

Participant Summaries

For my project, I have chosen to use the About page for the National Women's Law Center (<https://nwlc.org/about/>), as it aims to be an inclusive organization which speaks for all women, especially disadvantaged communities. My participants are all women who represent a variety of background, roles, and perspectives.

Participant 1: A single mother with two college-aged daughters, she works as a finance manager at an international company. She sees financial/economical standing as being “very important” for the NWLC’s economic capital as financial inequality is a major issue facing women. Having never heard of the brand, she doesn’t have much of an opinion on their social capital; she notes that there are a variety of ways to contact them, as per the website; she would use email if needed. The NWLC’s cultural capital strikes her as being very positive with their emphasis on legislation that brings about reform in women’s lives. The brand has positive social capital as NWLC “strives for inclusion and diversity,” and uses white, purple, and teal in their logo. The NWLC’s focus on “we,” noting that it implies an organization that views itself as a united team and which is very inclusive of people, “no matter their circumstances,” strikes this participant as good linguistic capital.

Participant 2: A gay, single mother of Native American background, she works for a state agency. This participant is highly skeptical, and it shows throughout her interview. In terms of the brand’s economic capital, she thinks that the brand likely values high economic standing when soliciting donations, but probably not when taking cases, because “it seems like the idea is to achieve economic equity and power for women in the workplace and that should mean all workplaces.” NWLC’s social capital is low, as she has never interacted with anyone from the NWLC, but if she had to communicate, “probably through email or Twitter.” She does not have a strong impression of the brand and would not know how to determine who is a member. NWLC’s educational capital borders on exclusionary in this participant’s eyes, as the NWLC, for her, is associated with lawyers, public policy advocates, fundraisers, non-profit workers, and political/campaign workers. She feels the brand’s social capital, with its focus on diversity, is deliberately vague – “I personally believe that it would be mainly (but not all) Caucasian women” who are trying to “reach out and include diverse voices,” whatever that means.” For NWLC’s cultural capital, she gets “the feeling they represent neo-liberal political and economic values but also genuinely wish to protect women’s interests and rights as a class in the US.”

Participant 3: An Arab transgender college student, she works and lives on campus. She believes that economic capital is “incredibly important” to the NWLC, as “they need to understand that women are going to have less money available to pay for their services due to the wage gap.” She wishes that the website made the cost of using the NWLC as a client clearer. Although the site is well-designed and professional, she notes the heavy reliance on asking for donations from visitors. For this participant, as with the others, the brand has limited social capital. To communicate with the brand, she would first email or phone them, preferring face-to-face for extended contact. The brand has good cultural capital, because they have a “clear drive to help women.” There is some information available about the “intersections with other

marginalized communities,” but not much. This participant had no opinion about the educational or symbolic capital of the NWLC.

Participant 4: In her early forties, she is married, has one daughter, and works as an administrative assistant at a state university. She believes that because of the NWLC’s focus on gender justice for those who cannot afford it, the economic capital of potential clients is very important to the brand. NWLC’s social capital is limited to its social media for this participant. She has never interacted with the brand, but would in general use social media, unless it was a “personal matter,” in which case she would use their online form. The website leaves her with a positive impression, but unless an individual is listed on the site as an employee, she wouldn’t otherwise know how to recognize a member of the NWLC brand. For this participant, this brand’s educational capital focuses employees who are “highly educated,” most of whom “have a law degree of some type.” The brand has good cultural capital; she learned about the brand’s mission through their website, which has been a pleasant experience. She describes the symbolical capital, as represented by the language of the NWLC’s tagline (“Justice for her. Justice for all.”), as implying gender justice; the site’s colors are purple and aqua/turquoise. Finally, NWLC’s linguistic capital is inclusive, informative, and not condescending. The site’s language focuses on gender justice, including women of color, LGBTQ individuals, and low-income women. The repeated use of their tagline drives “their message and mission home” to visitors. She believes that this is probably an indication of their “main measurable goal – to teach people what they do and what their mission is.”

