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On Social Networks and Social Protest

Understanding the Organizational Embeddedness of Large-Scale Protest Events

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ON SOCIAL NETWORKS AND SOCIAL PROTEST*

Understanding the Organizational Embeddedness of 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 roles that social networks play in mobilizing participants in large-scale domestic protest. Comparing two relatively recent events in the United States and France, I find that different types of social ties did not play the same role in each country. Although personal and organizational ties played almost equal roles in mobilizing participants at the protest-event during the Republican National Convention in 2004, organizational ties played a much more significant role in mobilizing participants to protest the *Contrat Première Embauche* (CPE) in France in 2006. In addition, participants in these two protest events reported being involved in dissimilar types of organizations at varying levels, which may help to explain the differential outcomes of these two protests.

| 1 | INTRODUCTION

Scholars have become increasingly interested in understanding how social ties affect mobilization and participation in social movements (e.g. Oberschall 1973; Tilly 1978; Fireman and Gamson 1979; Snow et al. 1980; Stark and Bainbridge 1980; McAdam 1986; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; della Porta 1988; Marwell et al. 1988; Fernandez and McAdam 1988; Gould 1991, 1993; Bearman and Everett 1993; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Opp and Gern 1993; Mueller 1994; Kim and Bearman 1997; Loveman 1998; Diani and 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: 236). Within this research, scholars have looked particularly at the social ties of protesters (e.g. Jasper and Poulsen 1995; Heaney and 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 and Oegema 1987; Schussman and Soule 2005) to understand how individuals are mobilized to participate in collective action. To date, this research has disaggregated social ties in numerous ways—looking at organizational and personal ties, direct and indirect ties, and strong versus weak ties—to understand the role that social networks play more completely. What remains to be seen, however, is how the role of social networks differ across political contexts and mobilizations.

This paper compares two recent large-scale protest events in the United States and France to 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—both 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 played. Moreover, participants in these two protest events reported very different types of involvement in organizations, which may help to explain their differential outcomes.

This paper is separated 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 studied protest participants and the research that has disaggregated the differences between organizational and personal ties. Second, I 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 and the potential differences to movement outcomes.

| 2 | 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, Oliver and Prahl 1988; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Opp and Gern 1993; Kim and Bearman 1997; Kitts 2000; Diani and McAdam 2003). One of the main goals of the literature on the role of social ties in social movement mobilization is to understand how social movement participants are recruited through their personal and organizational connections. In particular, analysis has disaggregated the different types of social tie, looking at personal connections to friends and family members and connections to organizations and civic groups (see particularly McAdam and 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 find what they call "critical friends" to be one of the two main variables that explain participation in protests against the regime (1993). In their research on the Dutch Peace Movement, Klandermans and Oegema also look at the role of personal connections in their analysis of four aspects of social movement mobilization (1987). The authors conclude that social networks—particularly informal recruitment networks—helped activists to overcome barriers to participation in the movement. Similarly, Rochford finds that nearly half of the Hare Krishnas in his sample were recruited through their personal ties (1982).

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 and Paulsen 1993; Anheier 2003; Passy 2003; Ohlemacher 1996). McAdam and Paulsen, for example, conclude that organizational ties were much more important in mobilizing activists to participate in Freedom Summer (1993; see also Fernandez and McAdam 1988). Analyzing the organizational embeddedness of single members in the infrastructure of the Nazi Party, Anheier points out that ties to this group "aided their efforts to establish and anchor the party locally" (2003:71). In his study of the mobilization against low-flying military jets in West Germany, Ohlemacher 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 (1996).

Beyond the research that focuses on personal and organizational ties, there are a handful of studies that look particularly at the ways that an individual's multiple social ties interact (e.g. Walsh and Warland 1983; Marwell et al. 1988; Gould 1991; Kitts 2000). In his research on the mobilization in the Paris Commune, Gould analyzes the role of interpersonal and organizational ties, distinguishing the "interplay between social ties created by insurgent organizations and pre-existing social networks rooted in Parisian neighborhoods" (1991: 716). The author finds that organizational ties, along with neighborhood ties, helped to maintain solidarity in the Paris Commune. In some cases, social ties have been found to encourage *as well as* inhibit participation in social movements (e.g. Snow et al. 1980; Gould 1990; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; see also Gould 2003). Reviewing the literature on social networks and social movement participation, Kitts states: "not all social referents (e.g. friends, parents, coworkers) support activism. Some may discourage participation or compete for an actor's time or other resources" (2000: 242).

Looking particularly at those who have analyzed the role that social ties play in mobilizing participants in social protest, there are a limited number of studies (e.g. Jasper and Paulsen 1995; Heaney and Rojas 2007, 2008; see also Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Schussman and Soule 2005; Louis Harris France 1994). In their study of the animal rights and anti-nuclear movements, for example, Jasper and Poulsen 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 (1995). 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.

