

ON SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL PROTEST: UNDERSTANDING THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL AND PERSONAL TIES IN LARGE-SCALE PROTEST EVENTS

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ABSTRACT

How do large-scale protest events differ across nation-states? Do social networks play different roles in different places and, if so, how do they matter? This paper compares the role that social networks play in mobilizing participants in large-scale domestic protest. Employing a paired comparison of large-scale domestic protests in the United States and France, I find that social ties play a differing role in each country. Although personal and organizational ties played almost equal roles in mobilizing participants at the protest-event in the United States, organizational ties played a much more significant role in mobilizing participants to protest in France. In addition, participants in these two events reported having very different levels of civic engagement at these two protests. I conclude by discussing how these differences are related to the characteristics of the mobilizations themselves.

Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 30, 115-140
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ISSN: 0163-786X/doi:10.1108/S0163-786X(2010)0000030007

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, scholars have become increasingly interested in understanding how social ties affect mobilization and participation in social movements (e.g., Oberschall, 1973; Tilly, 1978; Fireman & Gamson, 1979; Snow, Zurcher, & Eklund-Olson, 1980; Stark & Bainbridge, 1980; McAdam, 1986; Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; della Porta, 1988; Marwell, Oliver, & Pahl, 1988; Fernandez & McAdam, 1988; Gould, 1991, 1993; Bearman & Everett, 1993; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; Opp & Gern, 1993; Mueller, 1994; Kim & Bearman, 1997; Loveman, 1998; Diani & McAdam, 2003; Osa, 2003; see also Tarrow, 1998, Chapter 8). Much of this research tends to focus on the role that social networks play in the recruitment of participants in collective action. In the words of Gould, "It is now commonplace to say that social connections to people who are already mobilized are what draw new people into protest movements, religious movements, and identity movements" (2003, p. 236). Within this research, scholars have looked particularly at the social ties of protesters (e.g., Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Heaney & Rojas, 2007, 2008), members of social movement organizations (e.g., Passy, 2001, 2003; see also Anheier, 2003), as well as individuals from the general population (e.g., Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Schussman & Soule, 2005) to understand how individuals are mobilized to participate in collective action.

The bulk of this research has focused on one particular social movement or mobilization in isolation, with very little of it comparing *across* social movements to understand the differential roles that social ties play in collective action (but see McCarthy, 1987; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). In addition, research has yet to explore how social ties play different roles in different political contexts (but see Walgrave & Verhulst, 2005). Accordingly, this paper builds on the classic paired comparison of the United States and France to look specifically at social protest and understand the role that personal and organizational ties play in mobilizing protest participants. The two events – the World Says No to the Bush Agenda during the Republican National Convention (RNC) in New York City in 2004 and the "Black Tuesday" Day of Protest against the *Contrat Première Embauche* (the CPE) in Paris in 2006 – involved large marches that targeted domestic politics and were predominantly peaceful. Using data collected through two waves of surveys with protesters who were randomly sampled at these large-scale protest events, I show that there are significant differences among these protesting populations in terms of the role that social networks play. In particular, participants in these two protest events reported very different types of involvement in organizations.

This paper is divided into three sections. First, I review the ways that scholars have studied social networks and social movement mobilization, paying particular attention to those scholars who have looked at protest participants and have compared across movements and mobilizations. In this section, I present three hypotheses that are generated from the literature. Second, I outline my methodology and present data collected through two stages of surveys with protest participants at the RNC and CPE protests in the United States and France. Third, I discuss the implications of these findings to our understanding of the role of personal and organizational ties in social protest.

STUDYING MOBILIZATION THROUGH SOCIAL TIES

As has been previously stated, scholars of collective action tend to agree that social networks facilitate participation in social movements (see particularly, Marwell et al., 1988; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; Opp & Gern, 1993; Kim & Bearman, 1997; Kitts, 2000; Diani & McAdam, 2003). Focusing predominantly on participants' personal connections and organizational embeddedness, this research has assessed the importance of social ties in an extensive array of social movements, from revolutionary and dissident movements (e.g., Bonnell, 1983; Gould, 1991; Opp & Gern, 1993; Goodwin, 1997; Osa, 1980; Snow, 1993), as well as the civil rights movement (e.g., Stark & Bainbridge, 1986, 1988; Fernandez & McAdam, 1988, 1989; McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; but see Andrews & Biggs, 2006).

One of the main goals of this research is to understand how social movement participants are recruited through their personal and organizational connections. In particular, analysis has disaggregated the types of social tie, looking at personal connections and associations with organizations and civic groups (see particularly McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; Anheier, 2003; Passy, 2003). On the one hand, research has explored how personal ties with friends, family members, and colleagues affect participation in social movements. Studying the East German Revolution of 1989, for example, Opp and Gern (1993) find what they call "critical friends" to be one of the two main variables that explain participation in protests against the regime. In their research on the Dutch Peace Movement, Klandermans and Oegema (1987) also look at the role of personal connections in their

analysis of four aspects of social movement mobilization. The authors conclude that social networks – particularly informal recruitment networks – helped activists to overcome barriers to participation in the movement. Similarly, Rochford (1982) finds that nearly half of the Hare Krishnas in his sample were recruited through their personal ties. Based on the findings of these studies, I present the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1. personal ties play a significant role in mobilizing people to participate in political activism.

