credibility from giving and through strict controlling processes. Narratives help to portray egocentric, egoistic and heroic corporate-giving organisations (*attribution of character qualities*).

A sentiment captured in the narratives of receiving-managers is 'laudatory'. Participants, through *the attribution of motive* and the *attribution of causal connection*, cast corporate-giving organisations as heroic agents also and, along with giving-managers, largely fail to say much about non-profit organisations

thereby signifying that non-profit organisations are probably dependent and reliant upon the contributions they receive.

Receiving-managers favorably cast relationships/partnerships as mutually beneficial and as mutually dependent, but their narratives suggest that receiving-managers are quietly ‘stroking the egos’ of corporate-giving organisations in an attempt to satisfy their own organisation’s desires to remain as recipients (*attribution of motive; attribution of causal connection*). Through the *attribution of responsibility and credit*, receiving-managers applaud their giving-manager counterparts and corporate-giving organisations for the philanthropic contributions made, perhaps insofar as to maintain those contributions. Through the *attribution of motive*, non-profit organisations are seen to be strategic by reciprocating the gifts they receive. Maintaining relationships is of utmost import to receiving-managers (*attribution of motive*).

The narratives analysed in Chapters Four and Five are revealing for their insights into the *motives* of giving-managers and receiving-managers. Gabriel (2000) argues that motive is one of the primary tropes that managers or organisations use to make sense of organisational phenomena. My analysis shows that motive is the *central* component around which other meanings revolve. Without exploring the motives of giving and receiving characters (individuals or organisations), and without participants reflecting on motive within the context of narrated experience, little meaning can be derived. The narratives reveal considerable meaning around the motives of characters and these motives are central to the themes of this research.

### **Establishing themes from narratives (Part Two)**

Meanings were collated and linkages made across narratives to establish three themes or “structures of experience” (Van Maanen, 1990, p.86). At the conclusion of the analytical process, three themes emerged. Those three themes

are based on the espoused *motives* (referred to as *desires* here) of both giving-managers and receiving-managers and include:

- i. the desire of both givers and receivers to ensure that givers achieve their strategic objectives;
- ii. givers' desire to generate their organisation's social credibility from giving;
- iii. recipients' desire to ensure future philanthropic support.

In the sections that follow, the preceding analysis of narratives is augmented by examples drawn from empirical material collected in the initial interview phase that did not feature in Chapters Four and Five. Material comes from interviews with giving-managers (*Louise, Robert*), chair-people (*Craig, Lance*) and receiving-managers (*Karl, Fiona*). Quotes from these interviews are reproduced verbatim. Giving-managers and receiving-managers are indicated by their acronyms (GM and RM respectively)<sup>5</sup> to make it easy to recognise their roles.

*The mutually held desire for givers to achieve strategic objectives*

When narrating their experiences, a theme that emerges from all of the participants (both giving-managers and receiving-managers) relates to the way in which they desire corporate-giving organisations and their managers to achieve their strategic intentions. The suggestion that giving is aligned with the strategic objectives of the giver is highlighted by one giving-manager's revelation that philanthropy is tied to pre-established business goals/drivers:

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<sup>5</sup> The chair-people (*Craig, Lance*) are referred to as giving-managers due to their involvement in making decisions around philanthropy for their respective organisations.

From [our corporation's] perspective, we try and link it, to be strategic, we also try to link it to some of our business drivers (GM: Mary, 12:41)

Receiving-managers also realise the importance of strategic alignment for the corporate-giving organisation.

...and as it turns out our sponsorship is quite a lot lower with them because there's been a refocus and they give us a bit less than that now and part of that's because they didn't get enough value out of the relationship and I knew that. (RM: Oliver, 3:45)

I can't say that by supporting any charity then that makes your company better, it might help with your company ethos but it doesn't necessarily help their core business (RM: Fiona, 19:47)

The strategic orientation of giving is not simply an organisational motive but also a fiduciary obligation and responsibility placed on managers to their employer. Accordingly, giving-managers are right to carry out their giving in line with business interests.

The person should make the decision on the basis of what's in the best interest of that [corporate] entity (GM: Craig, 21:51)

We're not subject to anybody's scrutiny just our own standards of behaviour and fiduciary responsibility (GM: Craig, 41:37)

Strategy theorists argue that corporations make contributions in an attempt to have an impact on their immediate neighbourhoods (Porter & Kramer, 2002; Thompson, Smith & Hood, 1993) and thereby stimulate goodwill towards corporations within those neighbourhoods (Wood & Jones, 1995). Giving-managers are explicit about their intention to engage those communities where business benefits are likely to accrue. Two giving-managers in particular are clear about the importance of locality, and the connection between 'business' and 'community':

It's a really important area for our operations so a lot of our community investment is actually situated up there (GM: Mary, 8:19)

The [corporate-trust] was gifting one and a half million into the community and there was quite a wide brief...included amongst it was communities in which [the corporation] operated (GM: Craig, 05:22)

One giving-manager was clear about the intention to use non-profit resources to advance business objectives directly.

we had a [product] exhibition there [at the non-profit's premises] which helped us demonstrate our technology and...it helps explain to the community and tourists what's there and at the same time promotes our technology (GM: Mary, 8:51)

One receiving-manager describes, for instance, how corporate staff have been employed to direct certain philanthropic initiatives:

[Corporate C] is very interesting because their chief executive built a relationship with us and he said, "I want all of my staff involved in this proposition"... (RM: Oliver, 5:57)

Staff-initiated giving is consistent with a strategic orientation on the part of the donor, as it represents a strategic use of corporate resources shown to improve the satisfaction, and retention, of employees (Lewin & Sabater, 1996).

Strikingly, comments on the importance of benefits to non-profit organisations are absent among the narratives of giving-managers. Seldom do giving-managers discuss the direct benefits that non-profit organisations attempt to achieve or how corporate-giving organisations might assist non-profit organisations in achieving those objectives. In fact, the objectives of the non-profit organisation must 'fit' those of the corporate-giving organisation in order for the relationship to exist.

We do have the ability to partner with whoever we feel is sharing our sort of values and ideas on making a difference (GM: Megan, 7:26)

It's an example of working closely with an organisation, realising they are a great fit with our objectives... (GM: Claire, 46:18)

It isn't necessarily what the applicant is asking for because their view maybe wrong of what the Trust can do (GM: Craig, 42:26)

We maintain a strong link with those people too. We make sure that we like what they're doing and that they're fitting in with what we expect them to be doing (GM: Lance, 4:52)

These accounts reinforce the centrality of the giver's strategic interests, a position that casts corporate philanthropic relationships in such a way as to reduce the identity and status of the recipient to that of 'perennial supplicant' (Levy, 1999). This leads us to believe that corporate philanthropic relationships are asymmetrical, suggesting an imbalance of power (Seitanidi & Ryan, 2007; Tracey et al., 2005). Power is retained through control.

Corporate-giving organisations constrain relationships through the imposition of time management. The imposition of finite, conventional business-oriented timeframes creates beginnings and endings that suit the corporate-giving organisation's desire for control. A strong feature of the narratives from both givers and receivers was the way in which giving-managers and their colleagues govern the management of giving through the imposition of time. The way participants link time into their corporate philanthropy narratives to create meaning, suggests deeper desires about how giving-managers attempt to manage their philanthropy.

Participants do so in a linear sense; in an irreversible succession from past through to the present through to the future where units of giving are uniform, regular, precise, and measurable (Ancona et al., 2001). Giving-managers

organise the course of the philanthropic relationship through time (years and months) and dictate for how long non-profit organisations will receive their funding.

We funded the work they did and we funded it for 5 years (GM: Lance, 6:55)

[a non-profit organisation] - that's a 3 year funding thing that's just ended (GM: Louise, 13:43)

For some giving-managers, time appears to be a 'point of negotiation' where the terms and the conditions of the philanthropic contract are brought into question.

...we have been partners with them for 8 years now and we are just looking at renewing it at the moment (GM: Mary, 8:51).

this year is actually our ten year anniversary so we have had talks with the Chief Executive there trying to see if there is a future relationship for us (GM: Mary, 12:11).

we have funded that initially for 2 years and I have discussed the risk of dependence with the board (GM: Claire, 46:18)

Giving-managers use time as a marker to evaluate whether these relationships continue to be of strategic significance to the corporate-giving organisation. Managers project the idea that the future of these relationships are clearly in doubt; not because there is no longer the need for corporate support of non-profit organisations, but because corporate-giving organisations are careful with their resources and time is used as a contractual 'out'.

By limiting philanthropy to specific time-periods, corporate-giving organisations are able to write efficiency, effectiveness and productivity into the corporate philanthropy lexicon (Cooper & Burrell, 1988; Cunliffe et al., 2004). Managers' accounts of corporate philanthropy suggest that giving works

to ‘restrict’ the gift relationship by exerting control over the incidents, events and characters at play.

so we wanted to continue with [the budgeting service] who we make a long term 3-5 year commitment to... (GM: Megan, 7:26)

On a number of occasions we have given grants where we’ve staged it over time. One for example, we gave them a quarter of a million and we paid them over five years (GM: Craig, 1:04:41)

Time is perhaps used as an excuse to release the corporate-giving organisation of its duty, its commitment, and its obligation to the non-profit receiving organisation at some point. That is, a corporate-giving organisation’s obligation is time-specific and time-controlled, not by coincidence, but by intent. This intent appears to have less relevance to non-profit receiving organisations’ objectives.

[two corporate givers] won’t deal retrospectively, they want to be party to the decision, they want to control it (GM: Craig, 45:03)

The companies that I work with you know told us it was coming – “we’ll support you now, because we’ve made that commitment, but we’re not sure about next year” (RM: Fiona, 24:48)

Repetition of annual giving and monthly giving constitutes a frame for giving related to cyclical time. Cyclical time organises philanthropic life for corporate-giving organisations but also for non-profit organisations whose operations depend on corporate giving (Ancona et al., 2001). The accumulation of repetitive annual or monthly giving, and thus receiving, locates giving-managers in stable networks of philanthropic relationships whereby giving becomes routine, mechanical and un-reflexive (see Edensor, 2006).

they give us a cushion for a wage...they send a certain amount each month which goes in to our account which supports the wage for Nicky (RM: David, 23:44)

...they also sponsor an annual [Corporate E] award for every school on the programme - currently 547. The [Corporate E] award gets given out at the end of the year to an outstanding student for 'Excellence in Attitude' (RM: Tania, 9:07)

we made a commitment from the beginning to build two houses a year so our staff - I think it's about 250 staff - build 2 houses each year (GM: Megan, 8:36)

They also give out apples, buckets of apples to their schools once a year... (RM: Tania, 15:01)

[Corporate F] are another major sponsor, they partner with us, we've just started doing an annual appeal week (RM: Tania, 10:24)

essentially they've gifted us \$100,000 each year (RM: Oliver, 3:19)

So [Corporate C] provided us with about 45 school bags fully equipped with stationary, calculators, writing equipment for different ages and presented them to us and we distributed them to families immediately prior to the start of the school year" (RM: Oliver, 6:23).

We have another fund which is \$250,000 a year (GM: Louise, 5:47)

The difference between cyclical time and linear clock time is that while the latter travels in a linear way never to be repeated, the former repeats. The repetition of events ("building two houses a year", "sending money on a monthly basis", "the giving of an annual award", "giving out apples once a year", "an annual appeal week", "gifting \$100,000 a year", "giving school bags at the start of the school year") represents consistency and therefore the easy management of giving and serves the corporate-giving organisation's own 'strategic self-interests'. Yet the very aspect that ensures rationality, control and predictability for the giver, potentially makes for a precarious future for the recipient organisations, which are dependent on the largesse of the giver.

As another form of managing relationships, governance mechanisms control for incompatibility (Werbel & Carter, 2002). Evidence suggests corporate-giving organisations impose similar governance mechanisms on non-profit organisations by placing people on non-profit boards to control and manage the community work they carry out and to ensure that their work is ‘strategically’ compatible with the giving-organisation.

