

Expanding the realm of the possible:

Field theory and a relational framing of social entrepreneurship

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## INTRODUCTION

In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, social entrepreneurship came to be defined in terms of a ‘double’ or ‘triple bottom line’ (financial, social, environmental/sustainability) that would enable people to make a profit while doing good for society (Dacanay, 2004; Nicholls, 2006; Slaper and Hall, 2011). The very idea of a bottom line, however, reflects an economic framing of social entrepreneurship that focuses on ‘market’ and ‘enterprise’ as the key to solving social and ecological problems (Humphries and Grant, 2005; Steyaert and Hjorth, 2006). The economic framing, which emphasises management and measurement, has increasingly forced the ‘social’ to defend itself in terms of efficiency and controllability (Hjorth, 2013). It limits people to the roles of ‘consumer/enterpriser/competitor’ (Hjorth, 2013, p. 47) and shapes relationships accordingly. Thus, social entrepreneurship becomes seen as simply another way of acting in a market society, while the managerial discourse and its underpinning norm of competitiveness weaken the social values it claims to champion (Humphries and Grant, 2005; Parkinson and Howarth, 2008; Dey and Steyaert, 2010).

Social entrepreneurship, however, can be framed as a widely distributed, prosaic process of everyday interaction through which citizens co-construct the societies in which they take part (Steyaert and Katz, 2004; Johannisson and Olaison, 2007). Duhl (2000), for example, focused on

the transformation of values, relationships, and social forms. He framed social entrepreneurship in terms of expanding, and improving the physical and social environments and community resources that enable people to mutually support each other and develop to their maximum potential.

Humphries and Grant (2005, p. 44) argued for an inclusive 'relational ethic' of social entrepreneurship that focuses on the quality of relations that people form with each other and with the physical environment. Goldstein, Hazy and Silberstrang (2009) maintained that complex relational patterns among a broad range of social agents open opportunities for a greater variety of roles that people, as social entrepreneurs or simply citizens, can play in developing society. Hjorth (2013) suggested using the term 'Public Entrepreneurship' rather than 'Social Entrepreneurship' in order to break with the economic discourse and to strengthen the social capacity of society. He argued that 'intensifying the relational' (p. 40) would lead to a Public Entrepreneurship as a 'creative force [...] in the context of building societies with greater possibilities for living for citizens' (p. 47).

The relational framing summoned in this contribution views all entrepreneurial processes as involving the co-construction of realities in ways that have both social and economic (as well as political and environmental) implications (Steyaert and Katz, 2004). A relational framing of social entrepreneurship implies that the unit of analysis should be the social relations through which entrepreneurial activities take place, rather than individual social entrepreneurs or their ventures (Steyaert and Katz, 2004). This framing shifts the focus from the creation of value, as measurable output, to the on-going process of creating new social worlds, realities that are far more complex and difficult to grasp. Thus, understanding and developing this relational framing calls for robust theoretical constructs with which to represent and understand these complex processes of social construction (Goldstein et al., 2009).

In this chapter, we propose that the required theoretical constructs already exist in the literature on 'field theory.' Field theory was central to the social psychology of Kurt Lewin (1936, 1948, 1951) and provided one of the foundations of early organizational theory and organizational development. Subsequently, however, it ceased being used as a systematic tool for building

organizational theory and guiding practice (Martin, 2003). In sociology, on the other hand, Pierre Bourdieu used field theory as a basis for his ‘reflexive sociology’ (Bourdieu, 1985, 1989, 1993, 1998; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) and, in recent years, there has been a revival of interest in social space and field theory in sociology (Martin, 2003; Fligstein and McAdam, 2012) as well as human geography (e.g. Werlen, 2009). A ‘relational’ framing of social entrepreneurship builds on this body of literature; it views social entrepreneurship as a relational process that can potentially reconfigure social spaces, thereby expanding the realm of the possible.

This chapter begins with a theoretical introduction to social space and field theory as a conceptual framework for analysing the construction of fields. It then uses this framework to analyse a case study of Beit Issie Shapiro, an organisation that played an important role in transforming the field of services for children with developmental disabilities and their families in Israel (Stuchiner, Sykes and Bacher, 2011). As will be seen, the focus of this case is not on the particular organisation, entrepreneur, or innovation, but rather on the way in which a field as a whole was reconfigured through social entrepreneurship.

## SOCIAL SPACE AND FIELD THEORY

Both Lewin and Bourdieu grounded their field theory on the work of Ernst Cassirer, a leading German philosopher best known for his ‘philosophy of symbolic forms’ (Cassirer, 1944, 1957). In these works Cassirer argued that myth, religion, language, art, history and science are not simply the products of diverse human societies and cultures but rather the ‘forms’ of social consciousness and constitutive of society itself. These symbolic forms are linked and unified in a linear and hierarchical fashion, advancing from myth to science, through the enduring tension between ‘identification and discrimination’ in which ‘man [...] submits to the rules of society but has an active share in bringing about, and an active power to change, the forms of social life’ (Cassirer, 1944, p. 223). Thus, while Cassirer placed great emphasis on the role of culture, society and tradition in shaping and stabilising human consciousness and behaviour, he also maintained that

innovation originated in the mind and imagination of individuals. He was not arguing for the autonomous individual as the prime mover of cultural development but rather as a part of a set of relations that linked the internal world with the external world.

