Resources for Success: Social Movements, Strategic Resource Allocation, and Union Organizing Outcomes

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Social movements' capacity to mount effective challenges often hinges on the availability of scare resources. Yet despite considerable scholarly interest in the ways that resources are mobilized, we know surprisingly little about the conclusion of this process, how movement actors strategically disburse resources to achieve specific goals. Recent attempts to revitalize the American labor movement, particularly efforts to reverse fifty years of membership decline, provide a substantive backdrop for examining resources and success. Data from a sample of local unions and their organizing activities from 1990 through 2001 indicate that tactical resource disbursements do increase the union's ability to recruit new members, but their effect is contingent upon other dimensions of organizing, such as firm and state hostility. The findings extend our understanding of movement agency and offer insight into the growth of social movement unionism today. Keywords: social movements, resource mobilization, labor unions, union organizing, resistance to unions.

With the introduction of the resource mobilization perspective in the 1970s (McCarthy and Zald 1977), scholars began to recognize that the strength of social movement actors is closely linked to the availability of external resources. Although initially spurred by the growth of professional social movement organizations (SMOs) in Western democracies (McCarthy and Zald 1973; Walker 1983), the centrality of resources in contentious politics has since been established across diverse movements and social settings (Cress and Snow 1996; Khawaja 1994). While analyses have begun to attend to the mechanisms groups employ to amass scarce resources (McCarthy and Wolfson 1996), this is only the first step in a process that culminates in the *dispersal* of resources for specific goals. Surprisingly, however, there has been little effort to deconstruct the relationship between purposeful resource allocation and success, a topic that has become particularly salient given the burgeoning interest in movement outcomes (Giugni 1998).

Current attempts to revitalize the American labor movement present a unique opportunity to examine how SMOs deploy resources to win new benefits for constituents. In an effort to reverse fifty years of membership decline driven by an increasingly hostile political and economic climate, a number of scholars and activists alike have advocated a return to "social movement unionism" (Clawson 2003; Fantasia and Voss 2004). This has led to the use of contentious tactics like civil disobedience when organizing, the formation of coalitions with community groups to confront corporate power, and, notably, an increase in resources devoted to organizing. As a direct consequence of these changes, there has been substantial growth in the

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use of a social movement theory to examine labor unions, not only in the present day (Dixon, Roscigno, and Hodson 2004; Lopez 2004; Voss and Sherman 2000), but historically as well (Cornfield and Fletcher 1988; Isaac and Christensen 2002; Isaac, McDonald, and Lukasik 2006; Kimeldorf and Stepan-Norris 1992; McCammon 1993, 1994; Roscigno and Danaher 2001; Stepan-Norris and Zeitlin 2003; Voss 1993).

Consistent with the resource mobilization perspective, the underlying argument made here is that resources should be positively related to new organizing gains. Yet, movements do not disburse resources in a vacuum; in the case of unionization efforts the relationship between resources and success is complicated by fundamental changes in American industrial relations and organized labor's response to these new challenges. Therefore, I consider whether the utility of resources hinges upon the form they take, the specific organizing strategy employed, and the level of firm and political hostility encountered by the union. I begin with a brief overview of the recent changes in the American labor movement that have lead to a refocus on organizing, and then describe how the resource mobilization perspective provides valuable insight for understanding unions' renewed efforts to mobilize workers. The analysis makes an important contribution to research on how movements affect social change, which has often been limited to successful or notorious cases (Giugni 1999), and also provides a systematic account of union organizing activity at the end of the twentieth century.

The Recent Transformation of Organized Labor

Class struggle in America is highly cyclical; upsurges in labor conflict are interspersed between episodes of relative peace (Brecher 1972). Compared to the tumult of the Great Depression (Yellen 1936), the period following World War II witnessed a significant, but by no means complete, shift towards more normalized industrial relations (see Isaac et al. 2006 and Zetka 1992 for accounts of working-class militancy in post-war America). Some reasons for this transformation included: (1) the passage of specific labor laws that institutionalized labor activism (Goldfield 1989); (2) a tacit labor/management accord, which granted unions the freedom to pursue economic goals, but checked their ability to encroach upon the hegemony of capital (see Nissen 1990 for an assessment of this claim); and (3) a booming economy that benefited both parties (Hoerr 1988). Industrial conflict is on the rise once again, prompted by the expansion of global trade, an increasingly anti-union federal government, epitomized by President Reagan's firing of striking air traffic controllers in 1981, and renewed efforts by firms to undermine the legitimacy of unions in the workplace (Edsall 1984; Fantasia and Voss 2004; Rosenblum 1995).

While a return to acrimonious labor relations has exposed the complacency of some unions, many have responded by demanding sweeping reforms that reflect a deeper commitment to social movement unionism (Clawson 2003; Fantasia and Voss 2004). Supporting this agenda, AFL-CIO president John J. Sweeney (1996) has argued that organized labor must, "act like a social movement that represents working people throughout the society" (p. 106). The debate over organizing has even led to a recent split within the AFL-CIO over its perceived failures in addressing the 50-year decline in the proportion of American workers who are unionized.[1] In an attempt to change course, a number of militant unions have begun to make membership growth their top priority by significantly expanding the resources allocated for organizing and employing innovative and confrontational tactics (Manheim 2001;

1. The Change to Win faction of unions that left the AFL-CIO has been vocal in its demands for increased organizing. Its mission, posted on its Web site, is to "develop and implement strategies to organize tens of millions of workers. Only when millions more American workers belong to unions will a pro-worker political consensus to support our goals emerge."

Martin 2008; Milkman and Voss 2004). This renewed commitment to organizing provides a unique opportunity to examine how resources matter in labor activism and beyond, a topic I explore using insight from social movement scholarship.

Resource Mobilization and Social Movement Organizing

The development of the resource mobilization perspective represented a major shift in social movement thought, which previously sought to explain mass protest as an irrational response to social upheaval (Smelser 1963). As an alternative, John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald (1973, 1977) proposed that movement activity crests and falls not with particular grievances but the availability of external resources necessary to support collective action. Scholars have since identified the role that resources play in a range of important movement dynamics, from organizational formation and viability (Cress and Snow 1996; McCammon 2001b) to variation in protest activity across time and space (Cress and Snow 1996; McLaughlin and Khawaja 2000). More recently, studies have begun to examine the specific mechanisms through which SMOs acquire critical resources (Edwards and McCarthy 2004).

Considering the centrality of resources in all facets of movement behavior, there has been surprisingly little effort to understand how resources allow groups to achieve desired outcomes (see Cress and Snow 2000). As Bob Edwards and McCarthy (2003:115) note: "the simple availability of resources is not sufficient: coordination and strategic effort is typically required in order to convert available pools of individually held resources into collective resources in order that they can help enable collective action." Quite simply, a movement actor does not realize the utility of the resources it has mobilized until they are disbursed for specific tasks, which can range from routine organization maintenance to contentious protest activity. Although prior research has linked resources to outcomes like organizational survival (Cress and Snow 1996), such concerns are distinct from SMOs' efforts to bring about social change (Gamson 1975).