On the other hand, a few studies have found that individuals' ties to organizations play a larger role than their personal connections (e.g., McAdam & Paulsen, 1993; Anheier, 2003; Passy, 2003; Ohlemacher, 1996). McAdam and Paulsen (1993), for example, conclude that organizational ties to civil rights groups were much more important in mobilizing activists to participate in Freedom Summer (see also Fernandez & Mcadam, 1988). Analyzing the organizational embeddedness of single members in the infrastructure of the Nazi Party, Anheier (2003, p. 71) points out that ties to this group "aided their efforts to establish and anchor the party locally" (but see Bearman & Stovel, 2000). In his study of the mobilization against low-flying military jets in West Germany, Ohlemacher (1996) also finds organizations to play an important role. He concludes that organizations and associations acted as brokers, mobilizing individuals to protest as part of the movement. The conclusions of these studies, lead to:

Hypothesis 2. organizational ties mobilize more people to participate in political activism than do personal ties.

With regard to the role that social ties play in mobilizing people to participate in social protest, there are even fewer studies (see e.g., Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Schussman & Soule, 2005). When they compare what they call "foreign protesters" to Belgian participants at the protest against the EU Summit in Brussels in 2001, Bédoyan, Van Aelst, and Walgrave (2004, p. 46) find foreign protesters to be more likely to have heard about the event from an organization, as well as to be more frequently accompanied by members of the group to the event (see also the study of the globalization movement by Fisher, Stanley, Berman, & Neff, 2005). One of the more recent studies to look at the role of personal and organizational ties focuses on the American Antiwar movement. In it, Heaney and Rojas (2008) conclude that people who learned about an antiwar rally from their personal networks were more likely to attend a rally sponsored by United for Peace and Justice (UFPJ), rather than the more radical International

ANSWER. The authors also explore the role that organizations played in mobilizing participants in these protest events, concluding that the more organizations are involved in mobilizing protest participants, the higher the turnout to the protest. In their own words: "the UFPJ core co-mobilization network is roughly double the size of ANSWER's, which may be part of the explanation for why UFPJ's January 27 rally drew substantially more participants than ANSWER's March 17, 2007 rally" (2008, p. 33). Overall, these studies of specific social movements tend to find that social ties to individuals and organizations facilitate involvement in social protest.

There are only a very limited number of studies that compare the role of social ties across social movements and mobilizations (e.g., McCarthy, 1987; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2005; see also Passy, 2003). In their study of the animal rights and anti-nuclear movements in the United States, for example, Jasper and Poulsen (1995) compare the patterns of recruitment for protest participants, finding significant differences in the role that friends and family played in recruiting participants to the different movements. In particular, although 80% of the anti-nuclear sample said that their friends and family played a role in their recruitment, these personal ties were much less important to the members of the animal rights sample. In fact, almost half of them reported that their friends and family were "not important" to their recruitment. McCarthy (1987) also compares the differences between two social movements in his study of the Pro-Life and Pro-Choice movements. He concludes that the two social movements functioned with very different levels of what he calls *social infrastructure*: "networks of interrelationships" across social movement supporters (McCarthy, 1987, p. 55). Although social infrastructure is found to make social movement mobilization easier, the author notes that the Pro-Choice movement mobilized participants in the face of an "infrastructural deficit." In other words, because the Pro-Choice movement was not populated with "single-issue groups" as was the Pro-Life movement that focused on overturning *Roe* versus *Wade* (1987, p. 53; for an extensive study of the Pro-Life movement and the role that social networks play in mobilizing these activists, see Munson, 2008: Chapter 3), Pro-Choice activists were recruited individually and not through their social networks. Building on these limited studies that have compared across social movements and mobilizations, I present Hypothesis 3 as:

Hypothesis 3. protest events that are directly linked to single-issue groups and specific targets will have more social infrastructure and, therefore, more reliance on both organizational and personal ties.

The one study that compares mobilizations across countries analyzes data collected at 16 demonstrations in 8 countries (Walgrave & Verhulst, 2005). Although the bulk of the paper focuses on the 1-in-10 people in the sample who came out to protest alone and were, in the words of the authors, *auto-mobilizers*, the authors find that both personal and organizational ties played a similarly important role in bringing people out to protest at these varied events.¹ Beyond this one study, however, research has yet to look at the role of social ties and the organizational embeddedness of protest participants across mobilizations in different political contexts. Thus, there is a need to build on the existing literature, but to deal with some of its weaknesses, particularly by following an explicitly comparative approach. Accordingly, this paper uses what Tarrow (2010) calls a "paired comparison" of contentious politics to begin to understand how social networks matter to different movements in different places, selecting cases that specifically represent different types of mobilizations in terms of the groups involved and the targets of the activism. The remainder of the paper is divided into three parts: first, I present an overview of the study and describe how and where the data were collected; second, I present analyses of the data; and third, I discuss the implications of the findings to understanding social protest and the outcomes of contentious politics more broadly.