Participant 5: A mother of five, she is currently a financially struggling stay-at-home parent who homeschools her youngest three children. She believes that the NWLC’s economic capital guarantees “a woman’s stable or equal financial standing would be a core mission.” The brand’s social capital is low for this participant; having never communicated with the brand, she would choose to phone, email, or use other forms of online communication. She is still learning about the NWLC’s cultural capital and would not know who is a member. She assumes that NWLC’s educational capital favors employees who have “educational, law, and public policy backgrounds.” The brand’s symbolic capital is “focused on helping women;” they use purple, teal, and blue with a stylized “w” for “women” as their logo. Although she doesn’t know how members communicate with each other, she notes the repeated use of the word “women” as a key piece of the NWLC’s linguistic capital and connects it to their focus on “the legal challenges facing women.”

Persona

Purpose & Goals: The NWLC aims to be an inclusive organization which speaks for, and advocates for, all American women, regardless of who they are or how they self-identify.



User: Jennifer Al Nimmer

Personal:

Jennifer is a 35-year-old married mother of two young children. She has a bachelor's degree in English and is currently out of the workforce, having decided to become a stay-at-home parent while her children are under the age of 12. Prior to becoming a mother, Jennifer worked in accounts payable, earning minimum wage. Jennifer's spouse works as a machine operator, which allows for the family to afford rent and necessities but leaves little room for luxuries.

Jennifer recently encountered racism at her children's school. Her spouse is Arab, and her children are being raised in Islam. They live in a small town in Alabama, where there are few Arabs or Muslims. Jennifer requested that the school exempt her children from the yearly Christmas play, which has a Nativity scene embedded in it, and was told that her children must either participate or be suspended from school. She has come to the NWLC to seek legal advice and representation.

She found the site through a quick Google search on her home PC. Their focus on inclusivity and advocacy leads Jennifer to believe they'll be able and willing to help.

Jennifer's family has one PC, which is shared among all members. She has an older iPhone which is no longer able to receive iOS updates. She goes online in the evening, after her children have been put to bed.

Appendix: Participant Interviews

User Profile One:

Section 1:

- *How would you describe your financial position?* My financial position is as secure as it's ever been in my adult life, but that's not to say I don't still live pretty much paycheck to paycheck – with 2 kids in college, as a single mom – it all goes quickly; but I have enough money to meet my needs and some of my wants.

- *How important do you think financial/economical standing is to the National Women's Law Center (NWLC)? Why?* Their stated goal is to fight for gender justice – driving solutions to gender inequity – of which a major one for women is financial; so I would assume that financial/economical standing is very important to NWLC.

Section 2:

- *Have you ever interacted with someone who works for the NWLC?* No, I had never heard of it until you directed me to this website.

- *How would you communicate with members of the NWLC community? Consider social media, online communication, face-to-face interaction, and other forms of communication.* The website offers a variety of communication choices – email addresses, physical address, contact form you can fill out as well as a phone number you can call. I prefer email communication, so that is how I would interact with the members of the NWLC community.

Section 3:

- *Tell me about an experience that you've had with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience).* The only experience I have with the NWLC is this webpage, but it includes information about the history of the organization, and I realize that they have worked on legislation that has likely helped me as well as other women I know – protections for pregnant workers, enforcement of child support as two examples that have touched my life or the lives of my friends.

- *How do you know that someone is a member of the NWLC community?* I do not know anyone who is a member.

Section 4:

- *Thinking of people associated with the NWLC, how would you describe their educational background?* While I don't know anyone directly, from looking at their website job postings, I can see that they prefer candidates with at least a bachelor's degree.

- *Have you ever had a pleasant (or unpleasant) experience with the NWLC? What was that experience like?* I have had no direct contact with anyone from NWLC.

Section 5:

- *Describe the identity of the NWLC. What does it look like? What/who does it involve? What does it represent?*

- *What symbols, colors, or other visuals have you encountered that are uniquely associated with the NWLC?*

The NWLC is an organization that strives for inclusion and diversity – not only with racial or ethnic diversity, but with gender and sexual identity as well. The colors on the website are

varied, but the main ones are white, purple and teal – which visuals that indicate that women are supporting women – and those who need help. The website has what might be a large letter W in purple and teal next to the name of their group – and their mission statement: Justice for Her. Justice for All.

Section 6:

- In your experience with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience) describe how people speak to and communicate with each other.