Marshall Ganz's (2000) conceptual framework of movement agency provides a useful starting point for linking resource disbursements to specific outcomes. In his case study of the United Farm Workers (UFW), he sought to explain why this organization was able to mobilize migrant farm workers when other, more established unions, failed. He argued that the "strategic capacity" or resourcefulness of the UFW allowed it to overcome a dearth of formal resources and adapt to changing political and social conditions. While interested in success, Ganz's primary focus was on the various organizational and individual decisions that led to the implementation of innovative tactics. The current research seeks to build upon his conceptualization of strategic capacity by analyzing how unions allocate resources they have mobilized to organize nonunion employees. The fact that the organizations examined here are both more formalized and have significantly more resources than the UFW does not change the fact that, in today's anti-union environment, resources must be dispersed strategically during the course of an organizing effort in order to ensure success.

In addition to Ganz's analysis of agency, other research has also considered how SMOs forge effective strategies to bring about desired change. Their ability to manipulate cultural symbols has played an integral part in challenges as diverse as Southern textile workers (Roscigno and Danaher 2001) to early suffragists (McCammon et al. 2001). Research on framing, how movements present their claims to garner popular support, has explored the link between movement tactics, culture, and success (Benford and Snow 2000; Cress and Snow 2000). The adoption of specific organizational forms (Clemens 1997; Gamson 1975) and repertoires of action (McAdam and Su 2002; Morris 1984; Tilly 1995) are also important strategic decisions. Like Ganz, much of this research is sensitive to the interplay between movement tactics and broader constraints and opportunities for action, which is particularly

critical for understanding how resources are translated into organizing gains. Specifically, I examine the types of resources unions deploy when organizing, the repertoires they are channeled through, and the implications of firm and state resistance. These realities, which cut across social movements, allow me to specify *why* resources matter, thus extending Ganz's framework of strategic capacity through an analysis of highly formalized SMOs.

The Categorization of Union Resources

One of the major contributions made by scholars working in the resource mobilization tradition has been the identification of those resources essential for collective action (Cress and Snow 1996; Edwards and McCarthy 2004; McCarthy and Zald 2003). Although the types of resources available to SMOs like unions are diverse, the two regarded as the most critical are human labor and money (Oliver and Marwell 1992). Recognizing the importance of these resources (Reed 1989, 1993; Rooks 2004; Voos 1982), unions have significantly increased the size of their organizing budget (Slaughter 1999; Voss and Sherman 2000) and created programs like Union Summer and the Organizing Institute to expand the pool of trained organizers.[2]

Union Organizing Repertoires

As Ganz clearly recognized, resources cannot simply "buy" desired outcomes like organizing success, but must be channeled through specific repertoires of action. Scholars have paid considerable attention to the tactical dimension of social movement activity, including the development of new strategies (McAdam 1983; Soule 1997; Tilly 1995) and the ways movements deploy them to influence targets (Gamson 1975; McAdam and Su 2002; McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly 2001). While often culturally prescribed (Tilly 1995), the tactical arsenal of many groups is considerable due both to internal innovations (McAdam 1983), and the modularity of protest repertoires (Tarrow 1998), which often leads to their diffusion across movement boundaries (Meyer and Whittier 1994).

Given the importance of repertoire selection, it follows that the effectiveness of resources should be contingent upon the particular strategic approach they are invested in. A major consequence of the shift towards social movement unionism has been the transformation of organizing from a fairly bureaucratic activity to a militant form of labor activism that were common in earlier labor struggles (Clawson 2003; Fantasia 1988). Specifically, some unions have begun to replace the traditional method of organizing, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) election, with a more contentious strategy, commonly referred to as the corporate or pressure campaign, that directly challenges corporate power (see Manheim 2001; Martin 2008).[3]

Under the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 labor unions are required to complete a series of predefined tasks during the course of an organizing drive. The union begins by collecting authorization cards from employees, which indicate support for unionization. Once the union secures cards from at least 35 percent of employees (typically a union will attempt to have a majority of workers sign cards) they are filed with the National Labor Relations

2. The Organizing Institute is an AFL-CIO program that provides in-depth training to workers seeking to form a union. The AFL-CIO's Union Summer is an internship for college students interesting in gaining organizing experience (see Bunnage and Stepan-Norris 2004).

3. There are two additional methods that unions can employ to expand their membership base: (1) organizing public sector employees (Bronfenbrenner and Juravich 1995; Johnston 1994), and (2) what Adrienne E Eaton and Jill Kriesky (2001) refer to as neutrality agreements, where the firm signs a contract with the union that represents its existing employees stating that it will not interfere in organizing drives at other plants. Public sector organizing is not included because of the lack of systematic data on this tactic, while neutrality agreements are excluded because they are not new organizing efforts, but rather the result of an existing union-firm relationship.

Board. The Board then oversees a secret ballot "certification election" where all employees are allowed to vote for or against unionization; a simple pro-union majority requires the firm to "bargain in good faith" with the union.

In an effort to avoid firm resistance that takes place within the NLRB election process (Dickens 1983; Freeman and Kleiner 1990), a growing number of unions have begun experimenting with an alternative method of organizing (Martin 2008). This new repertoire has been used with great effect by the Service Employees Union's Justice for Janitors organizing drives in various U.S. cities (Waldinger et al. 1998) and has also been instrumental in the recent success of the Hotel Employees' union in Las Vegas (Fantasia and Voss 2004). Under the rubric of this resurgent strategy, unions employ a range of coordinated tactics, from legal maneuverings to civil disobedience and strikes, to mobilize external allies in an effort to force the firm to recognize the union (Crump 1991). The ability of unions to borrow from the "playlist" of other movements illustrates both the modularity of protest repertoires (Tarrow 1998) and how the tactical choices of individual groups is shaped by the larger social movement field within which they operate (Isaac et al. 2006). Importantly, because the scope of conflict is expanded beyond existing union/firm relations, this repertoire parallels other types of protest that disrupt the target's ability to carry out routine operations (McAdam 1983).

Recent interest in the institutionalization of social movements provides a useful theoretical framework to examine the underlying logic of these two organizing strategies. Although institutionalization can refer to a variety of movement activities (see Meyer and Tarrow 1998) the routinization of protest is a key dimension. Unlike NLRB elections, which have a clearly established "script" that unions must follow, non-NLRB organizing varies dramatically depending upon the targeted firm and, "lacks well-defined rules and requirements . . . " (Perry 1987:16).[4] In addition, the legitimacy of the NLRB election rests upon the authority of the state, another common indicator of institutionalized collective action (Schwartz 1976:130).[5] On the whole, then, the movement away from the NLRB has created somewhat of a paradigm shift in labor circles, providing unionists a new set of tools to organize workers (Swidler 1986).