[John Ray], who started [Corporate E], is the chairman of [our] Board as well (RM: Tania, 10:12)

We created a standalone foundation...they have their own projects going on, they have their own executive director...and one of our trustees is on the board (GM: Louise, 7:25)

Now, I sit on the other side, I’m the chairman of a number of not for profits (GM: Craig, 25:45)

A strategic orientation and commensurate gifting practices are reflected in the accounts of managers. It is apparent that corporate-giving organisations operate in “a relational pair with the followers whose essential feature is reliance on the hero” (see Beech, 2000, p.216). While corporate-giving organisations (as heroic leaders) and non-profit organisations (as followers) have complementary functions in the sphere of philanthropic action (see Beech, 2000; Propp, 1975), receivers are at times represented as passive players. The non-profit organisation’s ability to carry out community work appears contingent on intervention from the corporate-giving organisation for direction and meaning. Indeed, it is giving-managers who ostensibly exercise control over the giving relationship.

*The giver’s desire to generate social credibility from giving*

The reputation of the corporate-giving organisation as a good corporate citizen is in part a function of its philanthropy (Levy, 1999). Over time, philanthropic

activity raises moral capital by enhancing community reputation and social credibility and this is particularly evident in the places the corporate donates money *and* conducts its business, thereby offering protection against unintentional reputational or financial risk (Godfrey, 2005). A positive reputation is fundamental to the long-term success of the corporate-giving organisation (Hess et al., 2002). Giving carried out by giving-managers that enhances the firm's image or strengthens its reputation is an appropriate and justifiable act because such an act is seen to be compatible with shareholder preferences and corporate interests (Campbell & Slack, 2008; Minow, 1999).

According to the participants in this study, improving brand and image and gaining public recognition are important. Managers are unambiguous about the connection between the corporate-giving organisation and corporate social credibility. The statement of one receiving-manager shows the close association between philanthropy and 'corporate image'.

Because of [Corporate E] and their sponsorship, one school in particular changed its name from '[Hilldown] School', but now it's '[Hilldown] [Corporate E] School', because they've just done so much for them and the school wanted to do that to acknowledge their contribution and support. (RM: Tania, 16:04).

One way that corporate-giving organisations try to improve their brand recognition is through the 'presentation' of their philanthropy at public events, as is evident in the following extracts:

And [the managing-chairman] goes down and makes a presentation and that's good, that kind of thing appeals to us greatly (GM, Robert, 1:12:07)

The sponsors are invited to go to the assemblies, to go in and help present the books, to be there with the role models as well. Often sponsors have spoken at assemblies as well (RM: Tania, 14:39)

Managers clearly reveal the centrality of the corporate-giving organisation's desire to improve its image or public visibility. While corporate philanthropy also has the ability to impact a corporation's marketing strategy directly through cause-related marketing initiatives (Varadarajan & Menon, 1988), those initiatives are not so prevalent or apparent in this study. New Zealand corporate-giving organisations, in line with research evidence that suggests the public will form favourable attitudes toward corporations that display philanthropy (Winters, 1988), appear intent on creating such favourable attitudes toward their business related operations; however, such intent may be less conspicuous in New Zealand than overseas.

International research suggests philanthropic giving levels relate to the strategy to improve public recognition (Fry et al., 1982). The notion that corporate-giving organisations are interested in promoting their public image and identity is accepted by both giving-managers and receiving-managers.

You know, [a corporation] might say, "no no we're not going to do that because it doesn't fit with our political, professional corporate image" (RM: Karl, 59:06)

But they realised that unless the public – customers, stakeholders – saw you as valid, as socially responsible, as adding value to society ultimately you'd come a cropper...you had to be truly creating value (GM: Craig, 15:27)

Shareholders are prepared to spend a small amount of course to promote that role, to promote that identity for a company – it's good PR in that respect (GM: Lance, 21:50)

Unlike cause-related marketing initiatives that noticeably operate through the direct linking of business products and services to charity in such a way that each time a consumer uses the particular service or buys the particular product, a contribution is made to the charity by the business (Caesar, n.d.), the image building philanthropy that New Zealand managers talk about in this study

appears less obvious and prominent as a business strategy. This interpretation resonates with Rumsey and White's (2009) observation that the image-building intention of giving organisations is an "unspoken secret between nonprofits and large corporations" (p.302).

International research brings to the fore yet another observation, that which suggests philanthropy might provide corporations with a tool to restore self-diminished corporate reputations (Williams & Barrett, 2000). This is particularly evident in industries such as alcohol and tobacco where corporations are vulnerable to public accusations of social irresponsibility (Brammer & Millington, 2004; Brammer & Pavelin, 2005). The idea that morally dubious corporations attempt to engage in philanthropy has some application in New Zealand. One receiving-manager in particular describes the hesitation in dealing with a corporate-giving organisation that has had a chequered past:

[Corporate D] also had some hooks in it, I guess, for some of our staff given some of the reputation of the [industry] and some of the ways they've behaved in perhaps developing nations (RM: Oliver, 5:04)

Organisational identities are constructed by the identity-relevant language that managers' use about them (Brown, 2006). A feature of my study is that giving-managers' narratives cast corporate-giving organisations in heroic roles:

we [the corporate-trust] were leaders, the leaders in new projects (GM: Robert, 35:39)

[the corporation] do it brilliantly (GM: Craig, 1:18:02)

That's just how we work or how we usually work. We have a high engagement model (GM: Claire, 41:48)

I think we were the first supporter of the museum and that helped them go get funding from other partners and from government (GM: Mary, 8:51)

These extracts are examples of how the social status of giving-managers and corporate-giving organisations are maintained or elevated by manipulating symbols of generosity. Actual philanthropic behaviour is irrelevant to this process (Sherry, 1983). As giving-managers cast themselves in positive ways, they also seek to exaggerate and juxtapose themselves and their organisations against the incompetence of others (see Gabriel, 2000). Through this narrative work, argue Alvesson and Willmot (1996), managers and corporations are portrayed as the heroes of modern society. The heroic qualities bestowed on corporate-giving organisations are enhanced when giving-managers blame other contributing organisations in the institutional field for their lack of commitment to the community (Gabriel, 2000). Through opposition, the heroic qualities of corporate-giving organisations are ‘heightened’ against the ‘cowardice’ of others.

the [non-profit] organisation gets stigmatised because funders look at the application and the first thing they see is [the sport] which gets a bad rap (GM: Claire, 37:00)

I’m very wary of things which are new or different that government gets involved in because they’re trying to pick winners (GM: Craig, 55:46)

The institutional argument for corporate philanthropy suggests managers look for signs from others both within and outside the business firm to lend certainty and predictability to giving programmes and events in their own organisations (Useem, 1988). From evidence elicited in my study, this argument does not seem to be so prevalent in the NZ context. It seems giving-managers are more interested in portraying themselves and their organisations as saviours. The heroic qualities bestowed on corporate-giving organisations are also enhanced

when managers contrast them against the ‘incompetence’ of those non-profit organisations and managers they serve:

David is dyslexic and incredibly busy with the gym, so he hasn't got the right skill set or the time to write funding applications. Andrew, who does funding applications, is an older, retired guy with a great heart who has no training or experience in the fundraising arena...so part of it is actually about building the evidence base (GM: Claire, 38:29)

So they came to us asking for 30k then through the process of actually meeting with them and working through their real vision and dreams the Board ended up increasing their financial support significantly (GM: Claire, 45:22)

but when she initially came to us for funding, I think she was asking for \$30,000 or something like that, and I actually went to her and I said, “it's actually not enough, come to us and ask for more” (GM: Claire, 43:37)

I went down when I was at the conference and sat with [Kate], the CEO, and she said “there are so many mortgagee sales at the moment you know with the current economic crisis” and so I said “are all your advisers up to the play in how to advise people on their mortgagee sales?” and she said, “they are probably struggling because it's a fairly new area for them (GM: Megan, 14:10)

Giving-managers clearly communicate favourable impressions of themselves and their own organisations, and my research is a vehicle for New Zealand managers to do so (Alvesson & Deetz, 1999). As we saw earlier, philanthropy is used as a way to engage employees – a concept that is well established in the corporate philanthropy literature (Buchholtz et al., 1999). Corporate-giving organisations also use employees/staff in conspicuous events to create a positive public image.

we made a commitment from the beginning to build two houses a year so our staff - I think it's about 250 staff - build 2 houses each year in Auckland and Wellington, and we build in the same area so

we're building up a nice little community of families...we want to have big street party days and you know get everyone together and bring back the community. So our staff are engaged on so many levels (GM: Megan, 8:36)

[Non-profit B] used to have a fundraising day and we had [our corporation's] employees go and help them fund-raise money, so there was some involvement there, but then they got rid of that fund-raising day so it kind of went back to just handing the money over (GM: Mary, 11:54)

This 'intention' and desire to gain public exposure through building houses and fund-raising money has been expressed elsewhere in the literature as forms of advertising (Brown et al., 2006). But the analysis in this study shows that these activities may serve more as 'cultivation events' where giving-managers seek to exploit their philanthropic efforts (Rumsey & White, 2009). Corporate-giving organisations use philanthropy to create positive public images and thereby improve their 'social credibility'. Their positioning of philanthropy as an opportunity for building credibility suggests that corporate-giving organisations and their managers in New Zealand have become professionalised in their approach to philanthropy (Saiia, 1999). Overall, an association with philanthropy is used by the giving-managers in this study as a boost to organisational credibility. New Zealand corporate philanthropy, echoing the international situation, may be a source of competitive advantage (Meijer et al., 2006; Smith, 1994).

*The recipient's desire to ensure future support*

Non-profit organisations, unlike their corporate giving counterparts, are not in positions of great power in corporate philanthropic relationships. Receivers are placed in positions of dependency and they are subject to business strategies and controls as already described. Because non-profit organisations rely on the

gifts they receive, they go to some lengths to maintain and enhance the relationships/partnerships that provide the gifts they depend on.

Organisations can be properly understood as moral persons and can have the same privileges as moral persons, including the privilege of forming and maintaining partnerships (see Arnold, 2006). A strong sub-theme that emerges from the majority of managers is the way in which organisations are cast as partners to philanthropy.

a partnership we have is with [Non-profit A] (GM: Mary, 8:19)

[Non-profit B] is one of our national – well, it is a national partner (GM: Mary, 11:12)

[the non-profit] is like one of our core partners (GM: Megan, 7:26)

[Corporate F] are another major sponsor - they partner with us (RM: Tania, 10:24)

And then the year I joined [this corporate-foundation] we took on [a housing non-profit organisation] (GM: Megan, 8:36)

With [Corporate D] - the relationship has gone back over 10 years and essentially they've gifted us \$100,000 each year (Oliver, 3:19)

our biggest relationship is with [Corporate E] (RM: Tania, 9:07)

Being an organisation in a corporate philanthropic relationship is essentially being party to a new unified philanthropic structure with its own identity, whereby positive and negative qualities are pooled, become fixed and are distributed to each organisation that is party to it (Gabriel, 2000). As such, both corporate giving organisations and non-profit organisations become responsible for the arrangement and carry, to some extent, a 'common identity'. This 'common identity' has implications for the corporate philanthropic relationship.

