

Introduction: Social Movements in Organizations and Markets

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In recent years, scholars of organizations and social movements have increasingly recognized that these two areas of research would both benefit from greater crossover. Organizations are the targets of, actors in, and sites for social movement activities. Social movements are often represented by formal organizations, while organizations resemble episodic “movements” rather than bounded actors. In an increasingly global economy and polity, organizations and movements are growing more transnational. And both movements and organizations are changing their strategies and routines in response to similar social and technological shifts. The same information and communication technologies that enable the management of global supply chains also allow global movement activities: on February 15, 2003, millions of participants marched in over 350 cities on six continents to protest the imminent U.S. invasion of Iraq, marching under the common slogan “The World Says No to War.” As forms of coordinated social action, movements and organizations are ships riding the same waves.

This special issue of the *Administrative Science Quarterly* is dedicated to building stronger connections among scholars of social movements, organizations, and markets. We received an enthusiastic response to our initial call for papers, with roughly 60 submissions from diverse research traditions. We were particularly gratified to note the prevalence of papers submitted by graduate students and junior faculty, including most of the authors of the papers contained in this issue. The next generation of scholars may find the integration of the diverse literatures on organizations, markets, and movements to be relatively seamless.

There are already signs of convergence in the agendas of organization studies and the study of social movements. Three decades ago, Zald and Berger (1978) explored the analytic parallels between political change processes in organizations, and McCarthy and Zald (1977) described the organizational foundations of most social movements. In the epilogue to this issue, Mayer Zald recounts in brief form some of the history of this engagement and the intellectual and societal trends that both constrained and facilitated research across the boundaries of social movement and organizational research. From current perspectives, the engagement between organizational and social movement scholars seems inevitable. But as Zald points out, it was far from inevitable given the state of research in the two areas of inquiry during the 1970s and 1980s.

Yet by the 1990s and early 2000s, researchers from both traditions began to draw on work from the other, using social movement theory to study the rise of shareholder activism (Davis and Thompson, 1994), the construction of new organizational forms (Fligstein, 1996; Rao, 1998; Carroll and Swaminathan, 2000), the dynamics of covert collective action inside organizations (Morrill, Zald, and Rao, 2003), and the transformation of institutional logics (Rao, Monin, and Durand, 2003). Others used ecological concepts from organization theory to explain the growth of feminist social movement organizations (Minkoff, 1997) and the diffusion of tactics (Olzak and Uhrig, 2001) and drew on neo-institutionalism to explain the spread

of organizational repertoires among women's political organizations (Clemens, 1993) and the spread of innovative protest tactics among student organizations (Soule, 1997). Methods and constructs from one domain proved to be fruitful in the other, and some processes, such as diffusion, are common across both (Strang and Soule, 1998). Movements and organizations were, in effect, twins separated at birth, and a series of conferences culminated in an intellectual reunion (Davis et al., 2005).

Events in the world also drive the convergence of the literatures on social movements and organizational theory. Social movements are pervasive in and around organizations, from policing the actions of multinationals to advancing demands for workplace rights to promoting or thwarting the development of new technologies to demanding that corporations fess up to negligence. Such movements have been prevalent since the emergence of the corporation (Hartmann, 2002) and have been found to affect corporations (e.g., King and Soule, 2007). At the global level, the boycott of Nestlé in the late 1970s, aimed at halting its sales of infant formula in low-income countries, has been followed by a succession of consumer actions aimed at changing the behavior of multinational corporations. Meanwhile, firms have been held to account for the equity of their employment practices, from the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability, to demands for comparable benefits for families of gay and lesbian employees. More recently, corporations have been held responsible for the labor practices of suppliers (e.g., Wal-Mart) and even for the human rights practices of regimes in the nations where they operate (e.g., Shell). Social movement processes have been instrumental in the rise of new organizational forms, such as micro-brewing, low-powered radio, or even militias. Collective mobilization has blocked new technologies such as cochlear ear implants or genetically modified food. Executive succession in organizations as different as Gallaudet University and Morgan Stanley has become the object of intra-organizational and extra-organizational mobilization and counter-mobilization. Some corporations respond to pressures by social movements by changing their strategies, structures, and routines. Others are obdurate in their resistance. Still others create Potemkin Village counter-movements to articulate their perspective—known as “astroturf organizing,” in contrast to grassroots organizing.

Overview of the Issue

In this special issue we include papers that examine themes at several intersections among organizations, movements, and markets. The first theme is *organizations as targets of social movements*, describing how movements seek to change the actions of organizations and what factors lead to success. The tactics that movements use for changing corporate behavior range from sabotage, such as José Bové's campaign against McDonald's in France, to collaboration, such as the Environmental Defense Fund's work with McDonald's to eliminate its polystyrene packaging and reduce its solid waste. What distinguishes the kinds of organizations most likely to change and the tactics most effective at bringing

about that change? Brayden King addresses this question by examining the factors that lead corporations targeted by boycotts to concede, compared with those that do not. He finds that corporations concede when boycotts receive media attention and when they have experienced reputational downswings, and he develops a political mediation model of corporate response to boycotts.

The second theme is *organizations as collaborators with movements*. Some organizations learn to tolerate and even work with social movements that initially appeared to threaten their interests. Under these conditions, collaboration is fraught with the potential for conflict and can shade into cooptation, dangers recognized by all sides. How do organizations and movements manage such collaborations? Siobhán O'Mahony and Beth Bechky study how parts of the open-source software movement collaborate with firms to develop software. The open-source movement consists of a loose group of programmers more or less united by a view that software should be freely available—the underlying code is open to examination and alteration before being compiled, in contrast to commercial software produced by firms, which is compiled before it is sold and is protected from alteration by copyright. In these contexts, open-source programmers and firms develop mechanisms for governing their interactions, leveraging their interests, and sustaining functional relationships.