This divergence in union organizing strategies allows me to systematically examine the consequences of institutionalization, which has been the subject of much theoretical debate but little empirical research (Meyers and Tarrow 1998). To the extent that the effectiveness of resources depends on which repertoire is selected, it is reasonable to assume that unions would strategically "bundle" specific tactical/resource combinations to increase the odds of a successful organizing drive. Proponents of non-NLRB organizing have cited this repertoire's ability to foster rank-and-file development and forge ties with outside allies as the foundation of a successful organizing campaign (Lerner 1991). As Richard Hogan (2004) writes, "One of the things that social movement organizers do is construct political identities and mobilize people so identified to engage in collective action" (p. 274). Because human labor allows movements to build networks among participants (Marwell, Oliver, and Prahl 1988), I expect that organizers will be particularly important in non-NLRB organizing drives. Given the high costs associated with this repertoire (Jarley and Maranto 1990), financial disbursements may also play a role. In contrast, the routinized nature of NLRB elections is expected to constrain the utility of resources deployed for organizing.[6]

4. While unions are able to employ certain tactics to increase the likelihood of a successful NLRB election (see Bronfenbrenner 1997; Bronfenbrenner and Hickey 2004), these actions take place within an organizing framework that has been constructed by the state, not the union.

5. Although it is the firm's employees who vote for or against union recognition, it is the state that sanctions the entire process, including the result. The recent conservative shift of the Board only exacerbates the challenges associated with this form of organizing (Gould 2000).

6. It is important to recognize that the selection of these repertoires may be contingent upon the disruptive capacity of the firm's employees; more powerful workers may prefer avoiding the NLRB (Wallace, Griffin, and Rubin 1989). Yet, I believe that this reality does not render resources inconsequential in the organizing process; even disruptive potential cannot be translated into new gains without the organizational resources necessary to support collective action (Wright 1984).

Opposition to Organizing

Scholars like Ganz have recognized that the strategic capacity of social movement actors depends heavily on their ability to outmaneuver groups hostile to their goals. While most research has focused on the role of the state and its repression of movement activity (Earl 2003; Gamson 1975; Titarenko et al. 2001), some has begun to explore resistance by other actors in the field (Andrews 2002; Lo 1982). Countermobilization can present a number of challenges to movements, from how they frame contentious situations (Benford and Snow 2000) to their ability to achieve desired goals (Andrews 2002). This is especially relevant for organized labor given the historical opposition of business groups (Griffin, Wallace, and Rubin 1986). Indeed, many have pointed to employer resistance as *the* reason for declining union membership in America (Fantasia and Voss 2004; Goldfield 1987).

Because the rise of countermovements are often linked to shifts in the political structure (Fantasia 1988; Isaac and Christensen 2002; Meyer and Staggenborg 1996; Rosenblum 1995), I expect firm hostility to organizing will be especially pronounced when the state adopts anti-labor policies. As the growth of resources devoted to organizing has been driven in part by this "layering" of firm and state hostilities (Voss and Sherman 2000), including resistance by these actors will allow me to fully specify the effect of resources in union organizing drives. This analysis also fills a void in the resource mobilization theory, which has been largely silent on matters of repression.

Data and Measurements

Given recent attempts to transform the labor movement at both the national and local level, an analysis of union organizing from 1990 through 2001 presents a unique opportunity to examine the implications of these important historical changes (Isaac and Griffin 1989). Additionally, data constraints also play a role in selecting this period; the electronic newspaper archives used to measure non-NLRB events are incomplete before 1990. Although organizing efforts are examined through 2001, seven years after the changing of the guard at the AFL-CIO, it is important to recognize that research cannot provide insight into the implications of more recent events, such as the split of the "Change to Win" coalition of unions.

The union database is compiled using the annual financial disclosure forms the Office of Labor and Management Standards (OLMS), a subagency of the Department of Labor, requires all labor unions in America to file. In order to measure human and financial disbursements to organizing, various "laundry lists" that include information on union expenditures and personnel were coded by a group of research assistants.[7]

While the OLMS includes every local labor union in existence today, the relative infrequency of NLRB elections and especially non-NLRB organizing would require a very large sample to capture enough events for standard statistical purposes. As an alternative, the sample includes a small number of unions most "at-risk" of organizing during the 1990s, while seeking to ensure a (relatively) representative sample of the labor movement as a whole.[8] To achieve both goals, a two stage sampling design was employed. In stage one, seven national unions were identified that represent a wide range of industries and have played, to varying

7. A rigorous training schedule and periodic reviews were instituted to ensure maximum intercoder reliability, which exceeded .9.

8. Note that unions were not selected on their actual organizing activity, only on characteristics that put them most at risk for this event. The strategy of sampling based on risk is common in sociology; Voss and Sherman (2000) employ such an approach to identify potentially revitalized local unions.

degrees, a role in rejuvenating the labor movement.[9] In stage two, ten local unions were randomly selected from each national union, for a total of 70 organizations. Only those locals that filed an LM-2 report were included in the sample.[10] Unions with annual receipts that exceed $200,000 file an LM-2, while financially smaller unions file the LM-3 or 4 report.[11] Filing status was chosen as a risk predictor because LM-2 locals comprise only 18 percent of all labor unions but account for nearly 70 percent of NLRB election activity.[12] Additionally, only the LM-2 form provides comprehensive information on the resource disbursements of labor unions.

Given a sampling strategy that overrepresents large, potentially active locals, it is worthwhile to provide a brief description of the organizations included to assess their representativeness of the labor movement as a whole. Data from the OLMS indicate that of the 28,233 local unions operating in the United States, 17.7 percent (5002), filed an LM-2, and represented over 10 million workers, or nearly 75 percent, of all union members. Table 1A in the Appendix compares the important characteristics of these 70 locals to the population of *all* local unions in America, all locals that file an LM-2 report, and the 1520 LM-2 locals that comprise the sample population. Although the unions in the sample are larger than the average local and have more members than other LM-2 unions, they do not differ statistically from the 1520 locals they were selected from, with the exception of a slight overrepresentation of Southern unions. In addition, the NLRB victory rate for the sample, 55 percent, is quite close to the overall victory rate of 48 percent during this period.

While the overarching goal of the sampling strategy employed here is to ensure a reasonably accurate representation of union organizing activity in the 1990s, the current research focuses on organizing outcomes. Because a union's attempt to organize a nonunion firm is a necessary precondition for an organizing victory (or defeat), the empirical models are limited to those unions that currently have at least one organizing drive underway at the time of the outcome. As discussed in greater detail below, NLRB elections are much more common than non-NLRB campaigns. Therefore, the sample of unions that are the basis of the non-NLRB analyses, 71 union-year observations from eight unions, is considerably smaller than the 299 union-years across 58 unions used to model NLRB success (although most non-NLRB unions also engage in some NLRB organizing). While the current research does not seek to address *why* unions choose to organize (see Martin 2007), it is important to recognize the potential implications of this approach. Although large enough for standard statistical models, the small size of the non-NLRB sample in particular may limit both the ability to identify the causal factors that increase the likelihood of success when using this strategy and the generalizability of the findings. Nevertheless, the results do provide empirical insight into the ways unions are able to organize new members, and, I believe, is preferable to analyzing a larger sample of unions selected on the basis of their actual organizing activity.