Cassirer's philosophy (1923/1953, 1944, 1957) was based on a critical distinction between a 'substantialist' and a 'relational' logic of reality. Substantialism holds that reality is composed of concrete, independent *things* that can be observed through our senses. Relationalism on the other hand holds that reality is best grasped as an *ordering* of perceived elements through a mental *process* of construction that gives them intelligibility and meaning. Relational concepts are fundamentally 'rules' that connect the different elements of experience and determine their behaviour. They originate in the mind but find their expression in the order they bring to the various elements of perception (Cassirer, 1923, p. 17). Cassirer (1923) also demonstrated how, in the natural sciences, relational thinking gradually replaced substantialist thinking, paving the way for many great advances of knowledge.

What made these advances possible was the use of the concept of geometric space as an abstract way of representing physical relations. Space is not a physical concept, but rather a mental creation that can be used to *think relationally* about making order from any given set of elements. Both Lewin and Bourdieu adopted this idea of space as an essential construct for theorising about the *social* world. What makes social space such a useful construct is that it focuses neither on the individual nor the collective as the unit of analysis but rather on the processes through which individuals, in interaction with others, construct their shared worlds (Friedman, 2011). It enables us to trace how thinking and action at the individual level shape, and are shaped by, collective action and what comes to be seen as social structures.

Social space forms out of links created when we enact our thinking and feeling and elicit responses from other(s), which then shape our thinking, feeling and action. If interaction is temporary or fleeting, then a social space is unlikely to form. However, when interactions are sustained over time and become patterned, they take on a particular configuration that differentiates them from other patterned interactions. *Differentiation* is a mental act that leads to the creation of a

space or a 'field' that has an existence outside, but not wholly independent, of the individuals that constitute it. Fields can involve as few as two people or an entire society. Groups and organisations are fields but so are less formal configurations such as the 'medical profession' or even 'the market.'

Lewin and Bourdieu borrowed the concept of field from physics as a way of accounting for *causality* in social space. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, physics increasingly faced problems it could not solve through Newtonian mechanics, which attributed causality to the behaviour of physical bodies when subjected to forces or to displacement from each other (Cassirer, 1961). The main difficulty inheres in explaining how certain bodies seemed to influence other bodies without direct contact (e.g. electro-magnetism). The turning point was the Faraday-Maxwell concept of the electromagnetic 'field' in which causality is attributed to the influence of this field on the elements that constitute it. Thus, fields can be understood as spaces that not only link different elements into a kind of network, but also exert force on and shape the behaviour of its constituents. It is in this sense that the field, as a whole, is greater than the sum of its parts. At the same time, a field, and its power, is continually recreated or enacted by its constituents and never exists as an independent entity.

Field theory provided Lewin and Bourdieu with an explanatory framework for understanding the seemingly invisible influence of social structures on individuals and on each other (Martin, 2004). What makes social space and field such useful constructs is that they focus on the circular, reflexive processes through which individuals, in interaction with others, continually construct and reconstruct their shared worlds (Friedman, 2011). Fields are both phenomenal (i.e. in people's minds) and structural ('out there'), linking the internal world of people with the external social world through an on-going shaping process. It is this nature of fields which Lewin tried to capture through the idea of the 'life space' (1936, p. 12), and Bourdieu through the concept of 'habitus' (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 81). Field theory obviates the distinction between agency and structure, seeing them as integrated and analysable by the same set of constructs. For this reason, both Lewin and Bourdieu believed that field theory provided a general theory that could dissolve strict disciplinary distinctions among the social sciences.

The field concept has found its way into the social entrepreneurship literature primarily through neo-institutional theory, which uses ‘field’ to describe how ordered realms of activity emerge and are maintained (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott and Meyer, 1983). Institutions are the means of structuring fields, providing rules to guide action and systems of meaning that enable actors to make sense of the actions of others. Neo-institutional theory offers an important perspective on social entrepreneurship as a field aimed at changing existing institutions and generating new ones. However, it has focused primarily on how fields are maintained rather than how they are changed (Fligstein, 2009). Furthermore, it lacks a theory of power that looks, and questions, who benefits from the institutionalized order and who does not (ibid.). Neo-institutional theorists acknowledge the importance of institutional entrepreneurs (e.g. DiMaggio, 1988), but offer little to explain how they overcome the power of established institutions and generate innovation.

The approach to fields proposed here attempts to bridge the gap between an overly deterministic view that portrays actors as ‘propagators of shared meanings and followers of scripts’ (Fligstein 2009, p. 241) and an overly individualistic view that focuses on heroic actors as the engines of change. Building on Cassirer’s (1923, 1944) concept of space and cultural development, we see fields as linking the internal thinking, feeling and action of individuals with external structures of meaning in a process of mutual shaping. However, individuals can think outside of any given field and envision alternative realities. By enacting this thinking in interactions with others, they step out of an incumbent field, and open new spaces, or ‘strategic action fields’ (Fligstein and McAdam, 2012) that challenge the incumbent field.

Our understanding of the field construct is consistent with Fligstein and McAdam’s (2012, p. 8) description of ‘social life as dominated by a complex web of strategic action fields,’ but with one critical difference. We would say that social life *is* a complex web of strategic action fields. This distinction is important because the statement ‘social life as dominated by fields’ implicitly treats ‘social life’ and ‘fields’ in a substantialist way, as if they were separate entities or variables, with the latter influencing the former. All spaces are fields, though with varying degrees of organisation,

complexity and force. We suggest that *all* social life can only be understood as a complex web of fields, some stronger and some weaker, through which action takes place.