Receiving-managers realise that this common identity must work for the corporate-giving organisation in order for the non-profit organisation to continue receiving. Receiving-managers understand that corporate-giving organisations are active and powerful players.

they [the corporation] allow stuff to happen (RM: David, 20:28)

[Corporate A] and [Corporate B] sponsored our trip (RM: David, 6:00)

[Corporate C] provided us with about 45 school bags fully equipped with stationary, calculators, writing equipment for different ages and presented them to us and we distributed them to families immediately prior to the start of the school year... (RM: Oliver, 6:23)

So [Corporate E] sponsor that (RM: Tania, 9:07).

but what they do is the staff come up with mechanisms for supporting the organisation (RM: Oliver, 5:57)

Because giving-managers seek to create favorable public images for their organisations, non-profit managers seek to maintain that public image, or social credibility, in order to sustain those relationships. One way non-profit organisations uphold or boost a corporate-giving organisation's social credibility is by the extensive use of hyperbolic praise bordering on reverence. This in turn conjures up positive social images about the moral good of corporate-giving organisations:

they're very very generous (RM: David, 20:28)

It's basically training, brilliant training from [Corporate B] they've got very very good at that and they pay for everything too - they fly you up, accommodate ya and everything like that, feed ya, and then I come back more equipped from the training and that so they're really really good (RM: David, 23:12)

they are very supportive, they get right in behind anything and everything...so they are a major contributor (RM: Tania, 10:12)

they've just done so much for them (RM: Tania, 16:04)

they've been partnering with us on that, trying to help us through their stores also, collecting money, and that's been a massive help (RM: Tania, 10:24)

so [Corporate G] pay for that and that's obviously massive as well (RM: Tania, 11:07)

So [Corporate F] are fantastic (RM: Tania, 19:51)

they're really supportive, they always go above and beyond, giving more stuff, you know, wanting to help out (RM: Tania, 21:36)

they put together some packs for children in foster care...dressing gowns, slippers, books and toiletries, soft toys, games, really quite imaginative things...So really nice initiatives (RM: Oliver, 7:35)

[Frank] is a cracking falla you know (RM: David, 20:28)

The contributions non-profit organisations receive come with an obligation (Verhezen, 2009); that obligation is, as we saw in the earlier narratives of giving-managers, that the relationship continues to be of strategic and reputational value to the corporate giving organisation. What we experience in the narrations by giving-managers is giving that is at least partially a vehicle for social obligation and political manoeuvre (Sherry, 1983). We have reason to believe that what we are experiencing in the receiving-managers narratives is not simply an elevation of the giver (though this is abundantly apparent), but rather a strategic 'reciprocation' by non-profit organisations as their receiving-managers conjure up positive images of corporate-giving organisations.

According to Rumsey and White (2009), non-profit managers are conspicuously aware of corporate motives and thus desire mutually rewarding

partnerships. Indeed, the non-profit organisation clearly relies upon the corporate-giving organisation to do well in business and also out of their giving in order for those corporate-giving organisations to be able to produce and confer surplus resources as gifts/contributions or as ‘sponsorship’ as many receiving-managers narrate. One receiving-manager makes his desire to reciprocate apparent by describing his efforts to ‘publicise’ the sponsorship of corporate-giving organisations that gave to him and his organisation:

every opportunity we got we wore their T-shirts with [Corporate B] and [Corporate A] written on them. (RM: David, 6:00)

they took their jackets off and there was [Corporate B] throughout the world - [Corporate A] and [Corporate B] right throughout the world, it was really good advertising (RM: David, 6:38)

So any opportunity we can to support them, we support them (RM: David, 6:38)

In general, any sense of equity in the relationship between corporate-giving organisation and non-profit organisation is maintained by reciprocity which requires that those in non-profit organisations feel compelled to help those who have helped them (Flynn, 2003).

we try and encourage the schools as strongly as possible to establish a relationship between themselves and their sponsors (RM: Tania, 14:39)

We’ve just had a ‘schools and sponsors get in touch week’ so we make a real effort to make sure that they are looking after their sponsors (RM: Tania, 19:51)

We send reports to our corporate sponsors. We send two versions - a long version and a short version and sometimes they put them on their website (RM: Fiona, 20:48)

One of the issues with a system of giving underpinned by reciprocity is the idea that the unreciprocated contribution makes the receiver inferior (Mauss, 1924) and that can result in a “loss of status and self-esteem” (Belk, 1976, p.156); this represents a social system of hierarchy which determines such an obligation (Belk, 1976). Receiving-managers understand the need to reciprocate in order to sustain the system that essentially provides for them and the causes they support.

We do let the schools know that to enjoy the best relationship with their sponsors it is dependent on them building and investing into that. Sometimes they find that if they do that they get a lot in return (RM: Tania, 16:04).

I met with the managing director about 2 years ago now and said “I have a concern you don’t get enough value out of this relationship” and he said, “well we don’t do it for that, we don’t need to” and I said “well actually I think you do need to because I suspect when times get hard and something’s got to go, if you don’t get any perceived value out of this, then this will be the first thing to go... (RM: Oliver, 3:19)

Recipients appear to be embedded in a system of obligation whereby reciprocation in terms of donor corporate reputation building ensures the maintenance of gift contracts. This relates back to part of the first theme - recipients’ desire for givers to achieve strategic objectives.

### **Checking and refining the preliminary theory (Part Three)**

The three themes that must be captured in any theory that reflects this study’s narrative analysis, relate to the mutual desire for givers to achieve strategic objectives; the giver’s desire to generate social credibility from giving, and; the recipient’s desire to ensure future support. These themes reflect the nature of the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand, bounded and guided

by the particulars of the narrative analysis and theory building approach. From these themes, I established a theory statement:

**Managed mutual dependency** is a New Zealand based theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship that argues that both the giver and the receiver of philanthropy are strategic instruments of each others' own volitions engaged in a common partnership whereby the giving organisation invests in causes that generate social credibility and the recipient organisation in turn repays the debt by maintaining that credibility, but primarily in an attempt to sustain the investment it receives (version 1).

*Seeking alternative explanations*

Consistent with Step 6 of the research approach outlined in Chapter Three, I sought supervisors' responses to this theory statement in order "to allow for any alternative explanations of the data to emerge" (Turnbull, 2002, p.327). Supervisors came back with some suggested revisions and questions. The phrase "each other's own volitions" didn't make sense to them and they suggested the use of "of the other's volition". Supervisors also encouraged me to consider using the term 'partnership' or 'unequal partnership' as distinct from 'common partnership'. The reason for 'unequal' was to make explicit something that I thought seemed implicit in the overall statement - the idea that there is a giver and someone who 'repays the debt'. They suggested a revision of "the organisation invests", and also asked me to reconsider the use of the final phrase/clause, "in an attempt to sustain the investment it receives". Thus, I proposed a revision of the original theory statement that would go to participants.

**Managed mutual dependency** is a New Zealand based theory of the corporate philanthropic relationship which argues that both the giving organisation and the recipient organisation are strategic instruments of the other's desires in a philanthropic relationship whereby the giving organisation invests in a social cause through the recipient organisation in an attempt to generate social

credibility, and the recipient organisation repays that investment by acting in such a way as to maintain the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship and therefore to ensure future contributions and support. (version 2)

*Revising the theory by consulting participants*

Recommended by Turnbull (2002) as a quality measure I checked the preliminary theory with two participants I had previously interviewed. My intentions were to identify any reasons to reject the theory statement and to gather any good ideas for its revision. I showed each manager a written version of the theory statement above. Each interview proceeded in a slightly different way as I adapted to the responses of each participant. My first question, however, was consistent. Both managers were asked what they thought of the theory statement. The responses were radically different. In the first instance, the giving-manager did not accept some elements of the statement:

...I don't think that's our motivation, we are not looking for social credibility... I don't think the main motivation would be social credibility; it would be more around feeling a moral obligation to contribute... (GM).

The giving-manager responds to my question in a 'defensive' manner, as if the theory was a criticism of her organisation's motivation. This raw reaction was not expected, it was nevertheless somewhat predictable, since my interpretation of giving-managers' and receiving-managers' narratives could be construed as quite critical of the motives of donor organisations. The receiving-manager's first response was quite different, as he frankly expressed support for the theory statement:

I completely agree, because you are talking about mutual joint benefit, so you are saying that actually, the organisation that provides the funding has both a responsibility and a benefit as does the recipient organisation... (RM).

Interestingly, despite her initial apparent rejection, the giving-manager too eventually supported aspects of the theory statement, although somewhat equivocally.

Um, managed mutual dependency, well I suppose philanthropy needs organisations to be asking it for money, or you know, why bother having it, and equally the organisations we fund need our money or need some money...I can sort of see where you are coming from too (GM).

The receiving-manager spontaneously reflected on what the statement might mean from the corporation's point of view.

...and so I mean it's interesting if you sat in a corporate you might say, you might argue this is cynical, but I don't think it is. I mean, it almost comes back to that fundamental premise that you know, what do corporate organisations exist for? Do they exist fundamentally to serve their communities, or do they exist for a very strictly defined commercial reason? I suspect it's the latter... (RM).

On one hand we see a sceptical giving-manager who questions the theory statement, although observing 'some' merit in it. On the other hand, we have a receiving-manager who claims to see considerable value in the theory statement as a reflection of the corporate philanthropic relationship.

#### *Matching managers' experiences*

As interviews progressed, I asked managers about the extent to which the theory statement matched their experiences of being engaged in corporate philanthropic relationships. The giving-manager explained:

Our foundation wants to do good in the world and has set up, you know, a quite clearly stated what kind of good we want to do in the world. So, we are strategic in our choices of who we fund and make sure they are aligned with that (GM)

Here the giving-manager seems to suggest that the giving they do is strategic but that such strategy is aligned with a “kind of good”. This requires some consideration, especially as ‘doing good’ becomes a common theme in these interviews. She goes on to refuse to accept that it is about credibility or the relationship.

So, I am not quite sure where I am coming to in that. Yes we are strategic. But the end point is not, it is neither credibility nor the relationship, but actually what happens, what those organisations do out there in the world (GM).

But then the giving-manager acknowledges that wanting to be ‘perceived’ as doing good is a possibility, albeit a secondary active pursuit.

And I think that is the motivation for most, well I can’t talk for others, but it’s certainly the motivation for us and that’s not to say that it might lead to other things about you know wanting to be perceived as doing good, but we certainly don’t go out there waving a banner saying look how much good we’re doing, we just sort of quietly go about doing it so it’s not the major motivation, the main motivation is you know, wanting to help out (GM)

Managers may not ‘wave banners’ but given the analysis of narratives presented in Chapter Four, my impression is that giving-managers go to some length to engage in public displays of philanthropy, and to praise themselves for the philanthropy they do. When confronted ‘head on’ with an implied criticism in the proposed theory statement, giving-managers are likely to refute it. This, on the face of it, challenges the theory. However, given the observation that giving-managers wish to be perceived in a positive light through their giving, their disapproval could be interpreted as support for the statement.

The receiving-manager’s reply to the ‘experience’ question was very interesting. He offers an example of a philanthropic relationship he was involved in that was unsuccessful because the corporation failed to realise that

“social credibility” was an important part of building successful and sustainable philanthropic relationships.

Yeah, I mean the example I gave you of [a corporation] is one of those. As I say, they paid no interest to the social credibility it gave them, and that longer term didn't sustain the relationship. When investment gets tight why would you put resources into something that doesn't give you any feedback... (RM).

Because he was in accord with the sentiments captured in the theory statement, I asked the receiving-manager specifically to explain how the theory might NOT fit with his experiences of being in corporate philanthropic relationships. The full response was quite short.

I, yeah, I don't think it doesn't fit at all. I think it does fit, it makes sense because it's like physics about equal and opposite forces. There's got to be a reason, I think, for a corporate entity to be engaged in a philanthropic relationship. And, that maybe a cynical view but I, I struggle to understand why they would do that without an understanding of what comes back. (RM).

I then asked the receiving-manager about the latter part of the theory that relates to receiving organisations (...the recipient organisation repays that investment by acting in such a way as to maintain the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship and therefore to ensure future contributions and support). He replied.

...that's probably a bit cynical I think, because the recipient organisation's main purpose is to, is to do something in the area they work in and in our case it is doing something for children and families. So, ultimately they want to maintain their connection so that they can, so that they can continue to do that. Now, whether that's defined as sustaining the relationship and future and therefore future funding, I, you know, I think that's a secondary reason. (RM).