9. These unions included: the Communication Workers of America (CWA), the Service Employees International (SEIU), the Hotel and Restaurant Employees (HERE), the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the United Auto Workers (UAW), the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), and the United Steelworkers of America (USW). It is in some respects difficult to quantify the specific role of these unions in the broader attempts to transform the American labor movement. Some, like SEIU, UFCW, and HERE, have been at the forefront of new organizing strategies (Crump 1991; Fantasia and Voss 2004; Waldinger et al. 1998), and, along with the Teamsters, form the Change to Win coalition of unions. Others, particularly the USW and UAW, have struggled to overcome the decline of the manufacturing sector (Juravich and Bronfenbrenner 1999).

10. An additional union, the Union of Needletrades, Industrial, and Textile Employees (which has since merged with HERE to form UNITE-HERE) has also been part of a move towards more aggressive unionism (Bonacich 2000). However, it did not have enough large local unions to be included in the sample.

11. The criterion for selection (the financial assets of the union) is included in the models as a control variable, which reduces the potential for selection bias (Winship and Mare 1992).

12. Unfortunately, there is no population of non-NLRB events, so I cannot make a similar estimate for this repertoire.

Union Organizing Efforts

One of the major empirical objectives of the current research is to examine how the effectiveness of resources are shaped by the specific strategy they are invested in. Data on NLRB organizing are provided by the National Labor Relations Board. As noted above, the NLRB only becomes involved once the union files authorization cards signed by at least thirty percent of the firm's employees. Because failures to reach this threshold (or some higher percentage imposed by the union) are not included in the analysis, the data are skewed towards elections where the union is at least minimally successful in securing support from workers.

In response to the perceived limitations of the NLRB election process, unions have begun drawing upon a variety of tactics, many of them contentious, to avoid the NLRB. To identify these events I draw upon media records, a common strategy used by scholars interested in various protest dynamics (Earl, Soule, and McCarthy 2003; Eisinger 1973; Jenkins and Perrow 1977; McAdam 1982; Soule 1997). Specifically, two newspaper archives, LEXIS-NEXIS and NEWSLIBRARY, were searched for any organizing by the 70 unions that occurred outside the NLRB. Together the archives included at least one local newspaper for each union in the sample. Despite issues of bias when using media sources to study various forms of collective action (Earl et al. 2004; Franzosi 1987; McCarthy, McPhail and Smith 1996; Oliver and Maney 2000), because the media outlets are major targets of non-NLRB campaigns (DiLorenzo 1996; Manheim 2001), I expect newspapers to provide a nearly complete record of these events.[13]

The shift towards social movement unionism encompasses a variety of different tactics that have been used in conjunction with events from strikes to political campaigns. The focus here is only on those that support an organizing drive targeting a nonunionized firm. While the current research examines resource disbursements across NLRB and non-NLRB organizing drives, it is important to recognize that the deinstitutionalized nature of organizing outside the NLRB has, by definition, granted unions significant tactical freedom (see Manheim 2001; Martin 2008 for a description). According to newspaper accounts of these events, over three-quarters of the drives analyzed here included marches/demonstrations, which represents a straightforward way to involve the rank and file. About a third were marked by some form of civil disobedience, a quarter were coupled with work stoppages by the unionizing workers, and over half included a political activity, such as lobbying. The diversity of tactics associated with this repertoire is likely to increase the strategic capacity of unions that select this particular approach to organizing.[14]

Table 1 includes the descriptive statistics for each variable included in the analysis. Unless otherwise specified, the measures are annual statistics, but because I am employing time-series data, most of the time-varying covariates are measured as two-year moving averages.[15] Because the models are limited to unions that are currently engaging in a particular form of organizing, the table includes the descriptors for the entire sample of unions, as well as the NLRB and non-NLRB samples, which do include some of the same unions.

13. Of course, some non-NLRB activities, like salting (union organizers seeking employment at the targeted firm), may not be considered newsworthy. However, the overarching approach of this new repertoire encompasses many tactics, from marches to civil disobedience, which should increase newspaper coverage.

14. Because the resource measures are annual data, I am unable to match them to specific tactics used in non-NLRB campaigns.

15. Two-year moving averages ($X_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$) are used primarily because the outcome of interest is an annual measure, which can take place at any point within time t. In contrast, a simple lag (X_{t-1}) ignores the possibility that X_t can have a causal effect on Y_t. Of course Y_t may affect X_t, increasing the possibility of simultaneity bias. However, the interest here is examining the relationship between resources and the conclusion of the organizing drive; it is unlikely that the union continues to allocate significant resources after the drive is completed.

Table 1 • *Means and Standard Deviations of Organizing Outcomes and Predictors*

Variables	*Entire Sample*	*NLRB Subsample*	*Non-NLRB Subsample*
Organizing victories			
NLRB elections	.390	1.130	—
Non-NLRB organizing	.080	—	1.00
Organizing resource allocation			
Nonstaff organizing budget (in thousands)	7.343	12.235	24.477
Staff organizing budget (in thousands)	33.910	71.629	69.684
Organizing staff size	.928	1.806	2.592
Hostile climate			
Right-to-work state	.257	.280	.250
Decertification elections (per 1,000 proxy unionenterprises)	7.531	7.768	6.227
Unfair labor practices (per 1,000 enterprises)	4.546	4.471	4.308
Controls			
Average membership size	3831.130	5965.876	3637.141
Age (in 1990)	16.530	17.210	19.380
Total receipts (in thousands)	1380.943	2073.891	1201.041
Service industry	.67	.76	—
State unionization rate	16.694	16.560	17.970

Outcomes

Organizing success is measured by *organizing victories*, the number of organizing drives that were successfully completed in a particular year. Table 2 illustrates the continued popularity of the NLRB election, which outnumbers its less institutionalized counterpart by a ratio of seven to one. Despite this disparity, it is obvious why some unions have begun to avoid the NLRB process; the success rate is nearly 30 percent lower than organizing outside the NLRB.

Organizing Resource Allocation

In their description of resources and social movements, Pamela E. Oliver and Gerald Marwell (1992) are concerned primarily with financial and human resources, which also figure prominently in the revitalization of union organizing efforts. Financial resources are captured by *nonstaff organizing budget* and *staff organizing budget*. This distinction allows me to determine if money disbursed to the union's organizing staff is more or less effective than financial disbursements that are made independently of organizers. *Organizing staff size* includes the number of union officers and employees that have the title of organizer. It is important to

Table 2 • *Rate and Success of Organizing among Sample of 70 Unions (1990–2001)*

	Frequency	*Percentage of all Organizing*	*Victory Rate (percentage)*
NLRB election	618	87	55
Non-NLRB organizing	86	13	83
Total	704	100	58

note that the OLMS forms do not report volunteer (unpaid) union organizers; thus the true amount of human labor invested in organizing may be underestimated. In addition, all of these indicators of resources are annual measures and cannot be linked to specific organizing drives. In order to isolate their effects, alternative organizing efforts are controlled for in the models.