No answer.

- If there are certain words or phrases that are commonly used, describe them including who uses them, when, and why. The part of the website that I interacted with did not have a lot of communication – however what was there included the word “we” many times – it felt like a way to communicate that as an organization they view themselves as a team who all work together – it feels very inclusive and accepting of people, no matter their circumstances.

User Profile Two:

Section 1:

- How would you describe your financial position? Stable.

- How important do you think financial/economical standing is to the National Women's Law Center (NWLC)? Why? I think it's probably important to them in context of soliciting donations or an annual appeal but maybe not in terms of taking on cases, because it seems like the idea is to achieve economic equity and power for women in the work place and that should mean all work places.

Section 2:

- Have you ever interacted with someone who works for the NWLC? No

- How would you communicate with members of the NWLC community? Consider social media, online communication, face-to-face interaction, and other forms of communication. Probably through email or Twitter since I don't live in DC.

Section 3:

- Tell me about an experience that you've had with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience).

Only viewing this webpage.

- How do you know that someone is a member of the NWLC community?

They would have to tell me.

Section 4:

- Thinking of people associated with the NWLC, how would you describe their educational background? I would think many of them are lawyers, have extensive background in public policy, fundraising, non-profit work, politics and campaign work.

- Have you ever had a pleasant (or unpleasant) experience with the NWLC? What was that experience like? N/A

Section 5:

- Describe the identity of the NWLC. What does it look like? What/who does it involve? What does it represent? This organization's identity is focused on justice in public and economic policy for women in the US. It would look like a partnership of middle and upper middle-class women with advanced degrees and/or extensive political, legal, policy, and financial experience from DC and NY most likely. I personally believe it would be mainly (but not all) Caucasian women but that in this day and age they are trying to do DEI and "reach out and include diverse voices," whatever that means, since many companies and non-profits are deliberately vague about this. Based on this page, I get the feeling they represent neo-liberal political and economic values but also genuinely wish to protect women's interests and rights as a class in the US as a whole.

- What symbols, colors, or other visuals have you encountered that are uniquely associated with the NWLC?

Nothing other than what I see on the website.

Section 6:

- In your experience with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience), describe how people speak to and communicate with each other.

I don't know since I don't know anyone who works there.

- If there are certain words or phrases that are commonly used, describe them including who uses them, when, and why.

No answer.

User Profile Three:

Section 1:

- How would you describe your financial position? Good job that pays for my housing and food, with scholarship covering tuition. No financial worries right now.

- How important do you think financial/economical standing is to the National Women's Law Center (NWLC)? Why? I think it'd be incredibly important; they need to understand that women are going to have less money available to pay for their services due to the wage gap. I wish the website was clearer on how affordable NWLC is.

Section 2:

- Have you ever interacted with someone who works for the NWLC? I have not.

- How would you communicate with members of the NWLC community? Consider social media, online communication, face-to-face interaction, and other forms of communication. I would first communicate through email or phone. Later I would prefer face-to-face meetings.

Section 3:

- *Tell me about an experience that you've had with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience).* The page seems well designed and professional. There seems to a point of theirs to ask for donations.
- *How do you know that someone is a member of the NWLC community?* No answer.

Section 4:

- *Thinking of people associated with the NWLC, how would you describe their educational background?* No answer.
- *Have you ever had a pleasant (or unpleasant) experience with the NWLC? What was that experience like?* No answer.

Section 5:

- *Describe the identity of the NWLC. What does it look like? What/who does it involve? What does it represent?* No answer.
- *What symbols, colors, or other visuals have you encountered that are uniquely associated with the NWLC?* No answer.

Section 6:

- *In your experience with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience), describe how people speak to and communicate with each other.* Clear drive to help women. Also, there is a little about the intersections with other marginalized communities, but this page has limited information on that.
- *If there are certain words or phrases that are commonly used, describe them including who uses them, when, and why.* No answer.

User Profile Four:

- *How would you describe your financial position?* Middle Income – i.e. Enough to pay the bills and eat, but not enough to have savings
- *How important do you think financial/economical standing is to the National Women's Law Center (NWLC)? Why?* Very important. The NWLC fights for gender justice, with a focus on those that can't afford it on their own. Low-income women and families certainly fall within that purview.