Thus, the phenomenon at the heart of the theory statement (the ‘corporate philanthropic relationship’) seems to be overlooked by the receiving-manager in favour of the ‘main purpose’ of the non-profit organisation. As the recipient did not offer much pertinent to the corporate philanthropic relationship, neither did it refute the theory statement. The receiving-manager proceeded to confirm part of the theory statement by affirming the non-profit organisation’s desire to sustain the philanthropic relationship over time, suggesting that the relationship will develop with age.

Now, if we do it well, hopefully you do sustain the relationship and future contributions, but that’s about a maturity of the relationship (RM)

*Assuming an alternative perspective*

Participants were then asked to place themselves in the ‘role of the other’ and asked how they would see the corporate philanthropic relationship (see Chapter Three). I asked the giving-manager what she thought a receiving-manager would say about the theory.

I think they would probably, I suspect it is probably more true for a recipient organisation, in that a funder is a means to an end. If you are running a travel organisation, you have to have that jet fuel. So, how do you do that? You do that by building a relationship with funders who can provide that. (GM)

Some [receiving organisations] actually will turn it around and say oh the donor’s the most important thing...because then you’re kinda skewing them, skewing what you are doing. (GM)

to say oh ‘X’ is wonderful because they gave us \$50,000 or actually they might have been put through all sorts of whips and hoops and, and actually, actually feel quite resentful I suspect sometimes. But they wouldn’t often tell you because of the power differentials. You know, like you, it’s hard to challenge the provider of the jet

fuel if you don't have another provider of jet fuel easily on tap, you know. (GM).

The emphasis placed on the inequality of the philanthropic relationship in these responses is particularly noteworthy. Whilst neither giving-manager nor receiving-manager mentioned this in their initial response to the theory statement, here the representative of the donor organisation is un-categorical in the view that the 'power' in any relationship is with the giver. This position was confirmed in the giving-manager's response to a direct question as to whether she thought there was some sort of power imbalance in the corporate philanthropic relationship:

Yes. It's not, it's certainly something we try and reduce and get rid of altogether, but it's still there. You know, there are sort of games that get played and it's yeah, it's not as good as it could be. I mean yes, formally people will you know, put your logo on their website and they'll say thank you to whoever. Is that because of a genuine feeling that this is a really good mutual partnership or is it because people feel they have to do that in order to get the next lot of funding?...And I don't know the answer to that, but I suspect in many cases it's the latter. (GM)

When the giving-manager was asked whether she thought that receiving organisations publically praise the givers to create some sort of social credibility for the donor organisation or to repay that organisation, she responded:

I think that receiving organisations feel they need to do that and that sometimes it is really quite hard to do because sometimes actually funding organisations are really quite difficult. (GM)

Attention was drawn to the end of the theory statement ("...recipient organisation repays that investment by acting in such a way as to maintain the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the

relationship and therefore to ensure future contributions and support”) and the giving-manager was asked if she thought this was accurate:

Oh yeah, that would be, yeah that’s, that’s definitely... Yeah. (GM)

In possibly the most telling part of the interview with the receiving-manager, I asked him what he would think about the theory if he was a giving-manager.

yeah I am not sure I’d disagree. I would probably question again social credibility. Sometimes that’s what happens. And other times, a giving organisation invests in a recipient organisation in the belief that a social cause is going to be, is going to be assisted. Or they invest in a recipient organisation because they like the, they like the connection with the relationship. And that is in itself regardless of what the money is spent on becomes the important thing (RM)

it’s not an organisation investing in a social cause necessarily, it’s about an organisation investing in a relationship it has with a recipient organisation, which has its own credibility, based on what it does. Yeah. Because you know if you front up at a corporate, ultimately it’s a personal relationship. And it’s, do they like you, and are we going to be able to work together? Are you known as an organisation that is gonna add value to that corporate’s reason for being? And that would depend on who you are, what credibility you have in the public domain and the view of the customers of the corporate. And it is associated with what you do (RM).

I mean if you start from the premise that a primary reason for a corporate to invest in a social endeavour is to enhance their own outcomes and then you can argue that premise or not, then what’s most important I suspect is the credibility of the organisation they’re connecting with... (RM)

Interestingly, despite some ambivalence at the beginning of his reply to my question, the receiving-manager displays considerable support for the idea that corporate-giving organisations align themselves with non-profits and not necessarily a ‘social cause’.

*Additional revisions*

Participants were finally asked if there were any (a) additional revisions (b) changes to the words (c) or synonyms that might better explain the corporate philanthropic relationship in New Zealand.

Yeah I think if that wording was ‘in an attempt to do good in the world and generate social credibility’, it would probably be alright. Again, I am not totally convinced about the managed mutual dependency but I don’t know (GM)

In congruence with an earlier observation, the giving-manager expresses some disquiet with the notion of ‘managed mutual dependency’. However, she nonetheless concedes the possibility that it might reflect the nature of the corporate philanthropic relationship.

It is actually a managed mutual dependency, that a corporate, corporate philanthropy needs people to give to and the people being given to need the corporate, so it’s probably ok, it just feels like an uncomfortable... (GM)

I wanted a little more depth around her discomfort so I asked how it felt uncomfortable and whether it was the dependency part.

Yeah, the dependency part feels uncomfortable. (GM)

I asked the giving-manager to explain a little further.

It might be accurate, I’ve never thought of it in that terms. I mean we have our partnership funding because the idea is that you have through partnership. It’s truly enabling and its truly open and its and I mean yeah there is a bottom line here in that not for profit organisations are not actually dependent on organisations like us, they’ve other sources of funding and we are probably not actually dependent on not for profit organisations coming to us, but we would have to find another model of using the money to do good in the world. So it might be just a little too strong maybe. (GM)

I asked the giving-manager for any additional changes to phrases or words.

No, I think that last sentence is pretty accurate [“the recipient organisation repays that investment by acting in such a way as to maintain the giving organisation’s social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship and therefore to ensure future contributions and support”]. I mean that’s the whole sort of putting the logo on the website. But actually, maybe there is something missing there because I don’t particularly care if we don’t get acknowledged, providing a child’s safer. So, I think maybe yeah, well what’s missing is the whole actually what you do, in terms of you know...doing good or supporting communities...Because that won’t be the most important extent. Maintaining the corporation’s social credibility, it’s like I suppose I’d better. What’s really gonna matter to that non-profit organisation is making change in the world, unless they are pretty cynical. (GM)

I asked the giving-manager to place herself in the role of a corporate or corporate-foundation chairperson and then asked her to think about the theory statement.

If I was chair of Telecom Foundation, Vodafone Foundation or something like that then probably I would care about that quite a lot because on the continuum - corporate philanthropy, corporate sponsorship, corporate donation, corporate financing - I don’t know quite what...but as you go further from a family foundation and closer to a corporation, closer to sponsorship you are going to be wanting to have more of the ‘how are we perceived in the marketplace?’ (GM)

I asked the receiving-manager if there were any terms he would change, for example, the social credibility that he was earlier questioning.

No, I don’t think so, apart from this ‘investing in social causes through the recipient organisation’ as opposed to ‘investing in the recipient organisation’....the rest looks ok (RM).

I mean I think a social cause can often be something quite generic...I mean it might be something like investing in children, or

in animals, so I guess fundamental or foundational to the relationship with the recipient organisation is normally a desire to connect with something (RM).

But as opposed to investing in it or doing something, I think it's a relationship that sits in the context of a commitment to, you know, say children, or old people or animals or whatever (RM).

I questioned further on the term 'social cause'

I don't know whether I would use the term social cause. So, maybe it's cause that's tricky. Maybe it's something like investing in social endeavour, I don't know. Cause feels quite, quite targeted. And I am not sure corporates are that targeted. I think it's a more generic area of interest if you like (RM).

But as I say if the fundamental purpose is to get an outcome for the corporate that makes some sense for them in terms of their responsibility to their shareholders or stakeholders, they may well have an interest in something which might be connected to the organisational outcome or not, or connected to the personal views of the people making decisions. And they're looking for a credible relationship, or a reputation, a reputation credibility, with the recipient organisation. I guess in a general sense, who's gonna be able to give us the most credibility to do something in this area (RM).

Having consulted participants, the phrase, '**predominantly contributor directed partnership**' was inserted. A few minor changes were also made.

Revised theory statement
both the giving organisation and the recipient organisation are strategic instruments of the other's desires in a predominantly contributor directed partnership whereby the giving organisation engages in a philanthropic relationship to generate social credibility and the recipient organisation seeks to maintain and enhance the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship to ensure future contributions and support.

Table 5: Revised theory statement

## **Conclusion**

The corporate philanthropy relationship in New Zealand is one of dependence. This dependence is managed and mutual. Both the giving organisation and the recipient organisation are strategic instruments of the other in a predominantly contributor directed partnership whereby the giving organisation engages in a philanthropic relationship to generate social credibility and the recipient organisation seeks to maintain and enhance the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship to ensure future contributions and support. The implications of this theory are examined and explained in the final chapter.

~ Chapter Seven ~

## Corporate Philanthropy Concluded: A Vehicle for Corporate or Social Outcomes?

### Introduction

The aim of this exploratory study was to build theory and underlying the stated research aim were some broad intentions: to better understand corporate philanthropy relationships; to identify the opportunity for future studies; and to assess the appropriateness of the methods used. Adherence to Turnbull's social constructionist theory building model both framed and lent rigour to the research process.

Findings from this study add to a research understanding of corporate philanthropy and the business and society scholarship both internationally and in New Zealand. Overall, the findings position corporate philanthropy in New Zealand within the 'corporate strategic' category which I earlier identified to be the current historical positioning of corporate philanthropy (Chapter Two). This final chapter states the main findings of the research and offers an overview of the implications for practice and research.

### **The philanthropic relationship as a corporate vehicle for self-expression**

The main findings of this research are highlighted in this section. These findings are not intended to be generalisable, but rather selective and partial given the choice of participants, their narrations, my interpretations as the researcher and the knowledge constructed in the cultural setting of the research.

*Creating favourable images of the giver*

Bolstering the credibility of the giver clearly matters to both giver and receiver in the strategic management of corporate philanthropy. Corporate philanthropy

has been shown to be an expression of a corporate-giving organisation's generosity and social responsibility. Moreover, the reputations of corporate-giving organisations are actively crafted by people who make allocation decisions regarding philanthropic contributions (giving-managers) and people who are primarily responsible for accepting those contributions (receiving-managers). This suggests that corporate philanthropy is less about achieving social outcomes and may be more about actively creating reputational outcomes for the giver.

Giving-managers' narratives, unsurprisingly, seemed to concentrate on painting favourable images of their own corporate-giving organisations. In some cases, positive images of non-profit organisations were conjured up by giving-managers, but often apparently in an attempt to re-assert the notion that the giving-manager's organisation contributes to 'good' and 'worthy' social causes. Another way giving-managers created positive images of their own corporate-giving organisations was by changing their narrative language to cast other funders in the institutional field of giving (other corporations, governments) as 'inadequate' servants of the grant-making sector. At times, this worked to elevate and exaggerate the social status of the narrator's corporate-giving organisation to that of 'social hero'.

Evidence from the narratives demonstrates that receiving-managers uphold and boost a corporate-giving organisation's social credibility by the extensive use of hyperbolic praise and reverence toward them. Indeed, this research project was one avenue for receiving-managers to advance the case for their philanthropic partner. Other avenues might include the media, public events and publically available reports. But the importance of this finding is that receiving-managers and non-profit organisations may, by necessity, be required to divert much of their energy into maintaining the 'hand that feeds them'. This could, arguably, reduce their ability to perform their own organisation's social objectives. This observation, of course, needs further empirical exploration. What is clear, is

that the narratives from receiving-managers both maintained and sought to enhance the positive status of corporate-giving organisations that they received their philanthropy from, a situation that became evident in the way they embellished the images of corporate-giving organisations.