Hostile Climate

A great deal of the resistance to unionization occurs within the context of the organizing drive itself; the firm employs a variety of tactics to deflect union activities, and the state can intervene by mobilizing police and the courts (Fantasia and Voss 2004). Again, because I am analyzing aggregate annual union organizing behavior, data limitations prevent the inclusion of organizing-specific indicators of countermobilization. As an alternative, I include anti-union measures at the state level. Although these do not in any way reflect actual resistance that occurs during the course of the organizing drive, and thus represent one limitation of the current analysis, they do capture the hostility of the broader climate within which the organizing effort occurs. The assumption is that unions, like most SMOs, will find it more difficult to achieve their goals when countermobilization is pervasive. The state's policy towards organized labor is captured by whether it is a *right-to-work state*. Right-to-work statutes outlaw the closed shop, making union membership at unionized firms voluntary, and thus reducing the union's ability to organize and maintain members (Ellwood and Fine 1987).

Along with a direct effect on organizing, the legal environment of the state also shapes firms' perception of the costs and benefits of anti-union activity. Here I employ two state-level contextual measures of employer hostility, both drawn from the *National Labor Relations Board Annual Report* (NRLB 1990–2001). The first is *decertification election frequency*,[16] an NLRB sponsored election similar to a certification election, except that at issue is an existing union's representation of the firm's employees. Companies commonly use these elections to terminate their collective bargaining agreement. The second indicator of employer resistance at the state level is the number of employer-related *unfair labor practices* filed by workers with the NLRB. Unfair labor practices (ULPs) are a response to various employer hostilities, and are often spurred by organizing (McCammon 2001a). Workers at any firm can file a ULP, so this indicator is standardized by 1,000 enterprises. It is important to recognize that, unlike ULPs, decertification elections do not occur at nonunionized firms that are the potential targets of organizing campaigns. Therefore, this measure is solely a state-level indicator of firm countermobilization.

Controls

In addition to these predictors, the models also include *membership size*,[17] *age*, *total receipts* (budget), if the union operated in the *service industry*,[18] and *state unionization rate* (the percent nonagricultural workforce that is unionized, from unionstats.com, see Hirsh and MacPherson

16. Decertification elections can only occur at unionized firms, which necessitates that this measure be standardized by the number of such enterprises in the state. Unfortunately, these data are not available, so I develop a proxy using two pieces of information. First, because unionization is quite rare at very small firms (Hollister 2004; Mellow 1982), I limit the number of enterprises to those with more than 20 employees. Secondly, I multiply this by the proportion of the workers in the state that are unionized, based on the logic that the more union members there are in a state, the greater the proportion of enterprises that are unionized. Although not an exact estimate, I do expect that this figure is correlated with the actual number of union enterprises in the state. The decertification election measure is then standardized per 1,000 of these proxy union enterprises.

17. Union membership size was not measured by the LM form until 1994, so I use the average membership size of the union from 1994 through 2001 instead.

18. Because all non-NLRB events occurs in the service sector, this variable is not included for this repertoire.

2003). I also include a *Sweeney era* dummy to measure whether the changing of the AFL-CIO guard in 1995 had any affect on organizing outcomes.[19] Finally, although data limitations prevent me from measuring the organizing culture of the union, I do include dummy variables for the national union the local is affiliated with and controls for lagged organizing activities.

Analytical Strategy

In this sample, annual observations of unions are embedded within the local union structure. These observations are highly correlated with one another (Allison 1984), resulting in serially autocorrelated error structures that produce misestimated standard errors. Therefore, hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), a generalization of multiple regression for nested or repeated-measures data (Bryk and Raudenbush 1992), is used. The statistical package is well-suited for examining multiple observations for each unit of analysis (see Bryk and Raudenbush 1987; 1992 for a methodological discussion and Horney, Osgood, and Marshall 1995 for a practical application of this approach). HLM addresses the problem of correlation among nested observations by partitioning variance into different levels: time (level 1) and union (level 2).

In the analysis, the indicator of success—annual victory rate—is not a linear outcome. Therefore, a generalized linear model, binomial regression, is employed. Binomial regression is useful for predicting the probability of a successful event, given a specified number of trials. The basic Binomial sampling model is as follows:

$$Y_{it}|\varphi_{it} \sim B(m_{it}, \varphi_{it})$$

where Y_{it}, which has a binomial distribution, represents the number of successes in m_{it} trials and the probability of success per trial is φ_{it}. Substantively, I am able predict the probability of a successful outcome, given that the union is currently engaged in m_{it} organizing efforts. Because the outcome variable is a dichotomy (success or failure), a logit link function is employed, where the dependent variable is the log odds of success.

Results

The analysis begins with an assessment of the role of resources in organizing before turning to a more in-depth account of strategic capacity by exploring the interplay between resources, repertoires, and resistance. As described above, there has been a tactical "break" in union organizing that should have a fundamental effect on the utility of resources allocated for this activity. Specifically, the less routinized nature of non-NLRB campaigns is expected to increase the importance of union organizers by granting them the opportunity to build networks among workers and between the union and external allies. The first two models in Table 3 support the claim that the link between resources and success is indeed dependent upon tactical decisions made by the union. Beginning first with the NLRB elections, neither financial resources nor human labor has any effect on the likelihood of a successful election.[20] In fact, the only significant coefficient is the effect of the service industry dummy, and success actually declined after Sweeney took office, although the period

19. There does not appear to be any indication of multicollinearity in the models; resources allocated for organizing did not increase significantly after 1995.

20. While research by Bronfenbrenner (1997) has found that unions can use specific strategies, such as emphasizing certain issues, to increase the likelihood of a successful NLRB election outcome, these findings suggest that the actual resources devoted to such tasks may be less important, again illustrating the constraints this repertoire places on unions.

Table 3 • *Binomial Effect of Union Resources on Annual Organizing Success (1990–2001)*

Variable	*NLRB Elections (Resources Only)*	*Non-NLRB Organizing (Resource Only)*	*NLRB Elections (Resources and Hostility)*	*Non-NLRB Organizing (Resources and Hostility)*
Intercept	−1.4631*	−1.2349	−1.5150*	−.1648
	(.8304)	(.8836)	(.8345)	(1.1095)
Organizing disbursements				
Nonstaff organizing budget$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	.0022	.0070	.0037	.0125
	(.0059)	(.0066)	(.0061)	(.0081)
Staff organizing budget$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	−.0014	−.0131	−.0017	−.0183
	(.0028)	(.0172)	(.0028)	(.0199)
Organizing staff size$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	.0834	.8203*	.0914	1.2505**
	(.1073)	(.4951)	(.1078)	(.6032)
Hostile climate				
Right-to-work state	—	—	.3642	2.2399
			(.4085)	(1.8638)
Decertification elections$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	—	—	.0304	.3412*
			(.0242)	(.1999)
Unfair labor practices$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	—	—	.0769	−.0838
			(.0919)	(.3346)
Controls				
Total receipts$_{(t)}$	−.0001	−.0020	−.0002	−.0021
	(.0002)	(.0018)	(.0002)	(.0023)
Membership	−.0001	.0010	.0001	.0008
	(.0001)	(.0007)	(.0001)	(.0006)
Age	−.0261	−.1065	−.0315	.1028
	(.0201)	(.1946)	(.0211)	(.3440)
Service industry	1.2908*	—	1.2967*	—
	(.7047)		(.7046)	
State unionization rate$_{(t)}$	.0159	−.0720	.0261	.1103
	(.0232)	(.1026)	(.0419)	(.1587)
Sweeney era dummy	−.5496	−.8194	−.5308	−1.6369
	(.3625)	(1.0063)	(.3619)	(1.1854)