THE STUDY

Since most of the literature on social networks and social protest bases its findings on empirical studies of mobilizations in the United States, this paper uses data from one of the largest protest events in the United States in recent years: the World Says No to the Bush Agenda March on the Eve of the Republican National Convention in New York City in August 2004. This mobilization focused on the relatively diffuse target of the George W. Bush Administration and its policies. The ideal comparison to this protest event would be a similarly sized protest event that targeted a specific domestic policy in a different advanced industrialized democracy. Since such an ideal match does not exist, this paper builds on the classic comparison of political systems in the United States and France, which dates back to Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1954; see also Tocqueville, 1955; for a discussion of Tocqueville's comparison, see Tarrow, 2010). Even with such a notable precedent, it is clear that the match is not perfect. Beyond the obvious cultural differences, France is known for having a much more

protesting public than the United States (see e.g., Stinson, 2006). Although there are some differences between the institutional politics and histories of these two countries, the similarities between the two countries are noteworthy: the political culture is relatively similar and the two countries represent long-term democratic regimes.

Consequently, this paper compares the protest against the Republican National Convention in the United States in 2004 to one of the largest recent citizen mobilizations in France: the protests that focused on a newly passed youth labor law in 2006, the CPE. Specifically, this paper uses data collected during the "Black Tuesday" Day of Protest against the CPE in Paris in March 2006. These mobilizations have a number of similarities that make them well suited for a paired comparison: both protest events were legally permitted rallies in outdoor public places involving large gatherings of broad coalitions of organizations, including labor groups, as well as unaffiliated activists and others who joined the protest; both protest events were of a similar size and held in the largest city in each country—New York City and Paris; and both events targeted the domestic policies of each country. As has been previously noted, there are important differences between the targets of the two protest events. In particular, the aim of the Republican National Convention protest was to show dissatisfaction with the current Administration in the United States. The goal of the Day of Protest in France was to stop a specific policy measure: the CPE. In other words, comparing these two protest events present an ideal opportunity to build on the limited research that compares mobilizations across movements and countries (e.g., McCarthy, 1987; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995; Walgrave & Verhulst, 2005), focusing on the roles that personal and organizational ties play in these different mobilizations. In the section that follows, I outline how the data were collected from participants at the two protests included in this study.

DATA AND METHODS

Data were collected through a two-stage process: random surveying of protest participants at two large-scale protest events, and an Internet follow-up survey with those in the original sample. Initially, data were collected by conducting an oral survey of randomly selected participants at the two protest events. While surveying protesters at each of these protest events, subjects were asked if they would be willing to participate in a follow-up

Internet survey. Data from both stages of this project are included in the analysis. Each stage will be discussed in detail below.

Random Survey of Protest Participants at Large-Scale Protest Events

First, protesters were randomly surveyed at both large-scale protest events. Consistent with the methodology employed by other studies of large-scale protest events (e.g., Bédoyan et al., 2004; Fisher et al., 2005; Heaney & Rojas, 2008), survey participants were chosen using a field approximation of random selection at the demonstrations. Starting from different points across the field site, surveyors "counted off" protesters standing in a formal or informal line, selecting every fifth protester to participate. Because the field situations varied somewhat, random selection was achieved by choosing every fifth person queuing up to march, or choosing every fifth person who was marching as determined by the researcher working in a particular area.

The survey was designed to be short and noninvasive, so as to facilitate data collection in the field and encourage the widest possible participation among the demonstrators. It includes six short questions that are administered orally and are designed to elicit responses that can easily be coded into categories regarding how the respondent came to be participating in the protest. Beyond survey data collected from protesters, data on the protest events were collected through pamphlets, fliers, and other materials that were distributed by the organizers of each protest. In addition, media coverage of each protest was monitored, along with the Web sites of the coordinating coalitions of each protest.

Overall, 949 demonstrators were sampled at the 2 events. Of the sample, 880 – or 92.7% – agreed to participate in the survey. In total, 69 people refused to take the survey, representing an overall refusal rate of approximately 7%. Using data collected from field notes, media accounts, and protest materials provided by organizations that were involved with the protests studied, both of the protests will be briefly summarized in turn.

The World Says No to the Bush Agenda: March on the Eve of the Republican National Convention

On Sunday, August 29, 2004, United for Peace and Justice coordinated what they called an "impassioned, peaceful, and legal march" in protest of

the Bush Administration's policies.² This legal march was the cornerstone of a week of protest organized by a coalition of organizations that mobilized activists to protest the Bush Administration and its policies. Prior to the event, the protest received national attention when the New York Mayor's office denied the organizers their request to rally in Central Park. This refusal to permit access to a common site of protest in New York City, ostensibly to protect the grass on the Great Lawn, was perceived by many activists as "free speech and not the grass being trampled" (McFadden, 2004).

The march was endorsed by groups that focused on a diversity of issues, including peace and globalization, as well as Iraq Veterans Against the War, Military Families Speak Out, and the group "September 11th Families." Although groups focused on specific issues – such as labor or the environment – organized separate events throughout the week that the RNC was taking place (see e.g., Greenhouse, 2004), the march involved a much more diverse coalition of anti-war, civil rights, labor, feminist, and environmental groups.³ While critics of the protest tried to link the event to the Democratic Party, many organizations involved in the protest had also protested the Democratic National Convention in Boston. In addition, the Kerry campaign "distanced itself from the protests" that were organized during the Republican Convention (Mishra & Robertson, 2003).