Fligstein and McAdam (2012, p. 10) offer a very useful framework for analysing ‘strategic action fields’, distinguishing between four categories of shared understandings. We propose a similar framework consisting of the following components: (1) the individual and collective actors or agents who constitute the field; (2) the modes of relationships among these actors, (e.g. hierarchical or egalitarian, competitive or cooperative, dependent or independent); (3) the shared meanings that signify what is going on in the field and make it intelligible; and (4) the ‘rules of the game’ that govern action within it. In the following sections, we will introduce the case study and use this framework to analyse strategic action that produced field change (Friedman , 2011; Friedman and Sykes, 2014).

## A METHODOLOGICAL NOTE

The main purpose of this chapter is theoretical and not to report on original research. It utilizes a book written about Beit Issie Shapiro, an non-profit organisation in Israel that acts to change the quality of the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families, by developing educational-therapeutic services, furthering social change, promoting awareness in the community, research, development, and training (Stuchiner et al., 2011). The book is an anthology edited by the founder of Beit Issie together with two other people, including one of the co-authors of this paper. It includes chapters written by both practitioners who developed particular services and by researchers who studied this work and/or conducted research with Beit Issie in the field of disability and accessibility.

Much of the material cited below was gathered in a retrospective participatory process of learning from success designed to produce actionable knowledge gleaned from an analysis of multiple perspectives (Schechter, Sykes and Rosenfeld, 2007). The focus of the inquiry was Beit Issie’s thirty-year history and its impact on Israeli society, particularly in the area of disability (Sykes, 2011). The approximately 150 people convened for the inquiry had occupied a broad range

of positions within Beit Issie and within its organisational environment, including managers, service providers, parents, people with disabilities, partners in government and municipal services and donors. They participated in facilitated group reflections in which they were asked to recall the way things were in Israel during the early years of Beit Issie's activity, look at the current situation and note relevant changes that have taken place, and discuss the ways in which Beit Issie contributed to these changes. Analysis of the recorded group sessions led to an identification of an action model for social entrepreneurial ventures aiming to have broad systemic impact.

## A CASE ANALYSIS OF BEIT ISSIE SHAPIRO

Naomi Stuchiner, a community social worker, together with members of her extended family, who provided the initial financial resources, founded Beit Issie in 1981. In her retrospective account of Beit Issie's history, Stuchiner (2011) framed the process as social entrepreneurship. Beit Issie took upon itself to enable parents to keep their children at home while providing them with high quality care, treatment and education. Over the years Beit Issie identified the needs of these families and then developed new and innovative services to meet them – services that not only treated the child, but also brought about changes in the family and community contexts.

Most of the programmes that Beit Issie developed to meet local needs had an impact far beyond its direct clientele because they spawned new services throughout Israel and strongly influenced government policy towards developmentally disabled children and their families (see Table 1 below). For example, one of the early services was a day-care centre that provided therapeutic services to children less than three years of age. At the time there were no such services for this age group, which meant that (1) children with developmental disabilities failed to receive valuable help at a crucial period in their lives and (2) at least one of the parents had to care for the child full time, preventing any kind of outside work or activity. In response to this need, Beit Issie opened up family day-care funded by foundation grants and tuitions paid by parents. However, it also led a coalition of organisations that lobbied the government for early child-care support. This work was responsible, at least in part, for the passing of legislation in the year 2000 that entitles free



therapeutic childcare beginning at one year of age for children with developmental disabilities. Today over 90 such day-care centres are functioning throughout the country with government funding.

Table 1 illustrates how programmes created to meet a local need had a much wider impact on the field. Their impact was both quantitative, in terms of the number of children and families served, but also qualitative, in terms of the establishment of new and higher standards for service provision. An official from the Ministry of Social Welfare described the organisation's impact as follows:

[...] many of the programs and services developed in Beit Issie Shapiro for families became services provided and funded by the government [...] Today the services do things that once were considered innovative, as part of their worldview and daily professional practice. And you really have to attribute this to its source. It all really began in Beit Issie Shapiro (Sykes, 2011, p. 79).

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The question, then, is through what processes did Beit Issie, a single social entrepreneurial venture, engage and ultimately contribute to a transformation of the wider fields in which it was embedded?

The goal of the analysis of Beit Issie is to trace the links from the creation of a social entrepreneurial venture to changes in a larger social field. The field that we are interested in examining is the field of services in Israel for children with developmental disabilities and their families. We shall use this analysis to introduce the concept of an 'enclave', which we define as *an alternatively configured field embedded within a larger field, that operates in accordance with rules that differ from those dictated by that field, and whose constituents consciously strive to change the configuration of the larger field* (Friedman and Sykes, 2014). Rather than simply being a sub-field characterised mainly by a unique set of actors, an enclave differentiates itself through a distinct configuration of actors, relationships, meanings and rules of the game that challenge those of the

incumbent field. Its own challenge is to interact with the larger field in ways that enable it to have an impact while at the same time protecting its own integrity. We will analyse Beit Issie's strategic action as an enclave, using the framework of the four field components set forth above: actors, relationships, meanings and rules of the game.