*Unequal control*

That the corporate philanthropic relationship is unequal in its control of people and organisations, brings into question the ethicality of corporate philanthropy. Giving-managers indicated that the relationship between their corporate-giving organisations and the non-profit organisations they gave to could be considered 'partnerships'. Yet, giving-managers are very clear that their giving is directed at non-profit organisations that fulfill a particular strategic brief which includes, but is not limited to, the desire to achieve social credibility from positive public announcements of their giving as previously mentioned. The choice of the term partnership to represent the nexus between corporate-giving organisation and non-profit organisation does not embody the giver-centric nature of the philanthropic relationship, nor does it signify the imbalance of motive to give out of self-interest which the narratives of giving-managers clearly indicate. Partnerships are fundamentally contributor directed.

However, critical to a research understanding of corporate philanthropy relationships, is the idea that non-profit organisations need to accept some accountability, since non-profit organisations appear to be currently submissive partners (thus possibly unwitting collaborators) in philanthropic relationships. There is a lack of resistance among receiving-managers, often unwilling to respond to the corporate-giving organisation's desire to 'control' the non-profit organisation and the philanthropic relationship for its own giver-centric strategic ends. Non-profit organisations may, indeed, not realise the full potential of their 'reputation capital' (Rumsey & White, 2009). Certainly, they do not appear to enter the corporate philanthropy arena ready for serious

strategic battle. Receiving-managers do appear to be strategic in that they *maintain* philanthropic relationships to continue receiving but they are less proactive about the potential power they hold as relationship partners; they do not negotiate for greater benefits or seek to actively control relationships in ways that giving-managers clearly do. Nor do they indicate how the benefits they receive allow them to achieve social outcomes.

*Obligation and reciprocation*

There is some evidence in the narratives and language work of participants in this study that philanthropy is what good organisations do. Managers suggest corporations and their foundations can help further neighborhood development, give people the first step to owning their own homes, and provide a safe space and guidance for youth. Yet, this evidence is not divorced from further evidence which indicates such apparently benevolent activities are intertwined with the motives to create favorable images for givers and to control giving relationships for certain giver motivated ends. As such, corporate philanthropy is not purely altruistic. Instead, corporate philanthropy creates obligation: the limited tenure and the insecurity of future funding reinforces a requirement for reciprocation in corporate philanthropic relationships.

The emergence of the idea that giving is both strategic and strictly managed through funding processes became evident in this study on a number of levels. The first relates to the two types of temporal modes used to frame the financial aspect of the philanthropic relationship. One time-related framing was a linear mode – “we funded it for 5 years”, “that is a 3 year funding thing”, “we have funded that initially for 2 years” – which created the impression that relationships have beginnings and endings. This makes for a precarious future for non-profit organisations and their managers who become dependent on the giver and on gifts that are received on the giver’s terms and ‘when’ the giver dictates. This was complemented by time, framed via a ‘cyclical’ mode – “we

made a commitment from the beginning to build two houses a year”, “we have another fund which is \$250,000 a year” – which gave the impression that predictability (the stable re-occurrence of what to give and when to give it) was important to both the corporate-giving organisation and the non-profit organisation.

In order to reduce uncertainty around resources, non-profit organisations are compelled to offer corporate-giving organisations something for their philanthropy. Indeed, the receiving-managers interviewed see reciprocation as a vital part of maintaining relationships with corporate-giving organisations. Bolstering reputation is an avenue through which receiving-managers repay corporate-giving organisations for their philanthropy. Giving-managers are well aware that their giving creates an obligation on the part of recipients to offer something in return and receiving-managers are well aware that corporate-giving organisations are primarily interested in their own objectives. In general, fairness in the relationship between corporate-giving organisations and non-profit receiving organisations is maintained by reciprocity, which requires that non-profit receiving organisations feel compelled to reciprocate to those who have helped them (Flynn, 2003).

Corporate philanthropy is dependably strategic in nature and this suggests corporate philanthropic relationships are not entirely about social outcomes. For the giving-managers in this study, the act of giving and the act of entering into relationships with non-profit organisations was less a self-expression of personal belief about doing good and more a rational, occupational negotiation of strategic decisions about why particular non-profit organisations received their philanthropy. The lack of emotion in their narratives re-asserts this. Perhaps, if attention to organisational strategy by international corporate philanthropy researchers is anything to go by (Brammer & Millington, 2006; Moir & Taffler, 2004; Saiia et al., 2003; Zhang et al., 2010), it is unsurprising that organisational strategy appears so prevalent, and emotion so sparse, in the

ways giving-managers talk about corporate philanthropy relationships in New Zealand. Perhaps emotion is synthesised and subordinated through human decision-making processes.

*A theory of managed mutual dependency*

The study of the giver-receiver nexus of corporate philanthropy in New Zealand has led me to propose several findings that have been addressed above. Taken together, these findings suggest that both the giving organisation and the recipient organisation are strategic instruments of the other's desires in a predominantly contributor directed partnership whereby the giving organisation engages in a philanthropic relationship to generate social credibility and the recipient organisation seeks to maintain and enhance the giving organisation's social credibility for the purpose of sustaining the relationship to ensure future contributions and support. I have termed this theory, **managed mutual dependency**.

Overall, given the interviewed managers' narratives, it may be argued that managed mutual dependency is a theory that could have some broader relevance for explaining corporate philanthropy in a variety of national and local contexts over time. This theory may seem to giving-managers to be an unfair, even cynical, reflection on their hard work and charitable intentions; indeed, when confronted with this theory, as part of the theory-building process, a giving-manager challenged it. Yet, the challenge was somewhat undermined by the considerable evidence from the text of giver' narratives. Giving-managers and receiving-managers were open about the intention of givers to engage in publicly visible philanthropic events. Upon 'testing' the theory with a receiving-manager, it was acknowledged to be a good reflection of corporate philanthropy.

Of particular note is that the study provides a baseline understanding for ongoing studies of corporate philanthropy within a New Zealand context. In

short, the findings and theory statement serve to augment previously proposed portrayals of corporate philanthropy as 'strategic' and 'reputational'. But the findings also, and most importantly, provide empirical evidence for a new conception which suggests that at its core, corporate philanthropy is a corporate driven vehicle for both self-expression and social outcomes.

### **Ethical and practical implications**

The findings of this research suggest that representatives of corporate-giving organisations act on their own impressions of what is good for recipient organisations and for the community, whether or not those views match recipients' views. This demonstrates the power imbalance and implies that the corporate involvement has potential to be harmful by interfering with non-profit autonomy and by producing undesirable consequences (Martin, 1994). This apparent disconnect implies that corporate-giving organisations need some direction from organisations dedicated to understanding the 'consequences' of corporate philanthropic actions. The research findings suggest that the public may become increasingly cynical as to the nature of corporate philanthropy if the imbalance is too obviously in favour of 'big business'. This might work against the public image of the corporate-giving organisation if it is perceived to be a veiled attempt to maintain an organised system of dependence and one that seeks to coerce, manipulate, and control those who rely on the corporate gift.

Yet corporate-giving organisations and their managers cannot be solely responsible for the direction of corporate philanthropy. Both givers and receivers evoke an image of corporate-giving organisations as heroes, a metaphor that brings with it the problem that the progress of New Zealand corporate philanthropy is likely to take a unified direction driven by the giver's vision. This may appear unproblematic to those charged with the responsibility of governing corporate philanthropy in New Zealand, and it appears from this study that receivers, as the weaker partner, are likely to collaborate in the

institutionalisation of such a practice. Just as this research sought to understand corporate philanthropy as a 'relationship', for genuinely socially responsible outcomes, the exchange partners must come together to form a balanced agenda for the development of corporate philanthropy.

The situation apparent in New Zealand is symptomatic of relationships as 'hierarchical' whereby giving-managers and their corporate-giving organisations are the primary players. Achieving more democratic and inclusive heterarchical relationships and partnerships with "equally important contributors" (Gergen, 2001, p.102) should be the objective. Levy (1999) suggests that an occupational hazard of those people engaged in philanthropy is the propensity to become removed from the issues facing non-profit organisations. The goals of corporate philanthropy should be shared whereby the objectives and desires of both giving-managers and receiving-managers are established through mutual negotiation for 'equal partnership'. While this vision of corporate philanthropy may be somewhat Utopian, it is something to be aspired to if corporates are to be seen as contributing to social good without abusing their considerable financial and political power. Receiving organisations may need to work more closely together rather than position themselves as competitors for corporate resources.

The way corporate philanthropy is managed in New Zealand presents several ethical dilemmas. A Kantian ethicist would object to corporate philanthropy as managed mutual dependency because such intentional acts would likely violate the corporate-giving organisation's duty to treat non-profit organisations with respect. In other words, corporate-giving organisations carrying out their own interests would violate the rights of non-profit organisations when they treat them as mere means to the ends of production and economic growth (Desjardins, 2009). From a Marxist perspective, an underlying principle for not giving away excess wealth is that such giving does not address injustices and inequalities of power between the rich and the poor (Cohen, 2001). Rozin

(1999) too argues that philanthropy and charity has the potential to maintain distance between the rich and the poor.

Much work remains to be done to explore corporate philanthropic relationships. My findings are provocative, and it would be a positive outcome if they served to rouse further debate and critique. As I am critical of the lack of research, and therefore lack of reporting about corporate philanthropy in New Zealand, I propose four primary outlets for my research. My first obligation and desire is to report back to my participants the findings of this research and to seek their insights and responses. Secondly, one vehicle for releasing the findings to a broader community will be through Philanthropy New Zealand, the organisation committed to leading the growth of generosity in the New Zealand philanthropic and grant-making sector. I will engage in a conversation with representatives of Philanthropy New Zealand to discuss the appropriate avenue for opening up a dialogue with its members. On a broader level, to open up the conversation to management researchers and practitioners in New Zealand, I intend to write an article for the professional publication, *New Zealand Management*. In addition, I will formally engage with my scholarly community via the conventional channels of conferences and peer-reviewed journal articles.

Corporate philanthropy, we learn from the narratives of giving-managers and receiving-managers in this research, does little to eliminate unequal social and political power. When philanthropy involves unequal power relations there is the danger that givers and gifts might erode the autonomy of recipients. Money is power and that power can be easily misused to harm recipients (Martin, 1994). I will dedicate my research in the coming years to exploring these unequal power relations. While the narratives explored have shaped an impression that the nature of corporate philanthropy is unequal, non-profit organisations and managers receiving such philanthropy must take on some of the responsibility for perpetuating a system of corporate philanthropy that maintains them (as recipients) as unequal partners (Eisenberg, 2008).

### **Research implications and limitations**

The continual recycling of performance-based research (Rowley & Berman, 2000), the narrow attention to business economic performance (Henderson & Malani, 2009) and the inability to shed light on the broader social benefits of corporate philanthropy (Himmelstein, 1997) are at the forefront of the criticism of corporate philanthropy research to date. A review of the literature reveals a field lacking balance in terms of representations of both the parties (receivers' perspectives being fairly consistently overlooked), and lacking in epistemological and methodological diversity. But the absence of critical debates and diversity of views around the notion of corporate philanthropy presents New Zealand researchers with a unique opportunity to seek guidance from an anti-performative stance (Fournier & Grey, 2000), to enquire further into the range of thought around corporate philanthropy, and to be open to the possibilities for corporate philanthropy in ways different from those being materialised by corporate philanthropy researchers in other parts of the world at present (Alvesson, 2000).

Reminders of the research limitations appear at various points through this thesis. They relate primarily to the study's geographical location, the sample size, and the method. The chosen method implicitly, and deliberately, challenges the positivist approach taken in much of the corporate philanthropy scholarship to date, thus addressing a deficit in interpretive accounts. My decision to locate this study of corporate philanthropy in New Zealand is likely to provoke a criticism as to the broader relevance of the findings in an international context. However, this apparent constraint is countered by the obvious benefit for theory development within New Zealand for scholars, policy-makers and practitioners working in a New Zealand social and business setting. Moreover, links drawn between findings from this study and those already published suggest that there are many consistencies in beliefs and practices associated with corporate philanthropy that may extend beyond national boundaries.