On the United for Peace and Justice's Web site, they explained that the purpose of the march was to protest political repression. In the words of its Web site: "Democracy begins with an absolute commitment to the rights and civil liberties of all ... we march for peace, we march for justice ... Another world is possible!"⁴ Beyond clearly stating that the march was intended to protest what the organization perceived as the repressive political environment in the United States, it is worth noting that the organizers also invoked one of the main slogans of the global justice/globalization movement (for a full discussion of the connections between these movements, see Fisher, 2006). In other words, this protest event provides an example of a mobilization that connected a broad array of social movement organizations against a relatively diffuse target.

Even though the New York State Supreme Court ruled against United for Peace and Justice's bid to rally in Central Park, people came out in droves. Attendance at the march was very high, with United for Peace and Justice estimating the crowd at 500,000 people (McFadden, 2004). Although a papier maché dragon was ignited as it passed in front of Madison Square Garden, the march was relatively peaceful. Even though there were widespread expectations that the protest would turn violent, the police

reported that only about 200 people were arrested during the march (McFadden, 2004).

Surveys were conducted with participants as they queued up to march on the cross streets between 5th and 9th Avenues from 14th to 21st Streets in Manhattan. Researchers entered the holding area and began surveying protesters at its four corners.⁵ During the march, surveys were also conducted with participants as they marched up 7th Avenue to Madison Square Garden. In all, 454 participants were surveyed and 41 people refused to participate in the survey. Because it was organized to coincide with the beginning of the Republican National Convention (RNC) and is best known as the largest protest during the convention, for the remainder of this paper, I will refer to this protest as the "RNC Protest."

The "Black Tuesday" Day of Protest Against the Contrat Première Embauche

On Tuesday, March 28, 2007, hundreds of thousands of people participated in a day of action against a newly passed youth labor law in France – the CPE – by protesting in cities and towns around the country. Although protests took place throughout the country, the largest demonstration was held in Paris. Crowd estimates of the march in Paris varied widely, with the police reporting only 92,000 demonstrators and labor groups estimating 700,000.⁶ The protesters marched from Place d'Italie to Place de la République in Paris.

This national day of action is perhaps best summarized in the words of a news report: "hundreds of thousands of French transport workers, teachers and other employees ... staged a one-day national strike or marched through the streets to try to force the government to abandon a new youth job law."⁷ "Black Tuesday," which was endorsed by labor groups, left-leaning political parties, and student groups, marked the fourth day of action to protest the law since it was approved on February 7, 2006. Although this event also involved a diverse coalition of groups, the majority were labor organizations and political parties and student groups that were aligned with the cause. In contrast to the RNC Protest, this mobilization represents a much more focused mobilization against the specific target of a new law.

Although the day of action was relatively peaceful, the *International Herald Tribune* reported that once the march arrived at its destination at Place de la République, "it disintegrated into sporadic brawls between

small, mobile bands of young thugs known as 'casseurs,' meaning 'smashers,' many of whom come from the troubled suburbs, the police said" (Sciolino & Smith, 2006). Even with the violence at the end of the march, the media reported only about 380 people being arrested around the country (Sciolino & Smith, 2006).

Surveys were conducted with participants as they queued up to march on the streets leading to the Place d'Italie in Paris. Researchers entered the area from the crowded streets leading onto the circle and began surveying protesters. During the march, surveys were also conducted with participants as they marched along the route to the Bastille. In all, 467 participants were surveyed and 32 people refused to participate in the survey. For the remainder of this paper, I will refer to this event as the "CPE Protest."

Internet Follow-Up Survey of Protest Participants

Researchers contacted all protesters who participated in the first stage of the study who had provided an e-mail address and agreed to be contacted via e-mail about the follow-up Internet survey. The follow-up Web-based survey included questions about the protesters' involvement in multiple social movements, the types of organizations in which they were involved, which large-scale protest events and days of protest they had attended, and what particular issues motivated them to participate in social protest. Overall, almost a third of those protesters who were initially surveyed at the two protest events and agreed to provide an e-mail address to be contacted about the follow-up component of the study participated. Of those people who provided e-mail addresses, 166 people – or 30.9% – participated in the follow-up survey.⁸

Although the overall response rate is not as high as some studies that employ Internet surveys (for a full discussion see Porter & Whitcomb, 2003; see also Cho & LaRose, 1999 for a full discussion of the role of trust in Internet survey response rates), it is consistent with the limited number of studies that have used this method to understand participation in social movements (e.g., Allen, 2000; Park, 2003; Fisher, 2006). The sample of respondents in such a Web-based Internet survey are likely to be biased somewhat toward the more affluent and well-educated protest participants (e.g., Hewson, Laurent, & Vogel, 1996). This bias can be particularly relevant when workers make up a significant part of the protesting population, as was the case with the CPE Protest. Nonetheless, in a comparison of the responses of those protesters who participated in the

Table 1. Summary of Protest Participants Surveyed.