### **The Field prior to Beit Issie: Actors, Relationships, Meanings and Rules of the Game**

In 1981 the actors that constituted the field of developmentally disabled children were the children, their families, professionals and institutional actors who represented the very meagre social, health and educational services provided mainly by the state. These actors were positioned vis-à-vis each other in a strictly hierarchical relationship of power, control and dependence. The highly dependent children were at the very bottom of this hierarchy and had almost no power or control over their own lives. The families, or parents, were one level up but they too were highly dependent on the authorities and had very little power or control over the situation. The professionals and institutional actors had almost complete control over the families and children. They decided when and where to institutionalize the child and the families had no say in the matter. They also had complete control over what happened to these children once they were institutionalized.

While professionals and administrators had power vis-à-vis families, they themselves were tightly constrained by the desires and expectations of the larger society. And, because the field of developmental disabilities was associated with a socially undesirable element, the professionals and authorities in this sub-field were in a position of inferiority relative to the larger professional fields to which they belonged.

The meanings attached to developmental disabilities at that time were highly stigmatized. The term mostly used to describe these children was 'retarded', which meant that they were slower than or behind 'normal' children of the same age. Retardation was associated with behavioural abnormalities and physical deformation that instilled feelings of fear and disgust among people in normative society. Family members tended to internalize stigmatic meanings and to experience feelings of shame and isolation.

The fundamental rule of the game in this field at this time was that these ‘defective’ children had to be put away in institutions located outside of or at the margins of communities. There they would receive humane treatment but would also be out of sight. The field of developmentally disabled children was, of course, embedded in and shaped by the larger social field. The rules of the game of the disability field functioned to protect society from a population experienced as arousing fear, disgust and pity.

### *Envisioning an Alternative Reality and Initiating an Enclave*

Beit Issie formed out of conviction that institutionalization was *not* the only option for people with developmental disabilities; that parents should have a right to choose what is right for their child; that keeping children at home should be an option; and that society had an obligation to support families in pursuing this option. These beliefs were rooted in the value that ‘every person has the right to live in dignity and according to his [and her] abilities’ (Rimmerman, 2011, p. 257).

At the time of Beit Issie’s founding there was an important anomaly in the Israeli reality. Over the years, there had been a steady rise in the number of children with developmental disabilities requiring special care, leading to a growing shortage of space in existing institutions. Because there seemed to be no other feasible option, the initial response of the social service system (the field) at the time was to develop more institutions to accommodate the growing waiting list of children in need. Meanwhile, these families were *de facto* caring for their children at home until something opened up, but without any of the necessary support. In other words, it was becoming apparent that keeping children at home was feasible and could even become optimal if the proper support services were provided. Beit Issie reframed the ‘problem’ of the waiting list as a potential ‘solution’ that was radically different from the normal response of adding more institutions.

Once it became acknowledged, this anomaly pointed to a gap in the logic of the entire field in its current configuration, and this gap in turn became a cornerstone for re-envisioning the space – a process that first took shape in Stuchiner’s thinking. In her interactions with other stakeholders, including the Minister of Social Welfare, she used the anomaly and her vision as a kind of lever to

open and widen the gap between what was taken for granted as ‘reality’ (the need for institutionalization) and alternative potential configurations of the field. The former Director of Community Services for the Retarded at the Ministry of Welfare, who worked with Stuchiner in those early years, described the dissonance he experienced at the time:

Naomi told us what she wanted to do, develop real community services for people with developmental disabilities. She presented us with a picture of a vision. What we see today is actually very close to the vision she painted in 1980, but at the time it sounded delusional [...] After five minutes with her and her incredible staff you couldn’t grasp how you could one day be sitting there with them and on the next day you would be sitting in the Ministry. It was like living in two different worlds. (Sykes, 2011, p. 68)

Stuchiner and her staff created an enclave that provided a relatively stable and protected space in which these alternative actors, relationships, meanings and rules of the game could be developed, legitimized and consolidated. From the very beginning it was clear that, in order to develop the kinds and services that were really needed, Beit Issie would have to establish its independence from government funding (Stuchiner et al., 2011). Even when the immediate reaction of incumbents was to reject the vision or to treat it with scepticism, its independent resources, based initially on family funds and increasingly on private donors and foundations, enabled it to survive and grow. Over time interactions between the enclave and the larger field opened spaces of possibility – first in the minds of others and then through action in the social world.

### *Actors and Relationships*

A field is usually experienced by its constituents as ‘reality’; rarely can they discern that the same set of elements in the field, if differently configured, could create an alternate reality. The fact that Stuchiner could see beyond the current field, if only dimly, to a different configuration (e.g. different players, positions, meanings and rules of the game) was the starting point for the creation of an enclave that transformed the field. Stuchiner knew how to develop projects that mobilized

others in developing concrete solutions, but the key to the process was forming a stable space through which to mount a sustained challenge to the incumbent field. This space was enacted through the *relationships* she formed with and among other actors or stakeholders. It was through these relationships that new services emerged, giving the vision concrete expression and shape as an enclave. Stuchiner described this process as follows:

With every new challenge, we begin by examining our circles of relationships, seeking out the people and organisations who can potentially be partners to generating solutions. For example, we look to our children's parents and other family members, staff, volunteers, donors, professional colleagues, like-minded professionals in the local and national government services and management. The development of each potential partnership is always carried out according to a well-defined community development process that seeks to engage and activate people so that each partner comes to take a share of the ownership over the joint solution. (Stuchiner, 2011, p. 39)

This quotation reflects a different, and much wider view, of the actors involved in the field of children with developmental disabilities. If the field in 1981 was constituted primarily by children, families and a relatively narrow range of professionals, many new actors became engaged in the emerging field (the enclave), including Beit Issie's staff, donors, volunteers and a much wider range of professionals.