$^{**}p < .1$ $^{*}p < .05$ $^{***}p < .001$ (two-tailed tests)

Note: Controls include rate of organizing, lagged success for both repertoires, a dummy for national affiliation, and time. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

dummy is not significant. In contrast, for non-NLRB campaigns resources do matter, particularly the size of the organizing staff; the addition of one organizer more than doubles the odds of a union victory.

As the significance of organizers is only at the .1 level, this effect suggests, but does not in any way conclusively "prove," that these actors are a key component of organizing success, especially given the incredible complexities of non-NLRB organizing (Manheim 2001). Yet, this finding is consistent with the argument made above; the outcomes of less institutionalized organizing efforts appear to depend on the allocation of human labor necessary to forge a grassroots movement to bring pressure on the firm. The importance of organizers is further supported by the unequal distribution of non-NLRB success across unions; those with more than two organizers engaged in about 60 percent of these campaigns, but accounted for nearly 85 percent of the victories.

If the effect of organizers can indeed be attributed to their ability to mobilize the rank-and-file, this finding has considerable implications for *how* non-NLRB campaigns are carried out. As Linda Markowitz (2000) argues, a top down approach with little membership involvement may reduce rank-and-file participation in other activities, such as contract negotiations. To the extent that organizers can forge a sense of collective identity among workers, then making these actors the centerpiece of non-NLRB efforts will increase both the likelihood of an organizing victory and ensure the long-term vitality of the union. Building upon Ganz's (2000) research, we would expect that particularly "resourceful" unions should not only utilize this militant form of organizing, which, as evidenced in Table 2, is considerably more effective than the traditional NLRB election, but would ensure that the organizing drives are adequately staff.

These models examine the direct effect of resources on success without taking into consideration the hostility of the environment within which the organizing drive takes place. Unlike many state-centric social movements, unions confront both the state *and* business enterprises willing to use a range of legal and illegal strategies to resist unionization. Such behaviors are included in the last two models in Table 3. Beginning first with the resource coefficients, the results indicate that the positive relationship between resources and success for non-NLRB events is strengthened when indicators of anti-union activity are controlled. A one–person increase in the union's organizing staff now raises the odds of success by a factor of 3.5, a sizable gain from the previous model (and the coefficient is now significant at the .05 level). Given the increase in the size of the organizer coefficient, it is apparent that the effectiveness of resources cannot be fully specified until countermobilization is included in the model, a finding that has considerable implications for the resource mobilization perspective.

Turning to measures of repression, the models present an unanticipated finding: both firm and political hostility at the state level has a *positive* effect on the two organizing outcomes, although only the decertification measure in the non-NLRB model is significant. One explanation is that unions simply avoid organizing in states where firm resistance is widespread, thus rendering the relationship between success and hostility largely irrelevant. There is, however, no indication that the unions in the sample are less active in states with higher than average levels of countermobilization.[21] A second explanation, based on the interdependence of countermobilization and political opportunities (Meyer and Staggenborg 1996), suggests that firm and political resistance have a synergistic effect on organizing success. In the following section I assess the likelihood of such an interaction and also extend Ganz's framework of strategic capacity by examining the interplay between resources and opposition to organizing.

Resource Effects by Hostile Context

Table 4 presents the interactions between the two indicators of firm resistance and the presence of a right–to–work law for both organizing outcomes. For NLRB elections, there is no evidence that firm hostility reduces success when combined with an unfavorable political environment. This is, however, not the case for non–NLRB organizing. Decertification election frequency is negatively related to the probability of a union victory when the drive occurs in a right–to–work state. A similar result holds for ULPs, though this interaction is not statistically significant. Additionally, the introduction of a more fine-tuned measure of countermobilization increases the effect of resources allocated for organizing. In this model, the effect of nonstaff financial disbursements is now significant, a finding that mirrors other research on the financial costs of this repertoire (Jarley and Maranto 1990).

The fact that non–NLRB organizing is less successful in states with higher levels of both state and firm hostility provides initial evidence that understanding how contextual factors

21. Although union organizing may spur anti-union activity by firms and the state, the focus here is on the conclusion of the organizing drive.

Table 4 • *Binomial Effect of Union Resources on Annual Organizing Success, with Firm/State Hostility and Resource Interactions (1990–2001)*

Variable	*NLRB Elections*	*Non-NLRB Organizing*	*Non-NLRB Organizing*
Intercept	−1.3766*	−.8097	−.1242
	(.8360)	(1.222)	(1.0224)
Organizing disbursements			
Nonstaff organizing budget$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	.0011	.0227**	.0178*
	(.0062)	(.0103)	(.0092)
Staff organizing budget$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	−.0011	−.0212	−.0141
	(.0028)	(.0179)	(.0200)
Organizing staff size$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	.0698	1.2492**	1.8601**
	(.1081)	(.5811)	(.6288)
Hostile climate			
Right-to-work state	.2733	1.6639	1.7542
	(.4371)	(1.6774)	(1.7903)
Decertification elections$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	−.0143	.6472**	.8247**
	(.0346)	(.2866)	(.2820)
Unfair labor practices$_{[(t+(t-1))/2]}$	.0224	−.1541	−.0898
	(.1106)	(.4652)	(.5210)
Controls			
Total receipts$_{(t)}$	−.0001	−.0007	−.0027
	(.0002)	(.0026)	(.0022)
Membership	.0001	−.0009	.0003
	(.0001)	(.0005)	(.0010)
Age	−.0299	.6312	.4806
	(.0211)	(.7702)	(.7205)
Service industry	1.3298*	—	—
	(.7043)		
State unionization rate$_{(t)}$	−.0080	.1999	.2625
	(.0454)	(.1839)	(.1846)
Sweeney era dummy	−.5418	−1.5438	−1.9888
	(.3618)	(1.2426)	(1.2033)
Interactions			
RTW*decertification elections	.0810	−1.084*	−1.1661*
	(.0507)	(.6183)	(.6106)
RTW*ULP	.2290	−.6510	—
	(.1745)	(.7050)	
Decertification elections*organizing staff size	—	—	−.1215*
			(.0652)

*$p < .1$ **$p < .05$ ***$p <. 001$ (two-tailed tests)
Note: Controls include rate of organizing, lagged success for both repertoires, a dummy for national affiliation, and time. Numbers in parentheses are standard errors.

shape organizing processes should be sensitive to both economic (business) and political forms of resistance (Fantasia 1988). Again, because the measures are at the state–level, these findings do not shed light on conflict that occurs within the organizing drive itself. However, they do suggest an overlap between firm and political opposition to union organizing. Specifically, it is possible that in states with right–to–work statutes, where the closed shop is not protected, employer hostility to unions may challenge the very legitimacy of collective bargaining.