With regard to the role that organizations play in mobilizing people to protest, there are even fewer studies. When looking at individual protest participation, Schussman and Soule find that individuals who are more organizationally embedded are more likely to be asked to protest and are, therefore, more likely to participate in protest (2005: 1098). 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 find foreign protesters to be more likely to have heard about the event from an organization, as well as more frequently accompanied by members of the group to the event (2004: 46; see also Fisher et al. 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 conclude that people who learned about an anti-war 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 (2008). 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: 33). In other words, organization ties have been found to play a significant role in mobilizing protest participants in multiple contexts.

Although this existing research points to the importance of social networks, it is still unclear how social ties and the organizational embeddedness of protest participants differ across mobilizations and the ways that these differences may contribute to movement outcomes. This paper, accordingly, explores the role that personal and organizational ties play in the mobilization of protesters at two large-scale protest events that targeted domestic policies in two countries. By looking at the role that personal and organizational ties play in informing people about the scheduled protest events and in supporting their participation at large-scale protests, this paper addresses the similarities and differences in this common form of mobilization. The remainder of the paper is separated into three parts: first, I 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.

| 3 | 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. Both protests were legally permitted rallies in outdoor public places and involved large gatherings of broad coalitions of organizations as well as unaffiliated activists and others who joined the protest. These two protests were chosen because they represent two of the largest recent protests against domestic politics in France and the United States. 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), 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 non-invasive, 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 websites of the coordinating coalitions of each protest.

Protests Surveyed

Data from two large-scale protests are included in this paper: 1) the World Says No to the Bush Agenda March on the Eve of the Republican National Convention in New York City, August 2004; and 2) the "Black Tuesday" Day of Protest against the *Contrat Première Embauche* (CPE) in Paris, France, March 2006.

Overall, 949 demonstrators were sampled. Of the sample, 880—or 92.7 percent—agreed to participate in the survey. In total, 69 people refused to take the survey, representing an overall refusal rate of approximately 7 percent. 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.[1] 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." It also included participation from anti-war, civil rights, labor, feminist, and environmental groups.[2] 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 and Robertson 2003).

On the United for Peace and Justice's Website, they explained that the purpose of the march was to protest political repression. In the words of its website: "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!"[3] 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).

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-21st Streets in Manhattan. Researchers entered the holding area and began surveying protesters at its four corners.[4] During the march, surveys were also conducted with participants as they marched up 7th Avenue to Madison Square

[1] www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=1810 (Accessed November 11, 2005).
[2] For a list of "member groups," see www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?list=type&type=27 (Accessed November 14, 2005).
[3] www.unitedforpeace.org/article.php?id=1810 (Accessed November 8, 2005).
[4] Researchers began surveying at 5th Avenue and 9th Avenue on 14th Street, and 5th Avenue and 9th Avenue on 22nd Street.

Garden. In all, 454 participants were surveyed and forty-one 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 at 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 *Contrat Première Embauche* (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.[5] 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."[6] "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 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 and 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 and 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 thirty-two 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 that 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

[5] www.lemonde.fr/web/infog/0,47-0@2-3224,54-755523@51-725561,0.html (accessed 29 March 2006).
[6] www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2006/03/28/1603139.htm (Accessed August 27, 2007).

participated. Of those people who provided e-mail addresses, 166 people—or 30.9 percent—participated in the follow-up survey.[7]

Although the overall response rate is not as high as some studies that employ Internet surveys (for a full discussion see Porter and Whitcomb 2003; see also Cho and 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 to such a Web-based Internet survey are likely to be biased somewhat toward the more affluent and well-educated protest participants (e.g. Hewson et al. 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. Even with this limitation, however, as participants in social protest have become increasingly tentative about being studied, the technology of the Internet provides a unique opportunity to gain additional information from protest participants who are randomly surveyed at demonstrations. Because the Internet allows a person to be contacted without his or her identity being known,[8] it is likely that participants at these protest events were more comfortable providing an e-mail address, rather than a phone number or mailing address. 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.

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
Refusal Rate	6.8%	9.0%
Percentage Providing e-mail Addresses	59.7%[9]	76.5%
Participants in Follow-up Survey	65	101
Follow-up Response Rate [10]	40.1%	31.7%

[7] 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 et al. 2005).

[8] Many protest participants provided e-mail addresses that were not traceable to their names and/or places of work.

[9] Although 59.7% of the protest participants provided e-mail addresses, only 47.1% of those e-mail addresses actually worked.

[10] Percentage is calculated based on those participants who provided working e-mail addresses to participate in the follow-up Internet 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 advertising such as flyers, or if they heard from movement news Websites; c) media, including traditional print and broadcast media as well as Websites for the traditional media; d) web, for unspecified Websites; e) e-mail, for respondents who reported having received an e-mail regarding the protest;[11] and f) other, for respondents whose answers did not fit into any of the categories listed.[12]

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

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.

[11] 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 clarify were coded as e-mail.

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

| 4 | RESULTS

In the remainder of this paper, I compare the participants of these two domestically focused events to explore the role that both personal and organizational ties played. Overall, these different types of social ties played different roles at these two large-scale protest 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 non-local 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 non-local 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 non-local participants at the RNC protest. Even so, the majority of the protest participants at this event came from New York City and the surrounding states (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 and non-local 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, in 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, only about a quarter of all protest participants had heard about the event from organizations (26.8%). 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, however, 21.1% of the participants reported hearing about the event from their friends and family members.