In terms of the sample size, the study's foundation in the philanthropic experiences of managers was built on the initial analysis of twelve interviews (7 giving-managers and 5 receiving-managers), and eventually an analysis of only 6 managers' narratives. While the relatively small number of participants recruited for this research suggests that findings are not generalisable to a broad population (Woods, 2007), generalisability was never the intent. Rather, a close focus on those twelve interviews as a first stage of a theory-building process enabled a rich, nuanced insight into corporate philanthropy in New Zealand and, in particular, the corporate philanthropy relationship as it is understood and enacted.

At odds with Czarniawska's (2007) assertion, that interview-situations may not be obvious sites for narration, the interview situation proved a useful method for evoking meaningful narratives that formed the focus of the study. I adopted an interview style that encouraged narration and participants willingly and openly shared stories of their corporate philanthropic partnerships. I was mindful, in the process of this research, to reflect on my own agenda, and remind myself of important power considerations since research is indeed oppressive and problematic (Wray-Bliss, 2002).

It is explicit in the thesis that the interview strategy was designed to be exploratory and theory building. Interpretations of participants' narratives led to findings that concentrate on meanings and experiences particular to each individual manager who participated in the research, and to the contexts from which they draw their experiences. Yet the points of confluence enabled me to assertively propose a theory-statement of corporate philanthropy, and assess the broad statement in the final research phase. This led to refinements that further bolstered my confidence in the content, tenor and intent of the eventual proposed theory statement.

In short, narrative analysis may not fully respond to all of the problems normally associated with dominant 'positivist', 'objectivist' and/or 'survey'

based research in the study of corporate philanthropy but it does open up access to how managers perceive, interpret, and meaningfully construct the corporate philanthropic relationships they engage in. In so doing, narrative research exposes managers' desires in ways that complement and challenge the prevailing research orthodoxies. That there are many possibilities in the analytical interpretation of narratives will always be a limitation. My thesis presents the narratives verbatim, so others may apply Gabriel's framework, or any other, to reinterpret and further enhance the range of insights.

In this study, narrative analysis was applied to the way managers constructed philanthropic relationships. There are limitations in the selection of 'relationship' as the research object. For instance, a considerable amount of the interview material gathered in interviews with participants did not focus on the relationship between giver and recipient and as such could not be subjected to narrative analysis in the first instance. This may have been a consequence of inadequate interview prompts. It may, however, have been less a limitation of process and method, and rather a disinclination on the part of participants to narrate their relationship experiences. Indeed, awareness of philanthropic relationships may represent only a small part of the lives of managers engaged in corporate philanthropy, making it difficult for managers to draw from experience.

Of note too is that the participants included in this study represent but the tip of the iceberg in terms of the number of corporate philanthropic relationships in New Zealand. But this is an empowering limitation because future research projects (whether via interpretivist or other approaches) are likely to reveal further possibilities about the nature of corporate philanthropy in New Zealand that will further enrich our scholarly understanding. Similarly, although my study has introduced new perspectives by giving voice to receiving managers, and by exploring the inter-organisational 'relationship', it does not present the voices of other, non-managerial, stakeholders whose views are relevant to a

more comprehensive insight. These possible subjects for future research include employees of giving organisations who may have a personal investment in the philanthropic giving, and the recipients of social activities funded by philanthropy (see Boje, 1995, 1998 for insights into researching a range of perspectives through story/narrative research). The research, however, remains a narrative analysis that can contribute to fundamental changes and revisions of the practices of corporations, corporate-foundations/trusts, umbrella organisations, non-profit organisations and communities.

### **A final comment**

Whose interests are served by corporate philanthropy and corporate philanthropic relationships? While they largely achieve their desire to attract corporate resources, non-profit organisations are drawn into an institutionalised structure that sees them become willing collaborators in the philanthropic relationship. This research argues that corporate philanthropy is a corporate driven vehicle for self-expression. Interpretations of corporate philanthropy presented via this research are interesting enough to motivate future academic inquiry. That inquiry needs to engage more critically with the moral issue that allows corporate givers to apparently express 'good citizenship' under the banner of corporate philanthropy, whilst relegating to lesser status philanthropy's historical directive to allay misery and liberate humanity from its social ills.

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# Appendix 1

## Letter of Ethics Approval: Massey University Human Ethics Committee



**Massey University**

2 April 2008

Mr Tyron Love  
Department of Management  
WELLINGTON

OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT  
TO THE VICE-CHANCELLOR  
(Research Ethics)  
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Dear Tyron

**Re: HEC: Southern A Application – 07/76  
Stories of Philanthropy in New Zealand**

Thank you for your letter dated 1 April 2008.

On behalf of the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, I am pleased to advise you that the ethics of your application are now approved. Approval is for three years. If this project has not been completed within three years from the date of this letter, reapproval must be requested.

If the nature, content, location, procedures or personnel of your approved application change, please advise the Secretary of the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Professor John O'Neill, Chair  
**Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A**

cc Dr Robyn Walker  
Dept of Management  
PN214

Dr Farah Palmer  
Dept of Management  
PN214

Prof Claire Massey, HoD  
Dept of Management  
PN214

Dr Brennon Wood  
School of Health & Social Services  
PN371

Prof Carol McVeigh, HoS  
School of Health & Social Services  
WELLINGTON

## Appendix 2

### Sample Information Sheet (Giving-managers)



#### Stories of Corporate Philanthropy in New Zealand

Tyron Love (researcher), Massey University, 2009.

##### INFORMATION SHEET

Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Doctoral research on corporate philanthropy in New Zealand.**

I am a PhD student in the Department of Management at Massey University, Palmerston North. Under the guidance of Dr Robyn Walker, Dr Brennon Wood and Dr Farah Palmer at the University, I am proposing a research study to identify what giving and recipient agents can tell us about corporate philanthropy in New Zealand. I am interested in the stories you have to tell. *This is a formal invitation to participate in the research project.*

Your organisation has been profiled in a public media, business media, and/or a New Zealand philanthropy specific publication as a contributor of corporate resources for a public purpose at some point over the past three years. I am extending this invitation to you because it appears you are an officer responsible (may be partially) for making contributions on behalf of (1) a corporation, or (2) a foundation/trust that maintains close ties with a corporate. Or (3) you make recommendations to senior managers on the corporation's philanthropy.

Stories are being collected so that we can construct some meaning around the elusive concept of corporate philanthropy. I am interested in your experiences in philanthropy and the relationships you have with others in the philanthropy space. This research may help us to understand the role corporate philanthropy has in New Zealand and specifically whether corporate philanthropy is good citizenship. I would like to share the research findings with you. We can discuss the avenue for doing this when we meet.

**Your involvement**

Should you choose to be involved, I would like to interview you for no longer than 50 minutes in a place of your choosing. I may wish to come back and ask further questions at a later date but only if that would be suitable for you. Each interview will be digitally recorded, transcribed and analysed. I will not discuss any of our conversation with other participants. I am interested in things like:

- How you came to the organisation
- The organisation and its people
- How decisions are made around philanthropy
- Your views on the corporate or corporate-foundation's role in society
- The relationships with non-profit organisations to which you contribute.

I will then seek your permission to use the transcripts. The only people who will have access to these, along with the digital recordings of interviews, will be (1) supervisors, (2) transcribers and (3) myself. Furthermore, you and your organisation will not be named in any reporting of the research material. You will have the opportunity to review the tapes and/or transcripts and will be asked to sign an 'Authority for the release of transcripts' form.



**Your Rights**

Firstly, you are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question
- withdraw from the study at anytime
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded
- ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during interviews.

*This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 07/76. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8771, email [humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz).*

**What happens next?**

Please contact me by phone (04 2936690), mail (as below) or email ([t.r.love@massey.ac.nz](mailto:t.r.love@massey.ac.nz)) should you require any further information about the project. If you are happy with what has been proposed then please reply to my email and I will contact you to arrange a convenient time and place for the interview. I will bring consent forms with me when we meet.

**Please feel free to contact my supervisors if you have any questions at any stage:**

**Dr. Robyn Walker                      Dr. Brennon Wood                      Dr. Farah Palmer**  
**0800MASSEY extn.2808      0800MASSEY extn.2626      0800MASSEY extn.7379**

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your response.

*Tyron Love*  
*119 Field Way*  
*Waikanae Beach*  
*Waikanae*  
Ph: 04 2936690  
Cell: 021359863  
Email: [t.r.love@massey.ac.nz](mailto:t.r.love@massey.ac.nz)

## Appendix 3

### Sample Information Sheet (Receiving-managers)



#### Stories of Corporate Philanthropy in New Zealand

Tyron Love (researcher), Massey University, 2010.

##### INFORMATION SHEET

Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Doctoral research on corporate philanthropy in New Zealand.**

I am a PhD student in the Department of Management at Massey University, Palmerston North. Under the guidance of Dr Robyn Walker, Dr Brennon Wood and Dr Farah Palmer at the University, I am proposing a research study to identify what giving and recipient agents can tell us about corporate philanthropy in New Zealand. I am interested in the stories you have to tell. *This is a formal invitation to participate in the research project.*

Your organisation has been mentioned in interviews with agents from corporations, corporate-foundations and corporate-trusts as a recipient of corporate philanthropy (contributions, donations, time etc). I am extending this invitation to you because it appears you are an officer responsible for the recipient organisation and I am interested in talking with you about your relationship with these corporate structures and their people.

Stories are being collected so that we can construct some meaning around the elusive concept of corporate philanthropy in New Zealand. I am interested in your experiences in philanthropy and the relationships you have with others in the philanthropy space. This research may help us to understand the role philanthropy has in New Zealand and specifically whether corporate philanthropy is good citizenship. I would like to share the research findings with you. We can discuss the avenue for doing this when we meet.

**Your involvement**

Should you choose to be involved, I would like to interview you for no longer than 40 minutes in a place of your choosing. I may wish to come back and ask further questions at a later date but only if that would be suitable for you. Each interview will be digitally recorded, transcribed and analysed. I will not discuss any of our conversation with other participants. In turn, I will not discuss with you any previous conversations. I am interested in things like:

- How you came to the organisation
- The organisation and its people
- The relationships you have with corporate structures.

I will then seek your permission to use the transcripts. The only people who will have access to these, along with the digital recordings of interviews, will be (1) supervisors, (2) transcribers and (3) myself. Furthermore, you and your organisation will not be named in any reporting of the research material. You will have the opportunity to review the tapes and/or transcripts and will be asked to sign an 'Authority for the release of transcripts' form.



**Your Rights**

Firstly, you are under no obligation to accept this invitation. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- decline to answer any particular question
- withdraw from the study at anytime
- ask any questions about the study at any time during participation
- provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used unless you give permission
- be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded
- ask for the audio tape to be turned off at any time during interviews.

*This project has been reviewed and approved by the Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, Application 07/76. If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research, please contact Professor John O'Neill, Chair, Massey University Human Ethics Committee: Southern A, telephone 06 350 5799 x 8771, email [humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz](mailto:humanethicsoutha@massey.ac.nz).*

**What happens next?**

Please contact me by phone (021359863), mail (*as below*) or email ([t.r.love@massey.ac.nz](mailto:t.r.love@massey.ac.nz)) should you require any further information about the project. If you are happy with what has been proposed then please reply to my email and I will contact you to arrange a convenient time and place for the interview. I will bring consent forms with me when we meet.

**Please feel free to contact my supervisors if you have any questions at any stage:**

**Dr. Robyn Walker                      Dr. Brennon Wood                      Dr. Farah Palmer**  
**0800MASSEY extn.2808      0800MASSEY extn.2626      0800MASSEY extn.7379**

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your response.