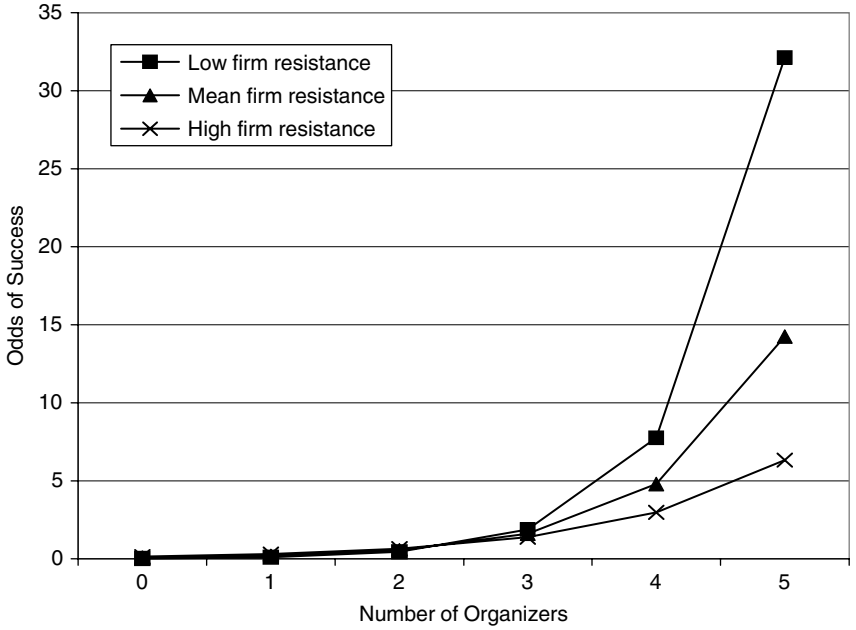

Figure 1 • *Effect of Organizers on Odds of Non-NLRB Success by Firm Resistance*

While firm/state collusion has long impeded labor activism (passage of right–to–work laws is an obvious example, Gall 1988), this has implications for analyzing movement processes more generally. Specifically, the growth of neoliberal polices has prompted a number of social movements to directly target corporations (Den Hond and De Bakker 2007; Schurman 2004), expanding the role these actors play deflecting movement challenges.

The interaction effect clearly illustrates the significant obstacle that political and corporate resistance, even at the state level, poses for unions. A major contribution of Ganz's analysis of the United Farm Workers' struggle is his recognition that part of acting strategically means overcoming these obstacles. As such, the last model in Table 4 extends this framework of movement agency by examining how resources disbursed for organizing are shaped by resistance to unionization. Specifically, the model includes an interaction between the size of the organizing staff and the measure of decertification elections to determine if the effectiveness of human resources in non-NLRB campaigns decreases in overtly hostile climates.[22] The results indicate that this is indeed the case; the interaction is negative and significant. In order to visually represent this relationship, Figure 1 presents the multiplicative effect of organizing staff size on the odds of non-NLRB success across three levels of firm resistance: one standard deviation below the mean (low), the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean (high).[23]

22. A similar interaction between organizing budget and decertification elections was not significant, nor were interaction effects for NLRB success.

23. This is a standard way of graphically representing an interaction between two continuous variables (see Tomaskovic-Devey and Roscigno 1996). While the probability of a successful organizing drive given *N* organizers can be extrapolated from these results, such an approach assumes organizers have a linear effect on success. Because this new form of organizing is incredibly diverse, there is a range of dynamics not included in the model. Thus, the results presented in the figure recognize that while organizers increase the odds of a union victory, there are a number of other factors that are also related to the outcome of the organizing drive.

Table 5 • *Non-NLRB Unions' Allocation of Organizers by Firm Resistance*

	Level of Firm Resistance in the State	
Number of Organizers	*Below Mean (percentage)*	*Above Mean*
0	40.5	17
1 to 3	11.9	62.1
4 or more	47.6	20.7
Total	100	100

This figure suggests two divergent, but equally important findings. First, an anti-union environment *does* constrain the ability of unions to convert resources into organizing gains. Although proponents of non-NLRB organizing have argued that this repertoire is particularly well-suited for overcoming opposition to unions (Crump 1991), it appears that firms can hinder organizers' ability to develop an effective campaign. This may be at least partially driven by the significant amount of conflict between the union and firm that occurs within these events (Manheim 2001).

Just as important, however, is that unions willing to allocate enough human labor to the organizing drive are able to substantially improve the likelihood of success, even when employer resistance is widespread. A union allocating five organizers in a hostile climate increases their baseline odds of success by more than 6 times. This effect, while much smaller than in states with low levels of firm resistance, is considerable nonetheless. As Ganz makes clear, unfavorable environmental conditions do not necessarily prevent an SMO from achieving its goal, they simply require new and innovative solutions. For unions today, part of the answer is the growth of non-NLRB organizing, but as Kim Voss and Rachel Sherman (2000) find in their analysis of union revitalization, even progressive unions vary in their commitment to new modes of action. A similar finding is echoed in Figure 1; simply adopting an innovative form of organizing is unlikely to have any real benefits unless there is a willingness on the part of the union to commit the resources necessary to ensure success.

To assess the allocation of organizers by unions that use the non-NLRB approach, Table 5 includes a breakdown of the size of their organizing staff by the level of firm resistance they face. It is apparent that although a large number of organizers are required to overcome firm hostility (at the state level), most of the human resources devoted to organizing are embedded in states where countermobilization is less pervasive. Nearly 48 percent of unions organizing outside the NLRB in states where firm resistance was below the mean employed four or more organizers, while only 21 percent of unions in hostile states make a similar allocation of human resources. This could, of course, be a strategic decision on the part of unions; to the extent that a hostile environment reduces the effectiveness of organizers, it makes sense to deploy them where they will have the greatest impact. However, if unions are to reassert themselves in U.S. industrial relations, they will have to become active in areas that are economically and politically unfavorable to working class interests, a challenge that should spark even more debate within the movement.

Conclusions

Although there have been significant advances within the resource mobilization perspective, including efforts to identify the tactics SMOs employ to acquire external support, the role of resources in movement outcomes has not been adequately addressed. Recent changes

in the American labor movement, including an expansion in both the volume and type of resources used for organizing, coupled with the resurgence of firm and state resistance to unionization, represent a unique opportunity to examine how resources are used by unions to organize new members. The findings suggest that resources are important, but that their effect is contingent upon the form they take, the particular organizing strategy used, and the level of firm and state hostility encountered by the union.