This quote also reflects a fundamental change in the relationships which formed the enclave as a field within the larger field of caring for children with disabilities. New collaborative modes of relating were significantly different from the distinctly hierarchical and dependent relationships that characterized the existing field. The fundamental link in this emerging network of relationships was a reorientation of professional relationships with parents of developmentally disabled children, starting with Beit Issie's staff and eventually influencing other professionals. In contrast to predominant hierarchical relationships, Beit Issie's staff sought to understand the real needs of the parents, and to mobilize their experience, dreams and social networks to develop new solutions.

These relationships were more than simply a means for gathering information, assessing needs and delivering services. Rather, as the above quote indicates, every interaction was a process of partnership building based on the vision of an alternative reality. Most importantly, partnership building was founded upon the recognition that everyone had something to contribute. A former official of the Ministry of Social Welfare, who was also instrumental in the development of services at Beit Issie, described the relationship that eventually emerged:

Partnership is something very dynamic and holistic, and it's mutual – it's not just that a so-called professional comes and knows what to do. No, it's this togetherness, enriching one another. Different family members also have what to give, whether the mom or the dad, or other children. We learn so much from them, and the insights are so deep, that that is what leads this partnership in the fullest meaning of the word.

(Sykes, 2011, p. 88)

As this quotation indicates, the partnership grew out of a relationship of mutual learning in which the professionals came to truly value the knowledge of the families. It also shows how Beit Issie's staff related to each family member as having unique perspectives, knowledge and needs. Describing the relationship between families and professionals as a 'partnership' reflects a fundamental change from the strictly hierarchical, one-way relationship of dominance that characterized the incumbent field. The fact that the speaker was a government official indicates that the change, which originated in the enclave, eventually influenced the incumbent field.

The emergence of new actors and a shift in relationship between them was evident in the connection that formed between Beit Issie, its immediate neighbours and the community as a whole. When people in the neighbourhood, an affluent suburb, heard that a centre for 'retarded' children was going to be built in the heart of their neighbourhood, they organised to stop it, circulating a petition and putting pressure on the mayor. The community worker at Beit Issie assigned to work with the community described how the organisation dealt with this problem:

I spoke with the neighbors individually rather than in a group [...] about their fears and

concerns [...] In the beginning, I heard ‘maybe they will be violent, maybe they will be contagious’. We worked step by step with the community [...] We convinced them that we were open to any request, that they could come to us and use our facilities. Slowly but surely we began to contribute to the community, going into the school and giving lectures, sending a representative to every community event. Over time, they felt that we were doing them a favor when they came into our building and felt pride at what they saw. In the end community representatives stood on the Beit Issie board. (Sykes, 2011, p. 82).

The interaction with the neighbours was not simply meant to overcome resistance. Rather, the neighbours too were regarded as potential partners to a relationship based on reciprocity. The neighbours had something significant to contribute and they benefited from the existence of Beit Issie in their midst. One of the key strategies here was to engage each family on the individual level rather than confronting them as a group. Rather than directly confronting field forces, this strategy enabled enclave actors to intervene at the point where individual attitudes both shape and are shaped by the incumbent field.

### *Meanings*

An important step in the process of reconfiguring the field was a fundamental change in the meanings attributed to children with developmental disabilities and their families. Since society’s predominant perception of children with developmental disabilities was that they were strange, inferior and frightening, they were expelled from their families and from the public space to institutions located in isolated areas. In contrast, Beit Issie saw children with developmental disabilities and their family members as *whole people* with complex needs who have a right to live with dignity in the community like any other person, and saw society as being obligated to understand their needs and to develop supports that would enable them to develop to their capacity.

Prior to the 1980s the only real ‘need’ that was seen by the system was that of getting the children out of the homes and into institutions so that they could get proper care and not disturb the

community. Other needs were always there but they were either unseen, unacknowledged or simply not something that mobilized a response from the existing actors. When Beit Issie entered the field, it saw each new need that it discovered as a potential – an opening for creating a new service that would expand the realm of the possible for disabled children and their families.

Beit Issie consistently discovered new needs and translated them into programmes. As one former staff member put it:

Wherever there was a need – that's where we went. That's how it was with most of the services that Beit Issie developed [...] Wherever there was nothing, that's where we moved in and started developing. (Sykes, 2011, p. 73)

In spatial terms, 'nothingness' does not mean an empty space waiting to be filled, but rather the lack of a relationship out of which a field can form. Needs were the stimulus for forming new relationships and the response to needs was the nexus around which new spaces involving families, professionals and other actors emerged.

As attention became organised around new meanings, a field change began to come into consciousness and discourse – becoming recognizable, knowable and distinct. This process of differentiation gave presence, visibility and new meaning to the lives of these families and their children. Differentiation accompanied by the emergence of new meaning led to increasing variety and complexity, opening up new realms of possibility and avenues for action. As the varied needs of children and their families became recognized and differentiated from one another, it meant that the services necessary for meeting their needs would also have to become increasingly differentiated and specialized.