*Tyron Love*  
*9 Kowhai Grove*  
*Waikanae*  
Cell: 021359863  
Email: [t.r.love@massey.ac.nz](mailto:t.r.love@massey.ac.nz)

# Appendix 4

## Participant Consent Form (Generic)



### Stories of Corporate Philanthropy in New Zealand

Tyron Love (researcher), Massey University, 2008.

#### PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

This consent form will be held for a period of five (5) years

I have read the Information Sheet and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time.

I **agree / do not agree** to the interview being audio taped.

I **wish / do not wish** to have all audio files returned to me.

I agree to participate in this study under the conditions set out in the Information Sheet.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name - printed \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 5

### Giving-managers' Narratives

#### **Giving for the corporate good**

A partnership we have is with [Non-profit A]. It's a museum library complex in [a north island city] up in [a north island region]. And [this] is where we have all our operations and that is where we do all our [operational work]. It's a really important area for our operations so a lot of our community investment is actually situated up there... (Mary, 8:19)

...so, [Non-profit A] - we were one of the founding partners, I think we were the first supporter of the museum and that helped them go get funding from other partners and from government and so we have been partners with them for 8 years now and we are just looking at renewing it at the moment... (Mary, 8:51)

...but that sort of evolved, we had a [product] exhibition there which helped us demonstrate our technology and you know [our products] are such a huge feature of [the region]...and people sort of wonder what [the business does] so it helps explain to the community and tourists what's there and at the same time promotes our technology. (Mary, 9:12).

#### **Heroes, villains and victims**

Then we've got, one of our other ones which is sort of interesting and I don't even know, this isn't really a partnership yet, but [Non-profit B] is one of our national – well, it is a national partner. So, we've been with them for 10 years but we're very much more philanthropic donation, you know; that traditional model where you hand over the cheque - you know you might do a few things with them... (Mary, 11:12)

...[Non-profit B] used to have a fundraising day and we had [our corporation's] employees go and help them fund-raise money, so there was some involvement there, but then they got rid of that fund-raising day so it kind of went back to just handing the money over and not much of a relationship... (Mary, 11:54)

...so this year is actually our ten year anniversary so we have had talks with the Chief Executive there trying to see if there is a future

relationship for us. So we're trying to explain to them that we are moving away from just pure donation and try and understand if there is a way that we can work together as partners... (Mary, 12:11)

...he's basically got to go back to his board and see if there is a need where [the corporation] can be involved. From [our corporation's] perspective, we try and link it, to be strategic, we also try to link it to some of our business drivers... (Mary, 12:41)

...but with [Non-profit B] you kind of think, well where do kids fit, where do youth fit? and you know just thinking about these things that we have at our [stores] for instance, you know high level of violence and crime and that's the same sort of things that [Non-profit B] work on, so you know maybe there is a fit there for us to work on a programme in the future... (Mary, 13:07)

...so we're just not sure. We're just having discussions and it may end up like any relationship, whether it's your boyfriend or husband where sometimes things don't work out and you go your separate ways but sometimes when you have those talks you can have a stronger relationship as well. So we're hoping that is what is going to happen... (Mary, 13:33)

...but they didn't have the people, we didn't have the people dedicated our side to really build a relationship and they perhaps didn't have that same commitment either, so it's just one of those relationships that is partly, well not been damaged, but hasn't been ideal. So that's an interesting one where we hope that we can have a really successful partnership but you'll have to just watch this space. (Mary, 13:55).

### **Filling the void**

We do have the ability to partner with whoever we feel is sharing our sort of values and ideas on making a difference, so we wanted to continue with [the budgeting service] who we make a long term 3-5 year commitment to during which time we get together and because they really epitomise what we are here for and that's to give people financial advice and security through their lives. So, [the non-profit] is like one of our core partners... (Megan, 7:26)

...things like [the non-profit], I went down when I was at the conference and sat with [Kate], the CEO, and she said "there are

so many mortgagee sales at the moment you know with the current economic crisis” and so I said “are all your advisers up to the play in how to advise people on their mortgagee sales?” and she said, “they are probably struggling because it’s a fairly new area for them... (Megan, 14:10)

...so, in two weeks we’re running, our mortgage team, is running workshops for their advisers and forming tool sheets to say, “this is the process, this is what we’d recommend they advise Joe Bloggs to do if he’s falling behind in his payments and the bank is on their back” and that sort of thing. So we just work together so closely that everything we are doing is just in tune with what’s happening in their world and where we can be of any help. (Megan, 14:39).

### **Engaging corporate staff in active duty**

And then the year I joined [this corporate-foundation] we took on [a housing non-profit organisation] because we felt that was again giving people the first step to owning their own home, financial security and things like [the housing non-profit organisation] - we made a commitment from the beginning to build two houses a year so our staff - I think it’s about 250 staff - build 2 houses each year in Auckland and Wellington, and we build in the same area so we’re building up a nice little community of families in South Auckland and in Porirua down in Wellington... (Megan, 8:36)

...so I guess we’re looking ahead and we’d like to work with the other partners of [this housing non-profit organisation] to further the neighbourhood. So we want to, eventually, we’re looking at the areas near these houses where they’re building parks and we want to have big street party days and you know get everyone together and bring back the community. So our staff are engaged on so many levels. (Megan, 12:56).

### **In support of a community hero**

Oh [David] in [a New Zealand region] doing, he runs the [sporting academy] which has got a focus on, it’s a [sporting] academy for boys but it’s actually a fitness club and he gets huge support from [a judge] and [a college head-teacher]... (Claire, 36:25)

...all of these testimonials coming from the parents that say, “I can’t believe how my son has changed, he was on this medication and on these drugs and these drugs, he was in trouble with the law, he had this happening in his life” and it’s actually not about the

[sport], but [David] and their crew and the safe space and guidance they provide for these young men... (Claire, 36:44)

...the organisation gets stigmatised because funders look at the application and the first thing they see is [the sport] which gets a bad rap and they say, “that’s terrible, they must be a bunch of thugs and encouraging violence” – which couldn’t be further from the truth. But it’s actually not about the [sport], it’s about fitness, a safe space for the kids and really strong mentoring and role models for the young men... (Claire, 37:00)

...David is incredibly fussy and he only allows coaches who have a certain approach with the young people which is really affirming, really strengths based - is very much about caring for the young people and their safety... (Claire, 37:22)

...there are some aspects, especially in [the sport’s] professional culture, where hits to the head are common and some trainers will put winning ahead of ensuring the young men are kept physically safe and not out of their depth. [David] is of the opposite school, he is a champion [at the sport] but he is all about not putting the kids into dangerous situations, protecting the [body] at all costs. So in terms of a lot of the stigma that goes with [the sport] even though it’s a [sporting] club and a fitness club for young men, it goes deeper than that and it goes against a lot of stereotypes... (Claire, 37:40)

...and it’s achieving great stuff, we know it’s achieving great stuff, we know that youth crime is really low in the region, we know there is no longer tagging in the area (this was a big issue before), we know that there are hundreds of testimonials and stories from all these parents going “[David] what have you done, this is amazing, what’s happened to my son?... (Claire, 38:16)

...David is dyslexic and incredibly busy with the gym, so he hasn’t got the right skill set or the time to write funding applications. Andrew, who does funding applications, is an older, retired guy with a great heart who has no training or experience in the fundraising arena... (Claire, 38:29)

...so part of it is actually about building the evidence base and that’s our primary objective with it...part of it is also because we know the organisation really struggles to articulate and quantify the difference they are making and break down the barriers and the

stigma (due to their sport) and if they can actually tag an external evaluation to a funding application, and say “this evaluation has been compiled by [a professional body] – an external organisation - that has come in and done this” and they can talk in the language the funders will respond to. So the primary objective is to build the evidence base (so it’s bigger picture stuff) but another objective is around supporting the organisation to try and secure future funding. (Claire, 38:43).

## **Raising hope and expectation**

I worked really closely with [Jill] on her funding application (which was an extraordinary application), and she told me “I think in the time that we’ve been partnering with you guys, I’ve seen you about five times face-to-face” which is over about a 12 month period. That’s just how we work or how we usually work. We have a high engagement model and relationship is very important... (Claire, 41:48)

...she is awesome, so they run - [Jill] in line with her husband - they work for [a non-profit] which is a church-based organisation in [a region of New Zealand]. They run a youth centre through the church and organise hip hop competitions, dance competitions, every Friday night they have the homework centre running and they have just different activities and different stuff going on. The work that they wanted to do, was to expand it in to something bigger, expand all their premises and I guess upscale what they were doing to reach more young people in their community... (Claire, 42:45)

...but when she initially came to us for funding, I think she was asking for \$30,000 or something like that, and I actually went to her and I said, “it’s actually not enough, come to us and ask for more” and we started talking. I sat down and said “what is your real vision?, what is really in your heart?, what do you really want to do?”. So we did all this brainstorming and before you know it she has submitted an application with three different funding options - she has got really crisp about what her priorities are... (Claire, 43:37)

...and then the application went to the board and the board looked at her funding options and they said “wait a minute she is actually putting in all her own time for free, she is not even putting in any time for project management or admin funding” so they looked at

the top option and increased it to include administration. It was an amazing application... (Claire, 44:13)

...when they came in to present to the board it was cool, they had just had a baby and the baby came too and so of course everyone fell in love with them and none of us will ever forget that board meeting - the baby kept piping up at really opportune moments, it was funny, it was cool... (Claire, 44:35)

...they are really credible; they have got so much experience with young people. They have worked in one stop shops that have failed (they worked in the [regional] one that failed) and they understand why it failed. They get all that stuff. They are just really credible, really great, wonderful people with amazing skills and experience and passion and heart... (Claire, 44:53)

...the board said “actually we want to give them the maximum option that they have asked for and we want them to add on 30k for some FTE components, some support... when I told [Jill] she said “what? They want to give us more money?” So they came to us asking for 30k then through the process of actually meeting with them and working through their real vision and dreams the Board ended up increasing their financial support significantly. The area is a high crime area, it really needs this and this could help bring the community together... (Claire, 45:22)

...and I mentioned we should go out there and meet [Jill and her husband]. It’s an example of working closely with an organisation, realising they are a great fit with our objectives and really encouraging them to reach for the sky. But then there is the risk that this particular project is 100% funded through the [corporate-foundation]. Now, we have funded that initially for 2 years and I have discussed the risk of dependence with the board. Having said that, their work is strongly in line with Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa, so they are well positioned to secure future government funding down the track - they are smart, it’s brilliant... (Claire, 46:18)

...but I would suspect that we may need to consider bridge funding beyond the 2 years. We really need to be thinking longer term as we’ve in a sense let this creation happen, we can’t drop the ball on it, you know we’ve got an obligation so I will be having those discussions with the board. We will get [the non-profit] in to the [next] board meeting to give an update on the project and later this year (or early next year) the board will need to consider its potential

future commitment. Assuming the project is going well and has positive feedback from young people in the community I believe our support does need to be longer term. (Claire, 46:54).