	CPE, "Black Tuesday" Day of Protest		The World Says No to the Bush Agenda	
	Paris, March 2006	New York, August 2004		
Reported attendance	700,000	500,000		
Participants initially surveyed	467	413		
Response rate	93.2%	91%		
Percentage providing e-mail addresses	59.7% ^a	76.5%		
Participants in follow-up survey	65	101		
Follow-up response rate ^b	40.1%	31.7%		

^a Although 59.7% of the protest participants provided e-mail addresses, only 47.1% of those e-mail addresses actually worked.

^b Percentage is calculated based on those participants who provided working e-mail addresses to participate in the follow-up Internet survey.

follow-up survey versus those protesters who did not, there is very little difference between their responses to the initial survey.⁹ Table 1 presents an overview of the protests included in this paper, along with the numbers of people originally surveyed at each protest event and the response rate for the follow-up survey.

VARIABLES AND MEASUREMENT

This paper presents the findings from two questions from the initial oral survey of randomly selected protesters at these two demonstrations along with the responses to one question from the follow-up Internet survey. The variables are described below.

How They Heard

Protesters gave open-ended responses regarding how they heard about each protest event. These responses were coded based on the source of the information into the following categories: (a) personal tie with friends and family members; (b) organizational tie, if the protester reported hearing about the protest from a specific social movement organization, political party, or labor group (such as a union or *syndicat*), if a protester recounted hearing about the demonstration from an organization's advertisements

such as flyers, or if they heard from movement news Web sites; (c) media, including traditional print and broadcast media as well as Web sites for the traditional media; (d) Web, for unspecified Web sites; (e) e-mail, for respondents who reported having received an e-mail regarding the protest;¹⁰ and (f) other, for respondents whose answers did not fit into any of the categories listed.¹¹

With Whom They Came

Protesters gave an open-ended response as to with whom they had come to the protest. These responses to were coded into three broad categories: (a) friends and family; (b) alone; or (c) organizations, which includes those participants who came to the event with a student group, political party, or labor union/*syndicat*.

Organizational Embeddedness

Building off of the research by Cornwell and Harrison (2004), I use the term "organizational embeddedness" in this paper to refer to protest participants' connections to organizations. In the follow-up survey, participants from these two protests were asked to report their levels of engagement in a number of different types of organizations. Respondents were asked if they were a leader of, an active member of, or affiliated with an affinity group, community organization, environmental organization, globalization organization, peace organization, political organization, religious organization, labor union, and nationality/ethnic group.

RESULTS

In the remainder of this paper, I compare the participants of these two large-scale protest events to explore the role that both personal and organizational ties played. Overall, different types of social ties played different roles at these events. In addition, protest participants at the two events had very different levels of organizational embeddedness in groups such as labor unions, political parties, and social movement organizations. Accordingly, in the sections that follow, I will highlight some of the most significant differences in the role that social ties played in each of these demonstrations.

Although previous research has found that there is a significant difference between local and nonlocal participants in social protest in terms of the role that organizations play (Bédoyan et al., 2004; Fisher et al., 2005), these two large domestic protests did not involve significant nonlocal participation. In France, the day of protest against the CPE involved events throughout the country. As a result, the CPE Protest in Paris was almost exclusively involving inhabitants of the city and the surrounding Départements (99.1%). In contrast, New York City was the main site where Americans were protesting the convention, as well as the Bush Administration more broadly because the Republican National Convention was taking place in New York City during that week in August 2004. As a result, there were more nonlocal participants at the RNC Protest event. Even so, the majority of the protest participants at this event came from New York City and its surrounding areas (85.7%). In addition, perhaps because of the domestic focus of these events, both protests had almost no participants who reported traveling from out of the country to attend (0 people in France and 4 people, or almost 1%, in the United States). Given these findings, the remainder of this paper compares the protest participants from each protest without disaggregating local, nonlocal, and transnational participants from each event.

How They Heard

In both countries, the traditional media played a significant role in informing participants about these protest events. In fact, at the protests in Paris and New York, about one-third of the protest participants reported hearing about the event from the media (36.4 and 33.2%, respectively). Since most of the participants in these demonstrations came from the areas around the cities in which they took place, it is not surprising that so many heard about the demonstration through the local media.

Beyond the traditional media, however, there are important differences between the ways that the participants at the CPE Protest and the RNC Protest heard about these events. Almost half of all protest participants at the CPE Protest reported hearing about the event through their organizational ties (46.7%). At the RNC Protest, in contrast, less than a third of all protest participants had heard about the event from organizations (31.2%). There are also significant differences in the role that personal ties played at each event. In particular, very few participants in Paris heard about the event through their personal ties (9.4%). In New York City, however, over

Table 2. How They Heard about the Protests.

	RNC Protest (New York City) (%)	CPE Protest (Paris) (%)
	<i>N</i> = 413	<i>N</i> = 467
Through organizational tie	31.2	46.7
Through personal tie	21.1	9.4
From traditional media	33.2	36.4
From the Web	3.9	2.6
From e-mail	0.7	0.4
Other	9.8	4.5

χ^2 (5df), 44.368; *P* value, 0.0001.

a fifth of the participants reported hearing about the event from their friends and family members (21.1%). These differences are generally consistent with the expectations of the literature, which find personal and organizational ties to facilitate participation in social movements. This finding provides varied support for Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3, as personal and organizational ties played different roles in these different mobilizations.