From the outset, a deliberate effort was made to change the meanings attributed by others to the children with developmental disabilities and their families. A social worker who was hired to write fundraising materials found that she herself needed to change her own ways of thinking:

I found that a whole new vocabulary was being used. I learned not to use words like 'charity', nor to think of children as getting pity and needing charity. Instead, I learned to think of



resource development as enabling children to get the education that they deserved – that was their right. (Sykes, 2011, p. 83)

This shift in meaning was reflected not only in the use of language, but also in the high standards the organisation strove for and achieved. This was the case for therapeutic and community services, but was equally reflected in the aesthetics of every aspect of operations:

There will not be an installation or a wall or a stone that will not be so aesthetic and fine as to convey to all who enter the building that people with such difficult needs, people with intellectual disabilities and other difficult disabilities are entitled to the maximum. (Sykes, 2011, p. 84)

Similarly, through its elegant events and high-level international conferences, Beit Issie brought interest, respect and prestige to what had been a neglected issue.

### *Rules of the Game*

Beit Issie also differentiated itself as an enclave within the larger field by instituting significant changes in the rules of the game. In 1981 the main rule of the game was that children with developmental disabilities needed to be institutionalized and that the professionals decided upon what was the most appropriate placement within very narrow administrative structures. Beit Issie challenged this rule, as illustrated above, but this challenge manifested itself in new rules of the game for initiating services to meet newly defined needs. The following quotes from two early staff members described this process as follows:

Staff Member 1: When I got to know Naomi, one of the things that impressed me most was that I had lots of ideas and Naomi liked them all, and I found this so strange [...] It was a world of initiatives, not rules. We didn't know about rules. Naomi said 'It's OK ... just do it!' And, following Naomi, I did it. (Sykes, 2011, p. 73)

Staff Member 2: There was systemic thinking about [our] ideas [...] . a great deal of emphasis on inter- and multi-disciplinary thinking at all times. It inspired us to go beyond the existing models. The moment you have backing and you see that someone believes that your idea can happen, it gives the people working on the idea the strength to keep moving ahead. (Sykes, 2011, p. 74)

When the first staff member described ‘a world of initiative, not of rules,’ she was pointing to new rules of the game – rules that said ‘if you have good ideas and are willing to take action to actualize them, I (the leadership) will support you.’ This rule was a revolution in how new services were developed.

The second staff member illustrates how the creation of a new field can move actors in new directions. As described earlier, a social space forms when individuals express their thoughts and feelings and elicit a response. In her relationships with her staff Stuchiner invited *them* to dream, to express their dreams and to act to make them happen. It was Stuchiner’s responses to her partners and to their ideas, so different to what they had become accustomed to, that shaped the field over time.

The building of a permanent home for Beit Issie also illustrates how the rules of the game in the field were transformed through the entrepreneurial process. At the time Beit Issie was founded, it was common practice to locate services for the developmentally disabled at the outskirts of communities, often in industrial zones, or in the countryside. When Beit Issie became established and began to plan a permanent facility, Stuchiner consciously decided that it would be located in the heart of an upper middle-class suburb ‘so that the families who come with their children will feel that their child is accepted in the community’ (Sykes, 2011, pp. 81-82). Locating Beit Issie in the heart of a residential neighbourhood represented a significant change in the rules of the game as to where such organisations were supposed to be.

One of the ways Beit Issie changed the rules of the game and influenced the larger field was to become a ‘knowledge’ organisation as well as a service organisation. It established an extensive

professional library as well as institutes for research, development and professional training that function alongside the direct services. A leading Israeli academic in the field of social welfare and planning described his initial reaction to this combination:

I remember the library, which at the time seemed so strange to me. I would tell them, ‘Beit Issie Shapiro is not a university’. However, as an organization committed to transmitting knowledge to its clients, it took care to provide them with an up-to-date library. This same drive has since developed beyond the library, to the books that Beit Issie publishes, as well as to the international conferences that it hosts. (Rimmerman, 2011, p. 258)

In becoming an innovative knowledge organisation and positioning itself alongside academic institutions, Beit Issie induced an important shift in the place of service providers in the broader field. By placing research and service aspects within the same organisational framework, it made a significant change in the rules of the game concerning where, how and by whom knowledge is produced and disseminated. Furthermore, it created a set of relationships through which Beit Issie could continually influence the meaning structure and the rules of the game of the larger field.

## DISCUSSION

The goal of this analysis has been to illustrate how field theory provides a useful conceptual and analytical framework for a relational framing of social entrepreneurship. The case analysis focused on Beit Issie Shapiro as an example of institutional entrepreneurship, rather than on its founder as an exemplary social entrepreneur. It illustrates how social entrepreneurship processes not only work at the material level, leading to the creation of new products, services or organisations, but also involve symbolic operations that change relationships, meanings and rules of the game that define an entire field. Indeed, it was the symbolic change that had the most prominent and far reaching effects.

The analysis of Beit Issie suggests that social entrepreneurship processes, or at least some manifestations of them, involve the creation of enclaves in which new forms of sociality can emerge

and influence the larger, incumbent field. Enclaves are closely related to what Steyaert (2010) calls ‘transitional spaces’ in which ‘the personal, the artistic and the political are simultaneously played out in practices of care of the self and self-formation’ (p. 48). The idea of a transitional space draws on Foucault’s (1995, as cited in Steyaert, 2010) concept of ‘heterotopia’ as spaces that contest the dominant field by mirroring it in ways that invert or neutralize relationships, meanings and rules of the game – providing for the existence and flourishing of alternatives to the status quo. Transitional spaces act heterotopically by permitting individuals to discover their otherness and re-form themselves in relation to, and challenging of, historically dominant practices and discourses. Enclaves are also heterotopic and may involve self-formation, but they differ from transitional spaces in focusing on, and challenging, the broader field in which they are embedded. In this respect enclaves and transitional spaces may be two sides of the same coin.