Although the American labor movement, given its age and relative formalization, is probably "wealthier" than many other social movement actors, the implications of the current study extend well beyond organized labor. As Ganz (2000) made explicit in his study of the United Farm Workers, movements are able to construct effective tactics in response to external and internal challenges. Scholars have paid considerable attention to the types of repertoires movement actors use to advance their goals (McAdam 1983), yet the findings highlight that in addition to tactical choice, it is the resources allocated to these actions that may be just as important. Specifically, I argue that by employing less institutionalized forms of action, labor unions allow organizers the freedom to build the campaign in the way that best suits the particular conditions on the ground. This is particularly salient given the influx of nontraditional union activists, such as college students and former members of other movements, who provide a fresh perspective and innovative ideas (Bunnage and Stepan-Norris 2004; Voss and Sherman 2000). Quite simply, certain repertoires grant these actors the strategic capacity to effect social change. This highlights not only the importance of human labor over money, which, of course, can be converted to labor, but also the importance of constructing space to most effectively harness the creative potential of activists.

Related to the previous point, it is important to recognize that specific movements may approach the repertoire/resource interaction differently depending upon their own history and goals. For example, resources vary in their fungibility; to the extent that human resources are necessary for less institutionalized modes of action, movement actors that use this approach would be expected to mobilize committed activists. Civil disobedience often does not cost a lot of money, but it does require participants willing to put themselves in harm's way. More institutionalized groups, however, may be interested in raising money through strategies like direct mailings. These SMOs have less need for individuals willing to take personal risks and can transform financial assets into paid staff. In addition, oppositional actors like the state can reduce the effectiveness of resources, prompting movements to further evaluate how to best use their resources strategically to win new benefits (McAdam 1983; Morris 1984).

It is important to recognize that the current insight is derived from analyzing union organizing activity, a form of collective action that is highly specific to the American labor movement. Given the quantifiable nature of organizing drives and their outcomes, the findings offered above, particularly the importance of organizers, may not be directly generalizable to other forms of social protest. In particular, movements often construct multifaceted campaigns that rely on a variety of tactics, which may mute the immediate effect of organizers. However, I believe there are clear parallels between organizing and social movement activity more generally that allow for some general, if qualified, claims about resources. First, the findings clearly indicate that organizers are positively related to success in less institutionalized forms of action, which grants these actors the flexibility to draw upon various tactics depending upon the particular challenges on the ground. Therefore, while the effects of an influx of organizers may be more difficult to quantify in other movement settings, I do expect them to be most salient when the movement engages in "outsider" strategies. Also, to the extent that organizers are building networks among workers, then, regardless of the particular movement in question, they may be particularly effective at fostering a sense of collective identity among participants and a deeper commitment to the movement as a whole.

The relevance of these findings extends to other social movement dynamics as well, particularly movement outcomes. Unlike early research on collective action, which explored the

internal dynamics of movements, scholars have turned their attention to the consequences of activism, such as new laws and cultural change (see Giugni 1998 for a review of this literature). Much of this research has demonstrated a strong link between various movement behaviors and success, typically captured by changes in state policy or action (Andrews 2001; Cress and Snow 2000; McAdam and Su 2002; McCammon et al. 2001). However, despite the insight of this research, focusing on the state poses two methodological challenges that are avoided when analyzing union organizing.

The first is identified by Marco G. Giugni (1998:373), who writes: "The principle difficulty [in movement outcomes research] is how to establish a causal relationship between a series of events that we can reasonably classify as social movement actions and an observed change in society . . ." The expansion of the nation-state into almost every sphere of public and private life (Chodak 1989; Tilly 1995) has resulted in fierce competition among actors for the state's attention. This has made it difficult to identify the causal connection between the actions of a specific movement and the reaction of the state simply because it is under pressure from so many different actors (movements and otherwise). Secondly, by focusing only on the state, this research ignores other institutions, such as religious and educational organizations, that are often at the center of contentious politics (Binder 2002; Katzenstein 1998).

Although American unions have a long history of political activism (Marks 1989), they have primarily adopted a unique form of industrial syndicalism, preferring to win new gains at the point of production rather than the ballot box (Kimeldorf 1999). In contrast to the shifting interests of the nation-state, which often implements policy to satisfy an entire range of constituents, the fundamental contradictions between labor and capital necessitate that any benefits corporations grant to unions are likely to be the direct result of the activities of organized labor (Fantasia 1988; Marx [1939–41] 1978:247–50). Indeed, the mere possibility of union representation has been perhaps more strongly resisted by capital than any other outcome because of the wide-ranging implications it has for the entire framework of industrial relations (Cowie 1999; Goldfield 1987; Rosenblum 1995; Yellen 1936, though see Swenson 2002). Secondly, the concrete nature of the economic goals of labor, including the right to represent the workers at a firm, are far more quantifiable than efforts to bring about political changes or transform the values held by members of society. Given these unique advantages, the findings presented above provide a clearer picture of just how important strategic resource disbursements are for movement outcomes.

The current article raises important issues for those interested in organized labor today. Here the resource mobilization perspective is used as a framework for analyzing the role of resources in local organizing activities. The recent departure of the Change to Win faction from the AFL-CIO was predicated largely on the shortcomings (real or perceived) of the earlier reform effort. To the extent that this new organization has, in the words of Ganz, the "resourcefulness" to experiment with new repertoires of actions that are backed with sufficient resources, the findings have considerable implications for the future of the movement. While some of the unions in Change to Win, such as SEIU and UNITE-HERE, have made considerable use of militant organizing strategies, it is too early to tell if such practices have been adopted by others in the coalition.

Beyond organizing, given recent changes in union rhetoric and organized labor's continued involvement in politics, perspectives like framing (Benford and Snow 2000) and political opportunity theory (McAdam 1982) also have the potential to explain a wide range of union outcomes. In addition, microanalyses of network recruitment processes would allow researchers to examine how union organizers are able to mobilize targeted workers. Linking social movement perspectives to union organizing will not only provide a stronger theoretical framework to examine working class struggles, but as in the case of the current analysis, also has the potential to contribute to our understanding of social movement processes generally.

Appendix

Table 1A • ***Comparison of Sample to Sampling Frame and Population of Labor Unions***

	Sample		*All LM-2 Locals of 7 National Unions*		*All LM-2 Locals*		*All Local Unions in U.S.*	
Variable	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*	*Mean*	*SD*
Members	4012.36	4818.43	3244.21	8529.28	2063.45*	6539.48	494.71*	3240.55
Net assets (in thousands)	819.48	783.03	891.99	2024.70	1116.35	3393.52	220.10*	1488.56
Receipts (in thousands)	1529.51	1821.08	1421.90	2696.42	1323.21	4214.51	259.16*	1842.25
Region								
South	.26		.16*		.18		.26	
Northeast	.29		.27		.26		.21	
Midwest	.30		.37		.33		.34	
West	.16		.20		.23		.19	
N	70		1520		5002		28233	

*Significantly different from sample ($p < .05$).

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