In a Pearson χ^2 -test of the ways protesters heard about these protest events, the results are very significant and the null hypothesis that protest participants heard about the events in the same ways in both places is rejected ($\chi^2 = 44.368$ with five degrees of freedom). Table 2 summarizes how the protest participants heard about these protest events.

With Whom They Came

Consistent with Hypothesis 1, which is derived from the studies that find personal ties facilitate participation in social movements (e.g., Klandermans & Oegema, 1987; Opp & Gern, 1993), the majority of the participants at both of these events reported traveling to the protests with their friends or family members. Even though relatively few participants in the CPE Protest heard about the event through their personal ties, almost half of them reported traveling to the event with friends or family members (48.4%). At the RNC Protest in New York City, where about a fifth of the participants heard about the event through their personal ties, even more participants reported traveling with friends and family members to the event (68.8%).

Although personal ties played an important role in the ways protesters traveled to both events, there are also significant differences. In particular,

organizational ties played a very different role in each protest. In Paris, where the event was part of a one-day national strike, over a third of the protest participants reported traveling to the event with organizations (36.8%). Significantly fewer of the protesters in New York City reported traveling to the event with organizations with which they were affiliated (12.7%). In other words, organizations such as political and labor groups played a significantly larger role in mobilizing participants in Paris. It is also worth noting that a similar number of protest participants reported coming to both of these events alone (14.3% in Paris and 18.4% in New York City). Overall, these findings are not consistent with Hypothesis 2: organizational ties played a smaller role in bringing people to the events than did personal ties at both protest events.

In a Pearson χ^2 -test of the ways protesters at these two events traveled to the event, the results are very significant and the null hypothesis that protest participants traveled to the event in the same ways in both places is rejected ($\chi^2 = 68.704$ with three degrees of freedom). Table 3 presents how protest participants traveled to the events.

Given the significant differences in how people heard about the events and the ways participants came to the events, I proceed by combining these findings in a cross tabulation. This analysis provides more evidence to explore the very different roles that social networks played in these two protest events. Comparing those who heard about the events through personal ties with their friends and families to those people who heard about them through organizations, we see that there are big differences in the ways they traveled to the day of action at each event. CPE Protest participants who heard about the event from an organization were much more likely to come to the protest event with an organization than were RNC Protest participants who heard through an organization (53.2% vs. 23.6%).

Table 3. With Whom They Traveled to the Protests.

	RNC Protest (New York City) (%)	CPE Protest (Paris) (%)
	<i>N</i> = 413	<i>N</i> = 467
With organization	12.8	36.8
With friend or family member	68.8	48.4
Alone	18.4	14.3

χ^2 (3 df), 68.704; *P* value, 0.0001.

In addition, less than 10% of the people who heard about the RNC Protest through friends and family members traveled to the event with organizations, whereas about 23% of those people who heard about the CPE Protest from personal ties traveled to the event with organizations. Since the coalition of groups involved in the CPE Protest were predominantly linked to labor, and the event was targeting a specific labor law, it is not a surprise that organizations played such a significant role in the protest in France.

In the protest in America, however, personal ties were much more important. Although the majority of those participants at the CPE Protest who heard about the event through personal ties or the traditional media traveled to the event with friends or family members, no matter how participants in the RNC Protest heard about the event, the overwhelming majority of them traveled to the event with their friends or family members. Table 4 presents the results of these analyses. It is also worth noting that

Table 4. Cross Tab of How Respondents Heard about the Demonstration $\times$ How They Came to the Event^a.

	Came Alone (%)	Came with Organization (%)	Came with Friend or Family Member (%)	Pearson's χ^2
RNC protest				
Heard through organizational tie	16.5	23.6	59.8	
Heard through personal tie	10.5	8.1	81.4	
Heard from traditional media	26.7	4.4	68.9	
Heard from e-mail	0	0	100	
Heard from Web	12.5	12.5	75.0	70.940***
CPE protest				
Heard through organizational tie	9.2	53.2	37.2	
Heard through personal tie	11.4	22.7	65.9	
Heard from traditional media	20.6	21.8	57.6	
Heard from e-mail	0	50.0	50.0	
Heard from Web	16.7	25.0	50.0	34.675***

* χ^2 is significant at the 0.1 level; ** χ^2 is significant at the 0.01 level; and *** χ^2 is significant at the 0.001 level.

^aPercentages do not add up to 100 when responses did not fit into these categories or data were missing.

more than half of the participants at both protest events who traveled to the event alone, had heard about the event through the traditional media or a Web site (55.2% in France and 50.7% in the United State).