One advantage of the term ‘enclave’ is that it implies a relationship. Enclaves are fields embedded in, but distinguished from larger, more dominant fields. However, it is critically important not to reify enclaves as some thing. Rather, as Beyes and Steyaert (2011) put it, we should ‘think of spaces as a verb and not a noun’ (p. 56). Enclaves are formed in relationship to the larger field through an on-going process of interaction and mutual shaping that holds potential for transforming the larger field.

The enclave first took shape in the minds of Stuchiner and other main actors, but it was enacted in the social world through a wide network of relationships that took on a life of its own as Beit Issie Shapiro. The analysis illustrates how Beit Issie formed as an enclave in the field of families with developmentally disabled children and through a web of relationships that acted strategically in ways that challenged and generated significant changes in the incumbent field. Strategic action in this case meant bringing about changes (intuitively at the time) in all four components of a field: actors, relationships, meanings and rules of the game. While these components were analysed separately, the analysis shows how specific strategic actions often influenced multiple, if not all, components.

From a field theory perspective, social entrepreneurship might be understood as action aimed

at expanding the realm of the possible. Prior to Beit Issie the field of families of children with developmental disabilities could be characterized as an extremely limited space of possibility. Families, professionals and administrators alike could envision almost no alternative to the status quo. The only option seemed to be finding the most appropriate placement given the nature of the child's disability and the availability of institutional facilities. Families, professionals and authorities alike occupied the positions dictated to them by the logic of the field and, by extension, they reinforced this logic. Under these circumstances, the main variables were quantitative – that is, the number of facilities available and the length of the waiting list. The status quo seemed increasingly inevitable, even if regrettable, and immutable.

As an enclave, Beit Issie constituted an alternative field that was embedded within the larger field and explicitly challenged every aspect of its configuration. The enclave provided a space in which an alternative reality could take shape and become consolidated, and a relatively stable base from which actors could engage incumbents from a position of relative strength and confidence. Although many of the case illustrations emphasise the importance of participation and coalition building, the history of Beit Issie was one of constant struggle with, though not necessarily against, the larger field. The strategic actions carried out through the enclave and the alternative relationships, meanings and the rules of the game that it both embodied and promoted, generated a great deal of tension over the years.

For example, Beit Issue became aware of the fact that each year about six children with mental disabilities being cared for at a local rehabilitation hospital reached kindergarten age. Each year the hospital director tried, unsuccessfully, to get the local municipality to take responsibility for these children – as was their obligation. Beit Issie organised the parents to put relentless pressure on the municipality and took steps to open its own kindergarten even though the municipality had not granted a license. The night before the kindergarten was to open the municipality granted the license and eventually took over the kindergarten, with Beit Issie providing special services.

Although this kind of struggle led to a redistribution of resources and shifts of power among institutional actors, we propose that the entrepreneurial strategic action of Beit Issie aimed more at

the symbolic than at the material level. The struggle in this case was not so much about getting funding for a kindergarten as about awakening a powerful actor in the field to obligations which were easy to ignore. In telling the story (Stuchiner et al., 2011), the municipality's resistance was attributed to a lack of knowledge (how to provide appropriate services) rather than a lack of funds – a problem which Beit Issie could help solve. In general, Beit Issie's symbolic struggles focused on (1) opening the field to previously unimagined possibilities that enabled children to stay with their families, and (2) generating programmes and knowledge that expanded the ways in which children with disabilities could live full lives in the community.

The emphasis on strategic field action as symbolic struggle is particularly important because it suggests a way of moving beyond a discourse of winners and losers. Disability is a good example because societal perceptions of disability shape people's thinking and prevent people with disabilities (and those around them) from imagining living full lives. Resources are necessary but there is no necessary material limit on the ability of people to see and fulfil their potential. Rather the key is changing relationships, meanings and rules of the game. A parent of one of the children who was a recipient of Beit Issie's services and later became a member of its board of directors, recalled coming to understand Beit Issie's strategy for dealing with the field as a whole:

One of the first things I learned is that we cannot care for all the children. But we can create a superb model that others can learn from, copy, and implement in many other places. And if we create a model that others will want to copy or to imitate, the results will ultimately be much better than if we tried to do it all ourselves. And if we look now from the perspective of years, it worked. (Sykes, 2011, p. 79)

Beit Issie could have adopted a very different strategy based on dominance of the field. It invested enormous energy and resources in creating innovative and alternative models of service provision and it would have been perfectly acceptable for it to try to maintain ownership over its products by trying to expand its own direct reach. It could have attempted to dominate the field and impede or control potential competitors for the same resources. However, as the case study illustrates, Beit

Issie attempted to replace strictly hierarchical relations with relations based on mutuality and reciprocity. Rather than demonizing potential opponents or polarizing the field, it attempted to build partnerships and slowly change thinking and action. Rather than occupying more and more space within the field so as to deter and drive out incumbents or competitors, Beit Issie adopted a strategy of openness and generosity by disseminating its knowledge and encouraging others to copy and reproduce its products in their own ways.