The third theme is *organizations as sites and carriers of social movements*. Organizations are places where social life happens and, as such, can be the location of struggles over broader issues of social justice. Firms can be mechanisms for economic mobility and places in which social divides are bridged, but they can also be sites of discrimination and devices for maintaining the status quo. Thus the stakes of wider social struggles are often enacted within firms. Moreover, the actions that organizations take in response to movements can set standards that spread more broadly through society. For example, the appearance of diaper-changing stations in the men's rooms of rural McDonald's restaurants signals change in traditional gender roles, as does the increasing elevation of women in substantial numbers to positions at the top of the corporate hierarchy. Forrest Briscoe and Sean Safford demonstrate that widespread adoption of domestic partner benefits in mainstream firms is triggered by prior adoptions of same-sex partner benefits among companies known to resist activism. They further demonstrate that activists' roles vary according to the company's orientation to activism. Thus activist groups within activist-prone firms championed the adoption of same-sex partner benefits, but in other firms, they made the organization more susceptible to the actions of others. In other words, rather than simply serving as passive models for mimetic isomorphism, prior adopters provided a rhetorical resource for activist groups in other firms.

The fourth theme is *organizations as manifestations of movements*. Social movement organizations reflect the underlying dynamics of public sentiment, and their spread can indicate the progress of social change. The prevalence of organiza-

tions promulgating particular values can thus provide an indication of how strongly held those values are in society. Marissa King and Heather Haveman show how the antebellum media—newspapers, broad sheets, and magazines—and the ideology of local churches shaped the growth of antislavery organizations in the United States. They show that extant organizations matter for social movement formation, but the ability of social movements to capitalize on organizational resources is contingent on the values held by those in the organizations. The values of the public can thus shape social movement environments either by creating centers of similar sentiments—in organizations—or by expression through the media to larger, more diffuse audiences. Antislavery societies, the formal organizations of the movement, were a potent source for mobilizing public opinion against slavery, and by their very prevalence, they documented the degree of opposition to the practice of slavery.

The final theme is *markets as outcomes of social movements*. Extra-organizational process such as institutional entrepreneurship can create the markets in which organizations and other actors interact. Klaus Weber, Kathryn Heinze, and Michaela DeSoucey demonstrate how the grassroots movement shaped the definitions and standard practices of the new market for grass-fed meat and dairy products as it came into existence. In effect, Weber and his colleagues underscore how the mobilization of culture can create markets and, in turn, how new markets can constitute culture change in contemporary society.

Future Directions

Taken together, the articles in the special issue suggest multiple directions for future research. The first of these directions should focus on pushing social movement theory deeper into the traditional bailiwick of organizational analysis. As we noted above, organization theory and research have been important parts of the toolkit of social movement scholars at least since McCarthy and Zald's (1977) classic piece on resource mobilization. But social movement research has only recently made incursions into mainstream organizational analysis. The articles in this issue suggest that social movement approaches to traditional topics of organizational scholarship not only can push beyond conventional explanations to reveal new insights but can also open up new areas of inquiry.

The study of social movements and organizations in transnational contexts provides yet another avenue for future research. Most of the articles in this issue focus on the North American context either in contemporary or historical perspective. As some of the illustrations we drew on in this brief introduction suggest, important engagements between organizations and social movements are occurring in transnational contexts around the issues of global economic development, environmental protection and sustainability, and even the dark side of transnational dynamics, such as terrorism, and struggles for social justice and equality. Approaches such as those illustrated in this special issue that draw from both social movement and organizational perspectives may pro-

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vide the best possibilities for insight into our complex, ever-changing, and paradoxical world.

As researchers move to consider transnational collective action and organizing, they will need to pay attention to the dynamic nature of the phenomena under study. Given the increasingly permeable and blurry boundaries among organizations and social movements, it may become difficult to study a single "movement" or "organization." The units of analysis that we have become accustomed to in much of the research in social movements and organizations may therefore need to change. We may increasingly need to study fields, networks, or narratives that cut across multiple sites. Techniques such as fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis (Ragin, 2000), narrative analysis (Polletta, 2006), network analysis (Diani and McAdam, 2003), or multi-sited ethnography (Marcus, 1995) and "mobile ethnology" (Czarniawska, 2004) may facilitate understanding the constant organizing and reorganizing of information and people across time and space that, in turn, provide the raw materials for social movements. Social movements may also exert delayed effects and secondary indirect effects on sites, and the study of such spillover effects requires the use of multi-method approaches to the study of social movements. Computer simulations may need to be used if we are to understand delayed effects, and laboratory experiments may become the pathway to understand the impact of framing processes within movements and organizations.

Finally, we have drawn special attention to convergences between both organizational and social movement research and the contemporary dynamics of organizations and social movements. Future research should also investigate the divergences between these approaches and phenomena. Much of social movement research, for example, concentrates on confrontations between states and non-state challengers, whereas much of the current wave of research on social movements and organizations (as underscored by the five articles in this special issue) focuses on non-state targets and challengers. The state, if present at all in the studies included here, appears in the form of background policies, regulations, or laws. Although we believe, along with prominent social movement scholars such as Snow (2004), that the expansion of social movement analysis to examine movements that are not state-centered (and in organizations, fields, and markets) is a positive development, we also believe that analysis of social movements and organizations must explicitly take into account various kinds of state-based power that play important roles in constraining and facilitating social movements in organizations and markets. How different logics and relations of power in markets and politics help to constitute both organizations and social movements is, in part, the key to ultimately understanding social change in the contemporary era.

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