In a Pearson chi-square 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 ($\chi^2 = 104.347$ with 9 degrees of freedom). Table 2 summarizes how the protest participants heard about these protest events.

Table 2: How They Heard About the Protests

	RNC Protest (New York City)	CPE Protest (Paris)
Through Organizational Tie	26.8%	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	14.2%	4.5%

Chi square (9 d.f.): 104.347
P value: .0001

With Whom They Came

Although personal ties played an important role in the ways protesters traveled to both events, there are also significant differences. The majority of the participants at both of these events traveled 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%). Organizational ties, however, played a smaller role at both protests. In Paris, 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).

Table 3: With Whom They Traveled to the Protests

	RNC Protest (New York City)	CPE Protest (Paris)
With Organization	12.7%	36.8%
With Friend or Family Member	68.8%	48.4%
Alone	18.4%	14.3%

Chi square (3 d.f.): 68.704
P value: .0001

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

Protesters' Organizational Embeddedness

Given the significant differences between these protesting populations and the degree to which organizational ties mobilized participation at these two events, I now look at how involved these 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 versus 22.3%, 29.5% and 11.4% in Paris).[13] Although 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 versus 27.3% in New York City).

Table 4: Organizational Embeddedness[14]

	RNC Protest (New York City)	CPE Protest (Paris)
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/*Syndicat*	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%

Although it is not necessarily surprising that participants in a protests 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 and Sommier 2005: 291). In addition, these differences are particularly noteworthy because labor unions in the United States were involved in calling for the protest against the RNC through the U.S. Labor

[13] 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.

[14] Based on respondents who reported being affiliated with, an active member of, or a leader of these types of organizations.

Against the War Coalition.[15] Table 4 presents the levels of organizational embeddedness of the protest participants.

Although 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 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; the majority of them reported being leaders of or active members of these organizations. These findings are consistent with the conclusions of scholars in the United States who discuss the increasing role of tertiary organizations and mail-in membership in American civic life (see particularly, Weir and Ganz 1997; Skocpol and Fiorina 1999; Skocpol 2003).

[15] For a list of affiliates involved in this coalition, see http://uslaboragainstwar.org/article.php?id=3606 (Accessed 6 February 2008).

| 5 | DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In sum, these findings provide strong support to the idea that social networks play different roles in mobilizing participants at different events. Specifically, participants in the CPE Protest in Paris heard about and traveled to the event with organizations, while personal ties played a much larger role in mobilizing participants in the RNC Protest in New York City. Through analysis of data collected from the follow-up survey, we are able to learn more about 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 in New York City. 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. These findings are consistent with the work of scholars who have found that demonstrations in France are dominated by unions (Fillieule 1997; see also Shorter and Tilly 1974 for a history of strikes 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). More recently, Cornwell and Harrison have found that "unions are more peripheral to American interorganizational culture than just about any other type of voluntary organization" (2004: 877). Given the isolation of union members with regard to other types of organizations in America, it can be expected that organized labor would play a smaller role in mobilizing participation in protest in the United States.

The findings of this study also provide some evidence to support the notion that, although protesters in both countries are organizationally embedded, the levels of actual involvement are qualitatively different. Even though participants in the New York protest were engaged in political groups, community organizations, and anti-war/peace groups, protesters in Paris were more *actively* involved with organizations than the protesters were in New York. Based on these findings, we can conclude that it is not overall organizational embeddedness that explains the differences in the mobilization of protest participants. Instead, these results suggest that it is the different *levels* of organizational embeddedness and the different *types* of organizations that are doing the mobilizing that is important.

These results suggest that there is a connection between who does the mobilizing to participate in protest events and the political outcomes of social protest. As we can see from the differential outcomes of the two protests, those mobilizations that are organizationally embedded with active members of organizations, like the CPE Protest in France, tend to have more successful outcomes. Those protests that are less organizationally embedded, however, do not seem to be as successful. In other words, the demonstration against the RNC had no perceivable effect on political outcomes in the United States. President George W. Bush was re-elected and one of the major laws that people came out to protest—the

Patriot Act—has yet to be significantly revised or repealed.[16] The CPE, in contrast, was withdrawn in April 2006 after five national days of action and significant protest throughout France. Although this study does not focus specifically on the effects of these protests (for a full discussion of social movement outcomes, see Gamson 1990; Giugni 1998), these findings provide some understanding of the relationship between mobilizing forces and the outcomes of large-scale domestic protest.

Thus, future research must explore how the qualitative aspects of the organizational embeddedness of protesters are related to the political outcomes of protesters. It is also worth exploring if these findings are consistent across different types of mobilizations and types of civic participation and activism. Through such research, we will be able to understand the role that social ties play in contentious politics, as well as the ways that citizens can affect institutional politics much better.

[16] As of February 2008, even though revisions to the Act were passed by Congress in March 2006, they did not address the major criticisms of the Act regarding civil liberties.

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