Protesters' Organizational Embeddedness

Based on these differences between the protesting populations and the degree to which organizational ties mobilized participation at these two events, I now look at how involved protest participants were in organizations, or what I call the "organizational embeddedness" of the protest participants. Consistent with the work of Schussman and Soule (2005), participants from both protests reported being relatively engaged in organizations of all sorts. Contrary to what one might expect based on the role that organizations played in mobilizing these different protesting populations, however, those who protested the RNC in New York City reported being much more organizationally embedded overall than those who protested the CPE in Paris. In particular, participants at the RNC Protest had much higher rates of involvement in political organizations, community organizations, and anti-war/peace groups than those who protested the CPE (68.8, 56.8, and 54.5% in New York City vs. 22.3, 29.5, and 11.4% in Paris).¹²

Even though protesters in New York City were more organizationally embedded in general, protesters in Paris reported very high levels of involvement in labor unions/*syndicats*. In fact, almost half of the participants from the CPE Protest reported involvement in a *syndicat*, while less than a third of the participants in the RNC Protest reported being involved in a labor union (47.4% in Paris vs. 27.3% in New York City). To restate once again, although it is not necessarily surprising that participants in a protest against a youth *labor* law would be members of organized labor, the difference is notable. In fact, this high level of labor-oriented organizational embeddedness is consistent with the findings of research conducted on other movements in France (e.g., Agrikoliansky & Sommer, 2005, p. 291). Table 5 presents the levels of organizational embeddedness of the protest participants.

Even though participants in the RNC Protest reported being more organizationally embedded than participants in the CPE Protest, their level of engagement within these organizations was lower overall. In other words, in all types of organizations except for affinity groups, the majority of respondents who reported being involved in organizations in the United

Table 5. Organizational Embeddedness^a.

	RNC Protest (New York City) (%)		CPE Protest (Paris) (%)	
	N = 101		N = 65	
Affinity group	18.2		2.3	
Community organization	56.8		29.5	
Environmental organization	37.7		4.5	
Globalization organization	10.4		11.4	
Labor union/ <i>syndicat</i>	27.3		47.4	
Nationality/ethnic group	9.1		2.3	
Political organization	68.8		22.3	
Peace organization	54.5		11.4	
Religious organization	16.9		2.3	

^aBased on respondents who reported being affiliated with, an active member of, or a leader of these types of organizations.

States, reported being affiliated with the group rather than being a leader or active member of it. Participants in the CPE Protest, in contrast, were more involved in these organizations; more than half of them reported being leaders of or active members of these organizations.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Overall, this paired comparison lays an empirical foundation for considering the ways that social networks facilitate protest participation across mobilizations and political contexts. Comparing protest events in the United States and France, we can clearly see the differing roles that social networks play. By comparing the more diffuse RNC Protest to the more targeted CPE Protest, we get varying degree of support for Hypotheses 1 and 2. Specifically, findings from the RNC Protest are consistent with the expectations of Hypothesis 1: personal ties played a significant role overall in mobilizing participants in the RNC Protest in New York City. Findings from the CPE Protest in Paris, however, provide a level of support for Hypothesis 2, in that participants in this event heard about it through their organizational ties and traveled to it with organizations or friends and family members.

To understand these differences more clearly, it is best to compare these findings with those of the limited number of studies that have compared the

role of social ties across mobilizations (McCarthy, 1987; Jasper & Poulsen, 1995). The results from the CPE and RNC protests are in partial agreement with Hypothesis 3, which is derived from these few studies. In particular, this study finds that mobilizations that are directly linked to single-issue groups and focused targets have more reliance on organizational ties. At the CPE Protest, which mobilized a diverse group of organizations and parties that were concerned about challenges to labor in France to target a specific labor policy, organizations played a larger role in mobilizing protest participants. In contrast, at the RNC Protest event, which involved a coalition of multi-issue groups and had a much less diffuse target, personal ties played a more important role in mobilizing participants. These findings suggest the need to disaggregate the personal and organizational components of social infrastructure in looking at their importance in different types of mobilizations. While diffuse mobilizations will rely more on connections to friends and family members, the findings from this paired comparison of protest events in the United States and France suggest that more focused mobilizations will have more reliance on organizational ties.

By looking at the analysis of data collected from the follow-up survey, we are able to understand better the ways that the participants in both protests were organizationally embedded. In particular, CPE protesters did not seem to have an overall higher level of organizational embeddedness than did participants in the RNC Protest. Instead, the main way that the CPE protesters were organizationally embedded was through their involvement with the French labor unions, or *syndicats*. These findings are not particularly surprising given the differences in the foci of the two protest events that were studied. In addition, although the event against the RNC took place on a Sunday, when many workers would be free, the CPE Protest was specifically coordinated to take place when the unions, themselves, had called for a strike. This national strike made it possible for union members to attend the demonstrations taking place throughout the country. The strike was all the more effective because the labor law was seen as a direct threat to the French working class. Even though the threat of four more years of the Bush Regime mobilized people to protest during the Republican National Convention, it was clearly a more diffuse target than that of the new labor law in France.

More broadly, these findings are consistent with the work of scholars who have found that demonstrations in France are dominated by unions (Agrikoliansky & Sommer, 2005; Fillieule, 1997; see also Shorter & Tilly, 1974 for a history of strikes in France; and Andolfatto & Labbé, 2007, for a review of the sociology of the *syndicats* in France), as well as those who have

studied the lack of a viable labor movement in the United States (see particularly Voss, 1993; Lipset, 1996). In other words, this more general literature leads us to expect that most protest events in France will have a significant union presence. More recently, Cornwell and Harrison (2004, p. 877) have found that "unions are more peripheral to American interorganizational culture than just about any other type of voluntary organization". Given the isolation of union members with regard to other types of organizations in America, it is not surprising that organized labor would play a smaller role in mobilizing participation in protest in the United States, even when unions play a role in the coalition that calls for the event itself. This finding is all the more expected given the difference in the targets of the two protest events studied in this paper.