There are a number of weaknesses that need to be acknowledged and taken into account in considering our argument. Our analysis of Beit Issie is based entirely on a set of studies that were conducted by stakeholders whose objectivity can be questioned. Furthermore, while we have argued that Beit Issie had an influence on the larger field, many other actors and factors were of course involved in the changes that occurred. In addition, it should also be noted that similar changes took place elsewhere in the world, which also reflects the embedded nature of field phenomena.

Although many of the main players attested to the important role played by Beit Issie, there is no way of knowing exactly how much of the change is attributable to the organisation or whether the change might have occurred, albeit by a different path, even if Beit Issie never existed. The goal of this paper, however, has not been to lionize Beit Issie or to argue that it should be credited with a change that took place in Israeli society. Rather the aim has been to use the case of Beit Issie as a way of illustrating field theory and how the idea of enclaves can be used to conceptualize the relational framing of social entrepreneurship.

A field is usually experienced by its constituents as ‘reality,’ but, in fact, it is only a particular order that people impose on a set of elements that then exerts influence on its constituents, guiding perception, thinking, feeling and behaviour. Although fields have a tendency to reproduce and reinforce themselves, there is always a potential for change in which the same elements can be reconfigured to create a different reality (e.g. a new configuration of different players, positions, meanings and rules of the game). Fields are first and foremost about the production of social worlds enacted by human beings and through which people act to meet their needs and achieve goals. Struggles over power and the control of resources commonly become central to strategic field

action, but these processes are secondary rather than primary in the formation of fields. Eversberg (2013), for example, distinguished between ‘the power to do’ and ‘power over’. The emergence of fields reflects precisely the mobilization of the power to do. Within these fields, competition and struggles aimed at ‘power over’ may very well arise, but they are not an inherent, defining feature of fields. To the contrary, fields are rooted in human perception, consciousness and/or imagination. Alternatives are always imminent in the incumbent field and they may be triggered by awareness of a gap, limit or anomaly in the dominant configuration, or simply by a way of seeing, or envisioning, a different configuration of the same elements. The constructs of field theory and social space allow for the potential production of anything that can be imagined. In this sense, they offer potential for expanding the realm of the possible so as to make the world increasingly inclusive and conducive to the flourishing of people and their communities.

## CONCLUSION

A relational framing and conceptual foundation of social entrepreneurship in social space and field theory is a promising pathway towards both a complex and robust theory of the phenomenon and an ‘advance[ment of] theory toward more effective practice’ (Wallis, 2009, p. 102). Field theory is useful because it enables us to view social entrepreneurship in terms of larger processes rather than as a unique phenomenon with its own local theories. Furthermore, the application of social space and field theory responds to the need to (1) move beyond individual social entrepreneurs or their ventures to relationships as the basic unit of analysis (Steyaert and Dey, 2010), and (2) to trace links between the intrapersonal, interpersonal and systemic levels of analysis (Goldstein et al., 2007). It is timely because field theory is beginning to emerge from the margins of social science, offering new ways of thinking about social phenomena.

Field theory is more than a tool for analysing social phenomena from the outside. It is also a way of reflecting on and seeing ourselves, our thoughts and our actions as constructing, at least in part, the social world in which we live. The power of field theory is that it implicitly contains an element of choice in how people frame strategic action. While a competitive market framing does



reflect much of current social reality, it does not necessarily need to be the foundation for social entrepreneurship. People can choose a relational framing of social entrepreneurship as a way of becoming more self-conscious co-constructors involved in ‘inventing new possibilities of life’ (Hjorth, 2013, p. 40).

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*Table 1: Beit Issie Programmes and Their Impact (Adapted from Stuchiner, 2011, pp. 40-41)*

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Need (1981)</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Government Policy</b>	<b>Impact (2011)</b>
<b>Early Intervention</b>	No therapeutic programmes in Israel for children under 3 years of age	First therapeutic day-care in Israel funded by Foundations and parents. Led coalition of organisations to improve rights of children with special needs.	Therapeutic day-care law passed (2000).	All children with developmental disabilities over one-year entitled to free day-care. Over 90 such day cares established country-wide.
<b>Afternoon programmes</b>	No afternoon care available in community in Israel.	Afternoon enrichment programme funded by donations.	Children with developmental disabilities entitled to government funded extended school day.	Reliable care is available for parents, enabling them to work outside the home.
<b>Dental Care</b>	No dental care available in community and no specialists who know how to provide it.	Established first community dental centre for people with development disabilities with funding from private donors. Research and training centre.	Government subsidizes care according to set criteria.	16 more community clinics opened in Israel. High quality care. Prevention.
<b>Inclusive playgrounds</b>	No playground accessible to children with special needs.	First fully integrated and accessible playground in Israel with funding from donors.	20 municipalities have adopted this model park design funded by National Insurance Institute and private foundations.	Raised standard of recreational facilities for children with 'accessibility' cornerstone.
<b>Institute for training in developmental disabilities</b>	Lack of professionals from with special skills for work with people with developmental disabilities.	First institute for continuing education and training in the field of disabilities funded by donors and tuition fees.	Government recognized certification. Institute increasingly commissioned by governmental and NGO's to develop training programmes.	Raised requirements for and the standard of service in the field of disabilities.