Section 2:

- *Have you ever interacted with someone who works for the NWLC?* I have not.
- *How would you communicate with members of the NWLC community? Consider social media, online communication, face-to-face interaction, and other forms of communication.* In a general

sense, I would communicate via social media – Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. For a personal matter, I would reach out via their online form.

Section 3:

- *Tell me about an experience that you've had with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience).* This website is my only experience. However, it's well set-up and informative, so my experience has been positive so far.
- *How do you know that someone is a member of the NWLC community?* Currently, as I do not know anyone personally, it would be through the NWLC staff page which lists everyone from the President & CEO (Fatima Goss Graves) on down to heads their various programs.

Section 4:

- *Thinking of people associated with the NWLC, how would you describe their educational background?* Highly educated, with most of them have a law degree of some type.
- *Have you ever had a pleasant (or unpleasant) experience with the NWLC? What was that experience like?* So far, it's been pleasant. I've learned what the organization does, what it stands for, and its current actions through their website. It's been informative.

Section 5:

- *Describe the identity of the NWLC. What does it look like? What/who does it involve? What does it represent?* Their identity is that they fight for gender justice – Justice for Her. Justice for All. It looks like using the law “in all its forms to change culture and drives solutions to the gender inequality that shapes our society and break down the barriers that harm all of us”. It involves all women, but especially women of color, LGBTQ people, and low-income women and families. These are also who they represent.
- *What symbols, colors, or other visuals have you encountered that are uniquely associated with the NWLC?* Their purple and aqua/turquoise logo, their prevalent use of those colors on their website, their colorful Lantix logo, and their mission statement, “Justice for her. Justice for all.”

Section 6:

- *In your experience with the NWLC (including this webpage if it's your only experience), describe how people speak to and communicate with each other.* Informative and not condescending. Inclusive.
- *If there are certain words or phrases that are commonly used, describe them including who uses them, when, and why.*

This is across almost every page, in one form or another:

“The National Women’s Law Center fights for gender justice—in the courts, in public policy, and in our society—working across the issues that are central to the lives of women and girls. We use the law in all its forms to change culture and drive solutions to the gender inequity that shapes our society and to break down the barriers that harm all of us—especially women of color, LGBTQ people, and low-income women and families. For nearly 50 years, we have been on the leading edge of every major legal and policy victory for women.”

Also: “Justice for her. Justice for all.” It’s prevalent and across the website as a whole to drive their message and mission home to those that visit their page. The more something is repeated, the more likely it is that the message will be retained. In web analytics, this is a reflection of

what is probably their main measurable goal – to teach people about what they do and what their mission is.

User Profile Five:

Section 1:

- My financial position can best be described as onerous. Raising children on a single income is always challenging and is proving even more so under current economic conditions.
- As I'm not quite sure from which angle this question is directed, I'll reply as if it intends to mean how the NWLC views a woman's financial or economical standing within society. I believe for the NWLC, guaranteeing a woman's stable or equal financial standing would be a core mission, a founding purpose of the organization.

Section 2:

- No, I have never had any interactions with the NWLC.
- I would personally choose to communicate with members of the NWLC via telephone, email, or other forms of online communication that may be available.

Section 3:

- Accessing the NWLC webpage just recently was my first experience with the organization. I am still reading further in order to gain a complete understanding of their mission and of their services offered.
- As I am not associated with the organization in any way, I personally would have a difficult time discerning who is a member of the NWLC community (barring those who may be in a public position and post their affiliation).

Section 4:

- As I have had no actual experience with any representative of the organization, I could only assume that at least in part, they staff people with educational, law, and public policy backgrounds.
- I have never had a pleasant nor an unpleasant experience with the NWLC. This webpage was my first exposure to the organization.

Section 5:

- The NWLC's identity seems to be focused on helping women from disadvantaged backgrounds.
- The colors are purple, teal, and blue. The logo is a stylized "w" for "women."

Section 6:

- I don't have enough experience with the NWLC to know how they communicate with each other.
- The website uses the word "women" repeatedly, which makes sense as they are focused on the legal challenges facing women.