## Appendix 6

### Receiving-managers' Narratives

#### **The corporate saint and the indebted inheritor**

Well, for instance, we've just come back from the States and [Corporate A] and [Corporate B] sponsored our trip which was a very very big thing, so every opportunity we got we wore their T-shirts with [Corporate B] and [Corporate A] written on them. So we did that and when we had photos at the airport and when we met [a famous sports person] we all had our [Corporate B] [Corporate A] things on, so we look after the people that look after us and that sort of thing... (David, 6:00)

...then we managed to get on TV right through the States on cable worldwide, it was a massive interview, huge for us. And they said "no advertising, take the Adidas gear off" (inaudible), that was good as gold, but underneath we had [Corporate B], you couldn't see it but we had it underneath [Corporate B] and then after the interview with me the guy said "how about your boys, would they like to give a skipping exhibition?" and I said "yeah good as gold, boys take your jackets off" and they took their jackets off and there was [Corporate B] throughout the world - [Corporate A] and [Corporate B] right throughout the world, it was really good advertising and it's that sort of stuff. So any opportunity we can to support them, we support them... (David, 6:38)

...they allow stuff to happen and by supporting me with the funds, to be able to do things that is basically it but they also, especially [Corporate B], they invite me to Auckland when they've got staff training on and things like that and I sit in with them. I won [a corporate philanthropy award], have you heard of that? (I: yeah) and I won that not last year but the year before and they supported me for a year that was really good so we've got a good relationship now and when something's going on they ring me up and say, "[David] do you want to come up to this?" so I get the training for it which is fantastic and they pick up the tab, they're very very generous, plus [Frank] is a cracking falla you know... (David, 20:28)

...and then he (Frank) introduced me to [Corporate A] which is part of theirs – one of their businesses and [Vince] from [Corporate A] he said "well how can I help?" and I said "well you know, to tell you the truth, we always need money you can help out in that way". He said, "well what about trips how do you get

on for trips?” and well I said “you know I do have a great contact in Colorado Springs who would let us train there...and we’d learn a lot from it but we haven’t got the airfares for that, you could help out with that”. “OK” he says “twenty grand? What else do you want?” ...*twenty grand!*...it’s like you’re worth *twenty grand?* ...so things like that it’s a huge thing for us. I mean there wouldn’t be many [sporting] clubs in New Zealand that would go and do trips like that. But we’ve made lifelong friends, they just love us to pieces and we’ve actually taught them a thing or two too... (David, 21:05)

...they (Corporate B) have, they had a big sports day up there and they got [a famous New Zealand sports person] out there and they’ve got blimmin you know all the superstars and [another famous New Zealand sports person] and they invite all the people up from the [corporate philanthropy programme] and they give staff training – how to raise money, how to approach funders and stuff like that. It’s basically training, brilliant training from [Corporate B] they’ve got very very good at that and they pay for everything too - they fly you up, accommodate ya and everything like that, feed ya, and then I come back more equipped from the training and that so they’re really really good... (David, 23:12)

...[Corporate A], well so far they haven’t done staff training but you know they’ve allowed me to be able to organise things, and they say “well how else can we help?” they give us a cushion for a wage...they send a certain amount each month which goes in to our account which supports the wage for Nicky. (David, 23:44).

## Beyond the call of duty

Our biggest relationship is with [Corporate E]. They sponsor over 30 schools on our programme and they also sponsor an annual [Corporate E] award for every school on the programme - currently 547. The [Corporate E] award gets given out at the end of the year to an outstanding student for ‘Excellence in Attitude’. It is given to a student that is about to leave and change over to intermediate or high school. Most of our schools go up to year 6 but there are some that are full primary or intermediate schools that goes up to year 8. So [Corporate E] sponsor that... (Tania, 9:07)

...they also give us office space and cover a lot of our expenses here. So that’s obviously a huge contribution. We’ve only been in this building; actually when I first started, they had only been in this building a couple of months. So they purposely built that area

for us down stairs and they have lots of writing on the wall about the value of books and reading and they are very supportive, they get right in behind anything and everything. [John Ray], who started [Corporate E], is the chairman of [our] Board as well....so they are a major contributor... (Tania, 10:12)

...as it is their award they obviously pay for the book – it's usually quite a big book, over the last couple of years it's been a big beautiful atlas that the kids get to have. They ([Corporate E]) get to choose what book they want to give out. Our involvement with [Corporate E] is on a daily basis because we're in their building so it's quite different from other sponsor relationships - although we still do run independently of them... (Tania, 14:21)

...we try and encourage the schools as strongly as possible to establish a relationship between themselves and their sponsors, so that it isn't just about my relationship with them as it is with the schools. The sponsors are invited to go to the assemblies, to go in and help present the books, to be there with the role models as well. Often sponsors have spoken at assemblies as well to talk about what they do and why they support our charity... (Tania, 14:39)

...[Corporate E] have a very good relationship with all their schools, they also produce a [Corporate E] calendar every year and they run a competition within their schools to submit drawings that they will use as the pictures for each month's page and that gets sent around to their schools as well. They also give out apples, buckets of apples to their schools once a year... (Tania, 15:01)

...they're obviously quite involved. We do let the schools know that to enjoy the best relationship with their sponsors it is dependent on them building and investing into that. Sometimes they find that if they do that they get a lot in return. Because of [Corporate E] and their sponsorship, one school in particular changed its name from '[Hilldown] School', but now it's '[Hilldown] [Corporate E] School', because they've just done so much for them and the school wanted to do that to acknowledge their contribution and support. [Corporate E] were also behind investing in and creating a computer lab for this particular school. So the benefits have obviously been well over and above just receiving the programme. (Tania, 16:04).

## The provider

[Corporate F] are another major sponsor, they partner with us, we've just started doing an annual appeal week - we've done that for 2 years and they've been partnering with us on that, trying to help us through their stores also, collecting money, and that's been a massive help... (Tania, 10:24)

...[Corporate F] again, they sponsor schools all over NZ and usually in a place where there is a [Corporate F] store, well that's how it was set up, and so again the schools get given the contact for the manager of that particular branch, and so they have that personal relationship with them, whereas I just deal with head office for payment and anything else we want to talk about. You know, the everyday or weekly contact that happens is between the school and their local store and I do know that some schools work that relationship really well and have a fantastic relationship with that store and will go in and visit them and will go in and have readings at the store... (Tania, 18:54)

...so again, it's really about the school developing that relationship. And we do try to make that clear with the schools, that it's really important to keep that relationship happening and to regularly thank their sponsors and send them stories or cards from the kids, send them photos. We've just had a 'schools and sponsors get in touch week' so we make a real effort to make sure that they are looking after their sponsors – obviously it makes my job a lot easier. So [Corporate F] are fantastic... (Tania, 19:51)

...we've just done this twice so it's kind of changed a little bit both times but [Corporate F] had donation boxes in their stores so that people can give. We're always talking about different ways to do that. We're working together on that. Last year we organised for some of our role models to go into [Corporate F] stores to do reading to children during that week, obviously promoting our brand and what we do as well so that people are aware and hopefully willing to support the programme... (Tania, 20:38).

## The spoils of good giving

[Corporate G], they supply all the books to the schools, so they do that for us. They offer the books on the programme for just over four dollars per book which makes it very very cheap for us to get the books to the children. They also sponsor a number of schools as well. They also provide every school, for every book offer, they

get what's called a preview pack so they get to see one of each book that's going to be in the book offer which every child gets which shows all the books they can choose from. So they supply a preview pack to the school so the kids can look through the books if they wanted to so [Corporate G] pay for that and that's obviously massive as well... (Tania, 11:07)

...[Corporate G] send out all the books. [Corporate G] are in schools nation-wide anyway. They run [a book programme] - the same programme really but the kids are paying for the books. So they're in schools anyway, but they came on board with this programme and they're just absolutely fantastic, they're really supportive, they always go above and beyond, giving more stuff, you know, wanting to help out... (Tania, 21:36)

...we started to do a day where we kind of reward co-ordinators in the school, because every school has their own [programme] coordinator, who might be one of the teachers, or it could be a teacher aide, or even in some of the smaller rural schools it's the principal and they are the ones that receive the books and we give them labels to stick in each book which has space to write the child's name and it also says who the school is sponsored by... so in the past couple of years we've rewarded the [programme] coordinators and bringing them up to Auckland for a '[programme] day-out' and [Corporate G] came on board with that and so they go to the [corporate G] office and have a look around their site and get to take some books home. So, they're fantastic and we work really closely with them. (Tania, 22:11).

### **The indispensable manager**

[Corporate C] is very interesting because their chief executive built a relationship with us and he said, "I want all of my staff involved in this proposition" and we've had that in place now for about 2 years. There's some money involved but not a lot. But what they do is the staff come up with mechanisms for supporting the organisation. So there have been three major initiatives so far... (Oliver, 5:57)

...the first was around school bags. So [Corporate C] provided us with about 45 school bags fully equipped with stationary, calculators, writing equipment for different ages and presented them to us and we distributed them to families immediately prior to the start of the school year. A really cool initiative, staff had come up with it, it was a wee bit of initiative on their part, the

organisation (corporate), I suspect, paid for some of the cost and the staff contributed things... (Oliver, 6:23)

...they then did an exercise - an executive team building exercise - and they had, I think, seven or eight teams and they built bikes. They had packaged bikes, you know proper sized push bikes and the team exercise was to assemble the bike and having assembled them they then gifted them to us. So a really nice way to say “well where’s an activity that can develop some capabilities in the team, where we can do some good leadership things in the organisation (corporation) and yet there’s an outcome?” Now the bikes went via a bike shop to make sure they had been assembled properly, to make sure they were nice and safe and things... (Oliver, 7:00)

...most recently they put together some packs for children in foster care who often don’t have anything they can call their own and they put these bags together with dressing gowns, slippers, books and toiletries, soft toys, games, really quite imaginative things and they gave about seventy eight of those packs I think. So really nice initiatives and that feels like it has sustainability and that it’s a better model for us than someone just giving us money cause you’ve always got an engagement with the staff... (Oliver, 7:35)

...now the big disappointment this week for me is that the chief executive of [Corporate C] has left his role so I’m a bit worried about what that relationship looks like now... (Oliver, 8:42).

### **The dispassionate engagement**

With [Corporate D] - the relationship has gone back over 10 years and essentially they’ve gifted us \$100,000 each year. It’s a very interesting relationship with them. I met with the managing director about 2 years ago now and said “I have a concern you don’t get enough value out of this relationship” and he said, “well we don’t do it for that, we don’t need to” and I said “well actually I think you do need to because I suspect when times get hard and something’s got to go, if you don’t get any perceived value out of this, then this will be the first thing to go... (Oliver, 3:19)

...and as it turns out our sponsorship is quite a lot lower with them because there’s been a refocus and they give us a bit less than that now and part of that’s because they didn’t get enough value out of the relationship and I knew that. They basically wanted to give us some money and not be too interested in what happened to it. That had some sustainability issues for us I think in terms of its

ability to be a core part of their corporate investment... (Oliver, 3:45)

...[Corporate D] also had some hooks in it, I guess, for some of our staff given some of the reputation of the [industry] and some of the ways they've behaved in perhaps developing nations, so we've got to manage those implications as well because we have staff who are highly values based and passionate - that's great, that's something that gives the organisation its capability and strength. But also they've got strong views on things like who we should connect with... (Oliver, 5:04)

...so, [Corporate D], it's what I, and I wouldn't do it publicly, but it's what I'd describe as a...it's quite a dispassionate engagement really so it's about saying, you know a cheque comes in the mail once a year and that's about the extent to what they want to know. Very little accountability around that which on some occasions is good because we get to apply the money where we think it is best used... (Oliver, 13:50)

...Increasingly though, I mean [Corporate D] have talked about this more recently, is they want to hear some stories – stories of how we use money and what the impact on the organisation has been and we're keen to encourage that because we're then saying, “we stuck this money in to it, what happens? what happens to families? what difference does it make when we invest it?” So that's part of the journey, saying “well ok, for everything you put in to the organisation there's an outcome and let's persevere and find out what that outcome looks like and then that's where the kudos to the organisation comes from... (Oliver, 14:20)

...we did establish a thing called the [Corporate D]-Fund that originally came out of a gift from [Corporate D] – they had some sort of staff welfare fund or something and they closed it down and gave us some money and we established the [Corporate D]-Fund which was used as an emergency fund for families. So families that were in particular strife and need some emergency funds we can fund that out of this fund. It's been called the [Corporate D]-Fund for, since whenever, years ago. The [Corporate D] money is long gone, it's subsequently been topped up and yet they've been quite interested in the [Corporate D]-Fund and what it does. So we've actually quite recently changed the name of that fund. Those funds, we've found, are particularly valuable and particularly interest corporates in terms of the

difference they can make for children and families in need...  
(Oliver, 14:55).