This paper is just a first step in comparative research on the role that social networks play in social protest. This paired comparison of one protest event in the United States and one in France provides a start to understanding how networks matter across mobilizations and political contexts. Future research must broaden this comparison to see if these findings are consistent across different types of mobilizations, in terms of the organizations involved and their targets. In addition, future research should go beyond the focus of this study to look at how the characteristics of the mobilizations may be related to political outcomes. Exploring whether protest events that have specific targets and mobilize participants through organizational ties to active members of civic and political groups have a better chance of sustaining collective action that will lead to meaningful social change than do mobilizations that have more diffuse targets will contribute significantly to the scholarship on social movements. Through such research, we will be able to understand the role that social ties play in contentious politics, as well as how citizens can affect institutional politics much better.

NOTES

1. The authors find that the protesters' "degree of embeddedness per demonstration" to be 44.8 with friends and family and 45.8 with colleagues, co-students, and co-members (2005, p. 32).
2. www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=1810. Accessed on November 11, 2005.
3. For a list of "member groups," see www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?list=type&type=27. Accessed on November 14, 2005.
4. www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=1810. Accessed on November 8, 2005.

5. Researchers began surveying at 5th Avenue and 9th Avenue on 14th Street, and 5th Avenue and 9th Avenue on 22nd Street.
6. www.lemonde.fr/web/info/0,47-0@2-3224,54-755523@51-725561,0.html. Accessed on March 29, 2006.
7. www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2006/03/28/1603139.htm. Accessed on August 27, 2007.

8. It is worth pointing out that Internet access, in general, is lower in France than it is in the United States. For example, 43% of French households had Internet access in 2005 (Frydel, 2006). In contrast, 54.7% of households in the United States had Internet access in 2003, which is the most recent year for which data are available (Day, Janus, & Davis, 2005).

9. There were small differences in how the protesters heard about the event (e.g., 9.7% of the participants from the CPE Protest who did not participate in the follow-up survey reported hearing about the event through their social networks vs. 7.9% of the participants who did participate in the follow-up survey and 21.0% of the survey reported hearing about the event through their social networks vs. 19.6% of the participants who did not participate in the follow-up survey) and with whom the protesters traveled to the event (14.4% of the participants from the CPE Protest who did not participate in the follow-up survey came to the event alone vs. 14.3% of the participants from the RNC Protest who did not participate in the follow-up survey came to the event alone vs. 16.3% of the participants who did participate in the follow-up survey).

10. Those respondents who reported having received an e-mail from a friend or family member were coded as hearing through their personal ties. Those who reported having received an e-mail from an organization were coded as hearing through an organizational tie. Those respondents who did not specify were coded as e-mail.

11. These responses run the gamut, including some protesters who just happened upon the event without having heard about the event ahead of time.

12. These numbers are based on the percentage of the respondents to the follow-up survey who answered this question and reported that they were a leader of, an active member of, or affiliated with these types of groups.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to thank the many students who helped collect data in New York City and Paris at the protest events discussed in this paper. I would also like to thank Sidney Tarrow, Nonna Mayer, Marije Boekkooi, Jill Campaiola, participants at the AFSP 2007 Module du GERMM panel on "Questions de Methode," the anonymous reviewers, and the *RSMCC* editor for providing comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

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LEGAL DISSENT: CONSTITUTIONAL PROPOSALS FOR "CAMBIO" IN CUBA

Ana Cristina Maldonado

ABSTRACT

The Revolution is 50, Raúl has succeeded Fidel, and many dissidents who participated in the 2002 Varela Project initiative are in jail. What hope for "cambio" (change) in Cuba? Legal dissent – constitutional proposals, a legislative agenda, and grassroots civil rights organizing – may be the key. The Movimiento Cristiano Liberación (MCL), led by the Nobel Peace Prize-nominated Oswaldo Payá, presents the strongest challenge to the power of Cuba's 50-year-old Revolutionary government. This dissent group is at the heart of the development of the 2002 Varela Project and forms the core of the leaders arrested in the 2003 Cuban Spring crackdown. This paper traces the history of MCL's "legal dissent" strategy, from the evolution of the Varela Project to their development of an entire legislative agenda, crafted with nation-wide grassroots participation over the last six years since the crackdown. Using data from international NGO surveys conducted within Cuba, we analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the MCL's proposal vis-à-vis the political and economic concerns and interests of the broader population. Cuba's government seeks to consolidate its rule through its institutions, specifically, through the Cuban Communist Party. It remains to be seen whether the MCL's legal dissent strategy can successfully mobilize a broad

Research in Social Movements, Conflicts and Change, Volume 30, 141-169

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ISSN: 0163-786X/doi:10.1108/S0163-786X(2010)0000030008